

Intra-specific aggression in Pale-mandibled Araçari *Pteroglossus erythropygius*

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The unusual social behaviour depicted here was witnessed and photographed at the junction of the Ríos Guaycayacu and Guayllabamba, north-west of Quito, Ecuador, on 14 July 1993. At about 10h30, a group of raucous Pale-mandibled Araçaris *Pteroglossus erythropygius* was heard as they landed in a nearby tree and proceeded to attack the individual in the middle of the group. The victim of their aggression was held by the mandible and occasionally the feet during the attack which lasted at least five minutes. On closer approach to the group, the attack stopped and the aggressors flew off some moments later. The ravaged individual remained in the tree, well bloodied, for at least 30 minutes.

Araçaris and many toucans live in family or extended family groups. Dispersal from these groups must occur and this dispersal is most often of one particular sex. The reception of an individual in a new group depends upon the group's composition: if the new group already has several individuals of the same sex as the new-comer the new bird may be driven off. This social behaviour, which appears to be the likely explanation of what is described (and illustrated) above, has been



Pale-mandibled Araçaris *Pteroglossus erythropygius* (Alexander Brydon)

recorded in barbets, but seemingly never in toucans.

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