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*Chicago, Illinois.*

## A NEW WREN FROM ARIZONA

BY HERBERT BRANDT

ARIZONA is an arid wonderland of plains, valleys and mountains. For the purposes of bird study, southeastern Arizona may be divided, chiefly by altitude and the climatic changes that this involves, into three major categories or life zones: the so-called 'Desert', comprising the Lower Austral Life Zone; the Foothills, or Upper Austral Life Zone; and the Highlands, that include the Transition and Canadian life zones.

During years previous to 1945 I had devoted four fruitful expeditions afield to investigating the breeding habits of the birds on the desert and in the foothills, and had touched the highlands just enough to whet my appetite for more experiences there. Meanwhile, Major Allan Brooks had painted for me several superb pictures of the sensationally beautiful birds of Apacheland, so I was anxious to finish the field work for my forthcoming book on Arizona bird life.

Due to the mystifying complexities of the floral and faunal life in this strange region of much avian research, I had long since learned that I should need considerable help if I were to make my report an acceptable contribution to the knowledge of Arizona birds. With this in view, I planned to make the 1945 Huachuca Highland Expedition an exceptionally notable one from the standpoint of helpful personnel.

In accordance therewith, I invited three of my ornithological friends to assist me in my mountaineering bird studies: Dr. Harry C. Oberholser, so well known and loved by the bird fraternity; Nelson K. Carpenter, outstanding California oölogist, who had spent several seasons afield in southern Arizona; and Lyndon L. Hargrave, for ten years Assistant Director of the Museum of Northern Arizona.

All three of these capable men kindly agreed to become members of an expedition into the Huachuca Mountains, and we enjoyed together, in that wonderful bird-classic highland, a most delightful and interesting sojourn.

Because of the ruggedness of the upended terrain, and the fact that

our work was to be principally above 7,000 feet, we required the use of a string of horses, both for riding and for packing water and supplies, especially to our camps along the skyline. We were pleased to obtain the services of three young frontier Arizonians, who handled our horses and packing and assisted us generally.

We were especially fortunate when we secured permission from Mr. and Mrs. L. H. Seeman, owners of the Tungsten Reef Mine, situated on the upper flanks of Carr Peak, to occupy certain of their cabins as our headquarters and laboratory. This tungsten property is at an elevation of 7,200 feet, and at the top of a steep, switchback road, which climbs dizzily upward, the highest, by far, of any similar trail in these rugged mountains.

After we arrived, the Seemans devoted most of their time to our welfare, so actually we had a party of nine persons for the month of June, all engaged in quest of bird secrets. The adventures we enjoyed in those glorious forested highlands, and the various nature problems discussed by the veteran members of our party, made the whole affair, for me, a most helpful and inspiring experience.

At an elevation of some 7,200 feet, in one of the main defiles of Major John Healy's Carr Canyon Ranch, in the Huachuca Mountains, on June 6, 1945, I detected a feathered flash leaving the opposite side of a large ash when I 'squeaked' and scraped its rough bark. This tree was growing at the stream-bed, so I climbed the adjacent abrupt slope, to a level of the upper half of the tree.

Before long the bird appeared and nervously entered a natural cavity, which proved to be its nest, but quickly departed. The next time it returned, I was able to obtain a good view of it with 8-power glasses, and, although it had the general behavior and appearance of a House Wren, yet there was a decided buff stripe above the eye.

Meanwhile a wren was singing vigorously close by, a song similar to that of the House Wren, but my ear warned me that it was different. Working with the late Prentiss Baldwin over the years, I had become familiar with his much-studied bird, and little dreamed that high in the Huachucas I would have use for that very knowledge.

These observations I called to the attention of Doctor Oberholser, who by now had joined me, and it was decided to investigate further the following day, because the equipment we had with us was insufficient to get at the nest which was in the main trunk, 16 feet from the ground. We agreed, however, that we had found something exciting!

The next morning, June 7, Nelson Carpenter, with boldness and extreme difficulty, chopped through the 10-inch living trunk to the nest, and removed five incubated eggs, which appeared about a third smaller

and more sparingly marked than those of the House Wren. Meanwhile, Lyndon Hargrave skillfully collected both shy parents, and we realized that we had an avian find. Doctor Oberholser at once pronounced the birds Cahoon's Wrens (*Troglodytes brunneicollis cahooni*), a most remarkable memory feat, as he had not studied this Mexican species in nearly 40 years.

A second nest of this bird I discovered on June 8, several miles away in another canyon of the range, also at an elevation of 7,200 feet. Its presence was suspected as the result of a male's singing, and later a bird was seen entering a natural cavity in a tall, upright branch of an ash, 35 feet up, which proved to be in a position too unsafe to climb. As a consequence we did not inspect this 'wrenery,' although we quickly learned that the parents were then feeding young, and later we collected the male.

Our experiences with this wren soon became so varied that Lyndon Hargrave assigned unto himself the task of observing it intensively. What we thought at first to be an isolated Arizona pair of this bird proved wrong, and as we became familiar with its habits, and could detect the differences between it and the Western House Wren, we found it more common than we had realized.

All nests discovered were situated at an elevation of between 7,000 and 7,300 feet, in well-wooded canyon bottoms of the Transition Life Zone, and were in a region where the Western House Wren was absent, although higher up the latter is not uncommon. Below 6,000 feet, Baird's Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii eremophilus*) is often encountered.

It seems to have been a long, long time since a distinct species of breeding bird, new to North America, together with its unknown nest, eggs, and young, have all been linked in one thrilling discovery, so one may well picture the excitement created among the four old-time field men, finally to have realized, and shared equally, in an ornithologist's daydream.

This wren is not only a species of bird new to North America, but also an undescribed subspecies, which may be called

**Troglodytes brunneicollis vorhiesi,** subsp. nov.—APACHE WREN

TYPE.—Adult male, No. 4130, collection of Herbert Brandt; Pat Scott Canyon, altitude 7,200 feet, Huachuca Mountains, Cochise County, Arizona, June 23, 1945; Lyndon L. Hargrave, collector.

SUBSPECIFIC CHARACTERS.—Similar to *Troglodytes brunneicollis cahooni* Brewster, from the plateau of northwestern México in the states of Sonora and Chihuahua, but duller and more grayish (less buffy) particularly on the under parts.

MEASUREMENTS.—Four adult males:—Length (skins), 104–111 mm. (107); wing, 49–52 (50); tail, 43–44 (43.2); exposed culmen, 12–13 (12.5); tarsus, 16.5–17 (16.7); middle toe, 11.5–12.4 (12.1).

Three adult females:—Length (skins), 103–105 mm. (104); wing, 50 (50); tail, 41–42 (41.3); exposed culmen, 11–13 (12); tarsus, 16–17 (16.5); middle toe, 11–12 (11.3).

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.—The Huachuca and Santa Rita mountains of Arizona and southward for an undetermined distance.

REMARKS.—I take this opportunity of inscribing this new wren to Dr. Charles T. Vorhies, whose work on the zoology of Arizona is well known.

In conclusion I wish to express my thanks to the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, Cambridge, and the U. S. National Museum, Washington, for the generous loan of specimens used for comparison in this study.

*The Bird Research Foundation*
*Cleveland, Ohio*

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## A REVIEW OF THE FORMS OF THE BROWN PELICAN

BY ALEXANDER WETMORE

UNDERSTANDING of the races to be recognized among the Brown Pelicans has been developing gradually since the tenth edition of Linnaeus in 1758, where all pelicans of the entire world, white or brown, were listed under the name *Pelecanus onocrotalus*. In 1766 Linnaeus formally separated the Brown Pelican as distinct under the name *occidentalis*, basing this on Sloane and Ray. Gmelin in 1789 included the Peruvian Pelican, known now under the name *thagus* of Molina, and Ridgway in 1884 described the bird of the west coast of the United States under the name *californicus*. Other early names were used for these birds but their application was confused and uncertain.

When W. L. Abbott began sending birds from Hispaniola more than 25 years ago, Charles W. Richmond and I recognized that the Brown Pelicans of that island were smaller than those of the southeastern United States and therefore different, and prepared some notes on the subject, but for various reasons these were never published. Peters ('Check-list of Birds of the World,' 1: 81, 1931) made this separation, listing in all four races, *viz.*, *occidentalis*, *carolinensis*, *californicus* and *thagus*. Murphy ('Oceanic Birds of South America,' 2: 808–810, 1936) revised the ranges of these in more detail, discussed the characters, and indicated that the Galápagos population, which had earlier been attributed to *californicus* and to *occidentalis*, was probably distinct.