

**A New Tit-Babbler (*Stachyris hypogrammica*, sp. nov.)
from Palawan, Philippine Islands.**

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The Danish "NOONA DAN Expedition" arrived at Ipolote Bay, near Brooke's Point in the southern part of Palawan Island August 10th, 1961. Having spent some time in the vicinity, camping at a place called Uring-Uring, the expedition moved into the interior Aug. 28th, spending the night at Makagwa and continuing the next day to Pinigisan, which is situated at an altitude of 620 meters above sea-level. On Sept. 4th a camp was erected at an altitude of about 1100 meter on the eastern slope of Mount Mataling in the Mantalingajan Range. In the following period collecting was carried out on the slope at altitudes between 1000 meters and 1400 meters, where mossy forest is predominant. Among the species of birds collected in this region one could not be identified by the ornithologists of the expedition, Mr. ERIK PETERSEN (Copenhagen) and Mr. TELESFORO OANE (Manila), and was, therefore, suspected to represent an unknown species. One of the seven specimens collected was sent by air mail to the committee of the expedition. The bird proved to be a new species, which I shall describe as follows:

Stachyris hypogrammica, new species.

Type: ♂ ad., Mt. Mataling, Mantalingajan Range, Palawan Island, altitude 1040 meters, 6. Sept. 1961, coll. E. PETERSEN, in Zoologisk Museum, Copenhagen, collector's number 169.

Description: Front, crown and neck olivaceous greenish with a dusky, vaguely defined mesial streak on each feather, giving an indistinct longitudinal dark striation; lores, eye-region, ear-coverts, sides of neck and sides of throat brownish grey, the ear-coverts with an olivaceous tinge, the feathering

around the eyes very thin and the skin partly bare; mantle, back, rump, upper tail-coverts and wing-coverts bright grass-green; remiges dark brown with broad grass-green outer edges on secondaries and narrow olive-yellow outer edges on primaries; axillaries, under wing-coverts and inner linings of remiges whitish with a slight yellowish tinge; tail-feathers dark brown with olivaceous outer edges; chin and throat whitish, washed with pale yellow; rest of under parts bright lemon-yellow, boldly marked with distinct broad black streaks, which are missing or obsolete only on the under tail-coverts; bill black; feet in the fresh bird (according to information on label) greyish green, in the dry skin blackish brown.

Measurements: Wing 71, tail 55, culmen (from skull) 17.5, tarsus 24 mm.

Structure: Nostrils with distinct operculum; nasal bristles lacking; 3-4 rather weak and short rictal bristles; first (outer) primary much longer than primary-coverts, second primary between ninth and tenth, third primary between sixth and seventh, fourth primary like fifth (which forms wing-tip) or a trifle shorter; tail square or very slightly rounded.

Material: Only type examined, but six more specimens were collected.

Range: Only known from the type locality, but judging from the fact, mentioned above, that seven specimens were collected within a few days' time, this species is probably a common bird with a wide-spread distribution in the mountain forests of Palawan.

Remarks: This is a very distinct species without any near relatives and undoubtedly would formerly have been generically separated. I do not consider such a separation necessary, however, because the new species exactly corresponds with other species of *Stachyris* in all the customary generic characters. It comes nearest to *S. striata* (Ogilvie-Grant), with which it shares the striation of the under parts, but *striata* is a much smaller and more finely built bird with a comparatively longer tail and much smaller feet and differs, further, in its colour pattern by having white eye-ring and lores, black supercilium and moustachial streak, whitish

under-parts faintly tinged with pale buffish (not bright lemon-yellow), and olive-brownish (not grass-green) upper parts. The newly described *S. nigrorum* Rand and Rabor (1952, Nat. Hist. Miscellanea, no. 100, p. 1) from Negros Island is related to *S. striata* from Luzon, but it has a very different colour pattern on the head and much fewer and more indistinct streaks on the under parts; it is a somewhat bigger bird, approaching the measurements of *hypogrammica*. *Stachyris whiteheadi* (Ogilvie-Grant) from Luzon shares with *hypogrammica* the bright green upper parts and has much yellow on the under parts. On the other hand, the under parts in *whiteheadi* are completely unstreaked, and in many other respects this species is further removed from *hypogrammica* than are *striata* and *nigrorum*. There is evidently no close relationship between *hypogrammica* and the many species of *Stachyris* inhabiting Malaysia. There are pronounced differences in proportions between *hypogrammica* and the other Philippine species. It is a more heavily built, more robust species, almost sparrow-like, with a stronger (but not longer) bill, broader and thicker head and body, stronger and longer feet and a comparatively shorter tail; the plumage of the back and rump is not so soft and fluffy, the feathers not disintegrated.

It has for a long time been considered a peculiar fact that *Stachyris* was absent from Palawan, while no less than seven species of this genus inhabited Borneo and a similar number of endemic species were found in the Philippines. The discovery of *S. hypogrammica* shows that the genus is represented by a most peculiar species on Palawan, and at the same time furnishes another example of the faunal independency of that island—a result of its long isolation.