

XIV.—*Descriptions of Seven New Species of Birds from the Island of St. Vincent, West Indies.*

BY GEORGE N. LAWRENCE.

Read May 13th, 1878.

When Mr. Ober had completed his investigations in Dominica, he proceeded to St. Vincent; but unfortunately, while there, he had two attacks of fever, one early in October, from which he soon recovered, but in December he had a relapse; by this he was completely prostrated, and it was not until the end of January, that he was convalescent.

There were also constant rains, and consequently his collecting was seriously interfered with. He thinks, however, that the specimens obtained, and the birds observed, complete quite thoroughly the avi-fauna of the island.

He left for the island of Grenada about the first of March, at which time he forwarded to the Smithsonian, the collection made in St. Vincent. This was received by me about the first of April. There are only 90 specimens, representing 35 species; seven of these I consider new to science, and their descriptions are given below. Besides the species sent, he enumerates 24 others, which he either saw, or had named to him as undoubtedly frequenting the island; making the total number 59. I expect soon to give a complete catalogue of them, together with his notes, which I now have.

1. *Turdus nigrirostris*.

FEMALE. Front, crown, and occiput dark warm brown, each feather of the crown and occiput with a shaft-stripe of dull pale rufous; upper plumage reddish olivaceous brown, deeper in color on the upper part of the back and on the wing coverts; the latter have their ends marked with small spots of bright rufous, which possibly may be an evidence of the example not being fully mature; the tail is of a dark warm brown, the shafts black; inner webs of quills blackish brown; the outer webs reddish brown, of the same color as the tail feathers; the shafts are glossy black; under lining of wings clear cinnamon red; under plumage light brownish ash, with the middle of the abdomen and the crissum white; on the upper part of the breast, a few feathers end with dark reddish



brown, forming an irregular narrow band; the throat unfortunately is soiled with blood, but as well as I can judge, it has stripes colored like the breast, and the feathers edged with whitish; the thighs are dull fulvous; the bill is large and strong, the upper mandible is black, the under also, but showing a brownish tinge; tarsi and toes dark brown.

Length (fresh),  $9\frac{1}{4}$  in.; wing,  $4\frac{1}{2}$ ; tail,  $3\frac{1}{2}$ ; tarsus,  $1\frac{1}{4}$ ; bill from front,  $\frac{1}{2}$ .

Type in National Museum, Washington.

*Remarks.* There is but one specimen in the collection; in the section (*Planesticus*) which this species comes under, the sexes do not differ.

In the distribution of colors on the under plumage, it is much like *T. albiventris*, but the color of the breast and sides is darker, and the upper plumage is of a much deeper and richer brown. The strong black bill is a striking feature.

Mr. Ober says: "Not abundant, obtained in Rutland Vale, January 25th, 1878."

## 2. *Myiadestes sibilans*.

The upper plumage is black; the front, lores, and sides of the head for a short distance under the eye, are intense black; the crown, occiput, hind neck and ear-coverts are deep black; the upper part of the back is not quite so deep in color, as it has a slight smoky tinge; the lower part of the back, rump, and upper tail-coverts, have a wash of dull olivaceous, the latter terminate with black; the ear-coverts have their shafts narrowly streaked with white, less striking than in *M. genibarbis*; the lower eye-lid is pure white; the chin and the anterior part of the rictal stripe are white, the posterior part of the latter is cinnamon-red; a very distinct black moustachial line starts from the under mandible, and joins the black of the side of the neck, separating the rictal stripe from the bright cinnamon-red color of the throat; the breast and upper part of the abdomen are of a clear plumbeous gray; the middle and lower part of the abdomen and the under tail coverts, are of a rather paler cinnamon-red than the throat; the thighs are blackish plumbeous, some of the feathers ending with light red; the quills are black, the edge of the wing and bases of the quill-feathers are white; the tail feathers, except the outer two, are brownish slate color, marked transversely with black bars, which are not very conspicuous; the first lateral feather has the inner web grayish-white, with a blackish diagonal mark at the base, the outer web is black for one quarter of its length from the base, the remaining part of a dusky ash color; the second feather is blackish, except that it has for half its length, on the inner web, an elongated white mark along the shaft, widening out to the end; the bill is black; tarsi and toes very pale yellow, claws black; "iris bright hazel."

Length (fresh),  $7\frac{1}{4}$  in.; wing,  $3\frac{1}{4}$ ; tail, 3; tarsus, 1.

The sexes do not differ in plumage.



Types in National Museum, Washington.

*Remarks.* This differs from all the West India species in its black upper plumage. The color of the throat is much lighter than in *M. genibarbis* and *solitarius*; in both of these the color is of a deep chestnut red; it has the black moustachial line as in *M. genibarbis*, but it is more defined.

*M. armillatus* (according to the description and plate) differs in being of a lighter color above, slate-gray (gris ardoise); in having the red of the under plumage darker, brownish-red (brun roux); it has no moustachial line, and the eye is encircled with white; but it varies especially, in having the feathers of the thigh terminating in bright yellow.

Mr. Ober writes: "This bird has been an object of search for fifty years, and has so long eluded the vigilance of naturalists and visitors to the mountains, that it is called the 'invisible bird.' From being seen only on the Souffriere Mountain, it has acquired the name of the 'Souffriere bird.'"

Mr. Ober is entitled to great credit for unravelling the mystery connected with this bird. By his indomitable perseverance, and camping out on the top of the mountain for several days, he secured seven specimens.

### 3. *Thryothorus musicus*.

MALE. Above of a dark ferruginous, somewhat darker on the crown and brighter on the rump; lores, and a line running back from the eye, white tinged with rufous; the exposed portions of the wings are dark rufous, conspicuously barred with black; the inner webs of the primaries are blackish-brown; under wing-coverts white; the tail-feathers are dark rufous, barred with black; the entire back and upper tail-coverts are marked inconspicuously, with narrow transverse dusky lines; the feathers of the rump have concealed white shaft-stripes, which become wider towards the ends of the feathers; the feathers of the back also, have the basal portion of their shafts marked with white; the throat, breast, and middle of the abdomen are white, the latter tinged with rufous; the sides are light ferruginous; the under tail-coverts are rufous, each feather marked with a subterminal round black spot; upper mandible black; the under whitish, with the end dusky; tarsi and toes light brownish flesh color.

Length (fresh),  $5\frac{1}{2}$  in.; wing,  $2\frac{1}{2}$ ; tail, 1 13-16; tarsus,  $\frac{3}{4}$ .

There are three male specimens in the collection, but no female; one example is evidently not mature; in this, the white



dorsal and rump spots are wanting, and the crissum is immaculate; the sides are dull rufous, the under plumage is tinged with rufous, and marked with faint, narrow, dusky bars. This specimen was killed February, 1878.

Types in National Museum, Washington.

*Remarks.* In its white under-plumage, this species somewhat resembles *T. mesoleucus*, Sel. from St. Lucia; but it is bright rufous above, instead of earthy-brown, and the flanks are light ferruginous instead of fulvous; it is also of larger dimensions. The transverse markings on the back, and the round black spots on the crissum, are strong characteristics.

Mr. Ober states that it is common, and is known as the House Wren and Wall Bird, breeding in holes in houses and trees. He says: "The sweet warble of this lively little bird may be heard morning, noon, and night, about the houses and sugar mills, as well as far up the mountain-sides and valleys."

#### 4. *Certhiola atrata*.

MALE. The entire plumage is black; on the head and throat it is of a deeper color; the breast, upper part of abdomen, and rump, on a side view, show a just perceptible tinge of greenish olive; bill and feet black.

Length (fresh),  $4\frac{1}{2}$  in.; wing,  $2\frac{3}{4}$ ; tail,  $1\frac{1}{2}$ ; tarsus,  $\frac{3}{4}$ .

The female differs only in being smaller.

Length (fresh), 4 in.; wing,  $2\frac{1}{4}$ ; tail,  $1\frac{3}{8}$ ; tarsus,  $\frac{5}{8}$ .

Types in National Museum, Washington.

*Remarks.* This is certainly a remarkable departure from the regular pattern of coloration, which prevails so uniformly in this genus. Had there been only a single example, I should have considered it as probably a case of abnormal coloring; but it seems to be the representative form of the genus in this island. Mr. Ober says it is very abundant, and "seems to have almost entirely replaced the black and yellow one of Dominica, etc." He has sent four specimens, two of each sex. But what is surprising is, that there is likewise found in St. Vincent a species of the usual style of coloration, of which he sends but two specimens, stating that it is not abundant. This I have described as a new species also.



5. *Certhiola saccharina*.

**FEMALE.** Crown, occiput, lores, and sides of the head, glossy black; back of a dull grayish or smoky black; rump dull greenish-yellow; a very conspicuous white superciliary stripe runs from the bill to the hind neck; tail black, the first two lateral feathers have a small patch of dull white on their inner webs at the end, the third feather has the end narrowly white; wings black, with a white patch at the base of the primaries; these have their outer webs narrowly margined with white; edge of wing light yellow; under wing-coverts white; throat dark plumbeous, breast and upper part of abdomen, clear light yellow, the sides and lower part of the abdomen are light ashy olive, under tail-coverts yellowish-white, bill and feet black.

Length (fresh)  $4\frac{1}{2}$  in; wing,  $2\frac{1}{2}$ ; tail, 1 9-16; tarsus,  $\frac{5}{8}$ . Two specimens are in the collection, one marked ♂, has the plumage greatly soiled; the other is marked as a ♀ with a ?; this I have taken for the type, the plumage being in a much better condition.

The male measures, length,  $4\frac{3}{8}$  in.; wing,  $2\frac{1}{2}$ ; tail,  $1\frac{1}{4}$ ; tarsus,  $\frac{3}{4}$ .

Types in National Museum, Washington.

**Remarks.** This, in appearance, comes nearest to *C. Portoricensis*, but differs in the superciliary stripe being wider and extending farther back, in the throat being many shades darker in color, in having the flanks of a darker olive, and the yellow on the rump darker and duller.

The color of the breast and rump in *C. Portoricensis* is of a deeper yellow.

Mr. Ober says it is called the "molasses bird."

6. *Leucopeza Bishopi*.

**MALE.** The general plumage is smoky-black, rather darker on the head; the sides are blackish cinereous; a circle of pure white surrounds the eye; a large roundish spot on the middle of the throat, the upper part of the breast, and the middle of the abdomen, are dull white, somewhat mixed with blackish on the throat and with cinereous on the abdomen; a very small spot on the chin, and the tips of the feathers on the upper part of the throat, are dull white; the black on the upper part of the breast has the appearance of a broad band, separating the white of the throat from that of the lower part of the breast; the under tail-coverts are cinereous-black at base, ending largely with dull white; wings and tail black, the outer two tail-feathers have a small white spot, triangular in shape, on their inner webs at the end; bill black; tarsi and toes very pale yellowish-brown, perhaps much lighter colored in the living bird, nails also pale.

Length (fresh)  $5\frac{3}{4}$  in.; wing,  $2\frac{3}{4}$ ; tail,  $2\frac{1}{2}$ ; tarsus,  $\frac{7}{8}$ .

Two specimens marked as females do not differ in plumage from the males.

Length (fresh)  $5\frac{1}{2}$  in.; wing,  $2\frac{3}{4}$ ; tail,  $2\frac{3}{8}$ ; tarsus,  $\frac{7}{8}$ .



Another specimen, marked male, and of quite different colors, I have no doubt is the young of this species; though Mr. Ober in his notes says of it, (No. 428): "The quickest to respond to my call on the Souffriere, was this little bird. It seems an associate of the preceding species (*L. Bishopi*), though I never saw them closely together; yet in general shape and habits, especially in search for insects, they resembled one another. As I have got both male and female of the other, it precludes the possibility of its being the adult of the former. That there may be no doubt, I have preserved one in rum."

The color of this specimen (No. 428), is of a dark olive-brown above, lighter below, and where the white markings are in the adult, it is of a pale dull rufous; on the throat showing some white, and around the eye partially white; the marks on the ends of the tail-feathers are precisely as in the black specimens; the quills are dark brown; the tail-feathers are black. But what I consider conclusive evidence of its being the young of *L. Bishopi* is, that on the crown the black feathers are beginning to appear. Had it not been marked as a male, I should have taken it for the female of this species. But according to Mr. Ober, the sexes are alike.

Types in National Museum, Washington.

*Remarks.* This is a remarkable species, and at first I was at a loss where to place it properly; I determined it to be a Sylvicoline form, yet unlike any of that family in coloration. On comparing it with the description and plate of *Leucopezia Semperi*, Mr. Selater's new form from St. Lucia (P. Z. S., 1876, p 14), I determined it to be a second species of that peculiar genus, and, like that species, having long and light-colored tarsi.

Mr. Ober requested that I would bestow the name of our friend Mr. Nathaniel H. Bishop on some West India bird of his procuring, if the opportunity offered; and it gives me much pleasure to connect his name with so remarkable a species. Mr. Bishop has had much experience in West Indian exploration, and it was in a great measure due to his influence and representations, that Mr. Ober's visit to these islands was determined upon; he also contributed substantial aid, by the donation of instruments, and in other ways.

The habits of this bird would seem to be like those of the wren, as Mr. Ober has on the labels, "Wren?" He states that they are "very rare and very shy, and found in the crater and dark gorges of the Souffriere."

Three specimens were obtained in November, 1877, and one in February, 1878.



7. *Calliste versicolor.*

MALE. Front, crown, and occiput of a bright deep chestnut-red; upper plumage golden fawn-color, clearest on the sides of the neck and on the rump, in some positions showing a pale greenish silvery gloss; upper tail-coverts bluish-green; lores and partly under the eye black; sides of the head and ear-coverts dull dark green; tail-feathers black, except the two middle ones, which, with the outer margins of the others, are bluish green; quills black, conspicuously edged with bluish-green; wing coverts black, with their exposed portions bluish-green; under wing coverts of a light salmon-color; the under plumage is changeable according to position; viewed from the bill downwards it is of a light bluish-lilac, the blue color deepest on the lower part of the throat, and the upper part of the breast; on a side view, the abdomen is of a purplish-red; the feathers of the upper part of the throat are tipped with gray; the under tail-coverts are bright cinnamon color; upper mandible black; the under light brownish horn-color; tarsi and toes black.

Length, 6½ in.; wing, 3¾; tail, 2½; tarsus, 13-16.

The female differs in having the top of the head of a lighter chestnut color, and the upper plumage of a pale green; the under plumage has the same colors as the male, but much subdued; the abdomen, sides and under tail-coverts are of a light cinnamon-color; the wings and tail are black, but margined with a paler bluish-green; the markings about the head and on the throat, are similar to those of the male, "iris hazel."

Length, 6 in.; wing, 3¼; tail, 2½; tarsus, 13-16.

Types in National Museum, Washington.

*Remarks.* This fine, new species belongs to the group which contains *C. vitriolina*, *cayana*, *cyanolaema* and *cucullata*; it somewhat resembles the latter, a species I have never seen, but according to the plate (Mon. of *Calliste*, Sel.), the colors of the present bird are generally darker, with no tendency to ochreous-yellow above, as in *C. cucullata*, and the abdomen is purple instead of reddish-ochreous; the crown is of a clearer and brighter chestnut red. It is larger than any of its allies; and a strikingly different character is its very large and stout bill, exceeding in size that of any of them I am acquainted with, being fully as large as the bill of *Tanagra cana*.

No species of *Calliste* appears to be on record before from any of the West India islands proper. There are five specimens in the collection, three ♂ and two ♀, procured in February, 1878. "Frequents the mountain ridges and valleys."



Lawrence, George N. 1879. "Descriptions of seven new species of birds from the island of St. Vincent, West Indies (Art. XIV)." *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 1, 146–152.

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