

SOME BIRDS FROM THE LOWLANDS OF CENTRAL VERACRUZ, MEXICO

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In the spring of 1941 I spent a short time in the lowlands of central Veracruz, Mexico, and took the opportunity to form a collection of birds. I was accompanied by Dr. Irving J. Cantrall and Dr. Norman Hartweg, who materially aided me in various ways, although their primary interests were in other groups of animals. The specimens collected during this trip are now in the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology. Also included in the present paper are notes on some specimens given to me by Dyfrig McH. Forbes. The total number of forms reported upon is 67, of which sixteen species are migrants from North America, and the rest represent the breeding fauna.

The period spent in the area was from March 6-16 and from May 8-10, 1941. On March 6 collections were made below Jalapa (situated at Kilometer 332 on the Mexico-Veracruz highway), at places called Venta de Lencero (Kilometer 345), Dos Ríos (Kilometer 348), Corral Falso (Kilometer 357), and Mata de Caña (Kilometer 358). All these localities lie at about 1200 meters altitude. The resident birds taken here all belong to the lowland fauna, except for *Carpodacus*, which is absent from the coastal plain.

From March 9-16 work was done in the vicinity of the city of Veracruz, which is situated at Kilometer 450 on the highway. Collections were made near Tejería (Kilometer 435), Tierra Colorada (Kilometer 417), Boca del Río (south of Veracruz), and near Veracruz itself. Tierra Colorada is at an altitude of perhaps 200 meters. The other places are practically at sea level.

May 8-10 was spent in the vicinity of Córdoba. Collecting was carried on at Potrero Viejo (a sugar finca about ten miles below the town and at an elevation of about 550 meters), above Fortín (which is at Kilometer 333 on the Mexico-Córdoba road, altitude about 1000 meters), and above Acultzingo (Kilometer 288, altitude about 1500 meters). At Potrero Viejo the birds were still predominately of the lowland fauna, though differences were noted in the genera *Centurus*

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and *Campylorhynchus*. Above Acultzingo the escarpment rises steeply, and the character of the avifauna changes rapidly.

Forbes's birds were taken at Potrero Viejo, Paraje Nuevo (a railroad station at Kilometer 326 on the Ferrocarril Mexicano), El Faro, and El Limón. These last two places I have not been able to locate exactly, but they are both below Córdoba. Forbes's Limón should not be confused with (San Antonio) Limón, situated on the plateau at Kilometer 265 on the Jalapa road.

Although the lowlands of central Veracruz have been visited by many of the collectors of the last century, few modern bird collections have been made there. W. B. Davis (1945) reported on a collection which he made between Cofre de Perote and Boca del Río. Most of his work was in the mountains, but he did include 51 species from Jalapa or lower altitudes. Bangs and Peters (1927) recorded 124 species from Motzorongo and Presidio, localities a little south of the area under consideration here. The incompleteness of our knowledge of bird distribution in this region may be illustrated by the fact that of the 67 species included in the present report only 29 were listed by Bangs and Peters and only 17 by Davis; 31 forms were not recorded in either paper. Since the type localities of a great many birds described by early authors are within the triangle formed by Jalapa, Veracruz, and Córdoba or Orizaba, a more detailed survey of this area is imperative.

Farther south the avifauna is better known. Wetmore (1943) reported on a collection of 292 forms from the region of San Andrés Tuxtla. In extreme southern Veracruz I listed (Brodkorb, 1943) 95 species from the Río Coatzacoalcos region.

ACCIPITRIDÆ

Buteo magnirostris griseocauda Ridgway. Near Veracruz, 2 ♂, March 10-11, 1941. One of these hawks had eaten two lizards of the genus *Cnemidophorus*.

FALCONIDÆ

Herpetotheres cachinnans excubitor van Rossem (Trans. San Diego Soc. Nat. Hist., 9, No. 4, 1938, p. 10: Volcán de Colima, Jalisco). El Faro, 1 ♀, November 1, 1938. This specimen has the following measurements: wing 292, tail 219 mm. In another connection I am publishing my reasons for including the Veracruz population in the range of *excubitor*.

Polyborus cheriway cheriway (Jacquin). El Faro, 1 ♀, November 1, 1938. Compared with *Polyborus cheriway audubonii* Cassin from Florida,

this bird is smaller and has darker barring on the tail. No characters have been pointed out to differentiate *Polyborus cheriway ammophilus* van Rossem (Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist., ser. 11, 4, 1939, p. 441: Tesia, Sonora) from true *cheriway* of South America.

Falco albigularis albigularis Daudin. Paraje Nuevo, 1 ♂, November 29, 1938.

RALLIDÆ

Laterallus ruber (Sclater and Salvin). El Limón, 1 ♀, date unrecorded.

COLUMBIDÆ

Zenaidura macroura carolinensis (Linnæus). El Faro, 1 ♀, November 1, 1938.

Scardafella inca (Lesson). Near Tejería, 1 ♂, March 16, 1941.

Leptotila verreauxi fulviventrís Lawrence. Near Tejería, 1 ♂, March 13, 1941. The wing of this specimen measures 149, tail 100 mm. The sexual activity of this dove must be prolonged, for the testes of this specimen were large, and Davis recorded enlarged gonads in his late July birds.

TYTONIDÆ

Tyto alba pratincola (Bonaparte). Potrero Viejo, 1 ♀, June 22, 1939. Davis (op. cit., p. 275) has identified a barn owl from Jalapa as *Tyto alba guatemalæ*. The present specimen agrees with United States material and is distinctly paler than a series of *guatemalæ* from Honduras.

STRIGIDÆ

Rhinoptynx clamator clamator (Vieillot). Potrero Viejo, 1 ♀, January, 1939. This is the second published occurrence of this owl in Mexico, Bangs and Peters (op. cit., p. 473) having previously recorded a specimen from Presidio, Veracruz.

TROCHILIDÆ

Pampa pampa curvipennis (Lichtenstein). Potrero Viejo, 2 ♀, November-December, 1938. These specimens have the following measurements: wing 69, 69; tail 54.5, 57.5; exposed culmen 27.5, 29.5 mm.

Amazilia tzacatl tzacatl (De la Llave). Potrero Viejo, 1 ♀, November-December, 1938.

Amazilia yucatanensis cerviniventrís Gould. Near Tierra Colorada, 2 ♂, March 14, 1941.

Anthracothonax prevostii prevostii (Lesson). Near Tierra Colorada, 1 ♂, March 14, 1941; Potrero Viejo, 1 ♂, April, 1941.

Chlorostilbon canivetii canivetii (Lesson). Near Tierra Colorada, 1 ♂, March 14, 1941.

Doricha eliza (Lesson and Delattre). Mata de Caña, 1 ♀, March 6, 1941; near Veracruz, 1 ♀, March 13, 1941.

PICIDÆ

Centurus aurifrons grateloupensis (Lesson). Near Veracruz, 3 ♂, 1 ♀, March 12-13, 1941; near Tierra Colorada, 1 ♀, March 15, 1941; near Fortín, 1 ♀, May 10, 1941. The specimens from Veracruz city and Tierra Colorada are typical of this race, having orange-yellow bellies and nasal plumes. The one from Fortín is somewhat intermediate toward *Centurus aurifrons veracruzis*, since it has these parts more reddish orange and less yellowish. It is, however, nearer *grateloupensis* than to *veracruzis* as exemplified by a series from Minatitlán. In the latter birds the nasal plumes and bellies are red.

Dendrocopos scalaris scalaris (Wagler). Near Veracruz, 1 ♀, March 11, 1941. This specimen is larger (wing 93.5, tail 49 mm.) and less heavily marked below than a skin of *Dendrocopos scalaris ridgwayi* from southern Campeche.

DENDROCOLAPTIDÆ

Sittasomus griseicapillus sylvioides (Lafresnaye). Potrero Viejo, 1 ♀, May 9, 1941.

FURNARIIDÆ

Synallaxis erythrothorax furtiva Bangs and Peters (op. cit., p. 476: Presidio, Veracruz). Near Veracruz, 1 ♂, 1 ♀, March 11-12, 1941. Although the gonads of these birds were enlarged, the tops of their skulls were clear. Apparently the brain case of this species never assumes the stippled appearance so characteristic of other passerine birds.

FORMICARIIDÆ

Thamnophilus doliatus intermedius Ridgway. Near Tierra Colorada, 1 ♂, March 14, 1941.

COTINGIDÆ

Platypsaris aglaia sumichrasti Nelson. Near Tierra Colorada, 2 ♂, March 14, 1941.

Tityra semifasciata personata Jardine and Selby. Near Veracruz, 2♂, 1♀, March 12, 1941; near Tierra Colorada, 1♀, March 15, 1941; Potrero Viejo, 1♂, May 9, 1941. As I have already remarked, size, especially wing length, is the only reliable character on which to separate this race from *Tityra semifasciata deses* Bangs. The present birds have the following measurements: wing 131-139 mm. (♀ 123-127), tail 72-79.5 (♀ 71-73). They thus agree with *personata*, whereas two from Minatitlán have the small size of *deses*.

TYRANNIDÆ

Pyrocephalus rubinus flammeus van Rossem (Trans. San Diego Soc. Nat. Hist., 7, No. 30, 1934, p. 353: Brawley, Imperial County, California). Near Tejería, 2♂, March 9-13, 1941. These two specimens agree with *flammeus* both in size and in their orange rather than crimson under parts. They have the following measurements: wing 79.5-80.5; tail 56.5-57.5 mm. The occurrence of this race in Veracruz, even on migration, is surprising.

Pyrocephalus rubinus blatteus Bangs. Near Tejería, 1♀, March 9, 1941; near Dos Ríos, 2♂, 1♀, March 6, 1941. Both on color and size these specimens are referable to the southeastern race. They appear to represent the breeding population. Their measurements are as follows: wing 76.5-77 (♀ 73-78); tail 55-55.5 (♀ 53.5-56.5 mm.). The smaller female is the one from Tejería.

Myiodynastes maculatus insolens Ridgway. Potrero Viejo, 1♂, May 9, 1941.

Myiozetetes similis texensis (Giraud). Near Venta de Lencero, 2♂, March 6, 1941; Boca del Río, 1♀, March 11, 1941.

Pitangus sulphuratus texanus van Rossem (Trans. San Diego Soc. Nat. Hist., 9, No. 17, 1940, p. 82: Brownsville, Texas). Near Tierra Colorada, 1♂, March 14, 1941. The area of intergradation between *texanus* and *P. s. guatemalensis* covers most of the state of Veracruz, and it is questionable just where to draw the line. This specimen is closer to *texanus*. Its wing length is 121, tail 89, culmen 33.5 mm.

Myiarchus cinerascens cinerascens (Lawrence). Near Corral Falso, 1♂, March 6, 1941. Wing 101 mm., tail 90 mm.

Myiarchus tyrannulus nelsoni Ridgway. Near Tierra Colorada, 1♂, 1♀, March 15, 1941. These were a mated pair. They measure: wing 106 (♀ 99.5), tail 98 (♀ 92.5 mm.).

Myiarchus tuberculifer lawrenceii (Giraud). Near Fortín, 1♂, May 10, 1941. Wing 84, tail 77.5 mm.

Empidonax minimus (Baird and Baird). Near Tejería, 1 ♂, March 9, 1941.

Camptostoma imberbe imberbe Sclater. Near Corral Falso, 1 ♂, March 6, 1941.

Pipromorpha oleaginea assimilis (Sclater). Potrero Viejo, 1 ♂, 1 ♀, May 9, 1941.

HIRUNDINIDÆ

Iridoprocne bicolor (Vieillot). Near Veracruz, 1 ♂, March 10, 1941.

CORVIDÆ

Psilorhynchus morio (Wagler). Near Tejería, 2 ♀, March 9, 1941. The eyes of these birds were blue. One had a particolored bill; in the other it was yellow.

TROGLODYTIDÆ

Campylorhynchus zonatus zonatus (Lesson). Potrero Viejo, 1 ♂, May 9, 1941; near Fortín, 2 ♂, May 10, 1941. The wings of these birds measure 80-87, tails 82-88 mm.

Campylorhynchus rufinucha rufinucha (Lesson). Near Veracruz, 2 ♂, March 12, 1941; near Tejería, 4 ♂, 5 ♀, March 13-16, 1941; near Tierra Colorada, 1 ♂, 1 ♀, March 14-15, 1941; El Faro, 1 ♂, November 1, 1938. The iris of this species is reddish brown. A nest under construction was found on March 15. It was four feet up in a small tree and was composed of twigs and plant cotton.

Thryothorus rutilus maculipectus Lafresnaye. Near Veracruz, 1 ♂, March 12, 1941.

Troglodytes aedon parkmanii Audubon. Near Veracruz, 1 ♀, March 12, 1941; near Tierra Colorada, 1 ♂, March 15, 1941.

MIMIDÆ

Dumetella carolinensis (Linnæus). Near Tejería, 1 ♂, March 9, 1941.

TURDIDÆ

Turdus grayi grayi Bonaparte. Near Fortín, 1 ♂, May 10, 1941. Although a little paler than the average *grayi*, still this specimen is decidedly darker than *T. g. tamaulipensis*.

SYLVIIDÆ

Polioptila caerulea caerulea (Linnæus). Near Tejería, 1 ♀, March 9, 1941; near Tierra Colorada, 1 ♂, 1 ♀, March 14, 1941.

VIREONIDÆ

Vireo griseus griseus (Boddaert). Near Tierra Colorada, 1 ♂, March 14, 1941.

MNIOTILTIDÆ

Vermivora celata celata (Say). Near Tejería, 1 ♀, March 16, 1941.

Dendroica aestiva amnicola Batchelder. Near Veracruz, 1 ♀, March 12, 1941; near Tierra Colorada, 1 ♂, March 15, 1941.

Icteria virens virens (Linnæus). Near Veracruz, 1 ♂, March 12, 1941.

Basileuterus culicivorus culicivorus (Lichtenstein). Near Fortín, 1 ♀, May 10, 1941. This bird was laying.

ICTERIDÆ

Cassidix mexicanus mexicanus (Gmelin). Near Veracruz, 2 ♂, 2 ♀, March 10-16, 1941. The iris color of both sexes was yellowish white.

Dives dives dives (Lichtenstein). Potrero Viejo, 1 ♂, May 9, 1941.

Icterus gularis tamaulipensis Ridgway. Boca del Río, 1 ♂, March 11, 1941; near Tejería, 1 ♀, March 13, 1941; near Tierra Colorada, 1 ♂, 1 ♀, March 15, 1941.

Agelaius phœniceus richmondi Nelson. Near Veracruz, 1 ♀, March 15, 1941.

Sturnella magna mexicana Sclater. Near Tejería, 1 ♀, March 9, 1941; El Faro, 2 ♂, November 1, 1938. These specimens definitely belong to the small lowland race of meadowlark. The males have wings measuring 110-111 mm., tails 68-69.5 mm. I have examined a cotype of *mexicana* (USNM 13653) labeled Xalapa. Although unsexed, it is undoubtedly a male. Its wing measures 108, tail 69 mm.

THRAUPIDÆ

Tanagra lauta lauta Bangs and Penard. Potrero Viejo, 1 ♂, May 9, 1941.

Thraupis episcopus diaconus (Lesson). Near Veracruz, 1 ♀, March 12, 1941.

Chlorospingus ophthalmicus ophthalmicus (DuBus). Near Fortín, 1 ♂, May 10, 1941.

FRINGILLIDÆ

Saltator atriceps atriceps (Lesson). Near Tierra Colorada, 1 ♂, March 15, 1941; near Fortín, 1 ♂, May 10, 1941. Wing 113.5-124, tail 110.5-122.5 mm.

Saltator coerulescens grandis (Lichtenstein). Near Veracruz, 1 ♂, 1 ♀, March 12, 1941.

Passerina cyanea (Linnæus). Near Corral Falso, 1 ♂, March 6, 1941.

Passerina versicolor versicolor (Bonaparte). Boca del Río, 1 ♀, March 11, 1941. Wing 60, tail 48.5 mm.

Passerina ciris pallidior Mearns. Near Tejería, 1 ♀, March 16, 1941; near Tierra Colorada, 1 ♀, March 14, 1941.

Tiaris olivacea pusilla Swainson. Near Veracruz, 1 ♀, March 13, 1941.

Carpodacus mexicanus mexicanus (Müller). Near Venta de Lencero, 1 ♂, March 6, 1941.

Sporophila torqueola morelleti (Bonaparte). Near Veracruz, 1 ♀, March 11, 1941; near Tejería, 1 ♂, March 9, 1941; near Venta de Lencero, 2 ♂, March 6, 1941.

Ammodramus savannarum perpallidus (Coues). Near Veracruz, 1 ♀, March 11, 1941; near Tejería, 1 ♀, March 9, 1941. These migrants were very fat and had small gonads.

Aimophila ruficeps boucardi (Sclater). Near Acultzingo, 1 ♂, May 8, 1941. Since this name currently covers two subspecies, it may be well to record that the present specimen belongs to the form with the back gray in strong contrast to the rufous color of the crown. Its measurements are: wing 67, tail 66, culmen 12 mm.

Spizella pallida (Swainson). Near Tierra Colorada, 1 ♂, March 14, 1941.

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