

Because of the biological interest that attaches to these two bones the University Museum, through the Director, Mr. Horace H. F. Jayne, has deposited the specimens in the osteological collections of the Division of Birds in the United States National Museum.—ALEXANDER WETMORE, *United States National Museum, Washington, D. C., December 12, 1930.*

An Early Name for the Allen Hummingbird.—René Primevère Lesson formally bestowed the name *Ornismya Sasin* upon a kind of hummingbird from "La Californie, la côte N. O. d'Amerique" (*Histoire Naturelle des Oiseaux-Mouche*, "Mai 1829", p. XXX; *idem*, 1830, pp. 190-193, pls. 66, 67). It was evidently in Lesson's mind merely to give a more fitting name to the species even though already technically named *Trochilus rufus* by Gmelin. The name first given to the species was a vernacular, "sasinne" or "sasin", used in the text of Captain Cook's third "Voyage", French edition, for the Rufous Hummingbird discovered at Nootka Sound. All this is shown in the synonymy (p. XXX) and discussion (pp. 190-191) given by Lesson; yet the only actual specimen he had in hand, and upon which his main description is based and which is clearly figured in the first plate (66), came from California and belonged to the species long years later named *Selasphorus alleni* by Henshaw. No matter if Lesson's general concept, through mistaken interpretation of the several previous authors he cites, was of a composite nature, embracing two or more species of hummingbirds, his first-given characterization, his detailed description, and his first plate all apply definitely to the one species—*alleni* of our recent American literature.

The critical phrases in the descriptive text having to do with the green back of the bird are: "teint de vert sur le dos" (p. XXX); "... se mêle du vert-doré sur ... le dos" (p. 191). The tail feathers are commented upon as slender, and there is no mention of notches on any of them: "la queue ... composée de rectrices faibles et terminées en pointe ..." (p. 191).

The first plate (66), "Le Sasin Mâle adulte", shows an adult male Allen Hummingbird—back shown as green; tail-feathers displayed from beneath, all narrow with no indication of the breadth and notching which pertains to *Selasphorus rufus*. One has only to put a specimen each of "*alleni*" and *rufus* alongside the figure on Lesson's plate 66, to see that what is figured, even though not altogether accurately, is the Allen Hummingbird.

The second plate (67), with legend "Le Sasin, Jeune âge", looks to be neither a Rufous nor an Allen. It is said (pp. 192-193) to have been reproduced from a figure from Vieillot drawn originally from a specimen in the Leverian museum in London. This subsidiary plate with accompanying remarks can properly be discarded in the present connection.

Lesson also includes, subsidiarily, descriptive remarks concerning the female, but these remarks are second-hand, after Latham. They, too, even though appertaining to another species than "*alleni*", have no special bearing here.

As to the type locality of his *Ornismya sasin*, Lesson makes a most significant statement, to the effect that the adult bird serving as the basis of his description was transmitted to him by the Duke of Rivoli: "L'individu adulte qui a servi à notre description nous a été communiqué par M. le duc de Rivoli" (p. 192). On a previous page Lesson remarks that everything known leads to the belief that this species is found continually in the "environs de Monterey et de San-Francisco" (p. 190).

In his Supplement, issued (most of its "parts" in 1831) in continuation of the work cited above, Lesson gives three additional plates (11, 12, 13) of "Le Sasin", with appertaining text (pp. 121-124). There is evidence here, again, that more than one species are dealt with under the one name, *Ornismya sasin* (plate 11 looks like a female Black-chinned Hummingbird). But the important thing now is that apparently all the specimens here additionally described were from California, and of one of them the following definite statement is made: "L'individu que nous avons fait figurer comme étant une jeune femelle du Sasin, avait été rapporté de la Californie par le docteur Botta, que l'avait étiqueté sur les lieux ..." (p. 121).

It would thus appear exceedingly probable that all the California-taken hummingbirds reaching France about this time, including the adult male type of *sasin*, were collected by Paola Emilio Botta, and very likely at the same place and time

as the type of *Ornismya anna* described by Lesson in the same volume as *sasin* and which also was in the Rivoli collection. This place and time, as worked out most carefully by Dr. T. S. Palmer (Condor, 19, 1917, pp. 159-161), was San Francisco, February, 1827.

More might be said along this line, but enough is presented for the purpose of establishing the application of Lesson's name. This action, however, is not at all new, as the gist of my demonstration was set forth clearly by Hartert, 36 years ago (Novitates Zoologicae, 1, 1894, pp. 63-64); also the situation is apparent in the synonymy given by Salvin (Cat. Birds British Mus., 16, 1892, p. 394), and there may be other foreign references to the same effect that I do not know about. The curious thing is that Americans have either overlooked Lesson's description (save for Ridgway's inclusion of the name with a question mark in the synonymy under *Selasphorus alleni*) or ignored it. In all the nomenclatural hubbub raised by Elliot when Henshaw named *alleni* I find no adequate mention of Lesson!

Unless the case as here set forth be reversed by evidence that I do not know about, the hummingbirds in question should hereafter be called

1. *Selasphorus sasin sasin* (Lesson). Migratory Allen Hummingbird.

2. *Selasphorus sasin sedentarius* Grinnell. Non-migratory Allen Hummingbird.

—J. GRINNELL, Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, December 13, 1930.

White-tailed Kites in Sonoma County.—North American White-tailed Kites (*Elanus leucurus majusculus*) have been observed as residents of Alexander Valley, about five miles north of Healdsburg, for a number of years. During the falls of 1924, 1925 and 1926, while hunting quail along the Russian River, I have on many occasions seen from one to five kites. It is believed they nested there until at least 1928. I have never seen a nest but think that is due to the fact that I did not try to locate one at that time.

Of a group of five kites seen in 1925, two appeared to be mature and three young. A resident of the valley states they bred there until 1928 after which date no mated pair was seen in his vicinity. They occupied the valley between the Russian River and the foothills about a mile and a half distant. Much of the valley is in prune orchards and the remainder is pasture land in which are many large valley oaks. The kites were often seen in trees or flying along the river.

During the past year only one has been seen. It still occupies the same territory and is observed on almost every visit to this locality. Whether the other kites have permanently migrated to another region or have fallen victims of gunners or other misfortunes is not known. Unlike other species of the hawk family, they were rather tame and allowed close approach. Some gunners shoot hawks without distinguishing between those that are beneficial and those that are harmful. There are a few hunters who, simply for practice, will shoot any large bird in flight. As quail are found in the territory of the kites I am afraid these rare, beautiful, and beneficial birds have been reduced in this section to a solitary survivor.—C. W. EDGE, Healdsburg, California, December 9, 1930.

Specimens from Point Barrow, Alaska.—Among the specimens collected the past season by Charles D. Brower at Barrow, Alaska, for the Chicago Academy of Sciences, were two forms new to our collection of birds from this northern point. A female Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*) was secured at the village, June 5, 1930, and several Slender-billed Shearwaters (*Puffinus tenuirostris*) were collected on the sea ice during November and December, 1929. Three males of the latter species were sent to the Academy, taken November 9 and December 10. Mr. Brower writes that there were many bands off-shore during the late fall months, but that they were too wild to be approached. The specimens collected were caught in the ice, some frozen solidly, and others still alive, too weak to rise. The birds were, according to Mr. Brower, very thin.—ALFRED M. BAILEY, Chicago Academy of Sciences, Chicago, January 1, 1931.