

ON THE GENUS PHÆOPROGNE, BAIRD.

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THE genus *Phæoprogne* was instituted by Baird (Review American Birds, May, 1865, 272, 283) for a group of Swallows allied to *Progne* Boie, but with a superficial resemblance to "*Cotyle*" of the same author (= *Riparia* Forster). Two species were assigned to the new genus, *P. fusca* (Vieillot) and *P. tapera* (Linnæus), which were carefully distinguished from each other, but no type-designation was made at the time. The name having been applied only in a subgeneric sense, it was ignored by later authors, until revived by Mr. Ridgway (Bulletin U. S. National Museum, No. 50, III, 1904, 26), who designated *P. fusca* as the type-species. The group seems entitled to generic separation on the strength of the differential characters pointed out by this authority and by the original describer—it rests on as good grounds, at any rate, as most of the other accepted genera of Hirundinidæ. Unfortunately there has arisen some confusion of late years with regard to the status of the included species, due to the treatment accorded them by Sharpe (Catalogue Birds British Museum, X, 1885, 180), who was under a misapprehension as to the significance of the characters shown by the series at his command. It is the purpose of this paper to clear up this confusion as to the names and ranges.

Phæoprogne tapera (Linnæus).

Hirundo tapera Linnæus, Syst. Nat., ed. 12, I, 1766, 345 ("America" = Brazil, ex Marcgrave).

Phæoprogne tapera immaculata Chapman, Bull. Am. Mus. Nat. Hist., XXXI, 1912, 156 (Chicoral, Tolima, Colombia; type in coll. Am. Mus. Nat. Hist.).

The original diagnosis of this species, it is true, leaves much to be desired in the way of details, but such as it is seems to apply to the form from eastern South America with the middle of the belly plain white, unspotted. A study of the references cited in connection with the name would seem to confirm this view—

with the exception of that by Sloane, which of course pertains to some other species (cf. Baird, Review American Birds, 1865, 286, note). In my opinion, von Berlepsch and Hartert (*Novitates Zoologicæ*, IX, 1902, 74) were accordingly perfectly justified in fixing eastern Brazil (ex Marcgrave) as the type-locality of *tapera*. At any rate, all our specimens from French Guiana and the lower Amazon Valley belong to this form, and according to Sharpe and Wyatt (*Monograph Hirundinidæ*, II, 1894, 481), in a series from Bahia, Brazil, "not a single one has a trace of spots on the breast," nor does Doctor Chapman record any of such a type from this general region (*Bulletin American Museum Natural History*, XXXVI, 1917, 503-4). It is fair to presume, therefore, that the plain-breasted type of *Phæoprogne* is the only one found in eastern South America, and this circumstance would of itself suffice to fix the name *tapera* on this form.

Doctor Chapman, however, under the impression that the spotted-breasted bird was *tapera*, proceeded to give a new subspecific name to the plain-breasted one, calling it *immaculata*. He supposed at first that the latter was confined to the northern part of the continent, and later on was greatly puzzled to discover that both forms occurred in Colombia, and that, too, without any indications of intergradation. He admitted that they behaved as if they were two different species, but left the question in abeyance. The fact is, as shown beyond, that these two types of coloration represent two closely allied but perfectly distinct *species*, as correctly given by Baird (l. c.) many years ago, and more recently recognized by Mr. Ridgway (*Bulletin U. S. National Museum*, No. 50, III, 1904, 26, note). Sharpe's remarks in his monograph and in the *Catalogue of the Birds in the British Museum* (Volume X, 1885, 181) are evidently responsible for the confusion of these two forms under one name. Age and season have nothing to do with the case.

Specimens examined (Carnegie Museum).—Venezuela: Maripa, 4; Altagracia, 2; San Felix, 2; Sabana de Mendoza, 1; Tabay, 4. Colombia: Calamar, 1; Lorica, 14; Monteria, 2. French Guiana: Mana, 7. Brazil: Miritituba, Rio Tapajoz, 16; Santarem, 1; Nova Olinda, Rio Purús, 6; Arimã, Rio Purús, 1. Total, 61.

Phæoprogne fusca (Vieillot).

Hirundo fusca Vieillot, Nouv. Dict. d'Hist. Nat., XIV, 1817, 510 (Paraguay, ex Azara).

Sharpe and Wyatt (Monograph Hirundinidæ, II, 1894, 481) remarked the variations in their series of what they called *Progne tapera*, but attributed it to season, saying that "the ovate drops of dark brown colour on the breast are developed to a greater extent during the breeding-season, if indeed they are not the principal evidences of nuptial plumage. They are never seen in young birds." Following these authors, recent writers have failed to realize the true significance of these markings, while Doctor Chapman (l. c.) undertook to show that they were of at least subspecific value. As already said, he retained the name *tapera* for the bird with the spotted breast, and gave a new name, *immaculata*, to the bird with the plain breast, which he supposed was restricted to northern South America—Colombia and Venezuela. That his action in this regard was quite superfluous I hope to be able to show. *Hirundo fusca* of Vieillot was based on the "Golondrina de la parda" of Azara (Apuntamientos, II, 1805, 505, 301), from Paraguay. Now, the spotted-breasted form of *Phæoprogne* is the only one known to occur in Paraguay, Argentina, Bolivia, and Matto Grosso, and moreover, Azara's description seems clearly to imply that he had a bird of this type in hand. On the other hand, as I have already shown, the plain-breasted form is the only one known to occur in eastern Brazil, the accepted type-locality of *tapera*. Not only so, but the description of the latter seems to have been based on a bird of that type. Consequently *immaculata* Chapman falls as a pure synonym of *tapera* Linnæus, while the spotted-breasted bird will have to be called *fusca*, as correctly indicated by Baird many years ago.

Later Dr. Chapman (1917), finding that the spotted-breasted bird occurred in Colombia, within the range of the other form, came to doubt his previous interpretation of their characters, suggesting that, if not two distinct species, they must be individual variants. He had a single bird from Suapure, on the Caura River, Venezuela, which was of the spotted-breasted type, while all the others from the same region belonged to the other type. (I have examined this specimen, No. 73,622, Collection American

Museum Natural History.) Our birds from the Caura are all plain-breasted, but we have four perfectly typical skins of the spotted-breasted form from farther north (El Trompillo, Carabobo), and two from Guachi in the State of Zulia—all of which are exactly like the series from Bolivia. There can be no doubt but that the two types are specifically distinct, and that their respective ranges overlap over an extensive area. I am unable to verify any of the distinctive characters given by Baird except the spotting on the middle of the breast and belly, but I find another good character in the length of the wing-tip (i. e., the distance between the tips of the longest secondaries and the tips of the longest primaries in the closed wing), which is constantly longer in *fusca* than in *tapera*, by 10 mm. or more, although the wings themselves are about the same length in both. The wonder is, of course, that two species so closely allied as these, which must have had a common origin, should occur together over so large an area without mixing. Possibly they may have different haunts and habits.

Specimens examined (Carnegie Museum).—Bolivia: Puerto Suarez, 6; Buenavista, 17; Rio Surutu, 4. Venezuela: El Trompillo, 4; Guachi, 2. Total, 33.

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