

Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope* in Venezuela: a new bird for South America

Robert S. R. Williams and David D. Beadle

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El 4 de marzo de 2002 nos descubrieron un macho del Silbón Europeo *Anas penelope* en la Bahía de Cuare, Falcón, Venezuela. Fue observado descansando junto a una banda de Cerceta Aliazul *Anas discors*, Silbón Americano *A. americana* y Pato Cuchara Norteño *A. clypeata*. La especie ha sido previamente registrada en la región Neotropical tanto en el Caribe como en México. Este sería aparentemente el primer registro para el continente del América del Sur.

In the mid-afternoon of 4 March 2002, while leading a birding tour, DDB and RSRW noted a distant flock of c. 450 *Anas* spp. roosting in shallow water in Cuare Bay, Falcón. RSRW began to check the flock using a telescope, finding it to largely comprise Blue-winged Teal *A. discors* and American Wigeon *A. americana* with smaller numbers of Northern Shoveler *A. clypeata*. Within a few minutes the head of a male Eurasian Wigeon *A. penelope* appeared behind the front row of ducks. Seven observers subsequently saw the bird, although initially only the head could be seen at intermittent intervals when raised. Though distant (c. 600 m) the reddish-brown head and straw-coloured forehead and forecrown were obvious. In an attempt to acquire closer views and photographic evidence, five members of the group decided to wade into the shallow bay. As they approached, the flock was flushed by a tractor and flew much further away. The remaining members of the group were afforded good but distant views of the bird for several minutes as it walked through the now scattered flock until it was flushed again to the inaccessible far side of the bay. All observations were made in excellent light with little haze. In addition to the rufous-and-buff head pattern, the grey flanks and mantle were noted. All observers had previous experience of the species in Europe or as a vagrant in the USA.

Eurasian Wigeon is a regular vagrant to North America and has previously been recorded in the Neotropics in Mexico, where it is an uncommon to rare visitor to northern Baja, rare in southern Baja, Sonora and Tamaulipas, and a vagrant to Jalisco

and Clipperton¹ (H. Gómez de Silva *in litt.* 2002). It has been recorded on several occasions in the Caribbean, with records from Cuba (A. Kirkconnell pers comm. 2002), Hispaniola, Puerto Rico, Barbuda and Barbados². The species' occurrence in South America as a vagrant is therefore unsurprising.

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References

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Robert S. R. Williams

Ultimate Voyages, Casilla 17-21-140, Quito, Ecuador.
E-mail: Rob@interactive.net.ec.

David D. Beadle

4 Yarmouth Gardens, Toronto, Ontario M6G 1W4, Canada.
E-mail: dbeadle@hotmail.com.