

Short communications

Comments concerning the races of the Crested Guineafowl *Guttera pucherani* in Tanzania, in particular the position of *Guttera pucherani granti* (Elliot)

The Crested Guineafowl *Guttera pucherani* is widely distributed in Tanzania, and is represented there by several distinctive forms. However, the taxonomy of the crested guineafowls in Africa is complex and in need of review.

Peters (1934) listed two races of *Guttera plumifera*, eight races of *Guttera edouardi* and the monotypic *Guttera pucherani* in his World Checklist. White (1965) followed suit, but replaced *pallasi* with *verreauxi*, and added *granti* to make a total of nine races within *edouardi*. Later, Britton (1980) followed White by admitting both *edouardi* and *pucherani*, with *barbata*, *granti*, *sethsmithi* and *schoutedeni* as races of *G. edouardi*.

Crowe (1978), and in Urban *et al.* (1986), regarded *pucherani* and *edouardi* as conspecific, based on intergradation in captivity and in the wild and placed four races (*edouardi*, *verreauxi*, *sclateri* and *barbata*) within *pucherani*, and considered five (*sethsmithi*, *schoutedeni*, *pallasi*, *chapini* and *kathleenae*) as synonyms of *verreauxi*, but failed to mention *granti*. Later, McGowan (1992) followed Crowe (*op. cit.*) by also omitting any reference to *granti*, stating that only nominate *pucherani* showed any red orbital skin.

Within Tanzania several forms are present, but much confusion has arisen over which ones. Crowe (1979) clearly erred in showing a huge area of central Tanzania as lacking any Crested Guineafowls, when in fact that area almost paralleled the range of *granti*. Similarly, the omission of *granti* by Crowe in Urban *et al.* (1986), together with mention of a collar of black feathers on the lower neck and upper breast (yet not shown in the accompanying plate) in nominate *pucherani*, has led to further confusion, particularly so when a photograph of nominate *pucherani* in McGowan (1992) clearly showed no black collar on the lower neck and upper breast.

Basic identification of the races of the Crested Guineafowl is based on the following criteria: colour of the throat and neck, and the presence or not of a broad band of black feathers at the base of the neck. Eye colour is also important, red or dark brown. The races likely to occur in Tanzania are:

Guttera p. pucherani (Hartlaub). Zanzibar, the coastal lowlands south to the Rufiji River, and inland to Kilimanjaro and the Uluguru Mountains. Sides of face and neck greyish blue, throat and orbital skin bright red. No black collar on lower neck. Eyes red.

Guttera p. granti (Elliot). Ranging over a wide area of inland Tanzania from Oldeani and Manyara south through Kondoa and Dodoma districts to Mikumi and Ruaha National Parks and the Udzungwa Mountains. Sides of face and neck bluish-grey, throat and orbital skin bright red. Broad black collar on lower neck. Eyes red.

Guttera p. verreauxi (Elliot). Western and northwestern Tanzania. Sides of face and

neck bluish grey; small area of pinkish-red on throat. Broad black collar on lower neck and upper breast. Eyes dark brown.

Guttera p. barbata Ghigi. Occurring in extreme southern border areas and in southeastern coastal lowlands north to the Rufiji River. Sides of face, neck and throat bluish black, little or no trace of red on throat. Broad black collar on lower neck. Eyes red. Possibly hybridizes with nominate *pucherani* in northern parts of its range.

Details of all known localities for the Crested Guineafowl in Tanzania can be found at www.tanzaniabirdatlas.com.



Figure 1.

Guttera p. edouardi (Hartlaub) is extralimital, occurring from southern Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique south to Natal. The sides of the face and throat are dark slate grey, with a curly black crest, a broad black collar on the lower neck, and a prominent whitish fold of skin on the hindneck. Eyes crimson. Possibly hybridizes with *barbata* in some northern areas.

In conclusion, we recommend that *granti* be re-admitted as the race occurring throughout inland Tanzania from Oldeani and Manyara south to Mikumi, Ruaha and the Udzungwas.

The race *granti* (Elliot), for which there is no type specimen, was based on a sketch (Fig. 1), currently housed in the Scottish National Library Archives, Edinburgh, of a bird shot and eaten by Major James Grant at Ugogo, Dodoma District on 8 December 1860. Later, Sclater (1931) commented that 'the special character distinguishing this race is the red on the face and throat that distinguishes it at once from the South African *Guttera e. edouardi*, in which the face and throat are dark'. It would seem that Crowe (*op. cit.*) had merely considered *granti* as synonymous with nominate birds on account of the similar facial pattern, but was clearly confused concerning the issue of a broad black collar on the lower neck of *granti*, yet absent in nominate birds. The error in the text in Urban *et al.* 1986 relating to the presence of a black collar in nominate birds can only be regretted. Fig. 2 is a photograph of *granti* taken in Mikumi National Park.



Figure 2.

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Recent unprecedented numbers of Red-necked Phalaropes *Phalaropus lobatus* in Tanzania, and some older undocumented records

In Kenya, Red-necked Phalaropes *Phalaropus lobatus* have frequently been recorded in offshore waters between October and April, sometimes with scores or even hundreds together. Occasional inland records have been mainly of small numbers on the Rift Valley lakes, but with up to 30 together at Ferguson's Gulf, Lake Turkana, and up to 15 at Lake Nakuru (Hopson & Hopson 1975, Britton 1980, East African Bird Reports for 1979–1992, Pearson & Turner 1998).

For Tanzania, however, Britton (1980) gives only two records: a single bird near Tabora on 10 October 1962 and a few at Lake Masek in January and February 1975.