

TURDUS AUREUS ANGSTIROSTRIS GYLDENSTOLPE⁽¹⁾ AND OREOCINCLA
HORSFIELDI AFFINIS RICHMOND⁽²⁾

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Several arrangements of the *aurea-damma* section of the genus *Oreocincla* have been advanced by recent students. Stuart Baker, in the 'Fauna of British India,' recognized two species, *aurea* and *damma*, each with associated races, and respectively distinguished by the possession of fourteen or twelve rectrices; he considered *angustirostris* of Gyldenstolpe to be a connective race between *O. aurea aurea* and *O. aurea horsfieldi*. Kuroda ('Birds of the island of Java') likewise recognized two species, but, not accepting *angustirostris*, queried whether small Indochinese birds with fourteen rectrices be *horsfieldi*. Riley recognizes three species, separating the birds of fourteen rectrices into a large species, *aurea*, and a small one, *horsfieldi*, the latter with a continental race, *affinis* Richmond (which he considers identical with *angustirostris*).

Gyldenstolpe described *angustirostris* (type-locality: Khun Tan, North Siam) from a bird which, having fourteen rectrices, was compared with the Javanese *horsfieldi*. In 1926, reviewing the bird-types in the Stockholm Museum, he re-affirms the validity of the race and mentions seeing two additional specimens from the same range of hills. As at least two of his birds were collected in May, it may be assumed that the form is resident in North Siam.

In the collection of the United States National Museum is a series of eight adult specimens of the *Oreocincla* resident in North Siam. Of these, two were taken at the type-locality of *angustirostris*, and five others about 70 kilometres farther north in the same range of hills; the eighth was collected in the Fang district, on the Siam-Shan States border. Of the eight, two have fourteen rectrices; the remainder, including the two topotypes, have twelve. The birds with twelve rectrices are inseparable from *Oreocincla damma damma* of Burma and India, whether by colour, wing-formula, size, or number

(1) Kungl. Sv. Vet. Akad. Handl., v. 56, no. 2, 1916, p. 47.

(2) Proc. Biol. Soc. Washington, v. 15, 1902, p. 158.

of tail-feathers. The birds with fourteen rectrices are separable by no character *except* the number of tail-feathers. Moreover, the wing-formula of *angustirostris* is precisely that of both *horsfieldi* and *dauma*, and the colour characters are those of *dauma*, with which it was not compared. Finally, a nest with young accompanies one of the twelve-rectrixed specimens taken 70 kilometres from the type-locality of *angustirostris*.

One is compelled, then, to believe that the name *angustirostris* is a pure synonym of *Oreocincla dauma dauma*, and that, while in India *dauma* seems always to have twelve rectrices, in Siam it has usually twelve, but not rarely fourteen, thus connecting with the more southern *horsfieldi*, which seems always to have fourteen.

Oreocincla horsfieldi affinis was based by Richmond on a unique specimen from Trang province, Peninsular Siam. It was compared with a Javanese specimen of *horsfieldi*, from which it is said to differ in "a smaller bill, longer wing, somewhat brighter colors . . . more heavily marked below, and . . . a different wing formula. "I have examined the type of this form and find it to be apparently a young adult in the freshest of plumage and perhaps still growing its remiges. In any case, the second primary does *not* fall between the third and fourth, as stated by the author, but in one wing equals the fifth and in the other falls just short of it. In short, there is no character by which this specimen can be separated from a series of six Javanese birds, except its small bill, which is like that of *dauma*. Moreover, Robinson and Kloss⁽¹⁾ describe birds from farther north (Nakhon Si Thammarat province) as inseparable from *horsfieldi*. *Affinis*, then, must be considered a synonym of *horsfieldi*, unless continental specimens eventually prove indeed separable in having a shorter bill.

Messrs. Robinson and Kloss⁽²⁾ identified as *angustirostris* a series of six fourteen-rectrixed birds from the high mountains of South Annam. As they were taken in April and May, they probably represent a resident form. I have seen one specimen of the series, taken on the Langbian Peaks, and find it quite different from the

(1) Journ. Nat. Hist. Soc. Siam, v. 5, no. 3, 1924, p. 308.

(2) Ibis, 1919, pp. 592-593.

bird of North Siam. It is nearest to *horsfieldi*, having a complete absence of buffy markings on the head, but is a much darker bird and with a longer wing (148.2). Unless this be an abnormal example, it seems certain that the South Annam birds will prove separable.

The twelve-rectrixed birds of western China have been named *socia* by Bangs⁽¹⁾ and are said to be separable from *O. d. dauma* by colour characters; to this race have been assigned by De Schauensee and others certain North Siam specimens. If *socia* be a valid form, this is no doubt quite correct, but I have so far seen no Siamese skins which could not be considered *O. d. dauma*, and I question whether the characters attributed to *socia* be other than those due to individual variation and seasonal change in this rather unstable form.

In separating the birds of this group, much emphasis has been laid on the relative length of the remiges. In all the forms the third and fourth are longest, so that no value may be attached to this. On the other hand, the length of the second in relation to the others has some significance, for in *aurea* (and *amami*?) it falls between the fourth and the fifth, while in all others, from Ceylon to Australia, it falls somewhere between the fifth and the seventh.

Since I have shown that the number of tail-feathers is not invariable in at least one of the races, this factor ceases to be a character of specific significance, and since, moreover, there is no overlapping in the breeding ranges of any of the forms, there is no reason why these birds should be considered otherwise than as geographical representatives of one widely distributed species.

In the Indo-chinese countries, we are concerned with at least three forms:

1. *Oreocincla dauma aurea* (Holandre), a winter visitor to the North of Siam and Indochine. Wing-length (26 ♂ ♀) 152.6–168.5 (average: 161.2). Wing-formula: 2nd. primary between 4th. and 5th. Tail-feathers 14.

2. *Oreocincla dauma dauma* (Latham) [= *O. d. angustirostris* (Gyld.)], a resident in the North of Siam and Indochine. Wing-length (8 ♂ ♀) 138–146 (average: 141.6). Wing-formula: 2nd. primary between 5th. and 6th. Tail-feathers 12 or 14.

(1) Mem. Mus. Comp. Zoöl., v. 40, no. 4, 1912, p. 117.

3. *Oreocincla dauma horsfieldi* Bonaparte (= *O. d. affinis* Richmond), a resident in the Malay Peninsula (and South Annam?). Wing-length (7 ♂ ♀) 135.5-145.5 (average: 140.9). Wing-formula: 2nd. primary between 5th. and 6th., or between 6th. and 7th. Tail-feathers 14. Readily distinguishable from the preceding form by its darker and redder colouration above, larger area of pure white on throat, and larger bill.