

## Noteworthy bird records from the Gulf of Fonseca, Honduras

Tom Jenner, Oliver Komar and Adam Narish

Received 26 May 2006; final revision accepted 19 October 2006

Cotinga 28 (2007): 13–20

Presentamos información nueva sobre las aves de la costa sur de Honduras. Observamos seis especies nuevas para la lista de aves de Honduras en la región costera Pacífica del sur de Honduras; se incluyen *Plegadis falcinellus*, *Tringa incana*, *Thalasseus elegans*, *Megascops cooperi*, *Petrochelidon fulva* y *Mimus polyglottos*, el último también el primer registro para Centroamérica. Además reportamos varias especies nuevas para el sur de Honduras, que incluyen *Anas clypeata*, *Anas americana*, *Limosa fedoa*, *Sterna forsteri*, *Thalasseus sandwicensis*, *Rynchops niger* y *Protonotaria citrea*, y el primer registro de reproducción en Honduras para *Parabuteo unicinctus*. La mayoría de estas especies se conocen de países vecinos y probablemente son residentes o visitantes regulares en Honduras; la falta de registros anteriores podría deberse a la poca presencia o actividad de investigadores de aves.

Some of the most extensive natural habitats on the Pacific coast of Central America are located on the Gulf of Fonseca in southern Honduras. Nonetheless, there have been few avifaunal studies in the region. Monroe<sup>20</sup> analysed many of the collections made in Honduras prior to 1968, including those by four expeditions to the south of the country. Brief visits by ornithologists since then have yielded a sparse literature on the region's avifauna<sup>2,18,21,24,25</sup>. Here we aim to fill gaps in the avian inventory of the Gulf of Fonseca.

### Study area and methods

Honduras's 111 km of Pacific coastline lie in the Gulf of Fonseca, bordered by El Salvador to the west and Nicaragua to the south (Fig. 1). The region has a tropical monsoon climate, with a distinct wet season in May–October and a dry season over the rest of the year<sup>20</sup>. Extinct volcanoes form the two largest Honduran islands in the gulf, isla del Tigre and isla Zacate Grande. These and a few smaller islands have rocky coasts, whereas much of the mainland is bordered by mangroves (mainly red

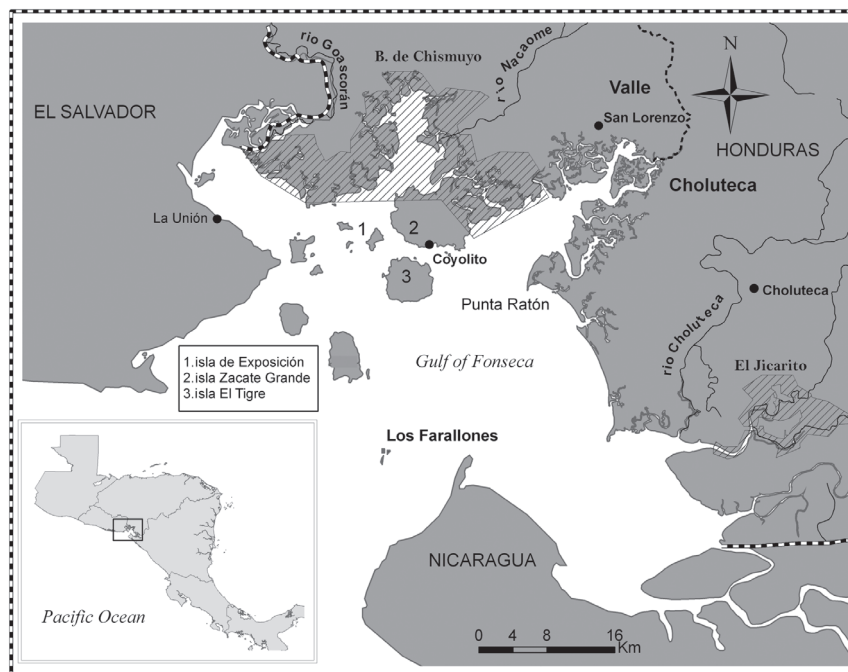


Figure 1. The Gulf of Fonseca, with study sites and protected areas (hatched) mentioned in the text.

**Table 1.** Details of visits to the Gulf of Fonseca region of Honduras.

Dates	Observers	Locations visited
16–17 August 2002	TJ	Mangroves in bahía de Chismuyo, El Jicarito
19 April 2003	TJ, AN	El Jicarito
30 July 2003	TJ	Mangroves and salt pans between San Lorenzo and Coyolito
13–14 August 2003	TJ	El Jicarito
2–6 November 2004	TJ	El Jicarito, río Choluteca, gulf islands, mangroves in bahía de Chismuyo
9–10 July 2005	TJ, AN	El Jicarito, río Choluteca
31 October–3 November 2005	TJ	El Jicarito, río Choluteca, gulf islands
11–12 February 2006	TJ, OK	El Jicarito, areas around Coyolito, Choluteca and Punta Ratón

mangrove *Rhizophora mangle*) and sandy beaches. Three main rivers enter the gulf in Honduras, and there are large estuaries at the mouths of all three. Extensive wetlands exist in the coastal floodplain, though much of the area has been converted to shrimp farming. Farmland is used for both cattle and crops, and there are many areas of arid scrub and small patches of tropical dry forest. Bahía de Chismuyo Wildlife Reserve protects extensive mangroves encompassing much of the coast between the town of San Lorenzo and the El Salvador border, including the mouth of the río Nacaome. El Jicarito (13°07'N 87°11'W) is an area of seasonal wetlands designated a Wildlife Refuge and Artesanal Fishing Area. Virtually the entire coastal region, including many of the mangroves, the Nacaome estuary, El Jicarito and the Choluteca estuary, was designated a Ramsar site in July 1999<sup>5</sup>.

The sightings presented here are derived from eight visits to dptos. Valle and Choluteca in 2002–06 (Table 1). Observations were not standardised, but were directed towards searching for certain species, e.g. terns, some shorebirds, owls and hirundines. Taxonomy and nomenclature follow those of the American Ornithologists' Union<sup>1</sup>.

## Species accounts

### American White Pelican *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*

Several records from El Jicarito: two on 13 August 2003, c.100 on 2–5 November 2004 (the largest group of 55), 15 on 9–10 July 2005, 31 on 1 November 2005 and 85 on 11 February 2006 (Fig. 2). Three were present with Brown Pelicans *P. occidentalis* at the mouth of the río Choluteca on 3 November 2004. The first Honduran record was on the Caribbean coast in 1993 and the first report for the south coast was near San Bernardo in 1997<sup>2</sup>. Though not suspected to breed in Honduras, the apparently overwintering birds in July and August are notable. It was previously noted summering at El Jicarito, a flock of c.60, in June 1997<sup>24</sup>. There has been a general increase in the species' breeding colonies in recent years<sup>11</sup>.

### Pinnated Bittern *Botaurus pinnatus*

A single at El Jicarito on 17 August 2002 and two there on 5 November 2004 (Fig. 3). The species was unknown in Honduras until 19 June 1997, when four were at El Jicarito<sup>24</sup>. Our records at this site suggest the species is probably regular there. However, the site mostly dries out in the dry season, leaving little suitable habitat for the species. It is possible, therefore, that *B. pinnatus* is only seasonal at El Jicarito and in Honduras.

### Jabiru *Jabiru mycteria*

We have several records from different parts of the marshes at El Jicarito, including one on 13 August 2003, at least three on 2–5 November 2004, at least nine on 9–10 July 2005 and six on 31 October 2005 (Fig. 4). None was present in April 2003 or February 2006 when El Jicarito was dry. The only previous published records in southern Honduras involved one at laguna El Faro and eight at El Jicarito in October 1994<sup>18</sup>. Refuge personnel have posted signs designating Jabiru observation posts and we believe the species is a regular wet season visitor to the region.

### Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

A distant flock of 94 dark ibises was seen at El Jicarito on 2 November 2004. Over the next three days individuals and small groups were observed sufficiently close to permit detailed descriptions and photographs. On 1 November 2005, groups of four and seven were seen at close range at the same site (Fig. 5). They possessed a narrow white line from the base of the bill over the lores to above the eye and a similar line below the lores; they all had dark eyes and lores, without any red. These features separated the birds from the similar White-faced Ibis *P. chihi*<sup>6</sup>, which occasionally winters as far south as El Salvador<sup>15</sup>. These are the first confirmed records of Glossy Ibis in Honduras, and suggest El Jicarito is a regular wintering area. In recent years the species has been expanding its range through Middle America<sup>9,22</sup>, making its presence in Honduras expected.

**Fulvous Whistling Duck** *Dendrocygna bicolor*

Seen daily on 2–5 November 2004, when up to 30 were present, and 31 October–2 November 2005, when c.50 were present. On both occasions, the birds were mostly well hidden and our estimates are conservative. The only Honduran location mentioned by Monroe<sup>20</sup> was lago Yojoa and other nearby sites in the north-west of the country. Thorn & Komar<sup>24</sup> extended the known range to southern Honduras, reporting 252 birds at El Jicarito in June 1997. In El Salvador, nearby to the west, the species is a common permanent resident<sup>8</sup>. Our records confirm it to be a regular wet season visitor, if not a permanent resident, in southern Honduras.

**Northern Shoveler** *Anas clypeata*

Several dozen were at El Jicarito on 2–5 November 2004, in small flocks and scattered individuals over a large area. On 1 November 2005, at least 111 were observed in several flocks along the 9.3 km track linking one end of the reserve to the other. Only a small fraction of the reserve is visible from this track and many distant unidentified ducks were probably this species, making the count conservative. Monroe<sup>20</sup> described the species as a fairly common winter visitor and listed several records from the Caribbean slope, though Bonta & Anderson<sup>3</sup> described it as rare on the Caribbean slope. Neither mentioned records for the Pacific slope. We consider the species seasonally common in southern Honduras, at least during autumn migration.

**American Wigeon** *Anas americana*

On 3 November 2004, a group of nine was photographed flying overhead near the mouth of the río Choluteca (Fig. 6). Though the species may be fairly common on the Caribbean slope<sup>3,20</sup>, this is the first record for southern Honduras.

**Harris's Hawk** *Parabuteo unicinctus*

A pair seen mating on 19 April 2003 in farmland near El Jicarito (13°09'N 87°10'W) is the first evidence of breeding in Honduras. We also observed individuals at various times within and outside the reserve at El Jicarito in February, August and November (Fig. 7). Additional sightings were made in open farmland between San Lorenzo and Coyolito, and at two locations west of Choluteca. Harris's Hawk was first reported from Honduras at Monjarás, near Choluteca, in 1993<sup>2</sup>. Our frequent sightings at several locations in different months suggest it is a fairly common resident. The species is an uncommon resident in the coastal plains of neighbouring El Salvador<sup>15,26</sup>, and we suspect its presence in southern Honduras has been previously overlooked.

**Wandering Tattler** *Tringa incana*

On 5 November 2004, TJ spent three hours searching for this species by boat on the rocky shores of several islands in the Gulf of Fonseca, and photographed one (Fig. 8) on the south side of isla El Tigre (13°14'N 87°37'W). A similar search on 3 November 2005 was unsuccessful. Published lists for Honduras<sup>3,20</sup> included the species on the basis of a record in October 1962 at Los Farallones, at the mouth of the Gulf of Fonseca, but this is now Nicaraguan territory<sup>16</sup> making ours the first record in the modern boundaries of Honduras. There are few suitable rocky coasts in southern Honduras and on each of the two visits c.50% of the total habitat was checked thoroughly. The species is probably an uncommon visitor or transient in the region, as in El Salvador<sup>8</sup>.

**Marbled Godwit** *Limosa fedoa*

A total of 76 was counted on the shore near the mouth of the río Choluteca on 3 November 2004 (Fig. 9). On 2 November 2005, 36 were observed on sandbars at the mouth of the río Choluteca (known locally as Punta Condega). On both occasions, birds were loosely scattered in small groups. Bonta & Anderson<sup>3</sup> cited just one record for Honduras, from the north coast in 1933<sup>7</sup> and indicated that the species' status on the Pacific slope was unknown. A few additional sightings have been reported recently<sup>25</sup>. In neighbouring El Salvador the species is a regular, non-breeding visitor in small numbers<sup>8,13</sup>, making it unsurprising that the species occurs in the Gulf of Fonseca. However, we are unaware of such large concentrations in El Salvador.

**Gull-billed Tern** *Gelochelidon nilotica*

Four were near the mouth of the río Choluteca on 3 November 2004. One was at the Nacaome estuary on 6 November 2004 and six were present near the mouth of the río Choluteca on 10 July 2005. Around 15 were seen at El Jicarito on 31 October 2005 and smaller numbers were present on the two days following. On 2 November 2005, 259 were present near the mouth of the río Choluteca (Fig. 10) and five were also seen near isla El Tigre and isla Exposición on 3 November 2005. Monroe<sup>20</sup> described it as an uncommon migrant and probably a winter visitor to Honduras, and stated that the species is undoubtedly more common than records indicated. He cited three records (involving a total of eight birds) in the Gulf of Fonseca on 27 September–9 October 1962. Thorn & Komar<sup>24</sup> added a July sighting for El Jicarito. Our records suggest that it is a common migrant in the region from mid July to early November, at least.

**Caspian Tern** *Hydroprogne caspia*

We have various observations from El Jicarito, with several seen daily on 2–5 November 2004 (Fig. 11), at least six on 9–10 July 2005 and several sightings on 31 October–2 November 2005, with a maximum count of 33. The species was common along the lower río Choluteca close to where it enters the gulf, with c.100 on 3 November 2004 and 57 on 2 November 2005. Two were seen between isla Zacate Grande and the mainland on 11 February 2006 and a single off Punta Ratón on 12 February 2006. The first record for southern Honduras was a single at El Jicarito in June 1997<sup>24</sup>. Our observations suggest that it is a common non-breeding visitor to the region.

**Forster's Tern** *Sterna forsteri*

At least two were photographed at El Jicarito on 14 August 2003 (Fig. 12). The species was present daily there on 2–5 November 2004, with a maximum of c.20. A single was near the mouth of the río Choluteca on 10 July 2005. These are the first records for the Pacific slope of Honduras. It is an uncommon migrant in neighbouring El Salvador (pers. obs.), and was expected in the region.

**Sandwich Tern** *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

Three at El Jicarito on 17 August 2002, a single at the Nacaome estuary on 6 November 2004 (Fig. 13), two at the mouth of the río Choluteca on 10 July 2005, with c.50 there on 2 November 2005 and 114 around isla El Tigre on 3 November 2005. No previous records have been published for southern Honduras<sup>3</sup>. The species is common on the coast of neighbouring El Salvador, especially in the non-breeding season<sup>13</sup>, making its presence in southern Honduras as a non-breeding visitor expected.

**Elegant Tern** *Thalasseus elegans*

Two photographed at the Nacaome estuary on 6 November 2004 (Fig. 13). A further 31 photographed on 3 November 2005, including a single with c.100 roosting terns, on a sandbar off isla Exposición (13°18'N 87°41'W), two lone birds off the south shore of isla El Tigre (Fig. 14) and 28 in a large tern and gull roost on the east side of isla El Tigre (13°16'N 87°36'W). A previous report for Honduras was erroneously based on a specimen labelled as being from 'Bay of Fonseca', but it was actually taken at La Unión in El Salvador<sup>20</sup>. Our sightings are the first for Honduras. In El Salvador, a large autumn passage of Elegant Terns peaks in November<sup>14</sup>. Smaller numbers pass through El Salvador in April–May, and we have occasional summer and winter records (unpubl.). Records for Honduras were long overdue.

**Black Skimmer** *Rynchops niger*

Three at El Jicarito on 17 August 2002 and a group of c.50 was at the mouth of the río Choluteca on 2 November 2005. The three published locality records from Honduras are all from near Tela on the Caribbean coast<sup>20,21</sup>. However, Bonta & Anderson<sup>3</sup> described the species as fairly common in Honduras without details, but they did not include the south of the country in its range. It is common in neighbouring El Salvador (pers. obs.), so was expected in the region. Our sightings establish that the species can be common on the Pacific coast of Honduras as well.

**Pacific Parakeet** *Aratinga strenua*

We observed this Pacific-slope species on five occasions: five birds beside the coastal highway near the junction to El Jicarito on 4 November 2004, a group of c.10 over the mangroves east of Coyolito on 6 November 2004, a group of eight photographed beside the main highway just east of Choluteca on 31 October 2005 (Fig. 15), six in farmland just outside El Jicarito the next day, and two perched in mango trees just east of Choluteca on 11 February 2006. Monroe<sup>20</sup> mentioned only one record for Honduras (at San Lorenzo on 25 September 1932) and Bonta & Anderson<sup>3</sup> commented that the status in Honduras was still unknown. Our sightings suggest the species is fairly common in the Pacific lowlands, at least seasonally.

**Pacific Screech-owl** *Megascops cooperi*

On 11 February 2006, a bird was heard at dusk (from c.18h30) at playa Guayaba Dorada (13°19'N 87°35'W) on the south-east side of isla Zacate Grande. The voice was recorded and two birds responded to playback and were photographed (Fig. 16). Playback was performed at several locations during this and other visits, but no others were heard. Though an owl seen in the 19th century on isla El Tigre was probably this species<sup>23</sup>, ours is the first confirmed record for the country. It was expected in Honduras<sup>3</sup> because it is found in neighbouring El Salvador<sup>15</sup> and Nicaragua<sup>19</sup>.

**Ladder-backed Woodpecker** *Picoides scalaris*

On 16 August 2002 at least three were observed deep in the mangroves of bahía de Chismuyo, near the border with El Salvador. Monroe<sup>20</sup> reported the species in mangroves near San Lorenzo and described the distribution of this species in Honduras as 'one of the strangest found among Honduran birds'. Further north, the species is known from relatively arid areas<sup>9</sup>, whilst in Honduras it has been reported from arid scrub, pine-oak forest and highland pine<sup>20</sup>. Komar *et al.*<sup>17</sup> observed and photographed the species in mangroves of neighbouring El Salvador, very close

to where the present observation was made. Though previously reported, our observation confirms that mangroves are used regularly by the species in this region.

#### **Cave Swallow** *Petrochelidon fulva*

On 11 February 2006, seven Cave Swallows were photographed feeding with Violet-green Swallows *Tachycineta thalassina* and Barn Swallows *Hirundo rustica* over fields at the edge of El Jicarito (Fig. 17). Several flocks of hirundines were checked on 11–12 February at localities throughout the region, but no other Cave Swallows were sighted. This is the first record for Honduras of a species that is a common winter visitor to El Salvador<sup>12</sup> and has recently been recorded as far south as Costa Rica<sup>10</sup>.

#### **Violet-green Swallow** *Tachycineta thalassina*

On 11 February 2006, c.10 were seen at El Jicarito and c.30 in three areas near Choluteca. Monroe<sup>20</sup> mentioned no records for southern Honduras, though Bonta & Anderson<sup>3</sup> included the species for the Pacific slope and gave an altitudinal range of 300–2,000 m for the country. Our sightings were near sea level, and extend the range in Honduras to the Pacific coastal plain. The species occurs regularly at sea level in El Salvador (OK pers. obs.).

#### **Northern Mockingbird** *Mimus polyglottos*

On 19 April 2003, one was studied carefully at a range of c.10 m at El Jicarito. Several photographs were obtained but are too poor for publication. The bird was similar in size and shape to Tropical Mockingbirds *M. gilvus* seen nearby. However, the most distinctive feature was the bold white patches at the base of the primaries and the all-white outer rectrices, both most obvious in flight. The pattern of white in the tail was different to that in the Tropical Mockingbirds with which it was compared; the latter had white restricted to the terminal portion of the outer rectrices and white extended further towards the central rectrices. The difference in pattern indicates that the white was not the result of partial albinism. The pattern of white in the wings and tail, lack of streaking and absence of any brown coloration to the rump, flanks or mantle all indicate the bird was not a vagrant species from South America or the Caribbean<sup>4</sup>. The bird had a darker grey breast and throat than the rest of the underparts, indicative of nominate *M. p. polyglottos*<sup>4</sup>, which breeds as far south as the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and winters a little beyond into Tabasco<sup>9</sup>. Northern Mockingbird is considered 'irregularly nomadic rather than truly migratory', but long-distance wandering is indicated by three records in the UK and the recent colonisation of Socorro Island, more than 400 km off the Pacific coast of Mexico<sup>4</sup>. We know of no other records for Central America.

#### **Prothonotary Warbler** *Protonotaria citrea*

Three were photographed in mangroves at El Jicarito on 3 November 2004 (Fig. 18). Two were observed at one location and the third c.2 km away. The birds responded to pishing. This is the first record for southern Honduras.

#### **Grasshopper Sparrow** *Ammodramus savannarum*

One was at El Jicarito on 19 April 2003, the first record for the Pacific coast of Honduras.

#### **Red-winged Blackbird** *Agelaius phoeniceus*

Common at El Jicarito throughout the study period (Fig. 19), with a maximum of c.100 on 9–10 July 2005. We also made various sightings between San Lorenzo and Coyolito (13°27'N 87°30'W). Juveniles were observed at both sites and a female was seen carrying food at the latter on 30 July 2003. Our observations, and those of Thorn & Komar<sup>24</sup>, indicate the species is a breeding resident in the Gulf of Fonseca. Likewise, we have observed it year-round in much of the El Salvador lowlands. We therefore question the hypotheses that northern populations winter as far as El Salvador, and that there are only single isolated breeding locations in El Salvador and Honduras<sup>9</sup>.

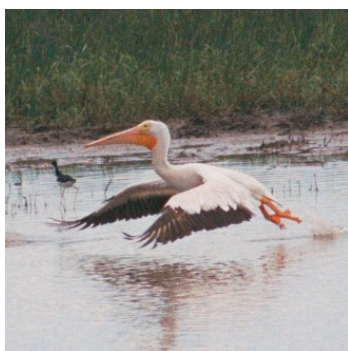
### **Conclusions**

We consider the records presented here to be important as they fill gaps in the avian inventory of the Gulf of Fonseca. Many of the species reported are common in similar habitats in neighbouring El Salvador and were predicted<sup>3</sup>. Indeed, four of the new species for Honduras (Elegant Tern,

**Table 2.** Species expected, but not yet reported, from southern Honduras. An asterisk indicates species not yet reported for the country as a whole.

English name	Scientific name
Red-billed Tropicbird*	<i>Phaethon aethereus</i>
Nazca Booby*	<i>Sula granti</i>
Blue-footed Booby <sup>2a</sup>	<i>Sula nebouxii</i>
Ruddy Duck	<i>Oxyurus jamaicensis</i>
American Swallow-tailed Kite	<i>Elanoides forficatus</i>
Snail Kite	<i>Rostrhamus sociabilis</i>
American Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra americana</i>
Surfbird*	<i>Aphriza virgata</i>
Baird's Sandpiper	<i>Calidris bairdii</i>
Red Phalarope*	<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>
Bridled Tern	<i>Onychoprion anaethetus</i>
Plain-breasted Ground-dove	<i>Columbina minuta</i>
Berylline Hummingbird	<i>Amazilia beryllina</i>
Blue-throated Goldentail	<i>Hylocharis eliciae</i>
Long-billed Starthroat	<i>Heliomaster longirostris</i>
Violaceous Trogon	<i>Trogon violaceus</i>
Rufous-breasted Spinetail	<i>Synallaxis erythrorhox</i>

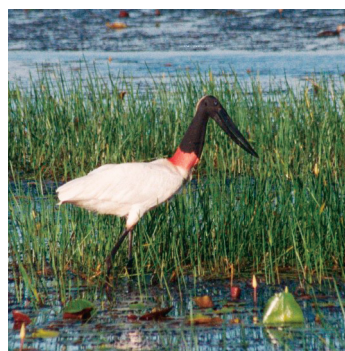
<sup>2a</sup>In some literature<sup>3,20</sup>, Blue-footed Booby is listed for Honduras based on records from islas Farallones, but these are currently considered Nicaraguan territory<sup>15</sup>.



2



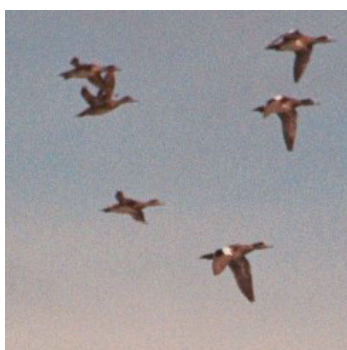
3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10

Figure 2. American White Pelican *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*, laguna El Jicarito, November 2004 (T. Jenner)

Figure 3. Pinnated Bittern *Botaurus pinnatus*, laguna El Jicarito, 5 November 2004 (T. Jenner)

Figure 4. Jabiru *Jabiru mycteria*, laguna El Jicarito, 31 October 2005 (T. Jenner)

Figure 5. Glossy Ibises *Plegadis falcinellus*, laguna El Jicarito, 1 November 2005, with Black-bellied Whistling Ducks *Dendrocygna autumnalis* in background (T. Jenner)

Figure 6. American Wigeon *Anas americana*, río Choluteca, 3 November 2004 (T. Jenner)

Figure 7. Harris's Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus*, west of Choluteca, 12 February 2006 (T. Jenner)

Figure 8. Wandering Tattler *Tringa incana*, isla El Tigre, 5 November 2004 (T. Jenner)

Figure 9. Marbled Godwit *Limosa fedoa*, río Choluteca, 3 November 2004, with Willet *Tringa semipalmata* in background (T. Jenner)

Figure 10. Gull-billed Terns *Gelocheidon nilotica*, río Choluteca, 2 November 2005 (T. Jenner)



11



12



13



14



15



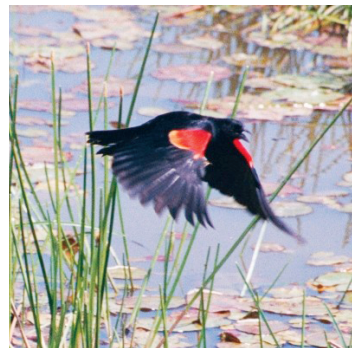
16



17



18



19

Figure 11. Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*, laguna El Jicarito, November 2004 (T. Jenner)

Figure 12. Forster's Tern *Sterna forsteri*, laguna El Jicarito, 14 August 2003 (T. Jenner)

Figure 13. Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*, río Nacaome, 6 November 2004, with Elegant *T. elegans* and Royal Terns *T. maximus* (T. Jenner)

Figure 14. Elegant Tern *Thalasseus elegans*, isla El Tigre, 3 November 2005 (T. Jenner)

Figure 15. Pacific Parakeet *Aratinga strenua*, east of Choluteca, 31 October 2005 (T. Jenner)

Figure 16. Pacific Screech-owl *Megascops cooperi*, isla Zacate Grande, 11 February 2006 (T. Jenner)

Figure 17. Cave Swallow *Petrochelidon fulva*, laguna El Jicarito, 11 February 2006 (photo T. Jenner)

Figure 18. Prothonotary Warbler *Protonotaria citrea*, laguna El Jicarito, 3 November 2004 (T. Jenner)

Figure 19. Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus*, laguna El Jicarito, August 2003 (T. Jenner)

Wandering Tattler, Pacific Screech-owl and Cave Swallow) were found by directed searches. Of the species mentioned here, only the Northern Mockingbird was probably a vagrant. Southern Honduras is poorly studied ornithologically and there are still a number of species expected (but not yet reported) that are reasonably common in nearby El Salvador or Nicaragua (Table 2). The records presented were based on only 20 field days, some involving only brief periods in the field. So many interesting sightings in such a brief period suggests the area merits further investigation. Southern Honduras lacks a serious systematic study to quantify the species present, estimate their abundances or determine their conservation needs.

#### Acknowledgements

We thank Juan Felipe Gutierrez for preparing the map. Mark Bonta and an anonymous reviewer provided helpful comments that improved the manuscript.

#### References

1. American Ornithologists' Union (2006) List of the 2,041 bird species (with scientific and English names) known from the A.O.U. check-list area. [www.aou.org/checklist](http://www.aou.org/checklist) (accessed 2 October 2006).
2. Anderson, D. L., Bonta, M. & Thorn, P. (1998) New and noteworthy bird records from Honduras. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Club* 118: 178–182.
3. Bonta, M. & Anderson, D. L. (2002) *Birding Honduras: a checklist and guide*. Tegucigalpa: EcoArte.
4. Brewer, D. (2001) *Wrens, dippers and thrashers*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
5. CODDEFFAGOLF (2001) *Áreas protegidas de la zona sur de Honduras*. Tegucigalpa: CODDEFFAGOLF.
6. Davis, W. E. & Kricher, J. (2000) Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*). In: Poole, A. & Gill, F. (eds.) *The birds of North America*, 545. Philadelphia, PA: The Birds of North America.
7. Deignan, H. G. (1936) Notes on a small collection of birds from the Republic of Honduras. *Auk* 53: 186–193.
8. Herrera, N., Komar, O. & Ibarra Portillo, R. (2006) *Evaluación de las poblaciones de aves acuáticas y su estado de conservación en El Salvador*. San Salvador: SalvaNATURA & Quito: BirdLife International.
9. Howell, S. N. G. & Webb, S. (1995) *A guide to the birds of Mexico and northern Central America*. New York: Oxford University Press.
10. Jones, H. L. & Komar, O. (2006) Regional Reports: Central America, August through November 2005. *North Amer. Birds* 60: 152–156.
11. Knopf, F. L. (2004) American White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*). In: Poole, A. (ed.) *The birds of North America online*. [www.bna.birds.cornell.edu](http://www.bna.birds.cornell.edu) (accessed May 2006).
12. Komar, O. (1997) Communal roosting behavior of the Cave Swallow in El Salvador. *Wilson Bull.* 109: 332–337.
13. Komar, O. (2001) Contribuciones a la avifauna de El Salvador. *Cotinga* 16: 40–45.
14. Komar, O. (2003) Notes on autumn bird migration in coastal El Salvador. *Orn. Neotrop.* 14: 39–46.
15. Komar, O. & Domínguez, J. P. (2001) *Lista de aves de El Salvador*. San Salvador: SalvaNATURA.
16. Komar, O. & Rodríguez, W. (1996) A major Bridled Tern (*Sterna anaethetus*) colony in the Gulf of Fonseca, Nicaragua. *Colonial Waterbirds* 19: 264–267.
17. Komar, O., Rodríguez, W. & Dueñas, C. (1997) Notas sobre las aves de los bosques de manglar en la Bahía de La Unión, y una nueva especie de carpintero *Picoides scalaris* para El Salvador. *Cotinga* 7: 16–17.
18. Marineros, L. (1996) Registros de *Jabiru mycteria* en la costa Pacífica de Honduras. *El Hornero* 14(3): 68–69.
19. Martínez-Sánchez, J. C. (2000) *Lista patrón de las aves de Nicaragua*. Managua: Fundación Cocibolca.
20. Monroe, B. L. (1968) *A distributional survey of the birds of Honduras*. Orn. Monogr. 7.
21. Sibley, F. C., Barrowclough, G. F. & Sibley, C. G. (1980) Notes on the birds of Honduras. *Wilson Bull.* 92: 126–127.
22. Stiles, F. G. & Skutch, A. F. (1989) *A guide to the birds of Costa Rica*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
23. Taylor, G. C. (1860) On birds collected or observed in the Republic of Honduras, with a short account of a journey across that country from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean. *Ibis* 1860: 222–228.
24. Thorn, S. P. & Komar, O. (1998) A brief inventory of the birds of the El Jicarito lagoon, Choluteca Department, Honduras. *Mesoamericana* 2(2): 29–32.
25. Thorn, S. P., Medina, D. & Shoch, D. (2006) *Diagnóstico de las aves acuáticas de Honduras*. San Salvador: SalvaNATURA & Quito: BirdLife International.
26. Thurber, W. A., Serrano, J. F., Sermeño, A. & Benítez, M. (1987) Status of uncommon and previously unreported birds of El Salvador. *Proc. West. Found. Vert. Zool.* 3: 109–293.

#### Tom Jenner

SalvaNATURA, San Salvador, El Salvador. E-mail: [mayanbirding@tomjenner.com](mailto:mayanbirding@tomjenner.com).

#### Oliver Komar

SalvaNATURA, San Salvador, El Salvador. E-mail: [okomar@salvanatura.org](mailto:okomar@salvanatura.org).

#### Adam Narish

Boise State University, Biology Department, Boise, Idaho, USA. E-mail: [adamnarish@mail.boisestate.edu](mailto:adamnarish@mail.boisestate.edu).