

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW SYLVIETTA

By HARRY C. OBERHOLSER

A specimen of *Sylvietta rufescens* (Vieillot) from Damara Land, collected by Mr. C. J. Anderson, and now in the United States National Museum, differs so greatly from the Cape Colony bird that it appears to represent a well-marked subspecies which, as it seems to be undescribed, may be called:

SYLVIETTA RUFESCENS OCHROCARA subsp. nov.

Chars. subsp.—Similar to *Sylvietta rufescens rufescens*, but very much paler both above and below, the lores and postocular stripe pale brown instead of blackish; the rump and upper tail-coverts more tawny; the lower surface not so uniform.

Description.—Type, adult, No. 98,155, U. S. N. M.; Damara Land, western Africa, December 24, 1866; C. J. Anderson. Upper parts pale brownish gray—about the same shade as in *Sylvietta micrura*—the forehead rather paler and tinged with ochraceous buff, the lower rump and the upper tail-coverts dull pale tawny; tail light fuscous, narrowly margined and tipped with paler; wings fuscous like the tail, the superior coverts and the quills broadly edged externally with the color of the back, which color on the primaries and outer secondaries has distally a decided tinge of ochraceous, the quills with basal part of inner margins narrowly paler; superciliary stripe, cheeks, and auriculars dull ochraceous buff; lores and postocular stripe dull light brown; chin, upper throat, and middle of abdomen cream buff; sides of neck, jugulum, breast, sides, flanks, crissum, lining of wing, and thighs ochraceous buff, rather brighter on sides, flanks, and thighs. Length of wing, 62; tail, 27; exposed culmen, 13.5; tarsus, 19.5; middle toe, 11 mm.

Although in size this new form appears to be about the same as true *Sylvietta rufescens*, the color differences are quite sufficient to warrant specific separation were it not for the great probability that by continuity of range *ochrocaro* is but a pale geographical race of *rufescens*.

The original description of *Sylvietta rufescens*¹ was based on the bird from Cape Colony, to which therefore the title *rufescens* should

¹ *Dicaeum rufescens* Vieillot, Nouv. Dict. d'Hist. Nat., ix, 1817, p. 407.

be restricted. Neither of the two other synonyms of the species apply to the Damara Land race, for *Sylvietta crombec* Lafresnaye¹ has the same basis as *S. rufescens* (i. e., Levaillant), and *Oligura meridionalis* Bonaparte² from southern Africa is a *nomen nudum*.

¹ *Rev. Zool.*, 1839, p. 258.

² *Consp. Av.*, I, 1850, p. 257.



Oberholser, Harry C. 1905. "Description of a new Sylvieta." *Smithsonian miscellaneous collections* 47, 373–374.

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