

NOTES ON THE GENUS SITTASOMUS OF SWAINSON.

BY

ROBERT RIDGWAY,
Curator of the Department of Birds.

In his recently published catalogue of the Tracheophonæ,* pages 118-121, Dr. P. L. Selater recognizes three species of *Sittasomus*, as follows:

1. *S. erithacus* (Licht.), "SE. Brazil, Paraguay, Bolivia, and N. Argentina." (Synonyms, *Dendrocolaptes sylviellus* Temm., and *Sittasomus temminekii* Less.)

2. *S. olivaceus* Max., "S. Mexico, Central America, and South America down to Brazil." (Synonyms, *Sittasomus griseus* Jard., *S. amazonus* Lafr., *S. sylvioides* Lafr., and *S. pectinicaudus* Cab. and Heine.)

3. *S. stictolemus* Pelz., Amazonia.

Of these three species the U. S. National Museum possesses specimens of all but the last, besides numerous examples which can not be referred to either *S. erithacus* or *S. olivaceus*. A considerable number of additional specimens have been borrowed from the American Museum of Natural History, New York City, and the Boston Society of Natural History, including the types of *S. olivaceus* Max., and *S. amazonus* Lafr., so that altogether a very fair series of the different forms has been brought together for comparison. The careful examination of this material immediately convinced me that the actual number of recognizable forms is at least double that recognized by Dr. Selater; indeed, it is a matter of great surprise to me that forms so strongly characterized as *S. griseus* Jard., *S. sylvioides* Lafr., and an unnamed one from western Ecuador could ever have been referred to the species into which Dr. Selater has merged them. Examination of the type specimen also shows that *S. olivaceus* Max., instead of being one of the forms which the distinguished authority cited has "lumped" under that name, is really referable to *S. erithacus* (Licht.),† and that the so-

* Catalogue of the Passeriformes, or Perching Birds, in the collection of the British Museum. — Tracheophonæ, or the Families Dendrocolaptidæ, Formicariidæ, Conopophagidæ, and Pteroptochidæ. By Philip Lutley Selater. London: Printed by order of the Trustees, 1890. (Constituting Volume xv of the "Catalogue of the Birds in the British Museum.")

† Mr. J. A. Allen has already made this identification (see Bull. Am. Mus. Nat. Hist., vol. II, No. 3, 1889, p. 247), but I was not aware of it until after the above was written.

called *S. olivaceus* from southwestern Brazil (presumably the same as the one occurring in Bolivia and northern Argentina) is a still different form, as is also the form inhabiting the upper Amazon Valley (*S. amazonus* Lafr.). I have not been able to inspect any example from any part of Colombia, Venezuela, or Guiana, and can not, therefore, offer an opinion as to the affinities of birds from the more northern parts of South America.

The forty-four specimens before me I find very easily separable into six groups (some, perhaps, of only subspecific rank) by the following characters:*

*a*¹. Throat not spotted.

*b*¹. Pale band across inner webs of remiges very sharply defined, very distinct on secondaries as well as primaries, and in color distinctly yellowish.

*e*¹. Tail and secondaries cinnamon-chestnut.

*d*¹. Under parts olive-yellowish. HAB.: Brazil (Bahia, Rio Janeiro, Sapitiba, † Ypanema, * etc.); "Paraguay;" "Bolivia;" "N. Argentina."

1. *S. erithacus* (Licht.).

*d*². Under parts grayish olive or olive-grayish.

*e*¹. Back mixed rusty and olive. ‡

*f*¹. More olivaceous, with much smaller bill; under wing-coverts and band across remiges deeper yellowish. HAB.: Interior of southern Brazil (Chapada, Matto-grosso); Paraguay? Bolivia? northern Argentina? 2. *S. chapadensis* Ridgw.

*f*². More grayish, with much larger bill; under wing-coverts and band across remiges paler yellowish. HAB.: Upper Amazons.

3. *S. amazonus* Lafr.

*e*². Back uniform russet-brown, very different from color of top of head. HAB.: Costa Rica (and Veragua?) to southern Mexico.

4. *S. sylvioides* Lafr.

*e*². Tail and secondaries clear tawny. HAB.: Western Ecuador (Guayaquil, Babahoyo, Chimbo) 5. *S. aquatorialis* Ridgw.

*b*² Pale band across inner web of remiges not sharply defined, very indistinct on secondaries, and in color white, or yellowish white. HAB.: Tobago. Trinidad? Venezuela? 6. *S. griseus* Jard.

*a*² Throat spotted. HAB.: Upper Amazon 7. *S. stictolemus*, Pelz.

The principal synonymy of these various forms is as follows:

1. *Sittasomus erithacus* (Licht.).

Dendrocolaptes erithacus LICHT., Abh. Akad. Berl., 1820, 259, pl. 1.

Sittasomus erythacus BONAP., Consp. 1, 1850, 209.—PELZ., Orn. Bras. 1871, 59.

Sittasomus erithacus LAFR., Rev. Zoöl. 1850, 5-9.—SCL., Cat. B. Brit. Mus., xv, 1890, 119.

Sittasomus sylvicollis TEMM., Pl. Col. livr. 12, Sept. 27, 1823, pl. 72, fig. 1.

Sittasomus olivaceus MAX., Beitr. III, 1830 (?), 1146.

There can be no question that the type of *S. olivaceus* MAX. belongs to this species. Its coloration is a little modified by exposure to the

* *S. stictolemus* PELZ., being also included in the synoptical table to render it more nearly complete.

† *Fide* PELZELN, Orn. Bras., p. 59.

‡ The colors of the rump and top of head, respectively.

light (being a mounted specimen), the plumage of the head, neck, and body being considerably duller than in other specimens of *S. erithacus*, though considerably more yellowish than in any of the seventeen examples of *S. chapadensis*, but the paler under tail coverts, sharper outline of the yellowish spot on inner web of the fourth primary, and other characters, render the identification certain.

2. *Sittasomus chapadensis* Ridgw. (Sp. nov.)

?? *Sittasomus erithacus* SCL. and SALV., P. Z. S. 1879, 622 (Bolivia).—SCL. and HUDS., Arg. Orn. 1, 1888, 198 (Salta, Arg. Rep.).—BERL., J. f. O. 1887, 132 (Paraguay).

?? *Sittasomus olivaceus* WHITE, P. Z. S., 1882, 613 (Salta, Arg. Rep.)—PELZ., Orn. Bras., 1871, 59 (Engenho de Gama and E. de Pari, Brazil).

SP. CHAR.—Much less yellowish olive than *S. erithacus*, with rufous-chestnut of wings more extended (spreading over at least terminal half of outer webs of primaries), and yellowish spot on inner web of fourth primary less sharply outlined. (Type, No. 33741, Am. Mus. Nat. Hist. Chapado, Matto Grosso, Brazil, May 16, 1885, H. H. Smith.)

3. *Sittasomus amazonus* Lafr.

Sittasomus amazonus LAFR., Rev. Zoöl. 1850, 590.—PELZ., Orn. Bras. 1871, 59 (Borba, Barra and Theotônio, Brazil).

Sittasomus olivaceus SCL., Cat. B. Brit. Mus., xv, 1890, 119 (part).

SP. CHAR.—Much grayer than *S. chapadensis*, the under parts being dull olivaceous gray, without the slightest yellowish cast, the top of head and hind neck similar, but darker; outer webs of primaries much less rusty, even the outermost secondaries being olivaceous rather than rusty; pale band across inner webs of remiges less yellowish; bill and general dimensions larger.

4. *Sittasomus sylvioides* Lafr.

Sittasomus sylvioides LAFR., Rev. Zoöl. 1850, 590 (Mexico).

Sittasomus pectinicaudus CAB. and HEINE, Mus. Hein. II, Ang. 26, 1859, 33 (Mexico).

Sittasomus olivaceus SCL., Cat. B. Brit. Mus., xv, 1890, 119 (part).

This form closely resembles *S. amazonus* in the grayness of its coloration, but is distinguished by smaller size, uniform brown back, and much deeper chestnut of wings, tail, and under tail-coverts. Possibly Colombian specimens may belong here.

5. *Sittasomus æquatorialis* Ridgw.

Sittasomus amazonus BERLEPSCH and TACZAN., P. Z. S. 1883, 562 (Chimbo, W. Ecuador).

SP. CHAR.—Top of head and hind neck grayish olive; back, scapulars, and wing-coverts raw umber brown, rather deeper on the scapulars; rump, upper tail-coverts, and tail clear tawny, or orange-tawny; secondaries similar, but rather duller. Under parts uniform pale grayish olive, except under tail coverts, which are clear ochraceous. (Type, No. 50712, U. S. Nat. Mus., Guayaquil, Ecuador, Dr. A. Destruge.)

The peculiarly light tawny-rufous, almost orange-rufous, hue of the tail, rump, secondaries, etc., strikingly different from the deep chestnut or chestnut-rufous color of the same parts in other forms, is the most obvious character of this well-marked species or race.

6. *Sittasomus griseus* Jard.

Sittasomus griseus JARD., Ann. and Mag. N. H., XIX, 1847, 82 (Tobago).

Sittasomus olivaceus SCL., Cat. B. Brit. Mus., xv, 1890, 119 (part).

With the exception of *S. stictolæmus* this is the most distinct species of the genus, differing conspicuously from all the other forms in the light olivaceous back and scapulars (concolor with the head and abruptly defined against the tawny-rufous of the rump), and in the very much restricted pale (white instead of buffy-yellowish) band across the inner webs of the remiges, this band furthermore becoming nearly obsolete on the secondaries, which likewise are without the distinct blackish sub-terminal space. Its characters were accurately and minutely given by Jardine in the description above cited.

7. *Sittasomus stictolæmus* Pelz.

Sittasomus stictolæmus PELZ., Orn. Bras., 1871, 59 (Borba, np. Amazon).—SCL., Cat. B. Brit. Mus., xv, 1890, 120.

This species, which I have not seen, differs from all the others in its spotted throat. Possibly it is not strictly congeneric with them.