

THE LARKS AND THE PIPIT



• *Horsfield Bushlark*

Photo: M. S. R. Sharland



• *Pipit approaching nest.*

Photo: A. J. Elliott

The Larks and the Pipit

Alaudidae

HORSFIELD BUSHLARK *Mirafra javanica*

SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis*

Motacillidae

PIPIT *Anthus australis*

The Bushlark is easily distinguished in the hand from the similar Skylark and Pipit by its small size and sparrow-like appearance although the paler inland races have a plumage more like that of the two other species. Confusion is more likely to occur between the Skylark and Pipit. In the Skylark and Bushlark, however, the area of the wing is obviously greater in proportion

to body length than it is in the Pipit. The position of No. 10 (small outer) primary also distinguishes the larks from the Pipit, but because of moult or plumage wear it may not be found easily.

The three species have white or mostly white outer tail feathers and so can be readily separated from the Songlarks *Cinclorhampus spp.*, which have no white on their outer tail feathers.

HORSFIELD BUSHLARK

Mirafra javanica

Primaries

No. 10 (small outer). Exposed length c. 14 mm, similar in length to primary coverts; situated under leading edge of primary No. 9.

No. 9 and No. 5. Same length, slightly shorter than Nos. 8-6.

Nos. 8-6. Equal length and longest.

Wing length: 69-79 mm (19 measured).

Hind claw: 6-8 mm. (9 measured).

SKYLARK

Alauda arvensis

Primaries

No. 10 (small outer). Exposed length c. 8 mm; situated under leading edge of primary no. 9.

No. 9 and No. 7. Equal, slightly shorter than No. 8.

No. 8. Longest.

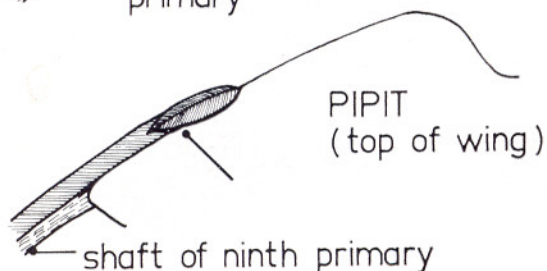
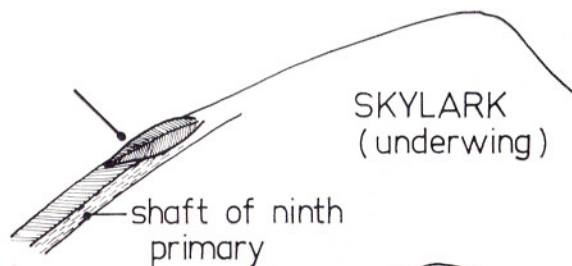
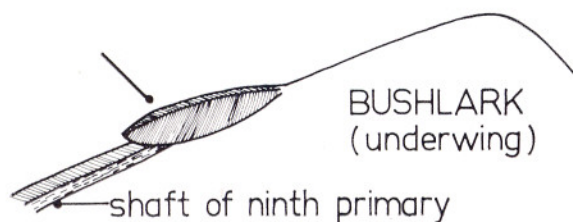
No. 6. Shorter than No. 7.

No. 5. Much shorter than No. 6.

Wing length: 97-112 mm. (11 measured).

Hind claw: 12-22 mm. (10 measured).

NO. 10 (small) PRIMARY



PIPIT

Anthus australis

Primaries

No. 10 (small outer). Exposed length c. 7 mm; situated over leading edge of primary no. 9, but hidden by primary coverts.

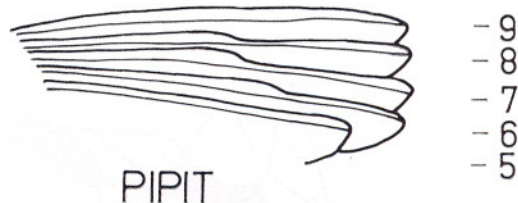
Nos. 9-6. Longest and almost equal.

No. 5. Much shorter than No. 6.

Wing length: 80-87 mm (9 measured).

Hind claw: 8.0-14.5 mm (9 measured).

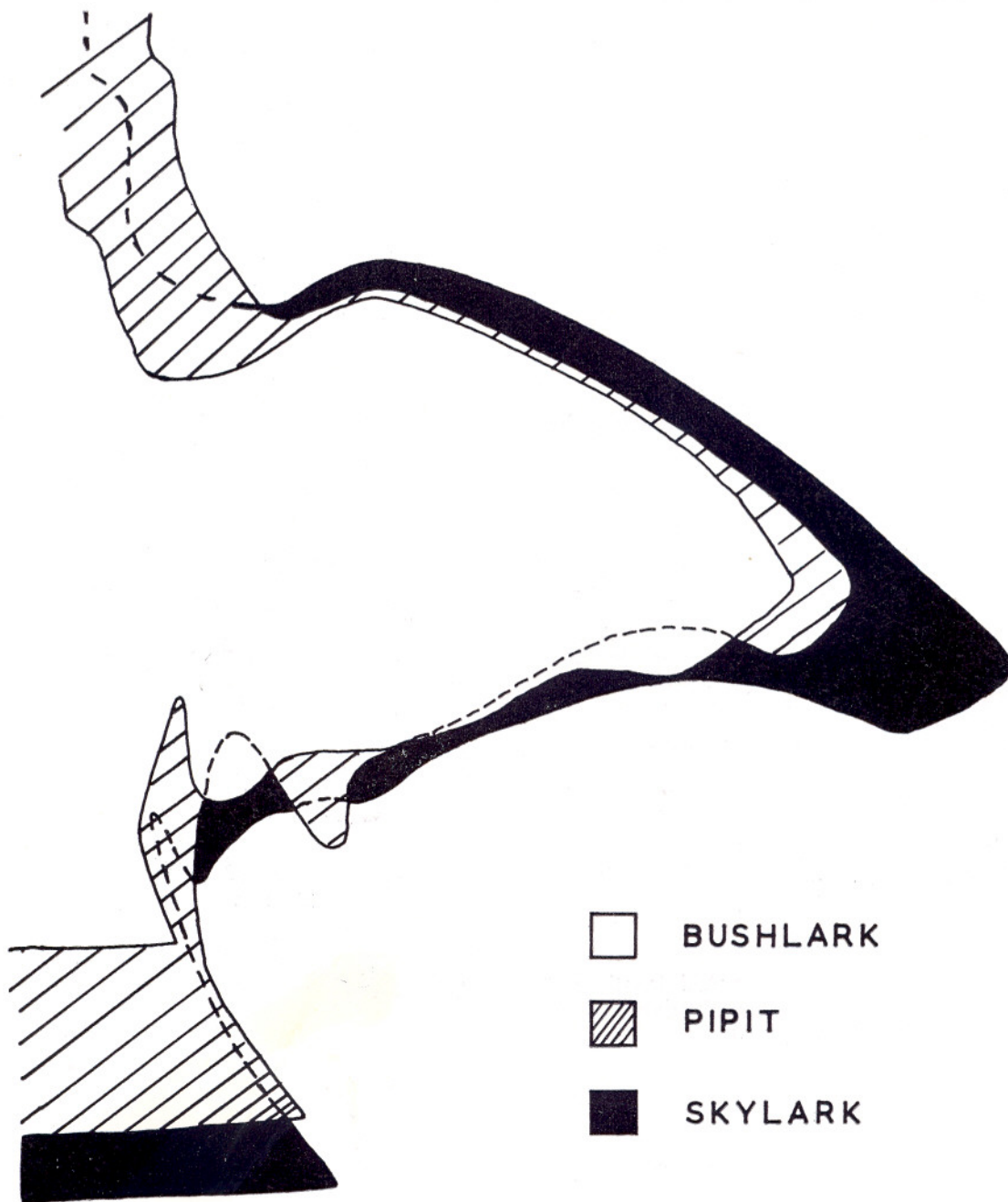
PRIMARIES NOS. 9 to 5






Hind Claw
(about x5 natural size)



Drawings by L. Arnold and D. Milledge



-  BUSHLARK
-  PIPIT
-  SKYLARK

Wing Outlines
(natural size)