

A WESTERN RACE OF THE TOOTH-BILLED TANAGER

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EVER since Oberholser (*Auk*, 36: 74, 1919) in 1919, described *Piranga hepatica oreophasma* from the Chisos Mountains in Texas and included in the range Arizona, New Mexico, and most of northern and central Mexico, there has been considerable diversity of opinion as to its tenability. Varying opinions have been expressed by Zimmer (*Field Mus., Zool. Ser.*, 17: 213-219, 1929), Griscom (*Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool.*, 75: 409, 1934), Hellmayr (*Field Mus. Nat. Hist., Zool. Ser.*, 13: pt. 9, 285, 1936), and the present writer, while various other authors have used or ignored the name without critical comment. Zimmer and Hellmayr emphatically rejected it as did Griscom, though rather tentatively so; I (*Trans. San Diego Soc. Nat. Hist.*, 6: 290, 1931) upheld it chiefly on the basis of series of specimens from Arizona and Sonora, a region which came within the range as originally outlined, but also noted that birds from even so far west as Sierra County, New Mexico, were not representative of those from Arizona and Sonora.

Since that time I have seen much additional material and have come to the conclusion that *oreophasma* is a very dubious race but that the name may be useful in designating the slightly darker, slightly larger birds of extreme northeastern and north-central Mexico and of Texas and New Mexico. Another conclusion is that the Tooth-billed Tanagers from the Pacific drainage in Arizona and Sonora are distinct from *hepatica* and still more so from *oreophasma*. Further comment is made below, together with the proposed name of

***Piranga flava zimmeri* subspecies nova**

WESTERN HEPATIC TANAGER

Type.—Male adult, 30604 Dickey collection; Chinobampo, southern Sonora, Mexico, March 7, 1930; collected by J. T. Wright.

Subspecific characters.—Paler and grayer than any of the named North American races of *Piranga flava*. Compared with *Piranga flava hepatica* of the Mexican Highlands generally, adult males paler and more rosy (less scarlet) red below, and with the flanks paler and grayer; upper parts paler and with the back very much grayer. Females and young males parallel the differences seen in adult males; ventrally they are paler yellow below and paler and grayer (less olive) dorsally, particularly on the back.

Range.—Upper Sonoran and lower parts of the Transition Zones (oak-pine association) from Arizona south along the west slope of the Sierra Madre and adjacent ranges to extreme southern Sonora and southwestern Chihuahua. Prob-

ably resident, in part at least, from central Sonora southward, but occurring as far south as Jalisco (Bolaños, British Museum, March 13).

Remarks.—There are no available specimens known to me whereby to trace the breeding range of *zimmeri* southward from Sonora and Chihuahua. To the eastward, nine specimens from the Chiricahua Mountains are so intermediate in character that they might as well be called *oreophasma* as *zimmeri*. Two from Chloride, Sierra County, New Mexico, I place definitely as the former race. One specimen from Pacheco, Chihuahua (on the interior slope) is *oreophasma*.

Measurements seem to be of little value in identifying individual specimens of the Mexican races of this species, save possibly in the case of *dextra*. There are minor group tendencies but size variation is notable, even in birds from the same locality: seventeen adult males of *zimmeri* have a wing measurement of from 99 to 106 (103.5) mm.; sixteen adult females 93 to 101 (98.4) mm.

Since the nomenclature of the central and eastern Mexican races of *flava* hinges upon the identity of Swainson's type of *Pyranga hepatica*, I made a special point of looking up this specimen when at Cambridge in 1933 and re-examined it in 1938. Fortunately it is still extant and I can record that it is typical of the race to which the name is currently applied. It is an adult male in perfect plumage, evidently taken in the fall or early winter for there is no abrasion evident anywhere and even the feathers of the chest retain their faint gray tipping. So far as I can see, it is typical in both color and size. The back is strongly reddish gray, the under parts are brightly colored and the flanks are olive gray. Measurements are as follows: wing, 101 mm.; tail, 81.5; exposed culmen, 18.2; tarsus, 22.2; middle toe minus claw, 16.0. The attached tag reads, "Genus *Pyranga*/P. *hepatica* Sw./Mexico." Undoubtedly Bullock was the collector for the skin is typical of his 'make,'—flattened, distorted, and with only a tuft of cotton in the neck and throat. In his description Swainson gives Real del Monte [Hidalgo] as the type locality, which may or may not be the case for four specimens from Jacala, Hidalgo, kindly sent me by Dr. George M. Sutton (among other material) show some tendencies in color toward *dextra*. They are nearer *hepatica*, however. Should a series from Real del Monte prove to be nearer *dextra*, a shift of type locality would be in order for Swainson has been shown more than once to have been careless in citing localities incorrectly and besides, in this case he cites "Table land" and "Real del Monte." [Since the above was transmitted for publication, information has been obtained to the effect that Swain-

son's "Real del Monte" locality inclusions were not based on Bullock material. Furthermore, "Tableland" in this and in nearly all other cases where given by him means the Valley of Mexico. This matter will be elaborated in another paper. In the present case the type locality of *Piranga hepatica* should be corrected to the Valley of Mexico.] However, there is no doubt as to the type specimen. Swainson's measurements accord closely with my own measurements of this particular specimen and this combined with his short description ("Grayish livid, beneath bright red; [etc.]") together with the fact that it is a Bullock skin would seem to settle the matter. I could not find the female which was described at the same time.

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