NOTES

HAEMORHOUS CASSINII VINIFER IS VALID

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The winter of 1996–1997 saw a major invasion of New Mexico by "winter" finches, particularly the Evening Grosbeak (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*) and Cassin's Finch (*Haemorhous cassinii*, until 2012 known as *Carpodacus cassinii*). This event was well documented at Albuquerque (Bernalillo Co.) and Española (Rio Arriba and Santa Fe counties). Concomitant with this invasion, perhaps because of it, there was an epizootic of salmonellosis and mortality of finches that included as well the House Finch (*H. mexicanus*) and, to a lesser extent, the Red Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra*).

The subspecies *H. c. vinifer* of Cassin's Finch was described almost 70 years ago (Duvall 1945), but the name has been recognized only sporadically, and the species has been widely maintained as monotypic. It was clear to me that the 1996–1997 incursion in New Mexico, however, involved two distinct phenotypes. Duvall described *vinifer* (holotype: United States National Museum of Natural History [USNM] 367522; adult ♂; 17 June 1942; Swan Lake, Ferry Co., Washington; coll. S. G. Jewett) as being darker than nominate *cassinii* (type locality Walnut Creek, Yavapai Co., Arizona), the crown patch of males being more purplish, less pink.

Actually, the male's plumage is more saturated with red throughout (Figure 1). Duvall did not mention the female's plumage, although he gave measurements for both sexes. Like the male, the female of *vinifer* is darker than that of nominate *cassinii*, with heavier streaking both dorsally and ventrally, though there is much overlap. Twice I brought series of both phenotypes from New Mexico to USNM for comparison with Duvall's type and with a series of topotypes taken in mid-winter and confirmed my tentative identification. Subspecies *vinifer* is represented by definitive-plumaged males collected in New Mexico (specimens at the Museum of Southwestern Biology, Albuquerque [MSB]) from January to March during 1960, 1977, 1978, 1980, 1993, 1997, 1998, and almost yearly from 2003 to 2011. It has occurred from October to March (sporadically in April and May) in Hidalgo, Catron, Rio Arriba, and San Juan counties, but mostly in the highland counties of Taos, Santa Fe, and Los Alamos, and also along the Rio Grande in Bernalillo County.

Duvall's (1945) paper was overlooked by the AOU, as neither *vinifer* nor *rubidus*, a subspecies of the Purple Finch (*H. purpureus*) described in that paper as well, was ever evaluated in their annual supplements (AOU 1945 to AOU 1956) leading up to the fifth *Check-list of North American Birds* (AOU 1957), in which Cassin's Finch was listed without comment as monotypic. Jewett et al. (1953) were apparently the first to accept Duvall's *vinifer* (and *rubidus*). Phillips et al. (1964) tentatively recognized both taxa for Arizona, and Monson and Phillips (1981) and Rea (1983) used the name *vinifer* explicitly or implicitly. Elsewhere, Bailey and Niedrach (1965) did not use the name *vinifer* for Colorado populations, and Behle (1985) did not list Cassin's Finch among the species he considered geographically variable in Utah. Pyle (1997) recognized *vinifer*, but Marshall et al. (2003) did not mention it for Oregon, nor did Wahl et al. (2005) for Washington, although the taxon was described from that state.

The nesting range of *vinifer* is as hazy today as in 1945. It nests in the Cascade Range of Washington (Wahl et al. 2005) and presumably Oregon (Marshall et al. 2005), but California specimens remain unstudied. It winters widely in Arizona (Monson and Phillips 1981) and New Mexico, but much work needs to be done to define both its summer and winter ranges. Someone in the central or northern Rocky Mountains must determine the northern limit of the nesting range of nominate *cassinii*!

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Figure 1. Six specimens from New Mexico of adult males of *Haemorhous cassinii* in the Museum of Southwestern Biology, University of New Mexico. From left to right: three examples of *H. c. cassinii* (MSB 19899, January; MSB 25522, March, and MSB 26959, March), followed by three of *H. c. vinifer* (MSB 20630, February; MSB 24512, March; and MSB 25523, April).

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IS THE LONG-EARED OWL DIMORPHIC?

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The Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*) is almost cosmopolitan in the North Temperate Zone. In Eurasia (see Peters 1940, Vaurie 1965), *A. o. otus* (Linnaeus, 1758) is found throughout the range of the species, except for the Canary Islands, where isolated *A. o. canariensis* Madarász, 1901, occurs. In North America two wide-ranging subspecies have been named, distinguished by size and color. "Eastern" *A. o. wilsonianus* (Lesson, 1830; type locality Pennsylvania) is reportedly larger and darker; "western" *A. o. tuftsi* Godfrey, 1948 (type locality South Arm, Last Mountain Lake, Saskatchewan) is reportedly smaller and paler (Godfrey 1948). The latter form was recognized by the AOU (1957), Monson and Phillips (1981), Marks et al. (1994), and Pyle (1997). Browning and Cross (1999) suggested the existence of even a third, as yet unnamed subspecies (see Marshall et al. 2006). But *tuftsi* was maintained as a junior synonym of *wilsonianus* by Rea (1983) and Unitt (1984). Rea (1983:171) wrote that "males are considerably darker than females" (n = 30) and questioned the validity of a paler western race. Kenneth C. Parkes "compared western birds of various museum ages ... with topotypical Pennsylvania material and was unable to substantiate a western race" (loc. cit.). Parkes "doubted the validity of ... '*tuftsi*' ... and suggested the supposed differences were artifacts of individual variation and museum age of specimens" (Unitt 1984:110).

Knowing this history, I studied the 51 Long-eared Owl specimens from New Mexico in the Museum of Southwestern Biology. I plotted their distribution by color and found that dark and light specimens were distributed evenly throughout the year, with dark birds being slightly more prevalent in the fledging season (June and July). With respect to sex, males outnumbered females 19:7 in the pale series, and females outnumbered males 21:6 in the dark series.