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THE NAME OF THE WESTERN RACE OF RED-
HEADED WOODPECKER

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RECENT examination of a series of *Melanerpes erythrocephalus* shows that Dr. Harry C. Oberholser¹ 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 erythrophthalmus* Silloway² 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 *erythrophthalmus* 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

¹ "An unrecognized subspecies of *Melanerpes erythrocephalus*," *Can. Field-Nat.*, 33, No. 3, 1919: 48.

² "The birds of Fergus County, Montana," *Bull. Fergus Co. Free High School*, No. 1, 1903: 36; Fergus Co., Montana.

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, Deuel 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,⁴ but larger, with the yellowish coloring of the underparts averaging more pronounced.

Adult male:⁵ 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:⁶ 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:⁷ 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:⁸ 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, Indi-

⁴ *Picus erythrocephalus* Linnaeus, *Syst. Nat.*, (10th ed.), 1, 1758: 113; South Carolina, *ex* Catesby.

⁵ Twelve specimens.

⁶ Nine specimens.

⁷ Fifty-seven specimens.

⁸ 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, Deuel County, 1), North Dakota (Grafton, 16; Medora, 1).

I am indebted to Dr. Max M. Peet, of Ann Arbor, for the privilege of examining specimens in his private collection and to the authorities of Field Museum of Natural History for similar courtesies.

