Ridgway Collection

R. Ridgway Esq^r. Havana 7 June 1890

Dear Sir.

I was absent from Habana when reached your favoured letter dated 3 April, and now I answer.

I have also received letter from M^r Cory, which had received the box with the bird-skins. In this box I have sent 2 or 3 skins of our Mimus, they were not good specimens, because prepared in the mould-time, and one with destroyed bill, also wing and tail of others, but probably able to reconoze the varietas. I am convinced that the Mimus of the different localities of West-India, accurately studied, will give an other result than that in Cory's List of the Birds of Westindia. My collection ~~had~~ possess a ♂ which had not equal both sides of the tail, and I believe that the specific character not consist in the colour of the tailfeathers.

I have sent skins of both sexes of the cuban Strix to M^r Cory protesting that this bird can not be considered variety of flammea. Perhaps the National Museum possess not good skins of the cuban Strix. M^r Cory in his last letter says: I think the Cuban Strix may stand as a good species now.

I have sent to M^r Cory now a ♂ of the Cuban Sparrow-

Give me a list of the desiderata of Cuban-bird skins.

Yours very respectfully

John Gundlach Dr. phil.

One Pelecanus (American White Pelican) was killed near Havana and stuffed. I see the name Pelecanus trachyrhynchus in Key to North american Birds by Elliott Coues, and the name Pelecanus erythrorhynchus in a letter from M^r Lawrence to me. Perhaps is the name erythrorhynchus an error calami;

in the description of Vigors had the dorsum ash coloured.
Hawk with the dorsum entirely slate-coloured). He possess now specimens from the most clear coloured to the most darker.

The species of Cuba has in all specimens ♂♀ only one, band of black near the apese of the tail feathers; — the species of Portorico had this subterminal band and others imperfect on the borders of the outer tail feathers. (I have killed many specimens all the same) — The cuban species had the rufous spot on the crown only in ♀; the Portorico-species ever.

The species of Portorico is very like the clearest variety of Cuba but the breast more or less streaked. I have never seen a difference of clearer or darker plumage.

Please compare the description given by Mr Lawrence in his Notes on some Cuban Birds 1860 Trans. N.Y. Lyc. Nat Hist. VII, p 247

My opinion is to apply the name dominicensis to the species of Portorico and probably Santo Domingo (I have never seen specimens from Haiti or Santo Domingo and the Hypotriorchis parvirostris de Saussure Revue et Mag. de Zoologie d'Guerin 1859 No 3, 117 may be a very dark ♀ of the Cuban species with erroneous locality, — and the name sparverioides to all the varieties of the Cuban species. Tinnunculus sparverius Gundl. J. f. Orn. 1878, p. 158 The reference of Falco sparverius D'Orb. in La Sagra Hist. Nat. Cuba Ois. p. 25 (1840 — of Tinnunculus dominicensis Report. Fis. Nat. Cuba Gundl. — Gundl. J. f. Orn. 1871, pag 373, are references to sparverioides. The reference Tinnunculus dominicensis Gundl Anal. Soc. Esp. Hist Nat Madrid VII p. 163 (1878 is good for Falco dominicensis; all these references in Cory's Birds of West India.

In the islands Jamaica, the Grand Caiman and the Lesser Caiman seems want a species of Sparrow-Hawk. Is it so?

I have compared many specimens of the Vireo Calidris killed in the island Portorico with V. barbatula Cabanis from Cuba. The former is similar in colour but had the bill longer, than in barbatula. I believe that is a sufficient character for distinction.

The references of Phaëton aethereus in Cory's Birds of West-India are of flavirostris, viz: Phaeton aethereus D'Orb. in La Sagra's Hist. Nat. Cuba, Ois. p. 312 (1840) and Gundl. J. f. Orn. 1862 p. 96. Ph. aethereus is not observed in Cuba and Portorico I do not know if the Phaeton of Jamaica is flavirostris as I suppose. You may compare.

I have in the last time received many letters with the direction Puentes Grandes 86. My actual address is Havana Calle de Virtudes 109. Please inform me Mr Brown Goode.