

TAXONOMIC UPDATE

Species-level changes proposed for Asian birds, 2005–2006

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OBC uses Inskipp *et al.* (1996) as its baseline checklist for both species and sequence, with 71 species added in 2000 as a result of the inclusion in our area of north-east Asia (OBC Bull. 31: 6–7). Collar (2003, 2005a) carried updates on some of the changes that had been made through taxonomic revisions (the year 2003 has not, however, been fully reviewed), and Rheindt (2006) provided a most helpful explanation of the dramatic recent changes in the genera *Phylloscopus* and *Seicercus*. In this article we attempt to summarise the changes that have been proposed in the literature in the years 2005 and 2006. We have sought to track down as many changes as possible, with the particular help of Norbert Bahr and with reference to Martens & Bahr (2007), but we cannot be certain of the completeness of our coverage. Moreover, owing to the increasingly complex, extensive and revolutionary insights being gained in higher-level avian taxonomy, we endeavour simply to report on new species and proposals for species-level changes in this review, without attempting a review of changes in generic position and other such insights. Our focus is on taxonomic proposals which run contrary to recent opinion, but we also (more opportunistically) list changes indicated during this period which add support to prior proposals.

This is mainly a service to OBC members, so we see no need to do more than mention here the papers by Collar (2006a,b) which recommended 44 new babbler species (see Plate 1) and two additional barbet species respectively. These were published in the Club's own journal *Forktail*, although the babbler revision has naturally been adopted in Collar & Robson (2007) and, for *Paradoxornis margaritae*, in Robson (2007), for which see Reviews, and further support for the separation of *Garrulax canorus* and *G. taewanus* was provided by Li *et al.* (2006). For the latest on *Phylloscopus* and *Seicercus* warbler taxonomy in Asia, Rheindt (2006)—as noted above—and Alström *et al.* (2006) are essential reading, and no attempt is made here to go over this ground afresh.

We should, however, make clear that it is by no means the case that every change proposed in print, even in *Forktail*, is automatically accepted by OBC. There is no mechanism for determining OBC's position on any of these or other new arrangements. For this reason we offer no summary

indicating the number of elevations to species level in the years 2005–2006, since it is unclear which of them will generally become accepted. We may have personal views on particular suggestions, but we seek here to be as impartial as possible in reporting developments, although circumstances inevitably invite or require a degree of commentary. Among the simplest options for those seeking decisions on the “acceptability” of the new proposals is to refer periodically to BirdLife International's website (www.birdlife.org/datazone/species/taxonomy.html), where an updated checklist of the birds of the world, largely convergent on but strictly independent of the work of Dickinson (2003), is maintained as a work-in-progress (with some background explanations for the acceptance or rejection of new proposals).

Plate 1. Two taxa from the review by Collar (2005a): right, Visayan Miniature Babbler *Micromacronus leytenensis*; left, Mindanao Miniature Babbler *M. sordidus*. Specimens of these taxa can apparently only be compared in one museum, the American Museum of Natural History, New York.



In the following accounts, headings with binomials indicate a split, while headings with trinomials or with the equals sign (=) indicate a lump. Where genetic distances are mentioned, we deliberately do not provide the values cited, because there is no agreed calibration by which to gauge the meaning of these distances. We follow the higher taxonomic sequence of Dickinson (2003) except in the case of the *Birds of South Asia*, where the list follows that work's own sequence.

1. Newly described species

Loriculus camiguinensis

The “Camiguin Hanging Parrot” was described by Tello *et al.* (2006), with a popular article and photographs provided by Arndt (2006). The taxon is confined to Camiguin (or Camiguin Sur) off the north coast of Mindanao, Philippines, and is a member of the Philippine Hanging Parrot *Loriculus philippensis* complex. The cardinal feature distinguishing this form from all others in the complex is its absence of sexual dimorphism, all birds being in female plumage, plus a number of minor characters of which the strongest appears to be a more strongly blue-washed face (Collar in prep. a). The conservation status of this bird appears to be highly precarious (Arndt 2006, D. N. S. Allen verbally 2007).

Ninox dubiosa

In a monograph on the Strigidae, Weick (2006) named the “Dubious Hawk Owl” based on an unprovenanced, undated specimen in the Senckenberg Museum (“FNSF”) in Frankfurt. He wrote: “While working at the FNSF on *Ninox* owls for the colour plates in König *et al.* (1999), I discovered this dubious skin between many other *Ninox* skins, labelled only with the inscription ‘*Ninox* spec. no. 25238’. Subsequent mensural analyses of a series of all *Ninox* species confirmed the distinctness of this specimen.” He gave its measurements as wing 195 and 200 mm, tail 120 mm, tarsus 26 mm and bill 18 mm (albeit with no comparison with other *Ninox* morphometrics), and reproduced an illustration from Weick (2005). He provided no further information—not even a plumage description—but placed it in a sequence between Little Sumba Hawk Owl *N. sumbaensis* and Togian Hawk Owl *N. burhani*, thereby implying a distribution within the Asian region and most probably within the Indonesian archipelago. However, in Weick (2005) he had written (translation: NJC):

With the discovery of [*Ninox sumbaensis*] I should draw attention to a specimen similar in plumage and size, and located in the Senckenberg Museum, Frankfurt, with the

label no.25238. The label simply indicates it as a *Ninox*. Probably the original label was lost in the course of the museum's history. No-one knows the collecting locality or the collector. Since this skin resembles no hawk owl hitherto described, I offer an illustration here. Only the iris colour is in doubt. It would be wonderful if one day this owl were to be rediscovered! On the basis of its plumage it should be known as the Many-spotted Hawk Owl (*Ninox multipunctatus*). But all speculation about it is illusory when its provenance is in doubt.

Sangster (2007) has commented: “without a description that states the characters that are purported to differentiate *N. dubiosa*, Weick's book lacks an essential requirement for the proper naming of a new species taxon under the rules of the International Code on Zoological Nomenclature (1999, Article 13.1).” This would also evidently apply to the name *N. multipunctatus*. Moreover, Norbert Bahr (*in litt.* 2007) kindly informs us that the specimen has now been independently scrutinised by J. Martens and G. Mayr, who judge that it neither belongs in *Ninox* nor represents a new species (Martens & Bahr in prep.).

Jabouilleia naungmungensis

The “Naung Mung Scimitar Babbler” (Rappole *et al.* 2005) was discovered in the far north of Kachin state, Myanmar, 50 km west of the border with China, in February 2004. This represented a significant range extension north-west for the genus *Jabouilleia*, which till then was known from various parts of Indochina. Its colder general coloration, lack of an ochreish breast-band, and thick blackish “malar stripe” combine with its apparently unusual dimensions to suggest a taxon sufficiently distinct to be given species status, as its namers propose. However, the original description contains several inconsistencies which complicate matters:

- measurements in the paper's Table 2, which show the bird to be much longer-legged and shorter-tailed than *J. d. danjoui* and *J. d. parvirostris*, do not match those given for the holotype, which are all within the range of existing *Jabouilleia*;
- hallux and hallux nail data claimed to be relevant are not given;
- the bird's “single, thick, black malar stripe, rather than two thin dark stripes separated by a white stripe” transmutes in an accompanying illustration (Plate 2; see also Plate 3) into a thick black *moustachial* line above a white submoustachial stripe and a very narrow malar line, a configuration to be found in *J. danjoui parvirostris*.



Plate 2. Painting by John C. Anderton accompanying the original description of Naung Mung Scimitar Babbler *Jabouilleia naungmungensis*. Foreground (below), *J. naungmungensis*; background (above), Short-tailed Scimitar Babbler *J. danjoui*.

Plate 3. Naung Mung Scimitar Babbler *Jabouilleia naungmungensis*, Naung Mung, Myanmar, February 2004.



Although we make no recommendations here on taxonomic treatment, these points are amplified in Collar (in prep. b), and it is to be noted that *naungmungensis* is treated as a subspecies of *J. danjoui* (with *Jabouilleia* subsumed in *Rimator*) in Collar & Robson (2007).

Liocichla bugunorum

The Bugun Liocichla was perhaps the greatest ornithological sensation of 2006. When Athreya (2006) broke the news mid-year, he took the world's media by storm. Part of the reason for this was the sheer beauty of the bird itself, which has rapidly made Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary in Assam a major target for birding tours; part the unexpectedness of a new species turning up in well-worked India (although this discovery reminds us that north-east India remains far from fully documented); and part the fact that, owing to the

extreme rarity of the species as currently known, no bird died in the process of naming the taxon—instead, feathers were collected from a living specimen to serve as type material and photographs were used extensively to diagnose it. In spite of this unorthodox beginning, this is the most unambiguous biological species to be described in the period in question. Subsequent information on it appeared in *BirdingASIA* (Allen & Catsis 2007) and it features among the other liocichlas in Collar & Robson (2007).

2. Proposed splits: regional reviews

South-East Asia: the updated Robson guide

In an update to Robson (2000), Robson (2005) incorporated a small number of taxonomic changes, mostly based on peer-reviewed publications: Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo *Hierococcyx nisor* (following King 2002); Mongolian Gull *Larus mongolicus* (following Yésou 2001, 2002); Slender-billed Vulture *Gyps tenuirostris* (following Rasmussen & Parry 2001; see also Johnson *et al.* 2006); Indian Spotted Eagle *Aquila hastata* (following Parry *et al.* 2002); Green-backed Flycatcher *Ficedula elisae* (following Round 2000, but see discussion below); and Siberian Stonechat *Saxicola maura* (following Wink *et al.* 2002).

South Asia: the Ripley guide epic

In their long-awaited review of the South Asian avifauna, published in a field guide, Rasmussen & Anderton (2005) presented a formidable range of changes to species limits in Indian subcontinental birds, many of them based on their own insights and evidence. They accorded species rank to the following taxa, the most significant changes (those not supported elsewhere in the literature up to the time of their publication) being in bold and those for which they regarded changes as tentative marked with square brackets around the middle name, and for all of which the symbols

† = arrangement followed by *HBW*10, 11 and 12,
* = split (often not theirs) that falls outside their region,

• = already covered in Collar (2003),
= considered an unequivocal full species in Inskipp *et al.* (1996),

‡ = elaborated in Rasmussen (2005a):

Anhinga melanogaster (as a monotypic Asian species; in line with, e.g., Peters 1931), *Bubulcus coromandus* (in line with McAllan & Bruce 1988), *Ixobrychus minutus**, *Pseudibis davisoni* (in line with, e.g., Peters 1931, Sözer *et al.* 1997; see Plates 4 and 5), *Cygnus bewickii*• (in line with, e.g., Livezey 1996), *Anas zonorhyncha* (in line with a number of previous authors; now compellingly supported by Leader 2006), *Anas albogularis* (in line with, e.g.,

Livezey 1991), *Gyps tenuirostris*•, *Spilornis klossi* (a slightly complicated rearrangement, also dealt with in Ferguson-Lees & Christie 2001), *Circus spilonotus*• (in line with, e.g., Amadon & Bull 1988), *Buteo burmanicus* (revived in line with reference to specimen material and molecular studies by Riesing *et al.* 2003, Kruckenhauser *et al.* 2004), *Aquila hastata*•, *Aquila heliaca** (in line with, e.g., Sibley & Monroe 1990), *Spizaetus limnaetus* (in line with, e.g., Fleming *et al.* 1984), ***Rallus indicus***, *Charadrius alexandrinus**, *Gallinago gallinago** (in line with Banks *et al.* 2002), *Limosa [limosa] melanuroides*, ***Burhinus indicus***, *Chalcophaps indica**, *Treron affinis*, *Treron phayrei*, *Treron chloropterus* (all three in line with, e.g., Hussain 1958), ***Ducula nicobarica***, *Centropus [sinensis] parroti* (missed from Appendix 3 of Rasmussen & Anderton 2005), *Centropus [sinensis] andamanensis*#, *Surniculus [lugubris] dicruroides*, *Hierococyx niscolor*•, *Tyto deroepstorffi*•, *Tyto longimembris*•, ***Phodilus assimilis***, *Otus lettia*•, *Bubo bengalensis*•, ***Strix***



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Plate 4. Black Ibis *Pseudibis papillosa*, Gir, Gujarat, February 1998.

Plate 5. White-shouldered Ibis *Pseudibis davisoni*, Tmat Boey, Cambodia, November 2006.



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nivicola, *Ninox obscura*, ***Ninox isolata*** (implicitly from *N. affinis*), *Caprimulgus andamanicus* (in line with Sangster & Rozendaal 2004; but already covered in Collar 2005a), *Ptilolaemus austeni*• (in line with Kemp 1988, 1995), *Megalaima malabarica* (in line with Wijesinghe 1994), ***Chrysocolaptes stricklandi***, *Mirafraga affinis*• (in line with Alström 1998), ***Riparia chinensis***, *Ptyonoprogne (Hirundo) obsoleta* (in line with Sibley & Monroe 1990), *Hirundo domicola* (in line with Sibley & Monroe 1990), ***Hirundo hyperythra***, *Motacilla tshutschensis*• (in line with Pavlova *et al.* 2003; not treated by OBC as *M. flava similima*, *contra* Appendix 3 of Rasmussen & Anderton 2005), ***Coracina dobsoni***, ***Pericrocotus albifrons***, ***Pericrocotus speciosus***, ***Tephrodornis sylvicola***, ***Tephrodornis affinis***, *Rhipidura albogularis*† (in line with Baker 1922–1930), ***Pycnonotus fuscoflavescens***†, ***Pycnonotus flaviventris***†, ***Pycnonotus gularis***†, ***Hypsipetes ganeesa***†, *Chloropsis jerdoni*†• (in line with Wells *et al.* 2003), *Lanius phoenicuroides*• (in line with Kryukov 1995), *Zoothera aurea*•, *Zoothera neilgherriensis*•, *Zoothera imbricata*†• (all *Zoothera* in line with Sangster *et al.* 1998), ***Turdus maximus***†, *Turdus similimus*† (in line with Henry 1971), *Turdus [ruficollis] atrogularis*†• (in line with, e.g., Dickinson 2003), ***Rhinomyias nicobaricus***, *Ficedula albicilla* (independently backed up by Svensson *et al.* 2005), ***Cyornis magnirostris***, ***Tarsiger rufilatus***, ***Copsychus albiventris***, ***Myiomela albiventris***† (from *Brachypteryx major albiventris*), ***Oenanthe chrysopygia***†•, ***Trochalopteron imbricatum***† (from *Garrulax lineatus*), ***Trochalopteron chrysopterum***† (from *G. erythrocephalus*), *Pomatorhinus [schisticeps] horsfieldi*#, *Pomatorhinus [schisticeps] melanurus*† (from *P. horsfieldi*), ***Rimator malacoptilus***†•, ***Spelaornis reptatus***†, ***Spelaornis oatesi***†, ***Sphenocichla roberti***†, ***Turdoides huttoni*** (but see Collar 2006a), ***Babax [lanceolatus] woodi*** (but see Collar 2006a), ***Gampsorhynchus rufulus***†•, *Alcippe manipurensis*†, *Prinia cinerascens*† (in line with, e.g., Clements 1991), *Prinia superciliaris*, *Cettia canturians*••, *Cettia brunnescens* (in line with data later published in Alström *et al.* 2007), *Bradypterus davidi*† (in line with, e.g., Round & Loskot 1995), ***Acrocephalus [stentoreus] brunnescens***, *Hippolais rama*• (in line with, e.g., Svensson 2001), *Hippolais pallida* (excluding *H. opaca*; in line with, e.g., Helbig & Seibold 1999, Svensson 2001 and recently Ottosson *et al.* 2005; but Eastern Olivaceous Warbler is only known from our region by virtue of a record from China needing further support, *vide* Inskipp *et al.* 1996), *Phylloscopus [collybita] tristis*, *Phylloscopus nitidus* (in line with, e.g., Helbig *et al.* 1995), *Seicercus whistleri*•, *Seicercus tephrocephalus*• (both *Seicercus*

in line with Alström & Olsson 1999), *Sylvia althaea*†•, *Sylvia nana* (excluding *deserti*) (in line with Shirihai *et al.* 2001), *Sylvia crassirostris*•, *Parus aplonotus*, *Sitta cinnamoventris*, *Sitta przewalskii*, *Dicaeum virescens*, *Leptocoma [Nectarinia] brasiliana*, *Aethopyga vigorsii*• (in line with Cheke & Mann 2001, Mann 2002), *Emberiza striolata* (excluding *sahari*) (an arrangement missed but independently endorsed by Kirwan & Shirihai 2007), *Carpodacus verreauxi*‡, *Carpodacus grandis*†• (in line with Voous 1977), *Carpodacus severtzovi*‡, *Lonchura atricapilla*• (in line with Restall 1995, 1996), *Sturnia blythii* (from *Sturnus malabaricus blythii*), *Gracula indica*• (in line with Feare & Craig 1998), *Oriolus kundoo*, *Dicrurus lophorinus*, *Pica pica** (in line with, e.g., Birkhead 1991, Enggist-Dublin & Birkhead 1992), *Nucifraga multipunctata*, *Corvus [macrorhynchos] japonensis*, *Corvus [m.] leuallantii* and *Corvus [m.] culminatus* (a number of such rearrangements of *C. macrorhynchos* have previously been proposed, as outlined by Dickinson *et al.* 2004).

These taxa are helpfully listed out in Appendix 3 in Rasmussen & Anderton (2005). It is to be noted that Rasmussen & Anderton (2005) retained the Houbara Bustard *Chlamydotis undulata* as one species, and mistakenly indicated *Mirafra cantillans* and *Lanius isabellinus* as being treated differently from Inskipp *et al.* (1996).

Clearly many of these splits are gaining wide acceptance, but it remains to be seen whether future editions of world checklists, such as Dickinson (2003), will accept them without the more formal presentation of evidence in peer-reviewed journals. Even paring down the number of changes on offer to those 49 that are otherwise unsupported in the literature, such presentation is likely to take a great deal of time. The commitment of Rasmussen (2005b) in this respect is admirable.

Philippine splits

The Philippine avifauna was subject to a “first-pass” review by Peterson (2006), which resulted in the suggestion of over a hundred elevations of subspecies and/or populations to species level. However, this was done with deliberate cursoriness, without the use of scientific names and without due recourse to the literature and to certain revisions already made, such that the exercise as a work of taxonomy was considered unreliable (Collar 2007) and not to be taken as a serious attempt at formal revision (Peterson 2007). Nevertheless, Peterson is in our view right to be pushing for renewed taxonomic study of the Philippine avifauna, and fuller evaluations of the evidence will doubtless in some cases at least support the proposals he was putting forward (e.g. Collar in prep. a).

3. Proposed splits: other revisions

Casmerodius modestus

Kushlan & Hancock (2005) justified the split of the Asian–Australasian “Eastern Great Egret” *C. modestus* (they used the genus *Ardea*; see Plate 6) from what they continued to call Great Egret *C. albus* (but which will have to be called Western Great Egret) with the following commentary:

Sheldon (1987) found clearly that the southeast Asia population of great egrets is distinct from the North American population. The degree of distinction is equivalent to that of the Intermediate Egret and so should be recognised equivalently, i.e. as separate species. Beyond molecular evidence, the Eastern Great Egret differs from the western [*sic*] Great Egret in having red legs during nesting... and using an Aerial Stretch display.

Naturally it has to be asked whether genetic comparison between two highly disjunct populations is the most appropriate indicator of relatedness, and indeed at the end of their entry on this “new” species Kushlan & Hancock (2005) admitted that the split deserves “critical examination”, not least because birds showing intermediate characters between nominate *albus* and *modestus* have been reported from northern

Plate 6. “Eastern Great Egret” *Casmerodius modestus*, Sri Lanka, April 2004.



China and Japan, where the ranges of the two taxa approach each other most closely. In any case, as the quotation above indicates and as Inskipp *et al.* (1996) noticed, the comparison in Sheldon (1987) is between *modestus* and the North American form *egretta*, leaving it unclear whether *albus* is better kept with *egretta* or *modestus*.

Pernis steerei

A brief biomolecular analysis of the honey-buzzards Perninae by Gamauf & Haring (2005) resulted in the identification of a well-supported differentiation within Barred Honey-buzzard *P. celebensis*, suggesting that the Philippine populations merit species status as *P. steerei*. We assume that, if adopted, this arrangement would require the use of the English names Philippine Honey-buzzard and Sulawesi Honey-buzzard for the two species, since both are barred below (Philippine more lightly, and with a longer crest).

Spizaetus pinskeri

Preleuthner & Gamauf (1998) tentatively established the taxon *pinskeri* as a subspecies of Philippine Hawk Eagle *S. philippensis*, but subsequently discovered that birds belonging to *pinskeri* (perhaps to be named “Southern Philippine Hawk Eagle” as opposed to “Northern Philippine Hawk Eagle”) are genetically well differentiated and probably merit species rank (Gamauf *et al.* 2005a,b). Below (Table 1) we present the diagnostic features from Gamauf *et al.* (1998), but a more thorough and precise evaluation of consistent differences is needed. It is worth noting that Gamauf *et al.* (2005b) suggested that Old World hawk eagles of the genus *Spizaetus* be transferred to the genus *Nisaetus*.

Hierococcyx bocki

Payne (2005) separated out at species level the Sundaic montane form *bocki* (“Dark Hawk Cuckoo”) from Large Hawk Cuckoo *H.*

sparverioides, pointing out that they have different songs, perhaps more different from each other than either is from Common Hawk-cuckoo *H. varius*. Insofar as the two differ with no overlap in size, adult plumage color and juvenile plumage as well as in voice, they appear to be distinct species... The molecular phylogeny indicates that *H. bocki* is basal to these other two hawk-cuckoos, and that *bocki* and *sparverioides* are not a monophyletic set and so are not conspecific.

Dark Hawk Cuckoo is smaller than Large (the wing is much shorter), with a dark face and darker overall plumage.

Cuculus lepidus

The separation of “Horsfield’s Cuckoo” *C. horsfieldi* (called Oriental Cuckoo *C. optatus* by Payne 2005) from Himalayan Cuckoo *C. saturatus* was noted earlier (Collar 2003), but King (2005) and Payne (2005) simultaneously went a step further and split off “Sunda Lesser Cuckoo” (also known as Sunda Cuckoo) *C. lepidus* from the already diminished *C. saturatus* on the basis of darker overall plumage with broader barring below, darker, rustier-buff undertail-coverts, shorter wings and a song delivered at a higher pitch and with 2–3 rather than 3–4 notes (although variations in song in *lepidus* led King to speculate that even there perhaps more than one taxon might be involved).

Surniculus dicruroides

Surniculus musschenbroeki

Payne (2005) assembled evidence that the once monospecific Drongo Cuckoo *S. lugubris* breaks down into four species (Philippine *S. velutinus* was already noted in Collar 2003). He (and Rasmussen & Anderton 2005; see above) christened nominate *lugubris* of lowland Assam, Thailand, the Sundaic region and Sri Lanka “Square-tailed Drongo

Table 1. Diagnostic features of *Spizaetus philippensis* and *S. pinskeri*, based on Gamauf *et al.* (1998).

	<i>S. philippensis</i>	<i>S. pinskeri</i>
crown	broad blackish-brown streaks	pale with fine black shaft-streaks which may be very bold
head-sides	sienna brown	ivory to pale olive-grey or dark olive-buff
throat and breast	ochraceous-tawny with bold black streaks	white with bold black streaks
belly	uniformly antique brown	barred clove-brown to black and white
underwing-coverts	uniform ochraceous-tawny but with fine, slightly darker barring	barred blackish and white (on ochraceous background)
feathered legs	finely barred clove-brown and white	heavily banded blackish and white
sex dimorphism	more pronounced	less pronounced
morphometrics	larger	smaller



Plate 7. Fork-tailed Drongo Cuckoo *Surniculus dicruroides*, Ta Nung Valley, Da Lat, Vietnam, December 2006.

Cuckoo”, reporting its song as a uniformly rising series of six notes whose tone is mellow than in “Fork-tailed Drongo Cuckoo” *S. dicruroides* (Plate 7) of the eastern Himalayas to China, in which—in any case—the first two notes of the song are on the same pitch. What he called “Moluccan Drongo Cuckoo” *S. musschenbroeki*, which ranges through Sulawesi as well as the North Moluccas, has a song which differs from other *Surniculus* in barely rising in pitch between notes, and with each note slightly falling in pitch.

Pycnonotus dispar *Pycnonotus montis*

Rasmussen & Anderton’s (2005) break-up of the *Pycnonotus melanicterus* group (see above) was matched contemporaneously by Fishpool & Tobias (2005). Both sets of authors determined that the group breaks down five ways, into Black-capped Bulbul *P. melanicterus*, Black-crested Bulbul *P. flaviventris* and Flame-throated Bulbul *P. gularis* (all Indian subcontinent) plus Ruby-throated Bulbul *P. dispar* (Sumatra and Java) and Bornean Bulbul *P. montis* (Borneo), with birds varying in eye

colour, throat colour, tail colour and pattern, and degree of crestedness, these characters leap-frogging each other geographically in an intriguing fashion (Table 2).

Alophoixus longirostris

Fishpool & Tobias (2005) split the Indonesian endemic Golden Bulbul *Alophoixus affinis* (they used the genus *Thapsinillas*) into two species, Northern Golden Bulbul *A. longirostris* (Sangihe, the Togian, Banggai and Sula Islands, North Moluccas and Obi) and Southern Golden Bulbul *A. affinis* (Buru, Seram and Ambon). Consistent morphological differences between the two were not indicated; justification for the division rested entirely on the vocal differences they exhibit. “Song of all races [of *longirostris*] lacks long sliding notes and descending cadence prevalent in song of *T. affinis*.” However, the authors acknowledged that this is just “a preliminary measure, drawing attention to the broadest rift in the complex, and paving the way for appropriate fieldwork and research into the song, morphology and genetics of all taxa involved”. They pointed out that the Buru form *A. a. mysticalis*—this spelling asserted as correct by Fishpool & Tobias (2005)—not only looks highly distinct but also sings rather differently from other *affinis*, and that, if split, the Sangihe form *A. l. platenae*, with several strong plumage features and a relatively distinctive voice, would at once enter the IUCN Red List, since “it is restricted to a tiny area of ridge forest... where it is thought that only 20–30 individuals survive”.

Parus weigoldicus

Eck & Martens (2006) agreed with Salzburger *et al.* (2002) that the surprisingly high genetic distance the latter reported for the form *weigoldicus* of Willow Tit *P. montanus* suggests something more than a subspecies. Moreover:

It differs conspicuously from parapatric *affinis* by larger wing length, shorter tail length, smaller TWI [tail/wing index] and less pronounced tail gradation, and in

Table 2. Character diaspora in black-capped bulbuls of the *Pycnonotus melanicterus* complex, based on Rasmussen & Anderton (2005) and Fishpool & Tobias (2005). The asterisk (*) is to note that some subspecies have morphs with variably red throats.

taxon	range	crest	eye	throat	tail-tips
<i>P. melanicterus</i>	Sri Lanka	none	brown	yellow	large white
<i>P. gularis</i>	SW India	short	yellow	orange-red	small white
<i>P. flaviventris</i>	N India to SE Asia	long	yellow	black*	none
<i>P. dispar</i>	Sumatra, Java	almost none	red	red	small pale
<i>P. montis</i>	Borneo	short	red-brown	pale yellow	none

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Plate 8. “Sichuan Tit” *Parus weigoldicus*, Sichuan, China, June 2007.

coloration... [It is] conspicuously dark, earthy brown... on the back, the flanks very dark... The song-type [there are four such in Willow Tits across their large range] is Sino-Japanese... while that of *affinis* is the Alpine type.

They recommended the English name “Sichuan Willow Tit”, but (as with the egrets above) this will fall foul of the now widely agreed requirement to match the descriptor in the parent species—people would probably prefer to use “Sichuan Tit” for *P. weigoldicus* rather than have to use (e.g.) “Eurasian Willow Tit” for the remaining *P. montanus*.

Parus minor

Parus cinereus

Harrap (1996) offered an excellent conspectus of the four taxonomic groups into which the Great Tit *Parus major* falls (*major*, yellow belly, greenish back; *minor*, greyish belly, greenish back; *cinereus* pale grey belly, bluish-grey back; and *bokharensis*, white belly, pale grey back), and of these he acknowledged one, Turkestan Tit *P. bokharensis*, as a full species. However, Päckert *et al.* (2005) and Eck & Martens (2006) have promoted a diametrically opposite view, reducing *bokharensis*

Plate 9. “Eastern Great Tit” *Parus minor*, Ilsan, South Korea, February 2007.



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to a subspecies of *P. major* (see below) but elevating the other groups to species status, resulting in a Northern Great Tit *P. major*, Eastern Great Tit *P. minor* and Southern Great Tit *P. cinereus*.

Hybridisation between *P. major* and *P. minor* is confined to a set of relatively restricted zones; the songs are somewhat different, as are their proportions. Ecologically, *major* seems to be more a species of anthropogenic habitats, using villages and farmland, whereas *minor* keeps to woodlands and the outskirts of settlements. The genetic distance between the two is striking. Kvist & Rytkönen (2006) discussed a secondary contact zone of *P. major* and *P. minor* in the far eastern Amur River valley, showing that effective hybridisation does occur across a broad area, and that an individual bird’s phenotype does not always reveal a hybrid origin, but—as Eck & Martens (2006) concluded—hybridisation currently appears to be both limited and stable.

Eck & Martens (2006) were less confident of the distinctions to be made between *P. minor* and *P. cinereus*. The genetic distance is, they thought, “notable”, but the vocal differences are less than those between *P. major* and *P. minor*, their morphometrics are similar, and the extent of the zones of contact is unstudied.

Orthotomus heterolaemus

Ryan *et al.* (2006) split the “Rufous-headed Tailorbird” *O. heterolaemus* of montane Mindanao in the Philippines from Mountain Tailorbird *O. cucullatus*, which ranges from north-east India east to Luzon and Seram in the eastern archipelagos, without being particularly explicit about the characters that divide them. The key difference is the “crown and head-sides orange-rufous, becoming buffier on throat and breast”. This case is under consideration by Collar (in prep. a).

Orthotomus frontalis

Ryan *et al.* (2006) also split “Rufous-fronted Tailorbird” *O. frontalis* of the east-central and southern Philippines from Philippine Tailorbird *O. castaneiceps*, on the basis of its “having a grey hood, with rufous restricted to frontal mask”, with the further claim of a difference in vocalisations, although this is also described more tentatively as an apparent difference. Of this split, mooted earlier, Inskipp *et al.* (1996) reported that “Dickinson *et al.* (1991) treated *frontalis* as conspecific with *castaneiceps* because no case for treating them as separate has been published”, a circumstance which, Ryan *et al.* (2006) notwithstanding, appears to continue to apply. This case is under consideration by Collar (in prep. a).

Phylloscopus (benguetensis)

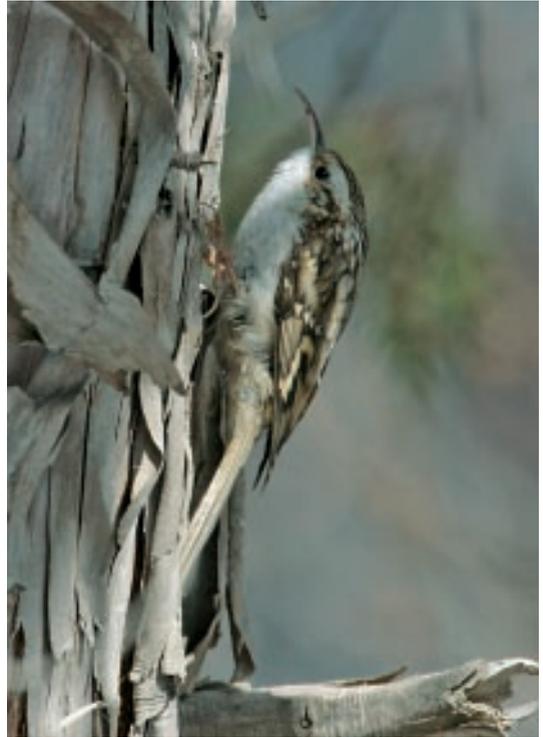
Strong molecular evidence suggested to Olsson *et al.* (2005) that the form *benguetensis* of Mountain Leaf-warbler *P. trivirgatus* should be treated as specifically distinct; however, they lacked samples from elsewhere in the Philippines, so that it is impossible on their evidence to indicate where the line between the two forms sampled should be drawn. On morphological grounds Collar (in prep. a) suggests that all Philippine representatives of *trivirgatus* (including *benguetensis*) could be regrouped as Philippine Mountain Leaf-warbler *P. nigrorum*.

Sitta arctica

Red'kin & Konovalova (2006) maintained that the form *arctica* (northern Siberia) of Eurasian Nuthatch *S. europaea* should be treated as a full species (perhaps "Siberian Nuthatch"). It is larger than any other race but the tarsus is proportionately shorter (albeit with a longer hind-claw) and the bill is narrower-based, with a shorter and narrower black eyestripe, dark grey (not pale grey) underwing-coverts, > 50% white outer rectrices (< 50% in other subspecies), no pale tips to the greater coverts and no sexual dimorphism (in both cases unlike all other subspecies). The voice is reportedly "sharply different" from all forms of *europaea*, but this needs confirmation. The degree of geographical overlap between *arctica* and (other) subspecies of *europaea* also needs clarification. Red'kin & Konovalova (2006) indicated that the range of *arctica* "borders and even partly overlaps with the ranges of three subspecies of *S. europaea*", but their map depicts an extensive area of sympatry with *S. e. baicalensis*, which is either conclusive evidence of two species or an indication of considerable winter intermingling. However, limited mitochondrial DNA sampling of *arctica* shows strong divergence from all other *S. europaea* forms (Zink *et al.* 2006).

Certhia hodgsoni

Within the Eurasian Treecreeper *C. familiaris* there are three Sino-Himalayan subspecies grouping under the senior name *hodgsoni* which show both a very considerable genetic disjunction and a notable vocal distinctiveness (Tietze *et al.* 2006). Morphologically they are extremely similar, and there is a challenge here for field ornithologists to meet in offering ways of telling apart the two new species, if indeed they are accepted as such. It is worth noting that the position of the subspecies *bianchii*, which Harrap (1996) and apparently also Martens & Tietze (2006) treated as part of the Sino-Himalayan group, despite Tietze *et al.* (2006) attributing it to the Eurasian group, requires clarification. Martens & Tietze (2006)



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Plate 10. "Hodgson's Treecreeper" *Certhia hodgsoni bianchii*, Huzu Bei Shan, Qinghai, China, April 2005.

suggested the name "Hodgson's Treecreeper" for the new form.

Certhia manipurensis

Brown-throated Treecreeper *C. discolor* is noted for the variety of its forms and the degree of their disjunction across southern Asia, but the possibility of more than one species being involved was not seriously raised until Martens *et al.* (2002), in the process of elevating Sichuan Treecreeper *C. tianquanensis* to species level, demonstrated a high degree of difference in the songs of northern nominate *discolor* and south-eastern forms such as *shanensis*, *manipurensis* and *meridionalis*. This vocal difference has now been supported by cytochrome-*b* molecular analysis, showing a high distance value between *discolor* and *manipurensis* (Tietze *et al.* 2006). Although the other subspecies have not yet been analysed, and Tietze *et al.* (2006) suggested that striking morphological differences may reflect strong genetic divergence among these taxa, Martens & Tietze (2006) assumed that their vocal similarity to *manipurensis* will be reflected in their genetic relationships. Thus they isolated the Brown-throated Treecreeper *C. discolor* of the Himalayas as one monotypic species and grouped all the other races into "Hume's Treecreeper" *C. manipurensis*.

Enicurus borneensis

Molecular analysis of Bornean material of White-crowned Forktail *E. leschenaultii*, which ranges from China and the eastern Himalayas to Borneo and Java (Collar 2005b), has disclosed a significant reproductive disjunction between upland (form *borneensis*) and lowland (form *frontalis*) populations on the island (Moyle *et al.* 2005). The differences between these two taxa lie in *borneensis* having a “longer tail, and white on inner secondaries confined to narrow straight-edged patch on tip of outer web” (Collar 2005b), and its overall size is greater (Moyle *et al.* 2005); but closer scrutiny of characters, such as extent of white on the forehead, may reveal further evidence (the entire species requires review in this regard).

Moyle *et al.* (2005) remarked that “despite ample opportunity for contact and inter-breeding at mid-elevations, the morphological differences between montane and lowland birds persist, suggesting the existence of two species rather than subspecies”. However, it is not clear that any of their samples came from mid-elevation populations (it appears not), and while they identified high genetic divergence within *frontalis* (grouping birds from Sabah separately from those of Sarawak, Sumatra, and Malaya), they had no samples from the majority of the Bornean population occurring within Indonesian territory. Altogether, therefore, it is still a little unclear whether an elevational or geographical cline or zone of parapatry is involved, or perhaps even an area of unoccupied habitat. Until this matter is resolved, their interpretation of their results, while strongly indicative, are perhaps not yet fully conclusive.

Rhodopechys sanguineus (sensu stricto)

Kirwan *et al.* (2006) examined the question whether the Crimson-winged Finch might divide up into western (African, race *alienus*) and eastern (Asian, nominate *sanguineus*) species, but could not quite bring themselves to come off the fence, concluding

Plate 11. Crimson-winged Finch *Rhodopechys sanguineus sanguineus*, Eastern Turkey, 30 May 2004.



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that the two forms have “achieved allospecies status, but whether they have achieved full species rank under the modern definition of the Biological Species Concept must probably await the results of molecular analysis”. Again, if it is a split it is one from outside the region, but worth noting.

4. Reinforcements of previous splits

Melanitta deglandi

Melanitta americana

The split of “White-winged Scoter” *M. deglandi* from “Velvet Scoter” *M. fusca*, and of “Common Scoter” *M. nigra* from “Black Scoter” *M. americana* was already covered by Collar (2003). However, it is worth noting that in the period under review Collinson *et al.* (2006) provided by far the most substantial account of the evidence, and they clarified that, for the time being, the race *stejnegeri*, which occurs in the OBC region, belongs with *deglandi*. The cases for both splits are strong; however, what happens to the taxa in the areas in northern Siberia where *nigra* approaches *americana* and where *fusca* approaches *stejnegeri* appears to be poorly documented, and it would be enormously interesting for this to be fully clarified.

Collocalia linchi

Cave Swiftlet *C. linchi* was covered in Collar (2003), where it was noted that Dickinson (2003) had accepted the argument in Somadikarta (1986), despite the contradictory evidence contained in that paper and pointed out in Inskipp *et al.* (1996). However, since then two separate pieces of molecular work (Price *et al.* 2005, Thomassen *et al.* 2005) have revealed a disjunction from Glossy Swiftlet *C. esculenta* that appears to confirm *linchi* as a separate species.

Parus hypermelaenus

Harrap (1996), and subsequently Dickinson (2003), recognised the “Black-bibbed Tit” *P. hypermelaenus* of China and Myanmar as separate from Marsh Tit *P. palustris* by virtue of its much more extensive black throat, more olive-green upperparts and slight ragged crest, and Inskipp *et al.* (1996), while not recognising the split, pointed to evidence of some vocal differences. Eck & Martens (2006) noted that representatives of *palustris* and *hypermelaenus* approach each other closely with no evidence of intergradation, and that the cytochrome-*b* distance between them is far greater than the equivalent distance between the distinct western and eastern populations of *P. palustris* itself. On this basis they provisionally accepted Black-bibbed Tit as a species.

Ficedula elisae (with a note on *F. beijingnica*)

Round (2000) elected to split “the distinctive green-



Plate 12. “Green-backed Flycatcher” *Ficedula elisae*, Po Toi Island, Hong Kong, April 2005.

backed form of Narcissus Flycatcher *Ficedula narcissina* as Green-backed Flycatcher *F. elisae*”, and in this he was followed by Robson (2005) (see above). The matter was considered by Zhang *et al.* (2006), who judged that vocal differences between *elisae* and *narcissina* were fully distinguishable:

Syntax characters (verses and elements structure), the maximum frequency and frequency range of songs all differ markedly...

In addition, 100% of the males of *narcissina* and *elisae*, the songs of which were recorded in different areas, were classified correctly in discriminant analysis. The acoustic divergences are clearer than in related cases...

However, Töpfer (2006) considered the situation with additional morphological evidence, which shows a cline in both plumage and morphometric characters, with nominate *narcissina* at one end and *elisae* at the other. He pointed out that the Zhang analysis had not sampled subspecies of *narcissina* other than the nominate, and felt that molecular analysis might helpfully resolve the issue but meanwhile favoured subspecies status for *elisae*. Incidentally, without reaching a taxonomic conclusion, <http://www.birdskorea.org/narcissustypes.asp> provides a useful review of this complex.

Although not entirely relevant to this review, it is worth noting that the species *Ficedula beijingnica*, described by Zheng *et al.* (2000), is also dealt with in Töpfer (2006) and Zhang *et al.* (2006). As Dickinson (2003) had surmised, it has proved to be a subadult form of *elisae*.

Montifringilla henrici

Collar (2003) already treated this species, but it is worth noting, as perhaps a final word on the issue, that Qu *et al.* (2006) showed that *henrici* is less closely related to White-winged Snowfinch *M. nivalis* (with which it is frequently lumped) than the latter is to Black-winged Snowfinch *M. adamsi* (with which *henrici* is partly sympatric).



Plate 13. Black-winged Snowfinch *Montifringilla nivalis henrici*, Lhasa, Tibet, China, 4 June 2004.

5. Putative split

Ficedula riedeli

Molecular analysis of a suite of *Ficedula* taxa (Outlaw & Voelker 2006) found an apparent paraphyletic situation within the Rufous-chested Flycatcher *F. dumetoria* (southern Thailand to Flores, plus Tanimbar) in which the disjunct eastern outlier *riedeli* on Tanimbar emerged as sister to Palawan Flycatcher *F. platenae* (in which both sexes resemble female *F. dumetoria*). If this is confirmed, it seems that Indonesia will have a new species, “Tanimbar Flycatcher” (as it might be called) *F. riedeli*, to add to its long list of endemics.

6. Proposed lumps

Cacomantis variolosus sepulcralis

Cacomantis henrichi = *C. variolosus*

Collar (2003) omitted to indicate that Payne (1997) lumped Rusty-breasted Cuckoo *C. sepulcralis* (Plate 14) with Brush Cuckoo *C. variolosus*. Payne (2005) maintained this arrangement with the following commentary:

The songs are similar in northern [smaller, more rufous; *sepulcralis*] and southern [larger, greyer; *variolosus*] birds, the size and plumage color intergrade in the Moluccas, and the populations do not consistently differ in eye-ring color, with both gray and yellow eye-rings occurring in New Guinea and Australia, the feature often noted in field guides as distinguishing the two sets... These northern and southern birds are genetically similar.

On the Moluccan Cuckoo *C. henrichi*, which he (Payne 1997) had earlier recognised, Payne (2005: 441) had an extended commentary to indicate that this taxon, considered Near Threatened in Collar (2001) and listed for Bacan and Halmahera only, was mistakenly based on small rufous individuals of *C. variolosus infaustus* while in reality a variety of shades and sizes exists in the North Moluccas



Plate 14. Rusty-bellied Cuckoo *Cacomantis variolosus sepulcralis*, Gunung Ambang, Sulawesi, September 2004.

with no consistency in their differentiation. Their songs appear to be similar to *variolosus*. Moreover, “the genetic distance of ‘*heinrichi*’ from other *Cacomantis variolosus* is less than that between other forms of *C. variolosus*”.

Chrysococcyx russatus* = *C. minutillus poecilurus
Chrysococcyx minutillus rufomerus
Chrysococcyx minutillus crassirostris

Building on Payne (1997), which was missed by Collar (2003), Payne (2005) judged that “Gould’s Bronze Cuckoo” *C. russatus* (eastern Indonesian archipelago) is a synonym of *C. minutillus poecilurus* from New Guinea (in 1997 he had regarded it as a valid name for what he later called *poecilurus*), and he decided that Green-cheeked Bronze Cuckoo *C. rufomerus* (eastern Lesser Sundas) and Pied Bronze Cuckoo *C. crassirostris* (Tanimbar, Kai and Tayandu Islands)—although admitting the latter is relatively distinctive—are subspecies of Little Bronze Cuckoo *C. minutillus*. Songs are apparently identical, and the same group of host species is used throughout.

Centropus phasianinus spilopterus

Although allowing it species status in Payne (1997), given that it is virtually all black and unpatterned

and ostensibly therefore very distinctive, Payne (2005) treated Kai Coucal *C. spilopterus* (Kai Islands, Indonesia) as a subspecies of Pheasant Coucal *C. phasianinus*, indicating that it is in fact close in plumage to the smaller race *nigricans* of New Guinea, and that Pheasant Coucals show considerable variation in plumage colour and pattern.

Centropus sinensis andamanensis

Although Rasmussen & Anderton (2005) were inclined to regard Brown or Andaman Coucal *C. andamanensis* (Andaman Islands, India) as a valid species, and although Payne (1997) himself already had done so, Payne (2005) treated it as a subspecies of Greater Coucal *C. sinensis*. However, the situation is not clear-cut, and he simply remarked:

Taking into account the pitch differences between sexes and the variation in calls given by a single bird, the geographically remote populations of Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis* in southern Asia and the Andaman Islands appear to be the same species, although these birds differ in size and sometimes in plumage.

Plate 15. “Andaman Coucal” *Centropus sinensis andamanensis*, Jackson Bay, Little Andaman, January 2007.



Parus major bokharensis

This entry picks up from the discussion of *Parus minor* and *P. cinereus* above, drawing on the insights of Päckert *et al.* (2005) and Eck & Martens (2006) in contrast to those of Harrap (1996), who recognised the Turkestan Tit *P. bokharensis* as a full species. Whatever their morphological differences, members of the *bokharensis* group are genetically and vocally very similar to Northern Great Tit, and in parts of their range they hybridise freely and extensively with *P. major* (Päckert *et al.*

2005). For these reasons the return of *P. bokharensis* to subspecies status within the newly restricted Northern Great Tit is proposed.

Parus cyanus flavipectus

In spite of the robust defence of the specific status of Yellow-breasted Tit *P. flavipectus* by Harrap (1996), Eck & Martens (2006) relegated it to the status of subspecies of Azure Tit *P. cyanus*: “no notable cytochrome-*b* distance is shown between white-breasted and yellow-breasted Azure Tits,... which even share the same haplotype cluster”. Although they seemed to be unable to trace hybrids or identify any hybrid zones, they concluded that “we cannot identify any sound reason to split white-breasted and yellow-breasted Azure Tits at the species level despite earlier suggestions and arrangements... and we treat them as conspecific”.

Parus ater melanolophus

Eck & Martens (2006) called into doubt the traditional recognition of the Spot-winged Tit *P. melanolophus* as a western Himalayan endemic. It has long been known to hybridise narrowly with the Coal Tit *P. ater* at its eastern limits, but molecular analysis (Martens *et al.* 2006), combined with various morphological and experimental cross-breeding work (outlined in Eck & Martens 2006), appears now to suggest that the interbreeding is too extensive to permit *melanolophus* species status, for all its distinctiveness in plumage.

Remiz consobrinus coronatus

Harrap’s (1996) division of (European) Penduline Tit *R. pendulinus* into four species has not been universally followed (e.g. Dickinson 2003), but Eck & Martens (2006) produced conclusive evidence from Gavrillov (1972) that at least two species occur, since the forms *macronyx* (Harrap’s “Black-headed Penduline Tit” *R. macronyx*) and *coronatus* (Harrap’s “White-crowned Penduline Tit” *R. coronatus*) are widely sympatric in Kazakhstan. Eck & Martens (2006) suggested that *R. macronyx* could be treated as separate from *R. pendulinus sensu stricto* but remained as yet unconvinced that Chinese Penduline Tit *R. consobrinus* is distinct from *R. coronatus*, thus reducing the number of species of *Remiz* in the Asian region from two to one.

Aegithalos niveogularis bonvaloti

Inskipp *et al.* (1996) treated Black-browed Tit *A. bonvaloti* (Plate 16) as a full species because it is morphologically distinct from Rufous-fronted Tit *A. iouschistos* (with which it was lumped by Harrap 1996) and shows no hybridisation where their ranges meet. However, although they mentioned that Martens & Eck (1995) had treated *bonvaloti* as



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Plate 16. “Chinese Penduline Tit” *Remiz consobrinus coronatus*, Seosan, South Korea, February 2007.

Plate 17. Black-browed Tit *Aegithalos niveogularis bonvaloti*, Qangshan, Dali, Yunnan Province, April 2005.



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a race of White-throated Tit *A. niveogularis*, they offered no reason for demurring to this arrangement. Ironically, Eck & Martens (2006) offered their own commentary on Martens & Eck (1995), saying that while the arrangement is supported by external morphological traits, “this does not seem to fit with general zoogeography [indeed, *bonvaloti* (north-east Myanmar and western China) is separated from *niveogularis* (western and central Himalayas) by *iouschistos* (central and eastern Himalayas)], and the limited ecological evidence is inconclusive”. They referred to Dickinson (2003), who like Inskipp *et al.* (1996) maintained all three taxa here mentioned as three species, but then concluded without explanation: “We prefer to maintain the arrangement offered by Martens & Eck (1995), however we look forward to a molecular analysis, which will no doubt clarify the picture.”

Muscicapa dauurica williamsoni

Clement & Taylor (2006) lumped the Brown-streaked Flycatcher *M. williamsoni* in Asian Brown Flycatcher *M. dauurica*, with the comment: “Distinctive race *williamsoni* sometimes treated as a separate species, mainly on basis that breeding range approaches that of *siamensis* (but no overlap yet demonstrated); a few individuals in shared non-breeding range have been considered intergrades between the two; further study required.” It is perhaps worth noting that this arrangement is followed, with a similar exhortation to new fieldwork, by Wells (2007).

Plate 18. Brown-streaked Flycatcher *Muscicapa williamsoni*, Kuala Selangor, Malaysia, September 2007.



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7. New rearrangements

Cettia flavolivacea and *C. vulcania*

Molecular work by Olsson *et al.* (2006) has resulted in the rearrangement of two existing species. Races *intricata* (northern and eastern Myanmar, southern China) and *oblita* (northern Laos and Vietnam) of Aberrant Bush Warbler *C. flavolivacea* prove to be more closely related to

Sunda Bush Warbler *C. vulcania* (Sumatra and Borneo to Timor) and need to be unified with that species. This leaves *C. flavolivacea* restricted to the Himalayas, south-west China, north-east India and the Chin Hills of western Myanmar. Anyone who has seen Aberrant Bush Warbler south and east of this range, and has never been to the Sunda Islands, can now add Sunda Bush Warbler to their list.

Garrulax (Trochalopteron) cachinnans and *G. (T.) jerdoni*

Rasmussen & Anderton (2005) re-allocated taxa in the *Garrulax (Trochalopteron) cachinnans* group, allowing two species as in the OBC Checklist but now with *T. cachinnans* plus race *jerdoni* (Black-chinned Laughingthrush) and *T. fairbanki* plus race *meridionale* (Kerala Laughingthrush), as followed by Collar & Robson (2007).

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