

They are labelled as follows: *Oceanodroma melania*, San Benito Island, Lower California, July 14, 1897. "♂" and "♀" respectively, numbers 1770, 1763.

When at London last year by the kindness of the Hon. Walter Rothschild, I had an opportunity to compare my small so-called *O. melania* with specimens of *O. monorhis* Swinh. from Amuria in the Tring Museum. I found them to be closely allied to *O. monorhis*, but differing from it in their much shorter wings, also somewhat shorter tail and bill, and in their darker and less grayish upper parts.

*O. monorhis* had not yet been mentioned as occurring in San Benito Island, or elsewhere on the coast of California. The new form as described above is evidently the American representative of that Asiatic species.

While participating in the fourth International Congress at London, I had also the good fortune to show my birds to Mr. Frank M. Chapman of New York. Mr. Chapman having satisfied himself of the distinctness of this new form, I have great pleasure in naming it after a distinguished authority on North American birds.

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## THE STATUS OF THE "SAN FRANCISCO TITMOUSE."

BY JOSEPH GRINNELL.

TOWARDS the latter part of 1903 a new form of the Plain Titmouse was described<sup>1</sup> under the name *Bæolophus inornatus restrictus*. It was based upon specimens from a suspiciously restricted locality, namely the vicinity of Oakland, California. Without any apparent hitch the A. O. U. Committee on Nomenclature published<sup>2</sup> its acceptance of the alleged subspecies just nine months

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<sup>1</sup> Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash., XVI, Sept. 30, 1903, p. 109.

<sup>2</sup> Auk, XXI, July, 1904, p. 418.

later, a much quicker decision than is usually accorded western novelties! The matter has since rested, apparently for the reason that no one has had the inclination or opportunity for verifying the validity of the race.

In 1845, Gambel described<sup>1</sup> his *Parus inornatus* from "Upper California," and two years later announced<sup>2</sup> that Monterey was the place of discovery.

The neighborhood of Monterey was thus established as the type locality of *Bæolophus inornatus inornatus*. Monterey is in the southern portion of what I have elsewhere called the Santa Cruz "District" or Faunal Area. Many humid coast races find in Monterey County the southern limit of their distribution; to the northward their range spreads interiorly to include the "San Francisco Bay Region," excepting the salt marshes. Such races are *Toxostoma redivivum redivivum*, *Thryomanes bewicki spilurus*, and *Chamæa fasciata intermedia*. Excluding the Song Sparrows and Yellow-throats, which are differentiated into local races by the fresh water and salt marsh sets of influences, I had so far failed to detect differences between any birds of the coast and those of the narrow district lying between the east shore of San Francisco Bay and the Mt. Hamilton Range (termed Berkeley Hills at the north). And I could not see why the Plain Titmouse should present a conspicuous exception.

In September, 1904, I examined the extensive series of *Bæolophus* in the Academy of Sciences collection at San Francisco, and among these, several skins (but not all) from Oakland presented the "dark" coloration, which is given as the sole character of *restrictus*. I also examined other species from the neighborhood of Oakland and Alameda with the significant result that a number of birds of that limited locality seem prone to dark or leaden shades of coloration. This has been remarked<sup>3</sup> upon by McGregor who gives several cases, and I can add to his list Green-backed Goldfinch, Willow Goldfinch, and now the Plain Titmouse!

The upshot of the matter is that I feel convinced that the name *restrictus* was based on specimens of the ordinary *inornatus* in

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<sup>1</sup> Proc. Ac. Nat. Sc. Phila., Aug., 1845, p. 265.

<sup>2</sup> Proc. Ac. Nat. Sc. Phila., Feb., 1847, p. 154.

<sup>3</sup> Condor, II, Jan. 1900, p. 18.

some manner adventitiously colored. The prevailing westerly winds, charged with the gases, soot and dust from the manufacturing bay-shore districts of San Francisco, sweep across the bay and up over the cities of Alameda and Oakland, with their added contributions, to the hills beyond. It seems to me probable that feathers may be soiled by this dirty atmosphere like the shrubbery and buildings in the same locality.

Mr. W. O. Emerson has kindly loaned me his series of 12 skins of *inornatus* from Haywards. This place is only 14 miles southeast of Oakland, the type locality of *restrictus*, but not one of them shows the character of that alleged form. I cannot distinguish these from 15 specimens collected by myself at Palo Alto, 17 miles further south across the bay, nor from 4 skins submitted to me by Mr. H. O. Jenkins who obtained them the past summer in Monterey County. For the want of skins from the immediate vicinity of Monterey we may safely consider the latter, from the headwaters of Big Creek in the coast district south of Monterey, as typical of *Bæolophus inornatus inornatus*. Among all these specimens, when seasonal changes are carefully accounted for, there appear to be no locality differences.

In view of the above considerations, ecologic and otherwise, I would urge that the so-called "San Francisco Titmouse" be no longer recognized as a phylogenetic race.

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