

Subalpine Warbler. Great Saltee Island, Co. Wexford, Ireland. 18 April 2009.
Photo: Tom Shevlin.



List of *Sylvia* Warblers with References

Compiled by Joe Hobbs



Introduction

I have endeavoured to keep typos, errors, omissions etc in this list to a minimum, however when you find more I would be grateful if you could mail the details during 2014 to: josephobbs@gmail.com. Grateful thanks to Tom Shevlin (www.wildlifesnaps.com) for the cover images. All images © the photographer.
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The general order of species follows the International Ornithologists' Union World Bird List (**Gill, F. & Donsker, D.** (eds.) 2014. IOC World Bird List. Available from: <http://www.worldbirdnames.org/> [version 4.1 accessed January 2014]).

The Lesser Whitethroat complex follows: **Shirihai, H., Gargallo, G. & Helbig, A.** 2001. *Sylvia Warblers, Identification, taxonomy and phylogeny of the genus Sylvia*. London.

The Subalpine Warbler complex follows: **Svensson, L.** 2013. A taxonomic revision of the Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans*. *Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club* 133: 240-248.

Version

Version 2.8 (March 2014).

Cover

Main image: Subalpine Warbler. Great Saltee Island, Co. Wexford, Ireland. 18th April 2009. Tom Shevlin.

Vignette: Whitethroat. Ring Marsh, Our Lady's Island Lake, Co. Wexford, Ireland. 29th May 2010. Tom Shevlin.

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Blackcap

Sylvia atricapilla [Linnaeus 1758, Sweden].

[*S.a. atricapilla*] W Europe S to the Pyrenees & N Italy E to SW Siberia & N Kazakhstan and S to C Turkey & SW Russia. Winters W & S Europe and NW, W & E Africa.

[*S.a. dammholzi*] Caucasus & Transcaucasia S to N Iran. Winters Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Zaire & NE Zambia.

[*S.a. paulucci*] WC Mediterranean.

[*S.a. heineken*] S Iberia, NW Africa and Madeira & Canary Islands.

[*S.a. gularis*] Cape Verde Islands & the Azores.

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Garden Warbler

Sylvia borin [Boddaert 1783, France].

[*S.b. borin*] W Europe E to Finland, C Poland, W Hungary & N Balkans. Winters sub-Saharan Africa. [*S.b. woodwardi*] C Poland, Balkans & Bulgaria E to the region of the upper R Yenisey (C Siberia). Winters E & S Africa.

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Barred Warbler

- Sylvia nisoria*** [Bechstein 1792, central and northern Germany].
[*S.n. nisoria*] C Europe N to S Scandinavia & S Finland E to S Ural Mts & R Ural and S to E Italy, Balkans, N Turkey & N Iran. Winters E Africa.
[*S.n. merzbacheri*] SW Siberia & N Kazakhstan E to SE Mongolia and locally in C Asian mountains S to N Afghanistan & W Xinjiang (China). Winters E Africa.
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Lesser Whitethroat

Sylvia curruca [Linnaeus 1758, S Sweden].

[*S.c. curruca*] W & C Europe S to the Alps, N Italy, N Balkans, N Bulgaria, middle Volga basin, Asia Minor, the Levant, N & SW Iran & S Siberia. Winters Africa & S Asia.

[*S.c. halimodendri*] Lower R. Ural basin (Kazakhstan) E thru C Asian steppe to Mongolia. Winters S Asia.

The proposed forms *blythi*, *caucasica* & *zagrossiensis* are included with *S.c. curruca*.

The proposed form *telengitica* is included with *S.c. halimodendri*.

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Margelanic Lesser Whitethroat

Sylvia margelanica [Stolzmann 1897].

Mountain ranges from Qaidam Pendi (Qinghai, China) N to SW Gobi and W to Lop-Nor Salt Marshes (China). Winters Pakistan, NW India & Iran.

The proposed form *chuancheica* is included with *S. margelanica*.

Treated by del Hoyo *et al* 2006 as a form of Desert Lesser Whitethroat.

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Desert Lesser Whitethroat

- Sylvia minula*** [Hume 1873, Bahawalpur, India].
SE Kazakhstan & Turkmenistan E to Xinjiang (W China) and possibly E Iran & W Afghanistan.
Winters Arabia E to NW India.
The proposed form *jaxartica* is included with *S. minula*.
Other name: Small Whitethroat, Desert Whitethroat.
Treated by del Hoyo *et al* 2006 to be polytypic with races *minula* & *margelanica*.
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Mountain Lesser Whitethroat

- Sylvia althaea*** [Hume 1878, Kashmir].
Karatau Mts (S Kazakhstan) E to SW & C Tien Shan and S thru mountains to NW Himalayas, Afghanistan, SE Iran & W Pakistan. Winters S Iran E to S India & Sri Lanka and probably S Afghanistan, S Iraq & SE Arabian peninsula.
The proposed form *monticola* is included with *S. althaea*.
Other name: Hume's Whitethroat.
Allan Octavian Hume (1829-1912), English theosophist, poet and writer on Indian birds who became known as the 'Father of Indian Ornithology'. He was one of the founders of the Indian National Congress.

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Western Orphean Warbler

Sylvia hortensis [J.F. Gmelin 1789, France].

[*S.h. hortensis*] SW & S Europe E to Switzerland & Italy and SW Morocco E to Libya. Winters Senegal E to Niger & Chad.

[*S.h. cyrenaicae*] NE Libya.

In Greek mythology, Orpheus was the son of Oeagrus and the Muse Calliope, who was renowned as a musician, poet and prophet. Temminck had previously assigned *Sylvia orphea* to this species and Gould derived the vernacular name from this.

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Eastern Orphean Warbler

Sylvia crassirostris [Cretzschmar 1830].

[*S.c. crassirostris*] Slovenia E to Turkey, the Levant, NW Iran & W Azerbaijan. Winters mainly Sudan E to W Yemen.

[*S.c. balchanica*] Iran & Transcaspia. Winters Oman, S Iran & Pakistan.

[*S.c. jerdoni*] SC Asia. Winters India.

Svensson (2012) treats *balchanica* as a synonym of *jerdoni*.

Other name: Jerdon's Orphean Warbler (*jerdoni*).

Thomas Claverhill Jerdon (1811-1872), British physician, amateur botanist and wildlife author who published the *Birds of India* between 1862 and 1864.

In Greek mythology, Orpheus was the son of Oeagrus and the Muse Calliope, who was renowned as a musician, poet and prophet. Temminck had previously assigned *Sylvia orphea* to this species and Gould derived the vernacular name from this.

Desfayes, M. & Praz, J.C. 1978. Notes on habitat and distribution of montane birds in southern Iran. *Bonner Zoologische Beiträge* 29(1-3): 18-37 (26).

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Arabian Warbler

- Sylvia leucomelaena*** [Hemprich and Ehrenberg 1833, C Midyan, Saudi Arabia].
 [*S.l. leucomelaena*] Tabuk & Khaybar (NW Saudi Arabia) S to S Yemen and E to Dhofar (Oman).
 [*S.l. negevensis*] Arava Valley (on the Israel - Jordan border).
 [*S.l. blanfordi*] Gebel Elba (SE Egypt) S along the coast to SE Eritrea.
 [*S.l. somaliensis*] Djibouti & N Somalia.
 Other names: Red Sea Warbler, Blanford's Warbler (*somaliensis* & *blanfordi*).
William Thomas Blanford (1832-1905), British geologist and ornithologist who was president of the Royal Geographical Society between 1888 and 1890.

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Asian Desert Warbler

- Sylvia nana*** [Hemprich and Ehrenberg 1833, El Tor, Sinai Peninsula, NE Egypt].
 N & E Caspian Sea coasts, C & NE Iran E thru C Asian steppe to Mongolia. Winters Red Sea coast thru Sinai, S Israel, Arabia, Iran & Pakistan E to Rajasthan & Kutch (NW India).
 The proposed form *theresae* is included with *S. nana*.
 Treated by del Hoyo *et al* 2006 to be polytypic with races *nana* & *deserti*.
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African Desert Warbler

Sylvia deserti [Loche 1858, Algerian Sahara].
Western Sahara E to W Libya.
Treated by del Hoyo *et al* 2006 as a race of *Sylvia nana*.

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Whitethroat

Sylvia communis [Latham 1787, Kent, England].
[*S.c. communis*] W Europe E to N European Russia & Ukraine, N Turkey and NW Africa. Winters mainly W & C Africa.
[*S.c. volgensis*] SE European Russia E to SW Siberia & N Kazakhstan. Winter range not fully established.
[*S.c. icterops*] Turkey, the Levant, Caucasus, Transcaucasia & N Iran E to Turkmenistan. Winters E & S Africa.
[*S.c. rubicola*] Russian Altai S to SE Uzbekistan and E to N Mongolia & S Transbaikalia (all C Asian mountain regions). Winters E & S Africa.

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Dartford Warbler

Sylvia undata [Boddaert 1783, Provence, France].

[*S.u. undata*] S France, Iberian peninsula, Menorca and locally in N Mallorca (Balearic Islands), Corsica, Sardinia, Scilly & Italy.

[*S.u. toni*] NE Morocco E to N Tunisia and possibly S Iberia. Winters S to the N edge of the Sahara.

[*S.u. dartfordiensis*] S England, W France, NW Spain & N Portugal.

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Marmora's Warbler

Sylvia sarda [Temminck 1820, Sardinia, Italy].

Corsica & Sardinia and some islands in the Tuscan archipelago including Capraia, Elba, Pianosa (off W coast Italy) and probably islands off SW Sicily. Winters NE Algeria E to NW Libya.

Alberto Ferrero Della Marmora (1789-1863), Italian naturalist who was also a general in the Napoleonic Wars and was personally decorated by Napoleon I.

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Balearic Warbler

Sylvia balearica [von Jordans 1913, Dragonera, Mallorca, Balearic Islands, Spain].

Balearic Islands except Menorca.

Previously considered conspecific with Marmora's Warbler.

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- Rooke, S.** 1999. Secret lives: A bird with a history. *Birdwatch* 83: 22-23.
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Tristram's Warbler

Sylvia deserticola [Tristram 1859, Sahara of southern Algeria].

[*S.d. deserticola*] Atlas Saharien & Aurès Mts from Aïn Sefra (NW Algeria) E to Gafsa (Tunisia).

Winters S to Tademaït Plateau, Tassili n-Ajjer & Ahaggar Mts (C & S Algeria), NE Mali & C Libya.

[*S.d. maroccana*] Haut & Moyen Atlas from Jebel Igdet (Morocco) E to Tlemcen (NW Algeria). Winters S as far as Nouakchott (W Mauritania) in W Saharan oases.

[*S.d. ticehursti*] This form is known from the type specimen only, which was collected at Ouarzazate (S Morocco). Possibly an extinct race of Tristram's Warbler or an aberrant instance of *S.d. maroccana* or a hybrid x with African Desert Warbler.

Other name: Meinertzhagen's Warbler (*ticehursti*).

Reverend Henry Baker Tristram FRS (1822-1906), canon of Durham cathedral, traveller, naturalist, archaeologist and antiquarian.

Richard Meinertzhagen (1878-1967), British Empire builder, naturalist and chancer.

Eds. 1990. Country varia: Morocco. *Dutch Birding* 12(1): 27-30 (plate 16, p. 27).

Fisher, D. 1991. Morocco. *British Birds* 84(9): 371-378 (375).

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Spectacled Warbler

Sylvia conspicillata [Temminck 1820, Sardinia, Italy].

[*S.c. conspicillata*] Iberia E to Italy including Sicily and NW Africa S to WC Mauritania and Cyprus & S Turkey and scattered populations in The Levant. Winters mainly NW Africa, N Egypt & E Mediterranean.

[*S.c. orbitalis*] Madeira, Canary Islands & Cape Verde Islands. Mainly resident but some dispersal from Canary Islands to NW Africa.

Amies, P.A. 1990. Notes: Spectacled Warblers feeding in association with Finsch's Wheatear. *British Birds* 83(2): 73.

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Guerrieri, G. & Santucci, B.R. 1996. Habitat et reproduction de la Fauvette à lunettes *Sylvia conspicillata*, en Italie centrale [Habitat and reproduction of the Spectacled Warbler *Sylvia conspicillata*, in central Italy]. *Alauda* 64(1): 17-30.

Gül, O. & Atahan, M. 2011. A new breeding location of Spectacled Warblers *Sylvia conspicillata* in Turkey. *Sandgrouse* 33(1): 4-7.

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Subalpine Warblers

Western Subalpine Warbler

Sylvia inornata [Tschusi 1906, Tunisia].

[*S.i. inornata*] W Haut Atlas (Morocco) E to N Tunisia and locally in NW Libya.

[*S.i. iberiae*] Iberia, S France & NW Italy. Winters S Morocco, C & S Algeria and Mauritania & Senegal E to Niger.

Eastern Subalpine Warbler

Sylvia cantillans [Pallas 1764, Italy].

[*S.c. cantillans*] Sicily, C & S Italy. Winters W Sahel.

[*S.c. albistriata*] Extreme NE Italy S along N Adriatic coast to Albania and E to S Bulgaria, Greece, W Turkey & SW Romania. Winters E Mali E to NW Sudan.

Aidley, D.J. & Wilkinson, R. 1987. Moult of some Palearctic warblers in northern Nigeria. *Bird Study* 34(3): 219-225 (221).

Audevard, A. 2007. Première mention française de la Fauvette passerinette orientale (*Sylvia cantillans albistriata*) [Eastern Subalpine Warbler, new to France]. *Ornithos* 14(3): 198-199.

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- Shirihai, H. et al** 2000. Subalpine Warbler: identification, ageing and sexing. *Birding World* 13(6): 234-250.
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Moltoni's Warbler

Sylvia subalpina [Temminck 1820].

Balearic Islands, Corsica, Sardinia, some islands in the Tuscan archipelago, N & C Italy and possibly SE France. Winters W Sahel.

Species initially designated as *Sylvia moltonii* Orlando 1937, only later emerging that *Sylvia subalpina* took precedence (Baccetti *et al* 2007).

Professor Dr. Edgardo Moltoni (1896-1980), eminent Italian ornithologist who was director of the Museo Civico di Storia Naturale di Milano (Natural History Museum, Milan).

Baccetti, N. et al 2007. Proposed synonymy of *Sylvia cantillans moltonii* Orlando 1937, with *Sylvia cantillans subalpina* Temminck 1820. *Bulletin of the British Ornithologist' Club* 127(2): 107-110.

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Festari, I. et al 2002. Moltoni's Warbler breeding in mainland Italy. *Dutch Birding* 24(2): 88-90.

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Svensson, L. 2013. Subalpine Warbler variation and taxonomy. *British Birds* 106(11): 651-668. (see also *BB* 106(12): 707 for a correction).

Sardinian Warbler

Sylvia melanocephala [J.F. Gmelin 1789, Sardinia, Italy].

[*S.m. melanocephala*] Canary Islands, NW Africa, Iberia & Mediterranean basin E to W Turkey. Winters S to N Senegal, S Algeria & N Niger.

[*S.m. valverdei*] Tiznit (S Morocco) S to C Western Sahara (Tropic of Cancer) and E to the edge of the Sahara.

[*S.m. momus*] The Levant. Winters S to N Sudan with some altitudinal movement also.

[*S.m. norrisae*] Formerly Faiyum (Egypt). Extinct since about 1940.

The extinct form *norrisae* was possibly only a localised morph of *S.m. momus*.

The proposed form *leucogastra* is included with *S.m. melanocephala*.

Other name: Fayyum Warbler (*norrisae*).

Bas, J.M. et al 2005. Home range and territory of the Sardinian Warbler *Sylvia melanocephala* in Mediterranean shrubland. *Bird Study* 52(2): 137-144.

Bas, J.M. et al 2007. Daily activity of the Sardinian warbler *Sylvia melanocephala* in the breeding season. *Ardeola* 54(2): 335-338.

Bensusan, K.J. et al 2011. Impacts of passage migrant songbirds on behaviour and habitat use of resident Sardinian Warblers *Sylvia melanocephala* in Gibraltar. *Ibis* 153(3): 616-621.

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Menetries's Warbler

- Sylvia mystacea*** [Ménétries 1832, Sal'yana, lower Kura River, Azerbaijan].
[*S.m. mystacea*] Transcaucasia & W Caspian Sea and NE Turkey, N Iran E to SW Turkmenistan. Winters Sudan, Somalia, Arabia & S Iran.
[*S.m. turcmenica*] Turkmenistan & E Iran E to Baluchistan & Tadzhikistan and N to Aral Sea. Winters Sudan, Somalia, Arabia & S Iran.
[*S.m. rubescens*] SE Turkey E thru Iraq to SW Iran. Winters Sudan, Somalia, Arabia & S Iran.
- Edouard P. Ménétries** (1802-1861), French zoologist who was an authority on Lepidoptera and Coleoptera. He collected in Brazil and Russia and later became Conservator of Collections at the Russia Academy of Sciences.

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- Shirihai, H.** 1988. Notes: Iris colour of *Sylvia* warblers. *British Birds* 81(7): 325-328.

Rüppell's Warbler

- Sylvia ruppelli*** [Temminck 1823, Iraklion, N Crete, Greece].
S Greece, Crete, islands in the Aegean Sea, W & S Turkey & NW Syria. Winters Sahel region of Chad & Sudan.
- Wilhelm Peter Eduard Simon Rüppell** (1794-1884), German collector who travelled extensively in northern and eastern Africa.
- Anon.** 1991. Country varia: Israel. *Dutch Birding* 13(1): 20-28 (plate 29, p. 25).
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- Grantham, M.** 2004. Ringing in August. *Birding World* 17(7): 306-307.
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Cyprus Warbler

Sylvia melanothorax [Tristram 1872, En Gedi, Dead Sea, Palestine].

Cyprus. Winters Dead Sea & NE Egypt S & E thru Arava depression & NW Saudi Arabia and S to NE Sudan.

- Anon.** 1991. Country varia: Israel. *Dutch Birding* 13(1): 20-28 (plate 25, p. 23).
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Yemen Warbler

Sylvia buryi [Ogilvie-Grant 1913, Manakhah (at 7000 ft.), Yemen].

Asir Mts (SW Saudi Arabia) & W Yemen.

Treated as *Parisoma buryi* by some.

Other names: Arabian Warbler, Arabian Tit-babbler, Arabian Tit-warbler, Yemen Parisoma, Yemen Tit-warbler.

- Bates, G.L.** 1937. Birds of 'Asir and parts of Hijaz and northern Yaman collected by H. St.J. B. Philby on his 1936 journey. *Ibis* 14(1): 786-830.
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- Jennings, M.C.** 1981. Some notes on birds of western Saudi Arabia. *Journal of the Saudi Arabian Natural History Society* 2: 8-14.
- Jennings, M.C. et al** 1988. *Report on an ornithological survey of the Asir National Park, Saudi Arabia: 29 June to 18 July 1987*. National Commission for Wildlife Conservation and Development, Riyadh.
- Lobley, G.** 2010. Birding Arabia: an introduction. *Birding World* 23(4): 160-174 (plate 16, p. 169).

Newton, S.F. & Newton, A.V. 1996. Seasonal changes in the abundance and diversity of birds in threatened juniper forest in the southern Asir mountains, Saudi Arabia. *Bird Conservation International* 6(4): 371-392.

Brown Warbler

Sylvia lugens [Rüppell 1840, Simien Province, Ethiopia].

[*S.l. lugens*] Ethiopian plateaux (except the Bale Mts).

[*S.l. griseiventris*] Bale Mts (Ethiopia).

[*S.l. jacksoni*] Sudan, Didinga & Imatong Mts (Uganda), Kenya, N Tanzania, Marungu Highlands (DR Congo) & Malawi.

[*S.l. clara*] Matengo Highlands (Malawi).

[*S.l. prigoginei*] Itombwe Highlands (DR Congo).

Treated as *Parisoma lugens* by some.

Other names: Brown Parisoma, Brown Sylvia, Brown Tit-babbler, Brown Tit-flycatcher, Brown Tit-warbler.

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Schaefer, H-C. et al 2005. Nest predation is little affected by parental behaviour and nest site in two African Sylvia warblers. *Journal of Ornithology* 146(2): 167-175.

Schaefer, H-C. et al 2006. Monthly survival of African Sylvia warblers in a seasonally arid tropical environment. *Ibis* 148(3): 411-424.

Banded Warbler

Sylvia boehmi [Reichenow 1882, Seke, Ugogo, Tanzania].

[*S.b. boehmi*] S Kenya & Tanzania.

[*S.b. marsabit*] NC Kenya.

[*S.b. somalicum*] NW Somalia & N Ethiopia.

Treated as *Parisoma boehmi* by some.

Other names: Banded Parisoma, Banded Sylvia, Banded Tit-babbler, Banded Tit-flycatcher, Banded Tit-warbler.

Schaefer, H-C. et al 2004. Life-history of two African Sylvia warblers: low annual fecundity and long post-fledging care. *Ibis* 146(3): 427-437.

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Chestnut-vented Warbler

Sylvia subcaeruleum [Vieillot 1817, Gourits River, Western Cape, South Africa].

[*S.s. subcaeruleum*] W South Africa E to SW Free State & Eastern Cape.

[*S.s. cinerascens*] Namibia & Botswana.

[*S.s. ansorgei*] Angola.

[*S.s. orpheanum*] Transvaal, Natal, W Zululand & Orange Free State (South Africa), Zimbabwe & Lesotho.

Treated by del Hoyo *et al* 2006 as *Sylvia subcaerulea*.

Treated as *Parisoma subcaeruleum* by some.

Other names: Cape Warbler, Cape Tit-babbler, Cape Tit-warbler, Chestnut-vented Tit-babbler, Rufous-vented Warbler, Southern Warbler, Southern Tit-warbler, Tit Babbler.

Auer, S.K. et al 2007. Biparental incubation in the chestnut-vented tit-babbler *Parisoma subcaeruleum*: mates devote equal time, but males keep eggs warmer. *Journal of Avian Biology* 38(3): 278-283.

Kopij, G. 2005. Diet of some insectivorous passerines in semi-arid regions of South Africa. *Ostrich* 76(1-2): 85-90.

Layard's Warbler

Sylvia layardi [Hartlaub 1862, Malmesbury, Western Cape, South Africa].

[*S.l. layardi*] SW Cape Province N to Port Nolloth (South Africa).

[*S.l. aridicola*] NW Cape N to Namibia and E to Orange Free State & W Transvaal (South Africa).

[*S.l. barnesi*] Lesotho.

[*S.l. subsolanum*] E Cape Province (South Africa).

Treated as *Parisoma layardi* by some.

Other names: Layard's Tit-babbler, Layard's Tit-flycatcher, Layard's Tit-warbler.

Edgar Leopold Layard (1824-1900), Italian born British civil servant and ornithologist who served in South Africa. He was the author of the first complete book on South African birds.

Clancey, P.A. 1997. Subspeciation in Layard's Tit-babbler of the southwestern Afrotropics. *Bulletin of the British Ornithologist' Club* 117: 244-247.

Kopij, G. 2005. Diet of some insectivorous passerines in semi-arid regions of South Africa. *Ostrich* 76(1-2): 85-90.