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## DISTRIBUTION OF THE RACES OF THE SWAMP SPARROW

BY W. EARL GODFREY

SINCE the description of *Melospiza georgiana ericrypta* by Oberholser (1938), the distribution of this subspecies has not been well understood, a state of affairs which is reflected in the vernacular name it has borne, western swamp sparrow. Its breeding range was outlined by Oberholser as "Alberta and Manitoba south to North Dakota" and quoted in the Nineteenth Supplement to the A. O. U. Checklist (1944). First published suspicion of its breeding in the east was that of Aldrich and Nutt (1939) who noted that a small series of breeding birds from Newfoundland was intermediate between *georgiana* and *ericrypta*. Later Peters and Burleigh (1945) definitely referred a more adequate Newfoundland series to *ericrypta*. Earlier, Braund and McCullagh (1940) referred birds from Anticosti Island, Province of Quebec, to *ericrypta* and suggested a probability that this race might be found to have an unbroken breeding distribution east across the northern part of the species' range.

In the course of identifying the swamp sparrows in the National Museum of Canada, the writer has examined 260 specimens of this

species from eight provinces and five states, including 127 adults in breeding plumage (June–July). To Mr. L. L. Snyder and the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology, the writer is especially grateful for the loan of a splendid series of 88 specimens, mostly breeding birds from Ontario. Mr. Snyder's own identifications were pencilled on the labels of these, and it is both a pleasure and a reassurance to note that my own interpretations agree so closely with his. Thanks are due also to Dr. John W. Aldrich and to Dr. Herbert Friedmann for the loan of specimens from the United States National Museum (Biological Survey Collection), and to Mr. Hoyes Lloyd and Mr. J. Dewey Soper for material from their respective private collections.

*Melospiza georgiana ericrypta* Oberholser. Northern Swamp Sparrow.

In this moderately well-marked race, breeding adults differ from *Melospiza georgiana georgiana* in their paler upper parts, the browns of back and rump averaging grayer, the pale dorsal feather edgings whiter and apparently broader. Autumn specimens of *ericrypta* are distinguishable by their paler dorsal and rump coloration, and by the paler feather edgings of the back which provide more contrast with the black dorsal streaking than in *georgiana*, which averages darker and duller above. In juvenal plumage the differences are somewhat less obvious but *ericrypta* averages paler.

The breeding range of *Melospiza georgiana ericrypta* may now be outlined as follows:

North to central Mackenzie (Fort Rae), northern Saskatchewan, northern Manitoba, northern Ontario, central Quebec (Lake Mistassini and Moisie Bay), and northern Newfoundland; east to eastern Newfoundland; south at least to northeastern New Brunswick (Youghall, near Bathurst, and Miscou Island), Quebec (Lake St. John, Pointe au Mourier, probably Gaspé peninsula), central Ontario (Lake Abitibi, Kapuskasing, Chapleau, Pancake Bay, and Rainy River district), northern Minnesota (probably), North Dakota, central Saskatchewan, and south central Alberta; west to central eastern British Columbia (Peace River district).

June and July adults of *ericrypta* were examined from the following localities:

ALBERTA (Lac la Nonne, 4; Belvedere, 1; Wood Buffalo Park, 1; Peace River Landing, 1). MANITOBA (Anola, 1; Lake St. Martin, 1; Reader Lake, 2; Dauphin, 2; Bird, 2; Clear Lake, 3; Ilford, 1; The Pas, 1; Shoal Lake, 3). ONTARIO (Favourable Lake Mine, 2; Lac Seul, 2; Chapleau, 1; Amyot, 1; Off Lake and Big Fork, Rainy River district, 3; Savanne, 2; Wabigoon, 1; Lake Nipigon, 2; Lake Abitibi, 4; Kapuskasing, 2; Fraserdale, 1; Genier, 1; Moosonee, 3; Moose Factory, 1; Moose River mouth, 4; James Bay west coast, 5; Fort Albany, 3; Carling Lake, 1; Pancake Bay, 1; Rosspport, 1; Peninsula, 1). QUEBEC (Pointe au Mourier, 1; Moisie Bay, 3; Havre St. Pierre, 2; Lake St. John, 8; Lake Mistassini, 13). NEW BRUNSWICK (Youghall, near Bathurst, 1; Miscou Island, 4).

Breeding specimens of *ericrypta* examined from the prairie provinces, from the east coast, and from northwest-central, north-central, and northeast-central Ontario are very uniform. However, certain trends, apparently geographical but evidently not sufficiently well-marked or so consistent as to be of subspecific status, are apparent within the range of *ericrypta*. Thirteen breeding birds from Lake Mistassini and eight from Lake St. John, Quebec, while unquestionably much nearer *ericrypta* than to *georgiana*, average slightly redder than the western series and show slightly heavier black dorsal streaking. A series of 17 from James Bay are interesting in averaging darkest of all specimens of *ericrypta* examined. Birds from farther south, however (Fraserdale, Genier, and Lake Abitibi) are perfectly typical *ericrypta*.

A single male from Manitoulin Island, Ontario (Perivale, June 17, 1938, R. O. M. Z.) is indistinguishable from *ericrypta*, and additional material might extend the known breeding range of this subspecies slightly southward from Pancake Bay. However, single birds from near-by Laird and MacLennan, while intermediate, are nearer *georgiana*. No breeding material was available from the Gaspé peninsula, but early June specimens from Miscou Island, northeastern New Brunswick, while somewhat intermediate, are nearer *ericrypta*. A male from Youghall, New Brunswick northeastern mainland, is certainly referable to *ericrypta*. Only a single breeding specimen was examined from Nova Scotia (Yarmouth, June 9) but this seems to be *georgiana*. However, six Nova Scotia migrants are all *ericrypta*, four of them early September specimens from Cape North, Cape Breton Island, which suggest a possibility that *ericrypta* may breed at least on the north side of that island.

The extensive breeding grounds of *ericrypta*, outlined above, obviously produce large numbers of migrants which must pass through southeastern Canada and eastern United States in larger numbers than the records indicate. In this connection it is of interest to point out that Wetmore (1940) has recorded it numerically almost equal to *georgiana* in migration through Kentucky, West Virginia, and Tennessee.

Migrant examples of *ericrypta*, from outside its known breeding range, have been identified by the writer as follows:

BRITISH COLUMBIA (Yahk, September 12, 1929); SASKATCHEWAN (Craven, September 11, 1937; Cabri Lake, September 10, 1920). ONTARIO (London, September 16, 1886; Ottawa, October 18, 1935; Rondeau, October 15, 1889; Pottageville, York County, April 27, 1932; Barrie, May 8, 1925; Toronto, May 10, 1891, May 12, 1898, May 11, 1935; Strathroy, May 9, 1928). QUEBEC (Meach Lake, Gatineau Park,

September 28, 1935). NOVA SCOTIA (Cape North, Cape Breton Island, September 5, 6, 11, 1935; Frizzleton, October 6, 1935; Black River, near Wolfville, May 23, 1907). NEW YORK (Cayuga, May 9, 1914). INDIANA (Winona Lake, October 4, 1913). MICHIGAN (Detroit, April 15, 1906; September 30, 1906; October 2, 1904, October 8, 1905).

*Melospiza georgiana georgiana* (Latham). Southern Swamp Sparrow.

June-July specimens of *Melospiza georgiana georgiana* have been examined from the following localities:

ONTARIO (Long Point, Norfolk County, 3; Port Sydney, Muskoka, 3; Hallowell, 2; Kingston, 1; Laird, 1; MacLennan, 1; Biscotasing, 2; London, 2; Pottageville, York County, 2; Toronto, 1; Eganville, Renfrew County, 1). QUEBEC (Kazabazua, 1). NOVA SCOTIA (Yarmouth, 1). PENNSYLVANIA (Black Swamp, Lawrence County, 2; Sandy Lake, Mercer County, 2; Sugar Lake, Crawford County, 1; Somerset, 2). WEST VIRGINIA (Cranesville, 1; Cranberry Glades, Pocahontas County, 1).

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## BREEDING BIRDS OF VIRGIN PALOUSE PRAIRIE

BY LEONARD WING

THE Palouse Prairie is perhaps the largest prairie type west of the Rocky Mountains. The term "Palouse" is generally used to designate the bunch-grass prairie of southeastern Washington and adjacent parts of Idaho and Oregon. However, identical vegetation occurs near by in southern British Columbia and western Montana. Thus, it is bounded by the timber country of the Blue Mountains on the south, the central Washington desert on the west, the timber area stretching from the Cascades to northern Idaho on the north, and the timbered outlines of the Bitterroots on the east.

In a more narrow sense, the term Palouse Country locally designates