

peninsula, not only in color but in size. In other words Grinnell's *Polioptila melanura abbreviata* (*ibid.*, p. 497) described from Cape San Lucas appears to be a synonym of *Polioptila melanura margaritae*. The transitional form of the middle section of the peninsula must consequently be renamed, which I hereby do as *Polioptila melanura nelsoni*, with the type a breeding male adult, number 30127, collection of Donald R. Dickey; San Francisquito Bay, latitude 28° 26' N., Gulf coast of Lower California, Mexico, April 5, 1930; collected by A. J. van Rossem; original number 12841. Measurements of the type in millimeters are: wing, 46; tail, 50; exposed culmen, 10.5; tarsus, 16.5; middle toe minus claw, 8.7. In color and size *nelsoni* is intermediate between *margaritae* of the Cape Region and *californica* of southwestern California and northwestern Lower California. The Cape race, *margaritae*, is the shortest tailed of all the known forms of *Polioptila melanura* and measures in that particular about 46 mm. The agreement in size between Cape and Magdalena Bay specimens is well shown in Grinnell's review to which the reader is referred for a general treatment of the subject.

The distribution of black-tailed gnatcatchers is probably continuous down the peninsula, but determination of the meeting place of *margaritae* and *nelsoni* must await further field work. Specimens of *nelsoni* are at hand from San Francisquito Bay, Santa Teresa Bay, Santa Ana Bay, Santa Rosalia, San Lucas and San Bruno on the Gulf side, from San Ignacio in the interior and from Port San Bartolomé on the Pacific.

In naming the central Lower California race for Dr. E. W. Nelson I am prompted not only by appreciation of his Lower California work, but also by the fact that he previously and with different material had reached exactly the conclusion expressed above, and generously waived his prior rights in my favor.

The black-tailed gnatcatchers of the deserts of the southwestern United States and northwestern Mexico have been generally referred to *Polioptila melanura* Lawrence, the type locality of which is Rio Grande in southeastern Texas. Through the kindness of the American Museum of Natural History there is before me a series of 12 examples of *melanura* from the general vicinity of the type locality, in fact seven are actual topotypes. The relative color differences between this series and another of 46 specimens from southeastern California, northern and central Sonora, and southern Arizona are seen to parallel those shown by *Auriparus flaviceps*, *Toxostoma curvirostre* and *Amphispiza bilineata*, the distributions of which are more or less coextensive with that of *Polioptila melanura*. The characters of the western race are best developed in central Sonora, and therefore the type of the western form, here designated as *Polioptila melanura lucida*, is selected from that region. It is a breeding adult male, number 30390, collection of Donald R. Dickey; collected 10 miles north of Guaymas, Sonora, Mexico; May 9, 1930; by A. J. van Rossem; original number 13107. Compared with *Polioptila melanura melanura* of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, *lucida* is slightly smaller in all dimensions and the bill is notably smaller; in color it is decidedly paler below (often nearly white medially) and the flanks are very much paler and less extensively gray. Females and young males of *lucida* also lack much of the brown wash seen in the corresponding plumages of *melanura*. Measurements of the type in millimeters are: wing, 44; tail, 48; exposed culmen, 9.4; tarsus, 15.9; middle toe minus claw, 7.8.

Specimens from California and Arizona are, while not so extreme as the Sonora birds, nevertheless decidedly closer to *lucida* than to *melanura*, which latter appears to be confined to the Atlantic drainage.—A. J. VAN ROSSEM, Pasadena, California, October 31, 1930.

**Three Note-worthy Bird Records from Barrow, Alaska.**—During the past seven years the bird collection of the San Diego Society of Natural History has been augmented from time to time through the generosity of Charles D. Brower of Barrow, Alaska. Barrow is the most northerly inhabited point on the American continent, and it has received its share of ornithological attention. The most thorough report made in recent years on the birds of northwestern Alaska (including a trip to Barrow) is that of Alfred M. Bailey, published in the *Condor* during 1925 and 1926. Bailey includes the three following species on his list, but their capture at Barrow extends their known ranges and seems worthy of record. Unfortunately on some of the speci-

mens pertinent data were lacking, such as sex and date, but the locality was always correctly stated. The birds, which were among many sent by Mr. Brower, are:

Kittlitz Murrelet (*Brachyramphus brevirostris*), Barrow, Alaska; collected September 27, 1929. (S. D. S. N. H. no. 13,271.)

Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), Barrow, Alaska; no date. (S. D. S. N. H. no. 13,803, received February, 1930.)

Gambel Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys gambelii*), female; Barrow, Alaska; collected June 4, 1928. (S. D. S. N. H. no. 13,449.)—LAURENCE M. HUEY, *San Diego Society of Natural History, Balboa Park, San Diego, California, September 22, 1930.*

**The Type Locality of the California Quail.**—George Shaw and Francis P. Nodder were the first formally to name the California Quail. This they did in the Naturalist's Miscellany, volume 9, 1797 [1798], plate 345 and accompanying text, calling the bird *Tetrao californicus*. They state that "This curious bird is a native of California, and was brought over [to England] by Mr. Archibald Menzies, who accompanied Captain Vancouver in his late expedition. The specimen from which the present figure was taken is in the British Museum." This type specimen is not now there—probably long ago destroyed (see Sharpe, *in* Hist. Colls. Nat. Hist. Depts. British Mus., vol. 2, 1906, pp. 79 ff).

As to the subspecific application of the name *californicus*, the plate referred to is inaccurate in so many respects—color tones, patterns, proportions—as to have no significance. The accompanying text says, selecting only those phrases which might help in subspecific determination: "Lead-coloured Quail, with upright vertical crest; the throat (of the male) black edged with white, the abdomen yellowish-brown with black crescents. . . . Its general tinge is blueish-cinereous or dove-coloured . . . ; the wings are of an earthy or dull brown . . ." There is nothing here to clinch the application of the name as between the brown backed humid-coast race and the grayish backed interior race unless, but only by a slight margin, to exclude the former.

The reading of Vancouver's Voyage of Discovery (1798, 3 vols.) leaves us with the conclusion that the type in question was obtained at either San Francisco or Monterey, though with no guidance as to which should be chosen as *the* type locality. But fortunately Menzies' journal, recently published (Eastwood, Calif. Hist. Soc. Quart., vol. 2, 1924, pp. 265-340), provides the deciding evidence. Under date December 5, 1792, Menzies records (*loc. cit.*, p. 286) strolling out from the Presidio (of Monterey) "towards Punta de Pinos" and seeing, besides many plants of interest to him, a "great variety of the feathered Tribe, many of which were also new, among these" being a "species of Quail of a dark lead colour", etc. Farther down on the same page Menzies says: "The two following days I remained on board [the ship Discovery] examining drawing & describing my little collection & such other objects of natural history as were brought me by the different parties [from the ship] who traversed the Country . . .".

The type locality of the California Quail can thus now be stated positively as Monterey, California. But, the quail of the neighborhood of Monterey are not of the humid coast-belt race, as has generally been supposed until now; they are definitely of the interior race. The name *vallicola* of Ridgway thus falls as a synonym of *californica*, using the latter name now in the subspecific sense. Indeed, I am unable to see any material differences between fresh-plumaged Monterey birds and similarly plumaged birds from the upper Sacramento Valley. Shaw and Nodder's name must thus henceforth apply to what we have been calling *vallicola*.

As for the brown-backed race of the narrow humid-coastal strip from Santa Cruz County northward, an available name is *Lophortyx californicus brunnescens* of Ridgway (Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash., vol. 2, 1884, p. 94). The type specimen here concerned is in the United States National Museum and, through the courtesy of Dr. Alexander Wetmore, I have just had the opportunity of studying it. While supposed to have been taken by J. K. Townsend at Santa Barbara, the label having probably been inscribed by Baird in accordance with the statement made by Audubon (Birds Amer., vol. 5, 1842, p. 67), this type could not, because of the subspecific characters it shows, have come from Santa Barbara. Nor could it have come from the Columbia River, as suggested by Ridgway (*loc. cit.*); nor, indeed, could it have been collected by J. K. Townsend at all, as I shall set forth in another connection.