NEW BIRDS FOR PORTO RICO.

BY STUART T. DANFORTH.

DURING a year's ornithological work in Porto Rico in 1923 and 1924, I obtained records of nine forms not hitherto listed in the Porto Rican avifauna. Five of these are North American migrants, three are forms of resident waterbirds not previously described, and one is probably of accidental occurrence.

1. **Gelochelidon nilotica.** GULL-BILLED TERN.—A few of these Terns, which do not seem to have been previously recorded from Porto Rico, stayed around Cartagena Lagoon practically all summer. I collected a female from a flock of nine on July 2, 1924.

2. **Phalacrocorax vigua mexicanus.** MEXICAN CORMORANT.—A small Cormorant, which appeared to be of this species, was observed at Cartagena Lagoon on October 17, 1924. No Cormorants have previously been listed from the island.

3. **Erismatura alleni.**[1] sp. nov.

ALLEN'S RUDDY DUCK.

Char. sp. Wing and tail conspicuously shorter than *E. jamaicensis;* bill slightly narrower; tarsus decidedly longer; eclipse plumage, as such, absent.

Adult male, throughout the year: Upper part of the head, down to and under the eyes, and nape, deep black; chin and cheeks pure white; rest of the neck, upper back, scapulars, rump, upper tail coverts, sides and flanks dark mahogany red[2]; upper breast a deep glossy maroon; wing coverts and lower back fuscous-black, the wing coverts sometimes conspicuously marked with dark mahogany red; under tail coverts white; feathers of the rest of the lower parts fuscous tipped with silvery, (often rust stained); remiges above and rectrices fuscous-black; under wing-coverts, axillaries, and under sides of remiges brownish gray, (between mouse gray and hair brown of Ridgway), the axillaries edged and the under wing coverts broadly tipped with white; bill, in life, between sky blue and forget-me-not blue.

Adult female: Upper part of the head, down to and below the eyes, amber brown narrowly barred with black; an indistinct whitish stripe runs from the base of the bill almost to the nape; rest of upperparts black, indistinctly barred and flecked with tawny brown, though these markings

[1] Named for Dr. Arthur A. Allen, Professor of Ornithology at Cornell University.

[2] The color terminology employed is that of Ridgway's 'Color Standards and Nomenclature.'

vary in shade and in some specimens are almost chestnut; chin white; throat and neck hair brown, tipped with whitish; sides and flanks similar to the back; feathers of the lower parts fuscous tipped with silvery; wings fuscous-black, the secondaries and coverts with minute freckling of the same shade as the freckling of the back.

Immature: An unsexed immature bird collected for me by Dr. A. Alvarez is similar to the female but paler all around, and more strongly barred on the back, sides, and upper tail coverts, and particularly on the flanks. It is similar to the immature of *E. jamaicensis*, but the bars of the flanks are brownish instead of white.

MEASUREMENTS (IN MILLIMETERS):

	Culmen	Wing	Tarsus	Tail	Breadth of bill at widest part
♂, *E. alleni*, No. 33, P.R., Mar. 1	39	122	32	66	23
♂, " No. 31, " Mar. 1	41	137	34	77	22.5
♂, " No. 186, " Apr. 19	41.5	139	32	76	23
♂, " No. 189, " Jul. 19	39	138	32	78	22
♀, " No. 32, " Mar. 1	41	135	33	74	24
♀, " No. 34, " Mar. 1	42	mlt.	30.5	mlt.	24
♀, " No. 35, " Mar. 1	38	135	32	72	23.5
♀, " No. 185, " Apr. 12	41	138	30.5	77	21.5
Imm., " No. 184, " Apr. 12	39	133.5	32	58	22
Average of ♂ *E. alleni*	40.1	134	32.5	74.2	22.6
" " ♀ "	40.5	136.0	31.5	74.3	23.3
Average of 6 breeding ♂ *E. jamaicensis* (N. Am.).	40.7	148.5	28.8	83.5	23.3
Extremes of these	40–42.5	144–154	28–30.5	79–88	20–24
Average of 4 breeding ♀ *E. jamaicensis* (N. Am.).	40.4	147.0	29.0	83.0	24.0
Extremes of these	39–42	146–148	28–30	82–85	24–24

Type: From Cartagena Lagoon, P. R., No. 186, S. T. D. Coll., taken April 19, 1925, by L. H. Mendoza, (C. U. Coll. No. 2287).

Geographic Distribution: Island of Porto Rico. Records from Cartagena and Anegado Lagoons and Guayabal Reservoir.

Remarks: The principal differences which distinguish *E. alleni* from *E. jamaicensis* are the short wing and tail and the generally darker coloration.

These features are noticeable at a glance. The bill is slightly narrower and the tarsus decidedly longer. The factor which has influenced me more than any other, in deciding to describe this Duck as a new species rather than a subspecies, is the fact that the male either undergoes no eclipse plumage or, if he does, this plumage is the same as the breeding plumage, while the male *E. jamaicensis* spends at least half the year in an eclipse plumage which is similar to the female plumage. In Porto Rico males in the red plumage may be noted every month in the year. Males which are not fully adult show a few brown and black immature feathers among the red feathers of the back. Molting birds in March were molting from red into red.

I have not had the opportunity to examine specimens from Cuba or Jamaica, but as the North American form was originally described from Jamaica the Porto Rican form must be different from that. The Ruddy Duck appears to be extremely rare in Jamaica at present, and I have not been able to locate any specimens from there in the United States. Gosse's records (1847) are referable to the Masked Duck, (*Nomonyx dominicus*), and I find no record of any naturalist since then who has observed the Ruddy Duck in Jamaica. Specimens from Cuba should throw interesting light on the relationships of these Ducks, but apparently there are none in this country.

4. **Gallinula chloropus portoricensis,** subsp. nov.

PORTO RICO GALLINULE.

Mr. Outram Bangs, in his revision of the American forms of *G. chloropus*,[1] suggested that when a larger series of West Indian specimens were brought together it might be possible to further subdivide the species. Specimens from Porto Rico show constant differences from any of the other described subspecies, so I propose to separate the Porto Rican bird as *G. c. portoricensis*.

Chars. subsp. The tarsus averages slightly longer than the North American *G. c. cachinnans*, and shorter than *G. c. cerceris* of St. Lucia and Grenada. The frontal shield is conspicuously larger than in the North American bird. The color is much darker, the lower parts being a deeper gray (blackish mouse gray of Ridgway), and the back a darker shade of brown (similar to raw umber of Ridgway, but slightly darker). The brown on the back is also less extensively distributed, being confined mostly to the middle back.

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[1] Bangs O. Proc. N. E. Zool. Club, V, 1915, pp. 93–99.

MEASUREMENTS (IN MILLIMETERS):

	Wing	Tail	Tarsus	Bill from Gape	Culmen with Frontal Shield	Width of Frontal Shield
♂, *G. c. portoricensis*, No. 17, P.R.	176	80	48	28.5	48	15
♀, *G. c. portoricensis*, No. 45, P.R.	170	72	52	27.5	46	13
♀, *G. c. portoricensis*, No. 56, P.R.	174	76	53	28	45	13
♂, *G. c. portoricensis* (Bangs) P.R.	173	68	51	30	—	—
Imm. ♀, AMNH No. 20369, P.R.	165	71	52	28	Undev.	Undev.
G. c. cerceris, St. Lucia (Bangs)	173–174	70–65	56–57	31–31	—	—
G. c. cerceris, Grenada, (AMNH No. 45639)	180	73	55	—	43	13
G. c. cachinnans, average of 17 N. Am. breeding birds	174.1	73.0	48.7	28.0	42.2	12.1
Extremes of same	160–183	65–80	46–53	25–30	39–45.5	9–14

Type, from Cartagena Lagoon, P.R., No. 17, Coll. S. T. D., (C. U. Coll. No. 2288), ♂ adult, collected Jan. 14, 1924. by S. T. Danforth.

Geographic Distribution: Island of Porto Rico. Records from Cartagena, Anegado and Guánica Lagoons, Cabo Rojo Lighthouse, Aguadilla and Mayagüez.

Remarks: There is less brown on the back of every Porto Rican bird than on any North American bird in the large series of specimens in the Cornell University Museum and in the American Museum of Natural History. The Cuban birds approach the Porto Rican birds in this paucity of brown, but the tarsus is even longer than *G. c. portoricensis*, nearly approaching *G. c. cerceris* in this respect.

5. **Fulica caribaea major,** subsp. nov.

PORTO RICO COOT.

The breeding Coots of Porto Rico, instead of being *F. americana*, as has long been supposed, proved to be a subspecies of *F. caribaea*.

Chars. subsp.: Much larger in all respects than *F. c. caribaea*, including the frontal plate.

MEASUREMENTS (IN MILLIMETERS):

	Wing	Tail	Culmen with Frontal Shield	Depth of Bill at Base	Length of Frontal Plate	Width of Frontal Plate
♂, *F. c. major*, No. 134, P.R.	192	50	57	16	23.5	12
♂, " " No. 133, "	190	51	55	16	25	12.5
♂, " " No. 16, "	195	51	57	16	23.5	14
♀, " " No. 141, "	191	56	57	15	27	13
Imm., *F. c. major*, No. 188, P.R.	Molt	51	52.5	16	20	11.5
F. c. caribaea, AMNH No. 26501 (Sombrero)	185	48	43.5	14	11	11
5 ♀, *F. c. caribaea*[1]	174.6	49	47	14.8	—	—
3 *F. c. caribaea*,[2] Guadeloupe and St. John's					.7 to .9 inch	.35 to .50 inch

Type, from Cartagena Lagoon, P.R., ♂ adult, no. 16, S. T. D. Coll., (C. U. Coll. No. 2291), collected January 14, 1924, by S. T. Danforth.

Geographic Distribution: Island of Porto Rico. Records from Cartagena and Anegado Lagoons and Guayabal Reservoir.

Remarks: This form is larger than *F. c. caribaea* or than any of the forms of *F. americana*. It can easily be told from *F. americana* by the fact that the frontal shield is entirely white. The color is darker than in *F. a. americana*.

6. **Ereunetes mauri.** WESTERN SANDPIPER.—On August 26, 1924, at Cartagena Lagoon, I collected a female Western Sandpiper, from a flock of Semipalmated Sandpipers. It was in almost full summer plumage.

7. **Circus hudsonius.** MARSH HAWK.—A Marsh Hawk frequented Cartagena Lagoon from November 30 to December 27, 1923. Although it was not collected I observed it closely on several occasions. It appeared to be an immature bird. The upperparts were very dark brown with a white rump, while the underparts were rufous colored without any visible streaks.

8. **Melospiza lincolni lincolni.** LINCOLN'S SPARROW.—One was seen December 14, 1923, in some piles of thorny brush at La Plata. I observed it very clearly with 8x binoculars at a distance of less than 20 feet, so that there could be no mistaking its identity, unusual as the record may be. The broad cream-buff band across the breast, the fine streaks on breast and sides of belly, and head similar to that of the Song Sparrow, but streaked, were very clearly noted. It had a sharp but rather weak chip.

[1] Listed by Riley, J. H., Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash., XXIX, 1916, pp. 103–4.
[2] Ridgway, orig. description, Proc. U. S. N. M., VII, 1884, p. 358.

It was rather shy, and occasionally flitted from one brush pile to another. keeping quite well concealed the greater part of the time, but giving me several opportunities to obtain fine views of it. Unfortunately I had no gun with me at the time, and therefore could not collect it. I was perfectly familiar with the local race of the Grasshopper Sparrow, which is the only other Sparrow found on the island.

9. **Geothlypis trichas brachidactyla.** NORTHERN YELLOW-THROAT. —On April 18, 1924 I observed a brilliant male Yellow-throat at Desengaño. Although it was not collected it was observed at very close range in a pile of bamboo brush near a pool of water. I believe this is the first definite record of the occurrence of this species in Porto Rico. Dr. Wetmore[1] lists it as of uncertain status for Porto Rico, on the basis of rather vague statements of older writers.

In conclusion I wish to express my thanks to Dr. F. M. Chapman and Mr. W. de Witt Miller of the American Museum of Natural History for permission to examine the specimens in that museum, and to Mr. Miller for his critical examination of some of my specimens, and especially to Professor A. A. Allen, of Cornell University, for his helpful advice and guidance throughout my work in Porto Rico and since then.

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THE BIRDS OF THE DES MOINES RAPIDS.

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THE Des Moines Rapids are no more and that fact is the chief excuse for publishing these old notes. Where the rapids used to be is now "Lake Keokuk" formed by the great Keokuk dam. The Rapids formed a unique feature in the course of the Mississippi, nothing like them occurring elsewhere between St. Paul and the Gulf. The present lake is almost as unique, few comparable stretches of deep, slow water are to be found in the whole length of the great river.

Ecologists certainly missed an opportunity when no careful survey of the biota of the old rapids was made. This could easily have been done especially as the river bottom was extensively bared during the building of the dam. The physical conditions were well known and weather and river changes had been recorded

[1] Wetmore, Alex., 1916, Birds of Porto Rico, P. R. Insular Experiment Station Bulletin, 15, p. 99.