

The assertion that the green-throated birds are immature males does not seem to be supported by any reliable evidence. In all of our carefully-sexed specimens males have a black throat, females a green one. In fact there are several birds in the collection which moult directly from the yellow-throated nestling plumage into the black-throated plumage of the adult male.

Taxonomic Notes on *Oreoica gutturalis*

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In addition to the nominate race, Mathews has described no less than five subspecies in this species. Actually, geographic variation is very slight and easily concealed by wear and foxing. At the present time it would seem best not to recognize more than two subspecies. Although the distribution of the species is somewhat 'spotty', variation is essentially clinal. There is no evidence for the presence of effective geographic barriers between any of the populations.

Oreoica gutturalis gutturalis (Vigors and Horsfield)

Falcunculus gutturalis Vigors and Horsfield, 1827, *Trans. Linn. Soc. London*, 15, 212. 'Kent Group', Sydney.

Range.—The southern two-thirds of Australia, from Western Australia (from North-West Cape and Point Cloates) through Central Australia to Queensland.

Synonyms are: *clelandi* (Coonalpyn, South Australia), *westralensis* (Broome Hill, south-west Australia), and *lloydi* (Dirk Hartog Island).

There is a certain amount of slight geographic variation within the range of this subspecies. Birds from the desert districts of South Australia and Central Australia tend to have rump, upper tail-coverts, flanks, and under tail-coverts rather rufous. The whiteness of the belly is an unreliable character, as correctly pointed out by Condon (1951, *South Aust. Orn.*, 20, 41). It soils easily and may be quite reddish in birds from reddish soils, or sooty in birds collected near railroads.

Although there is presumably a break in the range in the region of the Nullarbor Plain, there appears to be no difference whatsoever between birds from south-west Australia and those from Victoria. Extremely-worn birds may have flanks and under tail-coverts almost white. Two specimens from Dirk Hartog Island are thus coloured. Until the reputed characters of *lloydi* are confirmed with fresh specimens, I consider it a synonym of *gutturalis*.

Specimens from the far interior of Queensland (Charleville, Windorah) differ in having the wings unusually pure

olive, the upper parts very greyish, and the under tail-coverts buffy ochre. Birds from the coastal parts of central Queensland, Westwood (west of Rockhampton), Bowen and Herberton, likewise have the wing very greenish. Such greenish-winged birds occur occasionally also in New South Wales and Victoria, but are the rule in Queensland. Additional material may justify the separation of a Queensland subspecies.

Wing, ♂, Victoria, 101-108; south-west Australia, 103-111; South Australia, 106-111; New South Wales, 106, 109; Queensland, 105-108.

***Oreoica gutturalis pallescens* Mathews**

Oreoica cristata pallescens Mathews, 1912, *Nov. Zool.*, 18 (1911), p. 377. Alexandria, Northern Territory.

Oreoica cristata mungi Mathews, 1912, *Nov. Zool.*, 18 (1911), p. 377. Mungi, 8 miles south-east of Mt. Alexander, south of Fitzroy River, West Kimberley District.

Similar to nominate *gutturalis*, but paler, particularly on the rump; white base on the feathers of the fore-crown more extensive.

Range.—North-western parts of Australia, from the DeGrey River drainage in Western Australia to the head of the Gulf of Carpentaria.

The populations of this area are by no means uniform. The palest specimens are the type and a paratype of *mungi*. The birds from Alexandria (19°S, 137°E) are darker and about as dark as a series from Nullagine (on a southern tributary of the DeGrey River). A single bird from east Murchison is similar and distinctly paler than specimens from Yalgoo or Kalgoorlie, which are indistinguishable from nominate birds. A freshly-moulted bird from Tanami is quite dark, but has much white on the fore-part of the crown. Birds from Carnarvon and North-West Cape are somewhat intermediate between nominate *gutturalis* and this paler race.

Wing, ♂ 101-104.5 (102.2), ♀ 98-103 (100.6); tail, ♂ 76-81, ♀ 75-79.

White-headed Petrel.—Although a little belated, another N.S.W. record of the White-headed Petrel (*Pterodroma lessona*) should, I think, be recorded. A storm-washed specimen was found on the beach at Thirroul, south coast of New South Wales, on April 7, 1950, after several days of heavy seas and very rough weather. The bird was quite fresh. It was made into a skin which is now in the Australian Museum, Sydney.—J. DOUGLAS GIBSON, Thirroul, N.S.W., 30/9/52.