

GENERAL NOTES

A new race of *Celeus spectabilis* from eastern Brazil.—Some years ago Mr. Charles O'Brien casually showed me a puzzling specimen of *Celeus* in the Kaempfer collection of the American Museum of Natural History. He had come to the conclusion that the bird resembled *C. spectabilis* more than any other species of that genus. I concurred that its features did indeed resemble those of *C. spectabilis*, and I suggested that he make some careful comparisons with a view of publishing a note about it. Unfortunately the press of other work prevented Mr. O'Brien from further study of the specimen, and upon his retirement in 1972 I undertook a comparative investigation of the bird. The specimen in question represents a distinct population of the rather rare *C. spectabilis*, apparently isolated from previously known populations of that species by some 1500 miles. The single specimen representing this isolate differs mensurally and in coloration from previously described races to a degree prompting me to describe it, despite my reluctance to do so on the basis of but a single specimen.

Celeus spectabilis is known from perhaps two dozen specimens, of which I have seen a dozen. Its range extends from eastern Ecuador sporadically (inferred from its rarity) southward just east of the Andes to Cochabamba, Bolivia (Meyer de Schauensee, The species of birds of South America, p. 221, 1966). The specimen in question was collected 16 August 1926 by E. Kaempfer at Uruçui (Urussuhy) on the Parnahyba River of western Piauhy, Brazil, and thus it represents the first Brazilian record for *C. spectabilis*. The new form is named:

***Celeus spectabilis obrieni* ssp. nov. (Figs. 1, 2)**

Holotype: American Museum of Natural History No. 242687, adult female, collected 16 August 1926 by E. Kaempfer at Iruçui, Piauhy, Brazil, altitude 124 m. Original number 3707.

Diagnosis: Differs from *C. s. spectabilis* Sclater and Salvin and *C. s. exsul* Bond and Meyer de Schauensee, in its smaller size (wings, tail, bill, tarsus), and in several color features, especially the greatly reduced barring dorsally, and reduced markings ventrally. Also whiter above and below; small outer rectrices mainly cinnamon (nearly all black in *exsul* and *spectabilis*); and secondaries paler, more buffy (less chestnut), especially on tertial feathers. The bill appears yellower, less white, compared with both older and more recently collected specimens of other races.

Description: Bill horn-colored, blackish at base. Entire head and crest cinnamon rufous, abruptly becoming pale buffy on sides of neck and hindneck, and black on rear of throat. Upperparts pale buffy, whiter anteriorly and darker, more cinnamon buff on rump; markings restricted to a few chordate spots on some upper back feathers. Primaries blackish brown with rufous bases; secondaries cinnamon-chestnut, paling to buff and even whitish buff on tertials, with tips black; tertials with small irregular black spot-bars, mainly on outer vanes. Wing coverts and scapulars with chordate blackish bars and broad buffy white interspaces and tips. Black patch hindthroat to mid-breast. Rest of underparts very pale cinnamon-buff, barely darker than upperparts, becoming pale cinnamon on under-tail coverts; buff coloring extends over flanks and sides around breast patch to sides of neck; ventral markings restricted to a few bars just posterior to breast patch. Tail unbarred, blackish; small outer rectrices cinnamon-buff, black on outer edge of outer vane, and with an irregular black base and small black mark near tip.

Measurements: Holotype as follows: wing (chord) 136 mm; tail 95 mm (worn); exposed culmen 24.3 mm; and tarsus 21.1 mm. Measurements for a male and a female



FIG. 1. Dorsal view of, from left to right, females of *Celeus spectabilis spectabilis* (from Concepcion, Ecuador), *C. s. exsul* (from Balta, Peru), and *C. s. obrieni* (type). Note small size of *obrieni*, and variation in barring.

C. s. spectabilis respectively are: wing 150, 147 mm; tail 92 (worn), 101 mm; culmen —, 28.3 mm; tarsus 23.4, 23.1 mm. Nine *C. s. exsul* range in measurements as follows: wing 138–153 mm; tail 99–108 mm; culmen 28.7 to 31.2 mm; and tarsus 22.1 to 24.2 mm. Thus, the new form is somewhat smaller than *spectabilis* or *exsul*, with a distinctly shorter bill.

Etymology: I take pleasure in naming this form in honor of Charles O'Brien, who contributed substantially to ornithology during his nearly 50 years of service in the Ornithology Department of the American Museum of Natural History.

Comparative Material: A male and female from Ecuador in the American Museum of Natural History represent *C. s. spectabilis*. An immature female from Kusu, Amazonas, Peru, borrowed from the Louisiana State University Museum of Zoology appears to represent an intergrade of *spectabilis-exsul*, and nine specimens from the same collection taken at Balta, Río Curanja, Loreto, Peru, represent *C. s. exsul*, which extends southward to Todos Santos, Cochabamba, Bolivia (Bond and Meyer de Schauensee, *Notula Nat.* no. 93, p. 4, 1941).

Range: Known only from the type locality, Uruçui, Piauí, Brazil, along the Parnahyba River. This is dry forested country, and the form should be widespread in the Piauí-Maranhão region.

The new form clearly represents a race of *C. spectabilis*, rather than some other species of *Celeus*, by virtue of its fully rufous head, its black, shield-like breast patch, its mainly clear rufous secondaries, and its black, unbanded tail. Its bill, although small, matches *spectabilis* in the slight curvature of the culmen, and in the breadth across the nostrils. In its reduced markings *obrieni* bears the same relation to other races of *C. spectabilis* that *C. torquatus torquatus* does to other races of *C. torquatus*, and that *C. flavescens ochraceus* does to other races of *C. flavescens*. I note that *C. spectabilis* in its color

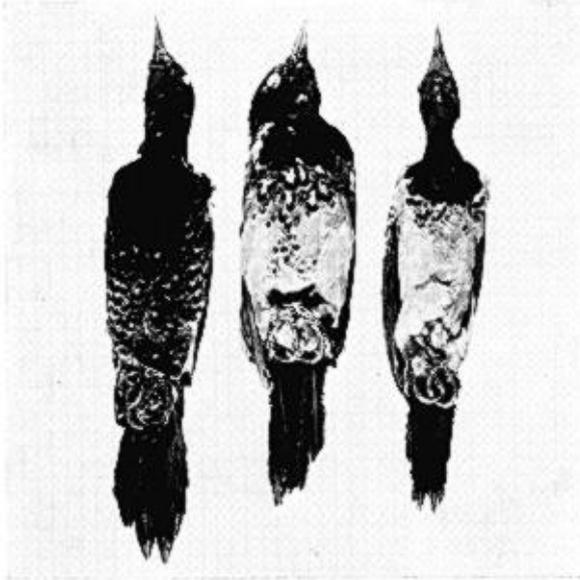


FIG. 2. Ventral view of, from left to right, females of *Celeus spectabilis spectabilis* (from Concepcion, Ecuador), *C. s. exsul* (from Balta, Peru), and *C. s. obrieni* (type). Note small size, especially of bill, of *obrieni*, and variation in markings of underparts.

patterns and bill shape appears somewhat intermediate between *C. torquatus* and the *Celeus elegans* group, which includes *C. flavescens* (Short, Amer. Mus. Novitates no. 2487, 1972).

The eastern Brazilian occurrence of *C. spectabilis* established by the discovery of *C. s. obrieni* is remarkable, for the species is otherwise confined to the lowlands of eastern Ecuador to Bolivia, although it is likely to be found in Brazil adjacent to Loreto, Peru, and Beni, Bolivia. The extent of the range of *C. s. obrieni* is of course unknown. Generally *Celeus* woodpeckers are inconspicuous, and less common species of the genus occurring at a locality are collected usually after extensive collecting has been undertaken. *Celeus spectabilis* may be widely, but uncommonly distributed in eastern Brazil, but it is doubtful that it will prove to occur throughout the region between Beni and Piahy. Thus, the distribution of *C. spectabilis* rather suggests a past, more widespread range throughout southern and western Amazonia. One of the unusual features of *C. s. obrieni* is its occurrence in rather dry forest, although *C. s. exsul* occurs in seasonally somewhat dry areas of eastern Peru.—LESTER L. SHORT, *American Museum of Natural History, New York, New York 10024, 10 May 1973.*

Relocation of a Wood Duck clutch from a natural cavity to a nest-box.—During April of 1971, we received a report of a Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*) nest located in an apple tree in Bedford, Massachusetts. The nest was approximately three meters from a house and the entrance to the nest cavity was less than a meter above the ground. The property owners requested that we move the clutch to prevent brood predation by neigh-