

A New Blackbird from the Canary Islands.

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(Med et dansk resumé: En ny solsortrace fra de Kanariske Øer.)

The western palaeartic Blackbirds have been divided into a number of subspecies, differing from each other partly in colour, partly in plastic characters, such as length of wing and tail and size of bill. HARTERT (1910 & 1932—38) recognized the following subspecies in Western Europe, North Africa and the Atlantic archipelago:

Turdus merula merula L. Wing ♂ 124—134 mm, ♀ 120—128 mm; tail ♂ 105—117 mm, ♀ 105—112 mm. — Range: Scandinavia, Finland, Russia, Central Europe, British Isles, France, Italy, N. Spain and N. Portugal.

T. merula algirus (Mad.). Darker than *merula*, ♀ with less rufous brown, but more dark slate-grey on upper- and under-parts. Wing ♂ 119—124 mm, tail ♂ 105—110 mm. — Range: Central and S. Spain and Portugal, N. Marocco to Tunisia.

T. merula mauritanicus Hart. Colour like *algirus*, but ♀ with dark grey-brown under-parts. Wing ♂ 121—132 mm, ♀ 118—127 mm; tail ♂ 110—130 mm, ♀ 105—120. — Range: S. Marocco to S. Tunisia.

T. merula cabreræ Hart. ♂ more glossy jet-black than *merula*, ♀ also darker, with more soot-brown upper-parts and darker under-parts. Wing ♂ 121—128 mm, ♀ 115—124 mm; tail ♂ 100—110, ♀ 94—108. — Range: Western Canary Islands.

T. merula azorensis Hart. Like *cabreræ* in colour, but with still shorter wings and tail. Wing ♂ 117—125 mm, ♀ 112—122; tail ♂ 90—102 mm, ♀ 90—100. — Range: Azores.

The measurements given above are HARTERT's (1910) with small corrections from more recent literature.

Still more subspecies have been separated, but they have not met with general recognition. Even the subspecies listed above require careful comparison, as WITHERBY remarks (WITHERBY a. o. 1938). The colour of the female especially shows so much individual variation in all the races that no clear-cut definition can be made; and the measurements of wing and tail generally overlap so much that only the maxi-

mum figures can be used as distinguishing marks. It was therefore with great hesitation that I decided to erect a new subspecies. The Blackbirds which I collected in the island of La Palma during my stay in the Canary Islands in the spring of 1947 are, however, so different from all other Blackbirds at my disposal that the females at least can be distinguished at

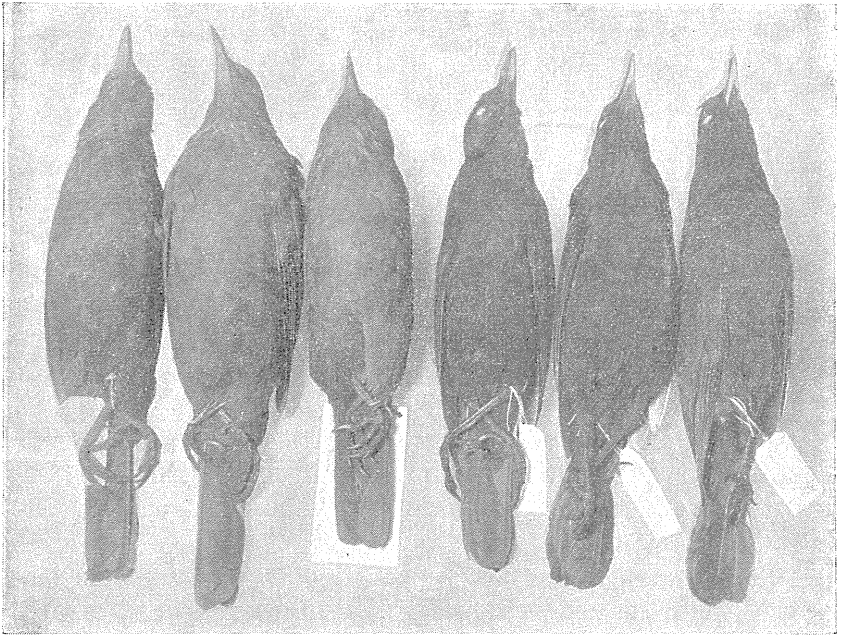


Fig. 1. Three females of *Turdus merula cabreræ* Hart. from Tenerife (left) and 3 females of *T. merula agnetæ* subsp. nov. from La Palma (right). All the birds collected in spring (March-April).

3 ♀♀ af *Turdus merula cabreræ* Hart. fra Tenerife (til venstre) og 3 ♀♀ af *T. merula agnetæ* subsp. nov. fra La Palma (til højre). Alle fuglene er indsamlede om foråret (marts-april).

once. I therefore describe it as a new subspecies which in honour of my wife, who skinned all the birds collected during the expedition, I propose to call:

***Turdus merula agnetæ*, subsp. nov.**

Type: In the Zoological Museum of Copenhagen. Adult female collected by the author at Cubo de Galga, La Palma on April 23, 1947.

Description: In length of wing and tail equal to *T. m. cabreræ*, but the female is much darker on upper- as well as underparts. It is as dark as a male of *T. m. merula* in first winter plumage; in fact I took them for males when I first shot them, and only dissection revealed their true sex. Their bright yellow bill contributed to this mistake. The greyish chin and throat with dark brown streaks and a faint black-brown belt across the upper-breast are all that is left of the typical female plumage. The only male in my collection has a very glossy almost bluish-black colour, distinctly deeper black than the three males of *cabreræ* at my disposal.

Distribution: Island of La Palma, Canary Islands. — Very probably the Blackbird of Hierro will also prove to belong to this subspecies.

Remarks: Three females and one male were collected in two different valleys separated by some 15 km. All the three females agree perfectly in colour. No Blackbirds were seen in La Palma outside the evergreen forests on the mountain slopes. — It is significant that it is one of the western islands, which houses this dark form, because the western islands have the greatest amount of precipitation, and dark plumage is generally correlated with the degree of moisture of the environment. — Very dark female Blackbirds may occasionally be found in other places; so MEINERTZHAGEN (1940) states that one female from Mogadir, Marocco, is almost in male plumage.

DANSK RESUMÉ

En ny solsortrace fra de Kanariske Øer.

Under et ophold på de Kanariske Øer i foråret 1947 indsamledes ialt 7 eksemplarer af Solsort (2 ♂♂, 5 ♀♀) på to forskellige øer (Tenerife og La Palma). De 3 ♀♀ fra La Palma var så mørke og havde tillige brandgult næb, at jeg straks troede, at det var hanner, og først dissektion af gonaderne viste, at det var hunner. Efter at have sammenlignet dem med hunner fra Tenerife (racen: *T. m. cabreræ*) og danske hunner (*T. m. merula*) tager jeg ikke i betænkning at udskille dem fra *cabreræ* som en særlig race, *T. m. agnetæ* (se fig. 1). Det er interessant, at denne mørke form forekommer på en af de

vestligste af de Kanariske Øer, som udmærker sig ved en særlig stor nedbør, idet mørk fjerdragt hos fuglene ofte findes hos former, som lever i fugtige omgivelser.

Literatur.

- HARTERT, E. 1910: Die Vögel der palaearktischen Fauna. 1. — Berlin.
 — 1932—38: Ibid. Ergänzungsband. — Berlin.
 MEINERTZHAGEN, R. 1940: Autumn in Central Marocco. — The Ibis, 14. Ser.,
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 WITHERBY, H. F. a o. 1938: The Handbook of British Birds, 2, p. 136.

FRA ZOOLOGISK MUSEUM

XI.

Af FINN SALOMONSEN.

To nye afrikanske Paradisfluesnappere (*Terpsiphone*).

(*Two New African Paradise-Flycatchers* (*Terpsiphone*).

Under udarbejdelsen af en monografi over Paradisfluesnapperne (*Terpsiphone*) har jeg undersøgt et overordentlig stort skindmateriale, ikke mindst fra Musée du Congo Belge i Tervueren, hvis samlinger gennem velvilje fra dr. H. SCHOUTEDEN er blevet stillet til min disposition. Ved gennemgangen af disse samlinger fandt jeg to hidtil ukendte former, som nedenfor skal beskrives.

Terpsiphone viridis subrufa subsp. nov.

Type: I Musée du Congo Belge, Tervueren, kat. nr. 36822, ♂ ad., Kapulo mellem Pweto og Moliro i Tanganika-Moero provinsen, S.Ø.-Belgisk Congo, februar 1940, BREDO leg. Vingelængde: 84.5 mm. Cotype: ♀ ad., nr. 36816.

Beskrivelse: Den udfarvede ♂ er fuldkommen som *T. v. plumbeiceps* Reichenow med undtagelse af, at underhaledækfjerene er konstant kanelfarvede, mens de hos *plumbeiceps* er hvide eller gullige. Også hos de gamle ♀♀ genfindes denne forskel i underhaledækfjerenes farve. Unge fugle af den nye form har jeg ikke set.

Udbredelse: Den sydøstlige del af Belgisk Congo omfattende distrikterne vest for Tanganyika søen og mod vest i