

Coppery-chested Jacamar *Galbula pastazae*

Michael Poulsen and David Wege



The Coppery-chested Jacamar has been recorded from a single site in Nariño department, southernmost Colombia and at a small number of localities along the eastern slope of Ecuadorian Andes from Napo south to Zamora-Chinchipe provinces. The species is very poorly known throughout its range, being rather thin and patchily distributed, with a low overall population.

It occupies humid lower montane forest or cloud-forest in the subtropical zone, primarily between c.900 and 1,300 m, although records range from c.600 to 1,700 m. This upper limit is apparently the highest recorded for any jacamar. It has been mist-netted deep within primary forest (with very little undergrowth), and although it sometimes frequents forest-edge and secondary growth, it appears to be dependent on fairly intact primary habitat. The Coppery-chested Jacamar tends to use a few favoured perches c.1.5-4 m up, and often returns to the same spot repeatedly having darted out in pursuit of prey: a diverse array of insects. Calls given by this jacamar include a series (usually 3-5) of loud *quep* notes (M.

Pearman pers. comm. 1994).

During November and December 1991 (the breeding season), jacamars from three territorial pairs were seen almost daily near the Río Bombuscara Visitor Centre, Podocarpus National Park (Zamora-Chinchipe province, Ecuador). These pictures of Coppery-chested Jacamar were taken near a nest-hole c.1.5 m up in an earth bank created by the cutting of a trail through the forest. The hole, in common with most jacamars was at least 50 cm deep and curved, so that the end (and therefore the nestlings) could not be seen. The species has been considered "fairly common" at Río Bombuscara (the only site where a population assessment has been made), although these records probably refer to just 4-6 pairs. A false impression of abundance may be caused by the presence of resident birds along well watched trails, though presumably more inhabit surrounding forest.

The lower slopes of the eastern Andes, from about 1,000 to 2,000 m, are seriously affected by rapid clearance for agricultural purposes (subsistence settlement, cattle graz-



Coppery-chested Jacamar *Galbula pastazae*, Podocarpus National Park, Ecuador, Nov/Dec 1991 (Michael Poulsen)

ing, coffee and tea growing), and the forest of the region is disappearing at an alarming rate. The Coppery-chested Jacamar is just one of many bird species endemic to the lower montane (subtropical) zone in the eastern Andes. Urgent measures need to be taken to establish major reserves protecting relevant habitat in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. Other species with similar ranges that need to be catered for in such reserves include the threatened White-necked Parakeet *Pyrrhura albipectus* and Bicoloured Antvireo *Dysithamnus occidentalis*.

Apart from personal observations made at Río Bombuscara, and where specifically mentioned, the information detailed above comes from Collar *et al.*². For a detailed description of plumage features and taxonomic affinities see Haffer³.

Records of Coppery-chested Jacamar from north to south, as mapped opposite are:
Colombia

(Nariño)

- * El Carmen ("pipeline"), on the border with Putumayo: December 1970.

Ecuador

(Napo)

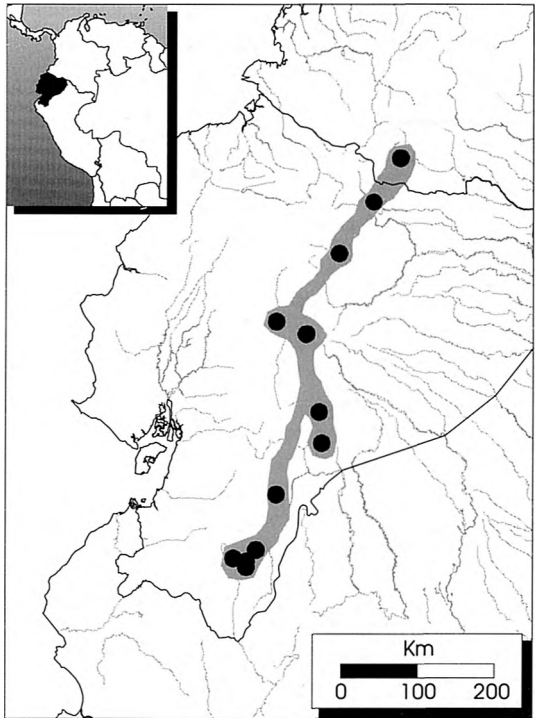
- * Cascada San Rafael (Coca falls), c.0°02'S 77°30'W (this locality was omitted from Collar *et al.*²): a well known site for the species amongst birders during the 1980s, the most recent sighting being a pair in November 1990 (M. Pearman *in litt.* 1994).
- * km 109 on the Lago Agrio–Baeza road: July 1976.
- * upper part of the Ministerio road (untraced): July 1992 (B. O. Poulsen pers. comm.).

(Tungurahua)

- * Ambato: 1896.
- * Machay, on west bank of Río Pastaza, and nearby at Hacienda Mapoto: mid-1880s.

(Morona-Santiago)

- * Macas, also "Macas region" and "Macas-Pitaloma, río Upano": December 1939.
- * "Yapitya" on the Logroño–Yaupi trail, west slope of the Cordillera de Cutucú: June 1984.
- * Río San José, at the mouth of the river between Sígsig and Gualaquiza, 3°17'S 78°37'W: November 1895^{1,3} (this locality was omitted from Collar *et al.*²). (*Zamora-Chinchipe*)
- * Cumaratzta: August 1965.
- * Zamora: October 1913.
- * the Loja–Sabanilla area by the Loja–Zamora



Distribution of Coppery-chested Jacamar

road - on the Zamora–Chinchipe side of the continental divide (*contra* Collar *et al.*²): recently.

- * the Río Bombuscara area, inside Podocarpus National Park and south-west of Zamora: since the late 1980s.

References

1. Chapman, F. M. (1926) The distribution of bird-life in Ecuador. *Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.* 55.
2. Collar, N. J., Gonzaga, L. G., Krabbe, N., Madroño Nieto, A., Naranjo, L. G., Parker, T. A. and Wege, D. C. (1992) *Threatened birds of the Americas: the ICBP/IUCN Red Data Book*.
3. Haffer, J. (1974) *Avian speciation in tropical South America; with a systematic survey of the toucans (Ramphastidae) and jacamars (Galbulidae)*. Cambridge, Mass.: The Nuttall Ornithological Club (publication 14).

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