

GENERAL NOTES

A new subspecies of Island Thrush, *Turdus poliocephalus*, from New Ireland.—The islands of the Bismarck Archipelago, north and east of New Guinea, although large and with low mountains, have always seemed deficient in populations of the very widespread species of thrush, the Island Thrush, distributed from Christmas Island and the Greater Sunda Islands south and east to Samoa. Only one named form has been known from this Archipelago, and that from one of the smaller islands, Saint Matthias, with a high point of about 800 m above sea level. No representative of the species is known from the very large island of New Britain, with mountains reaching 1,800+ m, although several ornithologists have worked there, most recently the late E. T. Gilliard for the American Museum of Natural History in 1958–59. Consequently the discovery of an Island Thrush on New Ireland, a long, narrow island little visited by naturalists, with mountains reaching some 1,700 m along its central spine, is a matter of considerable zoogeographical interest.

Turdus poliocephalus beehleri subsp. nov.

TYPE: adult male; United States National Museum of Natural History no. 522762; 15 km NNW of Cape Narum, Hans Meyer Range, elevation 2,200 m (5,600 ft), New Ireland; 13 February 1976; collected by Bruce Beehler; field number BB 727.

DIAGNOSIS: from *heinrothi* Rothschild and Hartert of St. Matthias Island (known from the unique type), this new subspecies differs in shorter wing and tail and a smaller, more slender bill, and in having an olivaceous wash on the upper parts (possibly a fugitive character, lacking in older, badly foxed specimens). The chin and upper throat are grayish-brown. The lores, around the eyes, an indistinct stripe continued back below the blackish cap, and shading down over the auricular region to the lower throat are colored a slightly deeper shade of umber grayish-brown. Although foxing makes the definition of such a pattern difficult in the type of *heinrothi*, there is no obvious indication of such shading around the head. Unfortunately the throat feathers in the type of *heinrothi* are virtually absent. No comparison between females is possible, but size alone separates these two populations (Table 1).

The next nearest populations occur in the adjacent Solomon Islands, the most northerly of which, Bougainville, forms part of Papua-New Guinea politically also. From *bougainvillei* Mayr, *beehleri* differs by being distinctly smaller, with a more slim bill, less stout in appearance laterally. In color the gray-brown around the bill, lores and back around the eyes, chin and upper throat in the male is totally unlike the monochromatic black of the males from Bougainville Island.

The other Solomon Islands subspecies in north to south order, *kulambangrae* Mayr from Kulambangra Island, *sladeni* Cain and Galbraith from Guadalcanal Island, and *rennellianus* Mayr from Rennell Island are similarly blackish and monochromatic in the male, although the cap color in *sladeni* is of a different tone from the back, setting it off by contrast. Additionally the undertail coverts and crissum of Rennell males may have a few pale spots. These three more southern Solomon Islands subspecies are smaller than *bougainvillei* thus being similar in size to *beehleri*.

TABLE 1
MEASUREMENTS

		Wing	Tail	Culmen	Tarsus	Weight
<i>beehleri</i>	2 ♂ ad.	104, 105 mm	78, 80.5 mm	19, 22 mm	34, 36 mm	47.8, 52.5 g
	♀ ad.	97	75	20	32.5	49.5
	♂ imm.	97	76.5	22	33	48
<i>heinrothi</i>	♂ (type)	110	83	24	34	—
<i>bougainvillei</i> ¹	4 ♂ ad.	111–114	82–87	23–23.5	30–31	—
	3 ♀ ad.	108	79–80	—	—	—
<i>sladeni</i>	♂ imm.	106	86	22	32	—
<i>kulambangrae</i>	♂ ad.	103	71	22	32	—
<i>rennellianus</i>	2 ♂ ad.	103.5, 106	75, 80	22.5, 23	31.5, 32	—
	♀ ad.	103.5	73.5	22	31	—
<i>papuensis</i>	3 ♂ ad.	120–132	85–105	23–25	35–40	—

¹ From Mayr 1941, Amer. Mus. Novitates 1152: 2.

Females of the available series from the Solomons forms differ from *beehleri* in being more uniform in color throughout, whereas an apparent adult female from New Ireland has a darker cap set off from the very dark olive-fuscous back, and a brownish patch on the upper abdomen, the feathers edged with paler brown.

From *papuensis* of adjacent mainland New Guinea, *beehleri* differs by smaller size, and lacking the broad concolorous, lighter brown sides of head, neck, and upper breast, found in both sexes of that form.

ETYMOLOGY: named for Bruce Beehler, now a graduate student at Princeton University, who collected material for the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History while working at the Wau Ecology Institute, Papua New Guinea.

COMMENTS: an isolated montane form known only from the type-locality but probably occurring in stunted mossy forest on the summits of the ridges of mountains on New Ireland, Papua-New Guinea. I am grateful to the authorities of the Bird Department of the American Museum of Natural History, New York, for permission to examine specimens in their care.—S. DILLON RIPLEY, *Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C. 20560*. Accepted 30 Mar. 77. (This paper was subsidized by the author.)

Copulation Observed in Maroon-tailed Parakeets in Meta, Colombia.—To my knowledge copulation in the Maroon-tailed Parakeet (*Pyrrhura melanura*) has not been described in the literature. The following is a description of this behavior I watched on 25 January 1976 near Campamiento Chamusa on the Duda River, La Macarena National Park, Meta, Colombia (2°42'N, 74°10'W; alt. 250 m). The birds were observed at less than 30-m distance with the aid of 12× binoculars.

At 0723 two Maroon-tailed Parakeets landed 20 m above the ground in the dead branches of a living tree on the south bank of the Duda River. The birds were 1.5–2 m apart. At 0725 the male flew over to join the female. Mutual body grooming of the neck and back began immediately and continued for 1 min. At 0726 the female presented herself to the male by stretching out, on top of and parallel to the supporting branch, with her posterior toward the male. The male quickly mounted the female by stepping up onto her rump and lower back, placing his long pointed tail downward on the right side of the female's body. The female then moved her tail outward to the left side, facilitating the placement of the male's cloaca in contact with hers. During copulation the male's tail and lower back rotated slowly in a clockwise direction and he ruffled the female's neck feathers with his bill. The female responded to the male's behavior by remaining still and emitting approximately 12 low "cooing" calls. At 0728:30 the male dismounted to the rear after being on top of the female for 2.5 min. He immediately "pumped" his head and neck, with the feathers ruffed, up and down vigorously 7 or 8 times. Both birds returned to normal perching positions. The male initiated mutual grooming again, which lasted for about 30 sec. At 0729 both birds moved apart, began low raucous calling and flew away simultaneously across the river to the north. The female flew slightly ahead of the male.—THOMAS O. LEMKE, *Institute for the Development of Renewable Natural Resources (INDERENA), Smithsonian-Peace Corps Environmental Program, % American Embassy, Bogotá, Colombia*. Accepted 7 July 76.

Nesting behavior of Pale-billed Woodpeckers in Guatemala.—Between 22 January and 3 February 1976, while staying at Tikal, Guatemala, I observed late stages of the nesting behavior of 3 pairs of Pale-billed Woodpeckers (*Campephilus guatemalensis*). Table 1 gives details of the nests. Skutch (1969, *Pacific Coast Avifauna* 35: 440) has given a previous account of this species. The following, however, appear to be aspects of behavior not reported by others.

(1) *Feeding visits.*—My wife and I watched nest A in times divided between midmornings and late afternoons. The single nestling fledged 8 days after observations began. Of 35 feeding visits seen in 13 h, 18 were by the female and 17 by the male. Intervals between visits averaged 22 min, but varied between none in 1½ h to 6, all by the male, in 36 min.

(2) *Prey.*—The entrance to nest A, where the young one was fed, was low (Table 1) and favorable for observation. We could thus see that on 22 of the 35 visits the prey brought by parents consisted of a single white larva, approximately 0.6 cm in diameter and 3–4 cm long, sufficiently large to prevent the mandibles from closing. One thrust of the parent's bill was usually enough to transfer the prey to the nestling. Parents also carried large larvae to nest B.

(3) *Begging notes.*—The young in nest A peered frequently from the hole before fledging. It made "chittery" notes (apparently begging) on seeing a parent approaching, while being fed, and after a parent had left but was still in view. When alone at other times, the young one remained silent.

(4) *Fledging.*—The nestling of nest C leaned out from the nest hole on the day before fledging, making loud "kuk-kuk-kwirra" notes. It called at 0704 on the following morning when it flew from the hole to a tree 5 m