

On the nomenclatural status of the generic name *Myioborus*.—Parkes (*Wilson Bull.*, 73: 374–379, 1961) presented evidence for the removal of the Painted Redstart, *Setophaga picta* Swainson (*Zool. Illus.*, ser. 2, 1: plate 3 and text, 1829), from the genus *Setophaga* and its transference to the genus *Myioborus*. Unfortunately, this action, while certainly sound from a taxonomic viewpoint and correct in light of our present knowledge, has created a nomenclatorial problem. Swainson (*in* Swainson and Richardson, *Fauna Bor.-Amer.*, 2: 201, 1832) described the genus *Erythrosoma* with *Setophaga picta* as the type species; to my knowledge, the name *Erythrosoma* has not been used again since Swainson's description. *Erythrosoma*, of course, antedates the well-known generic name *Myioborus* Baird (*Rev. Amer. Birds*, 1: 237, 257, 1865), which is currently employed for some nine species of tropical redstarts in addition to *pictus*.

The purpose of this discussion is to point out that *Erythrosoma* should not and legally cannot be used to supplant *Myioborus* as a generic name; it qualifies in this case as a *nomen oblitum* since it would become a senior synonym of *Myioborus* and it has not been used for over 50 years (*Int. Code of Zool. Nomen.*, 1961, art. 23b). This case provides one example in which the rule of the *nomen oblitum* is superior to strict priority in preserving stability in our taxonomic system.

One further comment is desirable at this point. In order to qualify as a *nomen oblitum*, a name must be a "senior synonym" of some other name subsequently adopted for the same taxon. Should the species *pictus* be removed from *Myioborus* and placed in a monotypic genus, the name *Erythrosoma* would again be available for *pictus* since it would no longer be in competition with any other generic name and therefore would not be a "senior synonym," hence not a *nomen oblitum* as defined by the Code.—BURT L. MONROE, JR., *Museum of Zoology, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.*

Sight records of color-marked Sandhill Cranes.—In January, 1959, a cooperative crane-banding effort took place on the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, in Socorro County, west-central New Mexico, 16 miles south of Socorro. Participating were the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish as a contribution to Federal Aid Project W-91-R, and the United States Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. This effort resulted in the capture of nine cranes which, from measurements, were considered to be "greater" Sandhill Cranes (*Grus canadensis tabida*), and two which were subsequently identified as "lesser" Sandhill Cranes (*Grus c. canadensis*). In addition to leg banding with serially numbered metal bands, the birds were color marked with yellow plexiglass collars.

From measurements taken in the field while banding, and from specimens collected, the composition of crane populations on New Mexico wintering areas has been defined by Aldrich, Burleigh, Boeker, and Huey ("Distinctions and distribution of wintering crane races in the southwest," paper read before the Cooper Ornithological Society at Tucson, Arizona, 8 April 1961).

In southeastern New Mexico, principally along the Pecos River, the crane population is of the lesser subspecies. No specimens of the greater race have been taken there.

In west-central New Mexico along the Rio Grande, the crane population is mainly of the greater subspecies. Of 66 specimens examined, 3 were *G. c. canadensis* and 1 was intermediate *G. c. tabida* × *G. c. canadensis*.

In addition to the markings made in January, 48 cranes were marked at the

same location and in the same manner in November and December, 1959. Of these, 1 was identified as *G. c. canadensis*, 1 as a possible intermediate between *G. c. canadensis* and *G. c. tabida*, and the remaining 46 as *G. c. tabida*.

No sightings of these color-marked birds were reported in the migration or breeding seasons of 1960. No additional color marking was accomplished on the wintering ground in the fall and winter of 1960-61. Several sightings of color-marked cranes on the Bosque del Apache Refuge were noted in the latter period, however.

On 30 April 1961 L. M. Baylor (pers. comm.), of Pocatello, Idaho, observed a Sandhill Crane wearing a yellow neck band at Grey's Lake, Idaho. The observation was made from Idaho State Highway 34, approximately six miles west of Wayan. The marked crane was feeding in a marshy field with an unmarked bird. Two more unmarked cranes were feeding nearby. The collar slid freely up and down the crane's neck as it raised and lowered its head while feeding. A total of 111 Sandhill Cranes was observed in the Grey's Lake area on the same day.

Chester R. Markley, Refuge Manager of Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge in Beaverhead County, near Lakeview, Montana reports (pers. comm.) that on 9 May 1961 a Sandhill Crane wearing a yellow neck band was observed by refuge biologist Devan (first name not given) along with 111 other Sandhill Cranes "on the stubble field on Montgomery's land near Odell Creek." Markley's report further states that many of the 112 cranes observed were performing courtship dances and two cranes' nests were observed on different parts of the refuge the same day. I doubt that the sighting of 111 individuals at each location is other than coincidental.

On 30 May 1962, Mr. Baylor (pers. comm.) observed a yellow-collared crane with 18 other cranes about one-half mile west of the point where he had observed the color-marked bird in the Grey's Lake area in 1961.

Mr. Elwood Bizeau of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (pers. comm.) observed a Sandhill Crane wearing a "white" collar (no cranes are known to have been marked with white collars, so I assume that this was a yellow collar) on 28 June 1962 at Island Park Reservoir, Fremont County, Idaho. Mr. Bizeau further reported that Island Park Reservoir normally has a summering population of 25 to 50 cranes and that an estimated 10 to 20 nests have been found there in previous years.

Mr. Robert Ballou (pers. comm.) sighted a yellow-collared crane on 3 October 1962 with 200 other cranes on the Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge, in Rio Grande County south of Monte Vista, Colorado. Also, on 4 October 1962, in a flock of 483 cranes on the refuge, he saw another yellow-collared crane. The second sighting was approximately four miles from the first and could have represented the same bird.

In November and December, 1962, at the Bosque del Apache Refuge, 45 additional "greater" Sandhill Cranes were marked with yellow collars.

Mr. Ballou additionally reported (pers. comm.) that on 29 March 1963 he carefully observed 950 cranes on the Monte Vista Refuge and, among these, 4 were wearing yellow collars.

Mr. Robert L. Means (pers. comm.) saw a Sandhill Crane marked with a yellow collar among 80 other cranes on the National Elk Refuge at Jackson, Wyoming, on 23 September 1963. The collared crane left the refuge on the following day.

Although the sample is small, the indications are good that the routes and ranges defined by these sightings are representative of at least a portion of the population of "greater" Sandhill Cranes which winters along the Rio Grande in New Mexico.

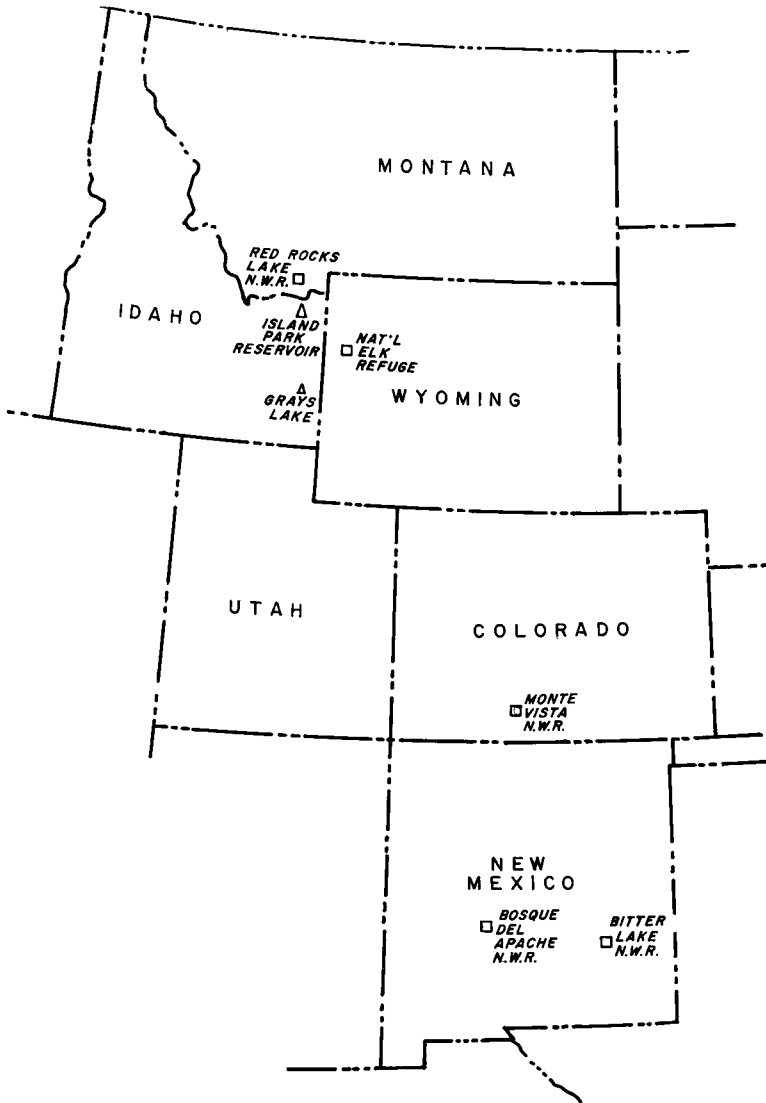


Figure 1. Banding and sighting locations of color-marked Sandhill Cranes, 1959-1963.

Figure 1 shows the banding and sighting locations.

In the three-year period, 1958-1960, 84 "lesser" Sandhill Cranes were color marked with blue plexiglas collars at Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge near Roswell, New Mexico. No sightings of these color-marked birds have been reported to date.

There has been only one recovery of the metal leg bands applied along with the

color markings. This came from a "lesser" Sandhill Crane banded as an immature on 29 December 1960 and killed on 25 May 1961 near Krasneno Anadyr, Magodon region, U.S.S.R. (64° 37' N lat., 174° 22' E long.). The recovery was reported by the U.S.S.R. Academy of Science and no mention was made of the collar.

Although the presence of breeding Sandhill Cranes in eastern Russia has been noted by Walkinshaw (*The Sandhill Cranes*, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, Cranbrook Inst. Sci., 1949), this is the first record which relates this breeding area to a specific wintering population in the United States.—WILLIAM S. HUEY, *Box 565, Santa Fe, New Mexico*.

Destruction of Red-legged Thrush nest by a Pearly-eyed Thrasher.—In my recent study of the Red-legged Thrush (*Mimocichla plumbea*) in Puerto Rico, I expressed my belief that during the nesting season interspecific competition occurs between this species and the Pearly-eyed Thrasher (*Margarops fuscatus*), even though direct encounters were never observed (Rolle, *Studies Fauna Curacao Carib. Isl.*, 14: 1-40, 1963; see pp. 20-21). The observations reported herein support my contention that competition between these species may at times become so intense as seriously to interfere with reproductive activities.

On 20 February 1963 initial observations were made of a thrush in the process of nest construction in a Bourbon palm (*Livistona chinensis*); the nest site was about 20 feet above the ground. (As I have never observed males of this species to assist in nest construction [Rolle, *op. cit.*: 23-24], I assume that the bird responsible for nest construction was always the same bird, i.e., the female.) On 21 February the thrush was still working on the nest; but this same day I noted that a Pearly-eyed Thrasher was constructing a nest in another Bourbon palm some 30 feet distant from the tree in which the thrush was building. The two birds took no apparent notice of each other for two hours, but then the thrasher began to slip into the nest of the Red-legged Thrush when the latter was absent from the nest site. At such times the thrasher would tear the nest apart and would pirate nest materials.

This pattern of activity continued throughout the days of 21, 22, and 23 February. Sometimes the Pearly-eyed Thrasher succeeded in completely destroying the thrush's nest before the owner returned, but at other times the thrasher was "caught in the act"; when this happened a violent struggle ensued, terminating when the birds, locked in combat, fell to the ground. In 12 hours of observation (spanning three days) 10 encounters of this sort occurred. After each encounter the thrush resumed nest construction.

At 1045 hours, 24 February, I discovered the thrush lying dead beneath the palm in which she had been building her nest. During preparation of the skin (UPRM 1607) I noted no injuries that might have caused death. However, a fully developed egg (22.5 × 33.0 mm; 8.93 g) was taken from the cloaca of the bird. The following measurements are from the prepared skin: length of bill from nostril, 15.9 mm; length of wing (chord), 128.0 mm; length of tail, 111.8 mm; and length of tarsus, 38.0 mm.

It is possible that the repeated encounters of the thrush with the Pearly-eyed Thrasher may have caused death through egg-binding. It is also conceivable that the Pearly-eyed Thrasher also died, since, while the thrasher completed its nest, no eggs were deposited. Throughout the period of observation, I failed to detect the presence of a mate of either of the birds.—FRANCIS J. ROLLE, *Museum of Biology, University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras, P. R.*