BROWN SONG-FINCH.

FRINGILLA CINEREA, *Gmel.*

PLATE CLXXXVIII.—MALE.

Of this bird I have received the following account from Mr. NUTTALL:—
 “This species, so much allied to *Fringilla iliaca* by its brown colour, inhabits the woody districts of the Columbia, very generally as far as the sea-coast, and continues as far south as Upper California. It is a somewhat familiar and agreeable songster, mounting some low bush, and singing, at intervals, for hours together, much in the manner of the Song Sparrow, but with a sweeter and more varied tone. We heard their cheerful notes throughout the summer; and every fine day in winter till the month of November, particularly in the morning, their song was still continued. The nest and eggs are scarcely distinguishable from those of the Song Sparrow, the former being chiefly formed of dry grass, and lined with finer blades of the same, or with deer hair. They keep much in low ground and alluvial situations, amidst rank weeds and brambles, where they are frequently to be seen hopping and searching after insects, like so many Wrens or Swamp Sparrows, which they so much resemble also in plumage. They are as usual very solicitous for the safety of their young or eggs, keeping up an incessant chirp, and are nearly the whole summer, like the Song Sparrow, engaged in the cares of breeding. We have found this species also very common in Upper California.

Mr. TOWNSEND speaks of it as follows:—“This species inhabits several hundred miles of the Platte country in great numbers, as well as the banks of the Columbia river. It affects generally the low bushes of wormwood (*Artemisia*), from the summit of which it pours forth a variety of pretty notes. It appears to be a very pugnacious species. Two of them, probably males, are often observed fighting in the air; the beaten party goes off crest-fallen, and the conqueror repairs to the nearest bush, where he tunes his pipe to a lively and triumphant stave in honour of his victory. I again met with this bird, though not plentiful, in June 1825, on the waters of the Columbia river near the mouth of Lewis river. I never observed it in the vicinity of the lower settlements. The sexes are almost precisely alike in plumage.

Platte river, North California, and Columbia river. Common. Migratory.

FRINGILLA CINEREA, Gmel. Syst. Nat., vol. i. p. 922.

CINEREOUS FINCH, Arct. Zool., vol. ii. N. 260.

BROWN SONG SPARROW, *Fringilla cinerea*, Aud. Orn. Biog., vol. v. p. 22.

Adult Male.

Bill short, stout, conical, compressed toward the end; upper mandible with the dorsal line very slightly convex, at the base and toward the tip, the ridge narrow, and extending a short way on the forehead, where it tapers to a point, the sides rounded, the edges inflected, the tip pointed, the gap-line nearly straight, a little deflected at the base; lower mandible of the same breadth as the upper, with the angle very short and broad, the dorsal line ascending and straight, the back broad at the base, the sides rounded, the edges involute, the tip pointed.

Head of moderate size, ovate; neck short; body full. Feet of moderate length and rather stout; tarsus rather short, compressed, anteriorly covered with seven scutella, posteriorly with two longitudinal plates meeting so as to form a very sharp edge; toes moderate, the first strong, the lateral equal; claws rather long, slender, much compressed, laterally grooved, moderately arched, very acute.

Plumage soft and blended, the feathers ovate. There are no distinct bristles at the base of the upper mandible. Wings short, concave, broad, much rounded; the first quill four-twelfths and three-fourths shorter than the fourth, which is the longest, the rest very little graduated, the outer secondaries slightly emarginate, the inner not elongated. Tail rather long, slender, much rounded, the lateral feathers being five-twelfths of an inch shorter than the longest.

Bill dusky, the lower mandible reddish-brown toward the base. Feet and claws dusky reddish-brown. The general colour of the upper parts is dark olivaceous brown, all the feathers dusky in the centre; the wing-coverts, inner secondaries and tail-feathers more or less tinged with red on the margins. Over the eye is a dusky greyish line; on the cheek a whitish line, and beneath it a dusky brown band; the throat and fore part of the neck white, with longitudinal brown streaks, the middle of the breast brownish-white, the sides dark greyish-brown, as are the lower tail-coverts.

Length to end of tail 6 inches; extent of wings 8; bill along the ridge $\frac{5\frac{3}{4}}{12}$; wing from flexure $2\frac{7}{12}$; tail $2\frac{10}{12}$; tarsus $\frac{11}{12}$; hind toe $\frac{4\frac{1}{2}}{12}$, its claw $\frac{4\frac{1}{2}}{12}$; middle toe $\frac{7\frac{1}{2}}{12}$, its claw $\frac{3\frac{1}{2}}{12}$.

The female is similar to the male.

Brown Finch.

Female

Audubon, John James. 1841. "Brown Song-Finch, *Fringilla cinerea*, Gmel. [Pl. 188]." *The birds of America : from drawings made in the United States and their territories* 3, 145–146. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.319301>.

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