A case of partial albinism in Giant Conebill Oreomanes fraseri
Grace P. Servat

Un individuo parcialmente albino del Pájaro de los Queñuales Oreomanes fraseri, fue observado y capturado en noviembre de 1997, en un bosque de Polylepis incana en la localidad de Japani, Lima, Perú. Este constituye el primer registro de albinismo para esta especie. Se presenta documentación fotográfica del individuo aberrante.

Giant Conebill Oreomanes fraseri is a monotypic genus restricted to high-elevation Polylepis woodlands, from south Colombia to south-west Bolivia. Throughout the Andes of Peru O. fraseri is a conspicuous member of the highly threatened Polylepis avian community.

I visited a Polylepis woodland in Japani (dpto. Lima, Huarochiri province, at 11°41’S 76°31’W and 4,140 m) from 28 November to 2 December 1997. A large (c.300 ha) Polylepis incana woodland extends along a chain of mountains, surrounded by bare terrain, or dry shrubby vegetation (Fig. 1). On 30 November, a partially albinistic O. fraseri was observed foraging on the bark of Polylepis trees, with two normal individuals. I caught the albino in a mist-net placed within the understorey. Partial albinos have only parts of their plumage or integument lacking pigments. Excepting the lack of pigmentation in the ventral, dorsal and flank feathers (Fig. 2), it was similar to the other O. fraseri present at Japani. This appears to be the first reported case of albinism for O. fraseri and closely related genera (e.g. Conirostrum).

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References

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