

Tumbes Tyrant ***Tumbezia salvini***



Tumbezia salvini is one of the least known of the Tumbesian Endemic Bird Area (EBA) endemics². Known, prior to 1965, from just six unprotected localities in Peru, from Tumbes to La Libertad; in that year it was reported from El Angolo Hunting Reserve, in the southern part of the North-west Peru Biosphere Reserve³. This area is known to harbour 30 restricted-range, five threatened and five near-threatened species¹. Since 1988, when the area was first visited by the Universidad Nacional Agraria La Molina, *Tumbezia* has been recorded in south-east Angolo (04°24'S 80°45'W). The photographs, shown here, are from this area and were taken in August 1992 and November 1994.

The species is considered near-threatened, principally due to habitat destruction^{2,4}. At El Angolo, it has principally been observed in riparian thickets between 540–800 m and in open dry forest at 650–700 m. A full description of the habitat found in this area is contained in Centro de Datos para la Conservación³. *Tumbezia* has also been twice observed along the road south of El Angolo at 300–400 m, in very dry *Prosopis pallida* open forest. These

habitat preferences appear to match those described for the species in Best & Kessler². *Tumbezia* is usually found perched on branches c. 1.5 m above ground. In El Angolo, it is an uncommon to relatively common species, easier to find during the dry season. This could be due to local movements, but, most probably, it is because visibility decreases when the vegetation becomes greener and denser during the rainy season.

Tumbezia exhibits behavioural similarities with Vermilion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus*, with which it shares habitat in El Angolo. *Pyrocephalus* appears to be more numerous than *Tumbezia* throughout the area; both species occupy the same habitats and vegetational strata, employ similar hunting techniques and are thus presumably in direct competition. I have observed the two species to displace each other on several occasions, apparently without one becoming more dominant. Both are highly territorial and readily defend their territories should it be invaded by the other species.

Bottom and right: Tumbes Tyrant *Tumbesia salvini*.
(Javier Barrio)



Populations of *Tumbezia salvini* appear to be secure in El Angolo Hunting Reserve, and probably also in the little-surveyed Cerros de Amotape National Park, to the north. Few threats exist to both areas. There is little timber removal in either area and is performed mostly for subsistence purposes by the scattered human population, and in close proximity to settlements. Habitat destruction in the North-west Peru Biosphere Reserve (which also includes the Cerros de Amotape National Park and Tumbes Reserved Zone, as well as El Angolo) is difficult to establish, as most occurs in heavy undergrowth, as a result of extensive cattle and goat grazing. Elsewhere, within the range of *Tumbezia salvini*, threats caused by human or economic pressures, are liable to be greater to the species.

References

1. Barrio, J. (in prep.) *El Angolo: Eden for Tumbesian endemics*.
2. Best, B. J. & Kessler, M. (1995) *Biodiversity and conservation in Tumbesian Ecuador and Peru*. Cambridge, UK: BirdLife International.
3. Centro de Datos para la Conservación (1995) *Las Areas Naturales Protegidas del Perú. Reporte 5: Coto de Caza El Angolo*. La Molina, Perú: CDC – Universidad Nacional Agraria La Molina.
4. Collar, N. J., Gonzaga, L. P., Krabbe, N., Madroño Nieto, A., Naranjo, L. G., Parker, T. A. & Wege, D. C. (1992) *Threatened birds of the Americas: the ICBP/IUCN Red Data Book*. Cambridge, UK: International Council for Bird Preservation.

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