

incluida dentro del Área Importante para la conservación de las Aves (AICA) Río Caoní (EC040)¹, ésta AICA no posee límites bien definidos y desafortunadamente no es en sí una unidad de conservación. Por lo que se hace evidente la necesidad de implementar acciones efectivas en estos remanentes boscosos, las cuales podrían ser la realización de actividades de investigación y aviturismo, para las cuales la RM ha sido adecuada.

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Brown Wood-rail *Aramides wolfi* at El Canclon Lagoon, Manglares-Churute Ecological Reserve, Ecuador

Brown Wood-rail *Aramides wolfi* occurs from western Colombia to extreme north-west Peru^{7,8}, but its known range is just c.140 km², with numbers of its decreasing population unknown¹. Thus, *A. wolfi* is categorised as Vulnerable globally and as Endangered in Ecuador⁵, where it is one of the rarest birds and, during the last two decades, seldom recorded, mainly in mangrove^{7,8}. Most sightings have been in either the north-west or south-west, from: north of Quinindé; pristine humid forest at Paraíso de Papagayos ranch; secondary forest and disturbed wetlands at Jatun Sacha-Bilsa Biological Reserve (within Mache Chindul Ecological Reserve) (all prov. Esmeraldas); forest remnants at Río Palenque Research Station, prov. Los Ríos; and mangroves in Manglares Churute Ecological Reserve (MCER), prov. Guayas^{2,4,6-8}.

On 29 June 2001, a bird was seen on a dirt road bordering disturbed riparian vegetation and secondary foothill forest on the east side of El Canclon lagoon (02°30'S 79°42'W), prov. Guayas (JJA, XA). Coloration of the head, neck and body identified it as *A. wolfi*, i.e. ash-grey head and cinnamon-rufous neck, with the rest of the upperparts and underparts pale olivaceous-brown. This observation is the first at El Canclon (a Ramsar site) and in the entire MCER for over a decade, following that of two birds in mangrove on 28 December 1989⁷. Unconfirmed

Captions to figures on opposite page

- Subadult Franklin's Gull *Larus pipixcan* with Laughing Gulls *L. atricilla*, Cata La Mar, Distrito Federal, Venezuela, 2 March 2005 (David Fisher)
- Adult Black-faced Hawk *Leucopternis melanops*, Cristalino Jungle Lodge, northern Mato Grosso, Brazil (Graeme Wallace)
- Egg of White-collared Swift *Streptoprocne zonaris*, Gruta do Funil, Mambai, north-east Goiás, Brazil, 23 March 2001 (Daniel Blamires)
- 4a-b. Royal Tern *Sterna maxima* (left) with Elegant Tern *S. elegans* and Franklin's Gulls *Larus pipixcan*, Lluta River mouth, prov. Arica, Chile, 10 November 2004; note the relatively massive orange bill, head pattern and large size (Steve N. G. Howell)
- 4c. Field sketch of Black Tern *Chlidonias niger surinamensis* observed off Arica, prov. Arica, Chile, 23 October 1999; the dusky underwings and dark mottling on the sides are characteristic of the American race *surinamensis* (Steve N. G. Howell)
- 4d. Field sketch of Grey-hooded Gull *Larus cirrocephalus* observed at Lluta River mouth, prov. Arica, Chile, 22 October 1999 (Steve N. G. Howell)
- 4e. Field sketch of Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus* observed off Arica, prov. Arica, Chile, 23 October 1999 (Steve N. G. Howell)
5. Tawny-headed Swallow *Alopocheidon fucata*, Huasco estuary, Chile, 19 March 2006 (José Miguel Hernández)

sightings were made in 2005–06 at Puerto Hondo (RA), a mangrove relatively close to Cerro Blanco Protected Forest. Attempts are underway to verify these observations as Rufous-necked Wood-rail *Aramides axillaris* is frequent there and juveniles have similar plumage to adult *A. wolffi* (RA pers. obs.). The two are locally sympatric in mangrove, but *A. wolffi* seems to be more frequent inland⁷.

One of *A. wolffi*'s most important habitats, mangrove forest, has declined in recent decades, e.g., in 1969–99 c.54,000 ha, or 26% of the original total (203,625 ha), has been lost in Ecuador, mainly due to construction of illegal shrimp farms, agriculture, timber extraction and urban sprawl³. It has been suggested that *A. wolffi* is capable of surviving in fragmented or deteriorated habitats^{7,8}. For example, the species has been observed at Paraíso de Papagayos, a c.40-ha site that is highly deforested⁴. On the other hand, it is perhaps less tolerant of habitat perturbation than Grey-necked Wood-rail *A. cajanea*⁷, and is definitely much more sensitive than *A. axillaris*. The latter is commonly found close to disturbed or human-modified mangroves, including in Guayas (Puerto Hondo) and El Oro (Bajo Alto) provinces (JJA pers. obs.). Thus, enforcement of the current environmental action plan for the MCER is needed, as are additional strategies to mitigate degradation of this habitat. Best farming practices and effective land-use zoning, utilising buffer zones between the farmed area and the wetland would ensure protection of local biodiversity. Community-based conservation and environmental awareness might be undertaken by building capacity of local stakeholders (e.g. farmers and ranchers) in sustainable agriculture and nature tourism. Finally, additional studies of *A. wolffi* are urgently required to increase knowledge of its natural history^{1,5,7,8}.

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Gull-billed Tern *Sterna nilotica* in Amazonian Peru

Two Gull-billed Terns *Sterna nilotica* in non-breeding plumage were present on 28 September 2005 at Iquitos, dpto. Loreto, Peru. They were observed for c.1 hour as they hunted for large insects over the River Amazon amongst some Large-billed Terns *Phaetusa*