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Anas punctata at Zaria:

Two Hottentot Teals: Anas punctata were seen by me at the N.T.C. dam, Samaru, Zaria, on 29th January, 1967, and constitute the first record for the area. The only other wild-fowl on the lake was a flock of 25 Garganey A. querquedula, but the two species were well separated.

C.H.Fry

Subspecific identity of the Zaria Corythornis leucogaster specimen:

The White-bellied Kingfisher Corythornis leucogaster captured at Zaria on 1st May 1967 was stated to correspond with the lower Guinea race C.l. batesi (Fry, Bull. Nig. Orn. Soc. 4 13-14: 38). This conclusion was based on descriptions of the races given in Bannerman (1954): I have now examined the material of C. leucogaster available at the British Museum (Natural History) and find that Bannerman's description is a little misleading. The following material was examined: C.l. leucogaster (Fernando Po : 1 only); C.l. bowdleri (2 imm. Sierra Leone 4.12.84, 1 adult Fanti 1870, 1 adult Ashanti no date, and 1 adult Fanti no date); and C.l. batesi (15 adults from various 'Lower Guinea' localities). The nominate race can be dismissed immediately; it resembles C.l. batesi more closely than it does C.l. bowdleri, but differs from batesi in being substantially larger, especially in the dimensions of the beak. The other two races are not defined by constant characters, but are more in the nature of opposite ends of a cline. C.l. bowdleri differs from C.l. batesi in having a narrower band of violet-blue feathers from the base of the culmen to the crown, and in having the orange feathers below the gape either free of dark tips, or with minute dark tips in one or two only of the smallest feathers. In C.l. bowdleri there is thus a larger area of orange on the face, and the width of the blue forehead band is about 2-3 mm, while in batesi, and leucogaster, the forehead band is about 3-5 mm wide and the orange sides of the forehead tend to be reduced to a circular patch in front of the eye. C.l. batesi has more feathers below the gape tipped black. This last character is variable however, and one of the fifteen specimens examined (B.M. Reg. 91.5.1.2840: Gaboon) has no dark tips at all.

The Zaria specimen agrees most closely - on direct comparison - with C.l. bowdleri, although there are 4 or 5 minutely dark-tipped feathers below the gape. An adult specimen from Sabele, Warri, 3rd January 1933, is in my view a typical C.l. batesi, so that the Zaria example is likely to have originated west (on the upper Guinea side) of Warri Province. However it would be unwise to be dogmatic about the origin of a bird found in such unusual circumstances.

The difference of head-pattern between the two mainland races is shown in the accompanying figure.

C. H. Fry.