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# A nest of the Scarlet-breasted Fruiteater *Pipreola frontalis* in eastern Ecuador

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Aquí presentamos algunos detalles de un nido de *Pipreola frontalis* en el este de Ecuador. El nido fue descubierto a 1200 msnm en la provincia de Napo, el 21 de enero de 1998. El mismo estaba formado de musgo en forma de taza, y medía aproximadamente 18 cm de diámetro. Estaba situado a 15 m de altura en una rama cubierta de musgo en el sub-dosel.

Little has been published concerning the nesting habits of any of the *Pipreola* fruiteaters<sup>4</sup>. The only complete nest description for any *Pipreola* is that of Miller<sup>1</sup>, who described a nest of Green-and-black Fruiteater *P. riefferii* from the Andes of Colombia. Samper<sup>2</sup> presented observations of courtship feeding in Orange-breasted Fruiteater *P. jucunda*, also in Colombia. In this note we report some brief observations at a nest of Scarlet-breasted Fruiteater *Pipreola frontalis* (presumably of the race *squamipectus*) in eastern Ecuador.

On 21 January 1998, at 08h30, we located a pair of *P. frontalis* in a disturbed area of pre-montane forest edge at c.1,200 m along the 'Loreto Road', 3 km east of Hollin, Napo Province, Ecuador. A single male *frontalis* was initially discovered feeding on small, unidentified, blackish fruits 6 m above the ground. Soon after this, a female was discovered nearby as it perched c.15 m above ground-level on a mossy limb in the subcanopy. Within a few minutes, the female moved horizontally along the branch and assumed a horizontal posture atop a rounded clump of moss and lichens. Scrutiny through binoculars revealed that this clump, c.18 cm in diameter, was a bowl-shaped nest, positioned astride a tree-fork. The nest was c.30 cm from the broken end of the branch that we estimated at 2.5 cm in diameter. The outer surface of the nest was composed of materials nearly identical in colour and texture to the surrounding epiphytes.

This nest was similar, in most respects (except its height off the ground), to that described by Miller<sup>1</sup> for *P. riefferii*. The female remained on the nest, with only the head and upper breast visible above its rim, for c.30 minutes. We returned to the site at c.12h30 to find the the nest unattended, although the female returned within a few minutes. Ten minutes later the female departed and did not return for c.20 minutes, despite a heavy downpour before we left the site at 13h00.

Skutch<sup>3</sup> listed *Pipreola* among those cotingid genera in which 'pairs are regularly formed and the male takes a share in attending the nestlings'. Although we never saw the male approach the nest, it remained close by during the period of our observation.

Unfortunately, no nest contents could be seen from our vantage. A large nestling should have been visible from our position, but we could not confirm that the nest was empty. However, the female's behaviour, i.e. leaving the nest unattended during a heavy rain shower, suggests that no eggs or nestlings were present.

## References

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2. Samper, K. C. (1992) Courtship and feeding in the Orange-breasted Fruiteater *Pipreola jucunda*. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Club* 112: 133-134.
3. Skutch, A. F. (1969) *Pacific Coast Avifauna, 35. Life histories of Central American birds*. Berkeley: Cooper Ornithological Society.
4. Snow, D. W. (1982) *The cotingas: bellbirds, umbrellabirds and other species*. London, UK: British Museum (Natural History) & Cornell University Press.

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