

## ANOTHER FUNNY THICKBILL

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H.T. Laycock (1985) does not have a monopoly of funny Thickbilled Weavers *Amblyospiza albifrons*. I had just finished reading about his immature male which had the outer five primaries of both wings adult male colour, primaries 3-4 of intermediate colour and all the rest of the flight feathers a normal, immature brown, when it was time to clear my nets at Nchalo, Malaŵi.

In one net was a young adult male, 18 or possibly 30 months old (bill and gape still partly yellow) which was moulting body feathers into breeding plumage. Wings and tail were already completely moulted, with normal, adult male black and white flight feathers - all except primary 2 on both wings.

Primary 2 was 'immature brown'. The two brown feathers were not old and worn, but were shiny and new. They had grown during the recent wing moult and were neither left over from a previous moult, nor were they of the original set of immature flight feathers, because they were the same length as the new adult primaries.

Unfortunately at Nchalo Thickbilled Weavers are not retrapped very often, but I can always hope to recapture this one next year to see if P2 remains brown after the next wing moult.

### REFERENCE:

Laycock, H.T. 1985. Puzzling plumage in an immature male Thickbilled Weaver. Safring News 14: 43-44.

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