

NOTES ON A COLLECTION OF ACCIPITRES FROM
THE MERIDA DISTRICT, W. VENEZUELA.

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THE collection forming the substance of the present paper was received from Venezuela, through the instrumentality of Mr. W. F. H. Rosenberg, in June of 1920, and comprises the *Accipitres* collected in the years immediately preceding the war by Bricéno Gabaldon e Hijos, of Mérida, and I have added a small selection of skins from the same source previously received. The total number of skins is 140, referable to 24 forms, of some of which very good series are presented. The numbers prefixed are those of my "Synopsis."

1. *Vultur gryphus gryphus* (LINN.), S. N., i, p. 86 (1758) [Chile] ♀ (?) near Mérida, circa 1912 (ticket perished).

An example in the brown plumage, without any sign of caruncle or wattles, wing 830 mm., indicating a size above the average. The species is probably not common from Venezuela, but the British Museum collection contains one other skin, female in the black and white plumage, from the same locality, with the wing 798 mm. An Ecuador female in same plumage which I have examined had the wing 786 mm., and a large male from the Andes, 798 mm., an immature male in brown plumage, 808 mm.

51a. *Climacocerus zonothorax* CAB., J. f. O 1865, p. 406 [Porto Cabello, Venez.]

3 ♂ 3 ♀ Montana Sierra. Valle and Chama, 1906-11, alt. 2000-3000 meters; ♂ Limoues, September 15, 1906, alt. 700 m. All in more or less immature plumage. One male is in first plumage, with buff underparts, the other birds all being in various stages of barring. The wide bars fairly well spaced suffice to distinguish this species from *C. guerilla* and it is certain that *C. zonothorax* is the species most common in Venezuela. It generally shows at all stages a well-defined white collar on hind neck, and the head is blackish brown; the throat white with a brown zone on foreneck. An example stated to be the rufous phase of this species in the British Museum collection from Venezuela (Spence) is in my opinion a rufous phase of *C. guerilla* and not this species as may be seen by the close and fine barring below and by the uniform head, hind neck and throat.

105. *Accipiter collaris* (KAUF) MS. in Mus. Brit. undé; ScI. Ibis 1860, p. 148, pl. 6. [New Granada-Bogota].

One immature Mérida dist. circa 1913 (orig. label perished).

I append a description of this example of this very rare hawk as it differs greatly from the Bogota juvenile described and figured by Sclater (*cf. supra*) although it agrees very well with an immature bird from the same district in the British Museum collection. The size of the feet and claws prove this bird to belong to the genus *Astur* rather than *Accipiter*. The only previous examples known to me are the two in the British Museum collection and one at Norwich.

Head and nape deep blackish chocolate, nape with a concealed white spot: above, including wings, chestnut red, clearer on the tail, which is crossed by 6 narrow black bands; throat whitish; below paler chestnut, the sides of the chest and flanks banded with darker chestnut; under wing-coverts pale chestnut; inner webs of primaries and secondaries banded with black; tibial plumes deep chestnut red, with traces of dusky bars. Total length about 265 mm.; wing 162 mm.: tail 127 mm.: culmen, including cere, 18 mm., tarsus, 40 mm., middle toe without claw 35 mm., middle claw 13 mm., outer claw 9 mm., inner and hind claws 22 mm.

(112a.) ***Accipiter chionogaster venezuelensis*** subsp. nov.

♀ (?) Escorial, Mérida dist. Feb. 17 1911, 2500 meters, in coll. H. Kirke Swann; and ♀ Escorial, Sept. 10 1896, Tring Mus. coll.

Type. Escorial, Mérida dist. 2500 meters, February 17, 1911. Coll. H. Kirke Swann.

Characters.—This new subspecies agrees well with the typical form from Guatemala, in the snowy white underparts, with only a few faint hair-lines on chest, but the tibiae are rather more rusty whitish coloured, although far paler than in *A. salvini*, and are faintly marked with dusky cross-bars: above it differs from the typical form in the much paler slate-gray shade, especially on the head, which is black in the typical form; the dark tail bands are wider and the pale interspaces narrower. Wing 196-198 mm. (in Guatemala female wing averages 208, male 172 mm.) The cotype in the Tring Museum differs only in the absence of the faint crossbars on the tibial plumes.

113. ***Accipiter salvini*** (RUDGW.) Bull. U. S. Geol. Surv. ii, p. 121 (1876). [Mérida, Venezuela].

3 ♀ Escorial, ♀ Montanas Conefos, ♀ Blechitera, ♂ Valle, juv. ♂ Montanas Valle, 2000-2500 meters.

The juvenile in this species has the lower parts rather whiter, the stripes paler, narrower and more longitudinal than in *A. ventralis*, with no apparent bar.

114. ***Accipiter ventralis ventralis*** SCLAT. P. Z. S. 1866, p. 303. [Interior of Colombia].

2 ♀, 2 ♂ Valle, ♂ ♀ Escorial, 2 juv. ♂ Valle, 1904-11, alt. 1500-3000 meters.

None of the adults are in quite uniform rufous plumage below, the most adult female having the rufous of chest and breast broken by white spots

or bars. One male, however, has rufous of under parts more nearly uniform but under tail-coverts white.

An ad. Culata, August 19, 1912, alt. 3000 meters, I doubtfully refer to this species, which it resembles above, although the black tail bands are wider and the gray interspaces narrower; below the rufous is paler and the chest uniform ashy gray. One other such example from the same district is in the British Museum collection.

123. *Accipiter bicolor* (VIEILL.), N. Dict., x. p. 325 (1817) [Cayenne].

Ad. ♀ Culata, March 11, 1908, alt. 2,500 meters.

128. *Heterospizias meridionalis meridionalis* (LATH.), Ind. Orn. i, p. 36 (1790). [Cayenne.]

No examples in the collection from Venezuela, although several from there are in the Tring Museum and British Museum collections. I find on examination that the northern (typical) form is smaller than examples I have received from Argentine, while the latter differ considerably in plumage, showing little or no trace of gray above. I therefore propose to separate the Argentine birds under the name of —

128a. *Heterospizias meridionalis australis* subsp. nov.,

♂ Laguna de Malima, Tucuman, Argentina, March 31, 1902, coll. Dinelli, in coll. H. Kirke Swann; ♀ Tucuman, May 23, 1900, coll. Dinelli, in coll. Tring Mus.

Type. ♂ Laguna de Malima, Tucuman, Argentina, March 31, 1902, coll. Dinelli. ♀ In coll. H. Kirke Swann.

Characters.—Larger and much darker above than typical form; mantle and scapulars blackish brown with rufous margins in place of pale slate grey with rufous margins; below averaging darker and with the dark bars wider and more numerous.

Wing in male (type and cotype) 415–17 mm., female (Tring Museum) 430 mm., against 586–404 mm. in Venezuelan male, 398–417 mm. in Venezuelan female, 405 mm. in Guiana female, 398 mm. in Bolivian male, 390 mm. in Brazilian (Matto Grosso) male, all the latter being typical birds.

129. *Geranoaetus melanoleucus* (VIEILL.) N. Dict. d'Hist. Nat., XXXII, p. 57 (1819). [Paraguay.]

4 ad. ♂, 2 juv. ♂, 2 juv. ♀, 2 nestlings, Culata, Escorial, Paramos de Morro, Paramo Escorial, Nevada, alt. 2500–3000 meters, January to October, 1907–12.

These examples appear to be a trifle smaller in size than Patagonian birds. Wing, male, 455–468 mm., tail 215–227 mm., wing, female, 480–525 mm., tail 252–303 mm.

Three of the juvenile birds have the tail slate numerously barred with black, while the fourth has already acquired the uniform black tail; all have the chest bright ochre. Of the two nestlings, one is in white down, with only the dark feathers of the wings and tail appearing and a few rufous feathers on sides of breast; the other is nearly fledged, with nearly all the rufous ochre chest-feathers and the white down only left in

patches, chiefly on the throat, chest, thighs and under side of wing; the feathers appearing on the latter and on the abdomen are black, instead of rufous barred with black as in the immature dress.

146. ***Buteo platypterus platypterus*** (VIEILL.), Tabl. Ency. Meth. iii. p. 1273 (1823) [near Philadelphia].

8 ♂, 5 ♀, 4 juv. ♂, 1 juv. ♀, Valle, Escorial, Culata, Conejos, Epèlo. Nevados, Jufi, Aug. 14 to March 15, 1903-13, alt. 1200-3000 meters. Presumably the Venezuela birds are all migratory and there are no examples taken between March 15 and August 14.

147. ***Buteo abbreviatus abbreviatus*** CAB., in Schomb. Reis. Guiana, iii. p. 739 (1848) [Brit. Guiana].

I have received from Dr. Reichnow some particulars of Cabanis' type of *B. abbreviatus* now in the Berlin Museum, as well as a drawing of the outer tail-feather, which leave no doubt that Cabanis' species is a tenable one and corresponds with the "nearly adult (type of *B. albonotatus*)" of Sharpe (Cat. Bds. B. M. p. 163) now in the British Museum collection. Therefore *B. albonotatus* as resuscitated by Mr. Selater in that collection must drop as being a synonym of *B. abbreviatus*, while the birds referred to *B. abbreviatus* must be regarded as black examples of *B. albicaudatus*. One juvenile bird from Guiana in my collection, described under No. 152 b., as well as a similar juvenile referred to *B. abbreviatus* in the Tring collection represent apparently the first juvenile stage of *B. albicaudatus*, a species which starts very dark and lightens with maturity.

Melanism in the South American Buzzards is in fact frequent. The form known as *B. unicolor* and so designated in the Tring Museum, I believe is correctly to be referred to *B. erythronotus*. The black birds from Venezuela, Guiana, etc., with the tail resembling *B. albicaudatus*, either adult immature, are I believe nothing more than melanistic of *B. albicaudatus*.

I take this opportunity of stating that further examination of this difficult question convinces me that the bird I described (Synoptical List p. 51, No. 147a, 1919) as *Buteo abbreviatus minimus* is, from its size, a melanistic example of *Buteola brachyura* and not a small form of *B. abbreviatus* as I previously supposed, especially as *B. abbreviatus* is itself a large edition in appearance of *Buteola brachyura* (= *B. fuliginosa* Selater) in which the tail is marked exactly as in the younger examples of *Buteo abbreviatus*.

I give a brief description of the type of Gray's *B. albonotatus*: Male (?) from Mexico, ex coll. J. Taylor, which Sharpe correctly designated as the younger of the two plumages: Blackish above and below, with more or less concealed white spots, especially on the under surface; the nape feathers white, except at tips, showing conspicuously; tail with about 6 ashy brown bars (appearing white below) the black bars narrow, except the terminal one which is 28 mm. wide; primaries below with narrow bands

of blackish brown, the wide interspaces ashy white; under wing and tail-coverts black; wing (measured as usual on underside) 405, tail 215, tarsus 75 middle toe without claw, 45 mm.; first 4 primaries notched.

The adult plumage, correctly described by Sharpe, as exhibited by Mexican examples, shows none of the white spots above and below, but white of nape is still exhibited; the tail has one broad median band of lighter grey, with a second narrower one nearer base, both showing very white below. Intermediate stages of plumage exhibit 5 and 4 of the ashy brown bands showing that they reduce with maturity, the subterminal one widening correspondingly. A male from Surinam in the Tring collection has four ashy brown bars above, but six white ones below; wing 385 mm. The inner face of primaries appears more slate colour in adults. Other Mexican male birds in the British Museum collection have the wing 392-400 mm. Two Mexican male examples in the Tring Museum have the wing 405 and 419 mm. There is no female in the British Museum collection, but one in the Tring collection from Bolivia has the wing 450 mm. A male from Peru in the British Museum collection has a wing of 380 mm.

152b. *Buteo albicaudatus exiguus* CHAPM., Bull. Am. Mus. N. H. XXXIV, p. 637 (1915). [Barrigon. Colombia.]

1 imm., Montañas Morro, May 29, 1911, alt. 1500 meters. In immature plumage, wing 411 mm. On account of its small size the example is presumably referable to this form.

I possess also a more juvenile male from British Guiana, February, 1898, ex coll. W. S. L. Loat. Above brownish black with white bases to feathers of head and interscapular regions; feathers of rump browner, with white bases and buff margins; sides of rump and upper tail-coverts white; tail feathers ashy brown, with narrow, indistinct, darker bars, the inner webs whitish; below buff, heavily marked with black, especially on chest and sides of breast; inner face of wing quills grayish, banded with black; wing 305 mm. (not fully grown.) This juvenile bird so closely suggests the blackish immature birds of *B. albicaudatus* that I do not hesitate to refer it to this species. A similar bird in the Tring Museum is referred to *B. abbreviatus*

155. *Buteola brachyura* (VIEILL.) N. Dist. d'Hist. Nat., IV., p. 477 (1816). [Cayenne.]

♀ (? , marked ♂) Escorial, August 18, 1913, alt. 3000 meters. In adult plumage, blackish above with four broad black bands on tail; sides of chest black, with some light brown lower margins: the rest of under parts pure white; wing 316 mm.

2 ♂ Valle, June 15, 1911, November 20, 1913, alt. 2500 meters. Both in immature plumage; buff below, the first with a very few dark striations on sides, the second with rufous edgings to feathers of upper parts, tail with nine narrow, dark bars, hardly apparent above; wing 290 and 298 mm.

♀ Escorial, October 28, 1911, alt. 2800 meters. Like first of the immature plumages above; wing 335 mm.

♀ Monte Sierra, April 18, 1911, alt. 3000 meters. Like the second of the immature plumages above; wing 323 mm. These immature plumages show very little black on sides of chest.

♀ juv. Culata, August 15, 1911, alt. 3000 meters. With the under parts buffish white chest marked with longitudinal blackish stripes and lower breast heavily blotched across with blackish brown; tail more visibly barred; wing 316 mm. One such example is in the British Museum and one in the Tring Museum and I therefore refer it to this species; and must suppose it to be the most juvenile plumage, as the buff under parts are evidently succeeded by the white plumage.

158. *Rupornis magnirostris magnirostris* (GMEI.) S. N. i. p. 282 (1788). [Cayenne].

11 ad., 3 immature, Valle, Culata and Escorial, June to December, 1907-11, alt. 2000-3000 meters; 1 nestling, Valle, July 12, 1908, alt. 2000 meters.

Wing 208 mm. (smallest male)—232 mm. (largest female). If the birds with largest wing measurement are females (sexing being questionable) they are much less rufous below than male birds. The immature birds have the feathers edged with buff above; and the chest buff with longitudinal blotches of brown; tail with four instead of three bars of black; otherwise they differ little from the adults.

The nestling (a newly fledged bird) is in similar plumage to the immature birds, even to the tail, which however is only just growing; the cross barring of under parts is also present as in the adults.

Birds from northern Ecuador in my collection do not agree with Venezuelan or Guianan birds, but the individual variation is so great that I do not think they can be separated. An example from Vaquerói, N. Ecuador, shows a strong tinge of rufous in the tail and of buff on upper tail-coverts and has the secondaries as well as primaries rufous on inner webs, but a second example from the same region has no buff on upper tail-coverts and no rufous in tail (cf. Chapman, Bull. Am. Mus. N. H. XXXVI, p. 244, 1917). Both these birds are almost as pale grey above as typical examples but a male from Chauchamayo, Peru, has the upper parts very much browner, yet has no rufous in tail or secondaries, nor yet any buff on upper tail-coverts. Bangs' form *occidua* from Rio Tembopata, E. Peru, is distinguished solely by having the chest "bright cinnamon rufous" instead of gray, but Peruvian birds from other districts do not show this.

A pair of birds in the Tring Museum from Chimbo, Ecuador, lack the buff on upper tail-coverts. The male has the light tail bands strongly rufescent, especially on anterior and posterior edges; the female however has no visible rufousness on the tail.

159. *Rupornis leucorrhoea* (QUOY ET GAIM.) Voy. de l'Uran. p. 91, pl. 13 (1824). [Brazil.]

♂ Culata, October 20, 1913, alt. 3000 meters; ♂ ♀ Montanas Sierra July 11, 1911, December 14, 1910, alt. 2500 meters; 2 ♂ Escorial, September 18, 1911, September 15, 1913, alt. 3000 meters. One ♂, apparently scarcely mature, shows a little buff variation below and very little rufous on the tibial plumes.

193. *Lophotriorchis isidorei* (DES MURS), Rev. Zool., 1845, p. 177.
[Santa Fé de Bogota.]

♂ ♀ (?) Mérida, circa 1912 (orig. tickets perished). In immature plumage, head and neck white with darker centers to the feathers; short crest black; entire underparts white, with a few dark brown shaft-lines; tail with 4 black bands, the wide interspaces marked with gray and brown; wing of a female (?) 521 mm.; male (?) 488 mm. Tring Museum possesses three examples in this plumage, one of which has the rufous feathers of adult plumage appearing on side of chest.

238a. *Elanoides forficatus yetapa* BONN. ET VIEILL., Encyc. Meth. iii, p. 1205 (1823). [Paraguay.]

5 ♂, 4 ♀, Culata, Capás, Escorial, April-August, 1906-14, alt. 2500-3500 meters; 1 juv. Correfos, June 19, 1911, alt. 3000 meters.

The adults of this scarcely separable form seem to average a trifle smaller than those of the typical form; wing 373 mm. (smallest male) to 433 mm. (largest female). The juvenile bird appears to be newly fledged, with the tail just growing, the head and hind neck buff, and underparts washed with buff; the plumage otherwise not differing from that of the adult.

246. *Rogerhinus uncinatus uncinatus* (TEMM.), Pl. Col. i, pl. 103-5 (1824). [Brazil=Rio de Janeiro, apud Chubb, type in Leyden Mus.]

♂ juv., Escorial, October 12, 1911, alt. 3000 meters. ♂ in intermediate plumage, Mérida dist. (ticket perished). The juvenile bird is in very rufous plumage, the secondaries entirely rufous barred with black.

250b. *Elanus axillaris leucurus* (VIEILL.) N. D., XX, p. 563 [err. 566] (1818). [Paraguay.]

♂ Nevada, Nov. 14, 1905, alt. 3000 meters.

252. *Gampsonyx swainsoni meridensis* SWANN, Synop., List Accip., pt. 3, p. 104. January 20, 1920.) [Nevada, Merida dist. Venez. type in coll. H. K. S.]

♂ (type) Nevada, November 15, 1903, alt. 3000 meters.

8 ♂, 1 ♀, Valle 1905-13, alt. 2000-2500 meters.

Three ♂ are younger examples, having the feathers of upper parts edged with rufous, the rufous collar nearly absent and the forehead white, but not otherwise differing from the adults. All examples show the rufous on sides characterising this race although in varying degrees.

Two examples in my collection from Bona Vista and Miritiba, N. E. Brazil are intermediate showing a trace of rufous on the left flank only.

253. *Ictinia plumbea* (GMEL.) S. N. i p. 283 (1788). [ex Lath.-Cayenne.]

- 1 juv. Nebados, Sept. 18, 1912, 3000 meters.
 Juvenile plumage: slaty black above the head, neck, throat and chest white, streaked with slaty black, the flanks barred with the same.
293. **Falco deiroleucus** TEMM., Pl. Col. i, pl. 348 (1825). [Brazil.]
 Juv., near Mérida, November, 1911. In the immature plumage described by Sharpe (Cat. Bds. Brit. Mus., p. 403). Wing 289 mm., hence presumably a female.
297. **Falco columbarius columbarius** LINN., S. N., i. p. 90 (1758)
 ["America", ex. Catesby=Carolina].
 ♂ Culata, September 18, 1911, alt. 3000 meters.
- 310a. **Cerchneis isabellina ochracea** CORY, Field Mus. Pub. Orn.,
 Ser i. p. 298 (1915). [Colon, Tachira, W. Venez., type in Field
 Museum.]
 19 ad. ♂; 1 ad. ♀; 9 juv. 1906-14.
 One ad. male, with totally unspotted back and lower parts, shows a small rufous crown patch; another practically adult, but with back barred has a larger rufous crown patch.
- 315a. **Pandion haliaëtus carolinensis** GMEL., S. N. i. p. 263 (1789)
 [S. Carolina.]
 ♀ Culata, March 14, 1908, alt. 2500 meters.
 ♂ (?) Montanas Sierra, October 24, 1911, alt. 2800 meters.
 The female, apparently less adult, lacks the narrow paler edgings above which appear in the other bird, and has upper parts, including the center of crown and patch behind eye and a distinct occipital crest, blackish; the tail dark brown with distinct bands of black; the interspaces on all but center pair of feathers white; wing 494 mm.
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DESCRIPTION OF A NEW LOON.

BY LOUIS B. BISHOP M. D.

WHEN I returned from North Dakota in 1895 I was surprised to find that a breeding female Loon I had collected on Turtle Mountain was much smaller than any I had from the East. Later, when I obtained eggs from North Dakota, I found them also smaller than eggs I had collected in New Hampshire. Unsexed Loons, killed by half-breeds on Turtle Mountain also in 1895, and now in the collection of Mr. William H. Hoyt, were likewise very small, as was another breeding female I collected there in July, 1905.