

First nesting records of Lyre-tailed Nightjar *Uropsalis lyra* in Argentina with notes on its breeding biology

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El Atajacaminos Lira *Uropsalis lyra* es un caprimúlgido andino poco conocido. En Argentina se desconocen aspectos básicos de su biología reproductiva. Presentamos notas sobre su reproducción en base a cuatro nidos ubicados en abruptos barrancos en la selva de yungas de la provincia de Jujuy. Solo la hembra cuidó y alimentó a un pichón durante todo su desarrollo. La hembra alimentó al pichón durante la noche y durante el día permanecieron juntos en reposo.

Lyre-tailed Nightjar *Uropsalis lyra* is patchily distributed in the Andes, with three subspecies: *U. l. lyra* in Venezuela, Colombia and Ecuador, *U. l. peruviana*² from Peru to Santa Cruz, Bolivia (larger and redder than *lyra*), and *U. l. argentina*¹⁴ in southern Bolivia and north-west Argentina. The last subspecies was described on the basis of its larger size, but its validity requires further investigation. Although *U. lyra* is poorly known in Argentina, it was considered to be threatened in the country¹³, but was recently reclassified as

Data Deficient¹². Throughout its range, the species inhabits humid cloud forest at 800–3,500 m, often near steep cliffs¹¹. Despite its large distribution, the species' breeding biology is poorly known. The only reported nest was in a human construction at El Monte Biological Station in Ecuador⁷.

In Argentina, *U. lyra* occurs in scrub at the edges of alder (*Alnus*) forest. It has been observed feeding above the canopy of *Alnus acuminata*, *Podocarpus parlatorei*, *Juglans australis* and *Phoebe porphyria*¹¹. The species was first reported

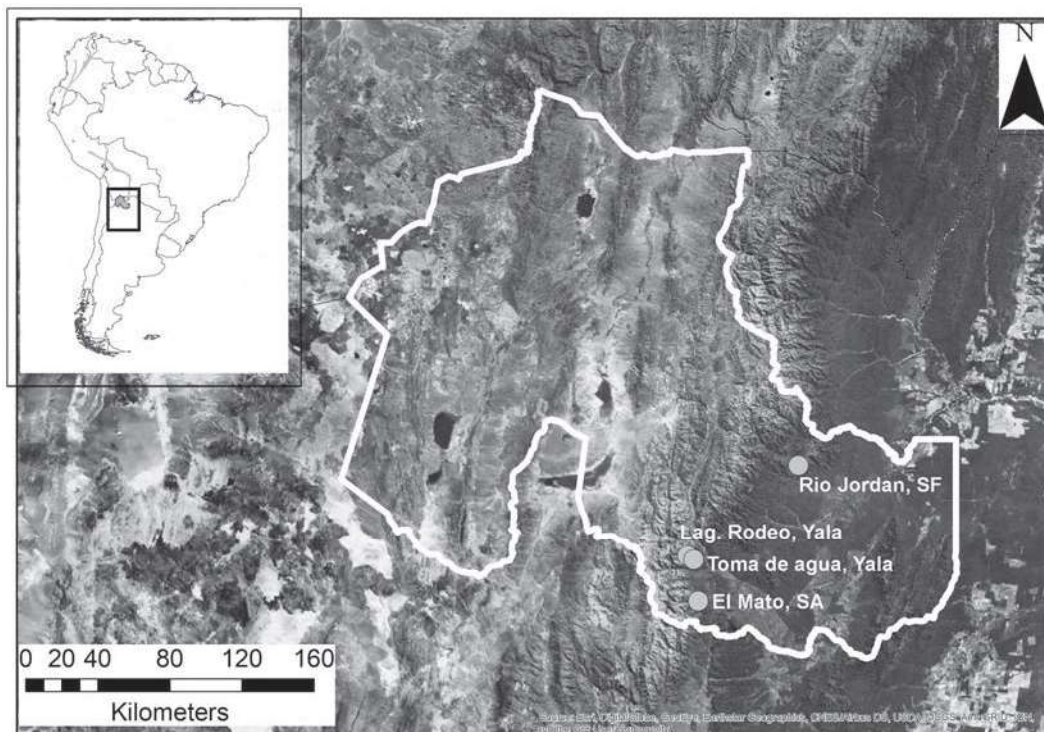


Figure 1. Nesting localities of Lyre-tailed Nightjar *Uropsalis lyra* in Jujuy province (white polygon), Argentina; SF: San Francisco; SA: San Antonio. Inset: global distribution according to Ridgely et al.¹⁵ (Main map © Google Earth, 2019).

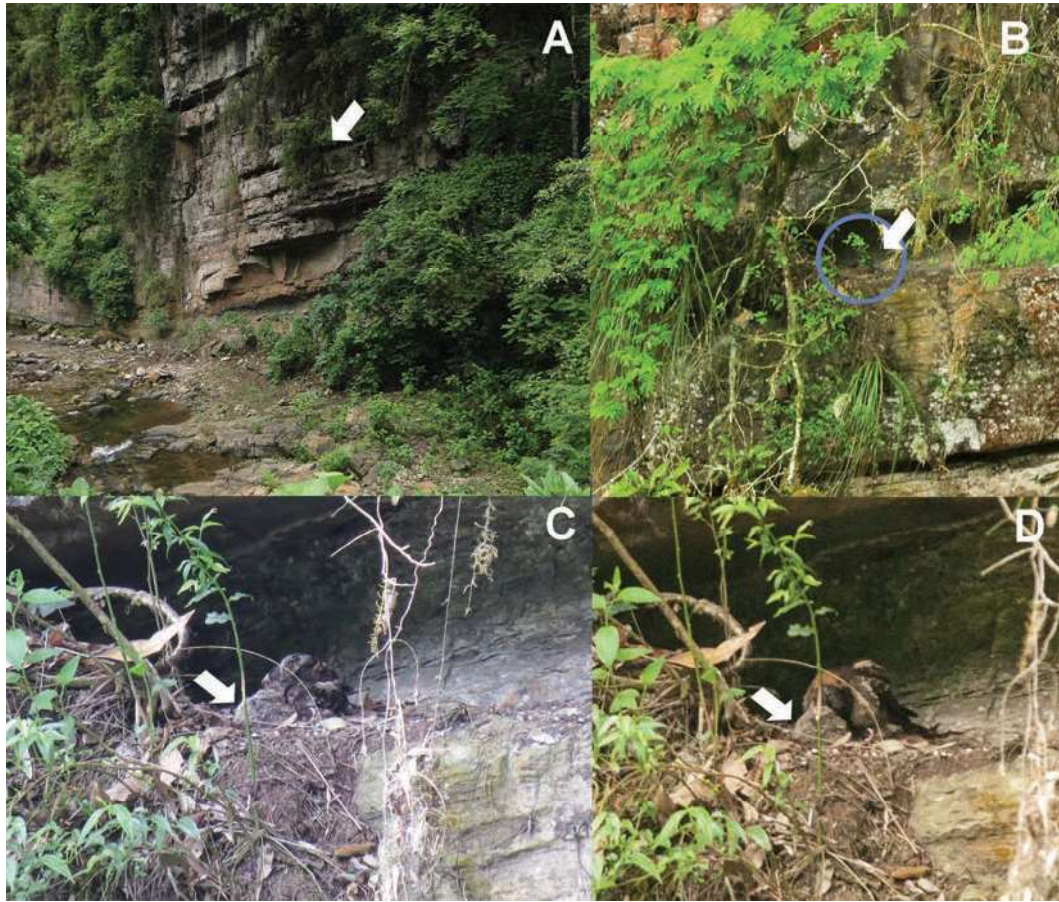


Figure 2. Nest of Lyre-tailed Nightjar *Uropsalis lyra*, San Francisco, Jujuy, Argentina, 13 November 2018: (A) steep cliff above the río Jordan; the white arrow indicates nest site (Carlos Otávio Araujo Gussoni); (B) the nest obscured by vegetation (Giselle Mangini); (C) female and nestling indicated by white arrow (Alex Mesquita); (D) female preening the nestling, indicated by the white arrow (Giselle Mangini)

by Olrog¹⁴ and rediscovered 23 years later in Jujuy¹¹. More recently, courtship displays have been reported between mid October and early November⁶. There are currently no published nesting records from the south of its range. Here, we present the first observations of breeding from Argentina. We also report eggs collected earlier and provide brief notes on the species' breeding behaviour and chick development.

Nest sites and description

Nest records are from three different localities in Jujuy province: San Francisco, Yala and San Antonio. The nests described below were all located on steep cliffs adjacent to rivers (Fig. 1).

Río Jordan, San Francisco

In Valle Grande, a few km outside the town of San Francisco, provincial road RP 83 crosses the río Jordan at a point where it is c.8 m wide

(23°38'54"S 64°56'16"W; 1,500 m). The river is bordered by a c.50 m-tall, steep, rocky cliff that faces south-east; the cliff is flanked by humid cloud forest typical of the austral Yungas with clumps of a grass known as seringuilla (*Lamprothysus hieronymi*) and small trees growing on the cliff (Fig. 2A–B). On 12 November 2018, GM, FG, COAG & AM observed a nightjar on the cliff, identified as a female *U. lyra* by its rufous nuchal collar, barred breast, pale grey supercilium and scapulars. It remained in the same place for c.1 hour. Despite using playback, we failed to observe any other individuals, although L. Dodyk & P. Grilli reported a male in the same location on 4 November 2018. On 13 November 2018, we observed presumably the same female at the same spot. It raised its breast and head feathers, and began to move sideways awkwardly. At this point, a small chick was visible despite being almost completely concealed (Fig. 2C–D). The chick had