Remarks on biology, vocalisations and systematics of *Urocynchramus pylzowi* Przewalski (Aves, Passeriformes)

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Abstract

Several field studies in the Qinghai Nanshan area (Qinghai Province, China) have added new findings to the scant knowledge about Przewalski´s Rosefinch *Urocynchramus pylzowi* Przewalski, 1876. The hitherto completely unknown vocalisations are described and used to clarify systematic relationships. Although one could argue for a relationship to *Uragus sibiricus* (Pallas), based on nearly identical auditory impression and sonagram structures of their songs, detailed measurements show significant differences in time and frequency parameters. Moreover a mtDNA analysis shows no close phylogenetic relationship to either of three major emberizid clades. These results support the hypothesis that *Urocynchramus* belongs in its own family, the Urocynchramidae.

Key words: Urocynchramidae, Przewalski´s Rosefinch, Long-tailed Rosefinch, *Uragus sibiricus*, acoustics

Introduction

Because of the inaccessibility of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau its endemic bird taxa are poorly studied. One of the least known species is the Pink-tailed Bunting or Przewalski´s Rosefinch *Urocynchramus pylzowi* Przewalski, 1876.

The species has been well described by several authors (e.g. Hartert 1910; Tugarinow & Stegmann 1929; Vaurie 1956; Meyer de Schauensee 1984; Clement *et al*. 1993; MacKinnon & Phillipps 2000). It resembles the Long-tailed Rosefinch, *Uragus sibiricus*, especially with its conspicuously long graduated tail. However, although it otherwise resembles the rosefinches in body color and pattern, the bright pink in the tail sets it apart (Badyaev & Hill 2000; Vaurie 1956; Paynter 1968). The presence of a well-developed