

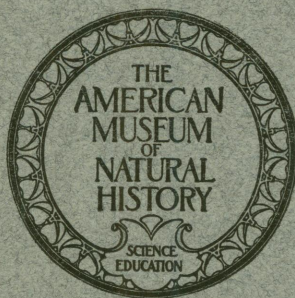
# AMERICAN MUSEUM NOVITATES

No. 25

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## DESCRIPTIONS OF PROPOSED NEW BIRDS FROM CENTRAL AMERICA, WITH NOTES ON OTHER LITTLE-KNOWN FORMS

BY WALDRON DEWITT MILLER AND LUDLOW GRISCOM



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## DESCRIPTIONS OF PROPOSED NEW BIRDS FROM CENTRAL AMERICA, WITH NOTES ON OTHER LITTLE-KNOWN FORMS

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As a result of studies made on the distribution of bird-life in Nicaragua, the authors here propose definite names for a number of birds, to invite criticism pending the appearance of their final report.

There is also included a discussion of the status of other little-known Central American birds, belonging to families that will be treated by Mr. Ridgway in the forthcoming part of his monumental work on the Birds of North and Middle America. We have to thank the authorities of the National Museum, and particularly Dr. Charles W. Richmond, for permission to examine material in their collection bearing on one of these cases.

### *Ortalis cinereiceps saturatus*, new subspecies

SUBSPECIFIC CHARACTERS.—Similar to *Ortalis c. cinereiceps* but darker throughout and averaging smaller. Crown and nape very slightly darker, deep mouse-gray instead of deep neutral gray; the back, wing-coverts, and rump deep olive-brown, instead of medium olive-brown, the contrast greatest on the wing-coverts; primaries dark rufous rather than bright rufous, the dusky tips and centers of the feathers more extensive and noticeable; tail tips grayish buffy rather than gray with whitish margins, the tips of the three outer feathers averaging 2 mm. less in extent; breast darker olive-gray, shading into light buffy olive-gray on the belly instead of almost pure light gray, the contrast best seen on the thighs; under tail-coverts olive-brown, rather than grayish olive. In each series some specimens are much browner on the breast than others.

TYPE.—No. 101063, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.; ♂ ad.; near Matagalpa, Nicaragua; March 4, 1907; Wm. B. Richardson.

### SPECIMENS EXAMINED

*Ortalis cinereiceps saturatus*.—NICARAGUA: Matagalpa, the type; Las Canas, Matagalpa, 1 ♂; Savala, 1 ♂; Muy Muy, 1 ♂; Rio Grande, 1 ♀; Chontales, 1 ♀; Los Sabalos, 1 ♂. COSTA RICA: Bonilla, 1 ♂; Aquinares, 2 ♂.

*Ortalis cinereiceps cinereiceps*.—PANAMA: Boqueron, Chiriqui, 1 ♂, 1 ♀; Canal Zone, 1 ♂, 1 ♀; Chepigana, East Panama, 1 ♂.

This form is based on 10 specimens from the humid tropical Atlantic forest region of Nicaragua and Costa Rica, and is compared with a series of what may be regarded as typical material from Panama. We have seen

no specimens from southern Costa Rica, but it would be surprising if the bird there did not approach the new form. There are slight differences in size, although the measurements of the two races show a considerable amount of individual variation.

MEASUREMENTS				
<i>O. c. cinereiceps</i>			<i>O. c. saturatus</i>	
Wing	3 ♂	196-216	8 ♂	187-204
	2 ♀	193	2 ♀	187-192
Tail	3 ♂	220-232	8 ♂	204-220
	2 ♀	219-222	2 ♀	197
Culmen	3 ♂	24-27	8 ♂	24-26
	2 ♀	23.5-25.5	2 ♀	22-23
Tarsus	3 ♂	65-68	8 ♂	65-67
	2 ♀	65-70	2 ♀	61-62

#### ***Creciscus ruberrimus*, new species**

**SPECIFIC CHARACTERS.**—Closely allied to *C. ruber* of Mexico and Guatemala, but differing in having the chestnut of the upper back extended over the entire upper-parts including the wing-coverts; the back, rump, upper tail-coverts, and wing-coverts rich deep chestnut instead of chocolate-brown; primaries and tail blackish instead of ashy brown; bill shorter and relatively stouter.

**TYPE.**—No. 143692, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.; ♀ ad.; Jinotega, Nicaragua (alt. about 3000 ft.); April 5, 1917; Miller and Griscom.

**DESCRIPTION OF TYPE.**—General color above rich deep chestnut, darkest on the rump; primaries and tail-feathers blackish, the secondaries deep blackish brown; crown, nape, and sides of face bright slaty gray, sharply demarcated from the chestnut color of the adjacent parts; throat and breast bright chestnut, becoming rich deep chestnut on the abdomen, belly, and under tail-coverts; thighs externally deep slaty gray, internally bright chestnut; under wing-coverts and axillars bright chestnut, the greater series ashy, edged with chestnut.

#### **SPECIMENS EXAMINED**

*Creciscus ruberrimus*.—NICARAGUA: Jinotega, the type.

*Creciscus ruber*.—MEXICO, 1; GUATEMALA, 1.

MEASUREMENTS			
	Nicaragua	Guatemala	Mexico
Wing	79	78	78.5
Tail	36	—	39
Culmen	18	21	21
Depth of Bill at Base	7.5	7.5	7.5
Tarsus	31	34.5	34
Middle Toe and Claw	37.5	39	40

This beautiful little Rail was collected in a surprisingly arid habitat, which is separated from that of *C. ruber*, its close ally, by a wide stretch of such mountainous and broken country that intergradation does not seem at all likely.

For the present we prefer to retain the old generic name, especially as Mr. Ridgway, the describer of *Thryocrex*, has not seen several important species. Until the exact limits of *Porzana* and *Creciscus* are determined by a critical examination of all the species involved throughout the world, there seems little point in proposing segregates from either. Our treatment must not, however, be taken as our opinion of the proper generic relationships of the two species here discussed, our material of this group of Rails being entirely inadequate.

***Gallinula chloropus centralis*, new subspecies**

**SUBSPECIFIC CHARACTERS.**—Similar to *G. c. cachinnans*, but decidedly darker and slightly smaller, the gray of the upper back and breast slightly darker, lower back much darker, "mummy brown," instead of "argus brown" or "Brussels brown," becoming blackish brown on the rump and upper tail-coverts.

**TYPE.**—No. 143693, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.; ad. ♀; 12 miles south of Metapa, Central Nicaragua; April 25, 1917; Ludlow Griscom.

**SPECIMENS EXAMINED**

*Gallinula chloropus centralis*.—NICARAGUA: Metapa, the type; Tipitapa, 1 ♀.

*Gallinula chloropus cachinnans*.—EASTERN UNITED STATES, 21 ♂, 20 ♀.

**MEASUREMENTS**

	Wing	Culmen to Hind Edge of Frontal Shield	Tarsus
Nicaragua 2 ♀	163.5–168 (165.7)	45–46 (45.5)	50–51 (50.5)
Eastern U. S. 20 ♀	164–176 (170.2)	40–47 (44)	50–57 (54.1)

The two adult females listed above are so distinct from a large series of *cachinnans* that we have no hesitation in describing them. Birds seen at Los Sabalos by Nutting and specimens taken by Holland at Greytown probably belong to this race, but we are unable at this time to state its range more accurately. It is interesting to note that the proposed new race is not in any sense intermediate between *cachinnans* and *pauxilla* from western Colombia. The latter is by far the smallest, but is lighter on the back than even *cachinnans*. There seem to be but single records of the Florida Gallinule from Costa Rica and Panama. It would be interesting to determine accurately the specimens on which they are based.

We follow the latest authorities on the genus, Bangs and Hartert, in treating the American Gallinules as races of the Old World *chloropus*, but we are not convinced that this is the best course. While our material is not entirely satisfactory for a revision of the genus, we are strongly of the opinion that *sandvicensis* and *garmani* are distinct species, and that *cerceris* is a valid race.

***Asturina plagiata micrus*, new subspecies**

SUBSPECIFIC CHARACTERS.—Similar to *A. p. plagiata*, but much smaller, the adults averaging slightly darker, with narrower tail-bands, the immature birds noticeably darker.

TYPE.—No. 143746, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.; ad. ♂; 4 miles northeast of Chinandega, Nicaragua; June 12, 1917.

SPECIMENS EXAMINED

*Asturina plagiata micrus*.—NICARAGUA, adults, 4 ♂, 4 ♀; immature, 2 ♂, 1 ♀. COSTA RICA: Pigres, 1 ♀ ad.

*Asturina plagiata plagiata*.—ARIZONA, 1 ♂ ad.; TEXAS, 1 ♀ imm.; MEXICO, adults, 15 ♂, 10 ♀; immature, 13 ♂, 4 ♀.

MEASUREMENTS

	Wing	Tail	Culmen	Tarsus
<i>A. p. plagiata</i> 16 ♂	261–282 (269.4)	[190]–213 (202)	30–35 (31.9)	71–78 (74)
<i>A. p. micrus</i> 6 ♂	241–257 (250.5)	192–212 (201.2)	29–31 (30.3)	67–73 (69.8)
<i>A. p. plagiata</i> 10 ♀	287–300 (292.6)	[205]–233 (216.3)	33–35 (34.5)	74–88 (78.4)
<i>A. p. micrus</i> 5 ♀	256–282 (270.2)	180–214 (205.6)	30–34 (31.8)	69–79 (74.8)

The small size of this new form is its chief diagnostic character, even in a group of birds where there is so much individual variation, the wing measurements not even overlapping. The differences in color are slight, as the darkest birds of *A. p. plagiata* are indistinguishable from the lightest of *A. p. micrus*. The majority, however, of our specimens of the new form, both adult and immature, are darker than any in a very large series of the northern bird. The adults have the gray of a darker tone throughout, most noticeable in the cross-barring below. The immature have the upperparts and the tear-shaped spots beneath of a decidedly blackish brown. In typical adult *A. p. plagiata* from eastern Mexico there are usually two well-defined tail-bars, and in the majority of specimens traces of a third, while the middle bar is complete. In only one specimen is both the third tail-bar lacking and the middle one incomplete. Birds from Sinaloa and Sonora never have a trace of a third bar, the middle bar is complete in one specimen only, and in others is reduced to a mere spot.

We have two birds from Tepic, however, which show traces of a third bar, so that it is impossible to separate western and eastern Mexican birds subspecifically as we have found no other differences. The Nicaraguan bird is the extreme of the western Mexican tendency. The middle or second bar is always reduced to a spot, which in some specimens is scarcely discernible. In addition, the subterminal bar, which is always complete, averages narrower than in the northern bird.

We have seen no material in the territory between southern Mexico and Nicaragua, so cannot say where the boundary line between the two races is.

In Nicaragua this Hawk is a common bird of the Pacific slope and specimens exist from practically every locality where collecting has been done. There are no records for the Atlantic forest section. It is not at all shy, which probably accounts in part for the numerous specimens.

#### ***Ictinia plumbea vagans*, new subspecies**

SUBSPECIFIC CHARACTERS.—Similar in color to *I. p. plumbea*, but averaging larger, the wing, ♂ 300–319; ♀ 292–316, the measurements of the two races not overlapping.

TYPE.—No. 103676, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.; ♂ ad.; Peña Blanca, Nicaragua; June 6, 1909; Wm. B. Richardson.

#### SPECIMENS EXAMINED

*Ictinia plumbea vagans*.—MEXICO, 1 ♀; GUATEMALA, 1 ♂, 1 ♀; HONDURAS, 1 ♂, 1 ♀; NICARAGUA, 4 ♂, 3 ♀; PANAMA, 1 ♂, 1 ♀; COLOMBIA, 1 ♀; ECUADOR, 5 ♂; PERU, 3 ♀; BRAZIL, Matto Grosso, 2 ♂, 6 ♀.

*Ictinia plumbea plumbea*.—COLOMBIA, 3 ♂, 1 ♀; ECUADOR, 1 ♀; TRINIDAD, 1 ♂; VENEZUELA, 1 ♀; BRAZIL, Bahia, 1 ♀, Matto Grosso, 8 ♂, 2 ♀.

# MEASUREMENTS

<i>Ictinia plumbea plumbea</i>								
		Wing	Tail	Tarsus		Wing	Tail	Tarsus
Colombia	♂ (Jan.)	270	148	40	♀ (March)	284	102	41
	♂ (March)	295	165	41.5				
	♂ (May)	279	146	40				
Ecuador					♀ (April)	274	150	42
Trinidad	♂ (March)	288	150	42.5				
Venezuela					♀ ? (late March)	267	146.5	41
Bahia					♀ (late March)	277	145	44.5
Matto Grosso	♂ (Aug.)	297	156	43.	♀ (Sept.)	285	161	42
	♂ (Sept.)	292	152	40	♀ (Oct.)	272	150	42
	♂ (Sept.)	293	153	41				
	♂ (Sept.)	278	152	41.6				
	♂ (Oct.)	286	145	40				
	♂ (Oct.)	291	149	41				
	♂ (Nov.)	288	153.5	40				
	♂ (Dec.)	288	162.	39.5				

<i>Ictinia plumbea vagans</i>								
Mexico					♀ (April?)	297	157	45
Guatemala	♂	311			♀	298		
Honduras	♂	313	161	42.5	♀	305	158.5	43
Nicaragua	♂	301	165	40	♀	296	158	44
	♂	307	—	40	♀	301	159.5	43
	♂	309	157.5	40	♀	311	167	41
	♂	311	159	42				
	♂ (?)	307	156	42	♀ (?)	306	162	42
Panama					♀ (June)	304	169	41
Colombia								
Ecuador	♂ (Oct.)	301	150	43.7				
	♂ (Dec.)	300	(150)	42				
	♂ (Dec.)	305	153	41				
	♂ (Dec.)	308	157.5	42				
	♂ (Jan.)	310	150	43.5				
Peru					♀ (Nov.)	311	168.5	38.5
					♀ (Nov.)	316	170.5	42
					♀ (Dec.)	299	169	40
					♀ (Sept.)	298	164	40.5
Matto Grosso	? (Aug.)	321	167	44	♀ (Oct.)	292	164	40.5
	♂ (Dec.)	307	159	41.5	♀ (Oct.)	292	161	37.5
					♀ (Nov.30)	294	156	41
					♀ (Dec.)	296	164	41.5
					♀ (Jan.)	302	156	40.5

## SUMMARY

		Wing	Tail	Tarsus
<i>I. p. plumbea</i>	12 ♂	270-297 (287.1)	145-165 (152.6)	39.5-43 (40.7)
<i>I. p. vagans</i>	14 ♂	300-321 (307.1)	150-167 (157.3)	40 -44 (41.9)
<i>I. p. plumbea</i>	6 ♀	267-285 (276.5)	145-162 (154.1)	41 -44.5 (42.1)
<i>I. p. vagans</i>	17 ♀	292-316 (301.1)	156-170.5 (162.7)	37.5-45. (41.3)

The recognition of this new race is apparently justified. In most of Central America it has been recorded only as a migrant in March, April, May, and November, but Salvin and Godman found it nest-building in Guatemala, and Richardson sent them birds from eastern Mexico in June and July. He has also sent us a bird from Peña Blanca, Nicaragua, taken in June, which may have been breeding. The species has never been recorded from Costa Rica. Salvin and Godman state that they have a nestling from Panama, so the species certainly breeds there, though what race we cannot say. The presence of *vagans* in Santa Marta in June may indicate its breeding there. In Matto Grosso, Brazil, both birds obviously occur together. Fortunately, our series is sufficiently large to pick out representatives of the two races with a reasonable degree of certainty. The same may be said for Ecuador, the birds taken in October, December, and January being obviously large, and April birds obviously small. The Bahia bird again, taken in March, is immature, indicating that it was probably hatched out a few months earlier in the vicinity. If the entire absence of the species from Costa Rica may be taken as an index, *I. p. vagans* breeds north of that country only, but perhaps it breeds in Panama and Santa Marta. That it has not been recorded from Costa Rica at all is surprising when we consider that the bird is common, migrates in flocks, and is not particularly shy.

THE STATUS OF *Crax panamensis* OGILVIE-GRANT

This species was described in the Catalogue of Birds, XXII, p. 479, with a habitat from southern Nicaragua to Colombia and was based on six specimens. The adult male differs from *C. globicera* in having a slight white tip to the tail. The adult female is said to differ from *globicera* in having the tail strongly barred with white both above and below; no white markings on the wing; back of neck, mantle, and chest rufous-chestnut almost devoid of black. So-called "younger" females of both species are more or less barred or freckled with black throughout.

In attempting to identify our Nicaraguan material, we soon found that matters were not as simple as they appeared. *C. globicera* had been recorded from Nicaragua by Nutting and Richmond, but these records had been placed under *panamensis* by Salvin and Godman in the *Biologia Centrali-Americana*. Incidentally, Carriker gives *C. panamensis* from Costa Rica, on the ground that all birds have the tail strongly barred, a far from convincing reason, as "immature" female *globicera* has the tail barred according to Grant.

Turning now to our specimens, an adult male from Nicaragua and no less than three out of four males from Panama prove to be undoubted *globicera*, which is not supposed to range south of Honduras! Of four "adult" females from Mexico, one has no white freckling on the wings, thus supposedly approaching *panamensis*. Four "adult" females from Panama and Colombia correspond quite well to Grant's description of *panamensis*, but one has black barring across the back, and the tail-bars are a different color in each, varying from ochre to yellowish white. We might add that these tail-bars average about 12 mm. in width. Three "immature" females from Nicaragua do not, however, correspond to anything in Grant's descriptions. Two are exactly like "adult" female *globicera* above in being black rather than rufous-chestnut, but a third is intermediate in this character. This latter bird has tail-bars just like our Panama females, but the other two have much whiter and narrower tail-bars averaging 3-4 mm. wide. Finally, these two birds have barred chests and thighs, while the third has none, and we might add that the tail-bars of all three are just as clearly marked on the under surface of the feathers as the upper. It becomes obvious that these three birds represent two plumages which completely connect the alleged differences between the females of the two species. Further, there is no evidence that these various changes in plumage and age are correctly correlated. For birds which vary so remarkably as do these Curassows, a far larger series and study in the field would be required before the age of a specimen can be told by its plumage.

Finally, we had the privilege of examining an excellent series of Mexican *C. globicera* in the U. S. National Museum, thanks to the courtesy of Dr. Charles W. Richmond. Every one of the supposed characters of female *panamensis*, in all ages or stages of Grant's, can be found in this series. We have no hesitation in saying that at present there is not a single reliable character on which to separate these supposed species, and *Craz panamensis* should accordingly become a synonym of *Craz globicera*.

*Aramides cajanea* AND ITS ALLIES IN CENTRAL AMERICA

In 1907 Outram Bangs published an excellent revision of the Wood Rails of Central America.<sup>1</sup> In this paper he eliminated *chiricote* as a subspecies of *A. cajanea*, considered *plumbeicollis* a race of *albiventris*, and described another race from eastern Mexico. We do not feel able to follow his treatment of *plumbeicollis*, which seems to us strikingly distinct from *albiventris*. We have had a much larger series of this form available and are able to extend its range northward to the Roman River, Honduras, which is just east of Trujillo. This series is absolutely constant, and the Honduras birds do not show the slightest elements of an approach to *albiventris*.

Our series shows that several of Mr. Bangs' characters do not hold. The type of *A. albiventris*, for instance, has an olive-tawny mantle, and consequently is not unicolor on the back, so that this character, which he relies upon in his key to distinguish *plumbeicollis*, is apparently not absolute. We do find, however, that there is a difference between them which has not been brought out. The bills of specimens of *albiventris* from both Guatemala and British Honduras are orange-yellow for the basal two-thirds, the terminal third of the upper mandible being orange-yellow and the lower mandible green. In *mexicanus*, *plumbeicollis*, and the other related species *cajanea*, the whole terminal third of the bill is pale apple-green.

Again, Mr. Bangs separates *cajanea* from *albiventris* and its races in that the back of the head is grayish brown instead of bright chestnut, and the shorter, stouter bill. Here we desire to point out that our excellent series of *plumbeicollis* is intermediate not only in the length of the bill, but in the color of the head, which could not possibly be called chestnut. In fact, in these two characters *plumbeicollis* is much nearer *cajanea* than *albiventris*, a situation which is further emphasized by the color of the abdomen. Below we give a tabular arrangement of the diagnostic characters of the four forms which, we hope, will outline the problem as graphically as possible.

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<sup>1</sup>Amer. Naturalist, XLI, pp. 177-187.

<i>A. albiventris</i>	<i>A. plumbeicollis</i>	<i>A. cajanea</i>	<i>A. mexicanus</i>
1. Bright chestnut crown patch	Bright brown	Dull to bright grayish brown	Bright brown
2. Broad patch of white feathers on abdomen	Narrow patch of buffy feathers	Breast and abdomen uniform chestnut	Narrow patch buffy feathers
3. Generally pale coloration	Dark coloration	Dark coloration	Dark coloration
4. Bill 60-66	Bill 53-61	Bill 50-57	Bill 61-73
5. Terminal third of upper mandible orange-yellow	Light apple-green	Light apple-green	Light apple-green
6. Back usually (?) concolor	Back never concolor	Back concolor	Always concolor, or nearly so
7. Iris yellow	Iris orange-red	Iris orange-red	Iris ?

In addition to these characters, it should be pointed out that, while the bill *length* is a gradual progression from south to north, *cajanea* is proportionately stouter. In the crown character *plumbeicollis* is much nearer *cajanea* than *albiventris*, while *mexicanus* is slightly nearer *albiventris*.

It seems to us on this showing that Mr. Bangs' treatment, in which he makes *plumbeicollis* and *mexicanus* races of *albiventris*, becomes untenable. *A. albiventris* stands out sharply as a very distinct species. The only ground for considering *plumbeicollis* a race of *albiventris* is its close affinity to *mexicanus*, which is stated to intergrade with *albiventris*. This alleged intergradation, however, is based on two specimens which Mr. Bangs calls intermediate, but they come from localities which are not strictly intermediate in the ranges of the two forms, one of them in fact from western Guatemala and the other from central Guatemala, hardly satisfactory proof of subspecific intergradation in the strict sense of the word. Even if this point were waived, the subspecific claims of *plumbeicollis* rest on nothing but a *priori* reasoning, and a second glance at our table of characters shows that, if it is to be a race of anything, its affinities are with *cajanea* rather than *albiventris*.

This view of the case is strengthened by our discovery of a Pacific race of *plumbeicollis* in Nicaragua, to be described below, which differs in being slightly darker, and especially in having lost all traces of light, buffy feathers on the abdomen. This is a step further from *albiventris*, and a *priori* reasoning to make this bird a race of *albiventris*, with which it has not a single diagnostic character in common, is strained to the breaking

point. *A. plumbeicollis* must be regarded, to our way of thinking, as a distinct species in default of any proof of intergradation with either *albiventris* to the north or *cajanea* to the south.

Further, we think that *mexicanus* must be accorded specific rank until complete intergradation with *albiventris* is established.

Finally, let us bear in mind that these Wood Rails are unquestionably an invasion from South America. The parent stock was originally one species which broke up into four races, as we go northward. Special isolation factors have evolved *albiventris* as the most distinct type. The other species are admittedly close, but intergradation has apparently broken down and disappeared and, in the case of *plumbeicollis*, at least, sufficient time has elapsed for a further secondary racial variation to develop between a very humid Atlantic Coast form and a comparatively dry Pacific form. This race may be known as follows.

***Aramides plumbeicollis pacificus*, new subspecies**

SUBSPECIFIC CHARACTERS.—Similar to *A. p. plumbeicollis*, but mantle less tawny, more olive; back more grayish olive; primaries deep rufous instead of chestnut, the dusky tips darker and more extensive; no light buffy feathers on the abdomen; axillars and under wing-coverts chestnut with narrow black bars. Iris orange-red; eyelids, rictus, and skin of mandibular ramus, legs and feet raspberry-red; basal half of bill dull yellow, terminal half pale apple-green. Wing, 176; tail, 58; culmen, 60; tarsus, 80.

TYPE.—No. 143684, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.; ♂ ad.; Tipitapa, Nicaragua; April 28, 1917.

SPECIMENS EXAMINED

*Aramides plumbeicollis pacificus*.—NICARAGUA, Tipitapa, the type.

*Aramides plumbeicollis plumbeicollis*.—HONDURAS, Roman River, 1 ♂, 1 ♀; NICARAGUA, Rio Coco, 2 ♂, 2 ♀, 1?, Jalapa, 1 ♂, 2 ♀, Matagalpa, 1 ♀, Los Sabalos, 1 ♀.

Besides the type, one other bird was collected, but was saved as a skeleton. There are three mounted specimens in the Managua Museum. The bird is found in the swampy borders of Lake Managua, a very narrow habitat, as the surrounding country is quite arid.

It will be noted that this race approaches *cajanea* in that the breast and abdomen are uniform chestnut. The axillars and under wing-coverts render it unique, however, in this group. In *mexicanus*, *albiventris*, and *plumbeicollis* these parts are barred black and hazel, to use Mr. Bangs' term, the tips of the feathers frequently being whitish. In *cajanea* these feathers are similar, but the black bars are much broader, and the light tips are slightly fainter. These characters plus the others mentioned in the diagnosis make us feel justified in describing this race on a single specimen.

THE RACES OF *Aramus vociferus*

The Limpkin found in Florida, the Greater Antilles, and Central America, always a local bird, has had a somewhat stormy nomenclatural career, but in spite of the many names it has borne, no one ever seems to have had the intention of dividing it into two or more forms. Systematic study of the larger water-birds is frequently hampered by scanty material, and this is undoubtedly responsible in the present case for the fact that an excellent subspecies of *Aramus vociferus* has been completely overlooked. Very satisfactory material shows that *Aramus vociferus* is restricted to southern peninsular Florida, and that birds from the Greater Antilles and Central America are a readily recognizable race which must be known as follows.

***Aramus vociferus holostictus*<sup>1</sup> (Cabanis)**

**SUBSPECIFIC CHARACTERS.**—Similar to *A. v. vociferus* of Florida, but much smaller; the ground color very slightly darker and more glossy above, much darker below; noticeably distinct in the great reduction of the white streaking on upper back, scapulars, wing-coverts, and underparts.

## SPECIMENS EXAMINED

*Aramus vociferus vociferus*.—FLORIDA, 9 ♂, 2 ♀, 2 imm.

*Aramus vociferus holostictus*.—HAITI, 1 ♀, 1 ♀ ?; TEXAS, 1 ♂; MEXICO, 4 ♂, 3 ♀, 3 imm.; NICARAGUA, 1 ♂, 1 ?.

## MEASUREMENTS

		Wing	Culmen	Tarsus
Florida	7 ♂	312-334	124-134	123-135
	2 ♀	306-340	112-124	117-129
Haiti	2 ♀	304-309	95- 99	101-109
Central America	6 ♂	290-315	92-126	104-125
	3 ♀	306-319	103-118	102-122

The great difference in the amount of white streaking is the most striking thing about the new subspecies, *holostictus* in this respect being a decided approach to the South American *scolopaceus*, which has no streaking on the mantle and wing-coverts at all. Typical *vociferus* below has almost as much white showing as dark olive-brown, while *holostictus* has much more brown than white, especially on the belly.

The nomenclature calls for some comment. Of the various names by which *vociferus* has been known, *pictus* Bartram is non-binomial; *giganteus* Bonaparte, 1825, founded on the Florida bird, is a synonym of *vociferus*; *guarauna* Wagler (nec Neuwied) is a synonym of *scolopaceus*, leaving *holostictus* Cabanis, 1856, founded on a Cuban bird, which is, so far as

<sup>1</sup>This name has already been revived for the Cuban bird by Outram Bangs, as an insular race of *vociferus*.

### ERRATA

For the last two paragraphs on page 13, substitute as follows:—

This remarkable little Kite occurs in Central America only in western Nicaragua, where it is common. Mr. Charles Chubb of the British Museum has recently proposed<sup>1</sup> the name *leonæ* for these birds. His race was based apparently on one specimen which was alleged to differ from typical *swainsoni* in having the upper surface darker and in having the forehead and sides of the face straw-color instead of orange-buff.

Comparison of four Nicaraguan specimens with a large series from South America shows that while the Nicaraguan birds are very slightly darker above than many, they are lighter than others, showing that nothing but individual variation is involved. The intensity of the color of the forehead and sides of the face is equally variable. However, the Nicaraguan birds are separable from Matto Grosso specimens, representing true *swainsoni*, in having more extensively rufous flanks and sides. We are unable to distinguish the recently described *meridensis* of Swann from the Nicaraguan race. The former, therefore, becomes a synonym of *leonæ*, to which we also refer specimens from Santa Marta and the north coast of Venezuela.

WALDRON DE WITT MILLER AND LUDLOW GRISCOM.

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<sup>1</sup>1919, Bull. B. O. C., XXXIX, p. 22.



we know, available, in spite of the fact that Cabanis was only intending to separate the more northern species from *scolopaceus*, apparently unaware that this had already been done by both Latham and Bonaparte.

The two races will stand as follows, with their principal synonymy. It should be noted that both forms will have a place in the A. O. U. Check-List.

1. ***Aramus vociferus vociferus* (Latham)**

*Numenius vociferus* Latham, (1801), Suppl. Index Orn., LXV, (Florida).

*Tantalus pictus* Bartram, (1792), 'Trav. Florida,' p. 291.

*Aramus scolopaceus* of authors (not Gmelin).

*Rallus giganteus* Bonaparte, (1825), Journ. Acad. Philad., V, p. 31, (Florida).

RANGE.—Southern peninsular Florida; Okefinokee Swamp, Georgia; casual north to South Carolina.

2. ***Aramus vociferus holostictus* (Cabanis)**

*Nothrodicus holostictus* Cabanis, 1856, Journ. f. Ornith., p. 426 (Cuba).

*Aramus holostictus* Selater and Salvin, 1859, Ibis, p. 227 (Belize, Omoa); Salvin, 1870, Ibis, p. 116 (Costa Rica).

RANGE.—Greater Antilles; Eastern Mexico to Panama; accidental in Texas (Brownsville, May 29, 1889, specimen examined).

THE STATUS OF *Gampsonyx swainsoni leonæ* CHUBB

This remarkable little Kite occurs in Central America only in western Nicaragua, where it is common. Mr. S. H. Chubb of the British Museum has recently proposed<sup>1</sup> the name *leonæ* for these birds. His race was based apparently on one specimen which was alleged to differ in having the upper surface darker and in having the forehead and sides of the face straw-color instead of orange-buff.

In spite of the fact that geographic isolation might well have caused subspecific variation, we find it impossible to maintain this race. Comparison of four Nicaraguan specimens with a large series from South America shows that while the Nicaraguan birds are very slightly darker above than many, they are lighter than others, showing that nothing but individual variation is involved. The intensity of the color of the forehead and sides of the face is equally variable. The Nicaraguan birds consequently, should be known as *Gampsonyx swainsoni meridensis* Swann, a recently described subspecies, to which we also refer specimens from Santa Marta and the north coast of Venezuela.

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<sup>1</sup>1919, Bull. B. O. C., XXXIX, p. 22.





## AMERICAN MUSEUM NOVITATES

FRANK E. LUTZ, Editor

**I**ssued, as occasion requires, for the publication of preliminary announcements, descriptions of new forms, and similar matters.

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