

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

TWO NEW OWLS, A SWIFT AND A POORWILL FROM
MEXICO¹

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Since the description by Griscom (Amer. Mus. Nov. No. 438, Dec. 15, 1930) of *Cryptoglaux rostrata* from Guatemala, the number of specimens of the Saw Whet Owl recorded from Mexico has been doubled by the securing of four individuals for the Moore collection and the locating of a fifth in the Museo Nacional de Historia Natural in Mexico City, a bird in immature plumage. The tag on the last records its capture at Jalapa, Veracruz. The ones in the Moore collection consist of the following: an adult male from Rancho Enmedio, Guanajuato, 6,000 feet altitude, Jan. 18, 1939 with sex organs considerably enlarged; an adult female from Puerto Lengua de Vaca 47 miles west of Toluca, State of Mexico, 9,350 feet altitude, Oct. 28, 1941; a male, in typical immature plumage with sex organs greatly enlarged, from a garden in Mexico City, Feb. 19, 1942; and a peculiar male from Volcán Tacaná, Chiapas, 3,000 meters altitude, April 14, 1943, with sex organs somewhat enlarged. Although the two adults show a slight buffiness on the flanks, this may be a remnant of the immature plumage and they are deemed to be true *acadicus acadicus*, as are the first and fourth bird mentioned above. The same is true of the Los Masos, Jalisco, individual in the American Museum of Natural History.

The Chiapas specimen is obviously a different form, intermediate, except for one character, between *acadicus* of the United States and the tropical *rostratus* of Guatemala. It is herewith described:

Aegolius ridgwayi tacanensis, subsp. nov.

Tacaná Saw Whet Owl

Type.—Male, number 37459, collection of Robert T. Moore; Volcán Tacaná, Chiapas, Mexico; altitude 3000 meters; April 14, 1943; sex organs slightly enlarged; collected by Mario del Toro Avilés.

¹A contribution from the California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, California.

Subspecific characters.—Nearest in its most important characters to *Aegolius ridgwayi rostratus* Griscom and, like it, differing from true *acadicus* in having (1) the toes partly bare; (2) the wings and tail without white spots or bars or with only vestigial traces; (3) the suborbital region browner; and (4) the under wing coverts not white, it also differs from *rostratus* in having (A) a more pointed wing; (B) a smaller bill and shorter culmen; (C) buff rather than wood-brown under wing coverts; and (D) very short buffy streaks on forehead, instead of none in *rostratus*, or long white ones in *acadicus*. In addition, the brown and white streaks on the ruff of *acadicus* are replaced by a conspicuous buffy band, each feather margined by brown, producing a marbled effect, the same being bordered anteriorly by white.

Range.—Known only from one specimen, the type, taken in the Temperature Zone at an altitude of about 10,000 ft. on the Mexican side of the boundary with Guatemala.

Measurements in millimeters.—Wing 136.2, Tail 59, Culmen from cere 12.4.

Specimens examined.—*acadicus*: 73 specs. from Canada and the United States, all in the Museum of Comparative Zoology; these include 6 immatures, also 2 immatures marked "*brooksi*." In addition the 5 specimens from Mexico, mentioned above, and 4 from the U. S. in the Moore Collection; also the 1 in the Museo Nacional of Mexico City. Finally all specimens in the American Museum of Natural History, the Biological Survey Collection and the United States National Museum, including the type of *ridgwayi*. I have not inspected the type of *rostratus*, but Griscom, the describer, who has inspected the type of *tacanensis*, assures me the latter is distinctly different in the characters given.

Remarks.—From the above I do not jump to the conclusion that *acadicus*, *tacanensis*, *rostratus* and *ridgwayi* are all conspecific, although this may be true, because I feel, as Peters (Birds of the World, 4, 174, footnote 1) has expressed it, that until it is definitely known that all have an adult plumage, it is wiser to maintain two specific entities. The discovery of a high temperature form of the *acadicus*—*ridgwayi* group as far south as the Guatemalan border does not militate against Griscom's theory that the tropical forms of this group may not have an adult plumage. *Tacanensis* is not a tropical form. On the other hand, if this peculiar plumage of the type proves to be its adult plumage and that it has an as yet undiscovered immature plumage, then such evidence, coupled with the intermediate characters of this type may force the conclusion that it is the hitherto missing link between the temperate *acadicus* and the tropical *rostratus*.

The reasons for conceiving that the plumage of the type of *tacanensis* may be nearly adult are as follows: the upper parts are not the dark Vandyke Brown² that immatures of *acadicus* show, but the lighter Prouts Brown of the adults; the sides of the face and anterior underparts also resemble an adult plumage as do the whitish legs, toes and under tail coverts. Only the buffy posterior underparts can be regarded as evidence of immaturity. The fact that the median rectrices are still in their sheaths in an April bird seems to indicate this individual was

²Names of colors, when capitalized, are taken from Ridgway's Color Standard and Nomenclature, 1912.

born in the previous year, for often late fall specimens of *acadicus* possess typical immature plumage throughout, as this bird does not.

My thanks are gratefully offered to the authorities of the American Museum of Natural History and the Biological Survey, and particularly to Ludlow Griscom of the Museum of Comparative Zoology and to Herbert Friedmann of the United States National Museum for unusual courtesies.

In June of 1945, on my return from a zoological trip to Chiapas, I happened to visit a small taxidermical shop in Mexico City at the invitation of Senor Abraham Ramirez, who had collected for me on an expedition to Presidio, Veracruz in 1942. Almost hidden on a top shelf a peculiar bird with swallow-like tail and white throat caught my attention. As I previously had never seen one like it, I purchased it and obtained minute details of its capture in Presidio by Senor Ramirez. It proved to represent an extraordinary extension of range of a genus, not hitherto recorded from Mexico. I herewith describe it as a new subspecies:

***Panyptila cayennensis veraecrucis* subsp. nov.**

Veracruz Panyptila

Type.—Male adult, number 45544, collection of Robert T. Moore; Presidio, Veracruz, Mexico; about 500 ft. altitude; June 1943; collected by Abraham Ramirez.

Subspecific characters.—Nearest to *Panyptila cayennensis cayennensis* (Gmelin) of Central America, but differs in having both wing and tail about 10% larger. It differs much more from its geographically nearer relative, *Panyptila sancti-hieronymi* Salvin, of Guatemala, which although almost identical in coloration, is a huge bird relatively, almost twice its size.

Range.—Known only from the type, taken in the Tropical Zone of Veracruz at Persidio.

Measurements in millimeters.—male type—Wing 126.8, Tail 63., Exposed Culmen 4.6. Average measurements of 9 *cayennensis* males from Nicaragua, Panama and Trinidad—W. 117.1, T. 55.8.

Specimens examined.—*cayennensis*: 6 males and 10 females from Canal Zone, Panama, in M.C.Z.; 1 spec. from Trinidad and 4 from S. America in Am. Mus. of N. H.; 1 spec. from Trinidad and 4 from Rio Escondido, Nicaragua, in U. S. Nat. Mus.; 1 spec. from Catacamas, Honduras; *sancti-hieronymi*: 1 spec. from Guatemala in U. S. Nat. Mus.; *veraecrucis*: the Type.

Remarks.—Previous to the discovery of *veraecrucis* in Mexico, the most northern point from which this species had been recorded was Catacamas, Honduras. Apparently from that locality south through Central America it is nowhere common, except locally at its nesting sites, but it has been collected at various localities in South America and about the locks of the Panama Canal Zone it has been almost common at times, it having been found breeding there on July 23, 1932 by J. Greenway, Jr. The great extension of the range of the species northward by the present discovery reveals a surprisingly irregular