

material from Australia, New Zealand, and the Tasman Sea islands by Brown (1960, p. 167). In all, 12 names, previously assigned specific, subspecific or infrasubspecific status, have been considered by these authors as junior synonyms of *australis*. The resulting simplified nomenclature is more practical than that of Wheeler (1927). However, we cannot assume with confidence that the *Amblyopone australis* of this nomenclature refers to a single biological species. Several lines of evidence involving karyology (Imai *et al.* 1977), and definite or likely sympatric associations between consistent 'forms' of the 'species' in Australia, and between '*australis*' and its sibling *A. leae* Wheeler on Lord Howe I., suggest that we are in fact dealing here with a complex of closely similar biological species. Unfortunately it is not possible at present to delimit, characterize or enumerate the component species in this complex, and when this is accomplished some of the names presently held in synonymy will doubtless need to be reinstated. In the meantime application of the name *australis*, as suggested by Brown and Wilson, provides our best, if not only, reasonable nomenclatorial action, *though only so long as this name is understood to indicate an area of clear taxonomic doubt*. We certainly are not able to assume that this nomenclatorial species is coextensive in its definition with a biological species, as is usually implied by the use of specific names.

The exclusively Melanesian names included as synonyms of *australis* by Wilson are: *laevidens* Emery (*levidens* of authors), previously listed from New Guinea and the Solomons, and *nana* Emery, previously reported from New Caledonia and the New Hebrides.

This species needs no characterization apart from that provided by the accompanying key (couplets 1*b*, 2*a*) and Figs 17–20.

Distribution

Eastern and south-western mainland Australia, Tasmania, Lord Howe I., Norfolk I., New Zealand (North Island), New Caledonia, New Hebrides (Tanna), New Guinea and Solomon Is (Kolombangara, Guadalcanal, Malaita).

Melanesian records. Unless otherwise indicated the New Guinea records listed here were gathered by the author, and those from the Solomon Islands by Dr P. J. M. Greenslade. The accession numbers are Greenslade's. This material is deposited in the ANIC.

New Guinea: Eastern Highlands District: *Aiyura* 1900 m, 2000 m, June 1962. **Morobe District:** *Finisterre Range*, Gusap River Valley, 1 record between 3000 and 6000 ft, Nov. 1965, R. Pullen; *Mt Kaindi*, c. 2300 m, 15.vi.1972; *Bulolo River Valley*, 6 km NE. of Wau, 1100 m, June 1962; *Wau*, near Bishop Museum Field Station, 1200 m, June 1962; *Kunai Creek Valley*, 1300 m, June 1962; *Joangeng*, 1500 m (Wilson 1958); *Ebabaang*, 1400 m (Wilson 1958). **Central District:** *Tapini*, 1100–1200 m, Aug. 1962. **Northern District:** 8 km S. of *Kokoda*, 800 m, 1.vi.72.

Solomon Islands: Kolombangara: *Kuzi*, 4000 ft, Aug. 1966. **Guadalcanal:** *Mt Jonapau*, 2600 ft (accs 18,048, 18,194), 3500 ft (acc. 18,118), May 1965; *Mt Popamanatseu*, 4500 ft (accs 20,187, 20,266), 5000 ft. (acc. 18,811), 5500 ft (acc. 20,227), Oct. 1965. **Malaita:** Interior near *Fourafi*, 1916 (Mann 1919).

New Caledonia: *Mt Paniè*, 500 m; *Mt Canala*, 700 m (Emery 1914).

New Hebrides: *Tanna* (Wilson 1958).

Bionomics

My New Guinea collections are all from closed mid-montane or montane rain forest, mostly from rotting wood. The Greenslade accessions were gathered from