

—Short notes—

Lessons from the past: a bibliographic puzzle

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I hope that having a pun in the title line will be excused. In fact, I will examine here the dates of two publications by R. P. Lesson, which have caused dating problems. These are his *Traité d'Ornithologie* (1830–1831) and his chapter on birds ('Oiseaux') in Bélanger's *Voyage aux Indes Orientales* (1831–1832). That these are problematic is well illustrated by the fact that the genus *Garrulax* appears, apparently as new, in both, as do two 'species' in that genus: *Garrulax belangeri*, the Burmese race of the White-crested Laughing Thrush *Garrulax leucolophus*, and *Garrulax rufifrons* from Java, and these two species are cited by Deignan (1964: 350, 352), one from the one work and the second from the other. The latter he cited from the *Traité* in 1831, as he did the generic name, and the former from the section in Bélanger's book in 1832. Yet only one of these citations can be correct—the one which has priority.

Both works appeared in Paris at a time when a magazine called *Bibliographie de la France* was published every week. The evidence in there is usually considered reliable, as the intention was for publishers to record therein what they had published in the preceding week.

The *Traité* began to appear in 1830. Entries in the *Bibliographie de la France* (BdF), for all but two of the parts, show its progress.

<i>Traité</i> Part (pages)	BdF issue	Entry no.	Page in BdF	BdF issue date
1 (1–80)	1830: 7	910	107	13.02.1830
2 (81–160)	1830: 19	2538	298	08.05.1830
3 (161–240)	1830: 28	3932	473	10.07.1830
4 (241–320)	1830: 39	5177	644	25.09.1830
5 (321–400)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
6 (401–480)	1831: 10	1100	147	06.03.1831
7 (481–560)	1831: 15	1635	213	09.04.1831
8 (561–644)	1831: 24	2732	347	11.06.1831
— (645–659)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
— (i–xxxii)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

There is an 1831 title page and so the parts that cannot be dated from the above information must be dated from 1831. The names *Garrulax*, *Garrulax belangeri* and *Garrulax rufifrons* all appear in pp. 647 and 648 within the 'Additions et corrections'. Thus the date here must be taken to be 31st December 1831.

The chapter in Bélanger's *Voyage* is reported by Sherborn & Woodward (1901) as having appeared in the *Bibliographie de la France* on 21st May 1831 and 4th August 1832. The 1831 part was part 3 (pp. 161–224), of Bélanger's book, and the 1832 one was part 4 (pp. 225–288). For some 15 years these dates from Sherborn & Woodward were accepted, but Richmond (1917) noted that what seemed to be a review (Lesson 1831) appeared in the September 1831 issue of the *Bulletin des Sciences Naturelles et de Géologie* stating that the first five parts had been published. Richmond's cardex, then unpublished, later issued posthumously

in microfiche form (Richmond 1992), was well known to Deignan, as it was housed and updated by the Division of Birds of the United States Museum of Natural History where Deignan worked. This is, therefore, almost certainly why Deignan used 1832 for this work. It is not clear however why Deignan forgot or ignored that *Garrulax belangeri* was also in the *Traité*.

Further investigation shows that Richmond did not have command of all the facts, he seemingly had not discovered that this 'September 1831' issue was most probably published in 1832, due to a seven or eight month gap in publication of the *Bulletin des Sciences Naturelles et de Géologie*. This is reported and explained in a copy of volume 26 held in the library at The Natural History Museum, South Kensington, London. Bound in at the end, after the September 1831 issue (which may have seemed logical due to its date, is a page headed AVIS ESSENTIEL dated 'Paris, le 30 septembre 1831' stating, in French, "we publish today the February 1831 issue". This, of course, is typical of the sort of evidence that simply disappears without trace as binders do not always receive such notes and when they do they do not always know where to bind them. Reading on, it becomes clear that the long gap after publication of the January 1831 issue was due to a general commercial crisis. The hope is also expressed that while the issue for March 1831, was to appear 'd'ici à peu de jours' (in a few days), the April issue and the issues following would all be late, appearing two a month in an effort to catch up so that the December issue might appear by end January (which would have required better than two issues a month). Of course this commercial crisis no doubt affected the issue of parts of Bélanger's book too which helps to explain the gap between May 1831 and August 1832 for the two parts mentioned above.

Browning & Monroe (1990) cited Richmond and made the connection with the dates given by Sherborn & Woodward and implied that their use of 1832 for part 4 must have been a *lapsus* for 1831. This is not so, the *Bibliographie de la France* for 4 August 1832 does indeed report the appearance of part 4. And now we know why the delay.

We thus face a choice between citing these names from Bélanger's work in August 1832 or from the 'Additions et corrections' in the *Traité*. Although we have no certain date of publication of the latter we do have a title page for the volume, which is dated 1831. To cite any date later than 1831 would be to suggest the imprint date for the volume was incorrect and of this there is no proof. Therefore, these names should all be cited from the *Traité* with a date of 1831 [December 31] based on Art. 21.3.1 of the Code (I.C.Z.N., 1999).

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Sighting of White-bellied Sea-Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster* at the Lakkavalli Dam

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In India, the White-bellied Sea-Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster* is distributed along the seaboard from about the latitude of Mumbai on the west coast to the mangroves of Sundarbans in the east, and on the offshore island archipelagos of Lakshadweep and Andaman & Nicobar. It is known to largely affect seacoasts, tidal creeks, estuaries, lagoons and mangroves. It is also found a few miles inland along tidal rivers and freshwater lakes, though rarely (Ali & Ripley 2001; Grimmett *et al.* 1998; Naoroji 2007).

We recorded a White-bellied Sea Eagle at the Lakkavalli Dam (13°41'58"N 75°38'12"E) along the northern edge of Bhadra Wildlife Sanctuary in central Karnataka (India) at 0800 hrs on 26th March 2006. After spotting the bird in flight at a distance of roughly one kilometre, near a far bank, we approached by boat, the tree where we had seen it land. Upon closer inspection from around 100 m we were able to confirm its identity. The eagle then took off, flew low overhead and swooped down about 150 m away to catch a large fish, which it proceeded to consume on a tree in the distance. On 27th March 2006 we spotted a White-bellied Sea-Eagle around noon, this time flying over the dam towards the rice and sugarcane fields to the east. We cannot confirm if this was the same or a different individual.

White-bellied Sea-Eagles are known to sometimes disperse inland. In Australia, where there are detailed records of the species' distribution, they have occasionally been sighted as far as 400–500 km from the coast (Shephard 2003). Such records are considerably fewer in India, with one record from Ahmedabad in Gujarat, about 80 km inland from the coast and another from the mouth of the Shatrungi River in Saurashtra (Ali & Ripley 2001). The species has also been sighted at Periyar reservoir in Kerala (Robertson & Jackson 1992), and other freshwater bodies close to the coast. The farthest record of the species straying inland was at Sagardighi fisheries near Malda town in West Bengal—about 450 km from the nearest sea coast (Jha 1997).

While we are not aware of any published records of the species from this site, the unfamiliarity of the locals with the bird suggests it to be a vagrant. It is a matter of interest that the species disperses this far inland, at a minimum straight-line distance of 103 km from the west coast, across a habitat of moist forests, montane shola and grasslands, tree-covered plantations and agriculture of the Western Ghats in the region of Kudremukh National Park, Someshwara Wildlife Sanctuary and Mookambika Wildlife Sanctuary. Also, this sighting happens to be the second ever farthest inland record of the species in southern India, the first being Maddur lake (12°05'N 77°02'E) near Yelandur town in Karnataka—nearly 200 km from the western coast (Thejaswi 2005).

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