

*Ammospiza caudacuta nelsoni*

Maryland: Cornfield Harbor, October 11, 1931, and October 14, 1928.

Virginia: Cobbs Island, May 12, 1892.

District of Columbia: September, 1862.

This race, with the James Bay Sharp-tailed Sparrow, comes to inland marshes in migration, while the other three frequent regions of brackish water.—ALEXANDER WETMORE, *U. S. National Museum, Washington, D. C.*

The type locality of *Nectarinia dabryii* Verreaux.<sup>1</sup>—Under the heading "Catalogue d'Oiseaux récoltés par Mgr. Perny, évêque du Su-tchuen, dans le nord de la Chine, et description de deux espèces nouvelles par M. Jules Verreaux," the author described *Nectarinia Dabryii* (Rev. et Mag. de Zoologie, (2) 19: 173-174, pl. 15, 1867) with the statement: "Cette belle espèce, que nous devons à l'obligeance de M. Soubiran, a été découverte dans le nord de la Chine, par M. Dabry, consul de France, auquel nous sommes heureux de pouvoir la dédier. . . Depuis la réception de cet Oiseau, nous avons eu la bonne fortune d'en voir plusieurs autres sujets, entre autres, parmi les Oiseaux de la même localité, rapportés par Mgr. Perny. . ." It seems clear that the type must be the specimen associated with Dabry and that those in Perny's collection are merely paratypes.

The type locality is first questioned by Lord Walden [*Ibis*, (n.s.) 6: 35, 1870], who gives the species as "découverte dans le nord de la Chine," but observes: "There must be some mistake about its habitat; Cochin China is probably intended."

In the same volume of "The Ibis" (pp. 296-297), P. L. Sclater, in a letter to the editor, writes: "In Lord Walden's excellent article on the Sun-birds of the Indian and Australian regions in the last number of 'The Ibis,' it is well remarked (p. 35) that there must be some mistake about the habitat of *Aethopyga dabryi* as given by M. Verreaux, namely, 'le nord de la Chine.' I am fortunately able to confirm Lord Walden's criticism, and to give the exact locality of this fine species. The type-specimen of this species was from the collection formed by Msgr. Chauveau on the hills above Ta-t sien-leou, which border the eastern boundary of the Chinese province of Sechen [*sic*], and was transmitted by him to M. Dabry, the French Consul at Hankow. This collection, which I had the pleasure of examining shortly after its arrival at Paris, likewise contained the new *Lophophorus lhuysi* and the new *Ithaginis geoffroyi*, also described by M. Verreaux, besides some other remarkable novelties. . . ."

David and Oustalet (*Oiseaux de la Chine: 80-81, 1877*), under *Aethopyga dabryi*, state: "Le Sucrier Dabry . . . ne se trouve en Chine que dans les provinces méridionales et occidentales, et c'est par erreur qu'il a été indiqué par J. Verreaux, dans la description originale, comme provenant du nord du Céleste-Empire. Le spécimen que Verreaux avait eu sous les yeux avait été recueilli sur les collines situées au-dessus de Tu-t sien-leou, à la limite orientale du Setchuan, par Mgr. Chauveau, et remis par ce dernier à M. Dabry, consul de France à Hankeou. . . ." Obviously, David and Oustalet here simply translate Sclater's remarks of 1870, repeating his inadvertence in regard to the "eastern" boundary and, presumably through a printer's error, spelling the name of the town with a 'u' instead of an 'a.'

In any case, no one has doubted that the type of *Nectarinia dabryii* came from the well-known town in western Szechuan called Ta-t sien-lu, until Messrs. Delacour and Greenway, describing *Aethopyga gouldiae harrietae* (*L'Oiseau et la Revue*

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française d'Ornithologie, nos. 1, 2: 68-69, 1940), state dogmatically, *ex David and Oustalet*, that "le type de *dabryi* provient de Tutsienléou (et non pas Tatsienlou), à la limite orientale du Setchuan . . ."

Since, up to the present, no less than three subspecific names (*dabryii*, *bangsi*, and *harrietae*) have been bestowed upon Chinese populations of this species, it is imperative, in the interest of a stable nomenclature, to determine whether the name *dabryii*, the oldest designation, is to apply to the bird of Ta-t sien-lu or to that of a hypothetical "Tu-t sien-leou" in eastern Szechwan; such a decision is rendered the more important by the fact that the resident population of eastern Szechwan, if it exist, may well be racially distinct from that of the western part of the same province.

I am convinced that Ta-t sien-lu must be considered the true type locality for the following reasons:

(a) The town "Tu-t sien-leou" is known to ornithology by one passage in David and Oustalet, which seems to be a direct translation from Sclater, who spelled it "Ta-t sien-leou."

(b) The Vicariate-Apostolic of Tibet (Fourth Ecclesiastical Region of China), embracing the eastern portion of Tibet and the western portion of Szechwan, was erected in 1846, with residence at Ta-t sien-lu. Joseph-Marie Chauveau (*b.* 24 Feb., 1816; *d.* 21 Dec., 1877), a priest of the Paris Seminary, held the dignity of Vicar-Apostolic of Tibet from 1864 to 1877 and resided at Ta-t sien-lu, near the eastern boundary of his vicariate. Eastern Szechwan falls into another Vicariate-Apostolic, with which Chauveau had no connection that I can discover (*cf.* The Catholic Encyclopedia, 14: 720, New York, 1912; also the ecclesiastical map of China, 3: between pp. 686 and 687).

(c) Sclater [*Ibis*, (n.s.) 6: 297, 1870] notes that "*Thaumalea amherstiae* . . . according to Msgr. Chauveau, is very abundant in the mountains above Ta-t sien-leou. . . ." A footnote refers to the Proc. Zool. Soc. London for 1870, p. 111, where we find: "A communication was read from Mr. R. Swinhoe, F.Z.S., stating that when at Hankow last summer he had ascertained from H. M. Consul in that city that some living Amherst's Pheasants (*Thaumalea amherstiae*) which had passed that way to England had been received from a French priest, Monseigneur Chauveau, Bishop of Sebastopolis, who was stationed at Ta-t sien-leou, on the Tibetan frontier. . . . Mr. Sclater remarked that there could be no doubt that these birds were those subsequently received by Mr. Stone, and for some time deposited in the Society's Gardens; and pointed out the position of Ta-t sien-leou on the slope on the Yung-lin mountains, between Tibet and the Chinese province of Sechuen." Farther on (*ibid.*: 128-129) we read: "In reference to Mr. Swinhoe's communication at the last Meeting on the locality of the Amherst's Pheasant (*Thaumalea amherstiae*), Mr. Sclater stated that Mr. J. J. Stone had kindly placed in his hands copies of two letters addressed by Monseigneur Chauveau, Bishop of Sebastopolis and Vicar Apostolic of Lhassa, to Mr. Medhurst, the English Consul at Hankow, one of which was the letter spoken of by Mr. Swinhoe. There could be no doubt, therefore, that the birds collected by Monseigneur Chauveau were the same as those which ultimately reached Mr. Stone, and that this Pheasant is 'exceedingly common' on the hills bordering the western part of the Chinese province of Szechuen, beyond the town of Ta-t sien-loo, through which runs one of the great routes to Lhassa." Still farther on (*ibid.*: 670) we find: "These Pheasants had arrived from one of Mr. Stone's Chinese collectors in company with specimens of

*Thaumalea amherstiae*, and were doubtless from the same locality—that is, from the slopes of the Yung-ling mountains beyond Ta-kien-leu, on the Chinese confines of Thibet. . . .”

These references, while not directly concerning *Nectarinia dabryii*, indicate that all birds with definite locality received from Msgr. Chauveau seem to have come from Ta-t sien-lu and it is important to note that almost wherever the name is used in them, it receives a new variant transliteration!

Assuming that the bird of Ta-t sien-lu must be called *Aethopyga gouldiae dabryii*, I find it impossible to distinguish between *dabryii* and *harrietae*; I suspect that the richness of the reds and the purity of the metallic blue vary directly with the freshness of the feathers in question and perhaps individually as well. Moreover, the examples placed under the latter name are, certainly in Thailand and probably in Laos (type locality), merely winter visitors from China.

The population of Hupeh have been named *bangsi* by Riley (Proc. Biol. Soc. Washington, 38: 11, 1925); they seem to differ from *dabryii* in the duller red of the mantle, the less intense scarlet of the breast, and the sharper demarcation of the scarlet and yellow areas of the under parts, but here again we may be dealing with seasonal and individual variation and the validity of the race is not yet established.

For the loan of valuable material of *bangsi* and *harrietae*, I am indebted to the authorities of the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, Cambridge, Massachusetts.—H. G. DEIGNAN, U. S. National Museum, Washington, D. C.

**Popular subspecies.**—The public is sometimes just as keen on making fine distinctions among birds as are the systematic ornithologists. A very well-known illustration is the widespread belief that there are two kinds of Black Ducks. That opinion is reflected in a considerable number of local names, of which those available, that can be cited in contrasting pairs from the same regions, are here tabulated:

Locality	<i>Anas rubripes tristis</i>	<i>Anas rubripes rubripes</i>
Delaware	Nigger black duck	Red-paddle
Massachusetts	Green-legged black duck	Red-legged black duck
	Pond black duck	Bay duck
	Putty-legs	Redleg
	Spring black duck	October duck
	Summer black duck	Winter black duck
New Jersey	Grassy channel black duck	Sedge black duck
New York	Long-necked black	Short-necked black
Ohio	Little green-leg	Big winter Jackie
	Little green-legged Jackie	Red-legged Jackie
Rhode Island	Pond black duck	Sea duck
Nova Scotia	Beach duck	Ledge duck
	Inside duck	Outside duck

While this splitting was given taxonomic embodiment by William Brewster (Auk, 19: 183-188, 1902) and was incorporated in the A. O. U. Check-List (4th edition: 44, 1931), it was not accepted by Dwight who stated (Auk, 26: 422-426, 1909) that *rubripes* birds are the adults, and *tristis* individuals the immatures, of a single species. In this he was supported by Pirnie ('Michigan Waterfowl Management': 12, 1935) and Trautman (Misc. Publ. Mus. Zool. Univ. Mich., 44: 179, 1940). The arguments for and against are reviewed by Kortright in his recent valuable book ("The