

GENERAL NOTES

Relationships of the Cinereous Harrier.—The Cinereous Harrier of South America usually had been regarded as a species, *Circus cinereus*, until Hellmayr and Conover (1949, *Birds of the Americas*, pt. 1, no. 4, p. 221, footnote) made it a race of the species *Circus cyaneus*, called Marsh Hawk in America and Hen Harrier in England. The range of the Marsh Hawk does not extend south of Virginia in the east and Oklahoma and northern Baja California in the west, whereas the Cinereous Harrier ranges north only to Ecuador and, perhaps casually, Colombia. Furthermore, the latter, unlike the Marsh Hawk, becomes a mountain bird in the more northern part of its range. It is common at elevations of 12,000 feet in Ecuador and near Lake Titicaca. In Argentina, the southern part of its range, it occurs at sea level. When birds whose ranges could meet geographically are nevertheless separated by 1,500 miles or so, one suspects that they have been separated for a long time and are, in fact, distinct species. Admittedly, some of the intervening terrain is not very suitable for harriers, but much of it, and at varying elevations, is. The presence of another harrier, the well-marked species *C. buffoni*, in South America shows that the genus is not a newcomer there.

Hellmayr and Conover overstate the similarity between these two harriers. The adult male of *cinereus* has the under parts posterior to the chest, boldly and conspicuously barred with deep rufous brown. In the adult male of *C. cyaneus hudsonius*, on the other hand, the under parts in this area are mostly whitish with sparse, rufous check marks, and only in occasional specimens is there, except on the sides, a suggestion of barring, and even then it is very much less conspicuous than in *cinereus*. More important, *cinereus* is one of those harriers, like *C. assimilis* of Australia, in which the female also has an advanced type of plumage, quite unlike that of the immature. This plumage of female *cinereus* is similar to that of the adult male, but the ventral barring is somewhat coarser and extends all the way up to the chin, while the upper parts are much browner, less glaucous, the glaucous-gray cast being chiefly limited to the wings and tail, and even there less noticeable than in the adult male. The immature plumages also are separable from those of *hudsonius*, though the differences are less marked, and perhaps occasional birds may be difficult to tell apart except by the smaller size of *cinereus*. One immature female from Patagonia seems much like some adult females of *hudsonius*, but the upper parts are somewhat darker. The above evidence, viewed in terms of the relatively slight differences separating some species of the genus *Circus*, leads me to conclude that *cinereus* has probably reached the specific level of differentiation. I suggest, therefore, that we revert to the practice of calling it a species.

Parenthetically, one may note that it is by no means certain that the Old World "Hen Harrier," *cyaneus*, is conspecific with the North American Marsh Hawk, *hudsonius*. The females are very similar; but the male of *cyaneus* is immaculate gray and white, and the immatures are rather different also. Probably it is best to leave them as conspecific, as has been done in such conservative works as the A.O.U. *Check-list* and Peters' *Check-list*. One may merely call attention to the fact that it is necessary to guess, since the ranges of the two do not meet.

While examining these birds, I noticed a specimen of *Circus cyaneus hudsonius*, the North American Marsh Hawk, collected at Merida, Venezuela, on 14 December 1903 by Gabaldon and Sons, the professional collectors who sent an incredibly

large number of birds of prey from this area to museums the world over. This bird, formerly in the Jonathan Dwight Collection of the American Museum of Natural History, has been presented to the Phelps Collection in Caracas. It was apparently never recorded in the literature. The species has wandered to Colombia two or three times on winter migration, and so its occurrence in Venezuela is not too unexpected.—DEAN AMADON, *American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th St., New York 24, New York.*

Notes on Fossil Tinamou.—The genus *Tinamisornis* provides the earliest record of the structurally primitive family Tinamidae. Cayetano Rovereto (Los estratos Auracanos y sus fósiles, *Anal. Mus. Nac. Hist. Nat. Buenos Aires*, 25: 161, 1914) set up the genus to include two new species of tinamou from the Pliocene of Monte Hermoso, Argentina, without designating either as type. This omission is now rectified by the selection of *Tinamisornis parvulus* Rovereto as type of the genus.

The cotypes of *T. parvulus* consist of a left coracoid, right humerus, right carpo-metacarpus, and tarsometatarsus. The right humerus is hereby designated as lectotype of the species.

The second species described by Rovereto, *Tinamisornis intermedius*, is generically distinct. Its humerus differs from that of *T. parvulus* in being stout and relatively straight. The bicapital crest is without the distally hooked deflection present in *T. parvulus*. The distal end is very wide, 70.9 per cent of the proximal width, compared with 61.5 per cent in *T. parvulus*. The ectepicondylar prominence is strongly produced and rounded, with the entepicondyle flaring. *Tinamisornis intermedius* is therefore separated as the type of a new genus, to be known as **Roveretornis**.

The original series of *Roveretornis intermedius* (Rovereto) consists of the holotype ("tipo") left humerus, paratype ("tipo complementario") pelvis, referred proximal portion of a tibiotarsus, and referred distal portion of a femur (erroneously termed a tibiotarsus; see Lambrecht, *Handbuch der Palaeornithologie*, p. 223, 1933). The doubtfully referred distal portion of a tarsometatarsus ("tipo?" illustrated in Rovereto, *op. cit.*, pl. 25, fig. 2d) appears to represent *Tinamisornis parvulus*. Because of the somewhat loose manner in which Rovereto designated his types, and because two species are involved in the type series, the left humerus is hereby selected as lectotype.—PIERCE BRODKORB, *Department of Biology, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida.*

On the Supposed Nesting of the Rhinoceros Auklet near Metlakahtla, Alaska.—In the preparation of a forthcoming catalogue of sea-bird colonies in British Columbia (Drent and Guiguet, *Occ. Pap. B.C. Prov. Mus.*, No. 12), I frequently referred to Gabrielson and Lincoln's excellent new book, *The Birds of Alaska* (Wildl. Mgmt. Inst. and Stackpole, Washington and Harrisburg, Pa., xiii + 922 pp., 1959). In discussing the Rhinoceros Auklet (*Cerorhinca monocerata*), these authors state (p. 512) that, in addition to the two definitely known colonies in Alaska (St. Lazaria and Forrester), "According to Bent, an egg of this species in the Collections of the Geological Survey of Canada was taken in June 1907 on Lucy Island near Metlakahtla, by the Rev. J. H. Keen." Reference to the appended gazetteer (compiled by M. A. Putnam) shows that this means Metlakahtla, Annette Island, southeastern Alaska.

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