Five New Malaysian Birds

By F. N. Chasen *and* C. Boden Kloss

Macropygia ruficeps malayana subsp. nov.

Nearest to *M. r. sumatranus* Rob. and Kloss[1]; but the adult male with the white tips to the breast feathers very conspicuous as in the Bornean race, *M. r. nana* Stresemann.[2] On the series the head darker, more chestnut and less buffy, especially on the sides, than in *sumatranus*.

Type:—Adult male, collected on 26th February, 1908, at the Semangko Pass, Selangor-Pahang boundary, Federated Malay States. Altitude between 2,500—4,500 feet. Selangor Mus. No. 461/08 (Native Coll.) Wing 141 mm.

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1. Journ. Straits Br. Royal Asiatic Soc., 80, 1919, p. 77; Gunong Talaman, Ophir district, West Sumatra.

2. Nov. Zool. 20, 1913, p. 311, Mt. Kinabalu, British North Borneo.

Specimens examined:—Twelve males and eight females from the Malay States compared with seven males and two females from West Sumatra (*sumatranus*); nine males and three females of *nana* from the type locality (Mt. Kinabalu in North Borneo); a good series of both sexes of the typical form from Java; and five *assimilis* from Western Siam.

Remarks:—Although recognizing that the form of *M. ruficeps* inhabiting the Malay States was not the same as the larger, less rufous *M. r. assimilis* Hume,[1] which is not known from further south than Raheng in West Siam[2] and the type locality in the hill country N. E. of Moulmein, it is only the recent acquisition of an exact topotypical series of the North Bornean sub-species *nana*, which the Malayan bird was thought to resemble, that has enabled us to name the latter. We find that *nana* is quite distinct, and from its adult male the male of *malayana* differs in having the upperparts of a brighter, more chocolate brown, especially on the lower back and rump; the head darker, more chestnut and less buffy and the underparts more deeply coloured, especially on the under tail-coverts.

Malayan females also have the upperparts brighter and less blackish brown and the underparts more deeply coloured; but the colour of the head of females is the same in both races.

M. r. malayana is perhaps rather larger than *nana*, as indeed it should be: ten males have the wings measuring 140—149 mm. and eight females 137—143 mm. against 136—143 mm. and 132—138 mm. for nine males and three females of *nana*.[3]

The subspecies of *M. ruficeps* are fairly well defined though one or two males of *malayana* are very near to *sumatranus* and on the available material, which only includes two from Sumatra, we should not care to separate females of the two forms. One male of the Bornean form from Kinabalu is perhaps not separable from males of *malayana*. It is not certain that the Sarawak bird is strictly the same as *nana* but our material thence is not good.

The birds recorded from French Laos as *M. r. ruficeps*[4] by Delacour and Jabouille are probably not the typical form described from Java which, on account of the absence of black spots on the underparts of the adult male, needs no comparison with other Malaysian races.[5]

1. Stray Feathers, 2, 1874, p. 441.

2. *Vide* Chasen and Kloss, Journ. Siam Soc., Nat. Hist. Suppl. 7, 1928, p. 156.

3. Stresemann (l. c. s.) gives a series of measurements but does not separate the sexes which is unfortunate as males seem a little larger than females.

4. Archives d' Histoire Naturelle, 3, 1927, p. 17.

5. But we have not seen *simalurensis* Fichmond from Simalur Island, West Sumatra, which may be unspotted below.

An apparent gap in the distribution of this species is noteworthy: no specimen seems to have been recorded from between Moulmein (*assimilis*) and Province Wellesley (*malayana*).

Pyrotrogon fasciatus impavidus subsp. nov.

Pyrotrogon kasumba Chasen and Kloss, Bull. Raffles Mus., 4, 1930, p. 28.

Pyrotrogon fasciatus kasumba Kloss, Treubia, XII, 1930, p. 403.

Like *P. f. kasumba* (Raffles) of Sumatra but smaller.

Type:—Adult male, collected at Bettotan near Sandakan, British North Borneo on 6th August, 1927, by C. Boden Kloss and F. N. Chasen.

Total length 288; tail 164; wing 134; tarsus 13; bill from gape 27 mm.

"Iris dark; bare skin round the eye blue; bill blue; culmen and tip black; feet plumbeous".

Specimens examined:—Three males (including the type) and four females from British North Borneo, two males and two females from East Borneo.

Remarks:—For some time past we have realised that the continental and Bornean races of this trogon were different. The wing-range of a good series from the Malay Peninsula is 143—151 mm. (139 mm. once) but Bornean birds run smaller, 132—140 mm. We have seen no examples from Sarawak.

Sumatran specimens are rare in collections but the few skins examined indicate that they are no smaller than Malayan birds. A male from Indrapura (Jacobson coll.) has a wing of 143 mm., another male from the Lampongs (British Museum) measures 145 mm., and a female from Langkat (Van Heyst coll.) 155 mm., giving 143—155 mm. for the wing-range of the typical race.

Penthoceryx sonnerati malayanus subsp. nov.

Smaller than the typical Indian form which extends to Central Tenasserim, but of much the same colour. More brightly coloured than the Sumatran race *P. s. fasciolatus* (S. Müll) which occurs also in the extreme south of the Malay Peninsula.[1]

Type:—Adult (sex inc.) collected at Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Federated Malay States on 31st May 1910 by C. Boden Kloss.

Wing 111 mm.

1. *Cuculus fasciolatus* S. Müll., Verh. Nat. Ges. Land-en Volkenk., 1843, p. 177, Java and Sumatra. Type locality restricted to Sumatra by Robinson and Kloss, Journ. Fed. Malay States Mus. VIII, Part 2, 1923, pp. 336, 359.

Mr. Stuart Baker has applied *Cuculus venustus* Jerdon, to this bird (Bull. B. O. C. XXIX, 1919, p. 46) but a reference to the passage in which the name was suggested (Madras Journal, XIII, Part II, 1845, p. 141) shows that it was proposed for the bird of the West Coast of Peninsular India. A specimen from Malacca mentioned at the same time was referred to *pravata* Horsf.

The name is a nomen nudum and was later made a synonym of *Cuculus sonnerati* by Jerdon (Birds of India, 1, 1862, p. 325).

Aegithina tiphia singapurensis subsp. nov.

Like *A. t. tiphia* (Linn.) of Bengal but the upperparts of the male in "breeding plumage" usually much blacker, therein approaching *multicolor* Gm., of Ceylon.

Type:—Adult male collected on Pulau Ubin, an islet in the Straits of Johore near Singapore on 26th February, 1921, by P. M. de Fontaine. Coll. Raffles Museum. Wing 64.5 mm.

Remarks:—The type locality of *A. tiphia* is Bengal where breeding males are usually patched in varying degree with black on the upper parts.

As long ago as 1877 (Stray Feathers, V, p. 439, et seq.) Hume pointed out in considerable detail that males with the entire nape and back black, or relatively heavily marked with black above, become commoner as one proceeds south down the Malay Peninsula until "at Singapore the majority, I believe, of the males when in breeding plumage exhibit a considerable amount of black on the upper surface, and some at any rate occur (how rarely or how commonly I cannot say) of the purely typical *zeylonica* [= *multicolor*] type".

But the south Malayan race is not the same as that inhabiting Ceylon: *multicolor* is even more constantly and completely black above, it has less white in the wings and the green parts of the plumage are rather darker.

The series before us shows that even as far south as Singapore the black plumage is not invariably assumed and the bird we have selected as a type has the mantle largely green.

It is difficult exactly to define the range of *singapurensis* but it should be considered as extending from Singapore Island at least as far north as Klang in Selangor from which locality we have seen a bird with very black upperparts.

In good series of males from Bengal and French Indo-China in the British Museum the large majority of specimens are uniformly green above: a few have odd black feathers on the crown and mantle. In a series from Mt. Victoria, Chin Hills, Western Burma the males have black crowns and mottled mantles and there

are also males with a fair amount of black on the upperparts from Rangoon, Tavoy, Bangkok and from localities in the North of the Malay Peninsula about Lat. 8 N., but from this latter area many males are also entirely green.

Hume's series of males from Malacca (t. c. p. 452) are typical of *singapurensis*:—"All showing more black than in typical *tiphia*, and none in quite the full *zeylonica* plumage".

Although so ill-defined we consider that this race is worth recognition. It and *multicolor* are instances of the interesting feature of parallel development, or convergence of races which occurs at the extremities of the Ceylon—Burma—Malayan arc.

Pteruthius flaviscapis robinsoni subsp. nov.

Like *P. f. aeralatus* Tickell, as represented by specimens from North Siam; but the male with the grey of the back and rump darker and the sides of the abdomen more washed with pink: throat bordering chin and cheeks whitish: foreneck and breast pale grey. Size rather smaller.

Type:—Adult male collected on Mt. Kinabalu, North Borneo, 7,200 feet, on 29th March, 1929, by F. N. Chasen.

Total length 155; tail 54; wing 75; tarsus 24; bill from gape 20 mm.

"Iris bluish-grey; maxilla black, tomia at base bluish-slate; mandible bluish slate; feet fleshy".

Specimens examined:—Eight males and six females from Mt. Kinabalu.

Remarks:—We have not seen exact topotypes of *aeralatus* from Tenasserim, but have compared the Bornean race with the most northerly specimens available as birds from the Malay Peninsula are not quite typical of *aeralatus* but are ranging towards the Sumatran *cameranoi*.

This latter race is quite distinct. The underparts of the male are much washed with grey and the females are very dark buff below: *cameranoi* is also characterized by its small bill.

The pink colour of the posterior flanks is probably fugacious in some degree, but we do not think that this accounts for the marked difference in the specimens compared above.

Bornean birds have the wings measuring 73—78 mm. against 76—80 mm. in birds from the Malay Peninsula and Siam.

A note left by the late Mr. H. C. Robinson, indicating its distinctness, drew our attention to this bird.