

# SCOPUS

## FIELD IDENTIFICATION OF KENYA GREENBULS

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The family Pycnonotidae is represented in Kenya by no less than 25 species (Table 1). Because of their generally shy and secretive behaviour in forest habitats, identification of greenbuls in the field is often a very frustrating experience. Apart from the ubiquitous Yellow-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus*, which requires no further comment, other members of this family tend to be sadly ignored due to lack of basic field identification aids. The untold frustrations of both resident and visiting ornithologists are an all too familiar story. These have prompted us to offer some guidelines for the field identification of this complex family so typical of forests throughout Africa.

We prefer to discuss the Kakamega and coastal forest populations first, as these two areas contain the largest number of greenbuls in Kenya, before turning to the remaining species on an individual basis.

### KAKAMEGA FOREST, WESTERN KENYA

Genus *ANDROPADUS*

No less than seven species within this genus occur in the Kakamega Forest, and this is by far the most difficult group to identify.

- |                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>A. ansorgei</i>       | Ansorge's Greenbul        |
| <i>A. curvirostris</i>   | Cameroun Sombre Greenbul  |
| <i>A. gracilis</i>       | Little Grey Greenbul      |
| <i>A. gracilirostris</i> | Slender-billed Greenbul   |
| <i>A. latirostris</i>    | Yellow Whiskered Greenbul |
| <i>A. masukuensis</i>    | Shelley's Greenbul        |
| <i>A. virens</i>         | Little Greenbul           |

- |                            |                      |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| <i>ANDROPADUS ANSORGEI</i> | Ansorge's Greenbul   |
| <i>A. GRACILIS</i>         | Little Grey Greenbul |

It is remarkable that two species so closely resembling each other can be found living alongside. However, whereas *A. ansorgei* is quite common at Kakamega, *A. gracilis* is not.

*A. ansorgei* appears very small in the field with a short tail, grey throat and gingerish belly and flanks. A small white eye ring is also clearly visible. *A. gracilis* is very similar, and also has a white eye ring, but can be identified by its yellow belly and yellowish-olive flanks. Both species prefer the smaller limbs and branches of trees at the lower and

middle levels and are often found in small parties. *A. ansorgei* is commonly seen in the forest area immediately behind the Kakamega Forest Department headquarters.

## SOFT PART COLOURS

- A. ansorgei* IRIS: Brown, occasionally reddish-brown.  
 BILL: (Males) Black to brownish-horn colour with black base. (Females) Dull blackish-brown.  
 FEET: (Males) Greyish-olive or dark olive.  
 (Females) Greenish-grey.
- A. gracilis* IRIS: Dark brown. BILL: Black to blackish-brown.  
 FEET: Dull greyish-olive.

*ANDROPADUS CURVIROSTRIS* Cameroun Sombre Greenbul

Rather difficult to separate from the Little Greenbul *A. virens*, but generally more frequently seen than that species, and often found in undergrowth as well as at the middle levels of fairly tall leafy shrubs. It is particularly fond of foraging in higher shrubs and tangles of vines that extend up into the lowest trees, though rarely going above 10 m. When seen well the slender black bill easily distinguishes it from the Little Greenbul, while the grey head and throat contrast slightly against the olive-grey underparts. A greyish white eye ring is clearly visible in the field, and this is not present in the Little Greenbul

## SOFT PART COLOURS

IRIS: Bright rusty brown. BILL: Black but in immatures some olive or yellow at tip.  
 FEET: Olive-green or dark greenish-grey.

*ANDROPADUS GRACILIROSTRIS* Slender-billed Greenbul

A rather slender greenbul, easily identified by its contrasting olive-green upperparts and all grey underparts. It has a much longer tail and bill than the preceding species, and shows a marked preference for the canopy and upper levels of tall fruiting trees, often perching on the topmost leaves.

## SOFT PART COLOURS

IRIS: Brick red to reddish-brown. BILL: Black  
 FEET: Black.

*ANDROPADUS LATIROSTRIS* Yellow-whiskered Greenbul

The commonest and most vocal greenbul at Kakamega. Adult birds are easily identified by the two creamy yellow malar streaks on either side of the throat. These are lacking in immatures, which closely resemble Little Greenbuls *A. virens*, though in the hand a dusky malar streak is visible. This is a rather shy species, frequenting undergrowth, creepers and any fruiting trees, but its constant chattering song, delivered in short bursts, is one of the dominant

TABLE 1 The distribution of Kenya Greenbuls

Genus	Species	Western Kenya including Kakamega Forest	Central Highlands including Nairobi area	Southern Kenya including Chyulus and Taita	Southern Kenya including Sokoke Forest
<i>Andropadus</i>	<i>ansorgei</i>	x			
	<i>curvirostris</i>	x			
	<i>gracilis</i>	x			
	<i>gracilirostris</i>	x	x	x	x
	<i>importunus</i>		x		
	<i>latirostris</i>	x	x		
	<i>masukuensis</i>	x			
	<i>milanjensis</i>			x	
	<i>tephrolaemus</i>	x	x		
	<i>virens</i>	x			x
<i>Baeopogon</i>	<i>indicator</i>	x			
<i>Bleda</i>	<i>syndactyla</i>	x			
	<i>flavicollis</i>	x			
<i>Chlorocichla</i>	<i>flaviventris</i>		x	x	x
	<i>laetissima</i>	x			
	<i>chloris</i>			x	x
<i>Phyllastrephus</i>	<i>baumanni</i>	x			
	<i>cerviniventris</i>			x	
	<i>debilis</i>		x		x
	<i>fischeri</i>				x
	<i>flavostrigatus</i>			x ?	x
	<i>placidus</i>	x	x	x	x
<i>Pycnonotus</i>	<i>strepitans</i>	x	x	x	x
	<i>terrestris</i>		x	x	x
	<i>barbatus</i>	x	x	x	x
Total	25	16	9	10-11	9

bird calls throughout the Kakamega Forest.

SOFT PART COLOURS

IRIS: Dark brown. BILL: Brownish black with pale tip, but in juveniles more yellowish or orange-yellow. corners of mouth yellow. FEET: Generally dark brownish-orange to yellowish-brown, but in juveniles and immatures bright orange or orange-yellow.

*ANDROPADUS MASUKUENSIS* Shelley's Greenbul

A fairly common species, easily recognisable by its all grey head, which contrasts sharply against an otherwise bright olive-green plumage. A small greyish-white eye ring is clearly visible at close range, or in the hand. A striking field character is its woodpecker-like habit of clinging to tree trunks while foraging for food.

SOFT PART COLOURS

IRIS: Brown or reddish-brown. BILL: Dark brown or slaty black above, blue-grey below. FEET: Slaty blue or bluish-grey to green or grey-green with underside of toes yellowish-olive.

*ANDROPADUS VIRENS* Little Greenbul

Small size, short stubby bill and an all dull olive green plumage are its only field characteristics. This is generally a shy, skulking species, keeping well hidden in thickets and undergrowth. Zimmerman (1972) found it to be more common in secondary growth at Kakamega than in primary forest. Unless seen well, or in the hand, adults are difficult to distinguish from *A. curvirostris*, while immatures are very similar to immature *A. latirostris* (as mentioned under those species).

SOFT PART COLOURS

IRIS: Dull greyish-brown. BILL: Blackish, though browner below with corners of mouth bright yellow. FEET: Yellowish-orange to yellowish-brown in adults though dull brown or yellowish brown in juveniles. (NB. very similar colour to *A. latirostris*)

Genus *PHYLLASTREPHUS*

Two species are found at Kakamega, and although both inhabit the same parts of the forest, Zimmerman (1972) found that *P.baumanni hypochloris* was primarily a fruit eater while *P.placidus sucosus* was almost entirely insectivorous.

<i>P. baumanni</i>	Toro Olive Greenbul
<i>P. placidus</i>	Placid Greenbul

*PHYLLASTREPHUS BAUMANNI* Toro Olive Greenbul

The form *hypochloris* is a small shy undergrowth species with a marked superficial resemblance to *Andropadus curvirostris*. It is generally uncommon at Kakamega and difficult to identify unless in the hand, when the longer bill and yellowish and grey streaking on underparts are clearly visible. At a distance it resembles a miniature *A. gracilirostris* but occurs in undergrowth not canopy. Zimmerman (1972) found that immature birds were somewhat lighter below than adults, with the plumulaceous crissum feathers pale rufous not yellowish-olive as in adults. Possibly worthy of specific status once more is known of the nominate *baumanni* in West Africa.

## SOFT PART COLOURS

IRIS: (Males) Brownish-orange. (Females) Russet brown, though brown in immature females.  
 BILL: (Males) Dull black above, below similar but with gonys pale flesh coloured becoming yellow at extreme tip. Gape a dull yellowish flesh colour. (Females) Brownish-black gape and tomia olive to yellowish horn colour with gonys pale olive-flesh. Immature females dark brown with yellow tomia and tip. FEET: From greenish-grey to bluish-grey. Toes more blue-grey above and dull yellow beneath, claws brown. Immature females pale bluish with edges of scutes, claws and ventral side of toes dull pale yellow.

(Zimmerman 1972)

*PHYLLASTREPHUS PLACIDUS* Placid Greenbul

Separated from *fischeri* and *cabanisi* by Dowsett (1972), this species is fairly common throughout Kakamega Forest, and easily identified by its russet tail and pale yellow throat sharply contrasting against an olive breast and bright yellow belly. Immature birds have very yellow underparts. The species is generally found in small family parties. It prefers the undergrowth and lower levels, and occurs only infrequently above eye level.

## SOFT PART COLOURS

IRIS: Pale grey often with faint olive tinge while more brownish-grey in juveniles.  
 BILL: Dusky horn-coloured, though more bluish-grey towards the base of the mandible. FEET: Bright blue-grey or greyish-blue. Underside of toes yellow or yellowish-olive.

The remaining three species occurring at Kakamega are all fairly common and easily identified.

*BAEOPOGON INDICATOR* Honeyguide Greenbul

Although this species looks and flies like a honeyguide, clearly showing all white outer tail feathers, it is a much darker and more robust look-

ing bird than the honeyguides. It is also more of a canopy and upper level species, and but for its loud and distinctive whistling song would frequently be overlooked. When seen well, the white or greyish white eye clearly distinguishes it from all honeyguides and other greenbuls.

## SOFT PART COLOURS

IRIS: (Males) Creamy white or yellowish-white.  
Dull greyish-buff in immature males.  
(Females) Greyish-white to grey, often with a faint olive-brown tinge. BILL: (Males) Dark grey to blackish. (Females) Dark leaden grey.  
FEET: (Male) Dark bluish-grey. (Females) Dark leaden grey

*BLEDA SYNDACTYLA* Bristle Bill

This, the largest greenbul, is easily identified by its size, deep russet tail, bright yellow underparts and bluish-white patch around each eye. It is rather a shy species, but is often found associating with ant columns.

## SOFT PART COLOURS

IRIS: (Males) Dark brown to dark red. (Females) Dark brown. (Immatures) Dark brown. Orbital skin is bluish-white or pale blue in adults; yellowish in immatures. BILL: (Adults) Maxilla blackish, mandible light blue-grey. (Immatures) Blackish at base, yellow at tip, the yellow extending along both tomia. FEET: (Adults) Pinkish-grey. (Immatures) Dull yellowish.

(Chapin 1953)

*CHLOROCICHLA LAETISSIMA* Joyful Greenbul

A large brightly coloured greenbul, appearing more or less uniformly yellow below, and not likely to be confused with any other species. It normally occurs in small noisy parties in both thick forest and forest edge habitats. Its presence is usually announced by a pleasant bubbling chatter.

## SOFT PART COLOURS

IRIS: Bright russet. BILL: Slaty black fading to brown along tomia and at tip. FEET: Greenish-grey.

## KENYA COASTAL FORESTS

Genus *PHYLLASTREPHUS*

Three forest species within this genus occur alongside each other in the Arabuku-Sokoke Forest near Malindi, and possibly also in other

coastal forests. Two of these (*fischeri* and *terrestris*) are very much alike, and can only be positively identified by their eye colour.

<i>P. debilis</i>	Smaller Yellow-streaked Greenbul
<i>P. fischeri</i>	Fischer's Greenbul
<i>P. terrestris</i>	Brownbul

**PHYLLASTREPHUS DEBILIS** Smaller Yellow-streaked Greenbul

The smallest greenbul, almost warbler sized, and easily recognisable by its bright olive-green upperparts, contrasting sharply against a grey head, and greyish-white underparts clearly streaked with yellow. It is fairly common throughout most coastal forest areas, and in particular the Sokoke Forest, where it occurs in the lower shrubs and undergrowth, and is often a member of mixed bird parties.

SOFT PART COLOURS

IRIS: Creamy white to yellowish-white, dark in immatures. BILL: Greyish horn coloured  
FEET: Brownish-black.

**PHYLLASTREPHUS FISCHERI** Fischer's Greenbul

A medium sized greenbul with olive brown upperparts and creamy white underparts. Not uncommon in the Sokoke Forest, where it is normally found in small parties on or close to the ground. Its most notable field character is the creamy white eye, which easily distinguishes it from the following species.

SOFT PART COLOURS

IRIS: Creamy white, grey in immatures.  
BILL: Black, fairly long (Males 15 mm, Females 13-14 mm). FEET: Blue-grey.

OTHER COASTAL FOREST GREENBULS

**ANDROPADUS VIRENS ZOMBENSIS** Little greenbul

As already described under species occurring at Kakamega, an extremely shy and secretive bird keeping well hidden in thickets and undergrowth. Very common in forests to the south of Mombasa, including the Shimba Hills National Park, but as yet unrecorded from Sokoke Forest (Britton & Zimmerman in press). Although it has few distinctive characters, its short stubby tail, uniform olive-green upperparts and greyish-olive underparts should suffice for identification at close range in the field, or in the hand. It could possibly be confused with immature Zanzibar Sombre Greenbuls *A. importunis*, but the latter is not a forest species and is therefore unlikely to occur in the same habitat as *virens*.

SOFT PART COLOURS

IRIS: Dark brownish. BILL: Blackish  
FEET: Bright yellowish-brown.

*CHLOROCICHLA FLAVIVENTRIS* Yellow-bellied Greenbul

A large greenbul (21.5 cm), dark olive-brown above, yellow below. Its light coloured upper eyelid is conspicuous in the field. This, against the dark lower part of the head and crown, gives the appearance of a dark patch above the eye. This is a common and widespread bird throughout the coastal forests, occurring either singly or in pairs, and occasionally with mixed bird parties.

## SOFT PART COLOURS

IRIS: Dark red, fudge-brown in immatures.

BILL: Blackish. FEET: slaty-grey.

*NICATOR CHLORIS* Nicator

The eastern form *N.c.gularis* considered by many authorities to be worthy of specific status, is another large greenbul, easily recognisable by its heavy shrike-like bill, loud and distinctive song, and large creamy spots on the wing coverts. This is a very shy and secretive species, which usually occurs singly or in pairs, in undergrowth and dense forest vegetation. It is common in Sokoke and in most other coastal forests.

## SOFT PART COLOURS

IRIS: Hazel brown (Jackson 1938 comments that the female has a white spot in front of the eye with no yellow eyelids, and is noticeably smaller). BILL: Horn coloured or grey-brown. FEET: Slaty blue-grey.

## REMAINING GREENBULS OCCURRING IN KENYA

Genus *ANDROPADUS**ANDROPADUS IMPORTUNIS* Zanzibar Sombre Greenbul

Although a rather dull looking bird, locally abundant in coastal thickets and non-forested areas from Shimoni to Lamu, where it is frequently seen perched on bushes or telegraph wires. Adults of the eastern coastal race *insularis* are easily recognised by their pale yellow eye, but young birds are dark eyed. Further inland, a central Kenya race *frickii*, characterised by a prominent yellow eye ring, has been recorded locally in highland areas from the Ndoto Mountains south to the Thika area.

SOFT PART COLOURS (*A. importunis insularis*)

IRIS: Pale yellow in adults, dark brown in immatures. BILL: Black. FEET: Dark olive-brown.

*ANDROPADUS MILANJENSIS* Striped-cheeked Greenbul

A forest edge bird that extends into Kenya from Tanzania in the Taita and Chyulu Hills. Easily identified by its dull golden-yellow plumage with a distinctive dark cheek patch on the sides of the face, pale coloured eyes are clearly noticeable at close range.

## SOFT PART COLOURS

IRIS: Pale grey. BILL: Black. FEET: Brown or olive-brown.

*ANDROPADUS TEPHROLAEMUS* Mountain Greenbul

The race *kikuyuensis* is a common species of montane forests throughout central Kenya from 1850 - 3000 m. It is easily recognisable by its bluish-grey head and chest contrasting sharply with its bright yellowish-green belly and upperparts. A thin greyish-white eye ring is clearly visible at close range. Particularly common on the Aberdare Mountains and Mt. Kenya, while in western Kenya it occurs on Mt. Elgon. The north-eastern Tanzania race *usambarae* has recently been recorded from the Taita Hills in south-eastern Kenya (Turner 1979).

SOFT PART COLOURS (*A. tephrolaemus kikuyuensis*)

IRIS: Brown to reddish-brown with greyish eye ring. BILL: Black. FEET: Greenish-grey to bluish-grey.

Genus *PHYLLASTREPHUS**PHYLLASTREPHUS CERVINIVENTRIS* Grey-Olive Greenbul

A local and uncommon species known only from the Kitovu Forest near Taveta, and from the Thika area. Shy and secretive in habits, it occurs in small parties in thick undergrowth in ground water forest, and although a species with few field characters, its greyish-white or pinkish-grey feet are quite conspicuous in the field.

## SOFT PART COLOURS

IRIS: Orange-yellow to golden-brown.  
BILL: Horn coloured. FEET: Pinkish-grey or greyish-white.

*PHYLLASTREPHUS FLAVOSTRIATUS* Yellow-streaked Greenbul

A large, pale coloured, long-billed greenbul with the habit of constantly flicking or raising a wing while foraging. Although the race *tenuirostris* is common in montane forests throughout eastern and north-eastern Tanzania, the only known record from Kenya is a female collected from Mt. Kasigau, south of Voi, on 18 November 1938 (Rand 1958). Its current status in Kenya is unknown, and there are no recent records.

## SOFT PART COLOURS

IRIS: Dull grey tinged with olive.  
 BILL: Blackish-brown. FEET: Bluish-grey.

(Chapin 1953)

*PHYLLASTREPHUS STREPITANS* Northern Brownbul

Very similar to the Brownbul *P. terrestris*, but with decidedly more rufous in the plumage, particularly in the wings and tail, and with a dark, wine-coloured eye. Constantly flicks its wings while foraging and when perched. Although it occurs occasionally in forested areas, it is by far more generally found in thicket and dense scrub. It is generally encountered in small noisy family parties, and ranges in low lying country from north-western Kenya to the coast, where it is common.

## SOFT PART COLOURS

IRIS: Dark wine-coloured, duller in immatures. BILL: Black, darker than *P. terrestris*. FEET: Deep blue-grey.

Genus *CHLOROCICHLA**CHLOROCICHLA FLAVICOLLIS* Yellow-throated Leaf Love

A rather robust species, occurring locally in the Lake Victoria basin. In Nyanza Province it is fairly common in cultivated plots and in thick *Lantana* scrub. It is normally found in noisy family parties on or close to the ground, its best field characteristic being its habit of puffing out its pale yellow throat feathers, which contrast sharply against its darker head and underparts. Its harsh rasping call note is also very distinctive.

## SOFT PART COLOURS

IRIS: Dull yellowish to light brown.  
 BILL: Black. FEET: Brownish-grey

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are most grateful to P.L. Britton and Dr A.W. Diamond for their valuable comments on an earlier draft of this paper, and to G.R. Cunningham-van Someren for access to the study collection in the National Museum, Nairobi

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(Received 15 February 1979)

APPENDIX 1 *Identification guide to the Greenbuls of Western Kenya*

## FOREST SPECIES

## 1. UNDERPARTS YELLOW OR YELLOWISH

a) Tail olive, concolor with back, underparts bright golden or olive-yellow. Usually a middle level to canopy species. . . . . JOYFUL GREENBUL

## b) Tail brownish or rufous; undergrowth species

i) Orbital skin bare, bluish-white; throat bright yellow, tail bright rufous. . . . . BRISTLE BILL

ii) Orbital area feathered; throat pale yellow; tail reddish-brown . . . . . PLACID GREENBUL

(Immatures with very yellow underparts) . . . . PLACID GREENBUL  
(*P.p. sucosus*)

## 2. UNDERPARTS BASICALLY GREY OR GREYISH OLIVE

a) Underparts plain grey contrasting sharply against olive green upperparts. . . . . SLENDER-BILLED  
GREENBUL

b) Underparts dark grey but with some olive-yellow streaking. Outer tail feathers white; iris creamy-white to grey. . . . . HONEYGUIDE GREENBUL

c) Underparts greyish with gingerish tone to crissum, lower belly and flanks. Small white eye ring. . . . . ANSORGE'S GREENBUL

d) Underparts greyish olive streaked with yellow; bill long. Undergrowth species. . . . . TORO OLIVE GREENBUL

e) Underparts greyish olive though belly or lower belly yellow to olive yellow. Small white eye ring. . . . . LITTLE GREY GREENBUL

## 3. UNDERPARTS BASICALLY BRIGHT OLIVE GREEN

a) Head all grey, contrasting sharply against bright olive green plumage. Occurring only at Kakamega . . . . . SHELLEY'S GREENBUL

b) Head and throat bluish-grey, also contrasting sharply with bright olive green plumage. Occurring only on Mt. Elgon. . . . MOUNTAIN GREENBUL

## 4. UNDERPARTS BASICALLY DARK OR DULL OLIVE

a) Underparts dark olive, contrasting with prominent yellow moustachial streaks. . . . . YELLOW-WHISKERED  
GREENBUL

b) Throat slightly paler in contrast to darker breast. Greyish white eye ring . . . . . CAMEROUN SOMBRE  
GREENBUL

## 5. NON-FOREST SPECIES

- a) Size large. Stout-billed bird with dull yellowish eye. Pale yellow throat contrasting with olive breast; throat feathers often puffed out (normally occurs in family parties) . . . . . YELLOW-THROATED  
LEAF LOVE
- b) Brown or russet brown upperparts. No yellow in plumage at all. Common habit of constantly flicking wing feathers while foraging (normally occurs in small parties . . . . . NORTHERN BROWNBUL

APPENDIX 2 Identification guide to the Greenbuls of the Central  
Kenya Highlands

## 1. UPPERPARTS GREENISH OR OLIVE GREEN

- a) Eye ring yellow. Underparts yellowish . . . . . ZANZIBAR SOMBRE  
GREENBUL  
(*A.i. frickii*)
- b) Eye ring greyish-white head and throat bluish-grey; belly concolor with upperparts . . . MOUNTAIN GREENBUL  
(*A.t. kikuyuensis*)
- c) No eye ring present. Underparts all grey. . . . . SLENDER-BILLED  
GREENBUL  
(*A.g. percivali*)

## 2. UPPERPARTS BROWNISH OR OLIVE BROWN

- a) Gregarious undergrowth species occurring in family parties on or near the ground.
- aa) Tail rufous or russet brown
- i) Throat creamy white and often puffed out . . . PLACID GREENBUL  
(*P.p. placidus*)
- ii) Underparts greyish. Feet noticeably greyish-white or pinkish-grey. . . . . GREY OLIVE GREENBUL
- bb) Tail concolor with upperparts
- Throat whitish contrasting against darker underparts. Known only from Meru district . . . . BROWNBUL  
(*P.t. bensoni*)
- b) Non-gregarious species
- i) Underparts yellowish. Iris dark red. . . . . YELLOW-BELLIED  
GREENBUL
- ii) Underparts olive contrasting with prominent yellow moustachial streaks . . . . . YELLOW-WHISKERED  
GREENBUL

## APPENDIX 3 Identification guide to the Greenbuls of Southern Kenya

## UPPERPARTS BROWNISH OR OLIVE BROWN

## a) Gregarious species usually occurring in family parties

## aa) Tail rufous or russet brown

- i) Underparts creamy yellow. Iris pale greyish.  
(Occurring in Taita and Chyulu Hills) . . . . . PLACID GREENBUL  
(*P.p. placidus*)

- ii) Underparts greyish. Iris orange-yellow.  
Feet greyish-white or pinkish-grey.  
(Occurring in Kitovu Forest, Taveta). . . . . GREY OLIVE  
GREENBUL

## ab) Tail generally concolor with upperparts

- i) Throat whitish contrasting against darker  
underparts. Little or no rufous in plumage.  
Iris dark brown. (Known only from Endau Mt.). BROWNBUL

- ii) More rufous in wings and tail than the  
preceding species. Constantly flicks wings  
while foraging. Iris dark wine colour.  
Bill darker than in Brownbul. (Occurs also  
at Endau Mountain. Very difficult to  
separate from preceding species). . . . . NORTHERN BROWNBUL

## b) Non-gregarious species

- i) Large size. Underparts pale greyish  
streaked yellow. Habit of constantly  
raising or flicking a wing while  
foraging is very characteristic.  
(Old record from Kasigau, current  
status in Kenya unknown). . . . . YELLOW-STREAKED  
GREENBUL

- ii) Large size. Underparts Yellow. Iris dark red. YELLOW-BELLIED  
GREENBUL

## 2. UPPERPARTS GREEN OR OLIVE GREEN

- a) Underparts yellowish. Iris pale yellow in  
adults, dark in immatures. . . . . ZANZIBAR SOMBRE  
GREENBUL

- b) Underparts greyish-white. Iris dark.  
Creamy yellow spots on wing coverts.  
(Occurring at Endau Mountain). . . . . EASTERN NICATOR

- c) Head all grey. (Known only from Taita Hills) . . . MOUNTAIN GREENBUL

3. All dull golden yellow with dark cheek  
patch. (Occurs Taita and Chyulu Hills) . . . . . STRIPED-CHEEKED  
GREENBUL

## APPENDIX 4 Identification guide to the Greenbuls of Coastal Kenya

## FOREST SPECIES

## 1. UPPERPARTS GREENISH OR OLIVE GREEN

- a) Size very small (wing under 70 mm)  
Underparts creamy white streaked yellow. . . . . SMALLER YELLOW-  
STREAKED GREENBUL
- b) Size small (but wing over 75 mm)  
Underparts greyish-olive. Short stubby bill. . . . . LITTLE GREENBUL  
(*A.V. Zombensis*)
- c) Large size. Underparts greyish-white;  
creamy yellow spots on wing coverts. . . . . EASTERN NICATOR  
(*N.c. gularis*)

## 2. UPPERPARTS BROWNISH OR OLIVE BROWN

- a) Eye colour creamy white. Underparts  
creamy white . . . . . FISCHER'S GREENBUL
- b) Eye colour brown. Little or no russet  
in plumage. Throat whitish contrasting  
against darker underparts. . . . . BROWNBUL

## NON-FOREST SPECIES

- a) Upperparts olive green. Underparts yellowish.  
Eye colour pale yellow in adults, dark in  
juveniles. . . . . ZANZIBAR SOMBRE  
GREENBUL  
(*A.i. insularis*)
- b) Brown or russet brown upperparts.  
Constantly flicks wings while foraging . . . . . NORTHERN BROWNBUL

## NOTE.

The ubiquitous Yellow-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus* is omitted from all the above appendices.



Turner, D. A. and Zimmerman, Dale A. 1979. "Field identification of Kenya greenbuls." *Scopus* 3, 33-47.

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