

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
CALIFORNIA ACADEMY
OF
NATURAL SCIENCES.
VOLUME II.
1858-1862.

SAN FRANCISCO:
TOWNE & BACON, EXCELSIOR STEAM PRINTING OFFICE.
1863.

Leaves unequally pinnate, about two inches long; leaflets in about six pairs, opposite, linear-lanceolate (half an inch or more in length).

Peduncles longer than the leaves, angular, minute subulate, bracts about as long as the pedicels, or one-third the length of the calyx; about nine-flowered, in a close capitate spike; flowers purple, large; calyx teeth subulate, as long as the tube, lower tooth diverging from the flower nearly to a right-angle, clothed with black hairs.

Banner oval, emarginate, one-third longer than the wings, the lateral margins recurved below, erect.

Legumes curved, acuminate and pointed with the persistent style, glabrous, colored and plane above upon the back, cells somewhat unequal or subtriquetrous, six to eight-seeded cells, or about sixteen-seeded.

July 7, 1861.

President in the Chair.

The following paper was read:

New Californian Animals. By J. G. Cooper, M. D.

Note.—The animals here described belong to the collection of the State Geological Survey, and brief diagnoses of them are published with the approval of Prof. Whitney, State Geologist, to secure for the survey the priority of description.

A. Species new to Science.

The first that I undertake to describe may possibly have been before described from Mexican or South American specimens, but as Mr. Cassin, of Philadelphia, is unable to identify it with any of them, I venture to name it:

Athene whitneyi—Whitney's Owl.

Spec. char.—Above light brownish gray, thickly spotted with angular pale brown dots, the most densely on head, but those on back largest; back also somewhat barred with waving lines of the same color. A concealed white collar on back of neck, forming a white bar across middle of feathers, which are plumbeous at base like the rest. Quills with three to six spots on each web, those on inner web white, as are those on the outer web of second, third and

fourth quills. Rest of spots light brown. A row of white spots on edges of lesser coverts, four on the upper, seven on the lower series, with a row of light brown spots between. A few white spots also on outer secondaries. A white stripe on outer row of scapulars, edged by large light brown stripes toward middle of back. Rest of wing feathers dark brown, the secondaries with light ashy dots toward their ends. Tail feathers colored like the quills, the light spots forming five broken bars, and another narrower bar at the tip. Wings and tail ashy brown beneath, with white bars; edge of wing white, a dark brown patch at end of coverts, which are elsewhere white, tinged with yellowish.

Stiff feathers above eye white, with black spots on middle of shafts. Feathers below orbit light brown, faintly barred with darker; bristles around bill black for their outer half. Chin and throat feathers white, their base black, and tips of lower series light brown, the white thus forming a broad crescent in front of the neck, extending between outer angles of orbits, somewhat broken at the median line, and edged with brown, darkest laterally. Sides of neck narrowly barred with ashy alternating with light and dark brown; a large white patch in front of neck, mottled with blackish. Breast imperfectly barred and blotched with the same colors, the brown forming large patches toward abdomen, margined with gray and white.

Sides more grayish, tinged yellow, flanks plumbeous. Tibial feathers narrowly barred with light and dark brown. Tarsal bristles white, those on toes yellowish, soles yellow, claws horn brown, bill pale green, (black with yellow edges when dry) iris bright yellow.

Length 6.25 inches; extent of wings, 15.25; wing from carpus, 4.50; tail, 2.25; tarsus, 0.90; middle toe, 0.60, with its claw, 0.70—inner lateral claw reaching to base of middle, outer to base of inner; hind toe and claw, 0.50; gape of bill, 0.45; height, 0.30; width at base, 0.40.

No. 208, male, (?) shot at Fort Mojave, lat. 35°, Colorado Valley, April 26th, 1861; the only one met with.

This owl is the smallest species yet discovered in the United States, being considerably less than the little *Glaucidium gnoma*. In colors it much resembles this species, but in generic characters differs essentially, being in these closely allied to *Athene*, though it might perhaps form a distinct genus. Not having access to any analysis of the South American genera, I have preferred to retain this bird in *Athene*.

The next, which is undoubtedly a new bird, I have dedicated to the interesting little daughter of my kind friend, Prof. S. F. Baird.