

A NEW TUFTED FLYCATCHER<sup>1</sup> FROM HIDALGO

BY GEORGE MIKSCH SUTTON AND THOMAS D. BURLEIGH

IN identifying the birds collected by the John B. Semple 1939 expedition to eastern Mexico, we find that our series of eight *Mitrephanes phaeocercus* from Jacala, Hidalgo, belong to an undescribed race that presumably represents the species at the northeasternmost edge of its range. We propose to call this form

*Mitrephanes phaeocercus hidalgensis*, subsp. nov.

TYPE.—Adult male in fresh plumage, Louis Agassiz Fuertes Memorial Bird Collection at Cornell University, No. 6558; La Placita (elevation about 6000 feet), along main highway six miles south of Jacala, Hidalgo, April 8, 1939; collected by George Miksch Sutton.

SUBSPECIFIC CHARACTERS.—Differs from all known races of *Mitrephanes phaeocercus*<sup>2</sup> in one striking character: the uniform, strongly greenish tone of the crown, hind neck, and back. Like *M. p. phaeocercus* (Sclater) in size, but greener above, with crown, hind neck and back the same shade throughout rather than darker on crown; smaller, darker above and below, broader-billed, and greener above than *M. p. tenuirostris* Brewster; larger, and greener above than *M. p. nicaraguae* Miller and Griscom; and lighter, and greener above than *M. p. quercinus* van Rossem, a richly colored form in which the darkness of the crown contrasts sharply with the lighter tone of the hind neck and back.<sup>3</sup>

RANGE.—So far as is known, the mountains of northern Hidalgo.

REMARKS.—It is significant that no specimen of the 13 *M. p. phaeocercus* (from central and southern Vera Cruz, Guerrero, Morelos, Oaxaca, Michoacan, and Guatemala) or the 18 *M. p. tenuirostris* (from Jalisco, Durango, Guerrero, Mazatlan, Morelos, 'Mexique', Chihuahua, Sonora, and Tepic) examined in connection with our study, shows any marked intergradation with *hidalgensis* insofar as greenness in tone of the upper parts is concerned. Several specimens in the U. S. National Museum are, on the other hand, intermediate between *phaeocercus* and *tenuirostris* in color and in width of bill, extreme individuals of *tenuirostris* being instantly recognizable by their narrow bills, but other pale large-sized birds being quite broad-billed enough for *phaeocercus* or for any other of the known races.

<sup>1</sup> The common name currently used for this bird is Dusky-tailed Flycatcher, an inept and misleading name based on Sclater's specific name *phaeocercus* rather than on Coues' generic name *Mitrephanes*. The name Crested Flycatcher is already in general use. Since the bird's distinct, triangular crest is surely its most noticeable external anatomical feature we hereby suggest the name Tufted Flycatcher. This name describes the bird's appearance and less directly its personality, whereas Dusky-tailed Flycatcher does neither.

<sup>2</sup> We do not agree with Hellmayr in calling *Mitrephanes aurantiiventris* (Lawrence) and the other yellow-bellied forms from farther south conspecific with *phaeocercus*.

<sup>3</sup> The flycatcher described as *Mitrephanes phaeocercus pallidus* Carriker and de Schauensee (*Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Philadelphia*, 87, 1935, 435) has been shown to be *Empidonax fulvifrons fusciceps* Nelson (see de Schauensee, *Auk*, 54, 1937, 540).

The four specimens of *quercinus* examined (from Guatemala and Honduras) are uniform in being dark in general appearance, brown rather than olive above, and very dark-crowned.

Our series of seven *hidalgensis* (four males, three females) are strictly uniform insofar as coloration of the upper parts is concerned. One male (G.M.S. field catalog No. 8537) is so richly colored on the throat and belly as to indicate considerable variation in the intensity of the general tone of the underparts. This same variability is noticeable also in *phaeocercus* and *tenuirostris*.

It appears that *hidalgensis* has evolved as a green-backed, northeastward-ranging extreme. Where the greenest-backed birds live will be revealed only when the northeastern frontiers of the range of the species have been thoroughly investigated.

MEASUREMENTS.—Type, wing, 71 mm.; tail, 62.5; exposed culmen, 10; tarsus, 13. Three other males: wing, 71, 71, 72; tail, 61.5, 63, 60.5. Three females: wing, 69, 70, 69; tail, 60, 60, 60.

We are grateful to the following for their assistance: A. J. van Rossem, Alexander Wetmore, Pierce Brodkorb, J. Van Tyne, and the authorities of the U. S. National Museum and U. S. Biological Survey.

CORNELL UNIVERSITY, ITHACA, NEW YORK  
U.S. BIOLOGICAL SURVEY, GULFPORT, MISSISSIPPI

THE BIRDS OF DENVER AND MOUNTAIN PARKS. By Robert J. Niedrach and Robert B. Rockwell. The Colorado Museum of Natural History, Popular Series No. 5, 1939: 6 x 9 in., 126 pp., illus. \$1.25 postpaid.

The authors and Alfred M. Bailey have produced for bird students of the Denver region a local handbook of unusual excellence. The annotated list of about 363 species and subspecies includes notes on field marks, abundance, zonal distribution, and remarks on habits and local status. The book is illustrated with many fine photographs of wild birds, some of them species rarely photographed, and several habitat pictures based on museum groups. This well-rounded book includes a folding map, key to localities, accounts of topography and life zones, an ornithological history of the region, a rather full bibliography, and an index to bird names.

It seems unfortunate that the authors of a faunal contribution like this should feel bound by some "authority" supposed to be inherent in the A.O.U. Check-List. In a number of cases they dutifully head the account of a bird with the scientific name which was used in the 1931 edition of that check-list and then show in a subsequent paragraph that they know some other designation to be more correct.—J. Van Tyne.