

Photographic record of Cedar Waxwing *Bombycilla cedrorum* from the Santa Marta Mountains, Colombia

Although best known for its endemic birds, the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta is an important wintering area for Nearctic migrants. Several vagrants have also been recorded in recent years^{3,8}.

On 2–7 January 2009, we participated in a ProAves' council meeting at Reserva Natural de Aves El Dorado, Santa Marta, dpto. Magdalena, Colombia. On 5 January 2009 at c.07h30, a Cedar Waxwing *Bombycilla cedrorum* was observed on a power line, c.50 m vertically above a patchwork of natural montane forest with invasive Mexican Pine *Pinus patula*. Series of record photographs / video recordings were taken by PS and BH (e.g. Fig. 1). The observation was made along the San Lorenzo ridge beside El Dorado Bird Reserve (11°06'21.32"N 74°03'18.39"W; c.2,540 m). The only possible confusion species, Bohemian Waxwing *B. garrulus* (which is unknown in South America) lacks pale undertail-coverts and has strong yellow markings on the primaries. Several of us are familiar with Cedar Waxwing from observations in North America or (a vagrant) in the UK.

Cedar Waxwing is considered a vagrant or accidental species in South America^{5,6}, being known from only a handful of published records: a male collected on 13 January 1951 in the Perijá Mountains of Venezuela¹, a female collected on 8 February 1951 at Nuquí, Chocó, Colombia⁷, a sight record on 5 January 1983 at

Buenaventura, Valle, Colombia⁴, a flock of c.30 some of which were illegally captured by local people and photographed on 5–8 February 2005 at San Juan Nepomuceno, Bolívar, Colombia², and a dead bird (specimen apparently not retained) in the Netherlands Antilles⁹. It is also reported as a vagrant in Ecuador⁵. Our record is the seventh published South American record, the first for the Santa Marta Mountains (the highest elevation record to date in South America), and the first Colombian record based on field photographs. A pattern is emerging of sporadic January–February records of this species in South America, and it should perhaps be looked for during cold snaps further north, such as that which occurred in late December 2008.

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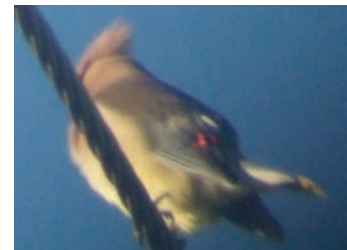
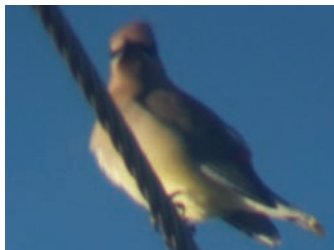


Figure 1. Cedar Waxwing *Bombycilla cedrorum* at Reserva Natural de Aves El Dorado, Santa Marta, Colombia, 5 January 2009 (Blanca Huertas)

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