

Two Races of the Red-breasted Sapsucker

BY JOSEPH GRINNELL

Sphyrapicus varius ruber (Gmelin) Ridgway.*

Type—♂ ad., No. 3964, Coll. F. S. Daggett; Puyallup, Washington; November 22, 1895; Collected by Geo. G. Cantwell.

Description—Head, neck and breast, deep carmine, posteriorly beneath fading out, but on nape, abruptly defined. Concealed pectoral black patch, indicated by a deepening of the red of that area into maroon. Loral stripe including nasal tufts, white; eye narrowly encircled with black, from which a narrow black line extends forward along the upper margin of the white loral stripe; a small area of black around base of lower mandible. Median posterior lower surface, dingy primrose yellow; sides with black sagittate markings on a light olive ground; flanks irregularly barred with blackish on a yellowish white ground. Crissum whitish, with hastate dusky markings toward bases of feathers. Dorsal surface, wings and tail steely black, marked as follows: Longitudinally down middle of back from nape to rump, the feathers of this tract being basally black, then white to a variable extent, then a hastate black interval, and finally tipped with lemon yellow; the whole effect is of a double yellowish stripe down middle of back. Upper tail coverts medially white tinged with primrose yellow. Narrow soiled whitish edgings near tips of outer two tail feathers on each side. Inner webs of central pair of tail feathers with five abruptly defined rectangular white spots, these not meeting the shaft. Median and greater wing coverts broadly tipped with white, forming a conspicuous white stripe on closed wing. Wing quills with numerous small white spots on their inner and outer edges and narrowly white tipped.

Measurements of Type—Wing, 5.04; tail, 3.75; tarsus, .80; culmen, .99.

Habitat—Northwest coast region of North America, south in California through the Santa Cruz Mountains.

Sphyrapicus varius daggetti new subspecies.

Type—♂ ad., No. 1482 Coll. F. S. Daggett; Pasadena, California; January 25, 1893; Collected by F. S. Daggett.

Description—Head, neck and breast, crimson, inclining to burnt carmine in region of concealed pectoral black patch. Loral stripe, including nasal tufts, white; narrow patch from in front of, to below eye, black, this forming part of the upper border of the loral stripe. Small areas of black feathers at bases of rami of lower mandible. Median posterior lower surface, pale primrose yellow. Sides and flanks, dusky whitish, with numerous sagittate blackish markings. Feathers of crissum white, with central black patches. Dorsal surface, wings and tail, steely black, marked as follows: Feathers composing longitudinal double stripe down middle of back, extensively white; rump and upper tail coverts, principally white. Inner webs of central pair of tail feathers, white, enclosing three black spots. Median and greater wing coverts broadly tipped with white, forming a conspicuous white stripe on closed wing. Wing quills with numerous white spots on their inner and outer edges, and more extensively white-tipped.

Measurements of Type—Wing, 4.83; tail, 3.55; tarsus, .80; culmen, .96.

Habitat—Southern California and the west slope of the Sierra Nevada north at least to Amador County.

I have examined a number of skins of the *nuchalis* type, and others approaching *ruber* in almost every degree, and I am certain that there is a continuous intergradation geographically between the eastern *S. varius* and *ruber* of the Pacific Coast. The intermediates do not appear to be the result of "hybridization" and the case does not seem to me at all a parallel to that of *Colaptes auratus* and *C. cafer*. Therefore I see no reason why the Red-breasted Sapsucker is of more than subspecific rank.

The Red-breasted Sapsucker in its Pacific Coast range is represented by two races (= sub-races!) as above indicated. *Sphyrapicus varius ruber* is characterized by larger size, deeper reds and an invasion of yellow, and a minimum extent of white markings. *Sphyrapicus varius daggetti* is smaller, paler and with a maximum extent of white markings. *Dryobates villosus harrisi* and *D. v. hyloscopus* of corresponding habitats show a similar difference in respect to size and extent of white markings.

I take pleasure in naming this new woodpecker for my respected friend, Mr. F. S. Daggett.

**Picus ruber* GMELIN, Systema Naturae, Tom I, 1788: p. 429.

Sphyrapicus varius var. *ruber* RIDGWAY, American Journal of Sciences and Arts, 3rd Series, Volume V, 1873: p. 40.