

American Museum Novitates

PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
CENTRAL PARK WEST AT 79TH STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10024

NUMBER 2423

JUNE 23, 1970

Birds of the Legendre Indochina Expedition 1931-1932

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The Legendre Indochina Expedition, sponsored by Sidney J. Legendre, spent the period from October, 1931 through March, 1932 in Indochina. Figure 1 shows the route of the expedition, and the itinerary (p. 15) lists the known halts and collecting localities with dates and coordinates.

The place names have been taken from a journal, labels, and the register of skins at the American Museum of Natural History. They have then been identified with the assistance of modern maps of the area and the official Standard Names Gazetteers of the United States Board on Geographic Names. Certain places have not been traced and one or two others are open to small degrees of doubt.

The main object of the expedition was to collect mammals, and the principal collector was T. Donald Carter, who recently retired from the Department of Mammalogy at the American Museum of Natural History. Birds and reptiles were also collected.

The 365 bird skins collected were divided between the American Museum of Natural History (A.M.N.H., 264 skins) and the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia (A.N.S.P.). Their source was:

Tonkin	82	southern Laos (Boloovens)	192
northern Laos	67	Cambodia	1
central Laos	14	southern Annam	7
		from zoos	2

¹ Siam Society, Bangkok, Thailand.

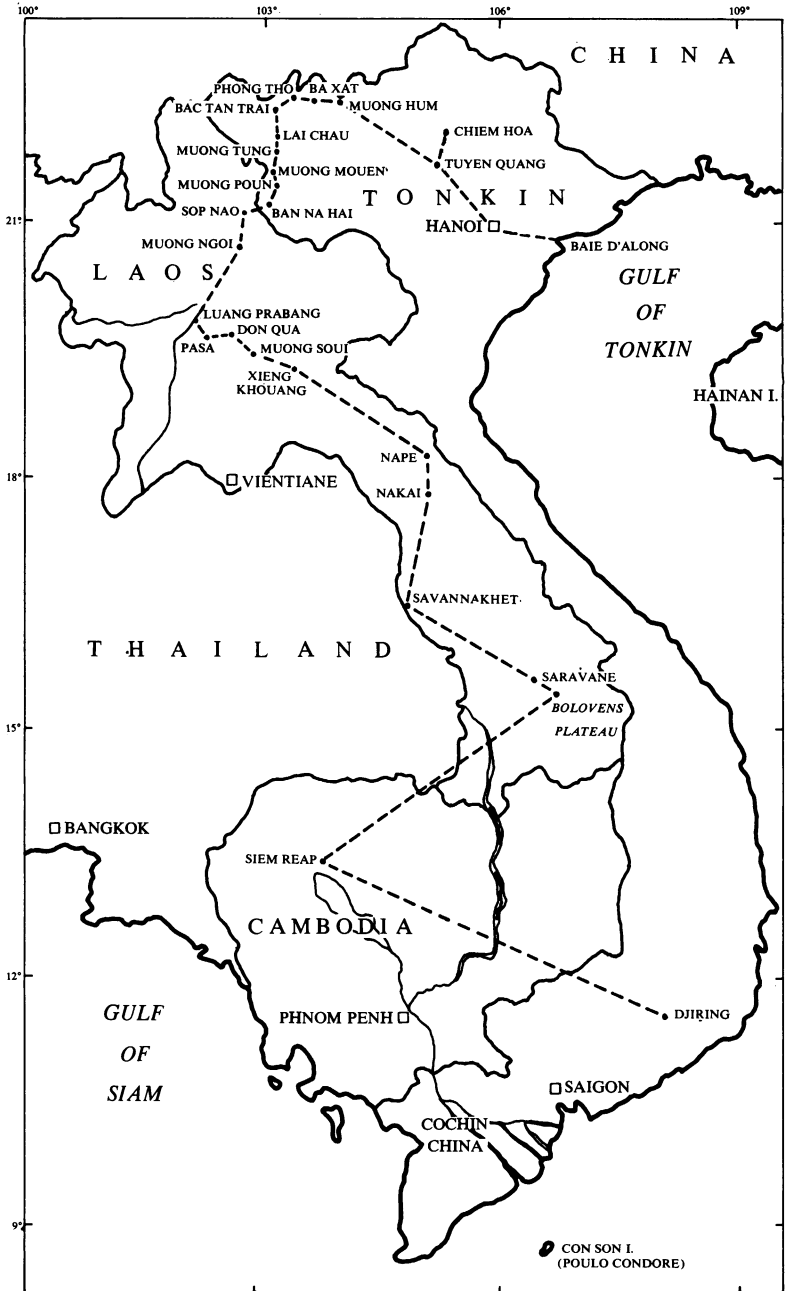


FIG. 1. Map showing route of the Legendre Indochina Expedition, 1931-1932.

METHODS

The collection came to the notice of the author as he was working on the text of a field guide to the birds of southeast Asia and was primarily of interest to him only in respect to any new distribution records that it might yield. It was not until after the author had left the United States that it became apparent that a part of the collection was in Philadelphia. This latter problem was largely overcome through the kindness of Curator James Bond of that institution who went to considerable trouble to track down the remaining birds and to supply details of them.

For the most part, I compared only the specimens whose identity was questioned in the catalogue, or those that seemed to represent extensions of range.

Table 1 (pp. 6-14) lists all the birds collected by number per collecting locality and employs trinomials only where these have been determined by the author.

NOTES ON SELECTED SPECIES

Cairina scutulata (S. Müller)

One female, Nakai, central Laos. January 11, 1932. A.M.N.H. No. 416966.

This appears to be the first record from central Laos. A second bird was collected by the expedition on the Plateau des Bolovens whence the species has been reported (Engelbach 1932). The skin was not examined.

Lophura nycthemera engelbachi Delacour

One male, Plateau des Bolovens, southern Laos. February 3, 1932. A.M.N.H. No. 417008.

This specimen, one of 33 birds of both sexes taken, was selected by Delacour (1948) as the type specimen for the subspecies.

Gallus gallus gallus (Linnaeus)

One male, one female, Napé, central Laos. January 8, 1932. A.M.N.H. No. 416996 and No. 417000.

The text of Delacour and Jabouille (1940) is not precise on the identity of the population of central Laos and indeed could be taken to imply that it had not yet been found in the area. The Legendre Expedition brought back examples of the typical race both from central Laos and southern Laos (Plateau des Bolovens), as well as specimens of *G. g. spadiceus* from northern Laos (Ban Hat Kham) and northwest Tonkin (Moung Mouen) and of *G. g. jabouillei* from north-central Tonkin (Ba Xat).

Pavo muticus imperator Delacour

The type, from the Plateau des Bolovens, was collected by the Legendre Expedition (Delacour, 1949).

Treron curvirostra nipalensis (Hodgson)

One male, Lai Chau, Tonkin. November 8, 1931. A.M.N.H. No. 417047.

This appears to be the first record for Tonkin. The label records that it was taken at an altitude of 500 feet.

Psittacula finschii (Hume)

One female, Muong Poun (=Muong Pon), Tonkin. November 19, 1931. A.M.N.H. No. 417059.

This is again apparently a first record for Tonkin.

Otus spilocephalus latouchi (Rickett)

One female, Plateau des Bolovens, southern Laos. February 10, 1932. A.M.N.H. No. 417602.

This specimen, which constitutes the first record of the species for southern Laos, was taken to London and compared with the material there. Birds in both New York and London had been examined by G. P. Hekstra of Amsterdam, and in view of his far more detailed study this bird is placed with *latouchi* pending publication of his results.

Batrachostomus hodgsoni indochinae Stresemann

One female, Plateau des Bolovens, southern Laos. February 12, 1932. A.M.N.H. No. 417064.

This specimen was taken to London for comparison. It matches very closely a female from Dak To, Annam (British Museum 1926, 9.8.416) taken on March 15, 1926. As can be seen from Stresemann (1937) the Dak To female is clearly one of a pair with the type specimen in Paris.

This appears to be the first record from southern Laos, although the bird is also known from Nam-khuong to the North (Delacour and Jabouille, 1940). Stresemann lists this specimen but his reference was apparently overlooked by later authors.

Caprimulgus indicus jota Temminck and Schlegel

One male, Muong Tung (=Muong Tong), Tonkin. November 13,

1931. A.M.N.H. No. 417066.

This appears to be the first record from Tonkin where the species is presumably only a scarce winter visitor or passage migrant.

Dendrocopos macei longipennis Hesse

One male, Plateau des Bolovens, southern Laos. February 7, 1932. A.M.N.H. No. 417089.

Although not the first to appear in print, chronologically this is the first record of the species for Laos. It is placed with *longipennis* only tentatively. It appears more spotted on the breast than do Thai birds. The spotting is rather similar to that found in *D. m. andamanensis* (Blyth). This, however, could be individual variation.

David-Beaulieu (1949) recorded this species in the early 1940's from central Laos (Savannakhet). He reported that one was collected. The specimen could be with that part of his collection which eventually reached the Yale-Peabody Museum (it is not among those at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok); if so, these two Laotian specimens might be worth comparing with birds from Thailand and southern Indochina.

Pitta soror annamensis (Oustalet)

One male, Plateau des Bolovens, southern Laos. February 2, 1932. A.M.N.H. No. 417097; one female, Plateau des Bolovens, southern Laos. February 4, 1932. A.M.N.H. No. 417098.

This species was recorded from the Plateau des Bolovens by Engelbach (1932) under the nominate trinomial. Delacour and Jabouille (1940) did not mention this record. They listed *P. s. soror* from Cochin China, Cambodia, and part of southern Annam, treating *annamensis* as a synonym. Earlier, in 1931, they had suggested that Oustalet's type of *annamensis* from Quang Tri was a juvenile and that juveniles are highly variable. They also regarded as a synonym *P. s. petersi* from northern Annam and central Laos.

The birds from Bolovens do not match closely the specimens of *P. s. soror* in New York. They were also compared with the fairly good series of *petersi*, *soror*, *tonkinensis*, and "annamensis" in the British Museum.

The two birds matched very closely the series called *annamensis* in the British Museum. These birds are characterized by: heavy spotting of the mantle; the rather pale blue of the rump; the mauvish pink coloration on the crown and face; the larger size and intense color of the black patch on the ear coverts (although this character varies somewhat from individual to individual).

TABLE 1—(Continued)

<i>Ducula badia</i>																					
<i>Macropygia unchall</i>																					
<i>Macropygia nifyceps</i>																					
<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>																					
<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>																					
<i>Chalophaps indica</i>	1																				
<i>Psittacula alexandri</i>																					
<i>Psittacula fuscata</i>																					
<i>Loriculus vernalis</i>																					
<i>Phaenophaeus tristis</i>										1											
<i>Centropus sinensis</i>	1																				
<i>Centropus toulou</i>	1																				
<i>Otus spilocephalus latouchi</i>																					
<i>Otus bakkamoena</i>										1											
<i>Ketupa flavipes</i>										1											
<i>Batrachostomus hodgsoni</i>																					
<i>inchochinae</i>																					
<i>Caprimulgus indicus jolaka</i>																					
Ba Xat, Tonkin																					
Moung Hum																					
Phong Tho																					
Bac Tan Tray																					
Lai Chau																					
Moung Tung																					1
Moung Mouen																					
Moung Poun																					
B. Na Hai																					
Sop Nao, N. Laos																					
Ban Hat Kham																					
Vang Pha Ho (?)																					
Moung Ngoi																					
Luang Prabang																					
Pasa																					
Don Qua																					
Moung Soui																					
Xieng Khouang																					
Nape, C. Laos																					
Nakai																					
Plateau Bolovens, S. Laos																					
Siem Reap, Cambodia																					
Djiring, S. Annam																					

ITINERARY OF THE LEGENDRE INDOCHINA EXPEDITION

Date: 1931	Locality	Coordinates	Total Bird Skins
October 13	Baic d'Along, Tonkin	20°55' N. 107°05' E.	—
October 18	Chien Hou (= ? Chiem Hoa)	22°12' N. 105°17' E.	—
October 19-20	Tuyen Quang	21°49' N. 105°13' E.	—
October 21-27	Ba Xat	22°36' N. 103°51' E.	13
October 30	Muong Hum	22°32' N. 103°43' E.	1
October 31-November 5	Phong Tho	22°32' N. 103°21' E.	2
November 5-6	Bac Tan Trai	22°24' N. 103°12' E.	13
November 7-11	Lai Chau	22°02' N. 103°10' E.	25
November 13	Muong Tung (= Muong Tong)	21°58' N. 103°08' E.	5
November 16-17	Muong Mouen (= Muong Muon)	21°40' N. 103°04' E.	8
November 17-19	Muong Poun (= Muong Pon)	21°33' N. 103°01' E.	12
November 20	B. Na Hai (= Ban Nahi)	21°27' N. 103°01' E.	3
November 21-23	Sop Nao, Laos	21°10' N. 102°46' E.	4
November 24	“Ban Hat Kham,” on the Nam Hau	?	3
November 25	“Kang Pha Ha” } ? the same	?	1
November 26	“Vang Pha Ho” }	?	
November 26-28	Muong Ngoi	20°43' N. 102°41' E.	7
December 5-9	Luang Prabang	19°52' N. 102°08' E.	2
December 10	Pasa, on the Nam Khan = Ban Pak Sa	19°41' N. 102°15' E.	8
December 11-15	Don Qua = Don Khua, Ban Khoua	19°42' N. 102°28' E.	23
December 18-20	Muong Soui	19°33' N. 102°52' E.	1
December 22-27	Xieng Khouang	19°20' N. 103°22' E.	18
Date: 1932			
January 6-8	Napé	18°18' N. 105°06' E.	8
January 10-17	Nakai (= Ban Na Kay)	17°45' N. 105°08' E.	6
January 22	Nr. Savannakhet	16°33' N. 104°45' E.	—
January 27	Saravane	15°43' N. 106°25' E.	—
January 27-February 13	Plateau Bolovens	15°00' N. 106°25' E.	192
February 24-25	Siem Reap, Cambodia	13°22' N. 108°51' E.	1
March 1-4	Djiring (= Di Linh), Annam	11°35' N. 108°04' E.	7
			363

It appears that *P. s. annamensis* is a good race with Quang Tri as its type locality and with the following range: central Annam, central Laos, and southern Laos (Plateau des Bolovens).

Pycnonotus aurigaster latouchei Deignan

One male, Laichau, Tonkin. November 8, 1931. A.M.N.H. No. 417161; one female, Laichau, Tonkin. November 7, 1931. A.N.S.P. No. 110963.

The first of these two birds was selected by Deignan (1949) as the type specimen of this race.

Enicurus leschenaulti indicus Hartert

One male, Plateau des Bolovens, southern Laos. February 3, 1932. A.M.N.H. No. 417202.

This appears to be the first record from southern Laos.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I should like to thank Mr. T. Donald Carter for permission to use information from his notebooks; Mr. Charles E. O'Brien for searching for certain specimens which I was unable to locate and for sending certain critical material to me at the British Museum (Nat. Hist.) for comparative study; Mr. James Bond for providing a mass of useful data on the part of the collection that is in Philadelphia; and Dean Amadon for his encouragement in this study. Mr. J. D. Macdonald of the British Museum (Nat. Hist.) was kind enough to allow me to examine skins in his care. Mrs. Mary LeCroy was most helpful over some determinations of sub-specific problems. I am also grateful to Dr. I. C. T. Nisbet for assistance in locating some of the collecting sites. Dr. Joe T. Marshall Jr., Mr. J. A. Tubb, and Mr. G. P. Hekstra read drafts and offered useful criticism for which, too, I am most grateful.

The visit to the American Museum of Natural History, where the collection came to my notice, was made possible by grants from the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C., and the Frank M. Chapman Memorial Fund of the American Museum of Natural History, New York.

SUMMARY

A brief account is given of the nature of the expedition and an itinerary is appended with coordinates. Comments are made on 13 forms of which three are new to Tonkin, two new to central Laos and four new to southern Laos. The validity of the race *Pitta soror annamensis* is also discussed.

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