

The Original Description of *Hesperiphona vespertina montana* Ridgway.—“*Hesperiphona vespertina*, var. *montana*” has been universally credited to Ridgway, in Baird, Brewer, and Ridgway, *History of North American Birds, Land Birds*, vol. 1, 1874, p. 449, pl. 22, fig. 4. Curiously, authors have ignored the adequate description previously given by Ridgway under the same name in the *Bulletin of the Essex Institute*, vol. 5, November, 1873, p. 189. Ridgway, himself (*Bull. U. S. Natl. Mus.*, 50, pt. 1: 43, 1901) dismissed the 1873 usage of the name as a *nomen nudum*, which it certainly is not. Even were there no description here, a reference is given to “*Birds of California*” [= Baird, in Cooper, *Ornithology of California*, 1870], p. 175, where there is a description with a text-figure but without a distinctive name.

The question then arises as to the type locality for *montana* of 1873. On page 181 the name is used without discussion in a list of Colorado birds. On page 189, two specimens are recorded from Waukegan, Illinois, as belonging to “this southern race,” but they are obviously secondary and not the basic specimens. The explanation lies in the 1870 book to which reference is made where the range of the distinct, but unnamed, southern population is given as “table-lands of Mexico, extending northward into New Mexico.” There, also, occurs the text-figure of the new bird which was reproduced with the 1874 usage, being latterly identified as based on U. S. National Museum no. 35150 from Mexico. Still later, Grinnell (*Condor*, 19: 20, 1917) established the identity of the specimen in question as having been collected by Dr. C. Sartorius at Mirador, near Veracruz; original number 180. Justifiably, as claimed by Grinnell, this specimen should be considered as the type of *montana* of 1874, and with equal logic occupies the same position with reference to *montana* of 1873. Mearns (*Auk*, 7: 247, 1890) claimed as type, U. S. National Museum no. 11960, from Cantonment Burgwin, New Mexico, and other authors accepted his dictum until Grinnell (*loc. cit.*) objected on the ground that such subsequent selection did not invalidate the claim of no. 35150 to its original position as type. The fourth edition of the A. O. U. Check-List (1931) accepted Grinnell’s thesis.

Recognition of the 1873 paper as the original source of the name *montana* entails little change other than that of bibliographic reference and date. The type and type locality remain as at present accepted for the name of 1874, but since the type locality is not specifically mentioned in the original account, it should be indicated that Mirador, near Veracruz, Mexico, was ascertained from other sources (Baird, 1870; Ridgway, 1874; and Grinnell, 1917).—JOHN T. ZIMMER, *American Museum of Natural History, New York*.

The Original Edition of Azara’s ‘Apuntamientos.’—A curious fact has recently come to hand concerning Azara’s famous work on the birds of Paraguay and eastern Argentina. Having occasion to refer to one of the species supposedly discussed in volume 1, I was surprised to find that the copy of the work in the library of the American Museum of Natural History did not have the account of the species in question. Further investigation revealed that volume 1 ended on page 399 with the discussion of species 101; volume 2 began with the preliminary matter on species 145, leaving a hiatus of 44 species that were neither discussed nor listed in the index.

Volume 1 is, however, a complete entity. Page 399 ends in the middle with the inscription: “Fin del Tomo Primero de los Pájaros,” and the bottom half of the page and the reverse of the leaf are blank. All signatures are complete, and page 399 is on the last leaf of its signature. The index to species 1 to 101 ends in the middle of a signature that is continued with other matter. Nothing is missing although the volume is obviously less extensive than it is supposed to be. The title is exactly as transcribed by Coues (*Bull. U. S. Geol. Geog. Surv. Terr.*, 5 [no. 2]: 246, Sept. 6,

1879) with the addition of a blazon (which Coues omitted to mention) preceding the date line. In further distinction from Coues, there is an additional preliminary leaf with the half-title, forming part of the first signature which would be incomplete without it.

Volumes 2 and 3 have no half-titles; the title-page in volume 2 is not part of the first complete signature, but in volume 3 it is. The wording of the titles in these two volumes follows closely that of volume 1 with the exception of the date and imprint (and the omission of a period after the name of the author in volume 3). Both volumes are dated 1805, and the imprint of "Ibarra" is altered to "la hija de Ibarra" in volume 2 and "Doña Manuela Ibarra" in volume 3.

Dr. Herbert Friedmann of the U. S. National Museum kindly loaned me the copy of Azara's work in that institution, and I have compared it with the American Museum copy. Volumes 2 and 3 appear to be identical in both sets. Volume 1 is quite different. In the National Museum copy, the leaf with the half-title is missing. The original leaf containing page 399 with a half page of print and the notation regarding the end of volume 1 is also missing. In its place is a new leaf, the first of a new signature (not the last of the original signature) with the text of the old page 399 reprinted, apparently from the same type, but without the colophon, and continuing with the new matter relating to species 102 and its relatives. The text continues thereafter to page 534 and species 144. Furthermore, an extra leaf is inserted in Signature C of the introductory matter, bearing the duplicate page numbers XIII and XIV and containing the references to species 102 to 144.

These additions are all printed on paper which is quite unlike that of the rest of the volume, but like the paper used in volumes 2 and 3. The other pages are identical as to typography and paper with the corresponding parts of volume 1 in the American Museum copy. James L. Peters wrote me that the set in the library of the Museum of Comparative Zoology is similarly complete except that the index lacks the added pages referring to species 102-144.

I have a theory concerning the two formats of volume 1, but it is no more than that. The American Museum copy of volume 1 probably demonstrates the originally planned format which would have necessitated either more than two additional volumes or distinctly more bulky ones. Volume 1 was printed in the short format. Whether it was actually issued to the public in that format I am unable to say. The present copy may have been a private one. At any rate, about that time there appears to have been some change in the printing firm as evidenced by the imprints on the three volumes, and perhaps volume 1 was held in reserve until the work could continue. In 1805, volumes 2 and 3 were printed. Judging by the quality of the paper, I suspect that at the same time the additional parts of volume 1 were also printed and the copies of that volume on hand made up in the new standard. If the short volume 1 had been issued to the public, the new pages could have been made available to purchasers or subscribers with which to complete their copies, but the entire set of three volumes may actually have come out at the same time. I believe that pages 399 (part) to 534, and perhaps the whole volume, should be dated 1805, not 1802.

I can find no contemporary references to the book around either 1802 or 1805. If any can be found, they should supply the proof needed. In any case, the matter of date is only of academic interest. Azara used only Spanish vernacular names for his birds, and later authors, basing their accounts on his descriptions, supplied the scientific names whose dates are sometimes critical. Likewise I can find no indications of the existence of the short format of volume 1 in any of the bibliographic

references that I have consulted. It would be interesting to learn more about the publication of this historic work.—JOHN T. ZIMMER, *American Museum of Natural History, New York, N. Y.*

A Convenient Method of Confining Live Birds for Weighing.—Bird students interested in obtaining data on weights of live birds are often surprised at the scarcity of such information. This is particularly true of small song birds despite the fact that many of these are trapped and banded. Difficulty in holding birds still while weights are taken has, perhaps, accounted for the fact that weights are often not taken, even by active bird banders.

For keeping birds comparatively motionless while being weighed, thick-walled glass tubing, cut in six-inch sections and open at both ends, has proved very convenient. Birds are inserted into the tubing head first, and, after weights are taken, they may be easily shoved through and released. While confined within the tube, they cannot move wings or legs to any great extent, and there is small chance that they will be injured in the process.

A set of three glass tubes, of 1.0, 1.25, and 1.5 inch diameters, is sufficient to handle practically all small birds. Weights of the empty tubes may be scratched on with a diamond point. Tubes are easily carried in the slotted pockets of a jacket. Plastic tubes are, of course, lighter, but they collapse easily, and are more subject to breakage.

Small boxes have often been used for confining live birds during the weighing process. These are bulkier than glass tubes, and there are greater chances that birds will escape while being inserted into, or released from, a box. The method described above seems to obviate many of the difficulties which have prevented the collecting of weight data.—MAURICE BROOKS, *Division of Forestry, West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia.*

Young Bluebird Taken from Nest-box by Sparrow Hawk (*Falco sparverius*).—On June 10, 1950, I noticed a female Sparrow Hawk on the top of a Bluebird nest-box located on a pole 100 feet from my residence. The hawk was eating a small bird which proved to be one of the three fledgling Bluebirds known to have been in the nest.

I secreted myself in a building 50 feet from the nest, and after a few minutes the hawk returned, landed on a projection below the box entrance, and tried, by extending its foot into the box, to extract another bird. This time the parent birds noticed the intruder and succeeded in driving it away. As soon as the old birds left the vicinity of the nest the little falcon returned, this time to be immediately attacked and driven away by a Kingbird. It did not return again that day, but an inspection of the box the following morning showed but one fledgling, indicating that the other one may have been taken in the early hours.

I then removed the perch that the hawk had used when reaching into the box, and without which I doubt if it could have secured its prey.

The remaining young bird was still in the box a week later.—HOWARD DRINKWATER, *Old Road, Whitehouse, New Jersey.*