

## XVI.—On a Collection of Birds from the Island of Cozumel.

By OSBERT SALVIN, M.A., F.R.S., &amp;c.

(Plate V.)

THE collection of birds described below was formed by Mr. E. C. J. Devis, who, after residing for some time in Northern Yucatan, visited Cozumel before returning to England.

The centre of Cozumel is situated in about lat.  $20^{\circ} 30' N.$ , long.  $86^{\circ} 50' W.$  The island lies off the east coast of Yucatan, a little to the southward of Cape Catoche. It is an irregular oval in shape, about twenty-five miles long and ten wide, and is separated from the mainland by a channel about ten miles wide. The geological formation appears to be similar to that of the adjoining coast, and consists of a porous limestone, through which all rain at once passes, so that there are no surface-streams or rivers anywhere in the district. The ground seems to be honeycombed, and water collects in natural wells, locally called "senotes," which have been described by all travellers in Yucatan (see Mr. G. F. Gaumer's description of them, P. Z. S. 1883, p. 438).

Historically, Cozumel is of some interest, having been first visited by Juan de Grijalva, one of the immediate predecessors of Cortés, who himself directed his ships to this island when he sailed from Cuba in the expedition which resulted in the conquest of Mexico. At that time the island appears to have been thickly populated, and extensive buildings gave evidence of an advanced civilization.

After the visit of Cortés, Cozumel appears to have again sunk into obscurity until Stephens went there in 1842 for the purpose of exploring its ruins\*. Dr. S. Cabot was with this expedition, and to him we owe the beginning of our knowledge of the birds of the island, as he brought away with him two skins of a *Certhiola*, many years afterwards described as *Certhiola caboti*, the nearest relative of which is a species inhabiting the Bahama Islands.

Mr. Devis's collection contains examples of twenty-seven species; and on comparing them with the now well-known

\* 'Incidents of Travel in Yucatan,' ii. chap. xx.

fauna of Yucatan we find, as might have been expected, a strong resemblance in the two districts as regards their birds. Still there are features in the Cozumel fauna that call for special remark; for besides the *Certhiola* just described, we find a species of the hitherto peculiarly Antillean genus *Spindalis*, also a distinct *Harporhynchus*, which has no ally nearer than in the Mexican State of Vera Cruz.

The characteristic birds which this island shares with the mainland are *Vireo magister*, *Pyrranga roseigularis*, *Centurus rubriventris*, *C. dubius*, and *Chrysotis xantholora*. Many of the remainder of the species are either widely distributed over the adjoining continent, or migratory birds visiting the island during their spring flight. A few, such as *Melanoptila glabrirostris*, are restricted to this coast, and *Columba leucocephala* and *Engyptila jamaicensis* have a wider range over the West-Indian Islands.

Mr. Devis noticed several other species which were familiar to him, but of which he did not secure specimens. Some of these were a *Mimus* (most probably *M. gilvus*), *Phanicopterus ruber* in numbers, a Spoonbill (*Platalea ajaja*), an Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*), the Boatbill (*Cancroma cochlearia*), the Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), and numerous species of Heron.

He further informs me that birds were generally very common.

That an island like Cozumel should contain so many distinct species is an important fact, and this, taken with the still more remarkable one that the only known species of the island of Old Providence are all distinct from their mainland or Antillean relatives, suggests that there is not an island in these seas that is not worth the visit of a naturalist. We doubt not that a harvest is to be reaped, rich in novelty, if not in numbers of species, by any one who is able and willing to undertake the task of investigating them.

#### 1. GALEOSOPTES CAROLINENSIS.

*Muscicapa carolinensis*, Linn. Syst. Nat. i. p. 328.

*Galeoscoptes carolinensis*, Salv. & Godm. Biol. Centr.-Am., Aves, i. p. 26.

“ Found along with a species of *Mimus* amongst trees and second-growth bushes.”

A well-known bird during the winter months in Yucatan and Eastern Guatemala. It is also common in the island of Cuba at the same season.

## 2. MELANOPTILA GLABRIROSTRIS.

*Melanoptila glabrirostris*, Scl. P. Z. S. 1857, p. 275; Salv. & Godm. Biol. Centr.-Am., Aves, i. p. 27, pl. 3. f. 2.

“ Found on the edges of the forest, and noted as a sweet songster.”

A species restricted in its range to the eastern coast of Central America from Yucatan to Omoa.

## 3. HARPORHYNCHUS MELANOSTOMA, sp. n.

Supra rufescens fere unicolor, alis fasciis duabus extus albis intus nigris transvittatis; subtus albus, nigro præter gulam et abdomen medium guttatus, crisso sordide rufescente, fusco guttato; rostro omnino nigro; pedibus obscure corylinis: long. tota 9·5, alæ 3·3, caudæ 4·2, rostri a rictu 1·3, tarsi 1·1.

*Hab.* Insula “Cozumel” dicta (*Devis*).

*Mus.* nostr. exempl. ii.

*Obs.* *H. longirostri* proximus, sed statura minore et mandibula omnino nigra differt.

“ A common bird in the island, where it is found frequently associating with *Mimus gilvus*. It runs along the ground or flies low, living in low bushes.”

This *Harporhynchus* is allied to *H. longirostris* (*cf.* Salv. & Godm. Biol. Centr.-Am., Aves, i. p. 31), and at first sight might easily be mistaken for it. The mandible is black to the base, and the dimensions, especially the wing, are much less. Moreover there is a wide gap in the ranges of the two birds, *H. longirostris*, so far as we know at present, not occurring in any locality nearer than the State of Vera Cruz.

## 4. PARULA AMERICANA.

*Parus americanus*, Linn. Syst. Nat. i. p. 341.

*Parula americana*, Salv. & Godm. Biol. Centr.-Am., Aves, i. p. 119.

“ Found in shady spots near the ‘senotes.’ ”

A migratory species, reaching Yucatan, Guatemala, Cuba, &c. in winter.

5. *SIURUS AURICAPILLUS*.

*Motacilla aurocapilla*, Linn. Syst. Nat. i. p. 334.

*Siurus auricapillus*, Salv. & Godm. Biol. Centr.-Am., Aves, i. p. 144.

“ Like *Parula americana*, found in shady places near the water-holes.”

Also a migratory species, reaching the State of Panama, Cuba, and several of the Antilles in winter.

6. *SETOPHAGA RUTICILLA*.

*Muscicapa ruticilla*, Linn. Syst. Nat. i. p. 326.

*Setophaga ruticilla*, Salv. & Godm. Biol. Centr.-Am., Aves, i. p. 178.

“ Also found in shady places near the water-holes.”

A well-known migratory species, found in Cuba and most of the Antilles and on the continent as far south as Guiana and Ecuador in winter.

7. *VIREO MAGISTER*.

*Vireosylva magister*, “ Baird,” Lawr. Ann. Lyc. N. Y. x. p. 20.

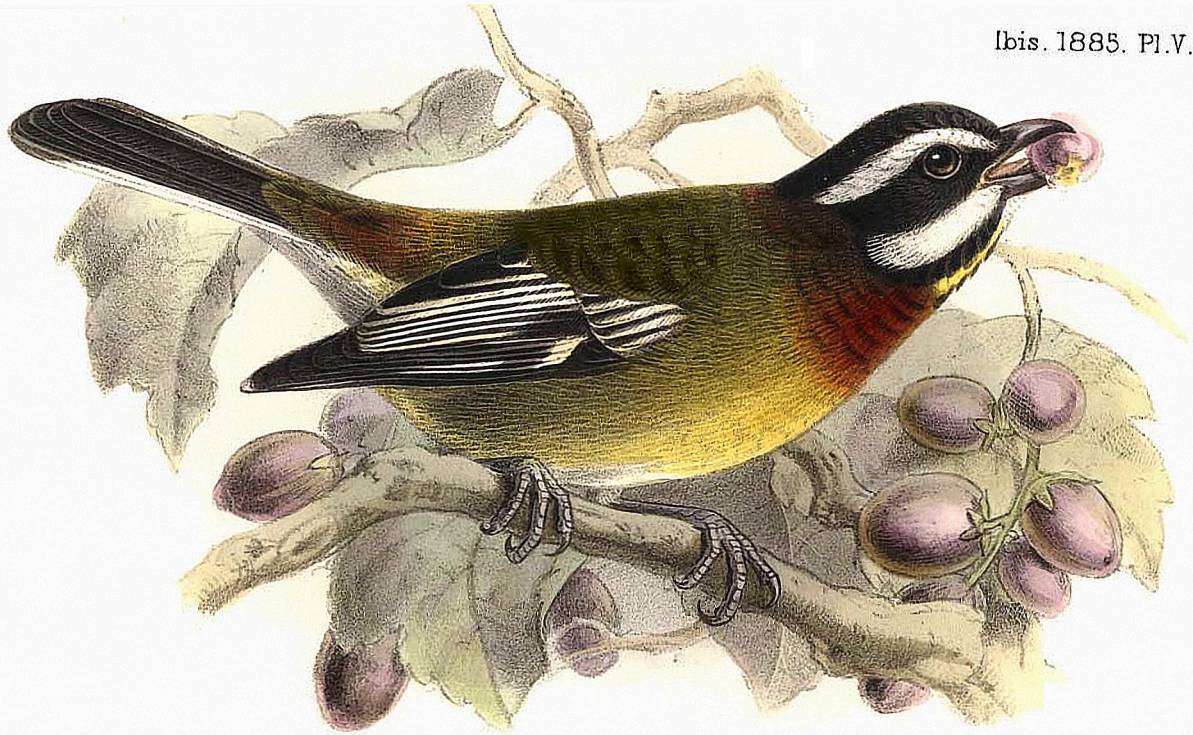
*Vireo magister*, Salv. & Godm. Biol. Centr.-Am., Aves, i. p. 191.

“ Found on the edges of the woods.”

The only specimens of this species previously known to me were the types in the United-States National Museum and in the Museum of the Boston Society of Natural History. Though these are not accessible now for comparison, I have little hesitation in ascribing Mr. Devis’s single specimen to this distinct species.

That *V. magister* should occur in Cozumel is not improbable, as the neighbourhood of Belize was previously its only known habitat.

Ibis. 1885. Pl.V.



J.G.Keulemans lith.

SPINDALIS EXSUL.

Hanhart imp.

8. *CERTHIOLA CABOTI*.

*Certhiola caboti*, Baird, Am. Nat. vii. p. 612; Salv. & Godm. Biol. Centr.-Am., Aves, i. p. 251, pl. 15. f. 4.

“Common, frequenting flowering bushes on the edges of the woods.”

Discovered by Dr. Cabot in this island, where alone it has, as yet, been met with. Its nearest ally is *C. bahamensis*, of the Bahama Islands, and this relationship is in accordance with that of the *Spindalis* next mentioned.

9. *SPINDALIS EXSUL*, sp. n. (Plate V.)

Supra saturate oleaginea, cervice postica et uropygio saturate castaneis; capite nigro, superciliis elongatis, mento et striga utrinque rictali albis; vitta gulari utrinque nigro limbata et abdomine antico aurantiacis; pectore saturate castaneo, abdomine medio et crisso albis, hypochondriis virescentibus; alis nigris, secundariis et tectricibus majoribus albo limbatis, speculo alari quoque albo; cauda nigra, rectricibus duabus utrinque externis albo maculatis, duabus mediis albo intus limbatis; rostro et pedibus nigris: long. tota 6·0, alæ 3·1, caudæ 2·4, tarsi 0·7, rostri a rictu 0·7.

♀ adhuc ignota.

*Hab.* Insula “Cozumel” dicta (*Devis*).

*Mus.* nostr. exempl. i.

*Obs.* *S. zene* ex insulis Bahamensibus proxima, sed dorso saturate oleagineo nec nigro, pectore quoque late castaneo, manifeste distinguenda.

The discovery of a *Spindalis* in this island is of great interest, all the previously known species being of purely Antillean origin. The interest in it is further enhanced from the fact that its nearest ally is the Bahaman *S. zena*, and not its nearest neighbour, *S. pretrii*, of Cuba. It thus follows the relationship of *Certhiola caboti* to *C. bahamensis*, except that the genus *Certhiola* appears to be not represented in Cuba.

Mr. Devis tells me that this *Spindalis* is found amongst trees and bushes in shady places near the senotes or water-holes. He saw three specimens together, one of which is the bird now described.

## 10. PYRANGA ROSEIGULARIS.

*Pyrranga roseigularis*, Cabot, Bost. Journ. N. H. v. p. 416 ;  
Salv. & Godm. Biol. Centr.-Am., Aves, i. p. 293.

“Frequents the woods, but is not common.”

Of this rare species, of which a single male specimen was long the only one known, Mr. Devis sends a female. Mr. Gaumer has recently procured examples of both sexes in Northern Yucatan.

## 11. PHONIPARA PUSILLA.

*Tiaris pusilla*, Sw. Phil. Mag. new ser. i. p. 438.

*Phonipara pusilla*, Boucard, P. Z. S. 1883, p. 444.

“Found on the ground amongst low bushes near the edges of the woods.”

A well-known bird in Northern Yucatan and Mexico, but more rare in Guatemala. The specimen is in bad condition.

## 12. CYANOSPIZA CIRIS.

*Emberiza ciris*, Linn. Syst. Nat. i. p. 313.

*Cyanospiza ciris*, Baird, Brew., & Ridgw. N. Am. B. ii. p. 87 ; Boucard, P. Z. S. 1883, p. 444.

“Frequents bushes near the edges of woods.”

A common species during the winter months in Central America.

## 13. CYANOSPIZA CYANEA.

*Tanagra cyanea*, Linn. Syst. Nat. i. p. 82.

*Cyanospiza cyanea*, Baird, Brew., & Ridgw. N. Am. B. ii. p. 82 ; Boucard, P. Z. S. 1883, p. 444.

“Observed on the ground amongst short grass.”

Like *C. ciris*, common in this region during winter.

## 14. COTURNICULUS PASSERINUS.

*Fringilla passerina*, Wils. Am. Orn. iii. p. 76, t. 26. f. 5.

*Coturniculus passerinus*, Baird, Brew., & Ridgw. N. Am. B. i. p. 553.

“Observed on the ground amongst low bushes in partly cleared places.”

Like the two species of *Cyanospiza*, probably here during the winter season.

## 15. DOLICHONYX ORYZIVORUS.

*Emberiza orizivora*, Linn. Syst. Nat. i. p. 311.

*Dolichonyx orizivora*, Baird, Brew. & Ridgw. N. Am. B ii. p. 149; Sci. Ibis, 1884, p. 2.

“Only observed in the town of San Miguel.”

This is a rare species in Central America; the only specimens that I obtained were shot on one of the cays of Lighthouse Reef, due south of Cozumel.

## 16. HADROSTOMUS, sp.?

“Found in the woods.”

A female or young male specimen of a species which I do not at present recognize. The bill is much larger than that of *H. aglaiae* of the adjoining coast. Nor does the bird agree with any specimens of *H. niger* that I have examined.

Without a specimen of the adult male the species to which the single example belongs cannot be satisfactorily determined.

## 17. ATILA, sp.?

“Frequents bushes near clearings; rare.”

A specimen without its head. It probably belongs to *A. citreopygius*, Bp., but has the flanks and rump of a darker tawny hue than any specimen in our collection. It still seems to fall within the range of variation noticeable in this form of *Attila*, at least such is my present opinion. But the difference between individuals is so great that it is possible that more than one species may be included under the name *A. citreopygius*.

## 18. CHLOROSTILBON CANIVETI.

*Ornysmya caniveti*, Less. Suppl. Ois.-Mouches, pls. 37, 38.

*Chlorostilbon caniveti*, Gould, Mon. Troch. v. pl. 351.

“Common.”

A male, in poor condition. The tail has light-coloured tips, as in the Central-American race of this species.

## 19. PICUS SCALARIS.

*Picus scalaris*, Wagl. Isis, 1829, p. 511; Boucard, P. Z. S. 1883, p. 452.



“Rarer than the other Woodpeckers, but found with them in the uncleared woods.”

Apparently common in Yucatan, where all collectors have met with it.

20. *CENTURUS RUBRIVENTRIS.*

*Centurus rubriventris*, Sw. An. in Menag. p. 354; Lawr. Ann. Lyc. N. Y. ix. p. 206.

“Tolerably common, being found along with *C. dubius* in the uncleared forest.”

A male specimen, agreeing with others sent from Northern Yucatan by Mr. Gaumer. I have no doubt as to the distinctness of *C. rubriventris* as a species, its characters being very definite, as pointed out by Swainson and Mr. Lawrence.

21. *CENTURUS DUBIUS.*

*Picus dubius*, Cabot, Pr. Bost. Soc. N. H. i. p. 164.

*Centurus dubius*, Boucard, P. Z. S. 1883, p. 452.

*Centurus aurifrons dubius*, Ridgw. Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus. iv. p. 108.

“Common all over the island.”

Specimens from Cozumel agree with others from Northern Yucatan and British Honduras, the former being typical of *C. dubius*. Mr. Ridgway, in his recently published monograph, treats *C. dubius* as an imperfectly segregated form of *C. aurifrons*, or, as I have frequently called it, *C. santacruzii*. The two forms may pass into one another by insensible steps, but I have no evidence before me at present that such is the case.

22. *CHRYSOTIS XANTHOLORA.*

*Chrysotis xantholora*, Gray, Salv. Ibis, 1874, p. 327; Sclater, P. Z. S. 1875, p. 157, pl. xxvi.; Boucard, P. Z. S. 1883, p. 455.

“Common everywhere in the uncleared woods.”

In Northern Yucatan this species is found along with its near ally, *C. albifrons*, and Mr. Gaumer obtained examples of both. In Cozumel, too, both may be found, but at present we can only record *C. xantholora*.

23. *ASTURINA RUFICAUDA.*

*Asturina ruficauda*, Scl. & Salv. P. Z. S. 1869, p. 133 ;  
iid. Ex. Orn. pl. 88 ; Sharpe, Cat. B. Brit. Mus. i. p. 205 ;  
Boucard, P. Z. S. 1883, p. 456.

“Common in the woods.”

Mr. Devis's specimen belongs to the form described by  
Mr. Ridgway as *Rupornis griseicauda*.

24. *URUBITINGA ANTHRACINA.*

*Falco anthracinus*, Nitzsch, Pteryl. p. 83.

*Urubitinga anthracina*, Sharpe, Cat. B. Brit. Mus. i. p. 215 ;  
Boucard, P. Z. S. 1883, p. 456.

“Observed near the sea-shore, but not very common.”

25. *COLUMBA LEUCOCEPHALA.*

*Columba leucocephala*, Linn. S. N. i. p. 281 ; Gosse, B.  
Jam. p. 299.

“Found in the woods, and common in the high trees sur-  
rounding the senotes or water-holes.”

This species is also common throughout the coral islands  
of the Belize coast, as well as most of the Antilles.

26. *ENGYPTILA JAMAICENSIS.*

*Columba jamaicensis*, Linn. Syst. Nat. i. p. 283.

*Peristera jamaicensis*, Gosse, B. Jam. p. 313.

*Engyptila gaumeri*, Lawr. Ann. N. Y. Ac. Sc. iii. p. 157.

“Tolerably common, frequenting the senotes.”

I am unable to distinguish a single specimen brought by  
Mr. Devis from others from Jamaica, the true *E. jamaicensis*.  
Moreover a skin sent us by M. Boucard, who received it from  
Mr. Gaumer from Northern Yucatan, seems to me to belong  
to the same species, though Mr. Lawrence has recently de-  
scribed it as *Engyptila gaumeri*.

Our two skins are clearly distinct from *E. albifrons*, having  
a much greater extent of the cinnamon colour on the under  
surface of the wings, and in this respect they quite resemble  
*E. jamaicensis* ; in the same way the metallic reflections of the  
neck are very much alike. These points being similar, I  
hesitate to admit the distinction of *E. gaumeri* upon a slight

discrepancy of size and a shade of the general colour of the plumage.

27. TRINGOIDES MACULARIUS.

*Tringa macularia*, Linn. Syst. Nat. i. p. 249.

*Tringoides macularius*, Baird, Brew., & Ridgw. Water-B. of N. Am. i. p. 301.

“ Observed amongst the rocks on the sea-shore.”

Mr. Devis's specimen is an adult bird in spotted plumage, and was shot in April.