# A potpourri of recently described species from the Neotropics

# Chris Balchin, with contributions by Diego Calderón, Thomas Donegan and David Fisher

Whilst less than a handful of bird species previously unknown to science are described from various parts of the world each year, during the course of the last decade or so a significant percentage of these have been from the Neotropics where ornithological exploration is still yielding major novelties.

ere, we present a selection of photographs of some of the species discovered in the NBC region in recent years. This list is by no means intended to be comprehensive (Taxonomic Round-up in *Cotinga* has reported the description of over 100 new taxa in the Neotropics since 1992), and includes only those species of which we have been able to locate reasonable-quality photographs.

## Cryptic Forest-falcon

Micrastur mintoni

Described in 2002 (*Wilson Bull.* 114: 421–445), specimens of *Micrastur mintoni* had been overlooked as Lined Forest-falcon *A. gilvicollis* or confused with Plumbeous Forest-falcon *M. plumbeus* for over 100 years, despite the attention of such acutely observant commentators as Charles Hellmayr and Dean Amadon, until

Right: Cryptic Forest-falcon *Micrastur mintoni*, Parque Nacional da Amazônia, Pará, Brazil (Andrew Whittaker) Below: Cryptic Forest-falcon *Micrastur mintoni* specimens, Museu Nacional, Rio de Janeiro (Guy M. Kirwan)



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Andrew Whittaker finally resolved the mystery of short-tailed specimens of 'M. gilvicollis' from Pará, northern Brazil. The new species appears to have a disjunct range with separate populations through central and eastern Amazonian Brazil as far as northeasternmost Bolivia, which population principally occurs in humid terra firme, and the other in the eastern Brazil Atlantic rainforest, from northern Espírito Santo to southern Bahia, though the latter is speculated to be extinct. Whereas *M. gilvicollis* is principally restricted to localities north of the Amazon, Cryptic Forestfalcon has yet to be recorded north of the river and to the south they appear to be separated by the rio Madeira. The vocalisations (which proved to be initial key that unlocked recognition of the new species) and morphology of *mintoni* are distinct from all other forest-falcons. Like others of the genus, *mintoni* is a shy and often secretive bird that is rarely observed by chance.

## **Sulphur-breasted Parakeet**

## Aratinga pintoi

Described in 2005 by Luís Fábio Silveira *et al.* (*Auk* 122: 292–305), this (allo)species is apparently restricted to the *lavrados* (open areas with scattered trees on sandy soil) on the north bank of the Amazon in Pará, Brazil, though it was perhaps formerly present south of the river near Santarém. Like several of the new species discussed here,





Above: Sulphur-breasted Parakeet *Aratinga pintoi* adult (top) and juveniles, Monte Alegre, Pará, Brazil, December 2005 (Chris Collins)

Left: Ventral and dorsal views of Sulphur-breasted Parakeet *Aratinga pintoi* specimens, Museu Nacional, Rio de Janeiro (Guy M. Kirwan)

Below: Habitat of Sulphur-breasted Parakeet Aratinga pintoi (Marcelo Vasconcelos)



Sulphur-breasted Parakeet had lain undescribed (or passed off as a hybrid) in museum collections for many years. The specific name commemorates the outstanding contributions to Brazilian ornithology of Olivério Pinto, who was also the first to notice discrepancies between Brazilian specimens ascribed to Aratinga solstitialis (Sun Parakeet) and material pertaining to this species from elsewhere. A member of the Sun Parakeet species-group, in adult plumage it most closely resembles A. solstitialis which has more yellow on the closed wing. Conversely the juvenile has virtually all-green wings and thus more closely resembles Jandava Parakeet A. jandava. The new species is arguably best looked for in the vicinity of Monte Alegre.

## Madeira Parakeet

Pyrrhura snethlageae

In 2002, Leo Joseph published the results (some collaborative with other workers) of his wideranging research into the taxonomy of the Painted Parakeet Pyrrhura picta group from across Amazonia (Orn. Neotrop. 13: 337-363). These were somewhat staggering: picta was deemed to comprise some five additional species, as follows. Deville's Parakeet P. lucianii (a previously described form) is considered confined to western Brazil around Tefé and the rio Purús; Redcrowned Parakeet P. roseifrons (another already named taxon) occurs disjunctly in Amazonian Peru and south-west Brazil; and Hellmayr's Parakeet P. amazonum (also previously named) is reasonably widespread in east Amazonian Brazil, from Pará south to Mato Grosso. Joseph also named two new forms, the first, Wavy-breasted Parakeet P. peruviana from north-west and central Amazonian Peru (and subsequently located in south-east Ecuador), with Hocking and Blake, and the second, Madeira Parakeet P. snethlageae, from the rio Madeira drainage in Brazil and northern Bolivia (although it has subsequently been discovered to occur elsewhere too), with John Bates. The scientific name of the latter taxon honours Emilie Snethlage, the courageous pioneer of Brazilian and in particular Amazonian ornithology.

## **Bald Parrot**

## Gypopsitta aurantiocephala

A closely related counterpart of the Vulturine Parrot *P. vulturina*, described in 2002 by Renato Gaban-Lima *et al.* (*Auk* 119: 815–819), also from the Brazilian state of Pará, this species had previously been misidentified as an immature plumage of *vulturina*, despite never having been seen together with adult Vulturine Parrots. Since its discovery it has been found further west and south, at several localities in the state of Amazonas as far west at least as Borba, in central Amazonia. Subsequent to the new species' description, in the genus *Pionopsitta*, the latter genus has been found to be polyphyletic and a new genus was required for all of the species, except the type of Pionopsitta, P. pileata (Pileated Parrot) of the Atlantic Forest of Brazil. It has thus been recommended that all of the other species traditionally placed in Pionopsitta be transferred to the genus Gypopsitta (see Cotinga 25: 10). As yet, no definitive English name for the species appears to have been proposed in the literature, though it seems to be most commonly referred to by the epithet employed here and by which name it is currently listed by the AOU South American Checklist Committee.

## **Cloud-forest Pygmy-owl**

## Glaucidium nubicola

Described, in 1999, by Mark Robbins and Gary Stiles (Auk 116: 305-315), this species was overlooked due to it inhabiting similar habitat to Andean Pygmy-owl G. jardinii though it occurs at much lower elevations than the latter. Best distinguished by voice (like so many small owls), a series of paired whistles each separated by c.0.2 seconds and with intervals between each couplet of about half a minute, though the combination of distinct streaks on the underparts and reduced spotting on the mantle should eliminate jardinii. At lower elevations on the west slope of the Andes it should be relatively easy to eliminate other owls. Ongoing forest destruction presents something of a threat to this species within its range which spans the subtropical zone on the west slope of the Andes in Colombia to north-west Ecuador, at least south to the Mindo region.

## **Scarlet-belted Barbet**

## Capito wallacei

Discovered in July 1996 by Dan Lane and Manuel Sánchez, and described by John O'Neill *et al.* (*Auk* 117: 569–577), this stunning bird (surely one of the most spectacular avian discoveries of the late 20th century) is apparently entirely restricted to stunted wet mossy forest within 200 m altitude of the summit of an isolated peak north-west of Contamana between the ríos Huallaga and Ucayali, dpto. Loreto, in Peru, known simply as 'Peak 1538' (its highest point), though speculated to also occur in immediately adjacent parts of Brazil (Acre) and Bolivia (Pando). It was the first species of Neotropical barbet to be described for over 70 years. Much of its life history is, unsurprisingly, still unknown. Anyone wishing to see it must be prepared for a gruelling trip of expedition-style proportions and have more than 10 days to spare.

## **Bahia Spinetail**

## Synallaxis cinerea

Although originally described in 1831, by the intrepid Prince Alexander Philip Maximilian II of Wied-Neuwied, the name cinerea subsequently languished in obscurity (as a synonym of the much better-known Rufous-capped Spinetail S. ruficapilla), and it was not until 1995 that Bahia Spinetail was shown to be separate species from ruficapilla (see Pacheco & Gonzaga, Ararajuba 3: 3–11), at first under the name S. whitneyi (in honour of the many outstanding recent contributions to Brazilian ornithology of Bret Whitney), then subsequently under the resurrected cinerea (though an even-more recent publication has suggested that in fact, after all, whitneyi is the valid name). There is no known overlap in range with *ruficapilla* and it differs in having dark grey (rather than pale brown) underparts and a buffy-cinnamon eyestripe. Bahia Spinetail is restricted to Atlantic Forest fragments of eastern Brazil and is currently listed as Endangered by BirdLife International, but has typically managed to defeat ornithologists' best efforts to evoke an appropriate vernacular name, by subsequently being discovered in easternmost Minas Gerais, as well as the state of Bahia.

## **Bolivian Spinetail**

## Cranioleuca henricae

Described in 1997 by Sjoerd Meijer and Jon Fjeldså (*Ibis* 139: 606–616), this Bolivian endemic occurs only in a very small range of c.3,000 km<sup>2</sup> in the north of the country, in which it is fortuitously rather common. Nonetheless, human modification of the landscape within that tiny range has led to this spinetail being categorised as Endangered by BirdLife International. It is part of a group of similar-looking *Cranioleuca* spinetails with disjunct ranges, but is apparently a sister species of Stripe-crowned Spinetail *C. pyrrhophia*. Despite its relative abundance, details of its life history, including breeding, are lacking.

## Caatinga Antwren

## Herpsilochmus sellowi

Like several of the discoveries reported here, Herpsilochmus sellowi represents in part the recognition (through techniques unavailable to the earlier cataloguers of Neotropical avifauna) of a cryptic diversity that had previously escaped detection. Described in the year 2000 by Bret Whitney and colleagues (Auk 117: 869-891), from Bahia, Brazil, this caatinga antwren had long been known and catalogued as H. pileatus (Pileated Antwren). When, in the late 1990s, it was realised that the loudsong of Pileated Antwrens in the littoral of Bahia differed from those in the drier interior, the investigators doubtlessly initially suspected that their coastal bird would prove to be the 'new' species. Instead, it proved that the type of pileatus was the form from south-east Bahia (which now takes the vernacular name Bahia Antwren), whereas it was the *caatinga* antwren that required a new scientific name be erected. The male Caatinga Antwren, shown here, closely resembles Black-capped Antwren H. atricapillus, with the main difference being the bare-faced appearance of the former, which lacks any dark on the lores and has weaker postocular streak. The female is much easier to identify as the crown is nearly uniform right to the bill base, lacking the white streaks of Black-capped.

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Madeira Parakeets *Pyrrhura snethlageae*: (left) rio Cristalino, Mato Grosso, Brazil, 5 April 2003, and (right) Ariquemes, Rondonia, 1 April 2003 (Arthur Grosset)

Below and right: Bald Parrot *Gypopsitta aurantiocephala*, Thaimaçu, Pará, Brazil, April 2003 (Arthur Grosset)

Below right: Specimens of Bald Parrot *Gypopsitta aurantiocephala* (lower bird) and Vulturine Parrot *G. vulturina*, Museu Nacional, Rio de Janeiro (Guy M. Kirwan)





Cloud-forest Pygmy-owl *Glaucidium nubicola*, Tandayapa Bird Lodge, Ecuador, 8 January 2005 (Steve Blain/Tropical Birding)



Scarlet-belted Barbet *Capito wallacei*, 'Peak 1538,' dpto. Loreto, Peru, May 2002 (Barry Wright)



Bahia Spinetail Synallaxis cinerea, Boa Nova, Bahia, Brazil, July 2002 (Arthur Grosset)



Bolivian Spinetail *Cranioleuca henricae*, Inquisivi, dpto. La Paz, Bolivia, 16 July 1995 (Jon Hornbuckle)





Above: Male Caatinga Antwren *Herpsilochmus sellowi*, Chapada do Araripe, Ceara, Brazil, 9 January 2006 (Nick Athanas/Tropical Birding) Left: Male, FLONA do Araripe, Ceará, Brazil, 4 November 2004 (Ciro Albano)

## **Ancient Antwren**

## Herpsilochmus gentryi

Another specialist of white-sand forests, the Ancient Antwren was described in 1998 by Bret Whitney and José Álvarez Alonso (Auk 115: 559-576) from around Iquitos, in north-east Peru (where it inhabits the same areas as Allpahuayo Antbird, Mishana Tyrannulet and Iquitos Gnatcatcher Polioptila clementsi), but has since also been found at Kapawi Lodge in southeasternmost Ecuador. It is the only Herpsilochmus in its range, and is restricted to two types of terra firme forest, known as irapayal (taller forest with a palm-dominated understorey) and varillal (more stunted forest), but is variable in appearance; the underparts varying from white to yellowish-toned (and are darker in females). H. gentryi appears to be reasonably common in its preferred habitats, but is considered Near Threatened due to its comparatively small range. The species' specific name honours the outstanding contributions to Neotropical botany of Al Gentry, who died in the same plane crash that claimed the life of Ted Parker.

## Marsh Antwren

## Stymphalornis acutirostris

Discovered as recently as 1995, by Marcos Bornschein et al. (Instituto Iguaçu de Pesquisa e Proteção Ambiental 1: 1–18), in littoral marshes dominated by Typha and Scirpus vegetation (unexpected habitat for an antbird) of Paraná and Santa Catarina states, southern Brazil, its generally secretive behaviour further contributed to its being overlooked. Nonetheless, it is far from uncommon within its small range and not difficult to see if using tape playback. Easily identified both by its plumage and wetland habitat, there has been speculation to the effect that the species would be better placed within the genus Formicivora, and it is certainly the case that the loudsong of acutirostris appears rather typical of many species placed in the latter genus. Perhaps even more remarkable is the subsequent (very recent) discovery of another population of marsh-dwelling antbirds, with many plumage and vocal similarities to acutirostris, just to the east of São Paulo, which is apparently set to be described as another new species (albeit presumably sister to acutirostris), and is also illustrated here.

## **Parker's Antbird**

#### Cercomacra parkeri

A Colombian endemic described, in 1997, by Gary Graves as part of the memorial volume to Ted Parker (Orn. Monogr. 48: 111-128), C. parkeri was overlooked for decades as being merely a highland population of Dusky Antbird C. tyrannina, which it closely resembles. Males of the two are barely distinguishable, but as with many species of Cercomacra, plumage differences between parkeri and its closest relative (in this case tyrannina) are more pronounced in females. Parker's Antbird is known only from west-central Colombia, where it has been found on the west slope of the Western Andes and on the north and east slopes of the Central Cordillera. It is frequent in the Amalfi and Anorí forests, in the northern Cordillera Central of the Colombian Andes, and in the Eastern Cordillera in Serranía de los Yariguíes including within Fundación ProAves' new reserve there. The new Yariguíes national park in the San Vicente de Chucurí region of northern Colombia is probably the safest and most reliable place in which to observe this species. Parker's Antbird is easily located and most readily identified by the loudsong, a quite distinctive series of liquid notes, falling in tone.

#### Allpahuayo Antbird

Percnostola arenarum

Exploration of species-poor, but comparatively endemic-rich, sandy soil forests near Iquitos in north-east Peru has led in very recent years to the discovery of a host of previously unknown species, of which this antbird is one. Described, in 2001, by Morton Isler et al. (Wilson Bull. 113: 164-176), Allpahuayo Antbird is restricted to white-sand areas where it appears to prefer a dense stunted type of *terra firme* forest known as *varillal*, in which it is the only Percnostola. The species takes its unusual name from that of the recently established national reserve which protects this antbird's core range and upon which its future may well depend (BirdLife International currently categorise the species as Vulnerable). Allpahuayo Antbird appears to form a superspecies with Black-headed Antbird P. rufifrons of northern Amazonia as far west as north-east Peru, and it has been speculated that these two are not particularly closely related to other species currently assigned to the genus *Percnostola*. The combination of black chin and grey head in the male and grey upperparts and cinnamon-rufous underparts in the female permit easy identification.

## **Upper Magdalena Tapaculo** *Scytalopus rodriguezi* / **Stiles's Tapaculo** *S. stilesi*

These two Colombian endemic tapaculos were described, concurrently, in 2005 by two teams led by Niels Krabbe (Bull. Brit. Orn. Club 125: 93-108) and Andrés Cuervo (Auk 122: 445-463). Vocalisations of Upper Magdalena Tapaculo were first heard in the 1970s, but political instability in the region, on the east slope of the Central Andes at the head of the Magdalena Valley, prevented detailed ornithological field work until recently. It is best observed at the Finca Merenberg reserve, near San Agustín in southern Colombia. As with most recently discovered species in this genus, S. rodriguezi is best identified by its vocalisations, in this case a series of repeated notes, each falling in tone. In view of its restricted range and the extent of deforestation within its known range, the authors of the type description recommended that the new species be accorded the conservation status Endangered. Further north on the same slope of Central Cordillera, Upper Magdalena Tapaculo is replaced by another species (named for Gary Stiles) which is fairly common (but nonetheless recommended as Near Threatened) in mid-level premontane forests in dptos. Antioquia, Risaralda and Caldas. The vocalisations (mostly short unmusical churrs) of Stiles's Tapaculo separate it from the three congenerics that occur sympatrically, namely Blackish S. latrans, Whitecrowned S. atratus and Spillmann's S. spillmanni. In adult plumage it is readily separated from latrans by its browner plumage and barring on flanks and from atratus by the lack of a crown spot.

## Planalto Tapaculo

## Scytalopus pachecoi

Field workers have appreciated for almost three decades the complexity of Scytalopus populations in the Andes, but it is only more recently that those working in the Atlantic Forest have begun to realise the taxonomic problems inherent to this group in the latter region. Recently, Giovanni Maurício (Ararajuba 13: 7-28) described a new species, Scytalopus pachecoi (named for Fernando Pacheco, in honour of his enormous contribution to modern Brazilian ornithology), from three highland regions in southernmost Brazil and adjacent extreme north-east Argentina. The new species is separable from both Mouse-coloured S. speluncae and Brasília Tapaculos S. novacapitalis on the basis of plumage and vocalisations, though it is arguably closest to the latter in morphology. In his study, Maurício also drew attention to the

potentially significant differences between northern and southern populations of *S. speluncae*, which may lead to their recognition as separate species in the future. Nonetheless, it also seems likely that further work will build substantially on that reported here, as the distribution, vocalisations and plumages of east Brazilian *Scytalopus* become increasingly better known, perhaps leading to further substantial refinements in our knowledge as it currently stands.

## Chestnut-capped Piha Lipaugus weberi

Discovered in March 1999 by Andrés Cuervo et al. and described two years later (Ibis 143: 353-368), although this is a common species, it is restricted to a narrow belt of pre-montane cloud forest between 1,500 and 1,820 m at the north end of the Central Andes of Antioquia, Colombia, in the municipalities of Anorí and Amalfi. Due to its extremely small range, L. weberi is currently considered Endangered by BirdLife International. This distinctive piha is easily located by its loud sreeck vocalisations, audible at long distance. Amalfi, where the species is easily seen, is within ready striking distance of Medellín. Any villager asked about 'el arriero' (the muleteer) will instantaneously begin to talk about Lipaugus weberi!

#### **Araripe Manakin**

## Antilophia bokermanni

This remarkably distinctive manakin (in adult male plumage), which is a sister species of the equally stunning but far more widespread Helmeted Manakin A. galeata, was discovered as recently as 1994 (though the bird remained unseen until 1996 and only in the following year were specimens collected), by Galileu Coelho and Weber Silva (Ararajuba 6: 81-84). It is known only from the Chapada do Araripe, at the border between the states of Pernambuco and Ceará, Brazil. Only within the last 25 years have many of north-east Brazil's most remarkable endemics been discovered by ornithologists, in several cases (like the even more recently described Pernambuco Pygmy-owl Glaucidium mooreorum) on the apparent brink of extinction. Sadly, the Araripe Manakin is restricted to valleys on the slopes of the Chapada with tall evergreen forests and does not occur in the Floresta Nacional (a protected area) atop the serra. Listed by BirdLife International as Critically Endangered, its tiny range is increasingly threatened by habitat



Above: Ancient Antwren *Herpsilochmus gentryi*, male, Allpahuayo-Mishana Reserved Zone, dpto. Loreto, Peru (José Álvarez Alonso)

Right: Interior of *varillal* forest, habitat of Ancient Antwren *Herpsilochmus gentryi*, Allpahuayo-Mishana Reserved Zone, dpto. Loreto, Peru (José Álvarez Alonso)







Male (above left) and female (above right) and habitat (right) of *Stymphalornis* sp. nov., near Biritiba-Mirim, São Paulo, Brazil, 8 March 2005 (Luís Fábio Silveira), and (above) female paratypes of Marsh Antwren *Stymphalornis acutirostris*, Museu Nacional, Rio de Janeiro (Guy M. Kirwan)

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Parker's Antbird Cercomacra parkeri male (left) and female, Serranía de los Yariguies, dpto. Santander, Colombia, January 2006 (Thomas Donegan / Proyecto YARE)



Male Allpahuayo Antbird *Percnostola arenarum*, Allpahuayo-Mishana Reserved Zone, dpto. Loreto, Peru (José Álvarez Alonso)



Specimens of Planalto Tapaculo Scytalopus pachecoi from north-east Argentina, held in the Museo Argentino de Ciencias Naturales, Buenos Aires (Guy M. Kirwan)





Above: (top) Holotype of Upper Magdalena Tapaculo Scytalopus rodriguezi (Paul Salaman, © British Ornithologists' Club, reproduced with permission); (bottom) Stiles's Tapaculo Scytalopus stilesi, Santuario de Fauna y Flora Otún-Quimbaya, dpto. Risaralda, Colombia, October 2003 (Gustavo Londoño)

destruction, due to agricultural and other development, though as anyone who has visited the type-locality in recent years, which is now a theme park (whose owner is proud of her land's association with the bird), can testify, the species is clearly able to tolerate some degree of habitat modification.

#### **Chapada Flycatcher**

Suiriri islerorum

Only in 2001 was it possible to bring to satisfactory conclusion a problem that had for many years vexed ornithologists as prominent as John T. Zimmer and Melvin Traylor, namely unexplained variation in a number of specimens of Suiriri flycatchers. In that year, Kevin Zimmer, Andrew Whittaker and David Oren published (Auk 118: 56-78) the results of a field and museum study which concluded that a cryptic sibling species of Suiriri was indeed involved, but had been overlooked due to its similarity with the more widespread Suiriri Flycatcher Suiriri suiriri. The principal differences are its shorter, broadbased bill, the pale terminal band on the tail, and its wing-flapping displays that accompany territorial simultaneous duets by pairs at dawn (field identification was further addressed and illustrated recently in these pages; Cotinga 24: 38-41). Virtually endemic to Brazil, where the species has since proven to be widespread in wooded campos and cerrados of the interior, and to occur in sympatry with S. suiriri at quite a number of localities, the new species is fairly easily found in the Chapada dos Guimarães, Mato Grosso, Brazil, but also along the road to the Serra do Cipó, Minas Gerais, another regularly visited locality by tourist birdwatchers. The name islerorum honours the many and varied contributions to Neotropical ornithology made by Mort & Phyllis Isler. With the benefit of hindsight, it is constantly remarkable to think of how much ornithologists of yore, such as Cory, Hellmayr and Zimmer, achieved in their efforts to correctly catalogue the South American avifauna, rather than to dwell on the problems that proved intangible to their generation, whose opportunities to gain field experience of many of these forms, and in particular to record and compare their voices, was negligible or nonexistent.

## Mishana Tyrannulet

#### Zimmerius villarejoi

Initially discovered, in February 1997, due to its distinctive vocalisations, Mishana Tyrannulet was

formally described in 2001 by Jose Álvarez Alonso and Bret Whitney (*Wilson Bull.* 113: 1–9), and is another species limited to *varillal* white-sand forest near Iquitos, dpto. Loreto, north-east Peru, where it appears to be rather uncommon. The combination of pale eye, pinkish base to the lower mandible and olive-green upperparts make for an easy identification compared to the congeneric Slender-footed Tyrannulet *Z. gracilipes*, which is locally common in the same region, but to some extent do recall the elevationally parapatric or allopatric Red-billed Tyrannulet *Z. cinereicapillus* (albeit smaller and with a green crown), which appears to be its closest relative.

## **Orange-eyed Flycatcher**

Tolmomyias traylori

Described in 1997 by Tom Schulenberg and the late Ted Parker (Orn. Monogr. 48: 723-732) from the western Amazonian basin, the tale of how, in 1983, Ted Parker found a new species of Tolmomyias flycatcher (a genus that most field observers struggle to identify correctly to species) through simply recognising that its voice was different to all other described species has taken on the stuff of legend, especially since his passing. That it was 'discovered' in an area of the Amazon basin comparatively well worked for over a century might seem surprising, but once the species had been recognised in the field, specimens (one as old as 130 years) quickly came to light. Orange-eyed Flycatcher, whose scientific name recognises the massive contributions of Melvin Traylor to our knowledge of Neotropical birds (and the Tyrannidae in particular), is restricted to the subcanopy and mid levels of várzea forest, a habitat not favoured by other Tolmomyias, and occurs over much of north-west Amazonia, from southern Colombia to northern Peru. The combination of buffy throat, grey crown, cinnamon lores and pale eye make this species reasonably distinctive.

## Johnson's Tody-tyrant

## Poecilotriccus luluae

First collected in August 1970, it was not until 2001 that Ned Johnson and Robert Jones (*Auk* 118: 334–341) formally described what they referred to as Lulu's Tody-tyrant, but has since come to be known as Johnson's Tody-tyrant (in honour of its recently deceased describer and collector), a name change which has found favour with the AOU South American Checklist Committee. *P. luluae* is restricted to mid-elevation forests on the east slope of the north-eastern

Andes in Peru, and appears never to occur in sympatry with its apparent sister species, Rufouscrowned Tody-tyrant *P. ruficeps* of further north in the Andes.

## Munchique Wood-wren

## Henicorhina negreti

The description of this species, in 2003, by Paul Salaman and colleagues (Orn. Colombiana 1: 4–21) was remarkable for at least two reasons, one being that it was the first new bird species to be described in what is almost exclusively an online journal. The other was that the new wren's description had taken 25 years to realise, as it was in 1978 that Steve Hilty first realised that 'greybreasted' wood-wrens on the upper Pacific slope in dptos. Cauca and Nariño sing differently from adjacent populations. Originally recommended for Critically Endangered status, the species was at first only known from very wet, stunted, epiphytic cloud forest in the Munchique massif of the Western Andes of Colombia, but has subsequently been found in similar habitat c.350 km to the north, at the border between dptos. Chocó, Antioquia and Risaralda. Nonetheless, its conservation status awaits proper assessment and, despite occurring within at least two nominally protected areas, is a matter of some concern. H. negreti resembles the sympatric race of Greybreasted Wood-wren H. leucophrys brunneiceps, which it replaces elevationally, but has a very different song, consisting of flute-like falling and rising cadences. The species is replaced by two H. leucophrys subspecies in the Munchique region, on adjacent slopes. All three can be seen if a c.3-km transect is walked along the main dirt road through Munchique National Park, with the new species only on the western slope and above 2,200 m. In the field, Munchique Wood-wren also has slightly darker upperparts with more distinct barring on the underparts.

## São Francisco Sparrow

Arremon franciscanus

This species was described in 1997 by Marcos Raposo (*Ararajuba* 5: 3–9) and is largely restricted to *caatinga* in the basin of the rio São Francisco, in Bahia and Minas Gerais, Brazil. Since its discovery it has been found at approximately ten localities, most of them in northern Minas Gerais, and has also been found to inhabit locally tropical semi-deciduous forest (an increasingly threatened habitat type upon which a number of highly endangered species are solely dependent). São Francisco Sparrow somewhat the resembles Halfcollared Sparrow *A. semitorquatus* (a form only recently separated from the Pectoral Sparrow *A. taciturnus*), but Half-collared is found only along the south-east Brazilian coast, and *franciscanus* is most closely in contact with the more widespread Saffron-billed Sparrow *A. flavirostris.* 

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...the tale of how, in 1983, Ted Parker found a new species of *Tolmomyias* flycatcher (a genus that most field observers struggle to identify correctly to species) through simply recognising that its voice was different to all other described species has taken on the stuff of legend, especially since his passing.



Left: Chestnut-capped Piha *Lipaugus* weberi: (top) Amalfi, Costa Rica, Colombia, June 2002; (bottom) Anorí, Santa Gertrudis, Colombia, April 2002 (Diego Calderón)

> Right: Male Araripe Manakin Antilophia bokermanni, Arajara, Ceará, Brazil, 26 October 2005 (Ciro Albano)

Below: Chapada Flycatcher Suiriri islerorum, Chapada dos Guimarães, Mato Grosso, Brazil, 12 February 2006 (Nick Athanas/Tropical Birding)











Far left: Mishana Tyrannulet Zimmerius villarejoi, Allpahuayo-Mishana Reserved Zone, dpto. Loreto, Peru (José Álvarez Alonso) Left: Interior of varillal forest, habitat of Mishana Tyrannulet Zimmerius villarejoi, Allpahuayo-Mishana Reserved Zone, dpto. Loreto, Peru (José Álvarez Alonso)





Left: Orange-eyed Flycatcher Tolmomyias traylori Río Iowe Morona, dpto. Loreto, Peru, July 2001 (José Álvarez Alonso) Above: Habitat of Orange-eyed Flycatcher Tolmomyias traylori, Río Iowe Morona, dpto. Loreto, Peru (José Álvarez Alonso)



Johnson's Tody-tyrant Poecilotriccus Iuluae Abra Patricia, dpto. San Martín, Peru, November 1998 (Jon Hornbuckle)









Above (top): São Francisco Sparrow Arremon franciscanus, Palmeiras, Chapada Diamantina, Bahia, Brazil, November

Above (bottom): Holotype and paratype of São Francisco Nacional, Rio de Janeiro (Guy M. Kirwan)

Left (top): Munchique Wood-wren *Henicorhina negreti* adult (left) and juvenile, Tambito Nature Reserve, Cauca, Colombia, July 2000 (Fundación ProAves www.proaves.org)

Left (bottom): Adult Munchique Wood-wren Henicorhina negreti (left) and Grey-breasted Wood-wren H. leucophrys brunneiceps, Tambito Nature Reserve, Cauca, Colombia, August 2000 (Fundación ProAves www.proaves.org)

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