

Systematic notes on Asian birds. 25.¹ A preliminary review of the Pycnonotidae

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The taxonomic treatment of Asian taxa of bulbuls (Pycnonotidae) is discussed with explanations of some historical changes. Attention is drawn to competing hypotheses as to treatment and recommendations are made for their further evaluation. The type locality of *Ixos plumigerus* Lafresnaye, 1840, is restricted.

Introduction

In preparing the text for a planned 'Synopsis of the Birds of Asia' (see Introduction to 'Systematic notes on Asian birds': Dickinson & Dekker, 2000a) we compare Rand & Deignan's (1960) treatment of bulbuls in Peters's Check-list of Birds of the World, with recent works and we comment on points arising from the Check-list itself. In Rand & Deignan (1960) Rand's scope was African and Deignan's Asian, but we assume Deignan consulted Rand on Philippine birds due to the latter's on-going research there at the time.

Our recommendations, as to the treatment to adopt in the Synopsis, are intended to be consistent with the tradition of requiring the publication of convincing evidence for change, in as much detail as is needed from case to case. We explain our recommendations where other views have been preferred in major publications.

This review of the Pycnonotidae suffers from the lack of a recent monograph on the group to provide a framework. Because there is none we have included rather more information on treatments prior to Rand & Deignan (1960) than we might otherwise have done. The overall review of the family by Delacour (1943a) was followed by a series of reviews of species or species groups by Deignan (1948a, b, c; 1949, 1954; 1956). These dealt with preparatory work for his Thai Checklist (Deignan, 1963) and certainly informed his work for Peters's Check-list, leading him away from Delacour's earlier treatment in a few important cases. These papers are important because they provide explanations for most of the fresh treatments followed by Deignan in both

¹ An invitational series arranged by René W.R.J. Dekker and Edward C. Dickinson under the auspices of the National Museum of Natural History, Leiden, The Netherlands, and the Trust for Oriental Ornithology, Eastbourne, U.K.

checklists. Few other groups, except the Dicaeidae (six papers by Salomonsen), saw so much preliminary publication of the reasoning process.

As before we comment only in those cases where change has occurred or is needed. We continue to give the author and year of each name where it is first introduced. If this is together with a generic name, which is always the case for headings but unusual in the body of the text, the author and year will be bracketed when the generic name shown is not that employed by the first describer. Sometimes, to maintain the link to prior treatments under discussion, where narrower genera were accepted, we deliberately employ the generic name used therein and not just the specific or subspecific epithet².

Our list of names, in the accompanying paper on types (Dickinson et al., 2002, this issue), which uses bold type to reflect clearly which subspecies we accept, includes the following which have been described since Rand & Deignan (1960): *Pycnonotus urostictus atricaudatus* Parkes, 1967; *Pycnonotus urostictus ilokensis* Rand & Rabor, 1967; *Pycnonotus goiavier karimuniensis* Hoogerwerf, 1963; *Pycnonotus goiavier samarensis* Rand & Rabor, 1960; *Pycnonotus plumosus siberi* Hoogerwerf, 1965; *Hypsipetes philippinus parkesi* duPont, 1980; *Hypsipetes everetti catarmanensis* Rand & Rabor, 1969; and *Hypsipetes amaurotis kurodae* Mishima, 1960³.

The generic attribution of bulbuls

In Peters's Check-list Rand & Deignan (1960) accepted the bulk of the broad review by Delacour (1943a). Delacour's review was based on personal field experience, the specimen collection at the American Museum of Natural History and his avicultural knowledge. Delacour wrote "as it so commonly happens with families extending over two or more continents and numerous islands, bulbuls have been studied mostly within the artificial limits of local avifaunas, and their general grouping has often been incomplete and fragmentary, their true affinities being ignored". This accords precisely with our reasons for examining the Asian avifauna across Asia as a whole in this series.

The most significant outcome of Delacour's review was a considerable reduction in the number of genera recognised. Delacour employed only 13 genera⁴ and of these one (*Pycnonotus*) included 47 species and another (*Phyllastrephus*) 23. In the opinion of the present authors this took lumping too far; five of his 13 genera being monotypic, the remaining eight genera accounted for 104 species. In fairness however it should be said that Delacour's subgenera numbered 24. In the light of fresh evidence from DNA (Cibois et al., 2001), as to the affinities of the Madagascan species that Delacour placed within the genus *Phyllastrephus*, one can see also that Delacour drew his limits for the bulbuls too wide.

² To be certain of the original generic name used see the list in the accompanying paper on types. This is also essential for the spellings of specific epithets as in our text these may change to reflect the context quoted as the generic names then employed may have differed in gender.

³ As explained below this name may antedate Rand & Deignan (1960).

⁴ Sharpe (1882) in a nearly equivalent subfamily Brachypodinae used 27 including four or five that are not to-day considered to be bulbuls. Between 1882 and 1943 a great many new generic names were proposed.

We understand that results of further genetic studies of bulbuls may be expected soon (P. Beresford, *pers. comm.*), and we understand that she expects to support a narrower genus *Pycnonotus* centred on Africa, as well as a smaller genus *Criniger* restricted to Africa, both already suggested by Hall & Moreau (1970). The taxon sampling will be of great importance to Asian treatments as already remarked by Pasquet et al. (2001).

We have felt it best, in the light of these on-going studies, to minimise our own modifications at generic level. We have made no changes to *Pycnonotus*. We have retained *Criniger* for the Asian species traditionally attached to the African ones, although there is now molecular evidence showing that Asian species are not closely related to the African species (Pasquet et al., 2001). We have retained the type species of *Alophoixus* within it. We accept that this name is the obvious available name if what we seek is an all-embracing Asian genus distinct from *Criniger*. However, we are unconvinced that a single genus will be the outcome of the genetic studies. We feel that using the name *Alophoixus* for several species not previously associated with that generic epithet (the diagnosis⁵ of which depended upon a distinction from these very species) is premature and confusing. Sibley & Monroe (1990) attached the species *affinis* Hombron & Jacquinot, 1841, here but we see no cause to do so.

Our changes are wholly in the context of the species treated under the generic name *Hypsipetes* by Rand & Deignan (1960). We agree with Sibley & Monroe that several smaller genera are deserved, but they made errors of generic construction such that one of the genera they arranged (*Ixos*) did not include the type species necessary to it so that two of their genera (*Ixos* and *Hypsipetes*) are, in the light of the same rule, misnamed. Here changes were essential.

In making these changes it seemed advisable also to reappraise the applicability of the generic name *Ixos* Temminck, 1825, and to explain the issues. This led to collaboration with Steven Gregory, initially on the subject of *Ixos* but ultimately as co-author of a review of the generic composition of the broad genus *Hypsipetes* (Dickinson & Gregory, 2002 – this issue).

Pycnonotus atriceps (Temminck, 1822)

Much of the early literature will be found under the name *melanocephalus* J.F. Gmelin, 1788. The adoption of the name *atriceps* by Oberholser (1917a), with original *terra typica* Sumatra and Java, was due to Oberholser's discovery of the preoccupation of *melanocephalus*. This finding was preceded by his correction, effectively "restriction", of the type locality of the latter name from the "Sandwich Islands" to Sumatra (Oberholser, 1912). Robinson & Kloss (1923), in turn, restricted the type locality of *atriceps* to Java.

A distinct grey morph appears in much of the range. This was recognised very early by Temminck (1828), in Temminck & Laugier (1820-1839), who named such a Javan bird *chalcocephalus*. Temminck added a MS note to Bawean examples in the Leiden collection indicating they were varieties of this and they were eventually named *baweanus* Finsch, 1901a. In India Blyth (1845) named one *cinereiventris*. It seems to be fairly common in India, is the predominant morph in the island of Bawean (Hoogerwerf, 1967), and

⁵ Admittedly always open to revision.

also occurs in Maratua (Bangs & Peters, 1927) and Indochina (Delacour, 1929).

Oberholser (1917a) considered *P. chalcocephalus* a separate species and, perceiving sympatric species on Bawean, gave the name *abbotti* to the representative form of *atriceps*. Chasen (1935a) placed *baweanus* within the species *atriceps* and regarded the grey forms as "common mutations".

Pycnonotus melanicterus (J.F. Gmelin, 1789)

This species also has a nomenclatural history that is clouded by the existence of colour morphs. Thus we find Baker (1922) treating three separate forms of the species, as we now recognise it, as *Otocompsa flaviventris* (Tickell, 1833), *Pycnonotus melanicterus* and *P. gularis* (Gould, 1836a), and Chasen (1935a) treating two species *Pycnonotus flaviventris* and *P. dispar* (Horsfield, 1821).

The recurrent variable is a red throat and it was Meyer de Schauensee (1946) who concluded, in the context of the Thai populations, that this was a colour morph. He gave an account of its occurrence and of the debates that had ensued when it seemed as if the two "species" did, or elsewhere might, occur together.

Crest length was also a reason for keeping some forms separate from others, but variation in that as well as in wing length and the colouration of the upperparts was eventually pronounced clinal. The process of unification began with Delacour (1943a), who united *flaviventris*, *gularis* and *montis* Sharpe, 1879, with *dispar*.

Deignan (1945) attached *minor* Kloss, 1918, a black-throated form perceived as extending from the Malay peninsula to north Thailand, and with it *flaviventris*, to *dispar*. Later, in reviewing over 200 specimens, he described four new races, three from Thailand and one from northern Vietnam (Deignan, 1948b). His northern Thai birds were the basis for one of these new races. The name *minor* was found to be preoccupied. Rather than offer a substitute name Deignan re-named the population of the south of the Malay peninsula based on specimens from south of the Isthmus of Kra because the name *minor* appeared to have been given to an intergrading population. He also noted the occurrence of red throats amongst predominantly black-throated populations in Indochina. Deignan (1954) eventually united Bornean *montis* and Ceylonese *melanicterus* with *dispar*. The oldest name is *melanicterus*.

Whether this process of unification has gone too far needs re-examination. Sri Lankan *melanicterus* and southern Indian *gularis* are widely separated in range from *flaviventris*. If genetic evidence supports splits here then Bornean *montis* could be separable too.

There is also a complication affecting the interpretation of the older literature. The name *Aegithina atricapilla* Vieillot, 1816, is a junior synonym of [*Muscicapa*] *melanictera* J.F. Gmelin, 1789, and some authors used this before discovering that Gmelin's name was applicable. This name incidentally is that which prevents the use of the name *Muscicapa atricapilla* Vieillot, 1818b, as the oldest name for the Chinese population of *Pycnonotus aurigaster* (Vieillot, 1818a)⁶.

⁶ The names *atricapilla* Vieillot, 1818b, and *Turdus aurigaster* Vieillot, 1818a, are from the same publication, but the latter is from the earlier volume.

***Pycnonotus jocosus* (Linnaeus, 1758)**

Otocompsa jocosus was described, *sub nomine Lanius jocosus*, from China but Sharpe (1882) treated its range as extending to north India and listed southern Indian *emeria* Linnaeus, 1758, as a close relative. Curiously Albin (1740) named the species the Bengal redstart, but Sharpe (op. cit.) had no specimens from Bengal.

Oates (1889) treated birds from southern India under the name *fuscicaudata* Gould, 1866, and remarked upon Sharpe's treatment of the birds of northern India. Oates employed the name *emeria* for the birds of northern India making Chinese *jocosus*, which he said was identical, a synonym so that in binomial nomenclature the species came to be known as *Otocompsa emeria*. It is not clear to us whether the identification of Chinese birds with Himalayan was seriously reviewed until 1924. While Baker (1922) retained this treatment and described the race *peguensis* the next review we have traced is that of Robinson & Kloss (1924: 278). They treated *jocosus* and *emeria* as distinct races together with *fuscicaudata* of southern India and *erythrotis* Bonaparte, 1850, of Java and the Malay peninsula. Robinson & Kloss also noted that the name *Lanius jocosus* Linnaeus, 1758, has [page] priority⁷ over *Motacilla emeria* Linnaeus, 1758.

***Pycnonotus sinensis* (J.F. Gmelin, 1789)**

Kuroda (1923) treated *sinensis* and *hainanus* Swinhoe, 1870, as two species because both occurred on Taiwan and Hainan and he did not believe this was due to a presence in winter of migrant *sinensis*. Rather, he thought both bred in Taiwan. Hachisuka & Udagawa (1951) demonstrated that the two breeding species in Taiwan are *sinensis* and *taivanus*. On this evidence Rand & Deignan (1960) decided to treat *hainanus* as a race of *sinensis*. The ranges of *sinensis* and *taivanus* seem not to overlap (Wang et al., 1991).

Treatments of *brevirostris* Hachisuka, 1939, differ. Cheng (1958) recognised both *hainanus* and *brevirostris* from Hainan and considered the latter to be a migrant of the nominate form, but Cheng (1987) treated it as a synonym of *hainanus*. Hachisuka's description of *brevirostris* does not distinguish it from *hainanus* but it is not apparent that the type has been compared with *hainanus*, whether breeding or with migrant specimens. The treatment by Rand & Deignan (1960) suggests that they satisfied themselves on this score as they treated *brevirostris* as a synonym of nominate *sinensis*, but now that it is known that the type of *brevirostris* survives in the Yamashina Institute for Ornithology a comparison should be arranged.

***Pycnonotus leucogenys* (J.E. Gray, 1835)**

Although Vaurie (1958) considered *leucotis* Gould, 1836b, and *leucogenys* as distinct, and believed *humii* Oates, 1889, which is found in Pakistan north of the Salt

⁷ Page priority was not accepted as a basis for decision since the first International Code (ICZN, 1961) which relied on the doctrine of the "first reviser", but Robinson & Kloss (1924) are taken to be the first reviser although their text suggests that the issue of priority was either drawn to their attention or resolved by some other unnamed person.

Range and west of the Murree Hills, to be 'conspecific' with *leucotis*, *humii* was considered an intergradient form by Sibley & Short (1959) and sympatry in Afghanistan was implicitly rejected by Paludan (1959). If there is a case for separate treatment it needs to be argued convincingly.

The name *Ixos plumigerus* Lafresnaye, 1840, placed in the synonymy of nominate *leucogenys* does not seem to have had its type locality fixed. Lafresnaye was unsure whence his material came and suggested New Holland or the Indies. We here restrict the type locality to the lower Himalayas because a second taxon described by him at the same time (*Coccothraustes fortirostris*) was from the lower Himalayas, and it seems probable that Lafresnaye obtained these together, perhaps as trade skins as suggested by Bangs (1930).

Pycnonotus cafer (Linnaeus, 1766) and *Pycnonotus aurigaster* (Vieillot, 1818a)

The specific separation of *P. cafer* from Ceylon and much of India and *P. aurigaster* from Java and much of south-east Asia did not take root until Deignan (1949) reviewed previous treatment. And these were not the names first associated with the devolving parts. The specific name *Molpastes haemorrhous* (J.F. Gmelin, 1789) was in use until Baker (1930) in his synonymy replaced it with the prior name *cafer* (Linnaeus, 1766). Both names he believed to be based on Ceylonese birds, a point to which we return below. This is a case where political boundaries formed a limited framework for the views of ornithologists and had the effect of minimising the exploration of extra-territorial issues.

Baker (1922) was aware, or at least thought⁶⁸, that others, e.g. Robinson and Kloss, considered that the complex comprised more than one species (brown-eared *haemorrhous* and white-eared *chrysorrhoides* Lafresnaye, 1845) and discussed the problem, deciding to treat a species *Molpastes haemorrhous* with seven races. His races and ranges were: nominate *haemorrhous* from Ceylon, *pallidus* Baker, 1917, from lowland and foothill north western India, *burmanicus* Sharpe, 1882, from Manipur and western Burma, *nigripileus* [sic = *nigropileus* Blyth, 1847] from SE Burma and peninsular Thailand, *chrysorrhoides* from NE Burma and Yunnan, *bengalensis* Blyth, 1845, from the Himalayas and north-eastern India and *intermedius* Blyth, 1846, from the NW Himalayas.

Oates (1889) in a binomial work, had treated *xanthorrhous* Anderson, 1869, from eastern Burma and Yunnan as a species in the genus *Molpastes*. By contrast Baker (1922) considered this a subspecies of *aurigaster* which he placed not in *Molpastes* but in the genus *Pycnonotus*. But *P. xanthorrhous* is, in fact, sympatric with *aurigaster* in much of its range. Baker (op. cit.) did not see the need to separate *aurigaster* from *xanthorrhous*. He had in *chrysorrhoides* a form that he wrongly attached to *cafer* (s.n. *haemorrhous*) not recognising this, due to his tight focus on India, as a true representative of *aurigaster* in eastern Burma.

Whistler & Kinnear (1933) and Ripley (1946) each added an Indian form to *cafer* and Delacour (1943b) added two new forms (*schauenseei* and *deignani*) from Thai-

⁶⁸ For Robinson & Kloss (1923) stated they had not taken position on this! In fact *cafer* and *aurigaster* did not extend in range to the Malay peninsula.

land but these two turned out to be forms of *aurigaster*. Deignan (1949) demonstrated that contact between the largely Indian *cafer* and the largely south-east Asian *aurigaster* occurs in Yunnan, eastern Burma and western Thailand. Here, if these two were a single species, one would expect smooth intergradation, but Deignan (op. cit.) pointed out that, whereas these groups showed clinal variation within themselves, where they met, in these areas, they displayed at most only narrow zones of hybridisation. He also showed that two names used by Baker (*nigropileus* and *burmanicus*) had been attached to local hybrids and that *chrysorrhoides* belonged to the species *aurigaster* as did the two races of Delacour (1943b) and he added three more subspecies of *aurigaster*, two from Indochina and one from Thailand. Deignan (1949) also added three more races to *cafer* from the hills of southern Assam and from Burma.

Not all of these names, proposed from 1933 to 1949 have stood the test of time. Rand & Deignan (1960) placed several in synonymy and later Ripley (1982) placed another (*primrosei* Deignan, 1949) in synonymy.

No mention was made by Rand & Deignan of the proposal by Stresemann (1952) to shift the type locality of *cafer* from Ceylon to Pondicherry. Stresemann (1952) wrote that it would imply no change in nomenclature. That may have been so given the arrangement of Indian forms proposed by Whistler & Kinnear (1933) to which he referred. But this was not the case in an arrangement requiring recognition of a southern Indian form. Such recognition sprang from the proposal by Ripley (1946) to name *vicinus*. Stresemann was probably unaware of *vicinus* or perhaps considered it a weak race; indeed later Ripley (1961) later placed his own *vicinus* in the synonymy of *cafer*. In fact, however, there was a prior name *pusillus* Blyth, 1841, and it was this name that was listed by Rand & Deignan (1960). Acceptance of Stresemann's views, and they were accepted by Ripley (1982), requires the use of *cafer* in place of *pusillus* and the use of *haemorrhousus*⁹ for the Ceylon form. These changes affect only the geography covered by Ripley's book and we therefore follow him.

Pycnonotus eutilosus (Jardine & Selby, 1836)

It may be helpful to clarify an old puzzle in the literature. Sharpe (1882: 62) placed both *tympanistrigus* S. Müller, 1836, and *tympanistrigus* Bonaparte, 1850, in the synonymy of *Pinarocichla eutilosa* [sic], and did not recognise a species *tympanistrigus*. The name *tigus* Bonaparte, 1850, he omitted entirely.

This peculiar *lapsus* was resolved by Finsch (1905) who explained that Temminck had annotated Müller's type of *tympanistrigus* with the name *tigus*. Bonaparte's description of *tigus* was thus a redescription of *tympanistrigus* Müller. The actually quite different description Bonaparte gave of *tympanistrigus* is indeed a description of *eutilotus*. In this text Finsch introduced Temminck's MS name *Ixos cristatellus*; this is also *eutilosus* but based on a Bornean specimen, not a Sumatran bird.

⁹ The corrected spelling of *haemorrhous*.

***Pycnonotus nieuwenhuisii* (Finsch, 1901b) (See colour plate 2)**

Williams (2002) suggested that this taxon, known only from the two type specimens from Borneo and Sumatra and observations in 1992 at one site in Borneo, might be a hybrid form resulting from interbreeding of *P. atriceps* and *P. cyaniventris* Blyth, 1842. Although his hybrid theory sounds plausible, we retain this taxon as a valid species until further evidence becomes available. On one point we can add to what Williams wrote. He stated that *nieuwenhuisii* has a greyish tail with a distinct whitish terminal area and no defined dark subterminal band. And he added that “apparently no sympatric *Pycnonotus* display a similar tail pattern”. However, Temminck (1828) described and illustrated *Ixos chalconcephalus* which is a variant of *Pycnonotus atriceps* and had the broad yellow terminal band replaced with white.

***Pycnonotus urostictus* (Salvadori, 1870)**

Reviewed by Parkes (1967), who described the subspecies *atricaudatus* from the Eastern Visayas. The race *ilokensis* Rand & Rabor, 1967, was accepted by Dickinson et al. (1991).

***Pycnonotus bimaculatus* (Horsfield, 1821)**

Rand & Deignan (1960) treated the birds of west and central Java as *barat* Robinson & Kloss, 1920, and applied the nominative epithet to those of eastern Java and Bali. Robinson & Kloss claimed that they had had Horsfield’s type examined and that it represented the eastern not the western subspecies. However, Mees (1996) had the type re-examined by Michael Walters and concluded that it was from central Java. The name *barat* thus became a synonym of nominate *bimaculatus* and the eastern population had the name *tenggerensis* van Oort, 1911, restored to it.

***Pycnonotus finlaysoni* Strickland, 1844**

It is important to note that the type locality of the nominate form was originally given as “probably from some of the Malasian [sic] islands” (Strickland, 1844) and that this was corrected to Malacca by Hartert (1902).

Strickland mentioned that Horsfield had given this MS name¹⁰ to the bird that he was naming. However Strickland did not know the origins of his own type and it is apparent that it had not come from Horsfield. Later, Horsfield & Moore (1854) listed their specimens: one from Siam, this one having been brought back from Siam by Finlayson (and no doubt being the one to which Horsfield had attached a MS name) and two others from Arracan (= Arakan). When Hartert (op. cit.) corrected the type locality he did so without referring to the travels of Finlayson and he made no mention of Horsfield & Moore (1854). His basis for the selection of Malacca seems to have

¹⁰ Implicitly based on a specimen in the collection of the Hon. East India Company (Horsfield & Moore, 1854).

been arbitrary. Salvin (1882) reported that Strickland's specimen of this species had been obtained from a Captain Askew, so whether or not Hartert was correct will depend upon where Askew obtained it. As far as we know, the type has not been compared to specimens of the different populations to see whether it can be firmly attached to one or another of them.

ECD examined the type and together with Michael Walters concluded that it can be accepted as from Malacca. The race *davisoni* Hume, 1875, seems to be distinctly browner below than the nominate form, but whether *eous* Riley, 1940, is distinct from the nominate form seems open to question.

Pycnonotus goiavier (Scopoli, 1786)

The "post-Peters" subspecies *samarensis* Rand & Rabor (1960) was accepted by Dickinson et al. (1991). Mees (1986) submerged *personatus* by extending the range of Javan *analis*.

Pycnonotus plumosus Blyth, 1845

This is one of the few species of bulbul reviewed since Rand & Deignan (1960). Mees (1986) placed *chiroplethis* Oberholser, 1917b, *billitonis* Chasen, 1935b, and *sibergi* Hoogerwerf, 1965, in synonymy. He considered *porphyreus* Oberholser, 1912, distinct and reserved judgement on *hutzi* Stresemann, 1938, and *hachisukae* Deignan, 1952. The latter, when originally described, was compared only with nominate *plumosus* but Deignan presumably compared it with *cinereifrons* Tweeddale, 1878b, during preparation for Peters's Check-list.

Mees (1986) also pointed out that *porphyreus* of western Sumatra and the islands offshore is said to be distinguished from the east Sumatran nominate form by having orange or yellow eyes rather than red or red-brown. Despite the value of eye colour as an aid to field identification at the specific level in this family it seems unsafe to consider this a criterion for subspecific distinction. Mees made this point in the context of *P. simplex* Lesson, 1839. On the mainland of Sumatra yellow- or orange-eyed *porphyreus* and red-eyed nominate *plumosus* presumably meet somewhere but the exact ranges of these two forms are not clear to us and further study would seem to be indicated.

Pycnonotus simplex Lesson, 1839

We adopt the revision of Mees (1986) who placed *perplexus* Chasen & Kloss, 1929, and *oblitus* Deignan, 1954, in the synonymy of the nominate form. The bases for placing these names in synonymy were the invalidity of iris colour as a constant character and the minimal differences otherwise proposed.

Much of the discussion by Mees centred on the issue of whether eye colour can be used as a subspecific character. Until 1986 the iris had been said to be universally white in Sumatra and normally white in adults in Malaya and to be usually red or orange-red in adults in Borneo, Billiton and Bangka. Wells (in litt.) confirms that while the irides are white in adults in the Malay Peninsula juveniles change from an initial

brown through orange and then pale yellow to the definitive white of the adult; see also Medway & Wells (1976).

Moreover, Mees (op. cit.) noted that red-eyed Bornean birds had been separated subspecifically as *perplexus* on the basis of eye colour, and that Chasen (1937) added Billiton to the range of *perplexus* based on red-eyed birds, and dismissed two white-eyed birds from there as juveniles. However Mees also noted that "in many parts of Borneo white-eyed birds occur mixed with the apparently more common red-eyes ones". Voous (1961) discussing birds collected by Lumholtz thought that males had red eyes and females white. Only extremely reliable collecting and labelling data would prove that. Mees did not speculate on that, but Wells (in litt.) believes differences are not gender based. Mees did mention that Fogden (1966) had reported white-eyed birds in Sarawak, thus extending the area from which they had been reported. It should be remembered, with some caution, that eye colour is the first character referred to in descriptions (King & Dickinson, 1975; Robson, 2000) of continental *P. simplex* and *P. brunneus* Blyth, 1845.

Pycnonotus erythrophthalmos (Hume, 1878)

The Bornean population has been called *salvadorii* Sharpe, 1882, which is a new name for *Pycnonotus pusillus* Salvadori, 1874. A careful reading of Salvadori's text shows that he was confused by the existence of two identical names for Sumatran taxa: *Pycnonotus simplex* Lesson, 1839, and *P. simplex* Bonaparte, 1850, and that to eliminate the confusion he proposed *pusillus* as a new name for his Bornean birds. Rand & Deignan (1960: 251) did not consider the name *pusillus* to be a *nomen novum*. It came accompanied by a description of a Bornean taxon in need of description. Salvadori wrote "Questa specie é stata descritta dal Bonaparte su individui di Sumatra, e non è improbabile che ad esa, e non al *P. plumosus*, Blyth, come vorrebbero Horsfield e Moore (Cat. n. 363), si debba riferire il *P. simplex*, Less., che sembra fosse ignorato dal Bonaparte; ...". We translate this as "This species has been described by Bonaparte from specimens from Sumatra, and it is not improbable that it is to this, and not to *P. plumosus*, Blyth, as Horsfield & Moore (Cat. n. 363) make out, that *P. simplex*, Less. should be attributed, which [incidentally] seems to have been unknown to Bonaparte." Salvadori continued "e se così è, con quel nome devrebbe essere distinta;" which we understand as "... and if this is the case, it should be distinguished with that name" by which we understand distinct from *P. plumosus*. And, finally, Salvadori wrote "ma potendo anche essere che, come vogliono Horsfield e Moore, il *P. simplex*, Less. sia lo stesso del *P. plumosus*, Blyth" in other words "but it may also be as Horsfield & Moore claim and *P. simplex* Less. may be the same as *P. plumosus*, Blyth." After that in order to avoid further confusion Salvadori described his specimens under the name *pusillus*. Preparatory work on the type catalogue for the RMNH had led to the belief there that *pusillus* Salvadori, 1874, must be seen to be a new name for *Pycnonotus simplex* Bonaparte. Our re-reading of Salvadori's text leads us to the view that this is not an unambiguous conclusion, and that the position taken by Rand & Deignan is defensible.

Chasen & Kloss (1930) considered *salvadorii* a "very thin race" in which, as a series, they are distinct from Malay Peninsula and Sumatran birds by having darker under-

parts so that the white throat in *salvadorii* is more obvious. The race has been accepted by Smythies (2000). However, as we worked on this we took the opportunity to compare Sumatran and Bornean birds from the collection in the RMNH and we are not convinced that the distinctions suggested by Chasen & Kloss (1930) are sufficient to warrant the maintenance of a Bornean form and we prefer to treat the species as monotypic. We can also confirm that the syntypes of *Picnonotus* [sic] *simplex* 'Kuhl' Bonaparte, 1850, relate to this species.

***Criniger bres* Lesson in Belanger, 1831¹¹**

Rand & Deignan (1960) recognised a race *balicus* Stresemann, 1913, and believed its range extended into eastern Java. Mees (1996) has shown that it does not and that at best it should be accepted as a Balinese endemic form. In summary though he considered it poorly differentiated, and we place it in the synonymy of the nominate form.

***Iole virescens* Blyth, 1845¹²**

Rand & Deignan (1960) implicitly excluded Mt. Victoria from the range of the nominate form. Earlier, Deignan (1948a) noted that Stresemann & Heinrich ("1940" = 1939) had mentioned the collection of "*Iole olivacea virescens*" on or near this mountain, and that the specimens should be re-examined as they were given wing lengths much longer than those he ascribed to this form. Perhaps, he suggested, a distinct race would be found on Mt. Victoria. Smythies (1953) mentioned this too under *Microscelis charlottae* (Finsch, 1867), which was then appropriate. Species concepts have since changed. Deignan (1948a) was writing under the caption of *Microscelis v. viridescens*, a shorter winged bird, which is now nominate *Iole virescens*. *Iole olivacea* Blyth, 1844, and *Iole propinqua* (Oustalet, 1903) are both longer-winged species although there is overlap. If the wing lengths given are accurate it is more likely that these specimens represent *propinqua* than the southern species *olivacea*. Smythies listed *propinquus* as a subspecies of *charlottae* (as it was then thought to be).

I. propinqua occurs in eastern and southern-eastern Burma. *Iole virescens* appears to occur in this part of Burma although from the range given by Rand & Deignan (1960) one would not think so. Smythies (1953) thought it was probably resident throughout the forests of the foothills - no doubt a statement making use of sight records. We forget, at our peril, that the ranges, especially the altitudinal ranges, of these very similar bulbuls are not completely worked out. *Iole virescens* was recently reported from the lowlands NE of Mt. Victoria by Robson et al. (1998). However, as explained above *virescens* should be shorter winged than the birds taken by Heinrich. We are not aware that the Berlin specimens collected by Heinrich have been re-examined.

¹¹ For a note on the use of this date see Dickinson et al. (2002 – this issue).

¹² For use of the generic name *Iole* see Dickinson & Gregory (2002 – this issue).

Iole olivacea Blyth, 1844

This species needs review. Voous (1961) suggested that *perplexa* Riley, 1939 was untenable but maintained Bornean *crypta* Oberholser, 1918. Mees (1986) sank *crypta*. One would therefore expect him to have listed the taxon under a binomial, but perhaps the trinomial used was left there in error. These revisions do not appear in Davison's revised text for Smythies (2000). We have deferred monotypic treatment until the situation is clarified.

Ixos maclellandii (Horsfield, 1840)¹³

Consolidation of this species began with Rothschild (1921). Several races of this species are isolated and Riley (1933) was unconvinced that lumping was appropriate, writing:

"In my opinion, *Ixos griseiventer* does not belong to the same form-group as *Ixos maclellandii* [sic] *tickelli*, and as *Ixos canescens* instead of being intermediate between *tickelli* and *griseiventer* is quite different from both and the ranges of all three are separated by wide stretches of country where no intermediates are known to occur, therefore *griseiventer* and *canescens* should be recognized as distinct until forms of intermediate character are discovered."

Deignan (1942, 1945) and Delacour (1943a) went further yet and placed this group within the species *virescens* Temminck, 1825, but Rand & Deignan (1960) stepped back from that.

This species would be an interesting one to re-examine with phylogeographic analyses based on DNA sequences particularly as, judging by back colour, there appear to be two morphs. Were this done *I. malaccensis* Blyth, 1845, should be sampled too. Morphologically the related Sumatran *I. virescens* is considerably more distinct.

Ixos philippinus (J.R. Forster, 1795) and *Ixos rufigularis* (Sharpe, 1877)

Those searching the literature for the period 1900 to 1960 will find that they need to look for the different synonyms shown in Dickinson et al. (2002). When it was discovered that the name *philippensis* J.F. Gmelin, 1789, was preoccupied it was thought that either *philippinensis* Kittlitz, 1832, or *gularis* Pucheran, 1855, must be used. It was Rand & Rabor (1959) who noted the availability of Forster's name *philippinus*.

Quite early in the ornithological exploration of the Philippines we knew that there were two sympatric species on Mindanao (Tweeddale, 1878a). Delacour (1943a) treated these as *gularis* and *everetti* Tweeddale, 1877 (in the latter he included *rufigularis* Sharpe, 1877). Delacour & Mayr (1946) made one species of *everetti*, *rufigularis* and the Sulu form *haynaldi* Blasius, 1890.

¹³ For use of the generic name *Ixos* see Dickinson & Gregory (2002 – this issue).

When Rabor (1955) reported sympatry between *everetti* and *rufigularis* at Olango Spring, Lanao del Norte in Mindanao it became apparent that this arrangement was untenable. Consequently Rand & Deignan (1960) treated *rufigularis* as a representative race of *philippinus*, on the grounds that no such sympatry had been reported between *H. p. saturator* (Hartert, 1916) (eastern Mindanao) and *rufigularis* (western Mindanao and Basilan). Meyer de Schauensee & duPont (1962) demonstrated this from Lake Lanao and it thus became necessary to accept three species in Mindanao.

Information on the vocal repertoire of all the various Philippine forms in this genus should be assembled; the last word may not yet have been said on the optimum number of species to recognise. As *I. everetti* resembles some Moluccan forms discussed below under the name *Thapsinillas affinis* (Hombron & Jacquinot, 1841), and these do not all closely resemble each other, they should be included in the study. This whole complex may prove particularly relevant to our understanding of the geographic roots of the bulbul assemblage.

Ixos everetti (Tweeddale, 1877)

Rand & Deignan (1960) recognised three forms. Since then Parkes (1973) placed *samarensis* Rand & Rabor, 1959, in the synonymy of the nominate form, and Rand & Rabor (1969) described *catarmanensis* from Camiguin Sur.¹⁴

Thapsinillas affinis (Hombron & Jacquinot, 1841)¹⁵

Rand & Deignan (1960) treated this as a species within the broad genus *Hypsipetes* but it was originally described, and most of its subspecies were described, in the genus *Criniger*. No detailed review was published and yet the different races do not present as a single homogenous group. It is therefore, perhaps, not surprising that a relationship with the genus *Criniger* was reaffirmed by Sibley & Monroe (1990); yet once again no study was published¹⁶. There is an equally reasonable case for presumption of a relationship with *Ixos everetti*, which is not too distant geographically. See also White in White & Bruce (1986).

Dickinson & Gregory (2002) preferred to retain the monotypic genus *Thapsinillas* for this species, which we suspect will justify subdivision into two to four species (see Hartert, 1922).

Microscelis amaurotis Temminck, 1830¹⁷

We follow Orn. Soc. Japan (1974) in placing *insignis* Kuroda, 1923, in the synonymy of *pryeri* Stejneger, 1887. We also follow Morioka (1994) in treating *hensoni* Stejneger, 1892, as a synonym of nominate *amaurotis*.

¹⁴ This is off the north coast of Mindanao and not, as sometimes thought, near Camiguin Norte which is hundreds of miles north off northern Luzon.

¹⁵ For use of the generic name *Thapsinillas* see Dickinson & Gregory (2002 – this issue).

¹⁶ Sibley & Monroe placed it in *Alophoixus*. We have explained earlier that we do not choose to employ this generic name.

¹⁷ For use of the generic name *Microscelis* see Dickinson & Gregory (2002 – this issue).

Hiroyuki Morioka drew to our attention the description of *Hypsipetes amaurotis kurodae* by Mishima, 1960, and enquired whether this name, published on 25 March, antedated the name *Hypsipetes amaurotis nagamichii* Deignan, 1960. Volume 9 of Peters's Check-list, containing the latter, was printed in Denmark; but the Museum of Comparative Zoology now seems not to have a record of when distribution of the imported stock began. Alison Pirie advised us (*in litt.* 25.02.2000) that "we have customs papers indicating it was in the US by 17 March, but do not have the final date of arrival at the MCZ"; the copy in the Library of Congress has no date stamp (C. Milensky *in litt.* 08.07.2002) and copies examined at the USNM (C. Milensky *in litt.* 02.07.2002) and the AMNH (M. LeCroy *in litt.* 12.07.2002) either have no associated dates of purchase or have no date stamp as early as 1960. It is possible that MCZ copies of their own invoices might be located which would resolve this. However, this is of less importance if the species *amaurotis* is no longer to be found in the same genus as the species that we here call *Thapsinillas affinis* as the original name *harterti* Kuroda, 1922, is then no longer preoccupied.

On another bibliographic note, we learned when in St. Petersburg and with the help of Vladimir Loskot and the library staff at the Zoological Institute St. Petersburg, that the publication cited by Rand & Deignan (1960) for the original description of *Oriolus squamiceps* Kittlitz, 1830 (with 1831 in brackets) is incorrect. A separate publication existed at that time and it apparently should be rendered as "Mem. savants estrang. Acad. Imp. Sci. St. Petersburg". The volume number 1 was correct, the volume year was 1830, but publication of this part occurred in 1831. We were able to examine other material from this journal, but no copy of Kittlitz's paper was available during our brief visit. We have seen it elsewhere.

Hemixos flavala (Blyth, 1845)¹⁸

Rand & Deignan (1960) treated this as a broad species including both the grey form *cinereus* Blyth, 1845, of the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra and the striking *castanototus* Swinhoe, 1870, of Hainan. Sibley & Monroe (1990) treated the latter as a separate species.

The differences are considerable and we can understand the view that inappropriate lumping may have occurred. In our paper on the pittas (Dickinson & Dekker, 2000b) we deferred acceptance of a species *Pitta dohertyi* Rothschild, 1898¹⁹, on the grounds that the related forms of *Pitta erythrogaster* Temminck, 1823, had not been fully reviewed. In that case we felt that several species would emerge from such a review. In this case we have similar views; we believe *H. flavala* must either be treated as one species with strikingly different representative races or that several species, not just two, should emerge. A review is therefore strongly recommended.

¹⁸ For use of the generic name *Hemixos* see Dickinson & Gregory (2002 – this issue).

¹⁹ For citations for *Pitta dohertyi* and *Pitta erythrogaster* see Dickinson & Dekker (2000b).

Hypsipetes leucocephalus (J.F. Gmelin, 1789)²⁰

The creation of a wide ranging species *H. madagascariensis* (P.L. Stadius Müller, 1776) can be found in Delacour (1943a). In a footnote Delacour said he followed "Mayr, Deignan and Danis"; the references to the three separate papers concerned appear in Rand & Deignan (1960: 283).

Danis (1940) dealt with perceived relationships between bulbuls in Madagascar and the Mascarenes and bulbuls in southern India and Ceylon and considered several of the former conspecific with the latter in a broad species *madagascariensis*. Deignan (1942), in a very sketchy list, went further and united *madagascariensis*, *borbonica* J.R. Forster, 1781, *crassirostris* Newton, 1867, and Indian *psaroides* Vigors, 1831, but excluded the species *leucocephalus*. Mayr (1942)²¹, in a detailed review, dealt with a broad species *leucocephalus* and discussed three colour "groups" (*leucocephalus*, *psaroides* and the black-headed forms) but, after recognising that intermediate birds can be found within some populations, ended with 12 subspecies. Baker (1922, 1930) had considered the Indian forms to comprise a separate species *psaroides*. This arrangement excluded the birds of Madagascar and the Mascarenes.

For Delacour (1943a) to say that he followed Mayr, Deignan and Danis was clearly highly disingenuous: he did not even begin to reconcile the differences in their approaches!

Rand & Deignan (1960) made a modest retreat and recognised three species: *crassirostris*, *borbonicus* and *madagascariensis*. This treatment suggests that they had now read Danis (1940) and were perhaps privy to what Benson (1960) was to write. Sibley & Monroe (1990) separated *H. parvirostris* (which Benson had retained as a race of *madagascariensis*) and divorced *leucocephalus* from *madagascariensis*, returning the Asian taxa to the configuration discerned by Mayr.

Whether Mayr's *leucocephalus* offers scope for further specific division is open to question. As so often the forms from Ceylon and the Western Ghats of India are widely disjunct from the Himalayan and Assamese taxa, and may well reward genetic studies. By contrast Himalayan *psaroides* would appear, from the maps in Mayr (1942) and Cheng (1987), to be almost in contact with *ambiens* Mayr, 1942, and gene flow probably occurs across the populations of China and northern South-east Asia. Perhaps the insular forms on Hainan and Taiwan may show genetic differences.

And, finally, was the southern Vietnamese bird called *impar* Riley, 1940, sufficiently isolated that it might be genetically distinct? It bred in the Langbian Mountains according to Delacour & Jabouille (1931).

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²⁰ For the use of a narrower genus *Hypsipetes* see Dickinson & Gregory (2002 – this issue).

²¹ Author's reprints provide no evidence to support the apparently delayed publication.

acknowledge our much earlier discussions about bulbuls during collaboration on King & Dickinson (1975) and Dickinson et al. (1991). In the absence of any recent revision of the family the notes drawn from correspondence with Herbert Deignan, Austin Rand, Dillon Ripley and others assisted Ben King and ECD materially in understanding the situation in mainland South-east Asia. And ECD wishes to thank Ben King in the same context. Similarly work with Bob Kennedy and Ken Parkes developed a clearer understanding of the taxa from the Philippines. There are to-day a number of field workers with a much better knowledge of these bulbuls than we have; we hope to receive their thoughts and ideas so that the eventual "Synopsis" benefits from their insights.

We have drawn on museum material in Tring to inform our work and as usual we were encouraged and assisted by the museum staff concerned, Robert Prys-Jones, Michael Walters, Mark Adams, Frank Steinheimer and their predecessors, whom we thank. Michael Brooke of the Department of Zoology, University of Cambridge, most kindly arranged to lend the type of *Pycnonotus finlaysoni* and this was handcarried to Tring by Jorn Scharlemann and our thanks go to both of them. Material in Leiden also provided valuable information, especially the rich collection of bulbul types; Hein van Grouw and Steven van der Mije kindly assisted here.

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