

POSTILLA

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Yale PEABODY MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

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Postilla

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ADDITIONS TO THE AVIFAUNA OF NORTHERN ANGOLA I.

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During the course of a year's visit to Angola for the Peabody Museum in 1957-58 by one of us (Heinrich) a number of interesting new records were made. Specimens have been critically compared in the Peabody Museum by one of us (Ripley) and the advice of Dr. James P. Chapin is here gratefully acknowledged. The accompanying map shows the course of Mr. Heinrich's travels. Grateful acknowledgement is made to the Diamond Company and its Museum for their wonderful hospitality.

Hieraaëtus africanus (Cassin)

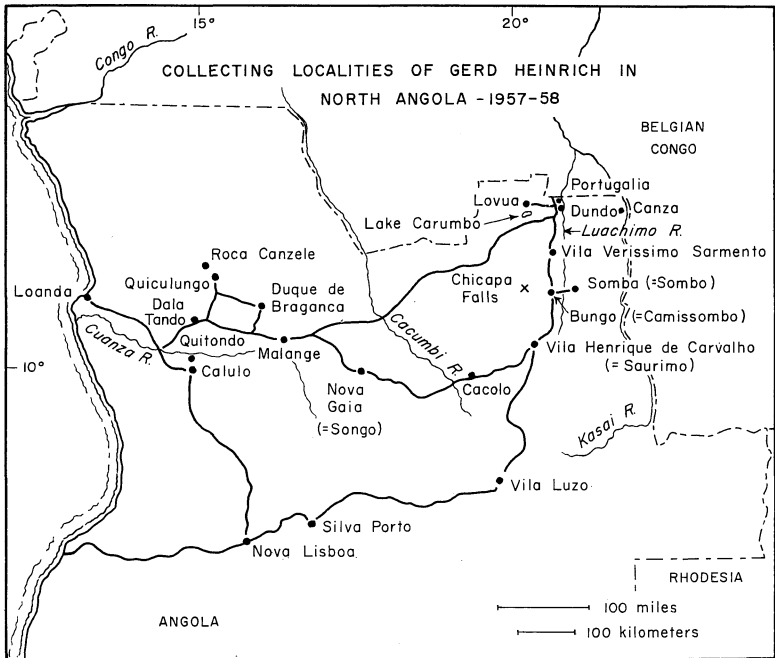
A male was shot in a coffee plantation at Roça Canzele September 26, 1957 by Prince Gustav von Schoenaich Carolath and presented to the collection.

Guttera edouardi schoutedeni Chapin

The occurrence of this form of the blue-spotted guinea fowl in Angola is hereby noted with the presentation to Yale of a female taken by the chief of the post office at Camissombo, September 17, 1958.

Numida meleagris marungensis Schalow

Cacolo, Somba and Dundo in dry savannah woods.



Turnix nana insolata, new subspecies

Type; ♂ ad. (Y.P.M. No. 50,087) collected by Gerd Heinrich February 7, 1958, 35 km. west of Camissombo, north-east Angola.

Diagnosis: from *Turnix nana* this form, known from two males, differs in color so strikingly as to suggest a new species. *Turnix nana* is distinguished from the contiguous species *sylvatica* by triflingly larger size, by the lack of a pronounced median crown stripe and by the presence of blackish bars on the neck and upper chest which may extend incompletely across the fore-neck in males. This subspecies differs from typical *nana* by being extremely pale, bleached, lacking the dark shading of the crown and solid blackish color of the lower back and rump. In this form the general coloration above is grayish with reduced black patches on the feathers, highly cross-hatched with brown. There is an indistinct median crown stripe, slightly more pronounced than in typical *nana*. The

wing coverts are whitish with a sandy-buff tone. The underparts are whitish with an incomplete buffy wash on the fore-neck and obsolete bars on the sides of the neck. In size this form is similar. Two males have wing measurements of 80.5 (type), 79; tail 30; culmen 11, 10; weight 46, 44.5 g. Soft parts: iris pale yellow with inner and outer brown rings; upper mandible blackish, lower whitish with dark tip; feet pinkish ivory.

Remarks: these birds were found on a dry, sandy, grassy plateau at 1100 metres altitude. Specimens loaned to us through the courtesy of the British Museum (Natural History) and the Chicago Museum of Natural History, come from Ndala Tando in the Benguella area of Angola, from northern Rhodesia and from the Kasai. All agree in being similarly and typically dark. Thus this bleached form occupies an isolated savannah area in the center of the range of normal *nana*.

Excalfactoria adansonii (Verreaux)

A male was taken 25 km. northwest of Nova Gaia in a grassy meadow near a brook December 5, 1957.

Sarothrura böhmi böhmi Reichenow

The bird collection of the zoological laboratory of the Diamond Company in Dundo contains a specimen of this species, a male, collected November 21, 1957, in the Luachimo valley near Dundo by a native. Length of wing 88 mm., of tarsus 23 mm.

Stephanibyx lugubris (Lesson)

A single specimen was collected on the roadside between Dundo and Calulo on the northern side of the Cuanza river.

Charadrius tricollaris tricollaris Vieillot

Taken at Luanda August 1, 5, 1957.

Larus fuscus fuscus Linnaeus

An immature female from near Luanda, taken August 7, 1957, is new for Angola.

Columba unicincta Cassin

Luachimo River, near Dundo, 800 m. altitude; Roca Canzele, north of Quiculungo, 600 m. altitude. This handsome pigeon lives in mature stands of tropical rain forest and tropical gallery woods, keeping always to the crowns of the oldest, tallest trees, usually about 100 feet above the ground. Not rare in the coffee woods north of Quiculungo, but difficult to observe and to collect on account of its dwelling above the normal reach of eye and gun.

Cuculus canorus gularis Stephens

South of Duque de Bragança, near the road to Matete, in a savannah parkwood: single, medium-sized trees and patches of low bushes alternating with open, grassy spaces.

This species seems to be very rare in Angola. During two and a half years of work it has been met with only once. When the call of the male was heard for the first time, it seemed to be the call of a dove or a barbet, rather than that of a cuckoo. It has no similarity with the familiar voice of the European *C. canorus*, being much softer, deeper, more muffled and accentuated on the second syllable instead of on the first. The calling begins usually with a few monosyllabic notes like "uk . . . uk . . . uk . . ." and then changes over to a fairly short series of duosyllabic calls, each accentuated in the second syllable. The whole song thus sounds like this: "uk . . . uk . . . uk . . . ukuk . . . ukuk . ukuk . ukuk." The calling male is perched, well hidden, in the crown of one of the medium sized trees of its biotope, as described above. From a pair, chasing each other, I heard a sharp, ringing call like: "pit pit pit pit pit," fairly similar to the voice of the female of the European *C. canorus*.

Centropus grillii grillii Hartlaub

Forty km. northeast of Duque de Bragança, 1250 m.; 25 km. northwest of Nova Gaia, 1250 m. altitude; Kassai River, 40 km. northeast of Canza, 900 m. altitude in open, wide, marshy, flat and treeless stream valleys of the high plateau in stands of tall grass in the drier areas.

In both males collected in December one of the testes was maximally enlarged, the other not at all. In April, in the Kas-sai valley, the species was still in full breeding condition and here, for the first time, the opportunity was found to study its voice which is rather different from the other species of the genus. The call was heard only during the early morning hours, but then many times and from different directions. It is two-syllabic sounding approximately like "julup", dull in sound, but nevertheless loud and audible from afar. This call is usually repeated two to six times in succession and often followed by a short series of monosyllabic sounds, like "du - du - du - du." These notes are deeper than the main call, more muffled and not so far carrying. One morning Heinrich stalked a bird that was continuously calling in a thicket of 12-foot tall grass. It was perched on a branch of an overgrown, dead bush, some 3 yards above ground, almost uninterruptedly calling as described above. The specimen turned out to be not a male but a female with maximally enlarged ovaries. A few minutes later, and about 40 yards ahead Heinrich flushed and shot the male. It too, had maximally enlarged gonads. But there is not the slightest doubt that the caller was indeed the female, as Heinrich was close enough to observe the movements of the head synchronized with the calls.

Myioceyx lecontei lecontei (Cassin)

A female was taken at Roça Canzele in heavy forest along a brook on October 1, 1957.

Berenicornis albocristatus cassini (Finsch)

A specimen taken on the Rio Luachimo near Dundo on May 11, 1958, and another specimen, a juvenile, in the museum at Dundo presumably from Lunda province taken in 1946, extend the range of this form into northeastern Angola.

Tricholaema hirsutum chapini Bannerman

A male and female were collected near Dundo on the Rio Luachimo in February and May.

Macronyx grimwoodi Benson

In the region of Lake Carumbo at 900 m. altitude, one specimen was found on March 20th, in a marshy meadow along a stream. The biotope was not at all different from the usual habitat of *M. fullerborni*, several specimens of which were in the same meadow. A careful examination of the whole area showed that the single specimen of *M. grimwoodi* was a solitary one.

Macrosphenus concolor (Hartlaub)

The olive longbill was found on the Luachimo river, near Dundo, 800 m. altitude and on the Kassai river, 40 km. north-east Canza at 900 m. altitude.

Within the tropical gallery wood this skulking little bird has chosen a rather specialized habitat. It is rarely found in the thickets of the lower floor. Instead it searches the very densest tangles of hanging vines, the webs and veils of lianas which here and there wrap the trunk of crown of a single tree, sometimes creating an almost solid mass of clustered vegetation.

Under this excellent cover the small birds would be invisible if their lively actions and characteristic voice did not betray them. There are two slightly different versions of the warbling song, both, however, equal in timbre and in their somewhat intrusive, eager, hurried delivery. The basic tune of the first version is four-syllabic, and sounds like "tutuhuo" with the strong accent on the penultimate syllable, which is somewhat higher than the others. This four-syllabic tune is repeated many times in rapid sequence without the slightest intermission: "tutuhuotutuhuotutuhuotutuhuotutuhuo" The other version is only three-syllabic with the accent on the first syllable: "huititi." It too is repeated rapidly and eagerly many times: huititihuititihuititihuititihuititi" In both versions the volume and the speed of the delivery increases slightly and gradually toward the end of the sequence. Heinrich observed the species always in pairs.

Sylvietta denti denti (Ogilvie-Grant)

The single collected specimen, a female with slightly enlarged ovaries, was shot May 11th from the crown of a tall

tree in tropical gallery woods, close to the border of the Luachimo river, near Dundo; altitude 800 m.

Apalis goslingi goslingi Alexander

Found on the Luachimo river, near Dundo, 800 m. altitude in tropical gallery wood. This species keeps always to the immediate neighborhood of the river, usually searching the foliage of branches hanging directly over the water or of bushes standing on little islands in the river.

The song is easy to distinguish from that of *A. rufogularis* and *A. alticola*, as its basic strophe is monosyllabic; it is repeated about seven to twelve times in quick succession with even accentuation of each syllable: "tchi tchi tchi tchi tchi tchi tchi." Thus the song has a somewhat twittering timbre.

Cisticola melanurus (Cabanis)

The discovery of this species in northeast Angola proves the point made by Chapin (1953, Bds. Belgian Congo, pt. 3:380) that this form is identical with *Dryodromas pearsoni* Neave which thereby becomes a synonym of Cabanis' older name.

Found about 50 km. southwest of Cacolo, at 1400 m. altitude in the continuous dry woods of the high plateau. In contrast to most of the species of the genus this one does not depend on grassland or any other dense cover. The birds are, however, more often found in the neighborhood of grassy clearings than in the depth of the forest.

Not very elusive and not difficult to observe as they usually dwell in the branches and crowns of lower trees, searching the foliage in the same manner as *Apalis* species do, for which Heinrich mistook them several times. Disturbed, or excited specimens flip their wings with a purring noise.