

characterize a particular phase of plumage in the adult of *A. atricapillus* proper, and also that the name is somewhat inappropriate when applied exclusively to the form under consideration; but a proper regard for the rules which tend most to the stability of nomenclature will not admit of a name being discarded on account of inappropriateness.

It is due Mr. Nelson to state that he bestowed the name *henshawi* under the impression, which I at the time shared with him, that a new title was necessary; in fact, I had myself transferred *striatulus* to the list of synonyms of *atricapillus*.

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ON THE POSSIBLE SPECIFIC IDENTITY OF  
*BUTEO COOPERI* CASS. WITH *B.*  
*HARLANI* (AUD.).

BY ROBERT RIDGWAY.

THE type of *Buteo cooperi* Cass. was obtained by Dr. J. G. Cooper at Santa Clara California, in November, 1855, and the supposed new species described by Mr. Cassin in October of the following year (Proc. Philad. Acad. Sci., VIII, Oct. 1856, p. 253). Since that time but one additional specimen has been taken, the one in question having been procured in Colorado, by Mr. C. E. Aiken, to whose courtesy I am indebted for the opportunity of examining it. A description of this specimen, with measurements, was prepared and sent, in 1875, to the 'American Naturalist' for publication, but I am informed never reached its destination, having probably been lost in the mails. The specimen was returned soon afterward, and I am therefore without memoranda respecting it, except measurements, which fortunately were preserved.\* According to my recollection, however, the Colorado specimen agreed pretty closely with the type, except in the color of the primaries, which were marked much like those of *B. borealis* and *B. harlani*; that is, instead of being uniform hoary grayish on the outer webs, they were more brownish, and distinctly marked with dusky quadrate spots. Both specimens differ conspicuously from any plumage of *B. borealis* in having the

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\*I am informed by Mr. Henshaw that this specimen is still, or was recently, in Mr Aiken's possession.

head streaked with dusky on a white ground, the tawny or rufous edgings always seen in *B. borealis* being wholly absent. The measurements are as follows:—

	Wing.	Tail.	Cul-men.	Tar-sus.	Middle toe.	
Colorado specimen	16.50	9.50	1.10	3.25	1.80	Tars. meas. in front.
Type of <i>B. cooperi</i>	15.75	9.10	1.05	3.15	1.70	“ “
<i>B. harlani</i> , No. 6851	15.65	9.00	1.00	2.80	1.60	“ “

It will thus be seen that the two specimens of '*B. cooperi*' differ more from one another than one of them does from a typical *B. harlani*. In fact, so far as the measurements are concerned, the extremes as given above \* would easily fall within the range of individual and sexual variation in *B. borealis*, or any other species of equal size. The only character of coloration in the type of *B. cooperi* which cannot readily be reconciled with the theory of this supposed species being the light-colored phase of *B. harlani*, is the nearly uniform decided glaucous-gray hue of the primaries, which are almost without a trace of the dark spots seen in all specimens of *B. harlani* that I have examined, and also in *B. borealis*. But since the Colorado specimen (if my memory is not at fault) had, as stated above, the primaries differently marked, or brownish gray with distinct black spotting, just as in *B. harlani*, we may reasonably conclude that the type specimen of *B. cooperi* presents an abnormal or at least unusual coloration of these feathers.

## THE SHORE LARKS OF THE UNITED STATES AND ADJACENT TERRITORY.

BY H. W. HENSHAW.

OF all our birds there are probably none that have given rise to so much perplexity and been the occasion of so great confusion as the Horned Larks. Occurring as they do, either as migrants or as summer residents, over almost every portion of our terri-

\* Except the length of the tarsus, in which there is a discrepancy that it is difficult to account for.