20 世纪 80 年代的鸟类学探索和鸟类新种

Ornithological explorations in the 1980s and new species of birds

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Above, I have described in brief my first ever (1984/85) and my first long (1987) trips to mainland China. There is no space (or time) to recount my many subsequent expeditions to different parts of China or the many exciting research projects I've been involved with. However, I will briefly summarize the discoveries of the new species to science that I have been involved with.

The first species that I was involved in describing, Chinese Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus yunnanensis*, is no longer valid under the name that we proposed, *P. sichuanensis*, as it was later realized that it had been described under the name *Phylloscopus proregulus yunnanensis* by J. D. La Touche 70 years earlier. Urban Olsson first encountered one singing bird in Sichuan in April 1986 and together with me another singing bird at Xiang Shan, Beijing in June 1988. Only poor views were obtained each time, and the birds looked very similar to Sichuan Leaf Warbler – but with two very different song types compared to the two song types of Sichuan Leaf warbler. In June 1989, Peter Colston and I found at least 15 vocalizing individuals in Jiuzhaigou, Sichuan, and finally had good views, and realized that this was not Sichuan Leaf Warbler, but instead a completely unknown species (**Figure 11**). We published a detailed description of its appearance and vocalizations, and results from a few simple playback tests, but refrained from proposing a new name (**Alström et al. 1990b**).

In June 1990, Urban Olsson and I found 20 singing males in Wolong, Sichuan, and also found two nests. We later identified a specimen from Shanxi in the Institute of Zoology, Academia Sinica, Beijing (No. 43548), which we considered to be of this species, and designated this as the holotype and proposed the name *Phylloscopus sichuanensis* (**Alström et al. 1992**) (**Figure 12**). In the same paper, we provided detailed descriptions of the species' morphology, vocalizations, habitat preferences and breeding (including nest, eggs and feeding of young) and listed eight places in Sichuan, Shanxi, Hebei and Beijing where observations had been made during the breeding period. Even though *P. sichuanensis* is now treated as a junior synonym of *P. yunnanensis*, we are nevertheless proud of our "rediscovery" of this species, as La Touche's description was only based on five specimens collected in Yunnan, presumably on migration, and only described morphological differences from *P. p. proregulus* (surprisingly he didn't mention the much more similar-looking *P. forresti*) and, of course, no information on vocalizations, habitat, breeding or distribution. (In our defense, we never examined La Touche's type specimen of *P. yunnanensis* in the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Boston, as it was examined on our behalf by the Curator, Dr Raymond A. Paynter, Jr., who wrote that it was "indistinguishable" from *P. proregulus chloronotus*, i.e. *P. forresti*.)

The second new species, Hainan Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus hainanus*, was first detected by

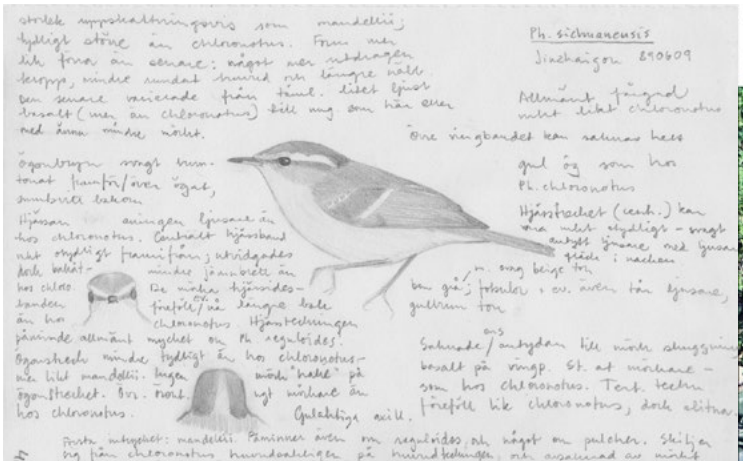

Fig. 11 Chinese Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus yunnanensis*, first field sketch of what was later described as *P. sichuanensis* (scientific name added after drawing was made), Jiuzhaigou, Gansu, 9 June 1989. (Drawing: Per Alström)

Fig. 12 Chinese Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus yunnanensis*, second bird caught, later designated as a paratype of *P. sichuanensis* Wolong, Sichuan 24 June 1990. (Photo: Urban Olsson)

Fig. 13 Hainan Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus hainanus*, Hainan, late April 1992. (Photo: Urban Olsson)

Fig. 14 Emei Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus emeiensis*, Emei Shan, Sichuan, 28 April 1992. (Photo: Urban Olsson)

Urban Olsson in 1986 in the specimen collection of the Institute of Zoology, Academia Sinica, Kunming. He immediately realized that the four specimens labelled Sulphur-breasted Warbler *Phylloscopus ricketti goodsoni* from Hainan might be a distinct species. As described above, in March 1987 we searched in vain for this species on Hainan. In April 1988, Stig Jensen informed us that he had found a leaf warbler at Jianfengling on Hainan, which matched the specimens Urban Olsson had seen, and he sent us a tape recording, which we found to be clearly different from the song of *P. ricketti*.

Next spring, in late May 1989, Urban Olsson, Peter Colston and I visited Jianfengling. We found several individuals of the leaf warbler, but breeding was over and they were only singing sporadically. However, we obtained sound recordings of its song and calls and could confirm that it differed markedly from *P. ricketti* in plumage as well as in vocalizations. The following year, I had the opportunity to examine the holotype and paratype of *P. ricketti goodsoni* in the American Museum of Natural History, New York, and was surprised to see that that was not at all similar to *P. ricketti* but instead clearly belonged to the Blyth's Leaf Warbler *P. reguloides* complex (**Alström et al. 1995a**; now treated as Hartert's Leaf Warbler *P. goodsoni* based on **Olsson et al. 2005, Päckert et al. 2009**). In late April 1992, Urban Olsson and I returned to Jianfengling, and this time breeding was in full swing, and we could collect much valuable information, and even found a nest with nearly fully grown young. We also found a specimen of this species in the Institute of Zoology, Academia Sinica, Beijing (No. 52154), which we designated as the holotype, and described it as a new species (**Olsson et al. 1993**) (**Figure 13**).

As mentioned above, we encountered the third new species, Emei Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus emeiensis*, for the first time on Emei Shan in May 1987. We heard a single individual calling multiple times and singing a few times, and I got sound recordings of its call (but not its song). We saw the bird very poorly, but thought that it looked more or less identical to the commonly occurring Claudia's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus claudiae* (then Blyth's Leaf Warbler *P. reguloides*, which was split into three species based on analyses of DNA and vocalizations: **Olsson et al. 2005, Päckert et al. 2009**). Since we didn't encounter any more birds with similar vocalizations during the rest of our visit this year, nor on visits there in 1989 and 1990, we thought it was most likely an aberrant Claudia's Leaf Warbler. However, our interest in this bird was stirred when Andy Goodwin informed us that he had heard birds with the same type of song in a valley on Emei Shan that we had never visited.

In late April 1992, we visited the area where Andy Goodwin had heard these birds, and we found at least 20 singing males in a very limited area. We noted slight but significant differences in morphology between this unknown leaf warbler and the sympatric Claudia's Leaf Warbler and Kloss's Leaf Warbler *P. ogilviegranti* (then White-tailed Leaf Warbler *P. davisoni*, but split in the same studies by **Olsson et al. 2005 and Päckert et al. 2009**). Playback tests on the unknown warbler did not elicit any response to the songs of Claudia's or Kloss's Warblers (and vice versa). Three males were caught, and one of these was collected and made into a specimen, which was deposited in the Institute of Zoology, Academia Sinica, Beijing (No. 60427) as the holotype of *P. emeiensis* (**Alström et al. 1995b**) (**Figure 14**).

The fourth new species, Alström's Warbler *Phylloscopus*

soror (originally in the genus *Seicercus*, which was merged with *Phylloscopus* by **Alström et al. 2018b** based on phylogenetic analyses), has a long, intricate history, and required 12 years of research, in five Chinese provinces, northwest and northeast India, Nepal, Myanmar and Vietnam, as well as in many museum collections before it was named (**Alström et al. 1999**). (I wish to stress that the English name, Alström's Warbler, was not my suggestion. In the original paper, we just proposed the scientific name. When I later wrote the account for this species in the *Handbook of the Birds of the World* (**del Hoyo et al. 2006**), the editors decided to use the name Alström's Warbler, based on a proposal by **Rheindt 2006**, instead of the previously used Plain-tailed Warbler. I was, of course, honoured, but also embarrassed as it may have seemed that I had coined this name to honour myself, so I convinced the editors to publish a statement in the book that the name Alström's Warbler was their choice, not mine.)

The Golden-spectacled Warbler *Seicercus burkii* was originally treated as a single species with several subspecies throughout the Himalayas and mountainous regions of central and southeast China and northern Southeast Asia. In 1987, during Urban Olsson's and my first visit to Emei Shan (see above), we noted that as we ascended the mountain, the song of Golden-spectacled Warbler changed from simple to more complex, which made us wonder whether more than one species was involved. However, as we reached even higher elevations, the songs became simple again, which made us conclude that there was probably considerable individual variation in the song of this species. In May 1992, during Urban Olsson's and my third spring visit to Emei Shan, we realized that the "Golden-spectacled Warbler" with more complex song, including trills, that occurred at mid-elevations, had a clearly different tail pattern from the birds with simpler song that occurred lower down on the mountain, and did not respond to playback of the simpler song. We concluded that these must be different species.

In May 1994, I returned to Emei Shan on my own, with the main goal to study the "Golden-spectacled Warblers". I caught seven males (sexed by song and strong aggressive response to playback) of the simple-song, low-elevation type (which I referred to as the "bottom" type based on its elevational distribution) and eight males of the complex-song, mid-elevation type (that I called the "middle" type); I also took blood samples of most of these. I could confirm our results from 1989: there were consistent differences in tail pattern and song between these two types, and I also noted additional morphological differences (shorter bill, longer tail, slightly different wing formula and more contrasting crown pattern in the "middle" type than in the "bottom" type) and consistent differences in calls. I also carried out nine playback tests on nine males of the "bottom" type and on nine of the "middle" type, and none of them responded to the other's song, while they responded very strongly to their own song type. I could also confirm that these two types were elevationally segregated, with the "bottom" one occurring commonly at approximately 700 ~ 1 300 m a.s.l. and the "middle" one occurring commonly at 1 300/1 400 ~ 2 100/2 200 m a.s.l. (elevations according to a Garmin barometric altimeter – less accurate than today's GPS-based systems); extremely few individuals of the two types were actually observed at the same elevation, so the altitudinal transition from one type to the other was exceptionally abrupt.

Remarkably, in May 1994 I also realized that even higher up on Emei Shan, there was a third species of "Golden-spectacled Warbler". In the next issue, I'll elaborate more on their differences and bring this journey to a close...

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