

# PROCEEDINGS

## OF THE

# BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

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## THE FERRUGINOUS PIGMY OWL OF NORTH- WESTERN MEXICO AND ARIZONA.

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Ferruginous pigmy owls which have been acquired by the Dickey collections from northwestern Mexico and Arizona during the past several years are so distinct from *Glaucidium brasilianum ridgwayi* of southern Mexico and Central America that they unquestionably constitute a well-marked race. A name and the distinguishing characters are given below.

### *Glaucidium brasilianum cactorum*, subs. nov.

*Type*.—Breeding male adult, 30225, Dickey collections at the California Institute of Technology; giant cactus grove between Guaymas and Empalme, on the coast of Sonora, Mexico; collected by A. J. van Rossem on April 24, 1930, original number 12940.

*Subspecific characters*.—Compared with *Glaucidium brasilianum ridgwayi* Sharpe of southern Mexico and Central America; wing shorter and tail longer; coloration in all phases paler and very much grayer; tail in the gray phase banded with brown and buff or brown and rufous, not dark brown and white as in the gray phase of *ridgwayi*.

*Range*.—Southern Arizona south to Nayarit.

*Remarks*.—Like most owls of this genus the present species has a red phase, a gray phase, and a rather variable type which is intermediate and is often called the "mongrel" phase. While the series of *cactorum* exhibits these three phases it is rather difficult to compare them with the corresponding phases of *ridgwayi*. Ignoring the matter of tail bands, the color of the upper parts may be relatively compared as follows:

Southern Mexico and

|                         |     |         |         |      |
|-------------------------|-----|---------|---------|------|
| Central America.....    | Red | Mongrel | Gray    |      |
| Arizona and Sonora..... |     | Red     | Mongrel | Gray |

In other words the red extreme of *cactorum* falls between the mongrel and gray phases of *ridgwayi* in color, but even so is paler in tone.

Texas specimens are not included in the above comparisons even though they approximate very closely the measurements and tail characters of

*cactorum*. It is my impression at the moment that in color they are best referred to *ridgwayi*, but insufficient material has been examined to be certain as to their systematic status. Ridgway (*Birds of North and Middle America*, 6, 1914, 798) was inclined to consider them distinct from *ridgwayi*, but whether they constitute still another race can not be decided at present.

As to phase tendencies in regard to sex, there is a marked average difference in that females tend to redness and the males to grayness. However, both extremes of coloration are represented in both sexes.

*Specimens examined*.—*G. b. ridgwayi*, Central America, 35; Mexico, 24: *G. b. cactorum*, Arizona, 4; Sonora, 15; Nayarit (not typical), 1.

## MEASUREMENTS—ADULTS.

|  | MALES   |       |
|--|---------|-------|
|  | Wing    | Tail  |
| 27 from range of <i>ridgwayi</i> ..... | 89-94   | 56-59 |
| 10 from range of <i>cactorum</i> ..... | 85-90   | 59-64 |
|  | FEMALES |       |
|  | Wing    | Tail  |
| 14 from range of <i>ridgwayi</i> ..... | 94-100  | 57-64 |
| 7 from range of <i>cactorum</i> .....  | 91-95   | 63-67 |