A peculiar ‘African’ Scops Owl found in Daallo.

Written by

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The peculiar African Scops owl found in Daallo in September, 2010 by Nik Borrow’s group of birders from Birdquest is causing a degree of uncertainty as to its affinity. Birding experts who came to see the bird after the first 2010 discovery, including Nigel Redman’s Birdquest expedition of 2012, are baffled by this bird.

This owl is apparently a ‘Scops’ but its mainly nocturnal calls are identical to another ‘Scops’ species found across the pudding in Arabia (pamelae), according to the experts. Also, the darker body tone is unlike the nominate African ‘Scops’s with bolder breast streaking and denser overall blotches. Even the eye color is somewhat subdued and is not as flaming yellow as the nominate’s. It lives in the relatively healthy mature Juniper woodland in Daallo Forest Reserve. A male ‘owns’ the grove of large juniper trees just to your left as you enter the Scenic Overlook Campsite.
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The bird is put down as a ‘race’ of African Scops in Nigel Redman’s *Birds of the Horn of Africa* for now but upon more research, it could get promoted to a completely new, undescribed taxon in the future!