

More distributional data on Ecuadorian birds

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Se presenta nueva información para 12 especies de aves en Ecuador, en base a 102 días de trabajo de campo entre 1994 y 1999, la mayoría en las provincias de Loja y Zamora-Chinchipe. De interés particular son los primeros registros de *Ixobrychus exilis* y *Gallinula chloropus* para la región surandina, y el primer registro de *Phaeomyias murina* para el suroriente.

Howell² recently updated distributional data in Ridgely & Greenfield^{4,5} for 13 species in Ecuador. Here I present additional distributional data for 12 species of Ecuadorian birds which complements information presented by Ridgely & Greenfield^{4,5}. My data are derived from 102 days of field work between 1994 and 1999, much of it in Loja and Zamora-Chinchipe provinces. Several interesting parallels can be drawn between data presented here and those of Howell², especially in the expansion of several non-forest species to higher elevations of Zamora-Chinchipe province.

Least Bittern *Ixobrychus exilis*

Ridgely & Greenfield⁴ list its status as 'complex and still imperfectly known', and cite only two highland records, both from Quito. On 11 July 1996, an injured individual was brought to Fundación Arcoiris in Loja, Loja province, having been captured by children on the banks of the río Malacatos within the city itself. This appears to be the first record in the southern highlands of Ecuador.

Grey-headed Kite *Leptodon cayanensis*

Ridgely & Greenfield⁴ list it as occurring to 900 m in Ecuador. I observed an adult at close range just above the town of Mindo, Pichincha province, on 22 July 1996, at c.1,300 m. This appears to be an altitudinal range extension within Ecuador, although the species had already been listed for the Mindo area³ and occurs to 2,200 m elsewhere in its range¹.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

I observed eight individuals in a small, reed-fringed pond near Zalape, just north of Loja city, Loja province, at c.2,000 m, on 2 July 1995. This appears to be the first record for the southern highlands⁴.

Little Woodstar *Chaetocercus bombus*

The only records for the east slope of the Andes cited by Ridgely & Greenfield⁴ are a handful of early-20th-century specimens. On 5 October 1999, Pablo Andrade and I watched a female feeding in a flowering *Inga* tree between Zamora and the río Bombuscaro entrance to Podocarpus National Park, Zamora-Chinchipe province. It was observed down

to 3 m and identified on the basis of the tiny size (quite noticeably smaller than a White-bellied Woodstar *C. mulsant* feeding at the same *Inga* tree), rufous throat and underparts (paler on the belly but completely lacking any white), green upperparts including the rump, rather noticeable whitish supercilium merging into the buffy neck-sides, conspicuous white flank patch, and rufous tail with black subterminal band. These field marks eliminate all other hummingbirds except the very similar female Gorgeted Woodstar *C. heliodor*, which occurs at higher elevations and has not been recorded in southern Ecuador. Those characters noted, especially the white supercilium and the paler belly centre, appear more applicable to Little Woodstar.

Crimson-crested Woodpecker *Campephilus melanoleucus*

Ridgely & Greenfield^{4,5} do not indicate the species for the Marañón Valley in Ecuador. One along the río Isimanchi, c.3 km east of Isimanchi town, Zamora-Chinchipe province, on 13 July 1996, therefore appears to be the first area record.

Mouse-coloured Tyrannulet *Phaeomyias murina*

Pablo Andrade and I observed one of this species near La Fragrancia on the Loja–Zamora road, Zamora-Chinchipe province, about 10 km north-west of Zamora at c.1,200 m, on 12 October 1999. We noted the small size, mostly upright posture, small bill, faint white supercilium mostly in front of the eye, faint dark line on the lores, grey-brown crown and nape, brown back, dark wings with two pale buff wingbars (the lower being more prominent), greyish breast with hints of streaking and pale yellowish wash to the belly. Ridgely & Greenfield⁴ note only four records in Ecuador, all from the north-east, and none above 600 m. This appears to be the first record in the south-east and an intra-country altitudinal range extension. Its occurrence in Zamora is most likely due to increasing deforestation, as evidenced by recent local records of Pearl Kite *Gampsonyx swainsonii* and Caquetá Seed-eater *Sporophila [americana] murallae*, which have also recently been recorded farther south and at higher elevations than previously known in Ecuador².

Yellow-throated Spadebill *Platyrinchus flavigularis*

One observed in a mixed-species flock in subtropical cloud forest below Quebrada Honda, Podocarpus National Park, Zamora-Chinchipe province, on 10 June 1995, at c.1,900 m, is among the few Ecuadorian records, but at an expected locality and altitude for this species⁴.

Baird's Flycatcher *Myiodynastes bairdii*

A single well watched at the El Tundo reserve, near Sozoranga, Loja province, on 10 July 1996 was at c.1,600 m, an altitudinal range extension based on Ridgely & Greenfield⁴, who list it only to 1,000 m.

Andean Slaty-thrush *Turdus nigriceps*

A male at Río Bombuscaro, Podocarpus National Park, Zamora-Chinchipe province, on 16 October 1999 appears to be only the third record for the east slope of the Andes in Ecuador, and was at a lower altitude than previously recorded, c.1,000 m, versus the 1,400 m lower altitudinal limit reported for Ecuador⁴. It was identified on the basis of the overall slate-grey plumage, yellow bill, white throat with black stripes, dark eyes, somewhat paler grey underparts and white belly, and size and shape. The dark eyes, yellow bill, throat pattern and size eliminate the only possible confusion species, Slaty-backed Nightingale-thrush *Catharus fuscater*.

Bay-breasted / Blackpoll Warbler *Dendroica castanea/D. striata*

One in a mixed-species flock near Pedro Vicente Maldonado, Pichincha province, on 30 November 1998 was not specifically identified, but was either the second *D. striata* on the west slope of the Andes in Ecuador or the fourth *D. castanea* in the country⁴.

Swallow Tanager *Tersina viridis*

Ridgely & Greenfield⁴ state it to be 'unaccountably scarce in the south-east' with 'virtually no recent reports' from the Zamora area. In October 1999

Pablo Andrade and myself observed this species twice between Zamora and the río Bombuscaro entrance to Podocarpus National Park, Zamora-Chinchipe province: one on 3 October and two on 7 October. As with *Phaeomyias murina*, and the records of *Gampsonyx swainsonii* and *Sporophila [americana] murallae* of Howell², it appears likely that increased deforestation has assisted the species' spread to the Zamora area, although these occurrences may alternatively reflect its propensity to wander⁴.

Slate-coloured Seedeater *Sporophila schistacea*

Apparently rare and local in Ecuador, without a well-defined pattern of occurrence⁴. An adult male at Tinalandia, Pichincha province, on 13 July 1995, is additional to the few recent records and a new locality, though well within its Ecuadorian range⁴.

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