

## First records of the Green-capped Eremomela subspecies *Eremomela scotops pulchra* from southern Tanzania

As part of ongoing research on the taxonomy of the Green-capped Eremomela *Eremomela scotops* complex, two specimens were uncovered from southern Tanzania representative of the subspecies *E. s. pulchra*. This taxon appears to be unrecognized in East Africa (Britton 1980, Urban *et al.* 1997), and this note serves to formally document its presence in the region. The two specimens are:

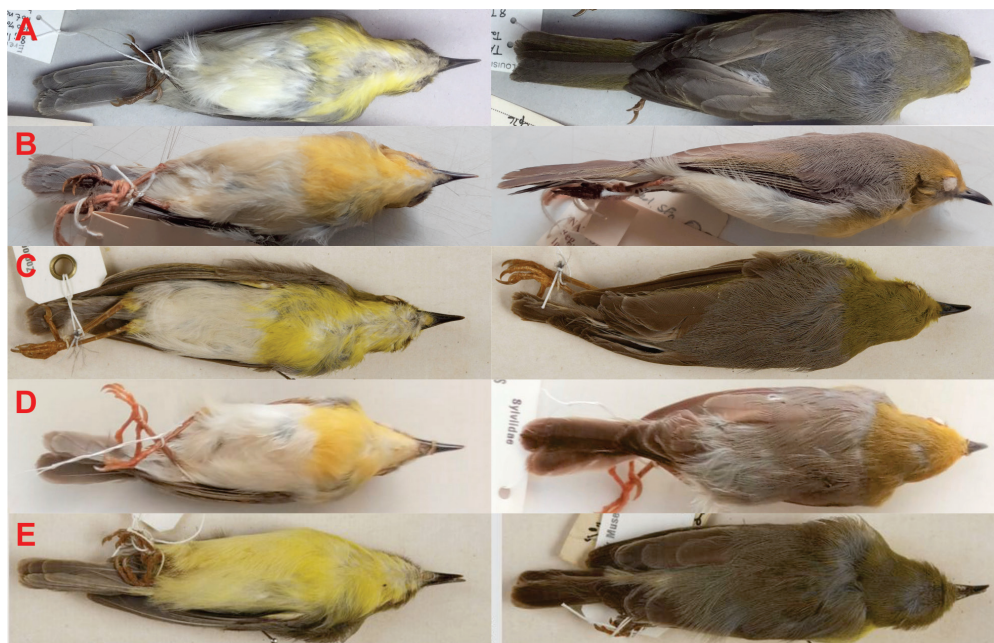
1. Louisiana State University #138973; male, collected 8 Jun 1989 @ 1700m in Sumbawanga District, Tanzania (c. 8°29' S, 31°30' E). Measurement details (mm) collected are: wing 59.9, tail 47.7, bill (nares to tip) 6.9. (Fig. 1; A)
2. National Museums of Kenya #17150; male, iris creamy white, collected 11 Sep 1956 @ 1525m 48km north of Tunduma, Tanzania (c. 8°53' S, 32°51' E). Measurement details collected are: wing 57, tail 47.4, bill 7.3. (Fig. 1; B)

Both of these specimens show features consistent with *pulchra* but neither of the other two subspecies that may be found in southern Tanzania, specifically:

1. The underparts show a clear and sharp demarcation from yellow throat and breast to white abdomen, which is consistent with *E. s. pulchra* and *E. s. citriniceps*, but not eastern *E. s. occipitalis* which shows the yellow of the throat blending across most if not all of the lower underparts (Fig. 1; E).
2. The dorsal surface shows the grey of the mantle extending to the occiput, a feature shown by *E. s. pulchra* and *E. s. occipitalis* but not *E. s. citriniceps*, in which the brighter golden olive of the crown extends to the rear of the head where it is sharply demarcated from the grey mantle (Fig. 1; C, D).
3. The colour of the irides noted for the Tunduma specimen (Fig. 1; B) is creamy white, which is inconsistent with the dark, wine red irides of *E. s. citriniceps* (hazel in juveniles), those being unique to that subspecies. Furthermore, the thighs show white feathering, which is always contrasting yellow in *citriniceps* when visible (Fig. 1; C).
4. The wing and tail measurements for both specimens fall within 2 mm of the average for those metrics in a sample of 57 *E.s. pulchra*, while the tail length measured for both specimens exceeds the maximum tail length in both *E. s. occipitalis* and *E. s. citriniceps*, from samples of 53 and 23 of each, respectively (JB unpub. data).

While label details for the Sumbawanga specimen do not record the colour of the irides, an important difference between *E. s. citriniceps* and *E. s. pulchra*, the extent of grey on the crown in combination with the measurement details is sufficient to be confident of the identification. This view is supported by the collector (D. Moyer pers. comm.).

**Figure 1.** Tanzanian specimens of *E. s. pulchra* from Sumbawanga District (A; photos by S. Cardiff) and from north of Tunduma (B; photos by D. Chesire), alongside examples of *E. s. citriniceps* from west Tanzania (C; see Fjelds  2015a) and Burundi (D; photos by R. Marie Lafontaine), and an example of *E. s. occipitalis* from southeast Tanzania (E; see Fjelds  2015b). Photographs are not to scale.



It should be noted that a third specimen of the Green-capped Eremomela from this southern region of Tanzania (on the Ufipa Plateau), was assigned to *E. s. citriniceps* (Grant & Mackworth-Praed 1942). Though not assessed for this short note, a contemporary re-evaluation of this material is almost certain to point to identification as *E. s. pulchra*. At the time of collection, *pulchra* was not known from as close to southern Tanzania as northern Zambia, and more importantly, the difference in eye colour between *pulchra* and *citriniceps* as well as other distinguishing characteristics, were not widely appreciated. Therefore then, and subsequently (e.g. Chapin 1953), there have been apparent difficulties in satisfactorily assigning specimens to either of these superficially similar taxa (JB unpub. data).

Immediately to the south of the East African region, *E. s. pulchra* is common in Katanga Province of southeast Democratic Republic of Congo and throughout Zambia (Chapin 1953, Dowsett *et al.* 2008). Its presence in the southwestern corner Tanzania can be expected, where it is likely to be the only subspecies present. Separating *E. s. pulchra* of the Tunduma–Sumbawanga area from *E. s. citriniceps* in the Rungwa Game Reserve and Mahale Mountains regions to the north is a prominent biogeographic barrier comprised of Lake Rukwa and the Karema Gap (Moreau 1943). Meanwhile, *E. s. pulchra* is also well separated from *E. s. occipitalis* of lowland southeastern Tanzania by the high ground of the Rungwe and Njombe regions, and to the south of there, Lake Malawi. Throughout its range, *E. s. pulchra* is also exclusive to miombo woodland habitat, which may further differentiate this taxon from the less habitat-exclusive *E. s. citriniceps*, given that subspecies' presence far to the north of the central-southern Tanzanian miombo zone in Kenya and Uganda.

### Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Steve Cardiff at Louisiana State University for providing photographs of the Sumbawanga specimen, Dr Peter Njoroge and Dominic Chesire at the National Museums of Kenya for photographs of the Tunduma specimen, and Rene Marie Lafontaine at the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences for photographs of the Burundi *citriniceps*. The Global Biodiversity Information Facility was used to access photographs of specimen material courtesy of the Natural History Museum of Denmark. Lastly, I thank David Moyer for commenting on the Sumbawanga specimen and Don Turner for some useful suggestions.

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### James Bradley

7961 East Saanich Rd, Saanichton, BC, Canada, V8M 1T4. Email: [james\\_bradley@ymail.com](mailto:james_bradley@ymail.com)

*Scopus* 41(1): 48-50, January 2021

Received 15 August 2020