

## Range and status of Green-capped Tanager *Tangara meyerdeschauenseei* in Bolivia

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El Tángara de Gorra Verde *Tangara meyerdeschauenseei* ha sido conocido, hasta hace poco, por ocurrir regularmente sólo en tres sitios al sur de Perú. Reciente estudio de campo en el área Apolo, departamento La Paz, ha resultado en el descubrimiento de una población de Tángara de Gorra Verde en Bolivia. Presentamos diez observaciones de un amplio rango de hábitats, incluyendo dos en el bosque húmedo de Yungas, un hábitat que no ha sido conocido anteriormente por esta especie. Una población confirmada en Bolivia así como observaciones hechas en un nuevo tipo de hábitat sugieren que el Tángara de Gorra Verde puede cambiar de Vulnerable a Casi amenazado en la lista roja de IUCN. En este artículo se presenta una actualización de la ocurrencia de la especie en Bolivia, basada en las recientes visitas al área Apolo en el departamento de La Paz, en el noroeste de Bolivia.

Green-capped Tanager *Tangara meyerdeschauenseei* was described in 1985 from dpto. Puno in southern Peru<sup>9</sup>. Mainly known from three sites in the headwaters of the río Inambari<sup>10</sup>, it inhabits forest edge and gardens at 1,750–2,200 m<sup>4,6,11</sup>. Originally, the species was probably restricted to arid, semi-open intermontane scrub<sup>4</sup>. In 2001, the first record for Bolivia was made in humid Yungas at Tokoaque, Madidi National Park, but being from a new habitat type it was deemed unconfirmed<sup>3</sup>. The second was in dry scrub <1 km west of Santa Cruz de Valle Ameno, where one was seen collecting nesting material on 12 December 2003 (ABH). These were the only known Bolivian records until now. A published sighting in dry forest along the río Machariapo in Madidi National Park<sup>7</sup> was later retracted by the observer (T. A. Parker)<sup>3</sup>.

*T. meyerdeschauenseei* is considered Vulnerable<sup>5</sup> because of its very small range, within which it previously was known with certainty from only three localities. However, its ecology and habitat requirements are poorly understood, and if its habitat or population were shown to be declining the species could be uplisted to Endangered<sup>5</sup>.

The Apolo region in western Bolivia is an Important Bird Area<sup>1</sup> characterised by savanna and scrub fragments (Fig. 1), mid-elevation mixed *cerrado* (Figs. 2–3) and humid forest (Fig. 4). Deforestation has increased, especially because of the need for agricultural and grazing land. The region's avian community includes species primarily restricted to the lowland *cerrado* of south-east Bolivia and Brazil, or isolated areas of Peru, like Sharp-tailed Tyrant *Culicivora caudacuta*, White-eared Puffbird *Nystalus chacuru* and Red-winged Tinamou *Rhynchotus rufescens*, as well as Palkachupa Cotinga *Phibulara boliviana*, which is unique to the area<sup>2,3</sup>. Although interest in the Apolo savanna has increased since the rediscovery of the latter species in 2003, large areas

are poorly known ornithologically. Most attention has been paid to the montane and dry forests within Madidi National Park, north and east of Apolo<sup>8</sup>.

### Methods

MB surveyed the area of Apolo, dpto. La Paz, Bolivia, on 28 April–18 May 2011 as part of Asociación Armonía's Palkachupa Cotinga conservation programme. The survey was undertaken in the environs of Atén (14°55'13"S 68°19'47"E; 1,430 m) on 28 April–15 May and the humid Yungas forest above Santa Cruz de Valle Ameno (14°37'41"S 68°36'52"W; 1,740 m) on 16–18 May. MB surveyed the main road leading west / east from Atén, 15 km in each direction, and trails near the village. Field work generally continued from dawn to dusk with a break at midday. The brief inventory in Yungas forest above Santa Cruz (14°39'07"S 68°35'24"W; 1,600 m) was based at a camp at 1,920 m on a dirt road. Cool, wet weather made day-long observations possible. AvK visited Atén on 24 September–4 October 2011 as part of the same Asociación Armonía programme.

### Observations

*Atén*.—MB made seven observations of Green-capped Tanager during 28 April–15 May 2011

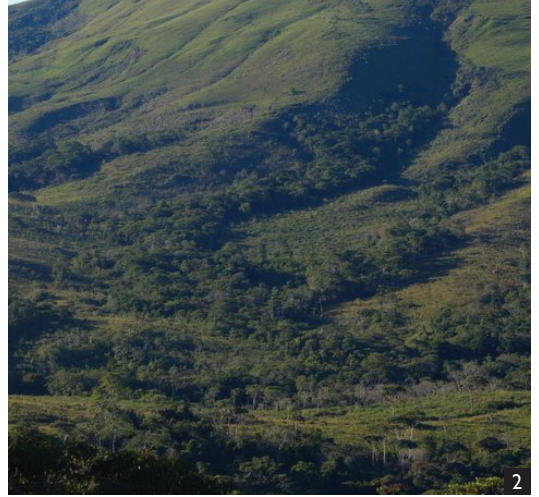
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Figure 1. Open savanna and dry scrub, Atén, La Paz, Bolivia, May 2011 (Martin Berg)

Figures 2–3. Andean *Cerrado* forest and natural clearings, Atén, La Paz, Bolivia, May 2011 (Martin Berg)

Figure 4. Humid Yungas forest above Santa Cruz de Valle Ameno, La Paz, Bolivia, May 2011 (Martin Berg)

Figures 5–6. Male Green-capped Tanager *Tangara meyerdeschauenseei*, Atén area, La Paz, Bolivia, May 2011 (Martin Berg)



(Table 1); a male was photographed (Figs. 5–6). In the period 24 September–4 October 2011 AvK found one c.3 km west of Atén. Furthermore, on 4 November 2011, J. Q. Vidoz (pers. comm.) reported two c.5 km south-east of Atén. Most observations were in open semi-humid scrub and forest borders at 1,450–1,700 m. Birds were usually alone or in pairs within large mixed-species flocks comprising Paradise Tanager *Tangara chilensis*, Blue-necked Tanager *T. cyanicollis*, Bay-headed Tanager *T. gyrola*, Swallow Tanager *Tersina viridis* and Black-faced Tanager *Schistochlamys melanopsis*, but frequently also alone in groups of 2–4. Most foraged in bushes and low trees 2–4 m above ground, but two observations totalling three birds close to Atén, at 1,450 m, were in large mixed-species flocks foraging in the canopy 8–12 m up. No vocalisations were heard.

*Santa Cruz de Valle Ameno.*—On 16–18 May 2011 MB observed a male Green-capped Tanager in upper Yungas forest at 1,850 m. It fed 6–8 m above ground within a large mixed-species flock consisting of *Tangara cyanicollis*, *T. gyrola*, *T. chilensis*, Cinnamon Flycatcher *Pyrrhomyias cinnamomeus*, Olive-backed Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus triangularis* and others. The area comprises continuous humid forest c.8 km from the savanna edge in Apolo and c.35 km east of the Yungas near Tokoaque, where the first observation for Bolivia was made on 10 November 2001<sup>3</sup>, and ours is the second record in Yungas forest in Bolivia.

In March 2010 and October 2011, J. Q. Vidoz (*in litt.* 2012) observed two pairs in anthropogenically modified habitats and obtained evidence of breeding. Subsequently, in March 2012, J. Q. Vidoz & S. K. Herzog (*in litt.* 2013) discovered a possible population in anthropogenically modified habitats c.60–75 km north-west of Atén in the Mojos–Virgen del Rosario area.

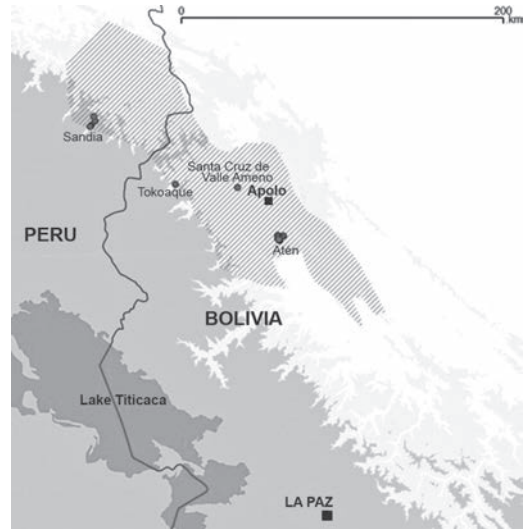


Figure 7. Mapped observations of Green-capped Tanager *Tangara meyerdeschauenseei* (grey dots) and range indication, derived from elevation data (1,200–2,400 m, source, SRTM 90 m digital elevation database and Google Earth; satellite images courtesy of Google Inc. All rights reserved © 2013 DigitalGlobe)

## Discussion

*Range and status.*—Fig. 7 reveals small clusters of observations between Sandia, Puno, Peru, and Atén, over a distance of c.140–150 km. These suggest that Green-capped Tanager is regular in small numbers at least around Atén, Mojos and Santa Cruz de Valle Ameno, but possibly over the wider Bolivian Andean Cerrado of Apolo. Based on our cumulative knowledge of the species' altitudinal range and habitat, it is possible that its overall range covers 11,000 km<sup>2</sup> at 1,200–2,400 m in Bolivia and adjacent Peru. The species' discreet behaviour and the limited number of previous

Table 1. Our Bolivian records of Green-capped Tanager *Tangara meyerdeschauenseei*.

Location	Date	Altitude (m)	Habitat	No. of birds	Observer
Tokoaque, Madidi N.P	1 Nov 2001	2,301	Humid Yungas	2	A. B Hennessey
Santa Cruz de Valle Ameno	12 Dec 2003	1,900	Scrub / Savanna	1	A. B Hennessey
Atén	28 Apr 2011	1,263	Cerrado forest	2	M. Berg
Atén	2 May 2011	1,369	Scrub / Savanna	4	M. Berg
Atén	8 May 2011	1,275	Cerrado forest	1	M. Berg
Atén	10 May 2011	1,517	Scrub / Savanna	3	M. Berg
Atén	12 May 2011	1,391	Scrub / Savanna	2	M. Berg
Atén	13 May 2011	1,356	Scrub / Savanna	2	M. Berg
Santa Cruz de Valle Ameno	18 May 2011	1,786	Humid Yungas	1	M. Berg
Atén	27 Sep 2011	1,629	Scrub / Savanna	1	A. v. Kleunen



inventories in the region may explain why it remains so little known.

**Habitat use.**—The two observations in the breeding and non-breeding seasons, respectively, in humid Yungas forest suggest that the species occurs in this habitat too. Future research should seek to establish the importance of this habitat for Green-capped Tanager and to what extent the species is dependent on nearby savanna.

**Red list status.**—Green-capped Tanager is currently considered Vulnerable because of its small Peruvian range of 380 km<sup>2</sup>. Our observations around Apolo, Bolivia, increase the known population size and distribution. The species' range possibly covers c.11,000 km<sup>2</sup> (Fig. 7) and it may warrant reclassification as Near Threatened given its wider known range and larger population. Future inventories in the Apolo area and adjacent Peru may provide more definitive details concerning the range, status and habitat use of Green-capped Tanager.

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