
Red-billed Ground-cuckoo *Neomorphus pucheranii*: hypothetical record in Ecuador

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Del 9 al 19 de marzo de 1998, se recorrieron los alrededores de Yuturi Lodge, Río Yuturi, a c.15 km del Río Napo, 180 km al este de Coca, Provincia Napo, Ecuador, con el objetivo de efectuar observaciones del Cuco-Hormiguero Ventrirrufo *Neomorphus geoffroyi*. Como resultado se hicieron observaciones del Cuco-Hormiguero Piquirrojo *N. pucheranii*.

During 9–19 March 1998, a survey was conducted around Yuturi Lodge on the Río Yuturi, c.15 kilometres from the Río Napo and 180 kilometres east of Coca in Napo province, Ecuador, with the intention of making observations of Rufous-vented Ground-cuckoo *Neomorphus geoffroyi*. However, only Red-billed Ground-Cuckoo *N. pucheranii* was located.

During the 10-day study, five army ant swarms were encountered without a single sighting of *N. geoffroyi*. Given the difficulties of locating *Neomorphus* near army ants, it was decided to survey the understorey randomly along the main tourist trails east of the Río Yuturi, forming lines of up to three people separated by 10–20 m. On 17 March, a *Neomorphus* was seen on the Manduro Trail in mature *terra firme* forest. Its description did not coincide with the plumage of either adult or juvenile Rufous-vented Ground-cuckoo *N. geoffroyi*, based on its red bill, the bare red skin around its eyes and lores (not seen in detail), greyish legs, black upperparts and whitish underparts. The black pectoral collar was not seen because the bird was observed from behind, firstly motionless and then running at speed. It is significant that three of the most experienced local guides in the Huarmi-Yuturi community maintain that two different types of 'Saino Pishco' (which means 'Peccary Bird', referring to the fact that the genus is often seen following groups of peccary and produces a similar sound to that when peccaries snap their teeth) occur in this area, and their descriptions exactly match those of *N. geoffroyi* and *N. pucheranii*. Red-billed Ground-cuckoo has never been collected or photographed in Ecuador¹, and this observation represents only the second hypothetical record of the species in the country; it had previously been recorded north of the Río Aguarico (R. Ridgely and P.Greenfield pers. comm.).

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References

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