

The type-locality of *Pteronetta hartlaubii* (Cassin, 1859) (Aves, Anatidae)

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Currently, the type locality of *Pteronetta hartlaubii* is considered to be the Camma River, Gabon, but this is an error, and must be Rio Boutry, Gold Coast (now Ghana), where the holotype was obtained by H.S. Pel. In a note, reference is made to a few other specimens obtained by the collectors Pel and Nagtglas which in recent literature have been overlooked.

The exact type-locality of a bird-species showing no geographical variation is of historic rather than of direct practical interest. When, however, a division into subspecies is contemplated, knowledge of a species' type-locality is an evident prerequisite for further study. Anyway, one has only to go through the ornithological literature of the past 50 years, to see that the fixation of type-localities has been considered important, perhaps especially by workers on African ornithology, even for its own, historical sake. For this reason the following discussion seems worth presenting.

The first scientific description of the duck now known as *Pteronetta hartlaubii* was by Hartlaub (1855: 357), who named it *Anas cyanoptera*. The description was based on a mounted specimen in Leiden, collected on what was then known as the Gold Coast, by H.S. Pel. The type-locality was stated to be Rio Bontry, for which read Boutry (nowadays the commonest spelling is Butry, 4°50'N, 1°56'W), and the sex was given as male. The scientific name used, *cyanoptera*, was based on a manuscript name with which the specimen was labelled by Temminck. Two years later, Hartlaub (1857: 248) published the name again, this time as *Querquedula cyanoptera*, and with the spelling of the type-locality corrected.

Subsequently Cassin (1859) received material of the same species from the rivers Camma and Ogobai, in what is now Gabon, collected by P.B. DuChaillu. He did not give a description, but discussed the nomenclature at some length:

"The name by which this handsome species is given in Dr. Hartlaub's Ornithology of Western Africa, adopted from that of Temminck in the Leyden Museum, was long since anticipated by Vieillot in Nouv. Dict. V. p. 104. The species too, described by Vieillot as *Anas cyanoptera*, is a *Querquedula*, and the same as described and figured by me in Birds of California and Texas I, p. 82. pl. 15, and now well known as a bird of the Western regions of North America. I take the liberty, therefore, of applying to this bird the name of its first describer, in which I hope to be sustained by naturalists, not only for reasons above mentioned, but as an act of justice to one who has contributed in the most important manner to Western African Ornithology." He concludes with the observation that: "This handsome bird is evidently an abundant species on the Camma and Ogobai. The sexes are very nearly alike."

Apparently Schlegel (1866: 62-63) was unaware of Cassin's paper, for in his cata-



Fig. 1. The holotype of *Anas cyanopectera* Hartlaub, 1855, also the holotype of *Querquedula hartlaubii* Cassin, 1859, and *Anas cuprea* Schlegel, 1866. RMNH 87334.

logue of material in the Leiden collection, he provided another new name: *Anas cuprea* Schlegel, substitute for "*Anas cyanopectera*, Temminck, nec Vieillot." As type he expressly indicated the bird collected by Pel (Schleg. cat. no. 2, now cat. no. 1), although in the meantime two more specimens had been received, viz., one from the Gold Coast, collected by Colonel Nagtglas in 1862 (Schleg. cat. no. 1, now cat. no. 2), and one from Gabon, 1865, without collector's name (Schleg. and now cat. no. 3). Note that the sex of the type-specimen, given as male by Hartlaub, was changed to female by Schlegel. Schlegel frequently felt competent to make arbitrary changes in the recorded sex of preserved specimens. On a new label he has also changed, for no visible reason, its locality to Dabocrom. Although Rio Boutry and Dabocrom are very close, they are not the same (cf. Holthuis, 1968: fig. 1).

In the few but authoritative systematic works available to me (White, 1965: 35; Johnsgard, 1979: 454; also leading general works such as Brown et al., 1982: 248 and Carboneras, 1992: 597) the type locality of *P. hartlaubii* is given as Camma River, Gabon, obviously derived from Cassin. Surprisingly, Johnsgard does not even mention that *Q. hartlaubii* Cassin is a nomen novum for a species described previously: a serious flaw in a work of this kind.

Cassin made quite clear that he was not proposing a new species, but only a new name for the preoccupied one given by Hartlaub. Such cases are covered by Art. 72.7 of the Code (ICZN, 1999), in which it is expressly ruled that a nomen novum has the same type as the name it replaces. In other words, the type of *P. hartlaubii* is the specimen collected by Pel at Rio Boutry, which therefore is the type-locality. There is no

way in which the Camma River, cited in so many works, could be construed as the type-locality. Inter alia it may be observed that without the reference to Hartlaub, Cassin's description of *Q. hartlaubii* would be a nomen nudum, for even by a generous interpretation of the Code, the remarks that it is a handsome bird, and that the sexes are very nearly alike, do not qualify as a sufficient indication. Cassin refers in his paper to Hartlaub (1857), and not to Hartlaub's original description, but as in both publications Hartlaub described the same specimen, this is without significance. In view of all this, it is incomprehensible how the Camma River has come to be regarded as the type-locality.

Pel's specimen is the holotype of three names: *Anas cyanoptera* Hartlaub, *Querquedula Hartlaubii* Cassin, and *Anas cuprea* Schlegel. Accordingly I have provided it with three type labels.

Grimes (1987) not only omits *P. hartlaubii* from the list of species and subspecies which have the Gold Coast (Ghana) as their type-locality (an understandable omission in the circumstances), but it even fails in his enumeration of species from Ghana present in the Leiden collections. It should be entered here with the symbols LP (Leiden: Pel) and LN (Leiden: Nagtglas). Actually, he does not mention the species from any of the classical collections (see Note).

Although in most recent literature no subspecies are recognized, a subspecies *albifrons* Neumann, 1908, from the eastern part of the range is sometimes admitted, for example by Brickell (1988: 162-165). Interestingly, the range of this eastern subspecies, as mapped by Brickell, includes the whole of Gabon. This underlines the need for a correction of the type-locality of the nominate race.

Note

Having based his type-list entirely on White (1965), Grimes (1987) also omitted *Oriolus intermedius* Hartlaub, 1850, another species discovered by Pel at Rio Boutry. *O. intermedius* has 103 years priority over *O. nigripennis alleni* Amadon, 1953, as I pointed out more than 30 years ago (Mees, 1970: 69). If a division into two subspecies is maintained, the western one becomes nominate *O. i. intermedius* Hartlaub, 1850, the eastern *O. i. nigripennis* J. & E. Verreaux, 1855.

In other respects too, Grimes's lists do not do full justice to the collectors Pel and Nagtglas. A superficial check showed that he fails to mention as present in Leiden the type material of *Gymnobucco peli* Hartlaub, 1857 (LP, lectotype, Dabocrom, RMNH reg. no. 88661; the name was based on two specimens, syntypes, but the second one is *G. calvus*, hence the need for a lectotype which I hereby select) and *Dryotriorchis spectabilis* (Schlegel, 1863) (LN, Elmina, RMNH reg. no. 87210).

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