

General, U.S. Department of the Army. I am indebted to Dr. Canuto G. Manuel and Mr. Telesforo Oane for help in the field. The type specimen of *alopex* is from a small collection of Leyte birds exchanged to Carnegie Museum, with the consent of the collector, from the University of Arkansas through the kindness of Dr. Douglas James.

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A northern race of lark supposedly breeding in Mexico

by Allan R. Phillips

Received 11th March, 1970

As is well known, only one species of lark, the Horned or Shore Lark (*Eremophila alpestris*) occurs in the Americas, where it is represented by many local races in North America, south to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in southern México, and an isolated one in Colombia. Certain striking paralisms occur, but no widely separated populations are now generally considered identical. Thus, as Dickerman (1963: 331) has intimated, one of the unlikely reports in Miller *et al.* (1957) is that of the breeding of *E. a. enthyimia* (Oberholser) in Coahuila, at least 1100 km. (700 miles) south of its main breeding range as given by Hellmayr (1935) and the American Ornithologists' Union (1957). Earlier writers (Ridgway, 1907) considered it to breed in Canada only, much farther away. This Coahuila record was based by Miller (*op. cit.*: 105) on a series of specimens in the Moore Laboratory of Zoology at Occidental College, taken at various seasons at "4 mi. S. Hipolito", i.e. "Lake Tulio" (=Tulillo), Coahuila, by Chester C. Lamb. No other race was taken there, so this is clearly the resident population.

Through the courtesy of Dr. J. W. Hardy, I was able to study the larks of the Moore Laboratory in 1969 and to compare them to selected Mexican specimens from my collection. It was at once evident that this Coahuila series was indeed very different from any other Mexican specimens I had ever seen. It was however almost equally different from my recollection of *enthyimia*. Through the courtesy of Drs. Hardy and S. M. Russell I was able to compare four males and two females of this series to known *enthyimia* in the University of Arizona, so as to verify this impression. The Coahuila birds may be known as:—

Eremophila alpestris lactea, subsp. nov.

Type: Moore Laboratory of Zoology 40604, male, Lake "Tulio" (=Tulillo), 5 km. south of Hipolito = 53 km. west-north-west of Saltillo, Coahuila, 25° 38' N., 101° 27' W., 2nd November, 1944. Collected by C. C. Lamb (original no. 11317).

Measurements of type: Wing chord 100.5; tail 69.4 mm.

Distribution: Known only from the type locality.

Description: The palest, in all known plumages (no juveniles seen), of all the North American races dorsally, tending to an almost whitish buff dorsum, less grey or reddish brown than in the other races. Differs further from *enthymia*, *sensu strictu*, of Saskatchewan and possibly south to north-western Texas, in its yellow throat, and usually yellow forehead; in these respects closer to *utahensis* (Behle) of northern Utah, but this race is hardly if at all separable otherwise from *enthymia*, being decidedly darker and greyer above than *lactea*. These differences are especially pronounced on the back of the male and the crown of the female, but even the wings of the male are perceptibly paler and are (in fresh plumage) further distinguished by relatively broad and distinct whitish tips ($\frac{1}{2}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ mm.) on the inner primaries (4 to 6, counting from the outside).

Remarks: Though these larks were marked "*enthymia* AHM" by Miller, there is an unsigned note (possibly his?) in the tray: "this series averages smaller than true *enthymia* by quite a bit". But the colour differences are far more striking, particularly in the males. These are near Tilleul Buff dorsally, or a pale Vinaceous Buff (Ridgway, 1912), in fresh plumage (early November), with the centres of the feathers nearest Light Drab but paler and browner (females are similar but have the feathers streaked centrally with a colour near Drab when worn). The nape of males is near Avellaneous when worn. Males have the lesser wing-coverts deep Shell Pink to nearly Buff-Pink.

From their extreme pallor, it is clear why one unfamiliar with the range of variation in the northern races would key these birds out to *enthymia* in Ridgway's key (1907: 298-303). But it is puzzling that such a surprising determination should have been published without an actual critical comparison of specimens, which would surely have shown that the Coahuila larks are not true *enthymia*.

Another notable point is the extremely local nature of this variation. Through the kindness of the authorities of the United States National Museum, I had previously been able to confirm the identity of a series of *diaphora* (Oberholser) from Saltillo, 7th-8th May, 1902. These average slightly duller than the type series from Miquihuana, Tamaulipas, on nape, wing, etc.; but one or two males are just as pinkish and deep. Thus, though found such a short distance away, they are much darker above, and in May much redder-backed, than *lactea*. I see no sign of adventitious (extraneous) bleaching in the latter; fall birds are just as whitish as June ones, and the yellow and pink colours show no dulling (seasonally or as compared to other races). A local ecological study should prove interesting.

It is not improbable that several other local races, less striking than *lactea*, remain to be described from México. The available material is unsatisfactory as this species requires *series* taken from many local populations in fall, winter, and early spring; much of what little material does exist is badly worn. There seems to be wide variation of many kinds . . . sexual, individual, seasonal . . . and possibly also *post-mortem* fading ("foxing"). But at least it may now be affirmed that *E. a. enthymia* does not breed in México.

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Phillips, A R. 1970. "A NORTHERN RACE OF LARK SUPPOSEDLY BREEDING IN MEXICO." *Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club* 90, 115–116.

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