First records of Maguari Stork *Ciconia maguari* in north-western South America

Maguari Stork *Ciconia maguari* is one of three Ciconiidae in the New World and the only representative of its genus in the Americas, where it primarily occurs in eastern South America[3,12]. In Colombia it is local east of the Andes, from Arauca south to Meta and the río Guaviare[9]. Unlike the Old World White *C. ciconia* and Oriental Storks *C. boyciana*, *C. maguari* is not migratory, but it wanders widely after breeding, responding to food availability[3].

We recorded *C. maguari* west of the Andes at two sites in north-west Colombia, 60 km

Figure 1. Maguari Stork *Ciconia maguari*, río León, dpto. Antioquia, Colombia, December 2010 (Alonso Quevedo)

apart, in dpto. Antioquia. The first sightings were made on 27 November 2010 by MF & AA. Two birds were observed soaring with Turkey Vultures *Cathartes aura* at Uno Bay (08°06'N 76°44'W; c.4 m) on the west side of the Urabá Gulf. Another was observed by CO & AQ on 13 December 2010 in the floodplain of the río León (Fig. 1), Urabá (07°34'N 76°46'W; c.25 m), with other large waterbirds such as Cocoi Heron *Ardea cocoi*. Two were seen in the same area on 8 February 2011 by AB, with a third individual a few kilometres to the west.

Despite intensive field work in the north-west Colombian lowlands[4–8], including around the Gulf of Urabá, this large and conspicuous species was not found. Surveys of several wetlands in the Urabá region did not find it[1] and the species is not included in Rangel *et al*.[11].

Our records might reflect recent colonisation of areas with similar environmental conditions to the species' typical habitat, or might represent vagrants. The species should be searched for in other floodplains within the region. As *C. maguari* is not known to be traded illegally within Colombia, we discard translocation as a possible explanation for these novel records. There are no records of confiscated individuals by the local environmental authority (CORPOURABA). We also discard an escape origin because our records come from two distant areas.

The Urabá Gulf hinterland was formerly covered by dense humid forests typical of the Chocó region[6], but due to ongoing deforestation, including intensive illegal extraction[10], is currently dominated by extensive pastures, as well as large banana plantations. Thus, *C. maguari* might find appropriate habitat in the region. The nearest published record is from Encontrados, north-west Venezuela[2] (09°04'N 72°13'W), c.510 km east of our records.

The río Leon is a tributary of the lower río Atrato, characterised by low vegetation (<3 m) dominated by *Montrichardia arborescens* (Araceae) and several fern species[10], and livestock grazing is severely affecting wetlands. The site was designated a reserve in 1971[13] to protect the wetland complex, but management has not been effective. Furthermore, wetlands associated with the Atrato and León rivers are some of the most important in Colombia.

Haffer[6] proposed routes for non-forest faunas to advance in northern South America. Habitat connectivity makes it plausible that *C. maguari* could move from the *llanos* of eastern Venezuela and Colombia to the Urabá Gulf via the savannas of dpto. Córdoba, west of the northern end of the Andes. The fact that *C. maguari* has reportedly crossed the Andes between Argentina and Chile[3] illustrates the species' capacity for more dramatic dispersal.

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A nest of Orange-throated Tanager *Wetmorethraupis sterrhopteron*

Since its discovery[7] in 1963, Orange-throated Tanager *Wetmorethraupis sterrhopteron* stands as one of the most distinctive and striking new bird species to be described in the past half-century. This spectacular tanager is restricted to humid foothill forests in south-east Ecuador and northern Peru[8,11]. Despite being found in disturbed as well as intact habitats, its limited range has led BirdLife International[1] to consider it Vulnerable. As little has been published on its behaviour or ecology, and the species' breeding biology is completely unknown, we provide brief observations made at a nest in extreme south-east Ecuador.

DSW, MH, JM & Xavier Muñoz discovered the nest on the morning of 30 January 2012 by a dirt road east of the río Nangaritza and c.6 km south of the village of Orquídeas, prov. Zamora, Ecuador, at an approximate elevation of 1,000 m. The nest was located in disturbed tropical broadleaf forest, and we observed active logging nearby. Canopy height was c.15–20 m with just a few larger trees, i.e., *Ocotea* sp. (Lauraceae), *Ficus* sp. (Moraceae) emerging above younger trees including many second-growth colonisers such as *Inga* (Mimosaceae) and *Cecropia* spp. (Cecropiaceae). Most of the understorey vegetation in the forest around the nest had been cleared. In general, habitat in the region is highly fragmented, and the forest surrounding the nest was c.10 ha.

While observing three adult-plumaged *Wetmorethraupis* moving through the canopy of the forest fragment from a dirt road, we noted that they were repeatedly visiting a particular site within a palm tree and further observations using binoculars and telescope revealed that at least two birds were constructing a nest.

The nest was c.10 m above the steeply sloping ground, in the uppermost fronds of a walking palm *Socratea exhorrhiza* (identified as probably this species by A. Henderson, New York Botanical Garden, pers. comm.). Although we were unable to examine it closely, on this or subsequent visits, it appeared to be an open-cup nest, supported from below by the woody rachis of a palm frond, with little or no material interwoven with the long-bladed leaflets on either side. The nest was c.1.5 m from the base of the frond and 3 m from its tip. At least externally, it appeared to be constructed primarily of twigs and other dead plant material. Some twigs bore mosses and lichens, but moss was apparently not an important component of the nest's external architecture. The nest was c.20–30 cm in external diameter and overhung by an adjacent frond shading and concealing it from above. Adults made multiple trips to the nest once every c.3–4 minutes over a 30-minute period on 30 January. Once, a bird sang while carrying either grass or a piece of palm frond to the nest. When HFG examined the presumably completed nest on a subsequent visit, he could detect no such material from below, suggesting that grass-like materials may form the nest lining.

HFG & R. A. Gelis visited the locality on 16 February–9 March, and spent 4–6 hours each day in the nest's vicinity. During the first four days, they detected tanagers only periodically, with the entire group of 4–5 adults moving noisily through the canopy around the nest. Unfortunately, they had not yet relocated the nest itself and did not observe any activity therein. However, they observed no adults carrying food or nest material. As the terrain is very steep, the group was only detected >300 m from the nest on several occasions (moving to or from the nest). Therefore, based on the ease with which this species is detected by its loud vocalisations, we consider that most of the periods of absence were spent in forest fragments other than that of the nest, and that the adults may have moved 1 km or more during these forays. Based on the extensive experience of HFG with other (albeit not closely related) species with similar nesting and foraging habits to *Wetmorethraupis* (i.e., *Aphelocoma, Cyanocorax, Cyanolyca* (Corvidae), *Sericossypha* (Thraupidae), we believe that incubation was underway on 16–19 February. On the morning of 20 February HFG located the nest during a period of adult absence. For fear of disrupting their behaviour, he observed the adults for four hours (08h00–12h00) from a vantage point that permitted approaches to the nest to be observed, but precluded viewing the nest itself. During this period the group visited the nest area three times, and at least three birds approached the nest. HFG did not observe food-carrying by adults, but visits to the nest were brief (1–3 minutes). While the possibility exists that the birds were switching places with, or provisioning, an incubating adult, their behaviour strongly suggests that they were feeding young. Food items may have been too small to detect or were perhaps regurgitated. On 21 February HFG videotaped the nest at 06h00–13h00. The recording revealed that the nest was not visited during this period, but adults were detected in the vicinity twice (by their vocalisations). Until 28 February tanagers were detected just four times in the forest around the nest. It is probable that the nest was empty at this time, almost certainly due to depredation given that <3 weeks had elapsed from construction