

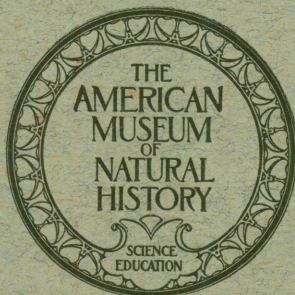
# AMERICAN MUSEUM NOVITATES

No. 17

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## NOTES ON A NEW OX-PECKER AND OTHER LITTLE-KNOWN BIRDS OF THE CONGO

BY JAMES P. CHAPIN



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## NOTES ON A NEW OX-PECKER AND OTHER LITTLE-KNOWN BIRDS OF THE CONGO<sup>1</sup>

By JAMES P. CHAPIN

In the working up of our collection of Congo birds there appear continually points of interest regarding the distribution and relationships of the rarer birds of this region, which seem to merit immediate publication and a little more space than can be allotted to them in the final report. For this reason, we offer the following remarks on species recently subjected to special investigation.

### A NEW *BUPHAGUS* FROM THE LOWER CONGO

The Tick-birds or Ox-peckers of Africa have been universally conceded to belong to two species, both of them widely distributed over the eastern and southern parts of Africa and both extending to Senegal in the northwest. Yet, they invariably shun the forested regions, especially of the Congo basin; and, while Professor Reichenow<sup>2</sup> states that *Buphagus africanus* is found locally in the western forest area, he gives in his great work only one such record from Lower Guinea: Gaboon (Marche and Compiègne). In his list of birds known from the Cameroon<sup>3</sup> we find no mention of either species.

This is entirely in accord with our experience during the American Museum Congo Expedition. Nowhere in the forested districts did we ever see or hear of an Ox-pecker, not even where cattle or horses were being kept, as at Stanleyville. But there are parts of the Gaboon which are certainly not to be reckoned as forest, since numbers of savanna birds extend their range northward from the Lower Congo along the west coast, and one of these must be a *Buphagus*.

At Faradje, Upper Uele District, where in 1911 some 700 head of cattle were living on the Government farm and the European traders and administrative agents possessed a few horses and mules, no Ox-peckers ever came to visit the domestic animals, although this was well to the north of the forest border. With the big game of the region, however, and even farther south near the Kibali River, there were frequently

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<sup>1</sup>Scientific Results of the American Museum Congo Expedition. Ornithology No. 6.

<sup>2</sup>1903, 'Vögel Afrikas,' II, p. 666.

<sup>3</sup>1911, Mitteilungen aus dem Zool. Mus. Berlin, V, p. 251.

Tick-birds of the so-called yellow-billed species, whose bill nevertheless has the terminal half bright red. They were found in rather small numbers in attendance upon the white rhinoceros, buffalo, giant eland, and occasionally even the wart-hog. Their well-known habits need no mention here; but the facts that they never approached human habitations and were never observed about the cattle are rather surprising.

Along the eastern border of the Belgian Congo, and especially in the Katanga, Ox-peckers of both the yellow- and red-billed species must doubtless occur; yet the only other place where any *Buphagus* was observed by us was at Zambi, on the Lower Congo. There Mr. Van Saceghem, a Belgian veterinary, kindly procured two specimens for me in January 1915; and Mr. Lang collected three more in June and July of the same year. They were seen commonly about the domestic cattle, and yet only a few miles away at Boma I sought in vain for them with the herds. I was even told that they did not show themselves on the Island of Mateba, where cattle raising is the principal industry. According to Mr. Drousie, Directeur de l'Agriculture at Boma, they were not seen at Zambi previous to 1908, appearing first in company with a herd installed at some little distance north of the river; and then, when these were brought back to the station, the birds came too.

Both Mr. Lang and I noticed at once that these Ox-peckers were of a much darker color, especially on the rump, than those of the Uele; and later I found that they agreed more or less in coloration with *Buphagus erythrorhynchus*, even to the dark shade of the rectrices. Yet the bill, instead of being entirely red, had been bicolored exactly as in *B. africanus*. Comparison with specimens made it clear at once that *erythrorhynchus* had a bill of quite another shape, yet this difference between the two well-known species, while alluded to in Stark and Selater's 'Birds of South Africa,' is generally disregarded in favor of color distinctions that are not at all evident in the beaks of old dried skins.

The bill of *Buphagus africanus* is much heavier than that of *B. erythrorhynchus*, especially on account of the pronounced widening of the basal half of the mandible, the sheath of which, in many adult specimens, is even produced inwardly below so as to encroach upon the feathering of the chin. This character was enough to place our darker birds from Zambi unquestionably in the *africanus* group, and, furthermore, they lacked all trace of the widened yellow eyelid of *erythrorhynchus*.

Were the species of this curious group of birds more numerous, it would doubtless be fitting to divide them in two genera, and such well-

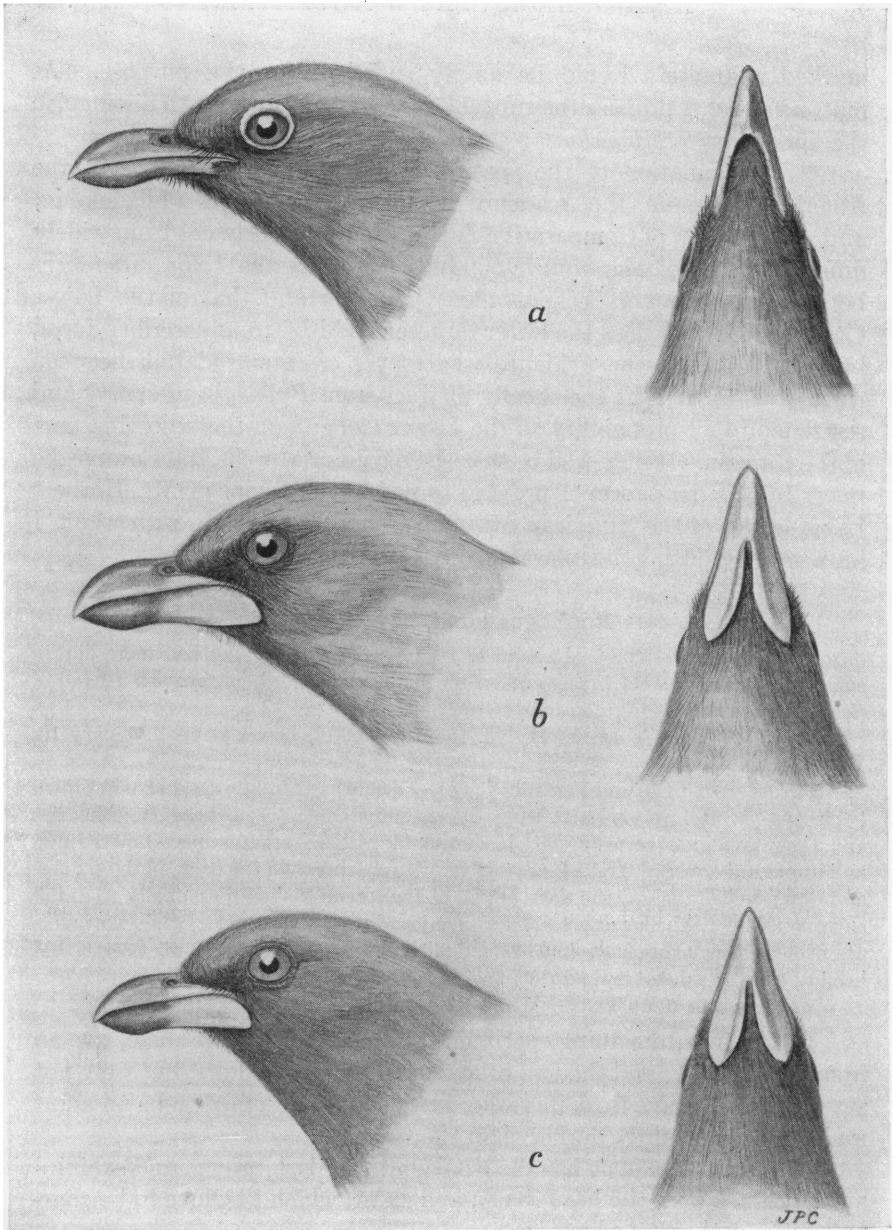


Fig. 1. Beaks of the three species of Ox-peckers, as seen from the side and beneath.  
 A, *Buphagus erythrorhynchus*; b, *B. africanus*; c, *B. langi*. Natural size.



marked characters would be amply sufficient for the purpose. As matters stand, I propose the subgeneric term **Buphagoides** to distinguish the species *erythrorhynchus*.

An examination of the specimens of *Buphagus africanus* in the American Museum, the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, and the Museum of Comparative Zoology (eleven specimens from widely different parts of the continent) fully confirms the color differences between the common Yellow-billed Ox-pecker and that of the Lower Congo. Not only does the latter represent a hitherto undescribed form, but, since there is no evidence whatsoever of intergradation between them, I consider it as specifically distinct from *Buphagus africanus* and restricted in all probability to the Lower Congo and the adjoining part of the Gaboon. It may well be that the record of Marche and Compiègne refers to this dark form. I propose to name it in honor of Mr. Herbert Lang, leader of the American Museum Congo Expedition, with whom I have worked during five pleasant years in Africa.

***Buphagus langi*, new species**

**SPECIFIC CHARACTERS.**—Related to *B. africanus*, but smaller and more darkly colored, especially on the breast and on the rump, the latter being grayish instead of rich yellowish buff. No rufous on the rectrices.

**TYPE.**—♀ ad.; A. M. N. H. No. 163005; Zambi, Lower Congo, January 16, 1915.

**DESCRIPTION OF ADULT FEMALE (Type).**—Whole head and throat dull dark brown ("fuscous" of Ridgway); back, wing-coverts and secondaries similar; the primaries and their greater coverts fuscous black; under wing-coverts fuscous. Lower rump and upper tail-coverts "grayish olive"; rectrices darker, like the back, both on inner and outer webs. Below, the dark brown of the foreneck shades gradually to a dull cinnamon-buff on the lower breast, abdomen, and under tail-coverts, while the flanks are of a warmer ochraceous buff, tinged with cinnamon. Iris yellow; base of bill bright yellow, its distal half scarlet; feet blackish.

**MEASUREMENTS OF TYPE.**—Wing, 107; tail, 74; culmen, 15; tarsus, 21.

Of the four remaining specimens, one is an immature male, one an immature female, and the two others have bills like adults, but were not sexed. One of these from its rather large size is presumed to be an adult male, yet it is slightly darker than the type.

The immature male has the whole bill still dark brown, and exhibits an ashy wash over the head, back, and chest, which I believe to be characteristic of the first plumage.

**Measurements of Five Specimens of *Buphagus langi* (both sexes).**—Wing, 106.5–113 (average, 109.1); tail, 74–81 (77.9); culmen, 13.5–15 (14.2); tarsus, 20.5–21.5 (21). The dimensions of *B. africanus*

are given by Reichenow ('Vögel Afrikas,' II, p. 666) as: wing, 120; tail, 90-105; bill, 16-18; tarsus, 21-23. The wing does vary, I find, from 117 to 124 mm., but *Buphagus africanus* does seem to be a decidedly larger bird.

#### THE *NECTARINIA* OF THE BANGALA COUNTRY

This long-tailed genus of Sunbirds is especially characteristic of the plains regions of Africa and, until a few years ago, seemed to be without a single representative in forested western Africa. Then, in April 1910, van Oort<sup>1</sup> described both male and female of a new species, *Nectarinia congensis*, which had been sent in alcohol from Boma on the Lower Congo by A. Greshoff to the Zoological Laboratory in Utrecht, and there had remained unnoticed for twenty-one years.

No further reference to the species has appeared since its original description, as a result, I believe, of the true range of this fine Sunbird along a river where few ornithologists have tarried to make collections. Some nine months before van Oort's description appeared, we were making the ascent by steamer of the Upper Congo River, profiting by every stop to jump ashore and secure specimens, mostly of birds. The Sunbirds in particular attracted our attention, but no long-tailed species was noticed at Boma, Matadi, or Leopoldville, nor indeed until we had reached Bumba, on July 29. At Barumbu, two days later, we collected an adult male specimen, and thereafter saw no more of the species, even during our stay at Stanleyville.

It may seem strange that a Sunbird characteristic of the forested course of the Congo River should not occur on the Upper Aruwimi or the Ituri, yet such appears to be the case. Stranger still is the fact that *Nectarinia congensis* was not found by us at even Stanleyville during October and November, 1914.

I determined therefore to keep a special watch for it on the way down the Congo and, at the end of the very first day's journey, at Isangi, the acquaintance was renewed. About the government station there some of the roads are lined with the beautiful tree *Poinciana regia*, known as the "Flamboyant" and introduced, I am told, from Madagascar. To its gaudy red flowers, now open in great numbers, there came a few of the Sunbirds I sought, and a male and female were secured.

The next day we stopped for an hour at Barumbu, and here on the same kind of flowering tree I again watched a few of these Sunbirds. On other native trees they were observed later near Lié, near Coquil-

<sup>1</sup>1910, Orn. Monatsb., p. 54.

hatville, and at Irebu (December 17), usually near or over the river-bank. All our specimens, with the exception of one not quite fully adult, were found to be in breeding condition; this was even the case with the male taken in July.

Near Lié a typical Sunbird nest was hanging from a bush, some six feet above the water, and a male of *Nectarinia congensis* sitting by it seemed to prove the ownership, though, because of the flooded condition of the stream, it could not be reached during our very short stop.

Below Irebu this species of Sunbird disappeared and, though I collected subsequently for several weeks in the neighborhood of Boma, it was never seen there either. I cannot help feeling that Greshoff's specimens really came from much farther up the river. Two days below Irebu by steamer the Congo emerges from the equatorial forest into the southern savanna, with a very distinct fauna; and what forest one sees along the Congo near its mouth is mainly a very heavy growth of mangrove. If our Sunbird inhabited this, we may take it for granted that it would long ago have been collected on the Gaboon coast. So far as my observations go, *Nectarinia congensis* inhabits the banks of the Upper Congo, from Irebu, near the entrance to Lake Tumba, up to Isangi, at the mouth of the Lomami River. The distance is about 500 miles, but I suspect that the birds keep very much to the banks of the larger streams in this region and never go beyond the limits of the equatorial forest belt.

Van Oort's description is very good, especially in view of the long sojourn of his specimens in alcohol. All we need add to it is that the burnished green chest of the male has a bluer posterior edge, sometimes even violet, and that the longer upper tail-coverts are of a like shade. In the case of the female, the upper side of the tail shows a faint green gloss, and the foreneck is heavily spotted with dull blackish.

With regard to measurements, those of the eight males in our collection are: wing, 63-66 (average, 64.5); middle rectrices, 110-125.5 (117.3), second longest pair, 49-52.5 (50.7); exposed culmen, 19-20 (19.3); metatarsus, 16-16.5 (16.1). The two females have smaller dimensions: wing, 56, 59; middle rectrices, 44.5, 45; second pair, 41, 41.5; exposed culmen, 16, 18.5; metatarsus, 15.5.

#### NEOLESTES CABANIS AND ITS ALLIES

At the confluence of the Kasai and Congo Rivers, on December 19, 1914, I made the acquaintance of a bird subsequently identified as *Neolestes torquatus* Cabanis, collecting three specimens. Having no



means of learning its name at the time, I attempted at least to determine the family which it represented and, from the general form of body, limbs, and other details, I soon decided that it belonged with certainty to the Pycnonotidæ, in spite of the rather unusual color pattern, largely green above, white and gray below, with crown and nape ashy, and a broad black line extending from the lores to behind the eye and down across the breast. The bill reminded me of that of *Pycnonotus*, but was wider and more arched; the feet did not belie such a relationship, the metatarsi being short and scutellate. The sexes were alike in color. I felt the more confident because all three of my specimens, shot among the bushes in upland savannah, had been eating small fruits; and their voice was a sort of twitter that suggested a Bulbul.

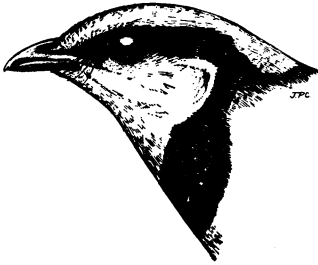


Fig. 2

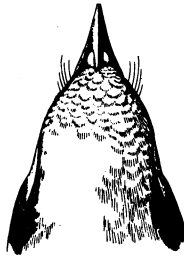


Fig. 3

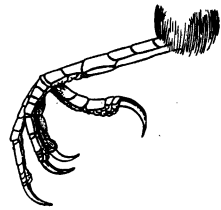


Fig. 4

Fig. 2. Head of *Neolestes torquatus*, adult male.

Natural size.

Fig. 3. Head of *Neolestes torquatus*, from above.

Natural size.

Fig. 4. Left foot of *Neolestes torquatus*.

Natural size.

Later in the same day, at Kunzulu, somewhat farther down the Congo River, a nest of this same bird was found in a bush, four feet from the ground. It was a frail cup of slender grasses and plant stems, holding two eggs, pinkish white indistinctly speckled with darker pinkish and a faint rufous zone about the larger end. Here, I thought, were additional indications of affinity to the Pycnonotidæ.

During the following month, January, near Boma on the Lower Congo, three more individuals were observed, though none was collected, because of their extreme wariness.

When I came to the identification of my specimens at the American Museum, no genus of Pycnonotidæ could be found in which they seemed to fit, and my search extended to the Laniidæ before it bore fruit. There

the monotypic genus *Neolestes* was placed by Reichenow<sup>1</sup> in the following association: "*Chlorophoneus*, *Pelicius*, *Neolestes*, *Calicalicus*, *Nicator*. . . ." Dr. Sharpe,<sup>2</sup> too, includes *Neolestes* in the Malaconotinæ, and Sclater,<sup>3</sup> in Shelley's 'Birds of Africa,' inserts it between *Malaconotus* and *Telophorus*, the latter a group of green-backed Shrikes referred by Reichenow to *Pelicius* and *Chlorophoneus*. This association of *Neolestes* is plainly unnatural, and an extract from Cabanis' original description<sup>4</sup> will show how the error came about. "It belongs to none of the known genera, and its insertion in the classification is rather difficult. For the present it had best be considered, like *Calicalicus* for example, as an aberrant form of the Malaconotinæ, and be placed in the neighborhood of that genus."

The specimens of *Calicalicus madagascariensis* I have examined in the Philadelphia Academy collection reminded me much more of the Paridæ than of any other family; they certainly bore no special resemblance to *Neolestes*. *Calicalicus* is placed by some writers in the Vangidæ, but this question I shall not attempt to settle. Beyond a doubt, Cabanis' opinion as to *Neolestes* belonging in the Malaconotinæ was based on a superficial resemblance to certain green-and-yellow Shrikes with black breast-bands, of which I have two species (*Chlorophoneus quadricolor* and *Pelicius zeylonus*) for comparison. The likeness is extremely faint, even the black band on the side of the head occupying an entirely different position, since in *Neolestes* it passes completely above the ear-coverts and in these Shrikes below them. Following up the question of coloration, we may note that the young of *Chlorophoneus dohertyi* is barred on the body<sup>5</sup>—a shrike character—whereas that of *Neolestes* is not thus marked but closely resembles the adult, as does the young of *Pycnonotus*.

The bill of these Shrikes is typical of the Malaconotinæ; that of *Neolestes* approaches the form seen in *Pycnonotus* (see Figs. 2 and 3) but is relatively even broader at the base, while the nasal operculum is better developed. The lengthened nuchal filoplumes, sometimes said to characterize the Pycnonotidæ, are almost completely lacking in our specimens of *Neolestes*, but this is of slight importance, for they are found in *Malaconotus* and even among some Ploceinæ as well developed as in many Bulbuls.

<sup>1</sup>1914, 'Die Vögel,' II, p. 289.

<sup>2</sup>1903, 'Hand-List of Birds,' IV, p. 299.

<sup>3</sup>1912, 'Birds of Africa,' V, part 2, p. 405.

<sup>4</sup>1875, 'Journal für Ornithologie,' p. 237.

<sup>5</sup>1902, Rothschild, Nov. Zool., Pl. ix.

The wing helps but little in our decision. Like both Pycnonotidæ and Malaconotinæ, *Neolestes* has it ten-primaried and rounded. In *Pycnonotus* the fifth and sixth primaries (counting from inside) are longest, in *Neolestes* the sixth, in *Pelecinus* sixth and seventh. In the adult of *Neolestes* the tenth primary is relatively shorter than in *Pycnonotus tricolor*, but this in turn has it shorter than in *Pelecinus*. The foot of *Neolestes* is not at all shrike-like. The metatarsus is too short, and its scutellation not at all like that of *Pelecinus* and most Laniidæ, but much more similar to that of the Pycnonotidæ, though not so nearly "booted" as in *Pycnonotus*.

My first impressions in the field are thus confirmed. Although my judgment is based on external characters, for no anatomical material was preserved, *Neolestes* seems undoubtedly a pycnonotid. I believe, indeed, that its affinities are closer to *Pycnonotus* than to any other African genus of the family.

Now I find that all this has been anticipated by Dr. Gadow, as long ago as 1883, in Vol. VIII of the 'Catalogue of Birds in the British Museum.' Although retaining *Neolestes* in the Laniidæ, probably only for convenience, he clearly states in the introduction to that family that *Neolestes* and *Calicalicus* are so aberrant as to form links with the Pycnonotinæ. Furthermore, he appends to the Key to the Genera of Malaconotinæ (p. 103) a footnote which subsequent writers seem to have ignored almost completely, though it is well worth quoting here, since my present remarks are simply a confirmation of it.

Here may be mentioned *Neolestes* . . . which has been placed by Cabanis near *Calicalicus*; it does not appear to be a Bush-Shrike, but to be allied to the Bulbuls or *Pycnonotinæ*. Bill not laterally compressed, but considerably broader than high; genys decidedly curved downwards, and not upwards as in all Laniidæ; nostrils with a well developed coriaceous operculum; strong rictal bristles; tail rounded and slightly shorter than wings.

Such a critical examination of one genus of supposed Shrikes might well prompt one to ask "What of *Nicator*?" I well remember meeting for the first time in the field two species of this African genus, *N. chloris* and *N. vireo*, and my reluctance to place them among the Laniidæ has never been quite overcome. *Nicator*, of course, bears little resemblance to *Neolestes* and is undoubtedly more shrike-like, with the bill straighter, narrower, and distinctly hooked, the metatarsus long, the toes short. Yet here most of its shrike characters seem to end. I do not feel that the spotting of its wings and tail necessarily indicates a relationship with *Malaconotus*, but was at first tempted to associate it rather with *Bleda* among the Pycnonotidæ, which also has a straight compressed

bill with more or less of a hook. The feet of *Nicator* and *Bleda* are similar in proportions, though the metatarsus is scutellate in the first, practically booted in the second. Both genera have a peculiar gap in the feather tract of the back of the neck, and outer primaries of similar proportions.

At all events, I feel that *Nicator* is as near to the *Pycnonotidæ* as to any member of the *Malaconotinæ*, though perhaps belonging in neither of these groups. Attention may here be called to one peculiarity of

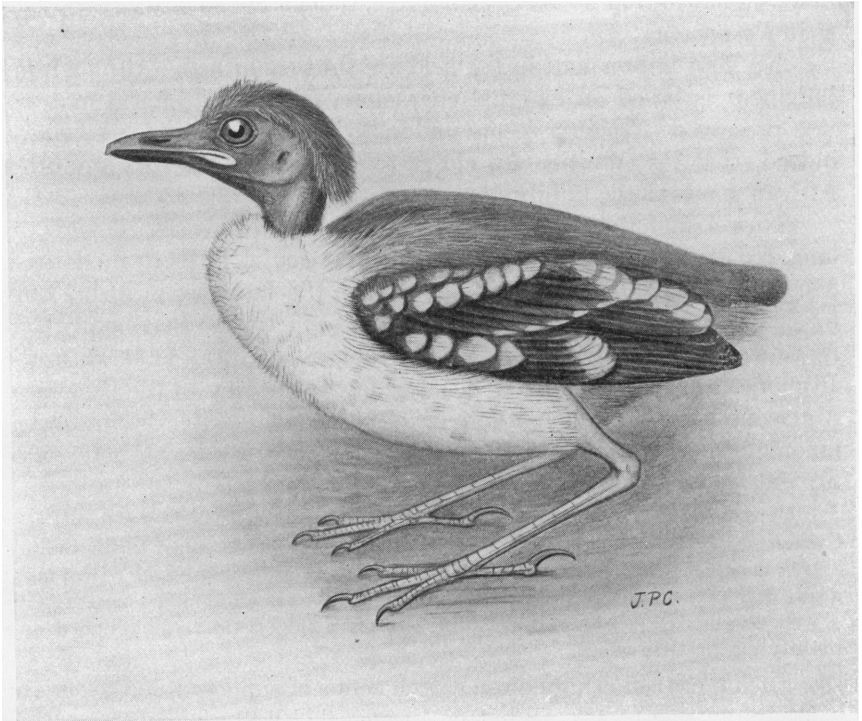


Fig. 5. Nestling of *Nicator chloris*, to show bare face and neck.  
Natural size.

*Nicator* which is of interest. The true rictal bristles, in contrast to those of *Bleda*, are rather poorly developed and they are replaced functionally by a different group of feathers, situated much closer to the eye, the shafts of which are stiffened and prolonged, the barbs being greatly reduced. There is no approach to this in *Bleda*, and but little resemblance in *Malaconotus*.



The feathering of the nestling *Nicator* is very peculiar and quite different from that of any young Shrike (Fig. 5). At the time when the wings are half grown and the body already well feathered, the feathers of throat and cheeks, as well as those around the eyes, ears, and base of bill, have still failed to put in appearance and there is a broad median apterium running the whole length of the crown, of which no trace can be seen in the adult. The only feathers on the head are thus in two lateral lines on the crown, which join on the nape but are isolated from the spinal tract. The legs are entirely bare of feathers up to the lumbar tract and the appearance of such young birds is unique, the fluffy feathers of the upper breast forming a sort of ruff. I do not think that this is paralleled in *Bleda*, of which I have, however, seen no specimen quite young enough for comparison.

The juvenal plumage of *Nicator* is similar in color to that of the adult, whereas that of *Bleda syndactyla* and *eximia* is strikingly different, for the upperparts, excepting the remiges and rectrices, are mostly of a peculiar rufous or maroon, the underparts whiter; and this first plumage, which recalls that of *Turdinus* (Timeliidæ), is molted even before the tail has attained its full length.

#### THE JUVENAL DRESS OF *SIGMODUS RUFIVENTRIS MENTALIS*

In glancing over our series of this bird from the Ituri and Uele, it is evident at once that immature examples are very differently colored about the head from adults, which have smooth bluish gray feathering on the crown and cheeks, set off sharply from the black collar encircling the whole neck. Instead, immature birds with black bills are found to have the lores and rictal bristles black, and a dark band extending from behind the eye to the nape, while the black collar does not encircle the foreneck.

A still younger individual, of female sex (A. M. N. H. No. 161114) with wings and tail fully grown, is seen to have a whitish collar extending almost entirely around the hind neck, and the cheeks and throat nearly white. The throat is separated from the purer white chest-patch by a narrow band of rufous crossing the foreneck. Even this specimen, however, has already begun to molt out of the juvenal plumage, for all its secondary coverts are black, and only a white spot at the tip of the second alula-quill gives a hint of their color in the first plumage.

Such a nestling as that shown in Figure 6 would be a puzzling bird to identify if we did not have some of the transitional stages. Most of the change to the adult plumage seems, nevertheless, to take place in a

single post-juvenal molt, which begins with the wing-coverts and is retarded longest about the head. Before the plumage of the head has been entirely renewed the molt of the remiges and rectrices is under way.

The young bird we figure (A. M. N. H. No. 161117, ♂) shows one peculiarity in which it is most unlike the Shrikes, though this genus and *Prionops* have very often been included in the Laniidæ. On the back of its crown there are two large bare patches of skin, separated by a narrow

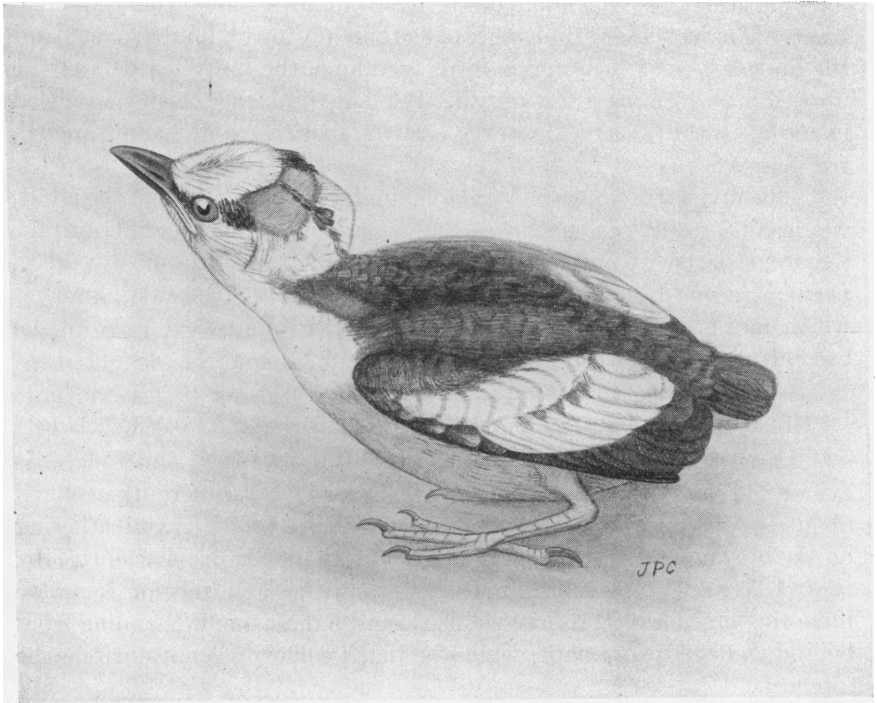


Fig. 6. Nestling of *Sigmodus rufiventris mentalis*, with white wing-coverts and parietal areas of naked skin.

Colors of plumage largely blackish and white, as in the figure; but throat tinged with cinnamon, and lower breast, belly, and under tail-coverts pale cinnamon-rufous, very much lighter than in the adult. Natural size.

median line. Feathers will later grow from this skin, but they are always a little shorter there, a condition which aids in the sharp definition of the blue-gray cap in the adult.

What the difference in color-pattern between adult and young may mean we cannot be entirely certain, but it looks like a good case of recapitulation, an ancestral plumage appearing in the young only. The

adults of several species of the related genus *Prionops* have considerable white on the wing-coverts. As passerine families go, the Prionopidae seem to be well marked off from the true Shrikes; but the affinities to the two typical African genera of some of the other forms associated with them, as for instance in Sharpe's 'Hand-List,' seem to me most questionable.

#### THE SECOND KNOWN LOCALITY FOR *LECYTHOPLASTES PREUSSI*

The Cliff Swallow discovered by Preuss at the falls of the Sannaga, near Edea, Cameroon, and named in his honor by Reichenow,<sup>1</sup> has thus far never been reported elsewhere. It plastered its bottle-shaped nests, wrote Preuss, with flasklike necks pointing obliquely downward, in great colonies on the vertical cliffs, right below the waterfall; and there he caught as many as he liked with a butterfly net.

While making a journey from Faradjé to Dungu, Upper Uele District, in 1911, I arrived on June 1 at the rest-house overlooking the River Dungu, about midway between the two posts and known as Gangara na Bodjo (= Bodjo's Hill). Flying about the huts and alighting on the bare ground around them was a flock of a dozen small swallows that looked new to me. I secured three, all adults, and was delighted to find that they resembled small Cliff Swallows, a group that I had not met thus far in the Congo. I recalled that in the preceding February, somewhere along this same part of the road, I had noticed some unusual swallows but thought at the time that they might be *Hirundo puella*. I am sure now that they were not.

At the time our specimens were taken they must have been breeding and were in worn plumage. The sexual organs of one male were noted as "much enlarged," those of the second as somewhat enlarged, and the ovary of the female slightly so. That they were not simply a wandering flock, far out of their normal range, is likewise indicated by my meeting a lone individual, on April 15, 1912, in the same general region, only about twenty-five miles to the south or southeast. To be more exact, it was a four hours' march west of the village of Gangura, an Azande chief, that this single bird was found, flying about near a strip of woods; but in shooting it I had the ill fortune to mutilate it beyond all usefulness. Though I twice had occasion to visit Gangara na Bodjo again, I never found the swallows there; their great rarity, or extremely local distribution, is attested by the fact that they have never been re-

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<sup>1</sup>1898, Orn. Monatsb., p. 115.

ported from any other localities than those above-mentioned, which are separated by a distance of 1300 miles. There can be no doubt of the breeding of Preuss' Swallow somewhere near the Dungu River, but just where we found it there seem to be no suitable cliffs at all. The only hill of any size I know in that vicinity is at Piagga, one day's march nearer to Faradje, where a splendid overhanging cliff was found in February 1913 to shelter a nesting colony of *Micropus affinis*. Yet no *Lecythoplastes* were observed; and on other higher hills near Aba, Garamba, Gangura's, Nzoro, and Dungu, only *Hirundo puella* and *Riparia rufigula* were found occupying the cliffs.

In view of the great distance from the type locality, the natural impulse is to look for slight differences in characters, but I can find none whatever. Reichenow's description fits exactly, even to measurements. Those of our specimens are: wing, ♂, 97, 96, ♀ 96; tail, middle feathers, ♂, 42, 42.5, ♀, 42; outer rectrices, ♂, 53, 53.5, ♀, 53; exposed culmen, ♂, 6.6, 6.2, ♀, 6.8; metatarsus, ♂, 10.3, 11, ♀, 10. The sexes do not differ any more in color than in size; one of our birds lacks the white spots on the outer pair of rectrices, but it is a male.

#### EASTERN LIMITS OF DISTRIBUTION FOR SOME WEST AFRICAN BIRDS

Collections made in recent years in Central Africa have shown repeatedly how many characteristic West African species extend their range from the Cameroon all across the Congo forests and even to the Lake Region. The number of such forest birds that have been taken near Beni, on the eastern border of the Belgian Congo, is surprising; and Dr. V. G. L. van Someren has recently made notable additions to the Uganda avifauna of species previously known only from West Africa.

A certain number of specimens in our Congo collection, representing West African forms that were not previously known to range so far into the Northeastern Congo or have been perhaps only once recorded from that part of the colony, are worthy of mention here.

*Canirallus oculus* ([Temminck] Hartlaub)

4 ♂, 2 ♀, Gamangui (Ituri); 1 ♀, Medje (Ituri); 2 ♂, 1 ♀, Niapu (Bomokandi).

*Podica senegalensis senegalensis* (Vieillot)

1 ♂ im., 1 ♀, Panga (Aruwimi R.); 1 ♂ with gray throat, 3 ♀, Avakubi (Ituri); 1 juv., Niapu (Bomokandi); 1 ♀ im., Niangara (Uele). Already recorded by Dubois<sup>1</sup> from Panga.

*Lamprolaima rara* Rothschild, Hartert and Kleinschmidt

1 ♀, Avakubi; 1 ♂, Niapu.

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<sup>1</sup>1905, Ann. Mus. Congo, Zool., (4) I, fasc. 1, p. 24.



*Lamprolaima olivacea olivacea* Du Bus

1 ♂, Avakubi.

*Tigronis leucolopha* (Jardine)

1 ♂, 1 ♀, Gamangui; 1 ♂, Medje; 2 ♂, 1 ♂ juv., Niapu.

*Urotiorchis macrourus* ([Temminck] Hartlaub)

1 ♀ im., Avakubi. Dubois has already reported it from Banalia.

*Astur castanilius* (Bonaparte)1 ♂, Gamangui; 2 ♀ im., Medje. The recently described *Accipiter beniensis* Lönnberg is apparently synonymous.*Accipiter sharpei* Reichenow1 ♂, Bengamisa (R. Lindi); 1 ♂, 1 ♂ im., Banalia; 1 ♀ im., Bafwasende (R. Lindi); 1 ♂, Avakubi. I consider *Accipiter zenkeri* and *A. erythropus*, which has recently been reported by Sassi from Beni, to be probably the immature stages of *A. sharpei* and *A. hartlaubi*. In such a case the name *sharpei* would be antedated by *zenkeri*.*Hieraaëtus africanus* (Cassin)

1 ♀, 1 ♀ juv., Niapu.

*Dryotiorchis batesi* Sharpe

1 ♂, Stanleyville; 6 ♂, 3 ♀, Avakubi; 1 ♀, Medje; 1 ♀, Niapu; 1 ♀, Akenge (Bomokandi).

*Baza cuculoides* (Swainson)

1 ♂, 2 ♀, 2 ♀ im., Avakubi; 1 ♀ im., Ngayu (Ituri); 1 ♂, Rungu (Bomokandi). There is one previous record from Semio (N. Uele).

*Scotopelia bouvieri* Sharpe

2 ♂, 1 ♀, 1 ♀ juv., Niapu; 2 ♀, Niangara.

*Bubo poënsis* Fraser

2 ♂, 1 ♀, Avakubi; 1 ♂, Medje.

*Bubo leucostictus* [Temminck] Hartlaub.

1 ♂, Batama (Distr. Stanley Falls); 1 ♀, 1 ♀ juv., Medje. Recorded from Popoi (Aruwimi R.) by Dubois.

*Glaucidium tephronotum* Sharpe (= *G. pycrafti* Bates)

2 ♂, 1 ♀, Medje; 1 ♀, Nala (Bomokandi).

*Otus holerythrus* (Sharpe)

1 ♀ juv., Medje. Previously known from Banalia.

*Scopelus brunneiceps* Sharpe

2 ♂, Avakubi.

*Meropogon breweri* Cassin

1 ♀, Banalia. Reported from Ubangi R. by Reichenow, and "Province Orientale" by Dubois.

*Caprimulgus batesi* Sharpe1 ♂, 1 ♀, 1 ♂ juv., 2 ♀ juv., Medje; 1 ♀, Avakubi. Bannerman<sup>1</sup> has reported it from Poko (Bomokandi).*Chaetura cassini* Selater

1 ♂, Bengamisa; 3 ♂, 1 ♀, Avakubi; 2 ♂, 1 ♀, Ngayu; 1 ♂, Medje.

A single specimen recorded as *C. breviceauda* from Moëra by Sassi, also noted from Aruwimi R. by Reichenow, and from Poko, Uele Distr., by Bannerman.

*Centropus anselli* Sharpe

1 ♀, Isangi (mouth of R. Lomami).

*Verreauxia africana* (Verreaux)

1 ♂, Stanleyville; 3 ♂, 3 ♀, 2 ♂ im., 1 ♀ im., Avakubi.

*Hirundo nigrita* G. R. Gray

1 ♀, Bengamisa; 1 ♂, Banalia; 3 ♂, 2 ♀, 1 ♀ juv., Avakubi; 2 ♀, Gamangui; 2 ♂, Bafwabaka (Nepoko R.); 1 ♂, 1 ♀, Rungu; 1 ♀, Nzoro (Upper Kibali R.). Already reported in 'Vögel Afrikas' from Bafwazabangi, on Ituri R. and from the Aruwimi.

*Fraseria ocreata* (Strickland)

1 ♂, Avakubi; 1 ♂, Ngayu; 1 ♂, 1 ♀, Gamangui; 1 ♀, 2 ♂ im., Medje.

*Fraseria cinerascens* Hartlaub

1 ♂, Avakubi.

*Lobotus oriolinus* Bates

1 ♂, Medje.

*Bæopogon clamans* (Sjöstedt)

3 ♂, 2 ♀, Avakubi; 1 ♂, 1 ♂ im., Ngayu.

*Camaroptera superciliaris* (Fraser)

1 ♂, Avakubi; 1 ♂, Penge (Ituri); 1 ♂, Ngayu; 2 ♂, 1 ♀, 1 ♂ im., Medje; 1 ♀ im., Rungu.

*Chaunonotus sabinei* (J. E. Gray)

1 ♂, Avakubi; 1 ♂ im., Ngayu.

*Cinnyris johannæ* Verreaux

1 ♂, Dobo (Distr. Bangala); 1 ♂, Avakubi.

*Anthreptes aurantium* Verreaux

1 ♀, Stanleyville; 1 ♂, Panga (Aruwimi R.); 1 ♂, Bomili (Ituri); 5 ♂, 3 ♀, Avakubi; 1 ♂, 1 ♀, Gamangui; 1 ♂, Gada R. near Niangara (Uele). Ubangi R. and Yambuya on lower Aruwimi mentioned in 'Vögel Afrikas.'

*Parmoptila jamesoni* (Shelley)

2 ♂, 1 ♀, 3 ♂ im., Avakubi; 1 ♂, Babeyru; 1 ♂, 1 ♀, Gamangui; 1 ♀, 1 ♀ im., Medje. Type locality: Yambuya, lower Aruwimi R.

*Hypargos dybowskii* (Oustalet)

1 ♀, Faradje; 1 ♂, 2 ♀, Aba (Upper Uele). Type locality: Kemo, Ubangi R.

*Estrilda melpoda* (Vieillot)

3 ♀, Stanleyville; 2 ♂, 2 ♀, Panga. Recorded from Banalia by Dubois.

*Brachycope anomala* (Reichenow)

6 ♂, 1 ♀, Avakubi. Type locality: Stanley Falls. Extends up the Aruwimi and Ituri rivers, also down the Congo to Nouvelle Anvers. Recorded by Reichenow<sup>1</sup> from Banalia.

<sup>1</sup>1910, Vogelf. Mittelafr. Seengebietes, p. 326.





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