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BIRDS COLLECTED DURING THE WHITNEY SOUTH SEA EXPEDITION. XXXII¹

ON A COLLECTION FROM TANNA, NEW HEBRIDES

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In 1926 and 1927 the Whitney South Sea Expedition collected extensively in the New Hebrides. All of the northern islands were visited, but in the southern New Hebrides only a few skins were secured on Aneiteum and none at all on Erromango or Tanna. Last year the opportunity arose to secure with the aid of the Whitney fund the services of Mr. L. Macmillan who made a thorough ornithological exploration of the island of Tanna. He succeeded not only in getting nearly every species known from the island, but also added the following species to the list: *Puffinus pacificus*, *Puffinus lherminieri*, *Fregatta albogularis*, *Fregata ariel*, *Anas superciliosus pelewensis*, *Circus approximans wolfei*, *Falco peregrinus ernesti*, *Rallus (Hypotaenidia) philippensis*, *Ptilinopus greyi*, *Columba vitiensis leopoldi*, *Chalcophaps indica sandvicensis*, *Trichoglossus ornatus massena*, *Cacomantis pyrrhophanus schistaceigularis*, *Collocalia esculenta uropygialis*, *Lalage leucopygia simillima*, *Hirundo tahitica subfusca*, *Acridotheres tristis* (introduced), *Zosterops lateralis*, and several seabirds and wandering shorebirds. In spite of intensive collecting and diligent searching, he did not obtain the following species: *Accipiter fasciatus vigilax*, *Ducula bakeri*, *Coracina caledonica*, *Gerygone flavolateralis*, *Neolalage banksiana*, *Rhipidura spilodera*, *Clytorhynchus pachycephaloides*, *Pachycephala pectoralis*, *Aplonis zelandica*, *Guadalcanaria nobilis*, *Lichmera incana*, and *Erythrura cyanovirens*. Although one or the other of these species may still be discovered on Tanna, there is good reason to believe that the majority of them is absent from the island. It will be interesting to analyze the zoogeographical significance of this, after the completion of the survey of Erromango and Aneiteum.

The particular value of this collection consists in the fact that it was made on Tanna, the island which was chosen as the type-locality of most of the birds which were described from the New Hebrides during

¹ Previous papers in this series comprise American Museum Novitates, Nos. 115, 124, 149, 322, 337, 350, 356, 364, 365, 370, 419, 469, 486, 488, 489, 502, 504, 516, 520, 522, 531, 590, 609, 628, 651, 665, 666, 709, 714, 820 and 828.

the 18th and 19th century. This permits a comparison with the rich material collected by the Whitney Expedition in the northern New Hebrides and has resulted in the recognition of several forms which will be described in the present paper. A more detailed report on this collection will be published at a later occasion; in the present paper only some new forms are described. Mr. Macmillan is to be congratulated on the persistence and zeal with which he has gathered this important collection under the most trying circumstances.

***Zosterops lateralis macmillani*, new subspecies**

TYPE.—No. 330518, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.; ♂ ad.; Tanna, New Hebrides; October 11, 1935; L. Macmillan.

Similar to *Z. l. vatensis* Tristram, but darker and much larger; the back is extensively dark gray, only the lower rump being olivaceous; the lores and an extended region on the cheeks and below the eye are black; crown, nape, and sides of face are dark citrine olive, with a pronounced fuscous-blackish wash; the throat is duller, more greenish yellow; the bill is paler, entirely yellowish, except for anterior part of the culmen.

Wing, 7 ♂ ad. 70-73 (71.7), 7 ♀ ad. 68-72 (70.3); tail, 7 ♂ ad. 54-58 (55.9), 7 ♀ ad. 52-55 (53.3); culmen (from feathering) 12-13; tarsus 20-21.

RANGE.—Tanna and Aniwa Islands, southern New Hebrides.

It is surprising and highly interesting to find this giant race, right between the ranges of the very similar small *vatensis* (northern New Hebrides) and *griseonota* (New Caledonia). To judge from the descriptions the new form *macmillani* seems to have a coloration of the head similar to that of *nigrescens* Sarasin (Maré and Uvea), although I have seen no specimens of this Loyalty Island form, which is, of course, very much smaller (wing 59, 60) than *macmillani*. The broad white eye-ring serves to distinguish *macmillani* from *inornata* (Lifu) which is equally large.

It gives me great pleasure to name this excellent form after its discoverer.

***Zosterops flavifrons efatensis*, new subspecies**

TYPE.—No. 212597, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.; ♂ ad.; Efate Island, New Hebrides; June 4, 1926; R. H. Beck and J. G. Correia.

Similar to *Z. fl. flavifrons*, but much smaller; under parts of a brighter and clearer yellow; upper parts more yellowish olive, less citrine; infraorbital black streak less conspicuous.

Wing, 5 ♂ 59-64 (61.3), 4 ♀ 59-63 (60.7); tail, 5 ♂ 41-45 (43.0), 4 ♀ 41-45 (42.5); culmen 11-12; tarsus 20.

RANGE.—Efate and Nguna Islands, northern New Hebrides.

This race has already been well characterized by Murphy and

Mathews under the name *flavifrons*, (1929, Amer. Mus. Novitates, No. 356, p. 2). The authors at that time did not have any typical specimens from Tanna, and were forced to rely on Sharpe's statement (Ibis, 1900, p. 346) that birds from Efate agreed with Tanna birds. Since there is no modern description of typical *flavifrons* available I shall give a short diagnosis of this race, based on the specimens collected by Mr. Macmillan.

Zosterops flavifrons flavifrons (Gmelin).—Large, with a long bill; upper parts bright citrine olive, but forehead and supraloral region yellow; lores and inconspicuous infraorbital streak blackish; under parts yellow, brighter, almost orange, on the throat, but more or less washed with greenish on sides of breast and flanks; bill blackish.

Wing, 6 ♂ 64–68 (65.5), 7 ♀ 60–65 (63.0); tail, 7 ♂ 47–50 (48.7), 7 ♀ 45–49 (46.3); culmen, ♂ 14, ♀ 13; tarsus, ♂ 21, ♀ 20.

RANGE.—Tanna and Aniwa Islands (Macmillan coll.)

The Aneiteum form, *majuscula*, although similar to *flavifrons* in size, differs by coloration to such a degree that a comparison is unnecessary (see 1929, Amer. Mus. Novitates, No. 356, p. 5).

Myzomela cardinalis tenuis, new subspecies

TYPE.—No. 212936, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.; ♂ ad.; Epi Island, New Hebrides; Aug. 4, 1926; Mrs. J. G. Correia.

Similar to *M. c. cardinalis*, but very much smaller, particularly in regard to the bill; immature males and females apparently brighter, more greenish, less brownish on back and wings.

A series of 12 adult males from Epi measures as follows: Wing, 66, 67, 67, 68, 68, 68.5, 69, 69, 69, 70, 71; av. 68.2. Tail, 44, 45, 45, 46, 46, 46.5, 47, 47, 48, 48; av. 46.2. Bill, 15.5, 16, 16, 16.5, 16.5, 17, 17, 17; av. 16.4.

A series of 14 adult males from Gaua, Banks Is., measures: Wing, 67.5–72 (69.7), tail, 45–48 (46.7). A series of 12 adult males from Efate averages a little larger, approaching true *cardinalis* from Tanna: Wing, 69–74 (71.0), tail, 47–50 (48.6), bill, 17–18.5 (17.9).

A series of typical *cardinalis* from Tanna measures much larger. 4 ♂ ad., wing, 74, 74, 75; tail, 50, 50, 52, 53; bill, 18, 19, 19, 19; 1 ♂ im., wing 71.5; tail, 50; bill, 16; 3 ♀, wing, 67, 67, 67; tail, 44, 46, 46.5; bill, 16, 16.5, 17. This compares well with the measurements of two Aneiteum males: Wing 72, 75; tail, 50, 51; bill, broken.

For further measurements, see Mayr, 1932, Amer. Mus. Novitates, No. 516, p. 22.

RANGE.—Northern New Hebrides from Efate Island northward and Banks Islands.

I suspected already in 1932 (*loc. cit.*) that there was a size difference between typical *cardinalis* from the southern New Hebrides and the birds of the northern islands. I had at that time, unfortunately, only

two specimens from Aneiteum, both with damaged bills. The topotypical material from Tanna has now enabled me to review the species once more and to name the small northern form.

***Myzomela cardinalis tucoptiae*, new subspecies**

TYPE.—No. 216265, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.; ♂ ad.; Tucopia Island; February 11, 1927; R. H. Beck.

Similar to *Myzomela cardinalis tenuis*, but with a shorter bill; the scarlet of the under parts is restricted to the throat and does not extend to the upper breast.

♂ ad., wing 68, tail 48, bill 15.5, tarsus 19.5 mm.

RANGE.—Tucopia Island (168° 48' east, 12° 18' south), east of Vanikoro.

I have already in 1932 (Amer. Mus. Novitates, No. 516, p. 22) called attention to the characters of the single specimen collected by the Whitney South Sea Expedition on Tucopia Island. During the new revision of this species, undertaken after the receipt of Mr. Macmillan's material, the naming of the very distinct Tucopia bird has become a necessity.