THE NAME OF THE WESTERN RACE OF RED-HEADED WOODPECKER

By Pierce Brodkorb

Recent examination of a series of *Melanerpes erythrocephalus* shows that Dr. Harry C. Oberholser\(^1\) is correct in his contention that the birds from the western portion of the range of the species represent a distinct subspecies.

Oberholser is in error, however, in using *Melanerpes erythropthalmus* Silloway\(^2\) as the name of this race. The name is an obvious *lapsus calami* for *Melanerpes erythrocephalus*, as which it is correctly given in the index, page 75. There is, as added proof of the accidental use of *erythropthalmus* for *erythrocephalus*, absolutely no indication that Silloway meant to describe a new species.\(^3\) Under the rules now in force, a slip of the pen may not be employed in a nomenclatural sense, and thus the northwestern race of the red-headed woodpecker is left without a valid name. It may be known as


\(^3\) See Jonathan Dwight's remarks on this same case, "Nomenclatural Casuistry," *Auk*, 37, 1920: 145.
Melanerpes erythrocephalus caurinus, subsp. nov.

Type.—University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, number 75453; breeding female; Lodgepole Creek, 2 miles northwest of Chappell, Duel County, Nebraska; June 29, 1934; P. Brodkorb, original number, 11500. Wing (flat), 142.5; tail, 76.5; culmen from base, 31; tarsus, 21.5; outer anterior toe, 19.5 mm. Weight, 80 grams.

Characters.—Similar to Melanerpes erythrocephalus erythrocephalus Linnaeus, but larger, with the yellowish coloring of the underparts averaging more pronounced.

Adult male: wing, 140–150.5 (145.9); tail, 73–83.5 (78.2); culmen from base, 29.5–31.5 (31.0); tarsus, 22–23.5 (22.6); outer anterior toe, 17.5–19.5 (18.4 mm.).

Adult female: wing, 137–147.5 (140.9); tail, 72–85 (77.8); culmen from base, 28–31 (29.2); tarsus, 21–24.5 (22.7); outer anterior toe, 17–19.5 (18.8 mm.).

Melanerpes erythrocephalus erythrocephalus has the following measurements: Adult male: wing, 128–144 (138.1); tail, 64.5–81.5 (74.8); culmen from base, 26.5–31.5, once 33.5 (29.4); tarsus, 19–24 (21.8); outer anterior toe, 15.5–18 (16.9 mm.).

Adult female: wing, 125–141 (135.2); tail, 63–75.5 (70.7); culmen from base, 25–31 (28.8); tarsus, 19.5–23 (21.0); outer anterior toe, 14.5–18 (16.5 mm.).

Range.—Southeastern British Columbia, central Montana, central Wyoming, central Colorado, and New Mexico (?), east to central Alberta, eastern North Dakota, and western Nebraska.

Material examined.—Melanerpes erythrocephalus erythrocephalus: 125 specimens, from the following states and provinces: Arkansas (Winslow), Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, South Carolina, ex Catesby.

5 Nine specimens.
6 Fifty-seven specimens.
7 Thirty specimens.
ana, Iowa (Palo Alto County), Kansas (Franklin and Miami counties), Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota (Montevideo), Nebraska (Arlington, Washington County), New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Ontario, Texas (Fort Worth), and Wisconsin.

*Melanerpes erythrocephalus caurinus*: 22 specimens, from localities as follows: Colorado (Fort Lyon, 3; not further specified, 1), Nebraska (Lodgepole Creek, Duel County, 1), North Dakota (Grafton, 16; Medora, 1).

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