

POSTILLA

Published from 1950 to 2004, the short papers of the *Postilla* series reported on original research by the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History's curators, staff, and research associates, and their colleagues, in the natural science disciplines represented by the collections of the Museum's curatorial divisions.

The *Postilla* series, which ceased publication with Number 232 (2004), was incorporated into the journal *Bulletin of the Peabody Museum of Natural History*, available from BioOne Complete at <https://bioone.org/>.

Yale Peabody Museum scholarly publications are archived through EliScholar, a digital platform for scholarly publishing provided by Yale University Library at <https://elischolar.library.yale.edu/>.



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>

Yale PEABODY MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

P.O. Box 208118 | New Haven CT 06520-8118 USA | peabody.yale.edu

Postilla

YALE PEABODY MUSEUM
OF NATURAL HISTORY

Number 14

December 15, 1952 New Haven, Conn.

A NEW RACE OF BLACK-THROATED BABBLER FROM ASSAM

S. DILLON RIPLEY

The Mishmi Hills in northeastern Assam, India, were so violently devastated by the great earthquake of August 1950 that whole hillsides for miles along the narrow steep valleys have been denuded of soil and vegetation. Centuries will be needed in some areas to restore even an approximate habitat for the fauna. That this fauna is in many respects unique was abundantly shown by the Smithsonian-Yale Expedition of 1946-1947, the results of which were discussed in "The Birds of the Mishmi Hills" by Mr. Salim Ali and myself (*Jour. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc.*, 48(1):1-37, 1948). It is a sad fact that the fate of many of these little known bird and animal species will probably remain unknown for an indefinite period of time to come.

Meanwhile, reëxamination of specimens of the Black-throated Babbler from the Mishmi Hills, at the suggestion of Mr. H. G. Deignan, prompts the recognition of another population of this species as follows:

Stachyris nigriceps coei, subsp. nov.

Type: ♂ ad. (Y.P.M., No. 9585), collected January 4, 1947, by S. Dillon Ripley at Dreyi, Mishmi Hills, northeastern Assam, India.

Diagnosis: from typical *nigriceps* of Nepal and the Himalayas ranging east into northern Assam this form differs by generally darker tone of plumage, and by having a blackish unstreaked throat and very slightly darker ear coverts.

From *spadix* of Cachar and the Khasia Hills this population differs by being notably darker with a more blackish throat and dark, really seal-brown, ear coverts. Compared with *coltarti*, the subspecies found in Margherita, the Naga Hills, and north Burma, *coei* differs by having dark brown rather than rufous-brown ear coverts, and by being a purer, less rufescent brown below.

Range: Mishmi Hills, northeastern Assam, India.

Remarks: in describing the subspecies, *spadix* (*Bull. British Ornith. Club*, 68:89-90, 1948), I left the Mishmi Hills population unnamed as an intermediate. Recent collections in the Naga Hills in 1950 of *coltarti* demonstrated anew the fallacy of this course and the necessity for recognizing this population.

It gives me great pleasure, therefore, to name this new subspecies for Yale's notable benefactor and collector of *ornithologica*, William Robertson Coe.