

paniola. I have not heard the voice of *C. c. insulaepinorum*, but, because of its geographic proximity and close morphological similarity to *C. c. cubanensis*, I would not expect it to be very different. It has been suggested that the Hispaniolan bird may be specifically distinct from the Cuban form, and Bond (1982: 3) remarks, "Vocalizations in Cuba (*cubanensis*) differ from those in Hispaniola (*eckmani*) as indicated by the vernacular names guabairo (Cuba) and pitanguá (Dom. Rep.). Haitians call this nightjar 'petonoi,' clearly a corruption of pitanguá, my interpretation 'peut-on voir' [being] incorrect."

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arranging to obtain specimens from the Isle of Pines that were collected by the local peasant Nilo Piñeiro.

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Rediscovery of, and New Data on, *Molothrus armenti* Cabanis

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The Colombian Bronzed Cowbird (*Molothrus armenti* Cabanis) was described on the basis of three immature examples. They were collected by G. Haerberlin at Cartagena, northern Colombia early in 1826 and sent to the Berlin Museum, where they remained unstudied until 1851. Only one of these specimens has survived (see Friedmann 1933, 1957 for the history of *armenti*). In the American Museum of Natural History is an adult male example, labelled "Savanilla" (= Sabanilla, in the vicinity of Barranquilla), an area on the north coast of Colombia near the mouth of the Río Magdalena, about 100 km from the type locality. This specimen came to the museum from the George Lawrence Collection and dates back to before 1866. Since that time, only one other specimen has

been recorded, a live male acquired by the National Zoological Park, Washington, in 1957 and, since its death, preserved in the National Museum of Natural History. It was obtained, together with some other kinds of birds, from a dealer in Rockville, Maryland, who said that he had received all the birds in a commercial shipment of living birds from Leticia, on the Amazon River in extreme southeastern Colombia. At that time it was realized that the shipper in Leticia may have acquired his material from several places, some considerably remote from Leticia. Certainly, Leticia is not in the typical savanna country of Colombia, the nearest sizable savanna being in Caquetá, not less than 600 km to the northwest as the crow (or the cowbird) flies. The Leticia region and the nearby Tabatinga district of northwestern Brazil are actually rather heavily forested. In fact, the Amazonian rainforest extends for hundreds of kilometers around Leticia, but much of it near the two towns has been cleared by man for many years.

In 1969 and 1970, Dr. Gilberto Toro-García, who since January 1968 has been in charge of the newly established Parque Nacional de la Isla de Salamanca

¹ The untimely deaths of the two authors prevented them from finishing this paper on *Molothrus armenti*, which I have now completed from their notes and correspondence, forwarded to me by Dr. François Vuilleumier. This I have been glad to do because of my interest in the bird and because of my long friendship with the authors.—Herbert Friedmann, 350 South Fuller Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90036 USA.

at the mouth of the Rio Magdalena near Barranquilla, discovered a population of *armenti* there, and in both years he collected a good number of specimens, thus corroborating the correctness of the type locality and casting doubt on Leticia as a locality of record. Dr. Toro-Garcia first observed the species on 16 June 1969, in company with Shiny Cowbirds (*Molothrus bonariensis*) but saw no more until early November of that year, when he noted flocks of them daily until early December. On 25 March 1970 he collected a young male but saw no others until 20 October, when flocks of 100–200 individuals were noted and additional specimens were taken. From then to 11 December flocks of 20–30 birds were seen almost daily.

Dr. Toro-Garcia reported seeing *armenti* chiefly on the ground (in which respect it agrees with *aeneus*), perching on small trees (*Prosopis juliflora*), or flying 30–50 m from tree to tree as he approached them. So far he has not been able to furnish any information about their breeding habits. If *armenti*, like the closely allied *aeneus*, is a brood parasite, which seems almost certain, it probably disperses and no longer gathers in conspicuous flocks during the main nesting season of its presumed host species, when it would be more likely to be overlooked. In 1913, when the late M. A. Carriker, Jr. visited the narrow sandy eastern end of Salamanca Island, he never saw *armenti*. Dr. Toro-Garcia even ventured to surmise that while breeding it may be absent from the island, as it is a bird of partly open habitats, favoring less humid regions or areas that, because of clearing by man for agriculture, have become semi-arid. In the stomachs of the specimens he collected he found small, unidentified grass seeds and also many rice seeds. (There are some small rice plantations to the south of Salamanca Island, across the Caño Clarín.)

The southernmost Panamanian locality where *aeneus* has been found, Río Chepo, on the Pacific slope of eastern Panama, is about 400 km (220 miles) from Cartagena, where *armenti* occurs. It seems quite pos-

sible that *armenti* may occur nearer to Panama in suitable spots in the still little-worked sections of northern Córdoba and Antioquia provinces. The isolation of *armenti* probably resulted from the intervening presence of a considerable area of humid forest in Panama and in northwestern Colombia. *M. aeneus* is but one of a number of species of semi-arid, or at least fairly open, parts of Middle America that has its nearest ally on the Caribbean slope of Colombia. Now, with increasing numbers of man-made clearings, *M. aeneus* has been extending its range southward in Panama on both slopes.

With 12 specimens now available for study in the museums of New York and Bogota, it becomes clear that *armenti* cannot be looked upon as other than a southernmost race of the species *M. aeneus*. *M. armenti* agrees with *aeneus* in the emargination of the primaries in the adults. Inasmuch as no adult females of *armenti* have been described until now, it may be put on record that in coloration they resemble, but are not quite as glossy as, female *M. aeneus assimilis*. The adult males of *armenti* resemble those of *aeneus* but are less bronzy, more brownish. The brown color of the head and body of *armenti*, while more iridescent, is not unlike that of the head of male *ater* (Parkes and Blake 1965). The bill of adult *armenti* is somewhat shorter and slenderer than that of *aeneus*.

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Lek Behavior of the Lesser Bird of Paradise

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The birds of paradise (Paradisaeidae) are prominent among an array of vertebrate groups that have become the focal point for biologists studying sexual selection and lek behavior (Emlen and Oring 1977, Foster 1977, Wittenberger 1979, Wrangham 1980, LeCroy et al. 1980, Bradbury 1981, LeCroy 1981, Diamond 1981, Oring 1982). Birds of paradise are often

cited as textbook examples of the promiscuous lifestyle, and the exaggerated display plumes of the males of some paradisaeid species are considered to be illustrative of the extreme products of runaway selection, which occurs when only a small proportion of males reproduce successfully in any breeding season. This view is surprising, as there has been no definitive field study of these birds in their native habitat that documents either polygynous mating or skewed mating success for males of any species of bird of paradise (Gilliard 1969, Dinsmore 1970, Cooper and

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