

The native Rhododendron (*R. maximum*) grows here in profusion attaining a height of twenty-five, or more, feet, and is a wonderful sight when in blossom in July. There is also much laurel and many hardwood trees on the edge of the swamp. On July 5, 1918, walking here among the Rhododendrons, listening to the songs of the Hooded Warbler, I made a discovery. The Hooded Warbler is quite common in this locality and sings freely. I heard the two songs on this day — one of which seems to say "you're it, you're it, you're it, you're it yourself" sung rapidly and varying in the number of "you're its." The other song seems to say "Nobody can touch me-ë," a rising inflection on the end. They made me think of children playing tag. Suddenly a strange distant song drew my attention and I hastened along listening intently — then as I stood on a rock surrounded by Rhododendrons out flew a beautiful Black-throated Blue Warbler, which alighted on a tree and sang. It flew about from tree to tree quite near and sang over and over again, and was answered by the same song from a more distant bird. The song was much finer than the books lead one to suppose. About six zees — the first three seeming to have a sort of double resonance and the last longer drawn out and higher. Of course the birds were nesting here, but although I visited the spot every few days and heard and saw the bird near the same locality, I could never locate the nest, in the wild tangle of growth. The last time that I heard the song was on August 1. In Dr. Bishop's 'List of Connecticut Birds' the Black-throated Blue is given as nesting at Eastford in 1874 and 1881, in Kent in 1905 and in Litchfield in 1905. Near this same place some Broad-winged Hawks were nesting and every time I visited the spot one of them would perch in a tall tree and whistle — a shrill penetrating whistle, although at times they could do it quite softly. They seemed to be unafraid and it was amusing to see one of them watching my dog as he ran among the bushes; it would stretch its neck and twist its head from side to side in a very funny way. For two years now the Solitary Vireo has nested in this vicinity and delighted us with its song all summer.

Still another rarity has been found nesting in this swamp, the Canada Warbler. Dr. Graves found it there on June 25, 1884, and again thirteen years later on July 17, 1897; at this later date he saw and heard a number of them singing. Although looking for it here for the last ten years I have yet to find it nesting.—FRANCES MINER GRAVES, *New London, Conn.*

The Name "erythrogaster."—I have been interested in the discussion about *erythrogaster*, *erythrogastra*, *erythrogastris*, etc. in recent numbers of 'The Auk.' From analogy, both in the Greek and Latin tongues, I make no question of this being an adjective. Thus in Latin, from *longus* and *manus* comes the adjective *longimanus* -a, -um, long-handed. In Greek form (using the Roman alphabet) *leukos* and *lithos*, *leukolithos*, -on. The older naturalists, as many botanists still do, printed specific names that are nouns with an initial capital, those that are adjectives with a lower-case initial. Linnaeus, for instance, who observed this distinction, wrote *Anas*

erythropus, *Hirundo fissipes*, *Fringilla erythrophthalma*, *Parus atricapillus*, etc., showing that he rightly considered these specific names to be adjectives.

From *erythros* and *melas* comes the adjective *erythromelas*, fem. *erythromelaena*, neut. *erythromelan*, red and black. Now if *Piranga* is considered feminine, as it is (*Piranga rubra*), the Scarlet Tanager's name is *Piranga erythromelaena*. There is no escape from this except for those who refuse to make an adjectival specific name conform in gender to the generic name with which it is associated.¹—WALTER FAXON, *Lexington, Mass.*

Constant Difference in Relative Proportions of Parts as a Specific Character.—In the oft-recurring discussions of what constitutes a species and the difference between subspecies and species, one interesting kind of intergradation which might be termed "pseudo-intergradation" had not been mentioned.

This is well illustrated by certain of the Guadalupe Island forms, notably the Rock Wren (*Salpinctes*) which has at times been regarded as a species and again as a subspecies even by the same authority.

The Guadalupe bird, together with its near ally of San Martin Island, differs from its relatives of other islands and the mainland in its longer bill, relatively shorter wing and darker coloration. The difference in proportions is constant so far as known; only exceptionally short-billed specimens agree in the length of this member with the longest billed individuals of other forms, while only very long-winged examples fail to differ from short-winged birds of the related races. This, however, has been held to be intergradation and on these grounds the Guadalupe bird, *S. guadeloupensis*, was degraded to subspecific rank by Ridgway in 1904, even before the somewhat intermediate race *S. g. proximus* was discovered.

Individuals agreeing in the length of the bill, however, naturally exhibit the maximum difference in the length of the wing, while those agreeing in the wing can be distinguished by the length of the bill. In other words the ratio of bill to wing length in the two species *S. obsoletus* and *S. guadeloupensis* is constantly different and furnishes a diagnostic character by which the species may always be distinguished. In the former the wing is more than three and a half times the length of the bill, in the latter less than three and a half. In addition there is a well-marked difference in color.

It seems reasonable to consider such differentiation in proportions when developed to the point where there is constant difference in ratio as of specific value. Measurements appear to indicate that this point has been reached in the Rock Wrens, and that the dark, long-billed forms should therefore be regarded as specifically distinct from the paler, shorter billed races. The same conclusion was arrived at by Swarth in 1914 (Condor, XVI, p. 216).

¹ It is interesting in this connection to note that Ridgway (Bird N. and Mid. Amer., II, p. 101) rejects *P. erythromelaena* Salv. 1868 because of *P. erythromelas* Vieill. 1819 but does not alter the latter! — Ed.



Faxon, Walter. 1919. "The Name "Erythrogaster"." *The Auk* 36, 294–295.
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