

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW SEASIDE SPARROW FROM
FLORIDA.

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ONE of the surprising results of a short collecting trip made by the writer to Cape Sable, Florida, in February, 1918, was the discovery of a distinct new species of Seaside Sparrow. This may be described as follows:

***Thryospiza*¹ *mirabilis* sp. nov.**

Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow.

Type, No. 261,542, U. S. National Museum, Biological Survey Collection; ♂ adult, Cape Sable, Florida, February 18, 1918; collected by A. H. Howell; original number, 1599.

Specific characters.— Most like *Thryospiza maritima sennetti*, but smaller, the upper-parts brighter and more greenish, the edgings on the tertials and scapulars more whitish; under-parts much more extensively whitish and the streaks much darker and more sharply defined.

Description of type.— Pileum mouse gray, streaked (chiefly in two lateral stripes) with chætura black, washed on occiput with yellowish olive; hind neck pale yellowish olive, this color forming a rather conspicuous, broad, transverse band; interscapular region and rump olive (slightly paler than deep olive of Ridgway), streaked with fuscous, the scapulars broadly edged with white; upper tail coverts olive, with a broad median streak of fuscous and tipped with pale grayish; rectrices fuscous along vanes, mouse gray on inner webs, indistinctly barred with fuscous; outer webs citrine drab; tips margined with white. Supraloral region empire yellow; superciliary stripe pyrite yellow, bordered above with grayish and shading posteriorly to cream buff; lores, suborbital region, and auriculars neutral gray, mixed with whitish; postocular streak and short streaks on side of neck chætura black; submalar stripe buffy white, bordered above and below with chætura black. Primaries and secondaries fuscous, edged with olive; tertials dark fuscous, margined with buffy white; edge of wing empire yellow; lesser coverts pyrite yellow; middle coverts fuscous-black, edged with grayish olive; greater coverts fuscous, shaded with olive, and bordered on outer

¹ For the use of this name in place of *Passerherbulus* for the Seaside Sparrows see Oberholser, Auk, April, 1918, p. 210.

web with cinnamon, the terminal portion darker and margined with buffy white; under-parts white, heavily streaked on chest, sides, and flanks with dark fuscous, the same areas faintly washed with cinnamon; under tail coverts white, tinged with cinnamon and streaked with fuscous; thighs drab; lining of wings dull white, mottled with hair brown; upper mandible blackish, lower mandible dark mouse gray.

Measurements.—Type (adult male): wing, 57; tail, 51; exposed culmen, 12; depth of bill at base, 6.5; tarsus, 22; middle toe, 17. Average of five adult males: Wing, 58.2 (57–60); tail, 51.4 (50–53); exposed culmen, 12.1 (12–12.5); depth of bill at base, 6.6 (6.5–7); tarsus, 21.9 (21.5–22); middle toe, 16.8 (16–17). One adult female: 53; 47.5; 12.5; 7; 22; 16.

Remarks.—This species differs so strikingly from all the other Seaside Sparrows that intergradation with any of the forms seems very improbable. From its nearest geographical neighbor, *Thryospiza maritima peninsulæ*, occupying the west coast of Florida from Tarpon Springs northward, *mirabilis* differs more than from other races of that species. Its closest affinities are with *Thryospiza maritima sennetti*, which inhabits the coast of Texas; it differs from this and from all other races of *maritima* in its more extensively white under-parts, with more sharply defined streaking, and more greenish upper-parts. In size, and in the white under-parts with sharply defined streaks, it approaches *Thryospiza nigrescens* of the east coast of Florida, but differs widely from that species in the color of the upper-parts.

Individual variation is not extensive; in some specimens the streaks on the under-parts are mouse gray instead of fuscous; the tail feathers vary from mouse gray to hair brown, and in all specimens except the type the white tips are nearly or quite obsolete (probably worn off); the single female examined is washed beneath with olive-buff.

The limits of the range of this species are at present unknown, but probably it is confined to the coastal marshes in the vicinity of Cape Sable, where doubtless it is a permanent resident. It is known from six specimens taken there by the writer between February 13 and 18, 1918. The species appeared to be only moderately numerous in the area traversed.