

and *schoutedeni* considered to be merely subspecies of *A. similis*. Note that the type specimen of the race *nyassae*, which later formed the type subspecies for the description of the Wood Pipit, was originally described as *Anthus nicholsoni nyassae* Neumann, 1906. *Journ. f. Ornith.* 54:233, between Sangesi and Songea, south-eastern Tanzania. This name was later changed to *Anthus similis nyassae*. Similarly, the races *schoutedeni*, Chapin, 1937, and *frondicolus*, Clancey, 1964 were treated as races of *similis*, with the argument for the specific status of the Wood Pipit *A. nyassae* published in the mid 1980s.

Hereafter, the race *chersophilus* was described as subspecies of *A. nyassae* and not *A. similis*. Note that several authorities, including Keith et al. (1992) in *The Birds of Africa*, retained the Wood Pipit as a subspecies of the Long-billed Pipit.

Specific *nyassae* from the Latin, pertaining to Nyasaland (now Malawi). The name Woodland Pipit is sometimes used as an alternative English common name and the name *Miombokoester*, referring to the habitat of the bird, is sometimes used as an alternative to the Afrikaans common name. Boskoester (Afrikaans). R6 909; R7 p1110.

**Field identification:** Although the distribution range of the Wood Pipit is not known to overlap with that of the Long-billed Pipit, some doubts as to the exact limits of distribution still exists.

Differs from **Long-billed Pipit** by marginally shorter bill; shorter, darker tail; and a generally more delicate and slimmer appearance. The buff panels on the outer rectrices are more extensive and sharply delineated, contrasting more with the dark areas. Central tail feathers narrower. Wood Pipit's breast streaking denser, blacker and bolder; usually thinner and less blotchy. Also, more saturated, more rufous and darker above; more contrast in underparts; and white (not buffy) supercilium. More arboreal habits; predominantly woodland (not rocky grassland) habitat. Song higher-pitched, sharper, less predictable, more metallic and more complicated. Long-billed Pipit typically perches in more exposed positions on the crown or the edge of a tree and not inside the canopy. As a rule the Long-billed Pipit is considerably less arboreal.

Differs from **African Pipit** by noticeably larger size; proportionately longer tail; slightly more subtle, less clearly marked

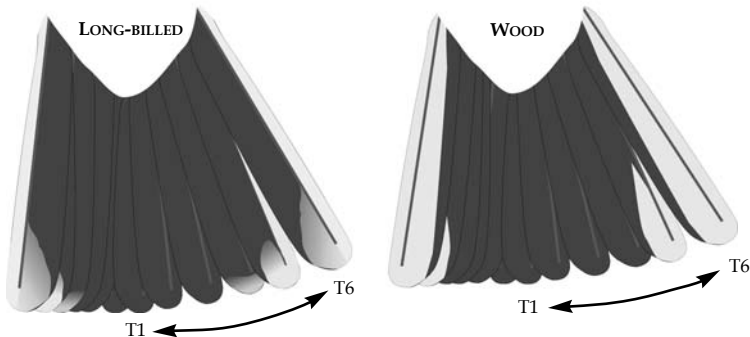


Fig. 75. Long-billed Pipit (left) and Wood Pipit (right) tail feathers (as seen from below). Wood Pipit shows a slightly shorter tail with the central pair of feathers (T1) narrower than in the Long-billed Pipit. In addition, the Wood Pipit lacks any pale colouration on the antepenultimate feather (T4), shows clearly delineated (not diffuse) borders between the pale and dark areas and has a darker, almost black background colour to the rectrices.