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of the Genera *Othyphantes*, *Hypargos*,
Aidemosyne, and *Lagonosticta*

BY

EDGAR A. MEARNS

Associate in Zoölogy, U. S. National Museum



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DESCRIPTIONS OF FIVE NEW AFRICAN WEAVER-BIRDS
OF THE GENERA OTHYPHANTES, HYPARGOS,
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ASSOCIATE IN ZOÖLOGY, U. S. NATIONAL MUSEUM

Four of the forms here described are from the collection made by the Childs Frick African Expedition, 1911-1912; and one is from the Smithsonian African Expedition collection, 1909-1910, under the direction of Col. Theodore Roosevelt.

The names of special tints and shades of colors used in this paper conform to Robert Ridgway's "Color Standards and Color Nomenclature," issued March 10, 1913. All measurements are in millimeters.

OTHYPHANTES FRICKI, new species

Frick's Weaver

Type-specimen.—Adult male. Cat. No. 247071, U. S. National Museum; collected at Aletta (Aleta), Sidamo, southern Abyssinia, March 9, 1912, by Edgar A. Mearns. (Original number, 20628.)

Characters.—The breeding plumage of the adult male is quite similar to that of *Othypantes reichenowi* (Fischer); and the adult female, in breeding plumage, is only distinguishable from *Othypantes stuhlmanni* (Reichenow) by the greater breadth of the shaft-stripes of the mantle, and the slightly darker, more greenish olive of the mantle, rump, and upper tail-coverts.

Description of the adult male in breeding plumage.—Forehead and most of crown apricot yellow; a band round the back of the ear-coverts, sides of upper neck, cheeks, and entire under parts empire yellow; auricular patch, back of head and neck, and mantle brownish black, the latter with the unworn feathers more or less edged with olive-yellowish-green; lower back, rump, upper tail-coverts, and rectrices warbler green; wings brownish black with pyrite yellow edges to the feathers, these edges being confined to the ends of the lesser and median coverts, the outer edges of the greater coverts and quills; iris pale yellow; bill black; feet and claws pale brown. In unworn plumage the yellow extends over the entire head and nape, but, posteriorly, the yellow feather-tips quickly disappear with wear.

Description of the adult female in breeding plumage.—Top and sides of head brownish black; back, rump, and upper tail-coverts yellowish olive-green, the mantle, only, with broad black shaft-streaks; wings as in the male; entire under parts empire yellow.

Description of young in first plumage (females, still attended by parents).—Top of head, back, rump, and upper tail-coverts warbler green, washed with brownish-grayish on the mantle, which is also shaft-streaked with brown; wings brown, with buffy-white outer edges to the secondaries, and pyrite yellow edges to the coverts and outer edge of primaries; auricular patch duskier than crown; under parts pinard yellow anteriorly, becoming pale drab-gray on lower abdomen and crissum.

Measurements of type (adult male).—Length of skin, 150; wing, 80; tail, 62; culmen (chord), 18.2; tarsus, 24.

Average measurements of four adult males.—Wing, 80.25; tail, 60.5; culmen (chord), 18.5; tarsus, 23.5.

Average measurements of three adult female topotypes.—Wing, 78; tail, 59; culmen (chord), 17.33; tarsus, 22.2.

Material.—Four adult males and three adult females, all in breeding plumage; also two young in first plumage; all from Sidamo.

Geographical range.—Sidamo and Djamdjam districts of Abyssinia.

Remarks.—The fortunate circumstance of my being in Sidamo when this species was in breeding plumage, and finding both sexes and the young associated, enables me to unite them as opposite sexes of one species. Without having examined the specimens, I suppose the few examples of *Othyphantes reichenowi* recorded from southern Abyssinia to be males of *O. fricki*, and the two females from Sidamo and Djamdjam recorded as *O. stuhlmanni* by Neumann to be females of *O. fricki*.

I find the species of *Othyphantes* from East Africa to be very similar in size, after averaging the measurements of our series of *stuhlmanni*, *reichenowi*, *emini*, and *baglafecht*. It is evident that, up to the present time, no ornithologist has studied these species with material sufficient to elucidate all of their plumages or their geographic distribution and interrelations.

HYPARGOS NIVEOGUTTATUS MACROSPILLOTUS, new subspecies

Meru Twin-spot

Type-specimen.—Adult male, Cat. No. 246922, U. S. National Museum; collected in the Meru Forest, north of the Equator, British East Africa, August 10, 1912, by Edgar A. Mearns. (Original number, 23560.)

Characters.—This form differs from *Hypargos niveoguttatus niveoguttatus* (Peters) in the following respects: Size larger; under parts jet black, with larger and more numerous white twin-spots on sides; mantle more yellowish brown; chin, throat, sides of head, and chest darker red.

Measurements of type (adult male).—Length of skin, 120; wing, 57; tail, 56; culmen (chord), 13; tarsus, 18.

AIDEMOSYNE INORNATA, new species

Plain Silver-bill

Type-specimen.—Female, Cat. No. 217336, U. S. National Museum; collected at El Dueim, White Nile, Sudan, Africa, March 13, 1910, by Edgar A. Mearns. (Original number, 18715.)

Characters.—Similar to *Aidemosyne cantans cantans* (Gmelin), but larger, and without transverse bars or vermiculations on the upper parts.

Description of type (adult female).—Crown, upper side of neck, mantle, upper rump, and inner portion of wings pale broccoli brown; feathers of forehead with darker centers and paler edges, giving a scale-like appearance which becomes obsolete on the occiput; sides of head of a color similar to that of the mantle but more buffy; tail and outer two-thirds of wing seal brown; chin and throat buffy white, faintly spotted with yellowish brown; remainder of under parts white perceptibly washed with buff; under side of wing, except tips of outer primaries, buff; some grayish white on under side of outer rectrices.

Measurements of type (adult female).—Length of skin, 106; wing, 57; tail, 45; culmen (chord), 11; tarsus, 13.5.

Remarks.—It is probable that some specimens of the present species have been included in published measurements of *Aidemosyne cantans cantans*. Reichenbach, in *Die Singvogel*, 1862, pl. xvi, fig. 146, figures a bird similar to the present species together with three individuals of *A. cantans*, but the colors are much more intense.

Mr. H. F. Witherby¹ collected specimens, at the same season and in the same region, of a species of *Aidemosyne* which may be, in whole or in part, the same as *inornata*; but he gives no measurements, although he carefully describes the changes resultant from "moulting from the immature to the mature plumage." The form *inornata* may prove to be merely a very large and pallid subspecies of *Aidemosyne cantans*, of which the subspecies *cantans* was restricted to West Africa by Lorenz and Hellmayr when they described *Aidemosyne cantans orientalis*.²

¹ Cf. *Ibis*, 1901, p. 247; also, in this connection, pp. 519 and 618.

² *Ornithologische Monatsberichte*, ix, 1901, p. 39.

AIDEMOSYNE CANTANS MERIDIONALIS, new subspecies

East-African Silver-bill

Type-specimen.—Adult male, Cat. No. 247534, U. S. National Museum; collected at the south base of the Indunumara Mountains, British East Africa, July 16, 1912, by Edgar A. Mearns. (Original number, 23048.)

Characters.—Most closely related to *Aidemosyne cantans orientalis* (Lorenz and Hellmayr) from South Arabia, from which it differs only in being slightly larger and considerably paler above. The dark cross-bars of the upper surface are narrower, and the upper side of the head and neck, and the mantle, lighter, more grayish, brown. The forehead has a more scaled appearance, produced by the paler edging to the feathers. There is also a more buffy tinge to the under parts.

Measurements of type (adult male).—Length of skin, 90; wing, 52; tail, 40; culmen (chord), 9.2; tarsus, 12.5.

Average measurements of fourteen adult males of Aidemosyne cantans meridionalis (Hawash River, Abyssinia, south to the Indunumara Mountains, British East Africa).—Wing, 51.4; tail, 41.8; culmen (chord), 9.5; tarsus, 12.5.

Average measurements of sixteen adult females of Aidemosyne cantans meridionalis (French Somaliland, south through Abyssinia to the Meru River, in British East Africa).—Wing, 50; tail, 40.6; culmen (chord), 9.7; tarsus, 12.4.

Average measurements of seven adult males of Aidemosyne cantans orientalis from Aden, central south Arabia.—Wing, 49.9; tail, 43.4; culmen (chord), 9.9; tarsus, 11.2.

Average measurements of six adult females of Aidemosyne cantans orientalis from Aden, Arabia.—Wing, 49.3; tail, 41; culmen (chord), 9.8; tarsus, 12.

Geographical range.—Northeast Africa, from the Red Sea to German East Africa.

Remarks.—On crossing the Red Sea to French Somaliland a very pale form of *Aidemosyne* was found at Djibouti which contrasts strikingly with specimens from Aden; rising thence to the Hawash Valley, Abyssinia, a slightly darker form occurs which remains quite constant through Abyssinia and British East Africa.

LAGONOSTICTA RUBRICATA FRICKI, new subspecies

Frick's Fire-Finch

Type-specimen.—Adult male, Cat. No. 247543, U. S. National Museum; collected on the Gato River, near Gardulla, Abyssinia, April 19, 1912, by Edgar A. Mearns. (Original number, 21388.)

Characters.—Most closely related to *Lagonosticta rubricata hildebrandti*, but smaller; coloration paler, less intense; mantle less olive tinted, and washed with red; crown slate color, very slightly washed with red; chest and sides morocco red instead of ox-blood red; sides sparsely spotted with pure white. As pointed out by Ogilvie-Grant (Ibis, 1908, p. 272), *Lagonosticta rubricata rhodopareia* Heuglin, from Keren, in Bogosland, differs in having the top of the head brownish gray without any wash of red—the opposite condition from *hildebrandti*.

Measurements of type.—Length of skin, 103; wing, 48; tail, 47; culmen (chord), 10.5; tarsus, 15.

Geographical range.—Basins of Abaya and Stefanie lakes, Abyssinia.

Material.—Sixteen specimens from Gato River, near Gardulla, Sagan River, Bodessa, and Tertale.