

have been fortunate in adding the rare Cape May Warbler to my list, as well as the Nashville and Water-Thrush (*noveboracensis*) having obtained examples of all three towards the end of August, so that my total now stands at twenty species of these interesting little birds that I have found here so far.

NOTES ON NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS.

I.

BY HARRY C. OBERHOLSER.

THIS is the first of a series of articles on the status, relationships, and nomenclature of various North American birds. These notes have been gathered during the course of many years of work, largely on the collections of the Biological Survey and of the United States National Museum, and in the identification of specimens for other institutions and for individuals. They are now presented for the benefit of ornithologists interested in the birds of this region.

Cepphus snowi Stejneger.

A specimen of this species said to have been taken on the Kenai River, Alaska, on October 7, 1906, is recorded by Dr. Anton Reichenow in Niedieck's "Kreuzfahrten im Beringmeer," 1907, p. 250. A recent letter from Dr. Reichenow says that this specimen reached the Berlin Museum in too poor a condition to be preserved. He says, moreover, that while the identification of the specimen is correct, there is considerable doubt about the proper labeling of the specimens in the collection made by Mr. Niedieck. In view of this likelihood that the labels were in some manner transposed, it seems quite inadvisable to add the species to the North American list on the basis of this record.

***Dendrocygna viduata* (Linnæus).**

A specimen of this South American duck was killed on the Hackensack Meadows in New Jersey in October, 1912, and subsequently recorded by Dr. George B. Grinnell.¹ While there seems to be no doubt of the proper identification of the specimen, its presence in New Jersey, so far beyond the limits of its normal home in South America and the West Indies, together with the fact that it is a common species in zoölogical gardens, strongly indicate that it probably escaped from captivity rather than that it wandered so far out of its normal range. In view of this fact it seems undesirable to include it in the list of North American birds without further and more positive evidence of its entirely natural occurrence within our limits.

***Anas rubripes tristis* Brewster.**

This poor duck has indeed had an unfortunate history, but it is sincerely to be hoped that brighter days are in store. The name *Anas rubripes tristis* was proposed by Mr. William Brewster² as a substitute for *Anas obscura* Gmelin, which is preoccupied by *Anas obscura* Pontoppidan for a species of the Old World. Previously Mr. Brewster had separated the red-legged form of this species as a distinct race and named it *Anas obscura rubripes*,³ taking as his type an autumn specimen from Lake Umbagog, New Hampshire.

That there are two well-marked forms of this species, one of them with bright red legs, the other with legs of an olivaceous brown, or at most only slightly reddish color, is apparently admitted by all. Whether these forms are really distinct subspecies or merely individual or other variants is of course the point at issue. Mr. Brewster has consistently claimed the subspecific distinctness of the two forms, but from this view some other ornithologists have dissented. Subsequently, however, Dr. Charles W. Townsend⁴

¹ Auk, XXX, January, 1913, p. 110.

² Auk, XXVI, April, 1909, p. 176.

³ Auk, XIX, April, 1902, p. 184.

⁴ Auk, XXIX, April, 1912, pp. 176-179.

published the notes made by him on some young captive ducks of this species reared from the down and kept under observation for two years. During this time the birds maintained the characters of the smaller form with brownish or slightly reddish legs; so that these observations, so far as they go, fully bear out Mr. Brewster's contention of the validity of the two subspecies, *Anas rubripes rubripes* and *Anas rubripes tristis*.

When the description of *Anas obscura rubripes* was first published and the distinction between the two supposed races first pointed out, the present writer was inclined to believe that these differences were due either to age, season, or individual variation. During the years that have intervened, however, every opportunity to investigate the status of these two birds has been taken; and all the results of these investigations are now seen to strengthen Mr. Brewster's view of the subspecific distinctness of the two forms. In fact, for a time it looked very much as though the two birds were specifically distinct; but there are, as Mr. Brewster says, numerous specimens variously intermediate between the two, so that subspecific titles more properly express their true relationships.

The technical name for the Red-legged Black Duck becomes *Anas rubripes rubripes* Brewster, since this is the first tenable name applied to the species; and the ordinary Black Duck, formerly known as *Anas obscura*, becomes, as above indicated, *Anas rubripes tristis*.

The principal characters and the geographic distribution of the two, so far as now determinable, are as follows:

***Anas rubripes rubripes* Brewster.**

SUBSPECIFIC CHARACTERS.—Size somewhat larger; feathers of the pileum usually much edged with grayish, ochraceous or tawny; entire throat normally spotted or streaked with very dark brown or blackish; the dark markings on the anterior lower parts and on the sides of the head larger and more blackish as well as usually more sharply defined; bill yellow; tarsi and toes bright red.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.—Breeds from northern Ungava to the western side of Hudson Bay in the neighborhood of Fort Churchill, south to southern James Bay and for an undetermined distance southeastward. In winter it ranges south to Arkansas, southern Texas, southern Louisiana, southern Georgia, and Florida.

***Anas rubripes tristis* Brewster.**

SUBSPECIFIC CHARACTERS.—Size somewhat smaller than *Anas rubripes rubripes*; feathers of the pileum not conspicuously edged with paler; chin and throat usually with very few dark markings or none; the dark markings on the neck and sides of the head smaller or narrower and not so deeply blackish; bill greenish black or olivaceous; legs and toes olivaceous brown, yellowish or pale orange.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.—Breeds from southern Maryland and northern Indiana north to Wisconsin, southern Ontario, New Hampshire, central Quebec, Newfoundland, and the coast of Labrador; in winter south to southern Louisiana, southern Georgia, and North Carolina.

***Lophortyx catalinensis* Grinnell.**

This bird was originally described by Dr. Joseph Grinnell as *Lophortyx catalinensis*,¹ but it has since been considered merely a synonym of *Lophortyx californica vallicola*. An examination of the material now available shows, however, that it is a recognizable subspecies, differing from *Lophortyx californica vallicola* in its decidedly larger size, particularly of wing, tail, and feet, and in its rather darker coloration. It is larger also than *Lophortyx californica californica*, but much paler. While these differences are not entirely constant, and therefore do not justify specific rank, they are excellent average distinctions, and fully warrant the subspecific separation of this bird, which is confined to Santa Catalina Island. It should therefore stand as *Lophortyx californica catalinensis*.

***Myiarchus crinitus residuus* Howe.**

The Florida race of the Great-crested Flycatcher was first distinguished by Mr. Outram Bangs, who named the northern bird *Myiarchus crinitus boreus*.² Unfortunately, however, as Mr. R. H. Howe has pointed out,³ the birds from South Carolina, which must be considered the type locality of *Myiarchus crinitus* (Linnæus),⁴

¹ Auk, XXIII, July, 1906, p. 262 (Avalon, Santa Catalina Island, California).

² Auk, XV, April, 1898, p. 179.

³ Contrib. North Amer. Ornith., I, May 21, 1902, p. 30.

⁴ *Turdus crinitus* Linneaus, Syst. Nat., ed. 10, I, 1758, p. 170.

are nearer the northern than the southern bird. This makes necessary the use of the name *Myiarchus crinitus crinitus* for the northern race. Mr. E. W. Nelson,¹ some years ago, as a result of his studies on this difficult genus, endorsed the opinion of Mr. Bangs and Mr. Howe that the Florida form is worthy of recognition. Now, after a careful examination of pertinent material, the present writer is convinced that this is the correct view.

The Florida bird differs from that of the northeastern United States in its strikingly larger bill and somewhat shorter wing. Care must be taken in making comparisons to select actually breeding birds from Florida, since a mixture of migrant northern birds would of course readily obscure the characters of the race inhabiting Florida during the breeding season. The name for this Florida subspecies is, of course, *Myiarchus crinitus residuus* Howe,² and the type is a specimen taken at Istokpoga Lake, Florida. Comparative measurements of these two races may be found in Mr. Nelson's paper.³ The summer distribution of *Myiarchus crinitus residuus* is limited to the peninsular portion of Florida; its winter range is unknown.

Planesticus migratorius caurinus Grinnell.

This northwestern form of the American Robin was first described by Dr. Joseph Grinnell from specimens taken at Windfall Harbor, Admiralty Island, Alaska.⁴ It has generally been regarded as an untenable race, but Mr. H. S. Swarth has recently claimed its distinctness on the basis of a study of an extensive series from Vancouver Island.⁵ Examination of a large series of western robins now fully substantiates Mr. Swarth's view and shows that *Planesticus migratorius caurinus* is a form well worthy of recognition. It differs from *Planesticus migratorius migratorius* in its much smaller white terminal tail spots, paler upper parts, and more sharply defined blackish pileum. From *Planesticus migratorius*

¹ Proc. Biol. Soc. Washington, XVII, March 10, 1904, pp. 30-31.

² Contrib. North Amer. Ornith., I, May 21, 1902, p. 30.

³ Proc. Biol. Soc. Washington, XVII, March 10, 1904, p. 31.

⁴ Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool., V, No. 2, February 18, 1909, p. 241.

⁵ Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool., X, No. 1, February 13, 1912, pp. 81-82.

propinquus it differs in smaller size, larger terminal white tail spots, and darker coloration.

Its breeding range extends from the Pacific slope of the State of Washington north through the Pacific coast region of British Columbia to the coast of southeastern Alaska as far north as Glacier Bay.

A NEW SUBSPECIES OF RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD FROM WESTERN CENTRAL AMERICA.

BY A. BRAZIER HOWELL.

AMONG a collection of birds which was made by A. van Rossem in Salvador, during 1912, are five red-wings — four males and a female — which prove to be of a form heretofore unnamed. I am indebted to H. W. Henshaw of the Bureau of Biological Survey, and to D. R. Dickey, for the loan of specimens that were necessary for working up this material. The series of *Agelaius p. richmondi* used in making the comparisons, comprise skins from the states of Vera Cruz, Tabasco, and Yucatan, Mexico. Those of *A. p. sonoriensis* are from the Imperial Valley, and the Lower Colorado River in California.

Agelaius phœniceus grinnelli, new subspecies.

GRINNELL'S RED-WING.

TYPE.— Male adult; no. 1585 coll. A. B. H.; San Sebastian, Salvador, July 18, 1912; collected by A. van Rossem.

DIAGNOSIS.— From *richmondi*, the males differ in being larger, especially the wings; the culmen is slightly shorter, but the bill is much heavier, thicker, and deeper. The length, taken in the flesh, is about the same as that of *sonoriensis*, but wing and tail are shorter, especially the former, while tarsus, middle toe with claw, and culmen are longer, the bill being also heavier, thicker, and deeper. The wing formula agrees with the usual one of *richmondi* (ninth primary shorter than fifth), as opposed to that of