

New distributional and temporal records of Mexican birds

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Se proporciona información que complementa los datos de distribución y estacionalidad presentados por Howell y Webb⁵ y otros autores. Esta información incluye algunos aparentes primeros registros publicados para Chihuahua (*Ictinia mississippiensis*), Tamaulipas (*Tyrannus crassirostris*, *Tityra inquisitor*), Puebla (*Phaethornis longuemareus*, *P. superciliosus*), Guerrero (*Gavia immer*) y Quintana Roo (*Anas americana*, *Spizella passerina*). También se incluyen registros de verano de algunas especies en áreas no mapeadas por otros autores (*Falco peregrinus* y *Passerina versicolor* en Veracruz, *Micrathene whitneyi*, *Stelgidopteryx serripennis* y *Icterus cucullatus* en Querétaro, *Catharus guttatus* en Chihuahua y Querétaro).

Here I present records from several areas of Mexico, which complement the information on distribution or seasonality of Mexican birds in Howell & Webb⁵, Russell & Monson¹⁰ or Wilson & Ceballos-Lascuráin¹⁴.

Common Loon *Gavia immer*

Recorded as a winter visitor on the Pacific coast south to Colima and possibly Guerrero and Chiapas⁵. I observed three in basic plumage from the beach at Pie de la Cuesta (8 km north-west of Acapulco), Guerrero, on 8 December 1999. Identified by the lack of sharp contrast between the dark head/hindneck and underparts, straight deep-based greyish bill and small eye obvious in the face.

American Wigeon *Anas americana*

Not mapped in Quintana Roo by Howell & Webb⁵. I saw two males and two females at Lake Cobá (20°30'N 87°45'W), on 15 November 1999. They were first seen through a 20–60x telescope, while swimming, and later flying away from me. Notably larger than nearby Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis*. The males were in alternate plumage. Barbara MacKinnon de Montes (pers. comm.) has other records of the species from Quintana Roo.

Mississippi Kite *Ictinia mississippiensis*

Not mapped for the Mexican Plateau by Howell & Webb⁵, though the possibility of wanderers from the west Texas breeding population is suggested. There is also a breeding population in Arizona and wanderers have been recorded in the USA, close to the borders of Sonora, Chihuahua and Coahuila¹². I observed a juvenile at the edge of pine woodland 1 km north of Batosárachi, Chihuahua (27°42'N 107°34'W), on 12–13 August 1997, coinciding with the start of autumn migration in the species⁵.

Hook-billed Kite *Chondrohierax uncinatus*

Cited by Friedmann *et al.*⁴ and Edwards² as resident in Distrito Federal and there are two specimens, from Tacubaya and Xochimilco, in the Instituto de Biología, Universidad Nacional

Autónoma de México (no other details recorded). However, until recently there have not been any further records¹⁴ and it was not mapped in the D.F. by Howell & Webb⁵. I saw up to four individuals in the UNAM Botanical Garden on 31 January and 6 and 8 November 1997, 8–10 November 1999, 27 November 2000 and 18 January 2001. The lack of records for other months suggests it is not resident, perhaps only a passage migrant.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

No summer records mapped in Veracruz in Howell & Webb⁵. Together with J. Cruz Bojorges, I saw one at Santa Gertrudis (c.45 km north-east of Xalapa), on 17 July 1999.

Purple Gallinule *Porphyryla martinica*

Not recorded in the state of México, but noted to wander in summer⁵. Wilson & Ceballos-Lascuráin¹⁴ note an April record from near Almoloya del Río in the state of México. On 28 June 1997, I observed an adult at a marsh 5 km north-west of Santa María Atarasquillo, also in the state of México (19°15'N 99°30'W).

Western Screech-owl *Otus kennicotti*

Not mapped for east Sonora or west Chihuahua⁵. Russell & Monson¹⁰ recorded the species in several localities in east Sonora and I recorded it in pine woodland at Batosárachi, west Chihuahua (27°42'N 107°34'W), on 18 April and 12 August 1997, and 31 January, 12–13 June and 1 September 1998, making it likely that it occurs across the northern Sierra Madre Occidental.

Elf Owl *Micrathene whitneyi*

Recorded as a breeder (March–August) in Sonora, north Sinaloa, Chihuahua, Nuevo León and south Puebla and thought to possibly breed elsewhere on the Mexican Plateau⁵. I recorded it in desert scrub at Peña Blanca, Querétaro (21°16'N 99°44'W), on the nights of 7 April, 25 and 27 July and 12 November 1997, and 31 July 1998. It appears to be rare at the site, given that I recorded singles on only five

occasions, despite spending 1–2 evening and 1–2 pre-dawn hours listening for nocturnal birds within a 1 km² study area on 30 nights in April, July and November 1997, and January, May and July 1998.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Cited by Friedmann *et al.*⁴ as a winter visitor to the Distrito Federal, but no recent records¹⁴. The Distrito Federal falls clearly within the winter range mapped by Howell & Webb⁵. I watched one for more than 20 minutes in the UNAM Botanical Garden, on 5 November 1997. Identified by its slender appearance, the body no broader than the head and the facial disks taller than wide, extremely long wings (in flight), smaller than Great Horned Owl *Bubo virginianus*; the long upright ear tufts set close together above the eyes were blackish with buff edges, and the facial disks solidly orange.

Common Nighthawk *Chordeiles minor*

Recorded in Chihuahua as a breeder only in the west. I heard the nasal note of this species at El Bocán (31°20'N 106°23'W) on 6 June 1998 (before dawn), and I both saw and heard it again before dusk the same day. However, it was not heard on the two preceding nor the two succeeding days, or in five days in May 1997. The date suggests the species breeds in the area, as migrants 'generally arrive in spring in s. U.S. by Apr. Fall departures begin in Jul'⁸, though migrants are still present in early June at Cape May, Massachusetts, north Idaho and on the west coast⁸. Lesser Nighthawk *Chordeiles acutipennis* was present at the same 1 km² study area in May 1997 and June 1998, making this a site where the two species probably occur sympatrically in the breeding season^{1,11}.

White-throated Swift *Aeronautes saxatalis*

According to Howell & Webb⁵, the only area of Mexico lacking any species of swift is much of the northern and central Mexican Plateau. However, White-throated Swift is resident in adjacent Texas and New Mexico^{7,12}, and (*contra* Howell & Webb⁵) has been recorded in Sierra del Carmen, Coahuila⁶, Mapimí, Chihuahua¹³ and Real de Catorce, San Luis Potosí³ (pers. obs. on 6 February 1988). Additionally, I have observed singles in Chihuahua over the south end of Ciudad Juárez (27 April 1997), and at El Bocán (31°20'N 106°23'W; 6 June 1998); in the latter, it appears to be only an accidental visitor.

Long-tailed Hermit *Phaethornis superciliosus*

Found in south-east Mexico north to central Veracruz and north Oaxaca⁵. One in rainforest between El Tepeyac and Tlacotepec, Puebla (c.18°25'N 96°48'W), in April 1996 may be the first record for Puebla.

Little Hermit *Phaethornis longuemareus*

Occurs from south-east Mexico north to central Veracruz and northern Oaxaca⁵. One in rainforest between El Tepeyac and Tlacotepec, Puebla (c.18°25'N 96°48'W), in April 1996 appears to be the first record for the latter state.

White-bellied Emerald *Amazilia candida*

Noted as nesting in February–May⁵. I found an active nest at rainforest edge at Chajul, Chiapas (16°07'N 90°56'W), on 2 July 1991.

Keel-billed Motmot *Electron carinatum*

Mapped in east Oaxaca, south-east Veracruz and north Chiapas⁵, but practically no recent records from Mexico. I heard one at Ixcán, Chiapas (c.16°02'N 91°5'W), on 20 Aug 1998 (song unmistakable in range, similar to that of Broad-billed Motmot *E. platyrhynchum*, with which I am very familiar from Costa Rica).

Greenish Elaenia *Myiopagis viridicata*

Resident in lowlands on both slopes and in certain parts of the interior of central and south Mexico, including east (but not west-central) Oaxaca⁵. I saw and heard one in tropical deciduous scrub above Teotitlán del Valle, Oaxaca (10°04'N 96°30'W), on 12 April 2000.

Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher *Myiodynastes luteiventris*

Mapped in western Chihuahua but noted only to 1,500 m⁵. I observed one at 2,390 m at the edge of a small man-made clearing in a 1 km² study area in pine woodland at Batosárachi, Chihuahua (27°42'N 107°34'W), on 11–14 June 1998, though it was not present in the same locality in April or August 1997, nor in September 1998.

Thick-billed Kingbird *Tyrannus crassirostris*

Principally recorded on the Pacific slope of Mexico⁵, so records from the Big Bend region of Texas⁹ (J. C. Arvin pers. comm.) are unusual. This is also the case for one seen and heard, with members of the Club de Observadores de Aves, for c.40 minutes in a semi-open area at Alta Cimas, Tamaulipas (c.23°05'N 99°11'W), on 20 March 2000. It repeatedly caught and swallowed Monarch *Danaus plexippus* butterflies that were continuously moving past on migration. One a few km north-east of Escuintla, Chiapas (15°20'N 92°37'W), on 24 October 1997 was east of its regular mapped range.

Black-crowned Tityra *Tityra inquisitor*

Not mapped in Tamaulipas by Howell & Webb⁵. Together with members of the Club de Observadores de Aves, I watched a pair in gallery forest along a tropical river at Bocatoma II, Tamaulipas (22°59'N

99°08'W). J. C. Arvin (pers. comm.) has once recorded the species in southern Tamaulipas.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis*

Mapped as a transient in the state of Querétaro by Howell & Webb⁵. I recorded at least one pair in a 1 km² study area in desert scrub at Peña Blanca, Querétaro (21°16'N 99°44'W), on 3–7 April, 26 July and 12 November 1997, on 25 January and 17–21 May 1998. These records suggest resident status in the region.

Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus*

Mapped as breeding in Mexico only in the Sierra San Pedro Mártir⁵. I observed it to be very common and vocal on 7–8 July 1998, in deciduous forest with much sweetgum (*Liquidambar*), at Mesa de las Guacamayas, Chihuahua (30°20'N 108°33'W, 2,300 m). Tape-recordings have been deposited in the Library of Natural Sounds, Cornell University.

Aztec Thrush *Ridgwayia pinicola*

Mapped by Howell & Webb⁵ north to east-central Sonora. I observed separate calling and singing individuals in pine–oak forest south of Huachineras, Sonora (30°05'N 108°54'W), on 10 July 1998. Tape-recordings of the singing individual have been deposited in the Library of Natural Sounds, Cornell University.

Prothonotary Warbler *Protonotaria citrea*

One at Yagul, Oaxaca, on 21 October 1997 represents a migrant slightly away from its mapped range⁵.

Fan-tailed Warbler *Euthlypis lachrymosa*

Two seen together with J. Cruz Bojorges (17 July) and several heard (28 August 1999) in tropical semi-deciduous forest at Santa Gertrudis, Veracruz (c.45 km north-east of Xalapa), are east of the mapped range according to Howell & Webb⁵.

Varied Bunting *Passerina versicolor*

Mapped as a winter visitor to most of Veracruz by Howell & Webb⁵. A few seen in a brushy pasture at Santa Gertrudis, Veracruz (c.45 km north-east of Xalapa), on 17 July 1999 suggest that it is more widespread in the breeding season.

Chipping Sparrow *Spizella passerina*

Not mapped in the Yucatán Peninsula by Howell & Webb⁵. On 14 November 1999, I saw one in basic plumage at Tulum archaeological site, Quintana Roo, foraging on the ground among 16 Bronzed Cowbird *Molothrus aeneus*, 12 Indigo Bunting *Passerina cyanea*, one Savannah Sparrow *Passerculus sandwichensis* and an immature Dickcissel *Spiza americana*. Observed for 30 min-

utes in strong late afternoon sunlight at distances of 8–12 m. Clearly a *Spizella*, it had pale grey underparts and neck-sides, a conspicuous buff eyestripe, dark upper border to the ear-coverts but no lower border, an indistinct malar, pink bill, streaked pale brown back, contrasting grey lower back/rump with diffuse dark streaks and a streaked crown.

Yellow-headed Blackbird *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*

Two females and one first-year male at a marsh 5 km north-west of Santa María Atarasquillo, state of México (19°15'N 99°30'W), on 28 June 1997, were probably overwintering.

Hooded Oriole *Icterus cucullatus*

Mapped as a transient in Querétaro by Howell & Webb⁵. On 28 July 1997 I watched an adult male feeding a moth to a juvenile (also two males and one female on 16 November 1997) at Peña Blanca, Querétaro (21°16'N 99°44'W). This village is surrounded by arid desert scrub but is adjacent to a riparian strip, including trees such as Montezuma cypress *Taxodium*. Certain species found along the river (e.g. Groove-billed Ani *Crotophaga sulcirostris*, Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus* and Clay-coloured Robin *Turdus grayi*) reveal a tropical influence, and others (e.g. Violet-green Swallow *Tachycineta thalassina*, Blue Mockingbird *Melanotis caerulescens* and Hepatic Tanager *Piranga flava*) suggest a highland-forest influence in an area predominantly occupied by desert birds.

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