

# American Museum Novitates

PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY  
CENTRAL PARK WEST AT 79TH STREET, NEW YORK 24, N.Y.

NUMBER 2008

JUNE 21, 1960

## Results of the 1958–1959 Gilliard New Britain Expedition

### 2. A New Species of Thicket Warbler (Aves, *Cichlornis*) from New Britain

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In 1926 R. H. Beck, leader of the Whitney South Sea Expedition, collected a strange thicket warbler in the mountain forest (2500 feet) of Espiritu Santo in the New Hebrides. In 1933 Mayr (1933, p. 2) erected the genus *Cichlornis* for this unique specimen, naming it *C. whitneyi*. Between 1933 and 1935 A. J. Marshall and T. Harrison (see Cain and Galbraith, 1955, p. 91) obtained four additional specimens (one male and three females) of *C. whitneyi* on Espiritu Santo.

In 1953 Cain and Galbraith, while on an Oxford University Expedition to Guadalcanal in the British Solomon Islands, obtained a single specimen of this genus which proved to be distinct. They described it (1955, p. 91) as *C. w. turipavae*.

The information detailed above was all that was known of this group until the following bird was discovered in the Whiteman Mountains by the 1958–1959 Gilliard New Britain Expedition.

#### *Cichlornis grosvenori*, new species

TYPE: A.M.N.H. No. 708127; adult female; Wild Dog Range, Whiteman Mountains, central New Britain; December 18, 1958; 5200 + feet; collectors, E. Thomas and Margaret Gilliard.

DESCRIPTION: Mantle dark olive brown, near *Sepia*,<sup>1</sup> becoming darker, more Clove Brown, on lower back and rump; crown like mantle, bordered laterally by prominent Ochraceous-Tawny superciliary stripes, which begin at the base of the nasal depression and extend posteriorly to the supra-auricular region; a broad black mask running from base of bill through lores, eyes, and malar region to posterior auriculars; the black mask is broad on the malar and subocular regions and restricted to a narrow line above eye; below generally ochraceous tawny, paler, more pale Ochraceous-Buffer on chin, throat, and central abdomen, becoming darker, more tawny, on chest, sides of neck, and flanks; sides of lower abdomen and under tail coverts still darker, more washed with dark cinnamon brown; wings blackish, with the exposed edges of the upper coverts and outer edges of remiges like mantle; under wing coverts dark sooty gray tinged with ochraceous on bend of wing; wing formula (counted from outside),  $1 < 2 < 3 < 4, 5, 6 > 7 > 8 > 9 > 10; 3 = 7$ ; tail sharply graduated, the shafts black, stiff, and with long, spine-like tips; the vanes narrow, dark brown, with traces of paler edges; outer quarter of the rectrices fragmented and worn (the barbs appear to be brittle and more perishable than the other plumage); the shortest rectrice slightly more than half of the longest. Bill in life brownish black; iris dark brown, with a dull green rim; feet and legs dark smoke brown.

MEASUREMENTS OF TYPE: Wing, 72 mm.; tail, 59; tarsus, 31; culmen from base, 20; middle toe with claw, 27.5; hind toe with claw, 21.

Adult male apparently similar to adult female but with a longer tail (see table 1).

In addition to my own measurements, in table 1 I have included Mayr's measurements (1933, p. 4) of the type of *Cichlornis whitneyi whitneyi*, as well as Cain and Galbraith's measurements (1955, p. 91) of four specimens of this subspecies. Included also are Cain and Galbraith's measurements (*loc. cit.*) for the type of *C. w. turipavae*.

DIAGNOSIS: Comparing the type of *C. grosvenori* with the type of *C. whitneyi*: eye completely encircled with black, not chestnut, ochraceous on upper half and with a moderately wide, chestnut ochraceous rim bordering basal quarter of eye; mask black, at least twice as wide, and extending solidly from base of bill, not blackish brown interspersed with ochraceous and largely ochraceous at the base of maxilla; the mask extending solidly to the posterior edge of the ear

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<sup>1</sup>Names of colors are capitalized when direct comparison has been made with Ridgway's "Color standards and color nomenclature."

TABLE 1  
 MEASUREMENTS (IN MILLIMETERS) OF THREE MALES AND THREE FEMALES OF *Cichlornis whitneyi*  
 AND ONE MALE (?) AND ONE FEMALE OF *Cichlornis grosvenori*

	<i>C. whitneyi</i>						<i>C. grosvenori</i>	
	Male <sup>a</sup>	Male	Female	Female	Female	Male <sup>b</sup>	Male (?)	Female <sup>c</sup>
Wing	72	68.5	63	60	64.5	65.5	71	72
Tail	70+	65	57+	56.5	68	76.5	65	59
Tarsus	28	27	25	26	25	27.5	31	31
Culmen	21	20	20	19.5	18.5	—	19.5	20
Middle toe with claw	27	22	22	20	21	24	27	27.5
Hind toe with claw	21	18.5	16.5	16.5	17.5	20.5	20	21
Distance between first and longest primaries	24	21.5	24	21	21.5	21	22	24
Distance between longest and second primaries	8	5	7	7.5	8	5	8	10
Distance between longest and shortest rectrices	38	30	—	27	38	36.5	27.5	25

<sup>a</sup>Type of *Cichlornis whitneyi whitneyi*.

<sup>b</sup>Type of *Cichlornis whitneyi turipavae*.

<sup>c</sup>Type of *Cichlornis grosvenori*.

coverts, not largely pale brown tinged with sooty black; tarsus distinctly longer and slightly thicker, tail less deeply graduated; culmen less curved and shallower through the nostrils, and with the maxilla notch shallower, the nostril more elongated and with the dorsal rim flatter, less rounded, and extending closer to the anterior edge of the nasal depression.

REMARKS: Both examples of *C. grosvenori* were collected by expedition hunters brought from the Sepik River, New Guinea. These men had worked with me on earlier expeditions to New Guinea, and both knew that I valued data concerning habits almost as much as I did the specimens themselves. After recording the following information concerning the first specimen to be collected, I examined the exact spot in the forest where it had been shot; thereafter for the remainder of our stay on the summit ridge of the Whiteman Mountains every effort was made to obtain a second specimen. An average of 30 man hours of hunting per day were devoted to this search. On December 22, our tenth day on the summit, the second specimen was shot. Unfortunately, despite extensive searching, I failed to encounter this bird. Therefore the only information I have is that which was given me by the native hunters, as follows: "Dec. 18. Camp 12. A long-legged, black-masked, cinnamon-breasted babbler (?), which I am almost certain is an unknown species, has just been brought in by Tesako, who shot it twenty minutes ago . . . he was creeping through a clump of bamboo forest when he spied this bird alone on the papery floor under the bamboos. It hopped to the base of a slender bamboo, where it clung to the vertical shaft like a wren, then it hopped to a low part of another bamboo and hung sidewise facing Tesako who then shot it. This is the first sign of this bird. It must be very local and elusive." The bird referred to above is the type of *C. grosvenori*. Its body and stomach were saved in formalin. The stomach was ". . . filled with insect bodies—mostly blackish—and with one stone-like object which turned out to be a very small snail shell." In addition to the perishable colors given above, I noted in my journal that the tongue was flesh-colored, the inside of the mouth blackish; the eye ring narrowly black; there was also a very small eye fold under the eye which was dull blue-gray. Total length in life 170 mm.

The second specimen was collected December 22: "After much pressure of hunting a second specimen was shot today. Rambur, who got the bird, says he heard two birds calling back and forth on the forest floor in the limestone crater just below Camp 12. The call was a single note. It was emitted only occasionally. Rambur sat quietly in the forest

and waited. The birds were hard to see but one finally was detected moving on the forest floor and on low fallen sticks. Rambur shot at this bird but it jumped an instant beforehand. He reloaded and remained motionless. Soon a second bird climbed up some three feet on a slender bush and Rambur shot it as it sat looking around."

The surprising discovery of *C. grosvenori* in New Britain extends the range of the genus some 600 miles northwest from Guadalcanal in the British Solomon Islands. As many high islands lie around and between the geographical extremes of the thousand-mile-wide range (New Hebrides to New Britain) of *Cichlornis*, it seems likely that other races and perhaps species of this elusive, forest-loving group remain to be discovered, or *C. whitneyi* and *C. grosvenori* are relict survivors of a once more widely spread group.

In this connection, I might add that, having several times come upon unknown species in areas already surveyed (i.e., the Hagen and Bismarck Mountains, New Guinea, and the mountains of New Britain) by collectors, I suspect that a larger number of species remain undiscovered than is generally postulated (see Mayr, 1946, p. 67; 1957, p. 35). This would seem to be particularly true of mountainous regions surveyed during earlier days when there was more competition for novelties and less interest in the making of comprehensive surveys. This conclusion is reinforced by the fact that many bird species are known from only one or two specimens.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It gives me great pleasure to name this new thicket warbler in honor of Dr. Gilbert Grosvenor as a token of my gratitude to him and to the National Geographic Society for their generous support of my explorations.

I am grateful to Drs. Dean Amadon and Ernst Mayr for their help in this study. Dr. Amadon, who read the manuscript, called to my attention the fact that Stresemann (1959, p. 404) had noted recently that new species of birds continue to turn up at an unexpectedly high rate.

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