

***Speotyto cunicularia minor* Cory**

*Speotyto cunicularia minor* CORY, 1918, Birds of Amer., Field Museum Zoological Series, XIII, p. 40. Type from Boa Vista, Rio Branco, Amazonas, Brazil.

?*Speotyto brachyptera* CHUBB, 1916, Birds Brit. Guiana, I, p. 292.

Twenty-eight skins of this species are at hand from various parts of the range Cory records (*minor*—*loc. cit.*) and from Venezuela. Fifteen are freshly collected birds from the middle and lower Orinoco and for a while seemed to be the first recorded specimens to be taken in Venezuela. However, Cory overlooked two skins of *S. c. minor* (Coll. G. K. Cherrie, Altagracia) which Hartert had classified as *S. c. brachyptera*,<sup>1</sup> the Margarita Island form before the northeastern Brazilian race, *minor*, was separated from it. In The American Museum of Natural History, in addition to these two birds, there is still another skin collected by Cherrie at Caicara.

According to Cory, *minor*, described from the Rio Branco region, ranges only questionably to British Guiana. Comparison between eight old British Guiana specimens collected by Whitely and two nearly topotypical birds from Frechal, Rio Surumu, northeastern Brazil, shows that a close affinity exists between the two series in color pattern and in size. (It is impossible to make color comparisons because the skins collected by Whitely are faded.)

Comparing old skins with old, the birds from the middle Orinoco region obtained by Cherrie are similar to Whitely's British Guiana birds, both having reddish brown upper parts as against dull grayish brown in the recently collected nearly topotypical birds. Comparing fresh material, nine lower Orinoco skins in the Phelps Collection have dark grayish brown upper parts similar to the nearly topotypical *minor* but show a slight though consistent tendency to be more rufous.

Apparently the birds from the lower Orinoco and from the middle Orinoco (the latter with the rufous wash even more pronounced) are intermediates between the northeastern Brazilian form, *minor*, and the upper Apure Valley race described in this

paper, which has a rich reddish-brown back. Their relationship is decidedly closer to *minor* than to the new form. Since they are so nearly like *minor*, I think any further separation would be unwise.

***Speotyto cunicularia apurensis*, new subspecies**

Type from Pedraza (Ciudad Bolivia), Barinas, upper Apure Valley, Venezuela. No. 2216, W. H. Phelps Collection, Caracas, Venezuela. (Type on deposit at The American Museum of Natural History.) Adult male collected March 16, 1939, by William H. Phelps. Altitude, 310 meters.

DIAGNOSIS.—Similar in measurement to *S. c. arubensis* from Aruba Island and the adjacent Paraguaná Peninsula but upper surface brighter, being Snuff Brown tinted with Buckthorn Brown instead of Saccardo's Umber. Differs from *S. c. brachyptera* of Margarita Island and *S. c. minor* of northeastern Brazil by reason of greater size and much brighter upper parts. (Wing averages 8 mm. longer than in *brachyptera*, 4 mm. longer than in *minor*.)

RANGE.—Venezuela: southern foothills of the Andes flanking the upper Apure River Valley on the north and northwest, south to the Apure River. (From Pedraza (Ciudad Bolivia), Barinas, on the northwest, to Tinaquillo, Cojedes, and Valencia, Carabobo, on the north, to Palmairito, Apure, on the south.)

DESCRIPTION OF TYPE.—Upper surface Snuff Brown (becoming slightly darker, Bister, between the shoulders) irregularly spotted with large dull white, buff and Clay Color spots. Crown similar to back but spotting smaller and more extensive giving it a brighter appearance. Lores whitish with long black tips (a few short brownish-black feathers cover the longer feathers at their bases); auriculars Tawny-Olive becoming lighter more buffy at base; forehead, supra-ocular stripe, area immediately posterior to the auriculars and chin, silvery white; malar region and postauricular region white, connecting sub-obsolete with pale supra-ocular stripe. Center of chest white, and unlike chin, with gray bases to the feathers. This area, roughly oval in shape, is separated from the silvery white throat by an irregular brownish band which continues to sides of neck. The feathers which form this band are Bister on their basal halves and tipped with light cinnamon-buff or sub-terminally with paired spots. Breast Pinkish Buff fading to dull buffy white on crissum and under tail-coverts. Each breast feather bears two Cinnamon-Buff and two light bars, one of the latter being terminal (all are anterior to the gray basal feather-halves). Across the breast behind the white chest spot, chiefly on the sides, the brownish bars become broader and darker giving the appearance of a Snuff Brown crescentic band. The brown bars decrease uni-

<sup>1</sup> 1902, *Novitates Zoologicae*, IX, p. 116.

formly in intensity of color and in width posteriorly, becoming obsolete on the crissum and under tail-coverts. Remiges drab brown with from six to seven pairs of buffy notches becoming increasingly larger on the inner vane. Greater and middle wing-coverts near snuff brown irregularly notched with buffy white. Lesser wing-coverts Sayal Brown becoming duller, more drab, on the portion between the elbow and the wrist where almost obsolete gray-buff terminal markings appear. Tail above like lower back, with five pairs of buff spottings and notchings except on central rectrix which is too worn for description (the spots are on outer vanes and large notchings are on inner vanes). Outermost feather on left side with whole inner web and basal half of outer web creamy whitish. Right outer feather with traces of brown bars on terminal third of inner web. Bill (in life), "Yellow-green"; iris, "yellow"; feet, "olive." Wing, 162.5 mm.; tail, 69; exposed culmen, 14.5; tarsus, 50.5.

**REMARKS.**—Females are as described for the male. Range of measurement in seven adult males: wing, 153–162.5 mm.; tail, 61.5–69 mm.; exposed culmen, 13.5–15 mm. A Mocquers skin collected in 1893 at Valencia,<sup>1</sup> state of Carabobo, appears to belong to this new race despite its faded condition. (Valencia is about thirty-five miles from Tinaquillo where two specimens of *apurensis* were collected.)

On the upper aspect the series of sixteen skins averages Snuff Brown. The extremes in color variation are slight and all are decidedly brighter than any other specimens examined. One specimen from Tinaquillo (W. H. Phelps Coll., No. 2221) is cinnamon-snuff-brown as opposed to one from Palmarito (W. H. Phelps, No. 2215) which appears duller, more umber. The light spotting appears quite variable on both the back and head. Some specimens have a great deal of it, for example, one from El Tinaco, Cojedes (W. H. Phelps Coll., No. 2223), has buffy white spotting on about a third of the total feather area of the crown. At the opposite extreme, one from Palmarito (W. H. Phelps Coll., No. 2212) bears only a few flecks of white and almost obsolete terminal fringes on the crown. The average is as described for the type.

The tails show great variation ranging from one extreme in which the outer tail feather is plain creamy buff on the inner vane (W. H. Phelps Coll., No. 2217) to the

other in which this same feather bears three broad brownish bars (W. H. Phelps Coll., No. 2212). The average is as described for the type.

#### SPECIMENS EXAMINED

*S. c. arubensis*.—ARUBA ISLAND: 2 ♂, 3 ♀ (including type). VENEZUELA: Adicora, Paraguaná Peninsula, 8 ♂, 8 ♀.

*S. c. brachyptera*.—MARGARITA ISLAND: 4 ♂, 2 ♀.

*S. c. minor*.—BRAZIL: Frechal, Rio Surumu, 1 ♂, 1 ♀. GUIANA: Annai, 2 ♂, 4 ♀; upper Takutu Mts., 1(?). VENEZUELA: Piscoa, 1 ♂; Tobasco, 5 ♂, 3 ♀; La Puerta, Palenque-Mercedes, Guárico, 3 ♂, 3 ♀; Altagracia, 1 ♂, 1 ♀; Caicara, 1 ♀.

*S. c. apurensis*.—VENEZUELA: Pedraza (Ciudad Bolívar), 2 ♂, 2 ♀; Palmarito, 4 ♂, 3 ♀; El Tinaco, 2 ♂, 1 ♀; Tinaquillo, 1 ♂, 1 ♀; Valencia, 1(?).

*S. c. tolimae*.—COLOMBIA: plains of Tolima, 1 ♂, 1 ♀, 1(?).

#### *Centurus subelegans subelegans* Bonaparte

*Centurus subelegans* BONAPARTE, 1837, Proc. Zool. Soc. London, p. 109 ("Mexico," i.e., Venezuela).

There still remains some question as to what form Bonaparte applied his original description.<sup>2</sup> In the first description he gave "Mexico" as the type locality and in the second, which embodied nearly the same description,<sup>3</sup> he corrected the type locality to "Venezuela."

In attempting to affix the original and abridged descriptions, our observations seem to parallel those of Mr. Richmond,<sup>4</sup> who is satisfied that, "the proper name for the present bird [El Valle, Caracas] is without doubt *M. subelegans* of Bonaparte, although some ornithologists, principally the English, have for a long time relegated this name to the synonymy of *M. aurifrons* (Wagler); probably following Selater, who seems to have been the first to make the mistake."

The case in point is particularly interesting because of the discovery of a second Venezuelan coastal form, there being, of course, the possibility that Bonaparte's description might apply to it and not, as Mr. Richmond thinks, to the long familiar Venezuelan race.

<sup>2</sup> 1837, Proc. Zool. Soc. London, p. 109.

<sup>3</sup> 1850, Conspectus, I, p. 119.

<sup>4</sup> 1896, Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., XVIII, p. 666.

<sup>1</sup> Specimen in American Museum of Natural History, No. 485375.