

A NEW MARSH WREN FROM NORTH CAROLINA.

BY EDWARD S. DINGLE AND ALEXANDER SPRUNT, JR.

FOR many years it has been known that an exceptionally dark marsh wren occurs commonly in the salt marshes of the North and South Carolina coasts. Its close resemblance to Marian's Marsh Wren (*Telmatodytes palustris marianae*), of Florida, has caused it to be generally regarded as identical with that form. In recent years however, much study has been devoted to this puzzling group of wrens and the field work of Messrs. Arthur H. Howell and H. E. Wheeler has definitely established *marianae* as a resident form on the Gulf Coast of Alabama and Florida. Therefore, the Atlantic coast bird is completely separated from *marianae* and is without a name. We propose to call it

Telmatodytes palustris waynei, nom. nov. Type No. 3460, ♀.

Collection of the late Arthur T. Wayne, now deposited in The Charleston Museum; Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, April 16, 1897. Collected by Arthur T. Wayne.

Subspecific characters.—Similar to *Telmatodytes palustris palustris*, but smaller; bill shorter and more slender; wing, tail and tarsus average shorter; upper parts darker, inclining more to olive brown; head and nape sooty black, the majority of specimens showing a short, faint median streak; black dorsal area of greater extent; tail and under tail coverts more heavily barred; flanks richer brown; these, and sides of breast with more or less barring.

Measurements of Type.—Wing 45 mm., tail 37 mm., exposed culmen 12.5 mm., tarsus 18 mm.

Average of 23 specimens.—Wing 46.6 mm., tail 38.9 mm., exposed culmen 12.9 mm. tarsus 19.3 mm.

Remarks.—A satisfactory comparison of *Telmatodytes palustris waynei* with *marianae* is not possible on account of inadequacy of specimens of the latter. In size, *waynei* seems to be slightly larger than the Florida form; in color it is quite similar, except that there is more white on the under parts. Messrs. Brimley and Pearson in their 'Birds of North Carolina,' and H. H. Bailey in his 'Birds of Virginia' under the name of *marianae*, give the breeding range of *waynei* to be the North Carolina coast; Bailey extends the range to "Back Bay, Princess Anne County, Virginia." Mr. Wayne, in recording the first specimen collected (The Auk, Oct. 1899) pre-

dicted the breeding range of *marianae* (= *waynei*) to be North Carolina! It is probable that *waynei* breeds well up into Virginia and it undoubtedly intergrades with *palustris*. Mr. Wayne says in his 'Birds of South Carolina,' page 187, of *T. p. griseus*, "There is no evidence that *griseus* interbreeds with *marianae*. . ."

The breeding range of *griseus* extends along the South Carolina coast as far north as the mouth of the Santee River. A glance at the map of this state will reveal the fact that there are no salt marshes of any extent from Georgetown, S. C. to Southport, N. C., in which this wren could breed. The present writers likewise find no interbreeding, and consider this absence of suitable salt marsh to be the principal cause. The range of *waynei* begins at Southport, N. C., where, at the mouth of the Cape Fear River, very extensive and suitable marshes are available. It is nearly one hundred miles from Southport to Georgetown, S. C., and in this area the marshes are very restricted and the growth anything but luxuriant. The cause of this lack of marsh seems to be the absence of inlets and barrier islands and the lack of any fresh water rivers emptying along this stretch. During the present breeding season (1932) we were unable to locate any wrens along this part of the coast and not until Southport was reached did they appear. North of the Cape Fear River the marshes again dwindle to almost nothing.

According to Mr. Wayne, this wren arrives in the vicinity of Charleston, S. C., about the middle of September; his earliest record being the 16th of that month (Birds of South Carolina, page 189). It remains until late in May. A male in song was taken by Mr. Dingle on May 26, 1932 in an old ricefield on the Cooper River. It is common in the Cooper River ricefields during the winter, especially during the months of October and November.

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*Charleston Museum,
Charleston, S. C.*