

Distributional and temporal records of some Mexican birds

Héctor Gómez de Silva G.

Se proporcionan algunos datos sobre observaciones de 29 especies de aves que se registraron fuera del área geográfica mapeada para cada especie por Howell & Webb⁶. Algunos representan nuevos registros para los estados respectivos.

Howell & Webb⁶ provide detailed range maps of Mexican birds, allowing observers to easily identify records from outside a species' known range. These authors write: "we recommend... publish[ing] findings that supplement and correct information given in this guide" (p. xiv). Here I list several records from different areas of Mexico which supplement information in that work. A few other such records have been or will be published in other articles^{2,3,4}. Approximate coordinates or other brief geographical descriptions are given except for well-known locations (different maps used to estimate geographical coordinates seem to differ by c.05' minutes of a degree).

Blue-footed Booby *Sula nebouxii*

Usually found in coastal north-west Mexico, and "irregularly R to U visitor (Mar–Jun at least) S to Gro"⁶. I saw an immature on the beach at El Farito, Michoacán (18°08'N 102°55'W) on 3 August 1990. The following characters were noted: beak and facial skin horn-grey, the beak slightly greener; iris brown; earth-brown upperparts, wings with a lighter alar bar; tail dark brown with much white at feather bases (irregular in extent); breast whitish with brown wash and irregular brown smudges, not sharply demarcated from white belly; white bases on lower hindneck and rump feathers; legs and feet greyish green. The colour of the breast, rump and tail clearly distinguished it from Brown *S. leucogaster* and Masked Boobies *S. dactylatra*, the white on the lower hindneck and upperpart tone further distinguished it from Brown Booby, and the near concolorous facial skin and beak from Masked Booby.

Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis*

Principally found along both coasts but also irregular inland, especially between December–March⁶. My inland records are from outside this period: an immature, soaring over forest at Amatlan, Veracruz (18°15'N 96°55'W) on 25 May 1991; an immature on the lake near Apic-pac, Chiapas (17°04'N 93°28'W) on 25 July 1991; two immatures at Laguna Yanqui, in the Selva Lacandona (16°35'N



Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis* (Robin Restall)

91°25'W) on 5–6 July 1995. The latter is apparently the first record of this species in the Selva Lacandona—the species is not mentioned in González García⁵.

Neotropic Cormorant *Phalacrocorax brasilianus*

Not mapped for interior Oaxaca⁶. Singles on the reservoir above Teotitlán del Valle, Oaxaca (17°03'N 96°30'W) on 20 and 22 December 1993, and on 14 October 1996, and at a reservoir a few km north-east of Oaxaca City (17°05'N 96°38'W) on 24 December 1993.

Harris' Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus*

Richard Wilson, Adam Kent and I saw an adult c. 10 km north-west of Acapulco, Guerrero, on 9 August 1991. The species is not mapped in coastal Guerrero⁶. However, this species is common in captivity in Mexico and the record may pertain to an escape.

Bicolored Hawk *Accipiter bicolor*

Found on the Atlantic Slope of Mexico and northern Central America and "possibly on Pacific Slope in Guatemala"⁶. John Hazelmayer and I saw a probable adult perched on a snag in the rainforest at Tres de Mayo, on the Pacific slope of the Sierra Madre de Chiapas (15°35'N 92°52'W) on 18 March 1991. The rufous thighs and primary projection (which distinguish the species from Plumbeous Kite

Ictinia plumbea) could not be seen, but we could clearly see the dark grey crown and nape, concolorous with the wings and sharply contrasting with the paler colour of the underparts and sides of face.

Aplomado Falcon *Falco femoralis*

Two records from the Gulf slope of Oaxaca, where not previously mapped by Howell & Webb⁶. An immature was hovering over a small cane fire on the roadside, 23 km south-west of Tuxtepec (17°56'N 96°01'W) on 23 April 1996, and an adult was on a telephone pole between Tuxtepec and Jalapa de Díaz on 27 April 1996.

Collared Plover *Charadrius collaris*

Howell & Webb⁶ mention three records from interior central Mexico (northern Guerrero, Morelos and Tlaxcala) where the species had not been recorded previously. An adult was at a lake near Tulyehualco, Distrito Federal (19°15'N 98°58'W) on 18 August 1996 and was still present on 22 August and 18 September, when it was also observed by Constantino Macías and Richard Wilson. This is the first record for Distrito Federal. On all three dates, it was observed at length at a distance of c. 100 m (occasionally down to 15 m on 18 August), and through a 30x telescope on the two latter dates. There were always 6–8 Snowy Plovers *Charadrius alexandrinus* in the area, often in the same field of view. These were in immature plumage in August and winter plumage by 18 September, whereas the Collared Plover did not change appearance. Compared to the former, the Collared Plover had a complete black breast band (narrowing slightly in the centre of the breast), a black line from the bill-base to the eye, a black smudge on the forecrown contrasting with the prominent white triangular forehead patch, flesh rather than flesh-grey legs, and no white hindcollar or postocular stripe. The Snowy Plovers appeared slightly paler on the mantle and wings, and slightly larger and plumper on direct comparison.

Pale-vented Pigeon *Columba cayennensis*

Mapped as reaching south-east Veracruz only from c. 10 km south of Las Choapas to near Coatzacoalcos⁶. I found it numerous in Veracruz south of Coatzacoalcos at Hidalgotitlán (17°45'N 94°40'W) and El Carrizal (c. 17°27'N 94°15'W) on 20–22 October 1991.

Yucatan Nightjar *Caprimulgus badius*

Howell & Webb⁶ consider the species not to have been reliably recorded in Guatemala, but that "some

apparently withdraw south in winter (Dec–Feb), when recorded in Belize and northern Honduras". I heard this species' distinctive *chuck ree-o ree-o* on 25 January 1993 at Villahermosa, Campeche (17°55'N 89°41'W), south of its mapped range in Mexico and only 11 km from the Guatemalan border.

Vaux's Swift *Chaetura vauxi*

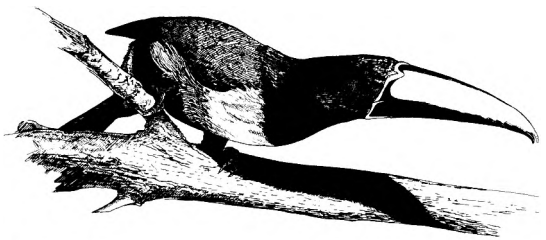
At midday on 25 January 1993, I saw three dark *Chaetura* swifts over an aguada near Villahermosa, Campeche (17°55'N 89°41'W); they were noted as being darker than northern migrant *vauxi*. Howell & Webb⁶ do not map any swift in south Campeche during winter but Vaux's Swift is mapped as resident in north Guatemala and Belize, and disjunctly in the northern Yucatan Peninsula, where a different subspecies occurs. S. N. G. Howell (pers. comm.) has recently seen Vaux's Swifts (subspecies uncertain, presumed *gaumeri*) at Chetumal in December and I have seen it there in July, which, together with this record, raises the possibility that the ranges of these two resident subspecies are not disjunct.

Anna's Hummingbird *Archilochus anna*

A few winter records from Coahuila and Nuevo León are mapped by Howell & Webb⁶, where it was not previously known to occur. I saw six birds (of both sexes) in the foothills of the Sierra de Catorce, San Luis Potosí (23°35'N 100°54'W, at 2,370 m) on 21 December 1994. It had been seen at this locality a few weeks previously by Rafael Villegas (*in litt.*). These birds represent the first state records and were identified by their proportionately short, slightly decurved beaks, plain pale greyish underparts and reddish-pink gorget and crown (males) and central throat patch (females).

Collared Aracari *Pteroglossus torquatus*

Howell & Webb⁶ map the species as occurring on the Gulf and Pacific slopes of Chiapas but not the interior. I saw two individuals on 7 August 1993, less than 1 km south of Santa Rita (15°36'N



Collared Aracari *Pteroglossus torquatus* (Charles Gambill)

92°46'W) on the interior-facing slope of the Sierra Madre de Chiapas.

Yucatan Woodpecker *Centurus pygmaeus*

Not recorded from south Campeche (or Guatemala), although known from similar latitudes in Belize⁶. I saw one on a snag in rainforest near Villahermosa, Campeche (17°55'N 89°41'W) on 25 January 1993.

Barred Woodcreeper *Dendrocolaptes certhia*

Recorded on the Pacific Slope of Middle America only in El Salvador and Oaxaca and Guerrero, Mexico⁶. I saw one in tropical semideciduous forest c. 1 km above Paval on the El Triunfo trail, on the Pacific side of the Sierra Madre de Chiapas (15°37'N 92°50'W) on 28 March 1991.

Greater Pewee *Contopus pertinax*

Not mapped in the Sierra Madre de Chiapas⁶. I recorded this unmistakable species at Santa Rita, Chiapas (15°36'N 92°46'W) on 4 March and 21 September 1993.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus forficatus*

A transient and winter visitor to much of eastern Mexico. An early June record from central Veracruz (4 June 1991, just east of Loma Bonita, c.18°05' 95°50'W) is therefore unusual, although it has been noted as late as May in the Yucatan Peninsula⁶.

Rock Wren *Salpinctes obsoletus*

Not recorded in Colima or adjacent regions⁶. Together with Kurt Rademaker and Tom Wurster, I saw one at a dry river bed in the foothills of the Volcanes de Colima near Barranca del Agua, Colima (c.19°25'N 103°45'W) on 1 December 1991.

Slate-colored Solitaire *Myadestes unicolor*

Not mapped in central-west Chiapas⁶. Common in rainforest at 16°56'N 93°28'W, where many were singing on 9 April and 22 October 1996, suggesting it is resident here. This area is at c.780 m, lower than the altitudinal range given in Howell & Webb⁶. The area has not been visited in summer, thus the species' status in the region at this season remains unknown.

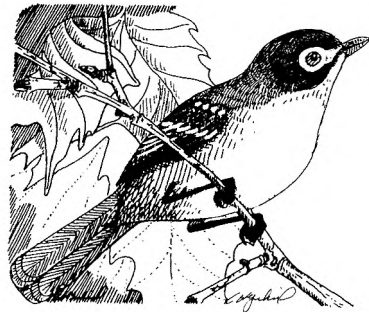
American Pipit *Anthus rubescens*

Richard Schofield and I (with a tour group) saw and heard two individuals flying high above the muddy edge of the lagoon at Puerto Arista, Chiapas (c.15°57'N 93°49'W) on 24 December 1995. They were seen briefly and identified by their size and slender shape, white outer tail feathers, buffy un-

derparts and distinctive *pip-it* call. This is the first record in Chiapas.

Mangrove Vireo *Vireo pallens*

Not mapped in Tabasco or Chiapas⁶. Richard Schofield and I (with a tour group) saw and heard one in south Tabasco less than 100 m from the bridge near La Libertad and the border with Chiapas (c.17°40'N 91°45'W) on 19 December 1995. The species was heard again at the same locality on 25 October 1996; R. Schofield then played a commercial recording of this species¹ which brought it into view. In addition to the diagnostic song, we identified it by the pale brown eyes, yellow wash to the entire underparts, head and mantle concolorously olive, and spectacles clearly not as bold as in White-eyed Vireo *Vireo griseus*. I have not explored the identical habitat on the Chiapas side of the border, but it is likely that it also occurs there.



Black-capped Vireo *Vireo atricapillus* (Charles Gambill)

Black-capped Vireo *Vireo atricapillus*

The species is presumably a transient in areas between its breeding and wintering ranges but is known from "few records"⁶. I recorded single males at Temascaltepec, México state (19°02'N 100°02'W) on 14 September 1985 and 1 January 1987. Phillips⁴ reports that it is a scarce winter visitor in this part of the state.

Tropical Parula *Parula pitiayumi*

Not mapped in central-west Chiapas⁶. A male was in rainforest at Laguna Bélgica (16°52'N 93°26'W) on 22 October 1996. Identified as a male by the deep colours and black mask, and distinguished from male Northern Parula *Parula americana* by its black mask, and lack of white eye-crescents and breast bands (other than the orange wash on breast).

Yellow-throated Warbler *Dendroica dominica*

Howell & Webb⁶ do not map south Campeche as part of its winter range, although they note a winter accidental in northern Petén. One seen at Villahermosa, Campeche (17°55'N 89°41'W) on 25 January 1993.

Fan-tailed Warbler *Basileuterus lachrymosa*

Its presence in south Veracruz is based on a report from a single locality (Los Tuxtlas) by Winker *et al.*⁹ On 24 April 1996, I saw one in a relict patch of rainforest with karstic boulders around the Oaxaca/Veracruz border, on the road to San Juan del Río, Oaxaca (17°32'N 95°44'W). This locality is southwest of the Los Tuxtlas record.

Olive Warbler *Peucedramus taeniatus*

Mapped in the San Cristóbal de las Casas area of Chiapas but not in the Sierra Madre de Chiapas⁶. One male in a very small pine woodland at Cipresal (15°39'N 92°50'W) on 6 May 1993 and a female on 31 July 1993. The species is usually relatively common where found, but it must be rare at Cipresal as I only saw the species once in the 16 daylight hours I spent there in the first half of May 1993.

Blue Grosbeak *Passerina caerulea*

Not mapped as breeding in Veracruz⁶. A male in a man-made clearing in pine forest at Acajete (19°35'N 97°01'W) on 10 July 1993. The date suggests local breeding although an early, post-breeding wanderer from the Mexican plateau could have been involved.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak *Pheucticus ludovicianus*

Howell & Webb⁶ state that the species is a "transient and winter visitor ... in interior from Isthmus" south, but do not map this species in the state of México. I have observed it in second-growth and orchards at Temascaltepec, México (19°02'N 100°02'W) on the following dates: 30–31 December 1985, 1 January 1986, 29–30 March 1986 and 6–7 February 1987 (1–2 males on most dates, three males and one female on 6 February 1987). J. Keenan (*in litt.*) recorded it there in April 1991. These are the first records in México state and the dates suggest wintering in the region.

Melodious Blackbird *Dives dives*

Not mapped on the Pacific slope of Mexico by Howell & Webb⁶, who inadvertently overlooked the recent (mid-1980s?) expansion of this species onto the Pacific slope of Chiapas as indicated by their own records, which are as follows: "two at

Mapastepec, 6 March 1985"; "fairly common" in the vicinity of Puerto Arista, 8 May 1986 and 11 January 1987; one at El Triunfo, 3–6 May 1988; at least 10 between Arriaga and Puerto Arista, 13 May 1988; "common" in the vicinity of Mapastepec, 14 May 1988 and between Mapastepec and Tapachula, 15 May 1988; heard at Motozintla and two seen near Huixtla, 5 January 1992; and 1–2 near Puerto Arista, 13 October 1993 (S. N. G. Howell *in litt.*). These and my own records suggest that it is now locally common in the Sierra Madre de Chiapas west to eastern Oaxaca. My records are from Loma Bonita (15°32'N 92°53'W) on 17 March 1991, Palo Gordo (15°37'N 92°52'W) on 28 August 1993, Unión Juárez (15°04'N 92°05'W; heard only) on 19 March 1991, a few km south-east of Tonalá (15°57'N 93°40'W) on 19 October 1996, Jaltenango de la Paz (15°50'N 92°47'W) on 25 November 1996, El Triunfo (15°37'N 92°48'W) at 1,875 m, where at least two pairs were resident (recorded from 23–26 March 1991 and in all months from March–December 1993), and from 5 km east-north-east of Zanatepec, Oaxaca (16°30'N 94°17'W) on 11 April 1996. I probably heard the species much further west at and around Mazunte, Oaxaca (15°40'N 96°36'W) on 8 April 1995 and 16 October 1996.

Bronzed Cowbird *Molothrus aeneus*

Howell & Webb⁶ map this species in San Luis Potosí only in the extreme south-east and question its status and distribution elsewhere in the state. Two males on television antennae in Wadley (c.23°35'N 100°59'W) on 20 December 1994 were identified by their red eyes, large 'greek-profile' bills and bulldog necks. Mellink⁷ recorded the species at a few sites in northern San Luis Potosí.

Altamira Oriole *Icterus gularis*

Howell & Webb⁶ do not map southern Campeche in this species' range, although they map it in northern Belize and note an accidental record in northern Petén, Guatemala. At least one was in a man-made clearing at Villahermosa, Campeche (17°55'N 89°41'W) on several days in late January 1993.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to all my companions in the field, some of whose names are mentioned above. Additionally, Rodrigo Medellín made possible trips to Laguna Yanqui and Sierra de Catorce, Marcelo Aranda and Enrique Martínez Meyer arranged the trip to Villahermosa, Campeche, and Fernando González García made possible several visits to the Sierra Madre de Chiapas. The manuscript was im-

proved thanks to comments by Steve Howell and Kimball Garrett.

References

1. Coffey, B. B. & Coffey, L. C. (1989) *Songs of Mexican birds*. ARA 13-1. Gainesville, Florida: ARA Records.
2. Gómez de Silva G., H. (1995) Canyon Wren *Catherpes mexicanus* in humid lowlands of Veracruz and Chiapas, with notes on near sympatry with other rock-loving wrens. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Club* 115: 132–133.
3. Gómez de Silva, H. (1997) Distribution and conservation status of *Hylorchilus* wrens (Troglodytidae) in Mexico. *Bird Conserv. International* 7: 409–418.
4. Gómez de Silva, H. & González-García, F. (in prep.) Birds of the upper cloud forest of El Triunfo, Chiapas.
5. González García, F. (1993) Avifauna de la Reserva de la Biosfera “Montes Azules”, Selva Lacandona, Chiapas, México. *Acta Zoologica Mexicana* 55.
6. Howell, S. N. G. & Webb, S. (1995) *A guide to the birds of Mexico and northern Central America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
7. Mellink, E. (1991) Bird communities associated with traditional agroecosystems in the San Luis Potosí Plateau, Mexico. *Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment* 36: 37–50.
8. Phillips, A. R. (1991) *The known birds of North and Middle America*, 2. Denver, Colorado: Phillips.
9. Winker, K., Oehlenschläger, R. J., Ramos, M. A., Zink, R. M., Rappole, J. H. & Warner, D.W. (1992) Avian distribution and abundance records for the Sierra de Los Tuxtlas, Veracruz, Mexico. *Wilson Bull.* 104: 699–718.

Héctor Gómez de Silva G.

Instituto de Ecología, UNAM, Apartado Postal 70-275, Ciudad Universitaria, 04510 - México, D.F., Mexico.