

GENERAL NOTES

A New Race of the Cuckoo, *Chalcites lucidus*, from the New Hebrides Islands.—Recent examination of specimens from southern Melanesia in the American Museum of Natural History has shown that the Shining Cuckoo inhabiting the northern New Hebrides and Banks Islands represents a well defined race, hitherto undescribed.

In his review of this species Mayr (Amer. Mus. Nov., No. 520: 1-9, 1932) presented in detail the characters and distribution of the three races, *lucidus*, *plagosus* and *layardi*, recognized at that time and described an additional one, *harterti*, from Rennell and Bellona islands. Since that date an excellent series of specimens was secured for the American Museum by L. Macmillan on New Caledonia and all three of the Loyalty Islands (Mayr, Amer. Mus. Nov., No. 1057: 1-3, 1940).

All measurements and color comparisons included in the present paper have been made in as nearly the same manner as possible to those in Mayr's review of 1932. Bill measurements are from the nostril; culmen is from the base. I am indebted to Dr. Ernst Mayr and Dr. Dean Amadon for helpful suggestions during the preparation of this paper.

***Chalcites lucidus aeneus* new subspecies**

TYPE: No. 213509, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.; adult male (testes "swelling"); Malekula Island; August 8, 1926; collected by Rollo H. Beck of the Whitney South Seas Expedition.

SUBSPECIFIC CHARACTERS: ADULT MALE—Larger than *layardi* and *harterti* in all measurements; smaller than *lucidus* and *plagosus* in wing length but bill larger. Closest to *layardi* but bill broader and longer; upper parts much darker; forehead and crown dark purple-bronze and faintly glossy; nape and fore-back deep purple-bronze and very glossy; rest of upper parts including lower back, scapulars, tail, wing-coverts and secondaries (outer webs) greenish-bronze and very glossy; sides of neck and breast deeper cinnamon, the cinnamon extending across entire breast as pale wash in many specimens; bars of underparts broader and deeper bronze (almost entirely replacing the green of *layardi*). Tail pattern: differs from *layardi* by further replacement of white spots with russet on fifth (outer), fourth, third, and second rectrices; on the fourth, white is in most specimens restricted to small spot near tip on inner web and does not touch shaft; black areas smaller and lighter; on the third and second, russet bands are larger and slightly darker. Very different from *harterti*; above much darker, bars of underparts considerably broader.

CHARACTERS OF FEMALE: In the two females examined (Vanua Lava, Espiritu Santo) sexual dimorphism is not discernible with certainty.

RANGE: Northern New Hebrides Islands (Epi, Ambrym, Malekula, Espiritu Santo), Banks Islands (Gaua, Vanua Lava, Ara Is.), and (race ?) Santa Cruz Islands (Utupua).

Birds from the Banks Group average slightly less purple-bronze on the wing and tail than New Hebrides birds, and the barring on the undersides of two of the former is darker. The only specimen from the Santa Cruz Islands, a female from Utupua, is scarcely or not at all distinguishable from females from Lifu except that the barring of the underparts is paler, lacking iridescence almost entirely.

The subspecies *layardi*, which is restricted to New Caledonia and the Loyalty Islands (Uvea, Lifu, Maré) at least during the breeding season, in addition to being

MEASUREMENTS IN MILLIMETERS

		Wing	Tail	Bill	Culmen
<i>aeneus</i>					
New Hebrides	8 males	98.6 (96-103)	71.3 (69-73)	12.8 ¹ (12.1-13.5)	20.0 ¹ (19.0-20.9)
	1 female	101.0	72.0	14.0	21.3
Banks Island	4 males	97.7 (97-100)	69.0 (67-71)	13.0 (12.5-13.5)	20.5 (19.6-21.5)
	1 female	—	68.0	12.0	19.4
Santa Cruz Island	1 female	95.0	67.0	12.5	20.0
<i>layardi</i>					
New Caledonia, Loyalty Island	14 males	95.8 (89-99)	71.1 ² (68-73)	11.5 (11-13)	18.6 (17.5-20)
	8 females	96.3 (94-98)	69.9 ² (68-72.5)	11.8 (11-13)	18.5 ¹ (18-19.5)

¹ seven specimens² ten specimens

Width of bill at nostril 5.4-6.4 (5.96) millimeters in *aeneus*, as against 5.0-6.1 (5.69) in *layardi*.

smaller than *aeneus*, is greenish rather than bronze in appearance both above and below, especially on the back and upper tail and is only slightly glossy. The bars of the underparts are narrower and the cinnamon of the sides of neck and breast is paler and more restricted, never extending across the breast. Birds from Uvea, Maré, and New Caledonia are similar to each other, but the Lifu specimens examined (2 males, 4 females), especially the females, tend toward New Hebrides birds in coloration, but are closer to *layardi*. Although these Lifu females appear slightly more intensely colored (darker) than other *layardi* females examined, perhaps this is because they are in very fresh plumage, apparently having recently completed the prenuptial molt. These Lifu birds were taken July 23, 25, and August 9; only a female taken on the last date (ovary very much enlarged) shows any signs of molt, and this by the presence of a few partly sheathed feathers on the chin. May and June birds from Uvea and New Caledonia are in body molt and November birds from New Caledonia show considerable wear. Since in this series females from Lifu may not be comparable in color to females from the other islands of this group, the true picture of the differences between females from Lifu and elsewhere can not be stated with assurance at this time. Sexual dimorphism in this race appears to me to be restricted to the Lifu population in which females are slightly darker than males.—Dwain W. Warner, *Museum Natural History, University Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota.*

Western Meadowlark, *Sturnella neglecta*, in New York State.—On April 18, 1948, a Western Meadowlark was observed singing in an apple tree just south of the North Hamlin Road, County of Monroe, about 1 mile south of Lake Ontario. The song which attracted members of the Genesee Ornithological Society (J. Brown, J. Taylor, A. Bussewitz, and A. Klonick) was bubbling and flute-like, occasionally interspersed with staccato call notes and definitely not the slurred song of *S. magna*. The bird continued its melodious song for at least two hours.

The bird was secured and is now in the collection of the Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences. This appears to be the first verified record of this species for New York State.—Allan S. Klonick, 828 Grosvenor Rd., Rochester 10, N. Y.