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The Distribution and Relationships of *Ammodramus maritimus* and its Allies

BY FRANK M. CHAPMAN (Auk 116, No. 1, January 1899)

"A field experience with four of our five recognized Seaside Sparrows has been the means of calling my attention to certain apparent anomalies in their distribution and relationships which in the following pages I have attempted to make clear.

"The material at my command while not wholly satisfactory, is nevertheless, I trust, sufficient to warrant a provisional explanation of the facts it presents. It numbers some 160 specimens, including series loaned me by Mr. Robert Ridgway from the collections under his charge, by Mr. William Brewster and Dr. A. K. Fisher, and also the examples in the American Museum of Natural History. The specimens loaned me by the gentlemen named constitute so important a part of the material studied that I feel under more than usual obligation to them.

"From Mr. Ridgway I have received a series of May birds collected by Mr. E. A. McIlhenny on the coast of Louisiana, and of breeding birds collected by Lieut. Wirt Robinson near St. Augustine, Florida; Mr. Brewster sends specimens from the west coast of Florida, breeding birds collected by himself at St. Mary's, Georgia, and a most puzzling series from the vicinity of Charleston, South Carolina, while Dr. Fisher forwards breeding birds and young in first plumage from Grand Isle, Louisiana.

"The questions involved in a study of these birds may be best presented by a brief consideration of our

recorded knowledge of the distribution and relationships of the five described forms, namely: *Ammodramus maritimus*, *A. m. peninsulae*, *A. m. sennetti*, *A. m. macgillivraii*, and *A. nigrescens*. Of these five forms, which are here given under their current names, the status of *A. nigrescens* and *A. m. sennetti* is apparently clear and these two birds may be considered before taking up the perplexing questions presented by the remaining three forms."

Chapman then goes into detail about questions of breeding ranges and their overlap. Regarding *A. [m.] nigrescens*:

"The specimen upon which this description was probably based is now in the U.S. Nat. Mus. (No. 2894) but is without date or locality. It is a young bird in first plumage, of the same age as the specimen taken at Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina, Aug. 10, 1893, from which it differs no more than do immature specimens of *maritimus* from one another.

"If this view of the case be accepted it will permit us to give the Louisiana bird a name of its own, a course which the specimens involved seem to warrant. And I therefore propose to name it in honor of Dr. A. K. Fisher who, after Audubon, was the first ornithologist to secure specimens of the Louisiana bird."

The taxonomy and natural history of the Seaside Sparrow continued to confound ornithologists for a long time afterward.

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