

**Miller on Birds from Southern Sinaloa.**<sup>1</sup>— This paper is an account of the birds collected for the American Museum of Natural History by Mr. J. H. Batty in the coast and foothill region of Southern Sinaloa, Mexico, December 8, 1903, to November 5, 1904. From the several localities visited, ranging in altitude from 50 to 5500 feet, Mr. Batty obtained a total of 1164 specimens, representing 160 species and subspecies. As we should expect, the list indicates that the resident avifauna of this region is mostly southwest Mexican; but there appear many migrants from the north, the most notable of these, perhaps, *Cyanospiza cyanea*.

Mr. Miller, in a brief introduction, gives various details concerning the physiography of the region, and follows with a well annotated list of all the forms represented in the collection. An important feature is Mr. Batty's often extended notes on the colors of the soft parts as well as on nesting and other habits. The various critical notes concern principally zoölogical points, and in some cases are of considerable interest. The unique *Iache magica* proves to be but an abnormal plumage of *Iache latirostris*; and *Glaucidium phalænoides* is divided into two races, for the northernmost of which the name *Glaucidium phalænoides ridgwayi* Sharpe is used. Two new subspecies are described:— *Amizilis beryllina viola* from Jalpa, Sonora, and of somewhat doubtful validity; and *Amazona albifrons nana*, a depauperate form from Yucatan.— H. C. O.

**Miller on Birds from Northwestern Durango.**<sup>2</sup>— During most of 1903— from January 19 to November 26— Mr. J. H. Batty collected birds for the American Museum of Natural History in northwestern Durango, at various localities ranging in altitude from 2500 to 8500 feet. Mr. Miller refers the 829 specimens to 132 forms, and as in his previous paper on Mr. Batty's collections, adds the collector's data regarding habits, colors of bill, feet, etc., together with various critical comments of his own, which, although relating to no new forms, are in many cases noteworthy. The relationships of *Icterus abeillei* are discussed at length, and the apparently correct conclusion reached that it is a subspecies of *Icterus bullocki*. The *Progne subis* of Arizona and western Texas is referred unconditionally to *Progne subis hesperia*, but after an examination of specimens we are obliged to dissent from this opinion, since the lower tail-coverts are not the only character worth considering, and the birds, while intermediate, are nearer the typical race. The range of *Petrochelidon lunifrons tachina* is extended west to Fort Verde, Arizona, on

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<sup>1</sup> List of Birds Collected in Southern Sinaloa, Mexico, by J. H. Batty, during 1903-1904. By Waldron De Witt Miller. Bulletin Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist., XXI, 1905, pp. 339-369.

<sup>2</sup> List of Birds Collected in Northwestern Durango, Mexico, by J. H. Batty, during 1903. By Waldron De Witt Miller. Bulletin Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist., XXII, 1906, pp. 161-183.

the strength of some intermediates between *Petrochelidon l. lunifrons* and *P. l. melanogastra*.

According to Mr. Miller, several of the resident birds treated are almost exactly intermediate between subspecies of the southwestern United States and their representatives in Central Mexico, making determination difficult. There are also many northern immigrants in the list. Catalogues such as this are of much value to the student of geographical distribution, as well as to others, particularly when the identifications are made with the care that these seem to have been.—H. C. O.

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## CORRESPONDENCE.

### The Speed of Birds.

EDITORS OF THE AUK':—

*Dear Sirs:*—The enormous discrepancy between the speed assigned to small birds by those who have observed them at night, through telescopes, and the speed these same birds exhibit on ordinary occasions seems to require some explanation. Those who have watched birds from a train are well aware that a train moving from thirty to forty miles an hour will pass most of the small birds that chance to be flying in the same direction, while trains traveling not over fifty miles an hour have been noted as being faster than ducks. Ducks are celebrated for the speed of their flight, and among them the Old Squaw is especially rapid; and yet the noted speed of ducks is from forty to sixty miles an hour, and the most enthusiastic gunner would hardly credit a Quandy going down wind with more than seventy-five miles an hour. Homing Pigeons are exceptionally fast flyers and yet in 1901 the record for young birds flying a distance of 150 miles was made by a score of 5346 feet per minute. That this is extremely rapid is shown by records of 2207 and 3249 feet per minute for distances of from 110 to 150 miles, the number of birds participating being from 117 to 269. In view of these facts one may be pardoned for suspecting some error in calculations that ascribe a speed of one hundred and thirty miles per hour to small birds.

Very respectfully,

F. A. LUCAS.