

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW MELOSPIZA FROM
CALIFORNIA.

BY HARRY C. OBERHOLSER.

A series of song sparrows from eastern California, in the Biological Survey Collection, United States National Museum, appear to represent an undescribed race. Since several of these specimens were obtained by Dr. A. K. Fisher, in Owen Valley, California, during the Death Valley Expedition of 1891,* this new form may appropriately be named

Melospiza melodia fisherella subsp. nov.

Chars. subsp..—Similar to *Melospiza melodia heermanni* Baird, but larger; upper surface paler, less rufescent; streaks on lower parts less blackish (more brownish).

Type.—Adult male, No. 203,507, U. S. Nat. Mus., Biological Survey Collection; Honey Lake, near Millford, California, June 18, 1906; A. S. Bunnell.

Description of type.—Upper surface somewhat rufescent hair brown; the crown with broad lateral stripes of burnt umber, and throughout with streaks of clove brown; the back and scapulars broadly streaked with black and burnt umber; the rump and upper tail-coverts somewhat streaked with dark brown; tail sepia, edged externally with wood brown and dull russet; wing-quills grayish sepia, margined exteriorly with wood brown and dull russet; superior wing-coverts mostly burnt umber, margined more or less with pale hair brown, the median and greater series and the tertials with terminal shaft markings of black or clove brown; superciliary stripe, auriculars, and sides of neck ash gray, the first mentioned paler than the others; postocular and malar stripes burnt umber; entire lower surface, including inferior wing-coverts, dull white, the sides, flanks, and crissum washed with brownish or buffy; breast, jugulum, sides, flanks, and crissum streaked with burnt umber and clove brown.

* Recorded by Dr. Fisher (North American Fauna No. 7, 1893, p. 100) as *Melospiza fasciata heermanni*.

Measurements of type.—Wing, 66; tail 66; exposed culmen, 12.2; tarsus, 22.7 mm.

Geographical distribution.—Eastern California, south to Owen Valley; western Nevada; and central southern Oregon.

This new race differs from *Melospiza melodia fallax* Baird (= *Melospiza melodia montana* Henshaw) in its darker upper parts, more blackish brown streaks of under surface, heavier bill, and shorter wing.