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Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa.

PREFACE

Several years previous to his death, Colonel Wardlaw Ramsay, realising that a Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. concise pocket " Guide to the Birds of Europe and North Africa" was a great desideratum, devoted much time to the preparation of such a work, and on many occasions consulted me on various matters as it progressed. A few days before he passed away he had premonitions that his end was near and said to me as I sat Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. beside him, "If I do not pull through this illness, I leave my unfinished book to you quite unconditionally: publish it or not as you think best." On

examination, the draft manuscript was found to be practically complete so far as the descriptions of the various species and racial forms, and their geographical distribution, were concerned ; but otherwise much remained to be done before the work would be in a state to send to the Press. Being engaged on other ornithological work at the moment, it was unfortunately impossible for me to give the necessary attention to the " Guide," but on mentioning the situation to my Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. friend Surgeon-Rear-Admiral Stenhouse, M.B.O.U., he at once kindly volunteered to help me, and it is entirely due to his valued co-operation that this work has so promptly appeared.

Most of the measurements given have been taken by Mr Stenhouse from specimens in the Royal Scottish Museum : when sufficient material was not available, the measurements have been copied from the works of Dr Hartert (*Vogel der paldarktischen Fauna* and Mr VVitherby (*Handbook of British Birds*), and are acknowledged by " H." and " \".

within brackets. The bill measurements, unless otherwise stated, are from the level of the end of the frontal feathers in a straight line to the tip of the bill, i.e., in a curved bill, like Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. a Falcon's, the measurement is not that of the chord of the curve. Measurements are in millimetres, and for the convenience of those who are not familiar with the metric system it may be said that twenty-five millimetres are practically equal to one inch.

The systematic arrangement followed is Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. that of Hartert's work previously mentioned, but Colonel Wardlaw Ramsay did not adopt Hartert's nomenclature in all cases.

WM. EAGLE CLARKE,

Colonel R. G. WARDLAW Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. RAMSAY

ROBERT GEORGE WARDLAW RAMSAY.

Robert George Wardlaw Ramsay was the only son of Robert Balfour Wardlaw Ramsay of Whitehill, Midlothian, and Tillicoultry in Clackmannanshire, and Louisa, third daughter of George, eighth Marquess of Tweeddale. He was educated at Cheam and Harrow, and elected to follow a military career. He received his Commission Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. in the Hampshire Regiment in January 1871, and soon after left for India; went through the Afghan Campaign, and saw service in Burmah and the Andaman Islands. Later he transferred to the Highland Light Infantry, afterwards commanding the 7th Volunteer Battalion of the Royal Scots, and eventually acting as Chairman of the Territorial Force Association. During the Great War he commanded a Brigade of the Territorial Force Reserve on Coast Defences.

He retired from the Army on the death of his father in 1882, and from that year until his death he took an active part in County affairs. He was Deputy-Chairman for the County of Midlothian; Chairman of the Territorial Forces for that County; Chairman Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. of the Edinburgh and East of Scotland College of Agriculture, and was also closely associated with charitable work. Though by nature reserved in manner, he was a singularly attractive personality to those who knew him intimately—a man who lived up to high ideals, and the Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. personification of all that was

honourable and best. He was the revered friend of the writer of this notice for over thirty years.

Colonel Wardlaw Ramsay, who had been keenly interested in the study of birds from boyhood, was elected a Member of the British Ornithologists' Union in 1872, and its President from 1913 to 1918; and was a Fellow of the Zoological Society. He commenced to contribute to ornithological literature in 1874, as is indicated by the list of his various papers which forms the conclusion of this notice. On Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. the death of his uncle, Arthur, Marquess of Tweeddale, who was for many years the distinguished President of the Zoological Society, Wardlaw Ramsay inherited the vast collection of birds formed by that nobleman. This the inheritor generously presented to the British Museum (Natural History), on Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. condition that a set of duplicate specimens was to be sent Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. to the Edinburgh Museum. He also handed over the very valuable ornithological library, which came to him with the collections, to the Natural History Museum, on condition it was placed in the Bird-room for the use of the officers and students working there. It is now known as the Tweeddale Library. In Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. 1881 he edited and revised a memorial volume entitled *The Ornithological Works of Arthur Ninth Marquess of Tweeddale*, a quarto of 760 pages. During the last years of his life, his ornithological activities were Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. devoted to the preparation of this "Guide," which he did not live to see in book form.

Colonel Wardlaw Ramsay was in his seventieth year, and had been seriously ill for about a month, when he passed away on the 22nd April 1921. He married the elder daughter of Mr Charles Swinton Hogg, Administrator-General of Bengal, and second son of Sir James Weir Hogg, Bart, by whom, as well as three sons and two daughters, he is survived.

The following is a List of Papers contributed by the Intc Colonel R. G. Wardlaw Ramsay:—

"Description of a New Species of Woodpecker (*Gecinus erythrogygis*) from

, British Burmah." *Proc. Zool. Soc.* 1874, pp. 212-215. "Ornithological Notes from the district of Karen-nee, Burmah." *Ibid.*,

1875, pp. 348-353—"On an undescribed species of Nuthatch (*Sitta jnagna*) and another bird

(*Orocetes erythiogaster*) from Karen-nee." *Proc. Zool. Soc.* 1876, p. 677. "Notes on some Burmese Birds." *Ibid.*, 1877, pp. 452-473. "A Synopsis of the genus *Pomatorhinus*." *Ibid.*, 1878, pp. 129-145. "Description of a new Oriole from Borneo (*Oriolus chinensis*)." *Proc.*

Zool. Soc. 1879, P- 709-"Ornithological Notes from Afghanistan" (Xos. I. and II.). //>is, 1S79, pp. 444-449; 18S0, pp. 45-71. Contributions to the Ornithology of Sumatra :—" Report on a collection

from the neighbourhood of Padang." Proc. Zool. Soc. 1880, pp. 13-16. "Descriptions of Two New Species of Birds (^Ana/cipus co>isarigitinfns nnd

Edo/ioso))ia a/terum').^" Ibis, 1881, pp. 32-34. "Descriptions of Two New Species of Birds from Sumatra {Hcmrxus

sumatrans and Criniger sumatranus.'^ Ann. Mag. Hist. x. 1882, p. 431. "Catalogue of the Tweeddale Collections." I/)is, 1884, p. 123. Contributions to the Ornithology of the Philippine Islands:—No. i, "On

two collections of Birds from the vicinity of Manila." I/'is, 1S84,

p. 330. No. 2, "On additional collections of Birds." I/>is, 1886,

p. 15. "On the Columbine genus Macropygm and its allies." Ilns, 1890, p. 214. "On a New Genus of the Order Columbx\" ///.s 1890, p. 246.

W. E. C.

Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa.

BIRDS OF EUROPE AND NORTH AFRICA

PASSERES.

Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa.

Perching birds : 3 toes in front, i behind.

CORVID^.

The largest Passeres. Wing with 10 primaries, of which the I St is short, but always longer than primary coverts, and about half the length of 2nd; nares covered with bristles.

CORVUS.

Mostly black with metallic sheen; nasal bristles prone; omnivorous; nest in cliffs or trees, or

occasionally on ground; eggs 4-5, pale bluish or greenish ground colour, blotched or spotted with black or brown.

Corvus corax corax L. Raven. Fr. Corbeau; Ger. Kalkrabe ; Ital. Corvo imperiale ; Swed. Korp.

^j \$ lilac, with steel blue and purple gloss ; throat feathers hackled ; feathers grey at base ; nasal bristles long and stiff, liill, legs and feet black. Wing ^ 400-436, 9 395-420 (W.). Tarsus 63-65. Bill 62-68, greatest height 31. Young are dull black with throat feathers short and rounded.

Resident. —Europe generally, including Faroes (" *C. c. varius*," feather bases whitish and less purple Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. gloss on feathers), Britain, Iceland (" *C. c. islandicus*," feathers rather greenish tinged), south to Pyrenees, Alps, Apennines, Crete (Meinertzhagen) and possibly Greece ; and in W. Siberia.

C. corax hispanus Hartert and Kleinschmidt. Rather smaller, wing not exceeding 430 ; throat hackles very short. Intermediate

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between typical "corax" and "tingitanus" as to bill, which is high and strong and Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. more Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. curved than in " corax," longer than in "tingitanus."

Resident —Spain and Portugal, Corsica, Sardinia.

" *C. c. sardus* " Kleinschmidt appears inseparable from this race.

C. corax canariensis Hartert and Kleinschmidt. Bill as in typical "corax," but smaller, as is entire bird. Wing 390-415 (H.). From "tingitanus" distinguished by its weaker, straighter and less high beak.

Resident. —Canary Islands.

C. corax tingitanus Irby. Bill shorter, higher, stouter, length 60-64 ; throat hackles shorter ; wing not over 430 ; upper back tinged brown in worn plumage.

Resident. —N. Africa from W. Egypt (Suium) to Morocco, south to Atlas. Accidental Madeira.

C. corax laurencei Hume. Intermediate between typical "corax" and larger eastern "tibetanus" (which has wing 480-497 and very long Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. throat hackles). Becomes very brown on head in worn plumage. Wing 400-450.

Resident. —From Greece, through Asia Minor, E. to N. W. India.

C. corax ruficollis Lesson. Smaller. Bill more slender; head, neck, and occasional feathers on underparts brownish at all seasons except just after moult, but most marked in worn plumage; neck feathers whitish at base. "Wing 350-420. Bill from skull 57-75. Height 20-25-5" (Meinertzhagen).

Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa.

Resident. —N. Africa in desert places, from Cape Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. de Verdes to Egypt ; south of range of "*tingitanus*" in Morocco, Tunis, and Algeria ; also through Palestine to India.

Corvus rhipidurus Hartert. Fantailed Raven.

Bill short and much curved; nasal bristles fan-shaped, pointing upwards ; primaries and secondaries very long in proportion to tail, which is short and broad. Wing 340-410. Tail 140-160. Tarsus 55. Bill 50-60 (H.).

Residence. —N.E. Africa, Middle and Upper Egypt, Arabia, and Palestine.

Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. *cornix cornix* L. Hooded Crow. Fr. *Corneille mantelee*; Ger. *Nebelkriihe*; Ital. *Cornacchia*; Swed. *Gra Kraka*.

Black, glossed Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. with blue and violet ; neck (sides and behind), back, and Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. underparts ashy grey. Bill, legs and feet black. Wing 315-338, 295-319. Tarsus 53-60. Bill 46-52.

Breeds. —Europe generally, E. and N. of a line from Elbe and Rhine down Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. to Italy ; Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. Ireland, Isle of Man, Mid and N. Scotland, Faroes. Partial migrant ; occurs in winter Holland, Belgium, England, Switzerland, W. Germany. Of rare occurrence in N.W. Africa. Interbreeds with "*C. corone*" and hybrids are fertile.

C. cornix sardonius Kleinschmidt. Smaller. Wing 280-324, 275-317 Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. (Meinertzhagen).

Resident. —Corsica, Sardinia, Balkans, Palestine, Egypt.

C. cornix kaukasicus Gengler. Grey with strong brown tinge, especially on back; shaft streaks dark grey, not very conspicuous ; wings also strongly tinged with brown, neck lighter blue gloss ; bases of feathers pale grey.

Resident. —Caucasus.

C. cornix minor Meinertzhagen. Nearest "*C. c. pallescens*" from Cyprus, a very Guide to the

birds of Europe and North Africa. pale form approaching " *C. capellanus*" from the Persian Gulf, but differs in longer wing and deeper and longer beak. Wing 313-327 ("palescens" 294-299). Culmen 55-61, height 20-22 ("palescens" 49-56, height 17-5-19). (Meinertzhagen.)

Resident. —Crete ; may prove to occur also in Greek islands.

Corvus corone corone L. Carrion Crow. Fr. Corneille noir ; Ger. Rabenkriihe ; Itai. Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. Cornacchia nera.

^ \$ Black, glossed with purple, greener on wings and tail ; nostrils covered with feathers. Bill, legs and feet black. Wing 310-324. Tarsus 52-59. Bill 47-52. Young may be distinguished from those of Rook by white bases to feathers of body.

lirccds. —England, S. and C. Scotland, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, N. Spain and Portugal, W. Germany, Switzerland, Bohemia, N. Italy, and from E. Russia east to Yenisei. Largely resident ; occurs in winter in C. and S. Italy, and W. Mediterranean Isles, Azores and Madeira.

Corvus frugilegus frugilegus L. Rook. Fr. Coibeau-Freux ; dcr. Saatkrahe ; Jhil. Corvo nero Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. ; Siucd. Raka.

<^ 9 Black, glossed with purple and violet ; bases of feathers

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grey; bill more slender and pointed than in "corone"; base of bill and front part of face bare and skin very rough. Bill, legs and feet black. Wing 292-320. Tarsus 52-54. 311149-54. Young are duller, with root of bill feathered Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. and nostrils covered.

Breeds. —Europe generally, including British Isles, from about 64° N., south to S. France, N. Italy, Dobrudscha, Crimea. Occurs in winter Spain, Portugal, Mediterranean basin and islands. Algeria (occasional), Egypt, Caucasus, Azores (occasional), Madeira (rare). Migrates from northern part of breeding range. Resident Britain, and many migrants come there Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. in winter from East.

Corvus monedula monedula L. Jackdaw. Fr. Choucas gris ; Gc}''. Dohle ; ItaL Taccola ; Swed. Kaja.

\$ \$ adult. Black, glossed purple and green on wings and tail ; crown bright purple, back and rump greyer, nape and neck whitish grey, whiter (almost forming a white patch) on sides ; beneath dark slate grey with a brown tinge. Bill, legs and feet black. Iris bluish white. Wing 220-243. Tarsus 42-46. Bill 28-32.

Breeds. —Scandinavia, Finland, Baltic Provinces. Possibly some migrate, but has not yet been recorded as occurring Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. elsewhere.

C. monedula spermologus Vieillot. Darker, especially on underparts ; neck not so pale grey and Guide to the birds of Europe and North Africa. no indication of white neck patches.

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