

The Blackburnian Warbler *Dendroica fusca* in South America, with a record from Santa Cruz department, Bolivia.

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On 16 February 1992, while conducting a preliminary avifaunal survey of Amboró National Park in western Santa Cruz department, Bolivia (c.18°0'S 64°0'W), I observed a male Blackburnian Warbler *Dendroica fusca*. The warbler was travelling with a large mixed-species flock of insectivorous and frugivorous birds in moderately disturbed "cloud-forest" at c.2,150 m. The bird showed conspicuous signs of moult towards breeding plumage on its head and elsewhere on the body.

The Blackburnian Warbler is a winter resident primarily in the subtropical zone (mostly 1,000 to 2,300 m: pers. obs.) of the mountains from Costa Rica to northern Bolivia^{1,6} with the vast majority of the population concentrated in the Andes of northern South America (pers. obs.). Stotz *et al.*⁷ also included the tepuis region in the wintering range of the species, and suggested that it probably winters at similar elevations in northern Roraima, Brazil, whence it was reported by Phelps⁴. There is apparently a significant year-to-year fluctuation in numbers of wintering birds in the mountains of western Panama⁵, near the

northern edge of the wintering range. The southern end of the winter range is relatively poorly known owing to the dearth of fieldwork that has been conducted there during the northern winter months, a season of high rainfall on the east slope of the Andes in southern Peru and Bolivia (pers. obs.). It is known, however, that Blackburnian Warblers are scarce as far south as central Peru, with the southernmost documented record being two specimens from Huánuco department, in the Museum of Natural Science, Louisiana State University³.

There is one previous published record of Blackburnian Warbler for Bolivia: on 17 March 1979, J. Heindel saw an adult male at 2,250 m in the upper Zongo valley La Paz department³. The sighting reported here thus represents the second record for Bolivia and extends the potential wintering range of Blackburnian Warbler c.450 km to the southeast of the La Paz record or, alternatively, it could be attributed to a vagrant individual. Blackburnian Warbler has a history of vagrancy in South America, with three or four



Blackburnian Warbler *Dendroica fusca* (David D. Beadle)

Guianan records (R. S. Ridgely pers. comm.), and several recent records from northern and eastern Brazil as follows: Amazonas⁷ and Jaú National Park (J. F. Pacheco sight record 31 January 1994); southern Ceará⁸ and Espírito Santo². The location of my Santa Cruz sighting at 2,150 m on the east slope of the Andes, together with the La Paz record cited above, most reasonably suggests that Blackburnian Warblers winter south at least occasionally (possibly regularly in small numbers) to western Santa Cruz department, Bolivia. Numbers of Blackburnian Warblers in this southern fringe of the wintering range are probably under-recorded owing to a paucity of observers and the general difficulty of access to appropriate humid montane forest, and may fluctuate from year-to-year.

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