

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW SUBSPECIES OF THE
BROAD-WINGED HAWK.

BY B. H. BAILEY.

***Buteo platypterus iowensis*, subsp. nov.**

IOWA BROAD-WINGED HAWK.

DESCRIPTION.—Head, neck, body, and tibial flags, sooty brown with a slightly rufous cast due to very faint rufous edgings on the feathers. Back, and top of the head, somewhat darker. The feathers of the upper surfaces of the wings slightly worn and somewhat lighter at their margins. Concealed bases of the feathers of the head, snow white; elsewhere bases of the feathers grayish white. Each feather shows a distinct black shaft. Under tail coverts when disturbed show three or four alternating light and dark bands.

Wings: Three outer primaries deeply emarginate on the inner webs. Lining of the wings in general the same color as the body, except at the bases of the first three or four primaries of each wing, where there are a very few whitish feathers, each crossed by about four dusky bands. Exposed parts of the primaries dusky above with no evident banding; below, however, they are whitish on the inner webs, and crossed by five narrow dark bars. The tips of the primaries from below for an inch and a half appear almost black.

Spreading the secondaries they show from above, on their inner webs, sharp contrasting bars of white and dusky, which appear much less distinct on the under surface.

Tail: Exposed surface above crossed by three dark bars of the same color as the back, which alternate with two narrower grayish white bands with a narrow tip of the same color. From below, these markings are less distinct. The inner webs of the outermost tail feathers show more numerous indistinct bars.

MEASUREMENTS OF TYPE.—Length (skin) 16.50 in. 41.8 cm.; wing, 11.62 in. 29.5 cm.; tail, 7.18 in. 18 cm.; tarsus, 2.44 in. 6.2 cm.; culmen, .80 in. 1.9 cm.

Type No. 918, Coe College Museum, Cedar Rapids, Iowa; sex (?); locality, Eagle Lake, Hancock County, Iowa; date, Fall 1907; collector, James Ward.

Paratype, No. 45, collection of W. Kubichek, Iowa City, Ia., sex, male; locality, Iowa City, Iowa; date, April 21, 1913.

Paratype, collection of A. J. Anderson, Sioux City, Iowa; date, October 30, 1893; sex (?); locality, 12 miles east of Des Moines, Iowa; collector, A. J. Anderson.

The latter paratype is in immature plumage.

The first mentioned paratype differs in coloration very little from the type, the most noticeable variation being the more evident banding of the upper tail coverts and flank feathers, noticed only when these are displaced. The second paratype as it is in the immature plumage, is characterized by a tail crossed on the exposed upper surface by three narrow and one wider sub-terminal dusky band, alternating with four wider dusky gray bands and a narrow tip of the same color. The lateral tail feathers show six dark bars, alternating with lighter ones, on their inner web. The feathers of the breast in particular, and of other parts to a less degree are definitely margined with rufous, so that a decided reddish cast is given to the under part of the body. At a distance however, the immature bird cannot be distinguished from either of the other specimens which are adults.

In reviewing the birds of prey of Iowa, my attention had been called to the occurrence of these dark plumaged individuals of the Broad-winged Hawk.

Mr. Robert Ridgway described the first noticed specimen under the title "Description of a Melanistic Specimen of *Buteo latissimus* (Wils.)," in the Proceedings of the United States National Museum, Vol. IX, Oct., 1886, pp. 248-249.

In 1912 Mr. F. L. Burns monographed this species *B. platypterus platypterus* in The Wilson Bulletin, Vol. XXIII, Nos. 3 & 4, 1911. In this monograph an adult male, *B. platypterus iowensis*, is described but not named, which was taken at Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, May 30, 1900.

In the Proceedings of the Iowa Academy of Science, Vol. XIX, 1912, pp. 193-194, the writer described the specimen which is here presented as the type of a new subspecies.

Mr. Ridgway mentions that two other birds similar to the one he describes were seen by Mr. Preston in 1874 and 1884 respectively, near where the first bird secured in 1883 was taken.

Mr. F. L. Burns says, "Worthen mentions one specimen from Minnesota, of a solid dark umber, showing dark bars on tail and primaries; and Seton another collected by A. Calder, April, 1907, Winnipeg, Manitoba, sex not stated." He says also "On Feb. 23, 1908, Mr. J. H. Riley saw a very dark bird pass almost directly

overhead at Falls Church, Virginia. He informs me that he had a fairly good look at it, and that it had some white on the breast, but appeared to be very dark otherwise; whether upon being shot it would be as dark as it appeared, it would be hard to say."

At least three interesting facts are to be noticed with regard to these published accounts of dark colored Broad-wings.

First they have all been either collected or observed, except the somewhat doubtful Virginia record, in a limited area extending north and south from Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie, through Minnesota and middle Iowa, the natural route of migration.

In the second place so far as the writer has been able to ascertain, there are no intergrading specimens. Those that have been examined are very similar in general color not excepting the one before me in immature plumage.

A third point of interest is the evident dusky character of the plumage of the immature, which has hitherto been unknown.

Thanks are due to Mr. James Ward through whose kindness the type specimen was secured, and to Mr. Kubichek and Mr. Anderson for permitting the examination, at some length, of their specimens.