

## BIRDS OF SAN MIGUEL ISLAND, PANAMA.

BY OUTRAM BANGS.

e/ LYING well within the Bay of Panama is a little group of islands known as the Archipelago de las Perlas. By far the largest of these is San Miguel or Ray Island. The others are small and all are so close together that the birds are probably much the same on all.

San Miguel is distant about twenty miles from the nearest point on the main and about sixty from Panama. It is about fifteen miles long, irregularly oblong in shape, and made up of a series of low hills clothed in luxuriant tropical forest that reaches almost to high water mark. The island has a hot and unhealthy climate, and is inhabited solely by negro pearl divers who are very independent of the Panama government and run the affairs of the island to suit themselves.

As nothing was known of the birds and mammals of Archipelago de las Perlas my brother and I decided to let Mr. W. W. Brown, Jr., visit it.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly toward the end of April, 1900, Mr. Brown reached San Miguel Island, where he stayed till the middle of May, collecting birds and mammals in the most vigorous manner.

Birds were scarce on the island, both in actual numbers and in number of species, and Mr. Brown took but forty-two species there. Besides these he saw no species of which he did not get specimens, except some Terns and two kinds of Boobys. The latter were said by the inhabitants to breed on some of the smaller islands of the group.

The birds of San Miguel are for the most part quite like those of the adjacent main. Four species, however, a Tanager, a Woodpecker, a Hummingbird, and a Tyrant bird are well marked island forms, and a few others are slightly different — too slightly to warrant separation — from the mainland stock. From the

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<sup>1</sup> I have found record of but one bird from there; this is *Asturina ruficauda*, Pearl Island, Bay of Panama, Capt. Kellett and Lieut. Wood, Cat. Birds in British Mus., Vol. I, p. 205.



formation of the coasts of Panama, which infold in a semicircle the Archipelago de las Perlas, one would not expect to find the birds, especially those of strong flight, of the islands very different. Undoubtedly many are carried across from the main in storms, and some execute this journey of their own will. While Mr. Brown lay becalmed in the Bay of Panama, in the little schooner in which he took passage to San Miguel Island, he saw on several different occasions small green Hummingbirds, which he afterwards recognized as *Chlorostilbon assimilis*, pass the vessel flying from the main straight for the Archipelago.

The following list of the birds of San Miguel Island can not be assumed to be complete, still, during his three weeks stay there, in the breeding season, Mr. Brown took specimens of every species of land birds that he saw. Many migrants must also touch the island in their passage to and from the north, but Mr. Brown was rather late for these, and the Kingbird and the Water Thrush were the only two non-breeding species that he took.

Drs. Ridgway and Richmond have, with extreme kindness, examined the whole collection, confirming my identifications and comparing specimens in cases where I had not the necessary material.

*Crypturus soui modestus* (Cab.). — One young male, May 6. This skin is just like one of about the same age taken at Loma del Leon, Panama, by Mr. Brown.

*Ortalis cinereiceps* (Gray). — Two specimens, an adult male from San Miguel Island, April 29, and a female from Pedro Gonsales Island, shot by a pearl diver and brought to Mr. Brown, May 8.

*Leptotila verreauxi* Bonap. — Two specimens, a male taken April 20, and a female taken April 25.

*Columbigallina rufipennis* (Bonap.). — Two males, May 1, and May 3.

*Nyctanassa violacea* (Linn.). — One female, taken May 7.

*Agamia agami* (Gmel.). — One male, taken May 8.

*Butorides virescens* (Linn.). — One male, taken May 4. This specimen is not typical *virescens*, the wing-coverts being edged with rusty as in the Cuban form, *B. brunnescens*.

*Ictinia plumbea* (Gmel.). — One adult female, April 20.

*Scops brasiliانا* (Gmel.). — Two specimens, a pair, taken from a hole in a dead tree, May 8. The female had apparently not yet laid her eggs. These skins have been identified by Dr. Ridgway as true *brasiliانا*.

*Amazona salvini* (Salvadori). — One adult male, taken April 25. Only once did Mr. Brown see this Parrot; then a small bunch of four or



five lit in a tree near him. He tried to get in position to kill more than one at a shot but was unable to do so before they took alarm, and he had to content himself with a single individual.

*Crotophaga ani* Linn. — One adult male, taken April 30.

*Nyctidromus albicollis* (Gmel.). — One female, April 29.

*Ceryle torquata* (Linn.). — One adult male, May 8.

*Ceryle inda* (Linn.). — Two males, May 4.

### *Malanerpes seductus*,<sup>1</sup> sp. nov.

Fourteen specimens, twelve adults, including both sexes, and two nearly full grown young, the male taken April 25, the female, May 6.

*Type* from San Miguel Island, Panama, ♂ adult, No. 4892, coll. of E. A. and O. Bangs. Collected April 27, 1900, by W. W. Brown, Jr.

*Specific characters.*—An island form of the *M. wagleri* series. Similar in general to *M. wagleri* Salv. and Godm. of Panama, but slightly smaller and differing in the following details of coloration: scarlet belly patch more extensive, reaching under tail-coverts, many of these feathers being tipped and edged with scarlet, and extending forward to breast; rest of under parts (throat, breast and sides) reddish buff, some of the feathers of chin, throat and malar region, in the male tipped with scarlet (in *M. wagleri* the under parts—throat, breast and sides—are smoke gray with a yellow suffusion); nasal tufts of male reddish (yellowish in *M. wagleri*).

#### *Measurements.*

No.		Sex.	Wing.	Tail.	Tarsus.	Exposed culmen.
4892	Type	♂ ad.	102.	48.	19.	27.
4889	Topotype	♂ ad.	102.	50.	19.	26.
4890	"	♂ ad.	100.5	51.	18.6	26.4
4891	"	♂ ad.	101.	48.	18.6	26.4
4893	"	♂ ad.	102.5	47.5	19.	26.
4894	"	♂ ad.	102.5	50.	18.4	26.6
4895	"	♀ ad.	100.	49.	18.	22.6
4896	"	♀ ad.	100.	49.5	18.2	22.2
4897	"	♀ ad.	99.5	48.	18.2	25.
4898	"	♀ ad.	100.5	49.	18.4	24.2

*Remarks.*—This new woodpecker was one of the commoner

<sup>1</sup> *Seductus*, remote, living in solitude or apart.



birds of San Miguel Island, Mr. Brown seeing or hearing it every day. It is a very well differentiated island form of *M. wagleri*, at once told by its inferior size, its reddish under parts, and greatly extended scarlet belly patch.

***Phaethornis hyalinus*,<sup>1</sup> sp. nov.**

Three specimens, two males, one female, April 20, and May 5.

*Type* from San Miguel Island, Panama, ♂ adult, No. 4922, Coll. of E. A. and O. Bangs. Collected May 5, 1900, by W. W. Brown, Jr.

*Specific Characters*.—Like *P. anthophilus* except in the color of the back, which in the new form is bottle-green, without a trace of the pale bronzy-green of the same part in *P. anthophilus*. Feathers of upper parts very little edged with buffy, so that the back and rump are not only darker, but much more evenly green than in *P. anthophilus*.

*Color*.—Pileum dusky; upper parts, from cervix to upper tail-coverts, dark, shining bottle-green; a few feathers of rump and upper tail-coverts very narrowly edged with buffy; supraorbital and supra-auricular regions buffy white; suborbital region blackish; side of neck mixed grayish buffy and bottle-green; chin and throat grayish white, with longitudinal dusky streaks in middle part, clear grayish white at sides; breast suffused with dull smoke-gray; belly pale drab-gray, shading toward buff on sides and under tail-coverts; wings purplish brown; wing coverts mostly bottle-green; tail dark shining bottle-green with subterminal black bar and white tip; two central rectrices much elongated (in two specimens, marked as males; very little prolonged in one marked "female?"); culmen black, mandible black at end, "basal two thirds cadimium orange" (Nos. 4922 and 4924), or "orange chrome" (No. 4923).<sup>2</sup>

*Measurements.*

No.		Sex.	Wing.	Tail.	Culmen.
4922	Type	♂ ad.	59.4	55.4	34.8
4923	Topotype	♂ ad.	61.	56.2	35.
4924	"	"♀?"	56.	36.4	32.

*Remarks*.—The three specimens upon which this new hum-

<sup>1</sup> *Hyalinus*, glass-green.

<sup>2</sup> Notes made by Mr. Brown from the fresh specimens.



mingbird is based are in fine plumage, showing no sign of wear. They differ so much in the shade of green of the back and tail, as well as in the greatly reduced amount of buffy edgings of the plumage above from all examples of *P. anthophilus* that I have seen, that I do not hesitate to give the form a name. Whether or not it is an island form, confined to San Miguel, I am unable to say. I, however, can not find that *P. anthophilus* has ever been recorded from so far north as Panama.

*Amizillis edwardi* (*Delattre & Bourcier*).—Nine adults, both sexes, April and May.

*Chlorostilbon assimilis* *Lawr.*—Seven adults, six males, one female, April and May.

*Mionectes oleagineus* (*Licht.*).—Two specimens, a pair, taken April 20. These examples agree exactly in color with South American specimens and not with the form I have lately described from Loma del Leon, Panama.<sup>1</sup> The wings are, however, a little short for true *oleagineus* and a little long for *parcus*.

*Ornithion pusillum* (*Cab. & Heine*).—Two males, April 29 and May 4. These are in bad plumage and are just beginning to moult. They are very dark, especially on the back, but this dull coloring is probably due to the condition of the feathers, as otherwise they are perfectly referable to true *pusillum*.

*Elænia pagana subpagana* *Scl. & Salv.*—Four males in worn, faded plumage, April and May, and one young in nestling plumage, May 2.

### *Elænia sordidata*,<sup>2</sup> sp. nov.

Fourteen specimens, adults of both sexes—many in worn faded plumage, others in fairly good plumage—April and May.

*Type* from San Miguel Island, Panama, ♂ adult, No. 4864, Coll. of E. A. and O. Bangs. Collected April 30, 1900, by W. W. Brown, Jr.

*Specific Characters.*—Most like *E. sororia* Bangs of the Santa Marta region of Colombia, differing from that form in broader, flatter bill; narrower white wing-bars; grayer, less olivaceous coloring of back; and smaller concealed white crown patch. Wing, tail and tarsus averaging shorter than in *sororia*, bill averaging longer (as well as broader and flatter).

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<sup>1</sup> *Mionectes oleagineus parcus* Bangs, Proc. New Eng. Zoöl. Club, Vol. II, pp. 20–21, Sept. 20, 1900.

<sup>2</sup> *Sordidatus*, in dirty clothes, meanly dressed.



*Color.*—Upper parts grayish hair-brown, forehead not darker than back, the long feathers of crown slightly darker in the middle part; a concealed white crown patch—small, but present and of about the same size in both sexes; rather narrow wing-bars, and edgings of primaries, secondaries and tertials soiled yellowish white; throat dull grayish white; breast, sides and flanks pale, dull olivaceous; belly and under tail-coverts pale yellow; lining of wing buff-yellow.

*Measurements.*

No.		Sex.	Wing.	Tail.	Tarsus.	Exposed culmen.
4864	Type	♂ ad.	74.	62.	15.4	11.4
4854	Topotype	♂ ad.	70.	60.	15.8	—
4855	"	♂ ad.	75.	62.5	16.4	11.6
4859	"	♂ ad.	68.	59.	16.	11.
4861	"	♂ ad.	73.	64.	16.	11.8
4863	"	♂ ad.	68.	59.	15.4	11.
4856	"	♀ ad.	73.	61.5	16.4	12.
4857	"	♀ ad.	70.	59.	16.	12.
4858	"	♀ ad.	69.	60.	16.	11.
4860	"	♀ ad.	68.	58.	15.2	10.4
4862	"	♀ ad.	69.	60.5	15.6	11.

*Remarks.*—As no *Elenia* of this style has been recorded from Panama, it is rather strange to find a form so close to *E. sororia* inhabiting San Miguel Island. I fancy that in fresh plumage the color differences between the two forms would be more marked; as it is they show well in series. The new form is grayer above and the contrast between head and back is less than in *E. sororia*. *E. sordidata* has also a smaller white crown patch, and less white in the wings, while the size and shape of bill and the length of wing, tail and tarsus are noticeably different in the two forms.

*E. sordidata* was not an uncommon bird on San Miguel, frequenting low brush. Its breeding season was well advanced, but Mr. Brown did not notice any young about during his stay on the island.

Our series of *E. sororia* from the Santa Marta region of Colombia is so extensive that I have been able to compare specimens killed on exactly the same dates and in precisely corresponding plumage with the series from San Miguel Island of the new form.



**Elænia placens** *Scl.*—One adult male, taken May 5.

**Sublegatus arenarum** (*Salvin*).—Five specimens, four males, one female, April and May.

These skins are inseparable from southern examples, that have been called *S. glaber* *Scl.* & *Salv.*, and substantiate the opinion of Messrs. Salvin and Godman (*Biol. Cent. Am.*, Vol. II, p. 37), that the species must be known as *S. arenarum*. The type locality of *S. arenarum* (described as *Elainea arenarum*) is Punta Arenas, Costa Rica.

**Myiobius nævius** (*Bodd.*).—One adult male, May 7.

**Myiarchus panamensis** *Lawr.*—Twelve adults, both sexes, April and May.

In the San Miguel Island series the wings seem to average a trifle shorter and the back is very slightly darker in color, than in a series from Loma del Leon, Panama, but these differences are not enough to warrant separating the island bird by name.

**Tyrannus tyrannus** (*Linn.*).—One female, taken April 27, a migrant. This is a small billed example, and therefore a bird that would breed far north.

**Tyrannus melancholicus satrapa** (*Licht.*).—Ten adults, both sexes, April and May.

**Cercomacra maculicaudis** (*Scl.*).—Eleven adults, both sexes, April and May.

**Dryophila intermedia** (*Cab.*).—Two adult males, April 30 and May 1. These agree exactly with southern specimens (Venezuela and Colombia). San Miguel Island, however, appears to be the most northern record for the species.

**Thamnophilus doliatus nigricristatus** (*Lawr.*).—Six adults, two males and four females, April and May. The two males are extreme examples of the black-capped form — *nigricristatus*.

**Vireo chivi agilis** (*Licht.*).—Four specimens, two pairs, all taken April 29. This was an uncommon bird on the island, and in one place Mr. Brown found these two pairs. He thinks he saw no others during his stay.

The color of the back is rather darker than usual, but the birds are in worn plumage and in all other respects agree with mainland specimens of *agilis*.

**Thryophilus galbraithi** *Lawr.*—Eight adults, both sexes, April and May.

These examples are almost imperceptibly more reddish on the back than mainland birds.

**Seiurus noveboracensis** (*Gmel.*).—One female, taken April 29, a migrant.

**Dendroica vieillotii** *Cassin.*—One male, taken May 7, in rather worn plumage.

**Cœreba mexicana columbiana** (*Cab.*).—Fourteen specimens, adults of both sexes and three nearly full grown young, just emerging from nestling plumage, taken April 20, May 4, and May 5.



*Cyanerpes cyaneus* (Linn.).—Two males, taken April 30.

*Rhamphocelus limatus*,<sup>1</sup> sp. nov.

Thirteen specimens, adults of both sexes, April and May.

*Type* from San Miguel Island, Panama, ♂ adult, No. 4990, coll. of E. A. and O. Bangs. Collected May 4, 1900, by W. W. Brown, Jr.

*Specific Characters*.—Most nearly like *R. dimidiatus*, but smaller; bill smaller; colors rather duller throughout; adult male with the black belly patch (so conspicuous a marking in *R. dimidiatus*) almost wanting; thighs dark reddish brown, instead of black; wings dull brownish black instead of jet black; adult female with interscapulum duller and browner, therefore whole head and back more nearly uniform.

*Color*.—Adult ♂ head and scapulars dark crimson, the feathers blackish basally; rump and upper tail-coverts intense scarlet vermilion; wings brownish black, the lesser coverts and some of the middle coverts edged with dull dark crimson; greater coverts, secondaries and tertials edged with brick red; throat and jugulum dull crimson; breast, sides and under tail-coverts scarlet vermilion (not so intense as rump)—the lower part of the feathers, just above their slaty bases orange; tibia dark reddish brown; on central portion of belly some of the feathers are brick red with blackish slate bases, forming a small, slightly darker belly patch, varying a little in size and darkness in different individuals—very different from the large, pronounced black belly patch of *R. dimidiatus*; tail black; lining of wing black; feet black; bill slate black; base of lower mandible French gray.

Adult ♀, head all round, and back brown—crown darkest, dusky, back walnut brown; forehead, chin and a few scattering feathers on sides of head dark liver brown; wing and tail dusky brown; rump, upper tail-coverts, breast, belly and under tail-coverts dull red, most intense on upper breast and upper tail-coverts; lining of wing dull cinnamon; bill dark horn color.

No.		Sex.	Wing.	Tail.	Tarsus.	Exposed culmen.
4990	Type	♂ ad.	77.	69.5	21.2	15.2
4991	Topotype	♂ ad.	79.	70.	21.	15.
4992	"	♂ ad.	77.	70.	20.2	15.
4993	"	♂ ad.	78.5	68.5	21.	15.
4994	"	♂ ad.	76.	67.	20.8	15.2
4995	"	♂ ad.	76.5	67.	20.2	15.
4996	"	♂ ad.	77.	68.	20.	15.2
4997	"	♂ ad.	78.	67.	21.	15.
4998	"	♂ ad.	76.	68.	20.	14.8
4999	"	♀ ad.	73.5	65.	20.4	15.
5000	"	♀ ad.	73.	66.	20.	15.

<sup>1</sup> *Limatus*, elegant, refined.



*Remarks.*—This handsome little *Rhamphocelus* is a strongly characterized island form of the *dimidiatus* series, differing in addition to its small size in the greatly reduced and less black belly patch, browner wings and rather duller general coloration. It was found by Mr. Brown generally distributed over San Miguel Island, but like all the birds of the island, in small numbers. All the specimens taken were in breeding condition.

The discovery of *R. limatus* on San Miguel Island adds the fifth species of *Rhamphocelus* described from Panama within a few years—*R. festæ*, *R. inexpectatus*, *R. chrysopterus*, and *R. dunstalli*, not to mention *R. costaricensis* from Costa Rica!

*Tanagra cana diaconus* (Less.).—Seven adult males, April and May. These are indistinguishable from Panama birds generally.

*Saltator albicollis isthmicus* (Scl.).—Fifteen specimens, both sexes, April and May. These birds were breeding; a female taken May 7 had an egg in the oviduct, others had laid their sets. All are in worn, very dull plumage, and at first sight look very different from a series taken in March at Loma del Leon. Closer inspection shows the duller plumage to be due to season, and the form of San Miguel Island is probably in no wise different from the mainland bird.

*Volatinia jacarini splendens* (Vieill.).—Two adults, a pair taken April 20. These two specimens have larger bills, but in all other ways agree with *splendens*. It is not worth while to separate the form of San Miguel on this character alone, though it appears to be a slightly differentiated island race.

*Oryzoborus funereus* Scl.—Three specimens, a male and two females taken April 21, April 27, and May 2.





Bangs, Outram. 1901. "Birds of San Miguel Island, Panama." *The Auk* 18, 24-32. <https://doi.org/10.2307/4069672>.

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