

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW SUB-SPECIES OF LOXIGILLA FROM THE
ISLAND OF ST. CHRISTOPHER, WEST INDIES.

By GEORGE N. LAWRENCE.

Loxigilla portoricensis var. *grandis*.

Male.—The general plumage is of a deep lustrous black, with the top and sides of the crown, the throat and under tail-coverts deep bright rufous; the under wing-coverts are white; the bill and feet are black.

Length (skin), $8\frac{1}{8}$ inches; wing, 4; tail, $3\frac{1}{8}$; tarsus, 1.

As the plumage of the female is similar to that of the male, it seemed so different from the recorded olive-colored plumage of the females of all others of the genus, that I wrote to Mr. Ober, asking if he was confident that the sexes were rightly determined; he replied that he was. I thought this marked difference in the coloring of the female would entitle it to full specific distinction.

In his work on the Birds of Porto Rico, Dr. Gundlach describes the female of *L. portoricensis* as being olive-colored. Therefore I wrote to him stating the close resemblance between the males of the birds from Porto Rico and St. Kitts, and called his attention to the fact that in the latter island the female resembled the male in plumage. He answered that he had just received a letter from his correspondent in Porto Rico, Dr. Stahl, who informed him that the female of *L. portoricensis* was like the male.

Length of ♀, 8 inches; wing, $3\frac{3}{4}$; tail, $3\frac{1}{8}$; tarsus, 1.

Types in the National Museum, Washington.

In the collection from Mr. Ober were nine specimens, one only in the olive-colored plumage, which was marked as a male. The collection also contained specimens of *Loxigilla noctis*.

Remarks.—The above-described bird in distribution of colors closely resembles *L. portoricensis*; the only noticeable difference is, that in the Porto Rico species the under wing-coverts are white, lightly marked with rufous. It is, however, larger, the bills as a rule markedly so, but in the only specimen in my collection from Porto Rico the bill is as large as that of the female from St. Kitts chosen as the type; but that of the male is larger.

In quite a large series of *L. portoricensis* belonging to the Smithsonian Institution, the bills average much smaller. Many of these are in the olive-colored plumage, but all are without distinction of sex.

Probably in the two forms from Porto Rico and St. Kitts, all the olive-colored birds are the young of both sexes.

Mr. F. A. Ober visited St. Christopher on his second expedition to the West Indies in 1880, but the time spent there was too limited to

admit of a satisfactory collection of its birds being made. The only one obtained of special interest is that now described.

Mr. Ober's note of it is as follows:

"219. 'Black bird,' ♂, Mt. Misery. May 21, 1880.

"General plumage soft, glossy black; chin and throat, top of head and extending back over the eyes on each side, and under tail-coverts rusty red; bill and feet black. Depth of bill $\frac{3}{4}$ inch.

"Sexes alike; young male different.

"Length, $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches; wing, $4\frac{1}{4}$; alar extent, 13."

JUNE 10, 1881.

NOTES ON THE MORTALITY AMONG FISHES OF THE GULF OF MEXICO.

By S. H. JOHNSON.

CUSTOM-HOUSE, CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS,
Collector's Office, June 17, 1881.

Prof. SPENCER F. BAIRD,

U. S. Commissioner of Fish and Fisheries, Washington, D. C.:

SIR: Noticing in the Forest and Stream of 9th instant some answers to queries as to the cause of mortality among fishes in the Gulf of Mexico, I make bold to present the result of my observations.

After very heavy rains and overflowing of rivers, the inner bays on the Texas coast suffer a loss of from one-half to three-fourths of their stock of salt-water fish, not including mullet, which live as well in fresh as salt water. In fact land-locked mullet in a fresh-water pond or tank grow to a weight of nine or ten pounds.

Last winter, after a heavy rain and a freeze, *all* the salt-water fish in the *Laguna del Madre* (a large sheet of water lying between Padre Island and the mainland) were found dead on the banks.

We have two causes for destruction of fish here, viz., too much fresh water and too cold weather.

In the lagoon above spoken of, in a long drought, the water gets too salty for the fish, and they become covered with sores, and unless relieved by a rain they die from too much salt.

I have never known any serious mortality among fish on the Gulf coast where there was free flow of water, except during violent storms, when many fish both small and large were beached and killed.

Very respectfully,

S. H. JOHNSON,
Collector.