

REMARKS ON THE TYPE SPECIMEN OF LIMICOLA HARTLAUBII VERR.

By LEONHARD STEJNEGER.

When my friend, Mr. W. Brewster recently visited Washington I expressed the wish to examine the unique type of J. Verreaux's *Limicola Hartlaubii*, from Madagascar, now in the collection of the Boston Society of Natural History. He very kindly sent for the specimen, thus enabling me to present the following remarks as the result of my examination. As the type is practically inaccessible to those authors, who are most interested in the Lemurian Avifauna, it is presumed that the remarks may possess some interest.

The specimen is mounted, but is not in a good condition. It has the No. 7570 of the Lafresnaye Collection with the following inscription on the under surface of the stand: «*Limicola hartlaubii* J. Verr. Madagascar. Type. 7, 8. 1862.»

The following table shows the dimensions as compared with two specimens of *Limicola platyrhyncha* in the U. S. Nat. Mus.

Species	Locality	When collected		Expos. culmen <i>m/m</i>	Tarsus <i>m/m</i>	Middl. toe with claw <i>m/m</i>	Wing <i>m/m</i>	Tail feathers <i>m/m</i>
<i>L. Hartlaubi</i>	Madagascar	Oct. 7. 62.		36	23	20.5	107	38
<i>L. platyrhyncha</i>	Lapponia	Summer	♀	30.5	20.5	19	105	37
«	British India	Winter		32	23.5	20	101	—

All the measurements are taken with very pointed dividers, the exposed culmen from the border of the feathering of the forehead to the tip; the tarsus from the tibio-tarsal joint, on the outside, to the joint with the middle toe; the latter from the same point to the tip of the nail; the wing from the bend to the tip of the first primary without flattening the wing; the tailfeathers by thrusting the point of the divi-

ders as far down as possible between the mesial pair, and measuring to the tip of the latter.

It will be seen from the table above, that the type of *L. hartlaubi* on the whole is a trifle larger, than the two birds, with which I have been able to compare it, the difference, however, not being larger than between these two themselves. The only tangible difference in the dimensions is in the length of the bill, which is considerably longer in the Madagascar bird, the difference being $4 \frac{m}{m}$. In the latter the bill also is a trifle slenderer, but not more so than that is merely perceptible.

The Madagascar bird is in a transitional plumage, the under parts and also the head having already assumed the full winter plumage, being in every respect, identical with the winter bird from India so far as the under parts are concerned. The upper parts are still in the summer garb, the feathers being very worn, so that most of the feathers are blackish brown with very narrow rusty edges; the wing coverts seem to belong to the winter plumage. The shafts of the primaries are somewhat darker in the type, (even that of the first primary in spite of Verreaux's description), but the difference from the two other specimens is not greater than it is between the two latter themselves, the shafts being whitest in the bird from India.

From the above is evident that the only real difference which I have been able to discover by a most minute examination is in the size of the bill. This difference is considerable, and apparent upon the first sight. Whether this character, however will hold good in a large series is impossible for me to say, but I doubt it very much, leaving the decision to others, who may have access to a more ample material.

There is absolutely nothing to be gained from Verreaux's description which is not only confused, as Dr. Hartlaub (Var. Madag. p. 332) justly remarks, but plainly incorrect.

Smithsonian Institution,

Washington D. C., March 15th. 1884.

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Zeitschrift/Journal: [Zeitschrift für die gesamte Ornithologie](#)

Jahr/Year: 1884

Band/Volume: [1](#)

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Artikel/Article: [Remarks on the type specimen of limigola hartlaubii verr. 84-85](#)