

New and noteworthy records of birds in Bolivia

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Reporto aquí varios registros de interés de aves en Bolivia. Esos son registros recopilé en 11 visitas al país sobre un periodo de catorce años. Se incluyen registros de un ave nueva para el país (*Accipiter collaris*), nuevos registros departamentales (*Callonetta leucophrys* en Cochabamba y *Sporophila crassirostris / maximiliani* en Beni) y varios registros de altitud, o de especies poca conocidas en Bolivia. La mayoría de los casos son documentados con fotos, grabaciones (disponibles en www.xeno-canto.org), o especímenes. Finalmente, propongo que el único registro boliviano de *Cacicus uropygialis* fue identificado mal y que la grabación que sirve como su documentación es de *C. chrysonotus* y *Cyanolyca viridicyana*.

Here I present records that augment our knowledge of distribution and status of several bird species in Bolivia accumulated during 11 visits to the country over a period of c.14 years. Among these are a species not previously reported in Bolivia, new elevational, regional and departmental records, and records of species that are rare or poorly known in the country. In most cases, these records are documented by photographs, sound-recording (available at www.xeno-canto.org) or specimens. I compare my records to previously published records; additional records available in the 'grey literature' (e.g., field projects published in NGO or government agency reports) or on eBird are largely not considered here as many of the former are difficult to locate, whereas most of the latter are unvetted, and the authors / observers may wish to publish their observations separately.

My field work was primarily during late June to late September, i.e. the local dry season (austral winter and early spring). The 1999 visit was an expedition organised by the Louisiana State University Museum of Natural Science (LSUMZ) to dpto. Santa Cruz, the December 2012 visit was also an LSUMZ expedition that visited several sites between dptos. Santa Cruz and La Paz, while the remaining visits involved tour-related travel to dptos. Santa Cruz, Cochabamba, Oruro and La Paz; I have also paid annual visits to dpto. Beni since 2007.

In the species accounts, I refer to the following localities (in alphabetical order): Achacachi, Lake Titicaca basin, dpto. La Paz (16°00'S 68°40'W; 3,850 m), Alto Sacramento, on the old Coroico Road, dpto. La Paz (16°17'S 67°48'W; 2,400 m), Buena Vista, dpto. Santa Cruz (17°28'S 63°40'W; 350 m), Cerro Tunari, dpto. Cochabamba (17°17'S 66°19'W; 3,000–4,500 m), El Chuchial, dpto. Santa Cruz (18°14'S 63°39'W; 1,100 m), Estancia El Cutal, north of Trinidad, dpto. Beni (04°07'S 64°56'W; 145 m), Estancia Perforación, dpto. Santa Cruz (19°55'S 62°34'W; 475 m), Laguna Alalay, dpto. Cochabamba (17°25'S 66°08'W; 2,580 m), Laguna

Suárez, south-east of Trinidad, dpto. Beni (14°53'S 64°51'W; 160 m), Laguna La Verde, dpto. Beni (14°03'S 64°54'W; 140 m), Laguna Los Volcanes, dpto. Santa Cruz (18°07'S 63°39'W; 1,150 m), La Habana, north of Trinidad, dpto. Beni (14°14'S 64°59'W; 150 m), La Pajcha, dpto. Santa Cruz (18°24'S 63°49'W; 1,750 m), Miguelito Road, dpto. Cochabamba (17°11'S 65°45'W; 1,700–1,900 m), mouth of the río Mizque canyon by Saipina, dpto. Santa Cruz (18°06'S 64°36'W; 1,350 m), Presa Corani on the Cochabamba–Santa Cruz highway, dpto. Cochabamba (17°14'S 65°53'W; 3,300 m), Puente Urubó area on the east bank of the río Piraí at Santa Cruz city, dpto. Santa Cruz (17°45'S 63°12'W; 410 m), río Ipurupuru, north of Trinidad, dpto. Beni (14°13'S 64°57'W; 150 m), río Mamoré west of Trinidad, dpto. Beni (14°52'S 64°58'W; 150 m), río Piraí, just north of Santa Cruz city, dpto. Santa Cruz (17°39'S 63°12'W; 380 m), and wet pasture north of Trinidad, dpto. Beni (14°27'S 64°51'W; 160 m). The following abbreviations are

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Figure 1. Ringed Teal *Callonetta leucophrys*, Laguna Alalay, dpto. Cochabamba, 18 September 2012 (D. F. Lane)

Figure 2. Silver Teal *Anas versicolor* (with White-cheeked Pintail *A. bahamensis*), Laguna Alalay, dpto. Cochabamba, 20 September 2011 (D. F. Lane)

Figures 3–4. Semicollared Hawk *Accipiter collaris*, Alto Sacramento, Old Coroico Road, dpto. La Paz, 24 September 2011 (D. F. Lane)

Figure 5. Red-fronted Coot *Fulica ruffifrons*, Laguna Alalay, dpto. Cochabamba, 18 September 2012 (D. F. Lane)

Figure 6. Pied Lapwing *Vanellus cayanus*, Laguna Alalay, dpto. Cochabamba, 19 December 2012 (D. F. Lane)

Figure 7. Hudsonian Godwit *Limosa haemastica* (with Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos* and Black Skimmer *Rhynchops niger*), río Ipurupuru, north of Trinidad, dpto. Beni, 8 September 2011 (D. F. Lane)

Figure 8. Andean / South American Snipe *Gallinago andina* / *G. paraguaiae*, Laguna Alalay, dpto. Cochabamba, 20 September 2010 (D. F. Lane)



also employed in the species accounts. XC####: recording available at www.xeno-canto.org/####. LSUMZ: Louisiana State University Museum of Natural Science, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA. MNKM: Museo de Historia Natural de Noel Kempff Mercado, Santa Cruz de la Sierra, dpto. Santa Cruz, Bolivia.

Species accounts

Red-faced Guan *Penelope dabbeni*

A pair of these Tucumán forest endemics was encountered at La Pajcha, dpto. Santa Cruz, 13 August 1999. Recordings were made (XC966177), and one was collected (LSUMZ 168706). This is the species' northernmost published locality^{8,10}.

Fulvous Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna bicolor*

Two at Laguna Alalay, dpto. Cochabamba, on 20 September 2011, and another on 18 September 2012. Fjeldsá & Krabbe¹⁰ noted that the species is 'accidental at 2550 m in Cochabamba', presumably referring to records from nearby Laguna Angustura³⁶.

Rosy-billed Pochard *Netta peposaca*

Apparently regular and resident on Laguna Alalay. My first record was a pair on 12 July 2007, with subsequent records on 12 September 2008 (number not noted), 22 September 2009 (four), 20 September 2010 (one female), 20 September 2011 (25, both sexes), 18 September 2012 (11, both sexes), 19 December 2012 (number not noted) and 17 September 2013 (52, both sexes). The species almost certainly breeds at this locality and numbers seem to be increasing. It is not strictly a migrant, as suggested by Fjeldsá & Krabbe¹⁰ and Hennessey *et al.*¹⁶.

Ringed Teal *Callonetta leucophrys*

I photographed a male on Laguna Alalay on 18 September 2012 (Fig. 1). Based on Hennessey *et al.*¹⁶, this is the first record for dpto. Cochabamba (S. Herzog pers. comm.), and probably also an altitudinal record for the species.

Silver Teal *Anas versicolor*

Encountered twice on Laguna Alalay: 12 July 2007 (one), 20 September 2011 (two; Fig. 2). Furthermore, I am aware of prior sight records by A. Jaramillo (pers comm.) at the same locality. The only previous published records in Bolivia are from Tarija^{4,16}, making these observations the first for dpto. Cochabamba and some of the very few for the country.

Red Shoveler *Anas platalea*

Regular visitor to Laguna Alalay. My records include 12 July 2007 (number not noted), 22

September 2009 (6+), 20 September 2010 (pair), 20 September 2011 (four males), 18 September 2012 (two males and a female) and 17 September 2013 (two males and a female). These records suggest that the species is a regular visitor to the highlands of Cochabamba, *contra* Fjeldsá & Krabbe¹⁰ who stated that it migrates 'to lowlands of Bolivia'.

Southern Screamer *Chauna torquata*

I observed at least three on 14 September 2010 and two on 13 September 2011, at c.1,150 m at Laguna Los Volcanes, dpto. Santa Cruz. These are perhaps the highest elevation for the species⁶.

Rufescent Tiger Heron *Tigrisoma lineatum*

Single immature on 10 September 2012 and an adult (the same individual?) on 9–10 September 2013, at c.1,150 m, at Laguna Los Volcanes, dpto. Santa Cruz; perhaps the highest elevation for the species (noted to reach 1,000 m¹⁶).

Whistling Heron *Syrigma sibilatrix*

A small population at c.1,150 m at Laguna Los Volcanes, dpto. Santa Cruz (one on 14 September 2010, and two on 12–13 September 2011) is one of the highest elevations for the species. Bond & Meyer de Schauensee⁴ reported a specimen from Lagunillas, Santa Cruz, at c.1,100 m in dpto. Santa Cruz, and Krabbe *et al.*¹⁹ saw five at c.2,500 m in dpto. Chuquisaca.

Green Ibis *Mesembrinibis cayennensis*

One at c.1,150 m at Laguna Los Volcanes, dpto. Santa Cruz, 13 September 2011, might represent the highest elevation for the species¹⁶.

White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi*

Records at Laguna Alalay include one on 22 September 2009, three on 20 September 2011 and >10 (including birds in breeding plumage plus a few juveniles probably of this species) on 17 September 2013. Status in Cochabamba unclear, and Hennessey *et al.*¹⁶ did not include Alalay's elevation within the species' altitudinal range in Bolivia, suggesting that they were unaware of records at this site. Although the species is smaller than Puna Ibis *P. ridgwayi*³², it has longer legs and bill, and stands taller when viewed beside the latter, appearing lankier. In breeding plumage, *P. chihi* has a distinctly green-glossed crown and whitish feathering around the cere, both lacking in *P. ridgwayi*, permitting the identification of adult *P. chihi* among groups of Puna. The putative juveniles in 2013 were identified primarily by their longer legs and bills.

Semi-collared Hawk *Accipiter collaris*

A single white-morph immature (Figs. 3–4) seen well at 'Alto Sacramento' on the old Coroico Road,

dpto. La Paz, 24 September 2011, is the first record for Bolivia. It was perched in a largely bare tree at the edge of roadside second growth for >30 minutes, occasionally preening and permitting good views. Angulo & Piana¹ outlined the species' distribution in Peru, including several observations from Cusco, the geographically most proximate records. Given the species' low density elsewhere in its range (based on the scarcity of records at known locations) and the lack of access and few visits by birders to appropriate elevations and habitats, this record indicates a range extension of >500 km to the south-east.

Rufous-sided Crake *Laterallus melanophaius*

One at c.1,150 m at Laguna Los Volcanes, dpto. Santa Cruz, 13 September 2011, and several heard and seen on 10–11 September 2012, may be close to the species' upper elevational limit⁶.

Red-fronted Coot *Fulica rufifrons*

Hosner *et al.*¹⁸ first reported the species for Bolivia, at Laguna Alalay. My records, also from Alalay, include three on 20 September 2010, 16 on 20 September 2011, 20+ on 18 September 2012, >10 on 19 December 2012 (Fig. 5) and 48 on 17 September 2013. Hosner *et al.*¹⁸ recorded three between December 2006 and January 2007, which together with my own in December 2012 and the rapid increase of individuals over the years, suggest that the species is a resident breeder on Alalay. This suspicion is strengthened by observations on 17 September 2013 of birds carrying water weeds in their bills, presumably for nests.

Pied Lapwing *Vanellus cayanus*

Common at river edges in the lowlands, typically below c.500 m, with one record in Bolivia at c.2,600 m¹⁶. I documented an apparent juvenile at Laguna Alalay on 19 December 2012 (Fig. 6), matching the previous highest elevational record.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper *Calidris subruficollis*

Uncommon migrant in Bolivia, presumably en route to wintering grounds in Argentina²¹. My records include: 10+ north of Trinidad, dpto. Beni, 4 September 2008; 30+ at the same site north of Trinidad, 10 September 2009; 11+ at Lomas de Arena, dpto. Santa Cruz, 14 September 2009; two at Laguna Alalay, 20 September 2010; two north of Trinidad, 8 September 2011; and one on sandbars in the río Piraí, just north of Santa Cruz city, dpto. Santa Cruz, 11 September 2011. These records suggest that the species regularly uses suitable habitat in dptos. Beni and Santa Cruz during the first two weeks of September (which is also peak migration in the eastern USA). Migration stopover sites in the interior of South America are poorly known, and with the unpredictable availability of

stopover habitat in Amazonia²¹, the Beni and Santa Cruz regions may provide important refueling stops for southbound migrants.

Hudsonian Godwit *Limosa haemastica*

Long-distance migrant, with the majority of individuals wintering in southernmost Chile and Argentina (N. Senner pers. comm.). I observed the species as follows: 12 at Lomas de Arena, 7 September 2008; five flying high over La Habana, dpto. Beni, 11 September 2010; one on the río Ipurupuru, north of Trinidad, dpto. Beni, 8 September 2011 (Fig. 7); six at Laguna La Verde, dpto. Beni, 8 September 2011; two on the río Piraí, 11 September 2011. Reported as 'accidental' in Bolivia⁹, but the frequency of records in early to mid September suggests that at least a few individuals regularly stopover in the country annually.

Upland Sandpiper *Bartramia longicauda*

One on a small grassy area below a hydroelectric substation transformer amid cloud forest (!) at the start of the Miguelito Road, dpto. Cochabamba, at c.1,900 m, 21 September 2009, was an unusual locality. Apparently a fairly regular migrant in Bolivia and reported from most departments¹⁶.

Snipe sp. *Gallinago andina / paraguaiae*

A small *Gallinago* was observed in waning daylight, foraging at Laguna Alalay, 20 September 2010 (Fig. 8). Neither in the field nor photographs were any characters that might specifically identify it as either Andean *G. andina* or South American Snipe *G. paraguaiae* visible. Either species would be interesting here, but better views would be necessary to see critical features (e.g., leg colour). The distribution maps in Fjeldså & Krabbe¹⁰ and the elevation range reported by Hennessey *et al.*¹⁶ suggest *G. andina* might be more expected at Alalay, but the presence of other 'lowland' waders there, such as Wattled Jacana *Jacana jacana* and Collared Plover *Charadrius collaris*, suggests *G. paraguaiae* cannot be excluded. Furthermore, records of *Gallinago* from 2,200 m at Lago Pomacochas, Amazonas, Peru, probably refer to *G. paraguaiae* (T. Valqui pers. comm.), suggesting that this species may occur above 2,000 m elsewhere in its range.

Large-tailed (Yungas) Dove *Leptotila megalura*

Relatively common in 'yungas' habitats of Bolivia and northernmost Argentina, but difficult to see and often occurs sympatrically with the very similar White-tipped Dove *L. verreauxi*. Field marks that separate them appear minimal (lack of green iridescence on *L. megalura*, and, on average, whiter forehead and ocular areas), thus many observers have trouble separating them on sight, making voice probably the most reliable character.

In September 2013, I observed many *L. megalura*, photographing several (Fig. 9), and noticed that iris colour appears to separate the two species, which fact has not previously been mentioned in the literature. *L. megalura* has very dark irides that afford it a 'button-eyed' appearance and contrast starkly with the narrow white region of the face around the eye, whereas *L. verreauxi* has pale yellow or orange irides that stand out much less obviously against the paler facial feathering, but instead highlight the darker orbital skin. This field mark makes separating the species easy in most lights. I can find only two published statements regarding iris colour, both of which erroneously suggest that those of *L. megalura* are 'yellow'¹³ or 'straw-yellow to orangey-red or orange'¹². However, two LSUMZ specimens both had 'dark brown' irides, and the same is true of the few online photographs I have seen. Probably confusion between this species and *L. verreauxi* has led to the reports of pale irides in the literature.

Maroon-chested Ground Dove *Claravis mondetoura*

A rare, nomadic species that tracks flowering *Chusquea* bamboo¹⁰, and is not regularly reported anywhere within its range. The few previous Bolivian reports are from Beni, La Paz and Cochabamba^{10,16}. My record is of an unseen, singing bird that I sound-recorded (XC62903) at Alto Sacramento, old Coroico Road, dpto. La Paz, 24 September 2010.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Very rare in Bolivia, with perhaps fewer than five records (S. Herzog pers. comm.). I photographed one in wet fields just north of Achacachi, in the Lago Titicaca basin, dpto. La Paz, 15 July 2007 (Fig. 10), with another there on 19 September 2013. I am aware of an unpublished sight record in this area by A. Jaramillo (pers. comm.). The species was added to the dpto. La Paz list only recently¹⁶; B. Walker (pers. comm.) has observed the species on the Peruvian side of the basin, but there are very few records from the Titicaca region either side of the border.

Slender-tailed Woodstar *Microstilbon burmeisteri*
Common at El Chuchial during a brief visit by an LSU expedition in August 1999, but not when I returned in September 2000, suggesting that the species conducts seasonal movements and is possibly an austral migrant. No male-plumaged birds had complete gorgets, and we collected two immature males. Specimens are deposited at LSUMZ (168811–17, 169284) and MNKM. I made sound recordings on 15–16 August 1999 (XC966188–89).

American Pygmy Kingfisher *Chloroceryle aenea*

I photographed a female successfully fishing along an irrigation ditch in arid thorn scrub near Tambo Mission School on 13 September 2012. The elevation (c.1,600 m), habitat and locality are very surprising for a species that is usually not found away from lowland forested waterways. This appears to be a significant elevational record for the species, at least in Bolivia¹⁶.

Bolivian Earthcreeper *Tarphonomus harterti*

A. Jaramillo (pers. comm.), M. Lysinger & D. Stejskal found this species at c.3,350 m on the south-east slope of Cerro Tunari, dpto. Cochabamba in 1999. I first encountered it there in 2000 and detected up to two territories annually in 2007–13. I first sound-recorded (XC96634–35, 96637–38, 96640, 96643) and photographed the species on 8 July 2007 (Fig. 11). This appears to be the upper elevational limit and a new locality for the species¹⁶ (S. Herzog pers. comm.). The territories were in a steep-walled gully dominated by low, deciduous, arid scrub with small columnar cactus, much like habitat used elsewhere by the species, aside from lacking terrestrial bromeliads²⁸. At Cerro Tunari, it is syntopic with Rock Earthcreeper *Upucerthia andaeicola*.

Yellow-chinned Spinetail *Certhiaxis cinnamomeus*

A pair at Laguna Volcanes (1,150 m) on 9–10 September 2013 was considerably higher than the max. elevation (500 m) given by Hennessey *et al.*¹⁶.

Giant Antshrike *Batara cinerea*

I photographed and sound-recorded (XC96656, 96658) a female at Estancia Perforación, dpto. Santa Cruz, 26 September 2001. It was similar to the female specimen (LSUMZ 153724), reported by Kratter *et al.*²⁰ from the same site, in lacking black on the crest. In addition, a female I photographed in dry foothills near Pulquina, dpto. Santa Cruz, also lacked black on the crest (Fig. 12). I suspect that the Perforación birds are the same taxon as the Bolivian foothill population²⁰. *B. c. argentina* was

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Figure 9. Large-tailed Dove *Leptotila megalura*, Laguna Los Volcanes, dpto. Santa Cruz, 10 September 2013 (D. F. Lane)

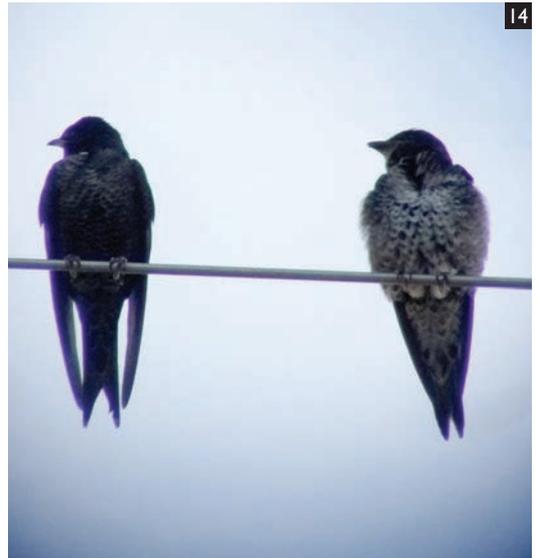
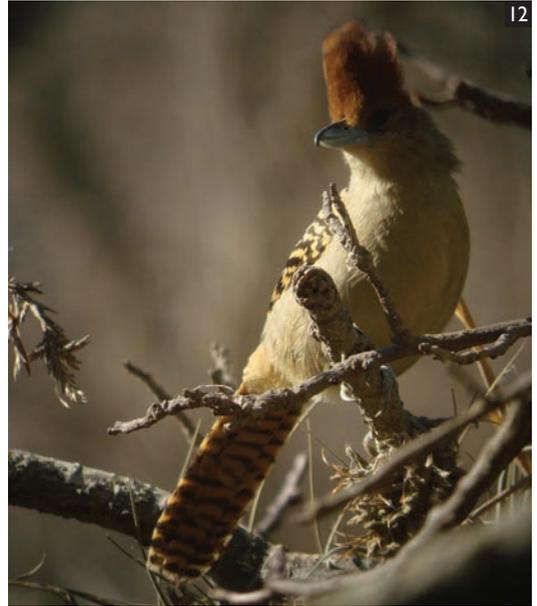
Figure 10. Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*, Achacachi, dpto. La Paz, 15 July 2007 (D. F. Lane)

Figure 11. Bolivian Earthcreeper *Tarphonomus harterti*, Cerro Tunari, dpto. Cochabamba, 8 July 2007 (D. F. Lane)

Figure 12. Giant Antshrike *Batara cinerea*, Pulquina, dpto. Santa Cruz, 15 September 2010 (D. F. Lane)

Figure 13. Grey-bellied Shrike-Tyrant *Agriornis micropterus*, Cerro Tunari, dpto. Cochabamba, 8 July 2007 (D. F. Lane)

Figure 14. Southern Martin *Progne elegans*, near Comarapa, dpto. Santa Cruz, 31 December 2012 (D. F. Lane)



described from San Lorenzo, Jujuy, Argentina, and *B. c. excubitor* from Samaipata, dpto. Santa Cruz, Bolivia. In describing *excubitor*, Bond & Meyer de Schauensee³ reviewed a series of four specimens identified as *argentina*, and stated that the latter was intermediate in size between *excubitor* and *cinerea* (the former smaller), and in colour, with *excubitor* exhibiting least black on the female's crest and with palest upperparts and chestnut crown. Zimmer & Isler³⁸ suggested that *excubitor* and *argentina* may represent points on a cline; given the species' apparently unbroken distribution in Argentina, western Paraguay and Bolivia, this seems probable. More specimens might help resolve the taxonomic status of *B. c. excubitor* with respect to *B. c. argentina*.

Crested Doradito *Pseudocolopteryx sclateri*

Rare in Bolivia, where probably primarily an austral migrant¹⁶, with few published records, making an adult at Estancia El Cutal, dpto. Beni, 9 September 2010, and another seen nearby on 6 September 2012, noteworthy. Tobias³³ reported one in November, suggesting the possibility of local breeding.

Grey-bellied Shrike-Tyrant *Agriornis micropterus*

Rare and poorly known in Bolivia. Chesser⁷ considered the species to be strictly an austral migrant, but Fjeldså & Krabbe¹⁰ regarded populations in 'western Bolivia' (albeit, exactly where is unclear) as resident, and J. A. Tobias (*in litt.* 2013) documented a nest with eggs in La Paz. Four records from dpto. Cochabamba are of interest: one at c.3,500 m on Cerro Tunari on 8 July 2007 (Fig. 13), another at c.3,200 m on Cerro Tunari on 19 September 2009, one at Presa Corani at c.3,300 m on 20 September 2011, and one at Laguna Alalay on 17 September 2013. These dates do not settle the question of the species' migratory status around Cochabamba city, but suggest it is regular there.

Dark martin sp. *Progne subis* / *elegans*

Twice I have seen high-flying or otherwise unidentified all-dark *Progne* in dpto. Beni: two in Trinidad, 9 September 2009, and six north of Trinidad, 10 September 2009. These were either *P. subis* or *P. elegans*, as both are migrants known from both north and south of this area, and would apparently be the first records for Beni of the latter¹⁶. Another all-dark *Progne* at Estancia Perforación, dpto. Santa Cruz, in late September 2001 was equally unidentifiable.

Purple Martin *Progne subis*

A typical female (white belly and grey forehead) was with a flock of dark martins at the mouth of the río Mizque canyon near Saipina, dpto. Santa Cruz,

16 September 2009. This is a rare boreal migrant, and difficulties in separating it from *P. elegans* may explain the lack of records in South America where both occur. Use of light-sensitive geolocators has demonstrated that the species' presumed core wintering range is largely in Amazonian or north-east Brazil, but that wintering areas differ among breeding populations¹¹. Contrary to my previous understanding of the differences in their localisations³², it appears that *P. elegans* can sound very like *P. subis* (see following account).

Southern Martin *Progne elegans*

Female at the mouth of the río Mizque canyon, 15 September 2010, and a group of c.15 at the reservoir near Comarapa, 31 December 2012 (XC126717–18), presumably nesting in the man-made structures there. Hosner *et al.*¹⁸ reported a probable colony at the Armonía Red-fronted Macaw Lodge, along the río Mizque in nearby dpto. Cochabamba. I concur with Hosner *et al.*¹⁸ that the species might nest in these arid valleys, which are probably near its northernmost breeding limits. Interestingly, female plumage appears quite variable (Fig. 14), with some exhibiting extensive pale feather tips on the underparts, making them appear paler bellied than suggested³² and potentially making them even more difficult to separate from other *Progne*.

Blue-and-white Swallow *Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*

Flock of 30+ over the río Piraí at Puente Urubó, Santa Cruz city, dpto. Santa Cruz, 8 September 2009, and more at a wet pasture north of Trinidad, dpto. Beni, 10 September 2009. Both flocks probably comprised migrating *P. c. patagonica*. Those on 10 September 2009 formed part of a major movement of hirundines that also included Brown-chested Martin *Progne tapera fusca*, White-rumped *Tachycineta leucorrhoa*, Barn *Hirundo rustica*, Cliff *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*, Bank *Riparia riparia*, Tawny-headed *Alopocheilidon fucata* and Southern Rough-winged Swallows *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*; all appeared to have been grounded by the passage of an austral cold front.

White-rumped Swallow *Tachycineta leucorrhoa*

Generally considered to be an austral migrant in Bolivia¹⁶, thus I was surprised to witness a pair investigating a hole in a wooden fence beside a wet pasture north of Trinidad, dpto. Beni, 8 September 2011. A sound-recording is available (XC96701). This observation suggests the species breeds as far north as Beni.

Tawny-headed Swallow *Alopocheilidon fucata*

I observed probably migrants over wet pasture north of Trinidad, dpto. Beni, on 10 September and 12 September 2009, with another two there and at Cutal on 3 and 5 September 2012, respectively.

The species was first reported in Beni as recently as the 1990s^{5,16}.

Rufous-crowned /Grey-eyed Greenlet

Hylophilus poicilotis / *H. amaurocephalus*

The Beni population of this species complex is poorly known, both in distribution and taxonomy. Olog²⁴ first reported the species in Bolivia: a male specimen, not in breeding condition, taken 2 September 1960 near San Juan, dpto. Beni, which he identified as *H. p. poicilotis*, presumably having compared it to specimens at the American Museum of Natural History (New York). Willis³⁷ demonstrated that *H. p. poicilotis* and *H. p. amaurocephalus* occur sympatrically in Brazil, and are sufficiently distinctive to be treated as species, which proposal has been widely adopted²⁷. Subsequent publications²⁹ considered the Beni birds to be *H. amaurocephalus*, not *H. poicilotis*. On 8 September 2010, my tour group and I observed a single, silent bird in roadside shrubs amid dry, seasonally flooded marsh near Laguna Suárez, south-east of Trinidad, dpto. Beni. Co-leader G. Armistead photographed the bird (Fig. 15). The features visible in the photographs (greyish throat and ear-coverts, and buff underparts) are more characteristic of *H. amaurocephalus*, thereby agreeing with later treatment. A pair (the same?) was at the same locality on 4 September 2013. On this occasion, I played recordings of Brazilian populations of *H. amaurocephalus* and *H. poicilotis*, neither of which elicited any response. I managed to record some scold and flight notes (XC148938) as they foraged in roadside brush, but was unable to record any song. Given the apparent disjunction between those in Beni and the better-known population in eastern Brazil, it would be worthwhile to determine if the Beni population represents an undescribed taxon within the *H. poicilotis* / *amaurocephalus* complex.

Unicoloured Thrush *Turdus haplochrous*

Poorly known species that regularly escapes detection and for which few life-history details are available^{5,35}. I observed it in evergreen gallery forest along the río Mamoré at La Habana, north of Trinidad, dpto. Beni, on 11 September 2010, 10 September 2011, and encountered two simultaneously vocalising individuals on 6 September 2013. The 2010 and 2011 records involved singles that responded well to playback of the mewing calls of related *Turdus*, as well as to the song of *T. haplochrous* recorded by C. G. Schmitt¹⁴. My recordings in 2010 (XC62235–38) appear to be the first of the species' mewing call, a characteristic vocalisation of the Spectacled Thrush *T. nudigenis* taxonomic clade²⁵. I observed singles at La Verde on 3 September 2012 and 5 September 2013. The 2012 bird vocalised without

playback at dusk, giving two different mewing calls (similar to XC148951), switching to *cuk* and longer notes in response to playback. The species appears very quiet in the dry season, when most observers visit the region, and my experience suggests that it vocalises mostly in response to playback, and perhaps crepuscularly. It remains low in the vegetation within evergreen gallery forest, or at the edges of *Atalea* palm islands with sufficient understorey, at this season. Abundance is probably much more accurately assessed when the species is singing in the wet season.

White-eared Solitaire *Entomodestes leucotis*

An anomalous record involved an adult-plumaged individual perched on a *Jarava ichu* tussock at c.3,300 m, at the north-east corner of Presa Corani, dpto. Cochabamba, on 21 September 2010. This is at the high end of the species' elevational range in Bolivia¹⁶, but the uncharacteristic habitat suggests that the bird was perhaps a displaced individual briefly resting in above-treeline habitats while in the process of searching for food or a territory.

Blue-grey Tanager *Thraupis episcopus*

Although known from Beni¹⁶, a bird seen well, permitting me to note the characteristic white shoulders and wingbar (excluding Sayaca Tanager *T. sayaca*), near the río Mamoré just west of Trinidad, 8 September 2010, appears noteworthy, given that the species is syntopic with *T. sayaca* here. If overlap of the two species is extensive, then their possible superspecies status or conspecific relationship is refuted²⁸, although wandering or seasonal movements by either or both species would not falsify the superspecies hypothesis. Presumably, *T. episcopus* is restricted to gallery forest in Beni, whereas *T. sayaca* is more widespread in all habitats in lowland Bolivia.

Grassland Yellow Finch *Sicalis luteola*

Two flyover individuals, giving their characteristic *tsi-sic* flight call, near Laguna Suárez, dpto. Beni, 8 September 2011, is only the second report in dpto. Beni¹⁷. A remarkable number was a flock of 1,000+ individuals coming to roost in reeds at the southern margin of Laguna Alalay at dusk on 20 September 2011.

Black-billed Seed Finch *Sporophila (Oryzoborus) atrirostris*

I sound-recorded (XC96703) and photographed one at Buena Vista, dpto. Santa Cruz, 20 August and 6 September 2000 (Fig. 16), very near where the species was previously recorded by Mayer²³. The individual I observed had a nearly all-black bill, with only a small white mark on the cutting edges and mandible. *S. a. gigantirostris* was described from Chatarona (c.10 km north-east of



Figure 15. Rufous-crowned / Grey-eyed Greenlet *Hylophilus poicilotis* / *H. amaurocephalus*, Laguna Suárez, dpto. Beni, 8 September 2010 (G. Armistead)

Figure 16. Black-billed Seed Finch *Sporophila atrirostris*, Buena Vista, dpto. Santa Cruz, 6 September 2000 (D. F. Lane)

Figures 17–18. Large-billed / Great-billed Seed Finches *Sporophila crassirostris* / *S. maximiliani*, Laguna Suárez, dpto. Beni, 8 September 2010 (D. F. Lane)

Rurrenabaque, at c.215 m elevation), Beni², and is a very large- and black-billed taxon, which seems to match the Buena Vista bird. Taxonomy of larger ‘*Oryzoborus*’ is in flux, and the paucity of specimens (and sight records) has permitted this situation to persist^{27–30}. The morphological distinctiveness, despite relative geographic proximity, suggests that *S. a. gigantirostris* is probably best considered a separate species from the white-billed population of large ‘*Oryzoborus*’ in the next account^{28–30}.

Large-billed / Great-billed Seed Finch

Sporophila (*Oryzoborus*) *crassirostris* / *S. maximiliani*

I photographed several large ‘*Oryzoborus*’ with white bills near Trinidad, dpto. Beni, on 8

September 2010 (including a young male just west of Trinidad and >5, of both sexes, at Laguna Suárez; Figs. 17–18) and 8 September 2011 (two males at Laguna Suárez). The all-white bills confirm that they were not *S. atrirostris*. The presence of black-billed *S. atrirostris gigantirostris* in Santa Cruz and south-west Beni (see previous account) suggests that those in central Beni are either *S. crassirostris* or *S. maximiliani*, probably the former given bill size. Further investigation, probably requiring specimens, is required to corroborate this identification. Chatarona, the type locality of *gigantirostris* (see previous account), is c.270 km west of Trinidad, much closer to the foothills and presumably more similar to the habitat where I

encountered *S. a. gigantirostris* at Buena Vista, and rather unlike the seasonally flooded habitats around Trinidad. One white-billed ‘*Oryzoborus*’, the young male on 8 September 2010, was foraging close to the ground at the roadside, but then flew nearly straight up into the air until barely visible, presumably en route elsewhere (behaviour I have seen on several occasions from larger ‘*Oryzoborus*’). The adults at Laguna Suárez in 2010 were closely spaced and observed alighting on tops of shrubs, suggesting they had just arrived from elsewhere. These observations, during the middle of the dry season when burning of grasslands is extensive (particularly so in 2010–11), may have involved birds forced to move to suitable habitat by wildfires. I am aware of just one previously published record of a large, pale-billed ‘*Oryzoborus*’ in Bolivia, identified as *S. maximiliani*, presumably because it is the more southerly of the white-billed large ‘*Oryzoborus*’, although no documentation was presented³⁴. The rarity and decline of large ‘*Oryzoborus*’ in Brazil and the Guianas, due to pressure from the cagebird trade, makes the presence of the northern Bolivia population of interest, and it is desirable to know which species it represents.

Long-tailed Reed Finch *Donacospiza albifrons*

In October 1984, D. C. Schmitt & C. G. Schmitt collected ten specimens in dpto. Beni, the first record in Bolivia³¹. Subsequently, Brace *et al.*⁵ reported the species at Beni Biological Station, as did Tobias³³ and Maillard *et al.*²². I observed a pair carrying food, presumably to a nest, in a dry, grassy pasture at Estancia El Cutal, north of Trinidad, dpto. Beni, 16 July 2007, with another individual, also at El Cutal, on 10 September 2010. On 3 September 2012, two singing birds were beside the highway north of Trinidad in open marsh with scattered papyrus-like sedge (probably *Cyperus* sp.). I obtained brief recordings (XC110421, 110423) and photographs of one bird. At the same site, on 5 September 2013, two males were again singing, and I acquired a very poor recording of the song (XC148939). On 7 September 2013, at El Cutal, I noted two family groups feeding recently fledged young and recorded one of them performing a chatter-duet song (XC148977). To my knowledge, these are the first sound-recordings of the Beni population. Beni specimens at LSUMZ (from October, including two recently fledged juveniles) are not in comparable stages of feather wear to LSUMZ specimens from Brazil (five from São Paulo: four from January and February, including a juvenile, one from July) and Argentina (Buenos Aires, one from July), to ascertain if morphological differences associated with the Bolivian population exist, but the geographical distance between it and those in Argentina, Uruguay and eastern Brazil

certainly suggests that their taxonomy should be investigated.

Velvet-fronted Grackle *Lampropsar tanagrinus*

Distinctive *L. t. bolivianus* is known primarily from the río Mamoré drainage in Beni and its southern limits are unclear, although Remsen *et al.*²⁶ listed records from dpto. Santa Cruz at Buena Vista, the río Surutú and Palmarito. I have two records from the Puente Urubó area on the east bank of the río Piraí at Santa Cruz city, dpto. Santa Cruz, which may be the species’ southernmost records: a group of 30+ on 2 September 2008, and a pair on 13 September 2009.

Finally, I feel obliged to question the veracity of a record, published as Bolivia’s first, of Subtropical Cacique *Cacicus uropygialis*^{15,16}. The recording that serves as the record’s sole documentation is now online (XC3290). Despite the comments by S. Mayer and P. Coopmans cited in Hennessey & Gomez¹⁵, to my ear the vocalisations recorded do not sound like *C. uropygialis*—of which species I have substantial experience. Instead, they sound far more like White-collared Jay *Cyanolyca viridicyanus*, for example those on XC150551, as well as a few vocalisations of Mountain Cacique *Cacicus chrysonotus*. Indeed, these two species often travel together and both are expected at this locality and elevation. The description of the purported *C. uropygialis* is very ambiguous, not mentioning any critical field marks (such as the red rump, blue iris or pale bill), and the elevation, 2,400 m, is too high for the species, which typically does not occur above 1,900 m in Peru³². I strongly suggest that this species be removed from the Bolivian list until unequivocal documentation becomes available.

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