

By contrast, the Sylviidae have radiated rather extensively in Africa, but likewise none of the African members of that family seem obviously related to *Chaetops*.

Chaetops is very distinct osteologically from *Turdoides*, but that genus differs considerably from various other Timaliidae as well. As shown here, *Chaetops* is also very different osteologically from either of the genera of Sylviidae (*Sphenoeacus* and *Melocichla*) with which *Achaetops* has been associated. An informed solution to this systematic problem cannot be had without a great deal more study using various lines of evidence. Although some core group of Asian genera in the Timaliidae are probably monophyletic, the family has long been regarded as something of a wastebasket, so that the placement of an outlying genus in the Timaliidae carries with it a certain implicit ambiguity. For this reason, it is preferable to maintain *Chaetops* (including *Achaetops*) in the Timaliidae, rather than transferring it to the Sylviidae, which might convey a misleading impression of knowledge that we do not yet possess.

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IN BRIEF

Differences in tarsal length between adult female Montagu's and Pallid Harriers: an easy method to separate specimens

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Adult females of Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus* and Montagu's Harrier *C. pygargus* are often misidentified in museum collections as the other because of their similar plumages. Both have dark brown upperparts, buffy to creamy, heavily streaked underparts, and similar tail patterns. Adult males and juveniles differ between species and are rather easy to distinguish.

Some differences between the species, especially adult females, have been pointed out by Svensson (1971) and illustrated in Bruun *et al.* (1986). These differences, as well as some new ones, are summarized by Forsman (1995). However, none of these references mention the difference in leg lengths.

One of us (WSC) noticed, from observing Pallid and Montagu's Harriers perched on bare ground near each other, that Montagu's appear to have much shorter legs, resulting in a more horizontal perch attitude, compared to the more upright stance of Pallid Harriers.

To test if there was a clear separation between species of this measure that could be used as a species indicator, we measured the tarsal length of a large sample of adult female specimens in the British Museum



Reid, Keith. 1998. "Franklin's gull *Larus pipixcan* at South Georgia." *Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club* 118, 55–56.

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