

THE BANDED WRENS OF NORTHERN MIDDLE AMERICA

By PIERCE BRODKORB

The wrens of the genus *Campylorhynchus* (formerly *Heleodytes*) are prominent members of the Mexican and Central American avifauna. Of large size, noisy habits, and bold disposition, they attract the attention of the observer. The genus as a whole occupies a wide area geographically and a variety of habitats, from desert to dripping cloud forest, and from the seacoast to high in the mountains. Speciation has taken place to a rather marked degree, since Mexico alone has about 8 full species and about 20 forms. In spite of the abundance of a given form, its distribution is likely to be restricted to rather narrow limits, defined more often than not by the ranges of its congeners.

The species treated here, *Campylorhynchus zonatus*, has a geographical distribution from central Mexico to Ecuador, and an altitudinal range from sea level to 2400 meters elevation. Only the populations inhabiting the northern part of this range, from Nicaragua northward, will be discussed here. In the mountains it occurs in the zone below that occupied by *C. megalopterus*. In the lowlands it is replaced by *C. rufinucha*, *C. chiapensis*, *C. capistratus*, and *C. yucatanicus*. Where no other members of the genus occur in the lowlands, it reaches the coast, as it does in Tabasco and extreme southern Veracruz.

Hellmayr in 1934 recognized no subspecies in the area under consideration. However, a study of the specimens belonging to the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, the United States National Museum, and the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, including the types or topotypes of all the named forms, indicates that the species varies geographically. At the mouth of the Río Usumacinta this wren is large, dark, and heavily marked. To the north its size decreases, its coloration becomes paler, and its markings become less prominent. South of the Usumacinta River the same general trends of small size, pale coloration, and more nearly immaculate pattern are even more pronounced.

According to my views three subspecies of *zonatus* are recognizable in this area. Other variations seem to be too unstable for nomenclatorial separation.

***Campylorhynchus zonatus zonatus* (Lesson)**

Picolaptes zonatus Lesson, Cent. Zool., livr. 14 (1830=March, 1831?):210, pl. 70 ("cet oiseau habite la Californie"); I substitute as type locality the town of Orizaba, Veracruz).

Campylorhynchus nigriceps Sclater, Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond., 1860, p. 461 (Orizaba and Jalapa, Veracruz; juv.).

Characters.—Size small (see table 1); ground color of flanks and crissum pale, marked with small spots; abdomen unspotted.

Range.—Coffee zone of extreme northern Puebla (Metlatoyuca) and northern Veracruz (from Papantla to Motzorongo). Above 1500 meters altitude it is replaced by *Campylorhynchus megalopterus*, below 500 meters by *C. rufinucha rufinucha*.

Specimens examined.—Puebla (Metlatoyuca, 3). Veracruz (Papantla, 4; Jalapa, 1; Mirador, 6; Orizaba, 2; near Fortín, 2; Potrero Viejo, 1; Motzorongo, 4).

***Campylorhynchus zonatus restrictus* (Nelson)**

Heleodytes zonatus restrictus Nelson, Auk, 18, No. 1 (Jan., 1901):49 (Frontera, Tabasco).

Heleodytes zonatus impudens Bangs and Peters, Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool., 68, No. 8 (Oct., 1928): 398 (Chivela, Oaxaca).

Characters.—Size large; coloration of under parts rich; spots on under parts large and tending to form bars, the entire ventral surface usually covered with marks, even on the center of the abdomen, under wing coverts, axillars, and thighs.

Range.—Lowlands and coffee zone of southern Veracruz (northwest to San Andrés Tuxtla), northern Oaxaca, Tabasco, southern Campeche, British Honduras, and northern Guatemala.

Heleodytes zonatus impudens Bangs and Peters appears to be a synonym. Birds from Oaxaca, southern Veracruz, and western Tabasco, do not differ in size from *restrictus*, although they are on the

average a little less heavily marked. This tendency indicates intergradation with *zonatus* and does not seem to be worth recognizing by name. On the other hand, birds from Petén and British Honduras have the markings of *restrictus*, but are smaller than specimens from Tabasco. In Verapaz intergradation between *restrictus* and *vulcanius* results in a bird which is not always distinguishable from *zonatus* of Veracruz. If *impudens* be recognized, then certainly a name would also have to be provided for the population of British Honduras and northern Guatemala.

Table 1

Average and Extreme Measurements of *Campylorhynchus zonatus* in Millimeters

Sex	Subspecies	Locality	Wing	Tail
14 ♂	<i>zonatus</i>	N. Veracruz; Puebla	85.3 (80-87, once 91)	85.9 (81.5-87.5, once 91.5)
6 ♂	<i>restrictus</i>	S. Veracruz; Oaxaca	91.0 (87-99)	88.2 (85.5-96.5)
9 ♂	<i>restrictus</i>	E. Tabasco; Campeche	91.6 (87.5-94)	91.7 (87.5-95)
3 ♂	<i>restrictus</i> X <i>vulcanius</i>	Petén	80.8 (78.5-85)	81.5 (77.5-83.5)
1 ♂	<i>restrictus</i> X <i>vulcanius</i>	Baja Verapaz	81	88.5
3 ♂	<i>vulcanius</i>	Mesa Central, Chiapas	87.7 (86-91)	85.2 (82-90)
7 ♂	<i>vulcanius</i>	Sierra Madre, Chiapas	80.7 (78.5-84)	78.0 (75.5-83.5)
5 ♂	<i>vulcanius</i>	Pacific Guatemala	84.3 (83-86)	82.0 (80-87)
3 ♂	<i>vulcanius</i>	Honduras	84.3 (83-86)	81.3 (78.5-83)
11 ♀	<i>zonatus</i>	N. Veracruz; Puebla	80.5 (77-85.5)	81.9 (75.5-86.5)
3 ♀	<i>restrictus</i>	S. Veracruz; Oaxaca; Teapa	85.3 (84.5-86.5)	83.8 (82-85.5)
13 ♀	<i>restrictus</i>	E. Tabasco; Campeche	85.2 (80-89)	85.9 (82.5-90)
4 ♀	<i>restrictus</i> X <i>vulcanius</i>	Petén; British Honduras	80.0 (76-82)	81.3 (78.5-83.5)
3 ♀	<i>restrictus</i> X <i>vulcanius</i>	Quiché; Alta Verapaz	77.7 (74-81)	78.5 (75-82)
8 ♀	<i>vulcanius</i>	Mesa Central, Chiapas	83.1 (76.5-87)	82.6 (77-87.5)
8 ♀	<i>vulcanius</i>	Sierra Madre, Chiapas	80.1 (76.5-83)	80.5 (77-83.5)
4 ♀	<i>vulcanius</i>	Pacific Guatemala	78.4 (77-81)	77.4 (74.5-82)
1 ♀	<i>vulcanius</i>	Honduras	77.5	81.5

Specimens examined.—Veracruz (Paso Nuevo, 4; Buenavista, 2; San Andrés Tuxtla, 1; Jaltipán, 1; Minatitlán, 2). Oaxaca (Guichicovi, 1; Sierra de Santo Domingo, 1; Chivela, 1). Tabasco (Teapa, 1; San Juan Bautista, 1; Frontera, 11, including type; Balancán, 6; Boca del Cerro, 2). Campeche (Palizada, 8). British Honduras (Cayo, 3). Petén (Gavilán, 4). Alta Verapaz (Choctum, 1; San Cristóbal, 1; Finca Samac, 1). Baja Verapaz (Finca Chejel, 1). El Quiché (Joyabaj, 1).

Campylorhynchus zonatus vulcanius (Brodkorb)

Heleodytes zonatus vulcanius Brodkorb, Auk, 57, No. 4 (October, 1940):547 (Aguacaliente, Chiapas).

Characters.—Size small; coloration of under parts pale; abdomen, flanks, and crissum without any markings at all.

Range.—Subtropical or temperate zones of the Mesa Central and Sierra Madre of Chiapas, south through the Pacific cordillera of Guatemala and Honduras, and possibly Nicaragua (none seen by me).

This race is best differentiated in the Sierra Madre and volcanoes of Chiapas. The birds from the Mesa Central, while agreeing in color characters, are slightly larger and are thus somewhat intermediate toward *restrictus*.

Specimens examined.—Chiapas (near Zinacantán, 1; San Cristóbal and vicinity, 3; Teopisca, 1; Canjob, 3; Juncaná, 2; San Vicente near Comitán, 1; Barranca Honda, 1; Letrero, 3; Siltepec, 3; Nuevo Amatenango, 2; Cerro Malé, 2; Aguacaliente, 7, including type). Guatemala (Panajachel, 2; Canderas, 1; Tecpam, 2; Volcán de Acatenango above Dueñas, 1; Antigua, 1). Honduras (Cantoral, 1; Montaña Vasquez, 1; San Juancito, 2).

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