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A RACE OF FOREST-INHABITING FINCH FROM THE
PERIJA MOUNTAINS OF VENEZUELA AND COLUMBIA

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When collections of birds made on the Colombian slope of the Sierra de Perijá came to hand in 1942 it appeared that the population of *Atlapetes schistaceus* from this mountain mass was different from that of the Cordillera de Mérida in Venezuela, but comparative material was not sufficient to establish this with certainty. In the ten years that have passed specimens have been secured for the Phelps Collection on the Venezuelan side of the range, with a considerable series of *Atlapetes schistaceus castaneifrons* from the Mérida region. With this new material at hand we now describe the bird of the high forests of the Perijá range as

Atlapetes schistaceus fumidus, subsp. nov.

Characters.—Similar to *Atlapetes schistaceus castaneifrons* (Sclater and Salvin)¹, but dorsal surface slightly grayer, less sooty; gray of breast and abdomen more even in tone, with less whitish centrally, averaging very slightly darker.

Description.—Type, Phelps Collection no. 55828, male, 2900 meters elevation on Cerro Tetarí, Sierra de Perijá, Zulia, Venezuela, March 30, 1952, collected by R. Urbano (on deposit in U. S. National Museum). Crown russet, very slightly paler on hind neck; loreal spot white; sides of head, including superciliary area, and sides of neck black, with feather shafts on auricular area gray, forming very narrow lighter lines; lower hindneck, back, rump and upper tail coverts dark mouse gray; wing coverts, remiges and rectrices dull black; malar region, throat and chin white, with a strongly marked streak of black separating the white of the malar streak from the throat; breast and sides neutral gray, shading to deep neutral gray on flanks and under tail coverts, center of lower breast and abdomen whitish; posterior side of tibia dark neutral gray, anterior side deep neutral gray; under wing coverts pallid mouse gray, washed with whitish; edge of wing and a narrow edging on outer web of outer (ninth) primary white. Bill dull black; tarsus and toes blackish brown; iris chestnut brown (from data on label).

Measurements.—Males, 14 specimens, wing 71.2-77.7 (74.5), tail 73.2-82.8 (78.6), culmen from base 14.2-15.2 (14.8), tarsus 25.9-28.7 (27.4) mm.

¹*Buarremon castaneifrons* Sclater and Salvin, Proc. Zool. Soc. London, August, 1875, p. 255, pl. 35, fig. 1 (Páramo de Culata, Mérida, Venezuela).

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Females, 16 specimens, wing 66.4-72.9 (69.9), tail 69.7-78.0 (73.7), culmen from base 14.3-15.8 (14.8, average of 15 specimens), tarsus 25.7-27.9 (27.2) mm.

Type, male, wing 74.0, tail 77.4, culmen from base 14.5, tarsus 25.9 mm.

Range.—Known from 2900 to 3100 meters elevation in the higher woodlands of the Sierra de Perijá, in Colombia and Venezuela. Specimens seen from above Hiroca, Laguna de Junco, and Cerro Pintado, Magdalena, Colombia, and from Cerro Tetarí, Zulia, Venezuela.

Remarks.—Specimens of *castaneifrons* and *fumidus* become grayer on the dorsal surface with feather wear, which needs to be kept in mind so as to make comparisons with specimens in similar stage of plumage. The slightly darker gray of the underparts of *fumidus* is more constant, a character that shows some approach to the very much darker form *tamae*, found in the mountains to the south, on Páramo Tamá, on the boundary between Táchira, Venezuela, and in northern Santander and Norte de Santander, Colombia. In size *fumidus* is identical with *castaneifrons*.

The record for *Atlapetes schistaceus castaneifrons* from above Hiroca, Magdalena, listed by de Schauensee² refers to a specimen of *fumidus* sent by Wetmore to the Instituto de Ciencias Naturales in Bogotá, from the collections made for the U. S. National Museum in the Perijá region by Carriker.

The subspecific name is taken from the latin *fumidus*, smoke colored. Following is a list of specimens examined during these studies.

Atlapetes schistaceus castaneifrons: Venezuela: Táchira: 1 ♂, Páramo Zumbador; 3 ♂, 4 ♀, Boca de Monte, Pregonero. Mérida: 2 ♂, 2 ♀, Páramo Aricagua; 1 ♂, Mesa de Lino, Santo Domingo; 6 ♂, 4 ♀, La Honda, Santo Domingo; 1 ♂, Páramo San Antonio; 1 ♀, Páramo de Culata; 3 ♂, 4 ♀, Llano Rucio; 1 ♂, Timotes. Trujillo: 5 ♂, 3 ♀, Cendé, Páramo Cendé; 2 ♂, El Rincón, Cerro Niquitaz; 1 ♀, Páramo Jabón.

Atlapetes schistaceus fumidus: Magdalena, Colombia: 2 ♂, 1 ♀, Laguna de Junco; 1 ♂, Cerro Pintado; 3 ♂, 2 ♀, above Hiroca; 3 ♂, 3 ♀, southern Teta (of Las Tres Tetas). Zulia, Venezuela: 7 ♂, 9 ♀, Cerro Tetarí.

Atlapetes schistaceus tamae: Colombia, Santander; 6 ♂, 4 ♀, Hacienda La Vegas, above Piedecusta.

Norte de Santander; 1 ♂, 3 ♀, Alto del Pozo; 1 ♂, 2 ♀, Pamplona; 1 ♂, 1 ♀, Buenos Aires. Táchira, Venezuela; 3 ♂, 6 ♀, Páramo de Tamá.

²Caldasia, vol. 5, no. 25, August 31, 1951, p. 1102.



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