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A NEW RACE OF BOB-WHITE FROM
INTERIOR CHIAPAS

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BOB-WHITES from a previously unexplored part of Chiapas, Mexico, represent an undescribed subspecies. I take pleasure in naming this bird after the late E. W. Nelson, who has done more than any other person to clear up the taxonomy of this amazingly plastic group.

Colinus virginianus nelsoni, new subspecies

TYPE.—University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, No. 110113; male adult; Chicomuselo, Chiapas; June 19, 1941; Gregorio Gómez.

CHARACTERS.—A form of *Colinus* allied to *C. v. salvini* and *C. v. coyolcos*, with chestnut breast and belly and with black throat and superciliary region.

Male differs from *salvini* in having the dark marking even more purely black (instead of brownish black), though less extensive; white markings also purer (less grayish) and smaller in extent; rufous markings brighter and more extensive. Solid black below confined to chin and neck, instead of covering the upper breast. Breast and belly with black streaks or squamate edges to the feathers less extensive. Crissum almost wholly chestnut, instead of being almost entirely black. All the markings are sharper and more contrasted.

Male differs from *coyolcos* in having more extensive and deeper black markings, deeper rufous markings, and purer (less buffy) white markings, all of which are more in contrast to each other. The superciliary region is entirely black (*coyolcos* often has some indication of white superciliary or post-ocular stripe). The crissum is mostly pure chestnut in *nelsoni*, extensively marked with black and buffy or whitish in *coyolcos*. The top of the head and the hindneck are entirely black in two of the three males of *nelsoni*, but the other male has a brown patch on the occiput and upper hindneck, similar in extent to, but darker than, that on *coyolcos*.

Female differs from *salvini* in having the black markings smaller and the brown and buff markings more extensive. All the colors are brighter, clearer, and more contrasted. Except on the throat, female *salvini* is practically devoid of brown or buff, being mainly dull black and dingy buffy white.

Female *nelsoni* differs from *coyolcos* in being darker throughout and in having all the markings more contrasted.

In size *nelsoni* is intermediate between *salvini* and *coyolcos*, but nearer the latter.

MEASUREMENTS (IN MILLIMETERS)

Number and Sex	Subspecies	Wing	Tail	Exposed Culmen	Tarsus	Middle Toe
5 ♂	<i>salvini</i>	97-100	50-53	12.5-13	26-27.5	22.5-24
3 ♂	<i>nelsoni</i>	102-106	57-58	13-13.5	28-29	23.5-25
7 ♂	<i>coyolcos</i>	105-109.5	57.5-62	13.5-14.5	29-31	25-27
3 ♀	<i>salvini</i>	97.5-102	45-51	12-13	26.5-27	24-24.5
2 ♀	<i>nelsoni</i>	103-104.5	54-55	13-13.5	27.5	25
9 ♀	<i>coyolcos</i>	101-110	54-57	13-14.5	27.5-29	24.5-26.5

RANGE.—Known only from Chicomuselo, Chiapas.

REMARKS.—In many respects *nelsoni* forms a connecting link between *salvini* and *coyolcos*, which until recently were both treated as full species. It has, however, several characters not shared by either of those forms, notably the intensity of black, purity of white, and practically unmarked crissum.

No fewer than five quite distinct races of *Colinus virginianus* are now known from Chiapas, which has an area little greater than that of the state of West Virginia. One Chiapan race, *Colinus virginianus minor* Nelson, from the region about Palenque, has a white throat. All the others are black-throated and are included in the subjoined key.

Through the kind co-operation of Dr. John W. Aldrich I have been able to study the Fish and Wildlife Service specimens of *salvini*.

Since this paper went to press I have examined a series of seven males and one female from Chicomuselo in the collection of H. B. Conover. These birds were reported by Hellmayr and Conover¹ under the name *Colinus virginianus insignis*. This name was based on a single female from Nentón, and, unfortunately, no males have ever been collected at the type locality. The main distinction between *nelsoni* and males from near the type locality of *insignis* is that the latter possess a white superciliary stripe. One specimen of *nelsoni* in the Conover collection has just a trace of a white line behind the eye. Otherwise his birds agree very well with those belonging to the University of Michigan. There may be other differences between *nelsoni* and *insignis*, but none of the allied forms were available in Chicago.

KEY TO MALES OF THE BLACK-THROATED RACES OF *Colinus virginianus*

- a. Middle of breast and belly white, barred with black and chestnut . . .
 *C. v. castaneus* (Gould). Locality unknown.
- aa. Lower breast and belly entirely chestnut.
 - b. A distinct white superciliary or postocular stripe.
 - c. Larger and paler; sides of head and neck partly chestnut . . .
 . . . *C. v. ridgwayi* Brewster. Sonora and southern Arizona.
 - cc. Smaller and darker; sides of head and neck (except white superciliary) plain black . . . *C. v. insignis* Nelson. Comitán-Nentón Valley of eastern Chiapas and western Guatemala.
 - bb. Superciliary region entirely black, but sometimes with an indication of a white postocular stripe.
 - d. Upper breast solid black.
 - e. Larger and paler; lower breast and belly solid chestnut;

¹ *Catalogue of Birds of the Americas, Zool. Ser. Field Mus. Nat. Hist.*, 13, Pt. 1, No. 1 (1942): 245.

- rufous more extensive
C. v. atriceps (Ogilvie-Grant). Putla, western Oaxaca.
- ee. Smaller and darker; lower breast and belly usually marked
 with black; rufous above much restricted
C. v. salvini Nelson. San Benito and Tapachula, Chiapas.
- dd. Upper breast mainly rufous, with black streaks or squamations.
- f. Larger and paler; feathers of center of crown with broad
 brown edges; crissum heavily marked
 *C. v. coyolcos* (Müller) Tehuantepec,
 Oaxaca, to Tonalá and Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas.
- ff. Smaller and darker; whole head and neck usually black;
 crissum scarcely marked
 *C. v. nelsoni* Brodtkorb. Chicomuselo, Chiapas.