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THE IDENTITY OF *ARTAMUS CINEREUS* VIEILLOT (AVES, ARTAMIDAE)

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Artamus cinereus was described and named by Vieillot in 1817, and for a century that name was universally used for the Australian Black-faced Wood Swallow.

Hellmayr (1916) discovered that in the original description the type-locality was given not as Australia, but as Timor. Hellmayr stated that he and Menegaux had vainly searched for Vieillot's type in the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle in Paris, but concluded that, notwithstanding certain discrepancies in the description, the name *Artamus cinereus* applies to a form from Timor that is closely related to the Australian bird and has been regarded as conspecific with it by most authors since Hellmayr. As a consequence, in subsequent literature, the bird from Timor, which for sixty-six years had been universally known as *Artamus perspicillatus* Bonaparte, 1850, changed name to *Artamus cinereus cinereus* Vieillot and the subspecies inhabiting the greater part of Australia received the next oldest name and is now known as *Artamus cinereus melanops* Gould.

Apparently Hellmayr (1916) was not aware that many of Vieillot's descriptions are not based on material personally examined but have been copied, with slight modifications, from Temminck (1807), though this had been pointed out as early as 1849 by Hartlaub.

Stresemann (1953) in his clever analysis of Temminck's (1807) Catalogue has convincingly shown that in the case of *Artamus cinereus*: "Vieillot's Diagnose basiert, wie in vielen andern Fällen, ganz und gar auf Temmincks Beschreibung. Nur die Heimat hat Vieillot nach Maugé hinzugefügt". This explains why Hellmayr was unable to find the type specimen of *Artamus cinereus* Vieillot in the Paris Museum, and throws an entirely new light on the matter: for further information concerning the identity of

Artamus cinereus Vieillot, evidently Temminck's Catalogue (1807), and the collection of the Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie, founded in 1820 with Temminck's private collection as its basis, had to be examined.

At this point it is perhaps well to mention that the most obvious character by which the subspecies from Timor can be differentiated from the Australian one is that the former has all rectrices with broad white tips, whereas in the Australian race the central pair of rectrices is all black. When consulting Temminck (1807: 232) we find under "L'Angroyan gris" the following description of its rectrices: "Queue noire terminée de blanc sur toutes les pennes Latérales, celles du milieu sont entièrement noires...". The provenance of the bird is not mentioned on this page, but on page 102 in the systematic list we find: "L'Angroyan gris de la nouvelle Galle meridionale". Therefore, not only does the description fit the Australian bird, and not the subspecies from Timor, but the provenance of the type-specimen is clearly stated to be New South Wales.

The type is in the Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie; for such an old specimen it is remarkably well preserved. It clearly belongs to the Australian race at present known as *Artamus cinereus melanops*, and there is no reason at all to doubt its provenance from New South Wales. The central tail-feathers are black as they should be. The under tail coverts are black, tipped with white. Measurements of the bird, which is in fresh plumage, are as follows: wing 130 mm, tail 71 mm, tarsus 22½ mm, culmen from skull 21½ mm. These measurements fit in with those for New South Wales birds given by Keast (1958).

Like all Temminck's birds, the type-specimen has formerly been mounted, but it has been taken off its stand by O. Finsch (curator of birds at the Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie from 1898-1904), who copied all notes from the socle on a label. On one side this label reads: "Kat. No. 1. ad. Type Temminck | *Artamus cinereus* Vieill. 1817. | Sharpe, Cat. Br. M. XIII p. 16. | Cabinet Temminck | 1807 | Australia | ("N.S. Wales" Tem.)", and on the reverse: "Type "L'Angroyan gris Tem. Cat. | syst. 1807 p. 102 No. 166 (Nouv. Galle | merid.) ib. p. 232 (descr.) | Später: *Ocypterus cinereus* | Australie by Tem. on label".

An objection that can be made against the case as presented here, is that Vieillot (1822) later, in a description which is partly adapted from the original one, but partly new, states: "L'individu qui a servi pour cette description a été apporté de Timor, et fait partie ... de la collection du Muséum d'histoire naturelle". Note, however, that in the original description no such statement appears, and also that no material from Timor, dating from Vieillot's time, could later be found in the Paris Museum. As regards

the statement that the type came from Timor: confusion between Australia and Timor was rule rather than exception in Vieillot's days. As Stresemann (1953) suggested, the locality may have been put in after Maugé, and certainly it is not surprising that Vieillot overlooked Temminck's mention of New South Wales, as it appears on an entirely different page from the description. Anyway there is no proof that Vieillot's original description was based on anything but Temminck's earlier description, which means that the nomenclature of the species as it had been for a century must be restored as follows:

1. The subspecies from the greater part of Australia becomes *Artamus cinereus cinereus* Vieillot, 1817, with *Artamus melanops* Gould, 1865, and *Artamus tregellasi* Mathews, 1911, as synonyms.

2. The subspecies from Timor must be known as *Artamus cinereus perspicillatus* Bonaparte, 1850. The two syntypes of this race, in the Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie, were collected by Salomon Müller in October 1828.

In a previous paper (Mees, 1961) I recognised, on the basis of larger size, *A. tregellasi* as a separate subspecies from south-western Australia, as was previously done by Keast (1958). Mayr (in Mayr & Greenway, 1962), on the other hand, placed *tregellasi* in the synonymy of "*melanops*". Macdonald (1967) regarded *tregellasi* as doubtful. Having now examined more material, including the type of *A. cinereus cinereus* which is also large, I agree with Mayr that *tregellasi* is a synonym.

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