

Rare birds in French Guiana in 2008–10

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Le Comité d'Homologation de Guyane (CHG) a pour rôle d'examiner les données d'espèces rares ou nouvelles pour la Guyane. Ce rapport fait suite à celui relatif aux trois premières années d'existence du CHG³³, et présente les observations homologuées pour les années 2008–10, ainsi que quelques données des années antérieures. Seules les espèces les plus rares ou nouvelles en Guyane, ou remarquables à l'échelle régionale ou continentale, sont présentées ici. Des rapports annuels ou bisannuels en français, plus détaillés, sont disponibles sur le site du Comité d'Homologation National (www.chn-france.org/chn_actualites.php). Plusieurs espèces nouvelles ou très rares régionalement sont documentées : le premier Chevalier aboyeur *Tringa nebularia* (en 2006) et les premières Bergeronnettes grises (sous-espèces *alba* et *yarellii*; en 2009 et 2010) pour l'Amérique du Sud, ainsi que les premiers Goéland argenté *Larus argentatus* (1999), Mouette à tête grise *Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus*, Sterne élégante *Thalasseus elegans* (2006), Pétrel des Desertas *Pterodroma feae deserta* (2009), et Râle des palétuviers *Aramides mangle* (2010) pour le plateau des Guyanes.

The Comité d'Homologation de Guyane (French Guiana Rarities Committee, hereafter CHG) was formed in 2005. It adjudicates on observations of rare and new birds, and regularly updates the list of birds of this French overseas department. The first report³³ presented accepted records for 2005–07. The present report covers the years 2008–10, plus some earlier records. Only records of the rarest or new species for French Guiana, as well as other notable records on a regional or continental scale are presented. Biennial reports in French illustrated with photographs present details of all observations of vagrant, rare and new birds. These reports can be accessed at www.chn-france.org/chn_actualites.php.

Some 453 observations were submitted for 2008–10, of which 93% were accepted, although some only to genus level. This high acceptance rate is due to the submission of photographs and/or tape recordings as evidence of identification. Only records validated by the CHG should be used in further analyses of, and publications about, the French Guianan avifauna.

Documented records for several species new or very rare at a regional or continental scale are presented here: the first Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* (2006) and White Wagtail *Motacilla alba* (both subspecies *alba* and *yarellii*; 2009–10) for South America, and the first Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* (1999), Grey-headed Gull *Larus cirrocephalus* and Elegant Tern *Thalasseus elegans* (2006), Fea's Petrel *Pterodroma feae deserta* (2009), and Little Wood Rail *Aramides mangle* (2010) for the Guianan Shield.

Fourteen additional taxa have been added to the bird list of French Guiana: White-chinned Swift *Cypseloides cryptus* in 2005, Brown Violetear *Colibri delphinae* in 2007 (and 2009), Aplomado Falcon *Falco femoralis*, Purple Martin *Progne subis* and Grey-chested Greenlet *Hylophilus semicinereus* in 2008, Masked Booby *Sula dactylatra*, Pearly-breasted Cuckoo *Coccyzus euleri*, Green-bellied (Coppery-tailed) Hummingbird *Amazilia viridigaster cupreicauda*, Vermiculated (Roraiman) Screech Owl *Megascops guatemalae roraimae* and Eastern Kingbird *Tyrannus tyrannus* in 2009, Audubon's Shearwater *Puffinus lherminieri*, Black Swift *Cypseloides niger*, Sick's Swift *Chaetura meridionalis*, Crested Doradito *Pseudocolaptes sclateri* and Yellow-bellied Seedeater *Sporophila nigricollis* in 2010.

Finally, a previously accepted record of Stygian Owl *Asio stygius* was rejected after re-examination, meaning that this species is no longer considered part of the French Guianan avifauna.

The sequence and taxonomy in this report follow those adopted by the South American Classification Committee (SACC)³¹. In 2008, the CHG comprised Olivier Claessens (Secretary), Thomas Luglia, Vincent Pelletier, Alexandre Renaudier (Chairman), Olivier Tostain and Jean-Jacques Vacquier. In 2009, Sylvain Uriot and Alexandre Vinot joined the committee. In 2010, members were Olivier Claessens (Secretary), Thomas Luglia, Vincent Pelletier, Alexandre Renaudier (Chairman), Olivier Tostain, Sylvain Uriot and Alexandre Vinot.

Systematic list of accepted records

White-faced Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna viduata*

Six at Mana rice fields on 3 March 2010 (SL, RW / Amana Nature Reserve). Just three were present next day, the others having been killed by a hunter. Second record for French Guiana, 22 years after the first, when two were at Cayenne-Rochambeau, Matoury, on 7 July 1998 (J. L. Dujardin)³⁸.

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*

A female or immature on Lac du Bois Diable, Kourou, on 31 December 2010 (AV) is the second sight record in French Guiana. The first was at Aztèque, Mana, on 21 January 1995 (GEPOG). Vagrant to South America⁶, with just one historical record (in 1946) from Surinam²⁶.

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis*

An immature male photographed at Kourou, where it was present 27 November to 12 December 2007 (LA, PS, OT, AV), and a female photographed at Le Larivot, Matoury, on 18–19 November 2010 (MGA, OT, AV; Fig. 1), are the second and third records following an observation of two on the Kaw River on 23 March 2000 (JLB, BG), but are the first to be documented. Also a vagrant to Surinam^{5,26}.

Fea's Petrel *Pterodroma feae deserta*

A male that had been fitted with a geolocator on its breeding grounds in the Desertas Islands, Madeira, in July 2008, passed along the French Guianan coast in May 2009 during its return migration, after wintering off the coast of Brazil³⁰. This is the first record in South America and French Guiana. By accepting this record, the CHG follows the opinion of the SACC, which has admitted the species to the list of South American birds²⁷.

Audubon's Shearwater *Puffinus lherminieri*

One at Pointe des Roches, Kourou, on 31 January 2010 (AV) is the first confirmed record of this shearwater, which is common in the Antilles and Trinidad & Tobago. Observations at sea in 2011 further confirm its presence off French Guiana¹⁰. It also appears to be common off Surinam at least during the summer months². It is probably regular off the Guianas, at least during the dry season. The observation from the coast at Kourou is more unusual.

Masked Booby *Sula dactylatra*

Sixteen photographed at sea, 100–150 km off Cayenne between 3 November and 14 December 2009 from an oil exploration platform (JC; Fig. 2).

Others were observed in 2011¹⁰. The abundance of this species off French Guiana was unexpected. A subadult on 7 November 2009 was ringed, but it was not possible to read the ring to determine its origin. The first documented records for French Guiana, following a sight record by a fisherman on the Battures du Connétable off Cayenne on 5 October 1995 (O. Tostain pers. comm.). Recent observations have also been made off Surinam, where it was also known from two previous records^{2,26}.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

The first observation dates from only 2004³², not 2005 as stated in Renaudier & CHG³³. In 2004–10, there was a total of nine records of at least 11 individuals. Most records are from Cayenne, including a flock of three in 2008 (MGA, PI, AR, AV), but one was in Kourou on 10–12 November 2005 (PS, OT, JJV), and an adult at Mana on 20 January 2010 (MC, YG). One at the port of Cayenne from 2 November 2009 until 21 January 2010, while a second was at a separate site (MGA, OC, MC, YG, TL, AR, JT, OT). At least some Little Egrets in South America have arrived from Europe (rather than the West Indies), highlighted by a bird ringed in Spain in Surinam²⁶. The observation of a bird resting on a ship off the coast of Cayenne on 23 September 2009 (JC) may be another example.

Jabiru *Jabiru mycteria*

Immature photographed at Macouria on 6 September 2008 (MS, PS, TS), and one seen at Mana on 27 June 2009 (OA, AR). First records since 2005 in French Guiana. Declining in northern South America. In Surinam, aerial surveys in the 1970s identified >100 individuals; however, nowadays the species no longer nests near the coast, and is rarely seen there. The closest nesting colony to French Guiana is in the Sipaliwini district, Surinam (A. Spaans)²⁶.

White-tailed Kite *Elanus leucurus*

Not observed in the rice fields near Mana since it nested there in 2004 (AR). One was photographed carrying prey on 9 September 2010 (MCh), but this interesting observation was not followed up. Given the extent of the rice fields and the difficulty of access, this small raptor can easily go unnoticed there. Two at Savanes de Matiti, Macouria, on 30 April 2008 (VP).

Little Wood Rail *Aramides mangle*

One photographed at the edge of a mangrove in the Kourou River estuary on 10 July 2010 (MD) (Fig. 3). This unexpected observation, at least 900 km from its normal range, is considered to have involved a vagrant rather than a local



Figure 1. Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis*, Matoury, French Guiana, 18 November 2010 (M. Giraud-Audine)

Figure 2. Masked Booby *Sula dactylatra*, off Cayenne, French Guiana, 7 November 2009 (J. Chevalier)

Figure 3. Little Wood Rail *Aramides mangle*, Kourou, French Guiana, 10 July 2010 (M. Dechelle)

Figure 4. Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*, Kourou, French Guiana, 15 January 2010 (J.-P. Policard)

Figure 5. Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*, Cayenne, French Guiana, 16 February 2006 (O. Tostain)

Figure 6. Grey-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus*, Cayenne, French Guiana, 5 January 2006 (O. Tostain)

Figure 7. Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus*, and Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*, Cayenne, French Guiana, 7 June 2003 (O. Tostain)

Figure 8. Elegant Tern *Thalasseus elegans*, Cayenne, French Guiana, 20 March 2006 (O. Tostain)



Figure 9. Pearly-beasted Cuckoo *Coccyzus euleri*, Nouragues Nature Reserve, French Guiana, 9 August 2009 (T. Deville)

Figure 10. Pavonine Cuckoo *Dromococcyx pavoninus*, Saül, French Guiana, 29 February 2008 (T. Deville)

Figure 11. Vermiculated (Roraiman) Screech Owl *Megascops guatemalae roraimae*, Trésor Nature Reserve, Roura, French Guiana, 30 December 2010 (T. Luglia)

Figure 12. Long-tailed Potoo *Nyctibius aethereus*, Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni, French Guiana, 16 April 2008 (O. Claessens)

Figure 13. Rufous Potoo *Nyctibius bracteatus*, Trinité Nature Reserve, French Guiana, 12 August 2008 (J.-F. Szpigel)

Figure 14. White-chinned Swifts *Cypseloides cryptus*, Petit Connétable Island, French Guiana, 7 June 2005 (O. Tostain)

breeder²⁰. The first record for French Guiana and north of the Amazon River.

Rufous-sided Crake *Laterallus melanophaius*

Two adults (probably a pair) tape-recorded and photographed at Kaw, Roura, on 26 April and on 7–12 May 2008 (ML, TL, SU). These marshes are the only site where this crake is known in French Guiana. Proof of breeding was obtained there in March 2002 (TD & OT / GEPOG). These are the first documented observations in French Guiana.

Paint-billed Crake *Neocrex erythrops*

Of the six observations between 2008 and 2010, the most noteworthy was the total of 24 individuals observed at Mana rice fields on 19 August 2010 (AR). These records, at the beginning of the dry season, may relate to migrant or dispersing birds. However the partial drying up of the rice fields undoubtedly contributed to the concentration of birds. The breeding status in French Guiana remains unclear.

Spotted Rail *Pardirallus maculatus*

Five at Mana rice fields on 19 August 2010 (AR), the first record since the creation of the CHG.

Common Gallinule *Gallinula galeata*

An important population of >100 individuals was discovered at Iracoubo in 2007 and 2009, and provided the first evidence of breeding in French Guiana (OT, PS, JJV). An immature photographed at Pripri de Yiyi, Sinnamary, on 27 November 2008 (BD, TL).

Southern Lapwing *Vanellus chilensis*

One at Mana on 22 September 2010 (LG, RM) was the first observation since 2005 despite the proximity of Brazilian and Venezuelan populations. Records may increase in the future as a result of the ongoing conversion of savanna into pasture.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

One at Kourou from 8 November 2009 to 17 February 2010 (JPP, AV; Fig. 4). It seems reasonable to believe that this was the bird identified at the same location in juvenile plumage in autumn 2007³⁴, revealing unexpected fidelity to its previous wintering site, despite being a vagrant to South America. The records in French Guiana are the ninth and tenth for South America (following the first in Venezuela in 1985 and those in Brazil between 1988 and 2006), but only the third and fourth on the mainland^{15,22}. More recently, two photographed in Alagoas, north-east Brazil, on 12 April 2011²⁹ and one on Chiloé Island, Chile, on 8 November 2013, the first record for the latter country¹⁶.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

One photographed at Pointe Saint-François, Cayenne, on 16 February 2006 (MGA, KP, NdP, OT; Fig. 5) is the first record for South America. Has been observed on the Atlantic coast in Canada in May and August–December²⁵.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Following one in the ricefields of Mana on 9 September 2007 (AR)²⁹, a male was photographed at the same location on 3–11 October 2009 (PI, SN, AR *et al.*). Very rare in South America, although there are now four published records from Brazil²¹, whereas it is a more regular visitor to North America²⁵.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

One photographed off Kourou on 13 December 2008 (VP, AR, OT *et al.*). Rarely observed in French Guiana, although it may be rather common offshore.

Grey-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus*

One photographed at Pointe Saint-Joseph, Cayenne, on 5 January 2006 (OT) is the first record for the Guiana Shield (Fig. 6). Range on the Atlantic coast of South America does not extend as far north as Belém. Like the Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* identified on the same mudflats 40 days previously, this gull was seen on just one day despite intensive searching thereafter.

Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus*

Following a first-winter at Cayenne in December 2002–March 2003 (AR, AT, OT / GEPOG, photos archived by CHG), a second-winter was at Cayenne on 7 and 10 June 2003 (OT; Fig. 7). First records on the coast of the Guiana Shield. Both were photographed with a Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*, an exceptional association!

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Third-winter photographed at Cayenne on 25 November and seen again on 9–10 December 1999 (CR, OT). The poor quality of the photographs did not permit identification to subspecies. Although the SACC does not recognise American Herring Gull *L. (a.) smithsonianus* as a separate species, no European subspecies of Herring Gull has previously been identified in South America. First record for the Guiana Shield.

Elegant Tern *Thalasseus elegans*

Two adults photographed at Cayenne on 20, 21 and 26 March 2006 (OT) (Fig. 8). These observations are the first for the Guiana Shield. Usually restricted to the Pacific coast of Central

and South America; records in the Caribbean and northern Atlantic Ocean are rare.

Pearly-beasted Cuckoo *Coccyzus euleri*

This austral migrant was seen for the first time in French Guiana at Nouragues Nature Reserve on 9 August 2009 (TD; Fig. 9)⁹. The series of observations in 2010 is remarkable: one at Montagnes Tortue, Régina, on 15 September, at least five at Tibourou, Roura, on 15–16 September, and one heard at Montagne Maripa, Roura, on 17 September (AR). This canopy-dwelling cuckoo would have gone unnoticed but for the skills of A. Renaudier, who detected the species at least six times in just three days! Further observations in 2011 suggest that it might be a more regular and commoner visitor than previously thought⁹.

Pavonine Cuckoo *Dromococcyx pavoninus*

In 2008, this rare cuckoo was recorded twice around Saül: one tape-recorded, trapped and photographed at Crique Limonade between 27 February and 26 March (OC, TD, AR *et al.*), with a second photographed at Mont La Fumée on 4 May (TN; Fig. 10). Just three previous records, all of singles: at Saut Pararé, Nouragues Nature Reserve in 1994³⁶, Mount Galbao, Saül, on 22 April 2004 (PS / GEPOG), and an unconfirmed record on the Acarouany Creek at Mana on 4 June 2006 (AR / GEPOG).

Vermiculated Screech Owl (Roraiman Screech Owl) *Megascops guatemalae roraimae*

Presence expected on hills in central and western French Guiana, as it is endemic to the tepui region of south-east Venezuela and northern Brazil, and is also known from Guyana and Surinam²⁶. Finally discovered in the north-east of the department, with one on at Trésor Nature Reserve, Roura, on 8 April 2009 (MT). In 2010, it was also found at four sites in Montagne de Kaw and Montagnes Tortues, Régina, all at altitudes below 270 m (FC, OC, TL, AR, JLS *et al.*, Fig. 11). Knowledge of its song will undoubtedly enable observers to discover this owl at other localities. The first records in French Guiana, expanding the eastern limit of its range by 350 km.

Stygian Owl *Asio stygius*

A previously accepted record³³ has been re-evaluated and was rejected in 2014. This was the only record for French Guiana. Consequently, the species has been removed from the French Guianan bird list.

Long-tailed Potoo *Nyctibius aethereus*

One photographed at Piste Paul Isnard, Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni, on 15–19 April 2008 (OC;

Fig. 12). This observation is only the second after the breeding record at Saül²⁸. The rarest of the five potoos in French Guiana.

White-winged Potoo *Nyctibius leucopterus*

This long enigmatic species⁸ is now known from a dozen localities in the country. The first sightings were in 2008 (OC, TD, AR), with the first photographs obtained in 2009^{11,13}. In 2010, there were no fewer than ten new records from eight different localities (RB, CC, MCh, TL, AR, JLS, SU), whereas there is currently just a single record in Surinam²⁶.

Rufous Potoo *Nyctibius bracteatus*

The first records date from 1998, when the species was seen along Arataï creek, and 2000, when it was heard near Saül¹². Thereafter, it was discovered at Trinité Nature Reserve in 2003 and Maripasoula in 2006 and 2007¹⁸. Three new localities found in 2007–09: singles heard or photographed at Crique Limonade, Saül, on 7 and 15 November 2007 (OC) and from 21 February to 25 March 2008 (OC, TD, VP, AR), photographed at Trinité Nature Reserve, Saint-Elie, on 12 August 2008 (JFS; Fig. 13) and at Saut Mapaou on the Approuage River, Régina, on 27 August 2009 (MF).

Nacunda Nighthawk *Chordeiles nacunda*

Two records in 2009: male at Wayabo, Kourou, on 31 July (MGA), and female photographed at Mana rice fields on 19–20 September (AR, AC, MC, AV). Just two previous records, at Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni on 18 September 1998 and at savane Matiti, Macouria, on 6 April 2000 (BG / GEPOG). As the species is not known to breed in the Guiana Shield, these records probably refer to the nominate subspecies, i.e. from the south, given the dates of the observations.

White-chinned Swift *Cypseloides cryptus*

A flock of at least 22 photographed at Petit Connétable Island, off Cayenne, on 7 June 2005 (OT; Fig. 14). First records for French Guiana. Another observation of *Cypseloides* in July 2007 was validated only at genus level, although it probably referred to this species (AR)³². These records either indicate vagrancy or migratory movements during the austral winter. Observed in large numbers at Voltzberg and Tafelberg in Surinam²⁶.

Black Swift *Cypseloides niger*

A flock of 30 individuals on 7 August, together with Sick's Swifts *Chaetura meridionalis*, then six on 11 August, and two photographed (race *niger*) on 13 August 2010, all at Awala-Yalimapo (MD, AR; Fig. 15). First record for French



15



16



17



18b



19



18a



20



21

Figure 15. Black Swift *Cypseloides niger niger*, Awala-Yalimapo, French Guiana, 13 August 2010 (M. Dechelle)

Figure 16. Brown Violetear *Colibri delphinae*, Monts Atachi Bakka, Maripasoula, French Guiana, 18 July 2009 (T. Deville)

Figure 17. Green-bellied (Coppery-tailed) Hummingbird *Amazilia viridigaster cupreicauda*, Rémire-Montjoly, French Guiana, 14 March 2009 (T. Deville)

Figure 18. Male and female Blackish-grey Antshrike *Thamnophilus nigrocinereus*, Pointe Béhague, French Guiana, 12 April 2010 (V. Rufroy)

Figure 19. Grey Elaenia *Myiopagis caniceps*, Nouragues Nature Reserve, French Guiana, 11 August 2009 (T. Deville)

Figure 20. Olive-green Tyrannulet *Phylloscartes virescens*, Montagne des Chevaux, Roura, French Guiana, 30 June 2009 (T. Deville)

Figure 21. Black-whiskered Vireo *Vireo altiloquus*, Saül, French Guiana, 14 August 2009 (M. Dechelle)

Guiana, and second documented record for the Guiana Shield following a specimen collected in Guyana in the late 1800s and now at the Natural History Museum, Tring (M. Braun *in litt.* 2015).

Sick's Swift *Chaetura meridionalis*

One observation, in excellent conditions, of at least 250 individuals at Digue de Yalimapo, Awala-Yalimapo, on 7 August 2010 (MD, AR), and three photographed in the same place on 13 August 2010 (MD, AR) are the first records in French Guiana. Sometimes treated as a subspecies of Ashy-tailed Swift *C. andrei*. The latter nests in Venezuela, whereas Sick's Swift breeds in southern Brazil and northern Argentina. The date is consistent with an austral migrant, as are the four Surinam records²⁶.

Brown Violetear *Colibri delphinae*

New species for French Guiana, discovered at four massifs throughout the department. Three or four were photographed at Montagne Kotika, Papaïchton, on 3 September 2007 (OT), one photographed at Monts Atachi Bakka, Maripasoula, on 18 July 2009 (TD; Fig. 16), one at Mont Tabulaire in the Trinité Nature Reserve, Saint-Elie, on 6 October 2009 (OC) and three sound-recorded (two seen) at Mount Itoupé, Parc Amazonien de Guyane, Maripasoula, on 2–3 October 2010 (OC, AR). All records were at altitudes above 700 m⁷.

White-chested Emerald *Amazilia brevirostris*

One trapped and photographed at Amerindian Couachi, Mana, on 13 April 2009 (MT, AR), one in the same place on 18 August 2010 (AR), and one at Coswine, near Awala-Yalimapo, on 1 November 2010 (AR). First certain records in French Guiana. Easily confused with Plain-bellied Emerald *A. leucogaster*, which may explain the lack of observations elsewhere in the country.

Green-bellied Hummingbird (Coppery-tailed Hummingbird) *Amazilia viridigaster cupreicauda*

Immature male photographed at Montravel in Rémire-Montjoly, a suburb of Cayenne, on 14 March 2009 (TD; Fig. 17). This first record is also the easternmost observation and evidences some erratic movement. Five records in Surinam where it supposedly breeds²⁶. Despite differences in plumage and their disjunct ranges, *A. v. cupreicauda* is now considered conspecific with Green-bellied Hummingbird *A. v. viridigaster* by SACC, but they are still regarded as separate species by some authorities³¹.

Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon*

Adult male at Lac Bois Diable, Kourou, on 11, 12 and 17 November 2009 (MGA, AV, JJV) and 11–12 March 2010 (TL, JLS, SU). For the past seven years, a Belted Kingfisher has returned to the same lake, following an immature male on 14–17 November 2004 (OC, AR *et al.*)³². This is believed to be the same individual, returning to its stopover on migration or potentially its wintering site, although it has never been observed in December–February, suggesting that it winters further south. The dates for 2009 are remarkably similar to those for 2004, while the 2010 record is the first in spring.

Eurasian Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

An immature male was at Sinnamary, along the road to Saint-Elie, from 10 December 2010 to 27 March 2011 (SA, CC, MHC, OC, KP, AR, OT, AV). The sixth and longest-staying record (108 days) in French Guiana, the only mainland region of South America where this European species has been observed. Several factors may explain the geographical concentration of records of this vagrant in South America, probably aided by ships crossing the Atlantic³⁵.

Aplomado Falcon *Falco femoralis*

First records in 2008, with one at Mana rice fields on 28 August (LG, AM, RW), and an immature at Pointe des Roches, Kourou, on 11 September (AV). An adult was again at Mana on 8 September 2009 (TF, LG). Still very rare in the country, this falcon may become more regular in the future with increasing land under cultivation.

Rufous-rumped Antwren *Euchrepomis callinota*

Three or four males on Mount Itoupé, Parc Amazonien de Guyane, Maripasoula, on 9, 10 and 19 March 2010 (GL, OT). The second record for French Guiana, following that at Mount Galbao near Saül in January 2005⁴. The new observations were made at 600–700 m altitude. Attempts to find this species on other massifs have as yet been unsuccessful. The similarity of its voice to that of the commoner Ash-rumped Antwren *E. spodioptila* and the difficulty in observing this canopy-dwelling bird make this species difficult to find.

Blackish-grey Antshrike *Thamnophilus nigrocinereus*

Two pairs, one trapped and photographed, the other seen and tape-recorded, in the mangroves of Point Béhague, Régina, on 11–12 April 2010 (KP, AR, VR; Fig. 18). The subspecies *T. n. kulczynskii* is endemic to the lower Oyapock River³⁹, and these observations are the first recent records. A pair collected in mangroves

along the Kaw River in 1987 (MNHN 1987-1938–39) was the only previous proof of the species' presence in French Guiana³⁷.

Sooty-headed Tyrannulet *Phyllomyias griseiceps*

Two at 650–750 m altitude on Mount Itoupé, Parc Amazonien de Guyane, Maripasoula, on 3–8 October 2010 (OC, AR). This second record for French Guiana extends the eastern limit of its range inland in French Guiana, where previously reported only from Papaïchton in the Maroni Valley³². This canopy-dwelling tyrannulet mainly occupies higher ground along an arc from French Guiana to Panama and northern Peru¹⁴, although it is also known from the northern Brazilian states of Amazonas, Roraima and especially in Pará¹. In Surinam, it is known only from Brownsberg²⁶.

Grey Elaenia *Myiopagis caniceps*

One or two heard at Pic du Petit Croissant, Saint-Georges-de-l'Oyapock, on 23 and 28 November 2007 (OC, NdP); an adult male photographed at Saut Pararé, Nouragues Nature Reserve, Régina, on 5 and 11 August 2009 (TD; Fig. 19); and two tape-recorded at Piste de la Montagne Tortue, Route de Bélizon, Roura, on 20 September 2009 (AR). Despite old records at several locations in the interior of French Guiana³⁸ (also at Saint-Eugène, Petit Saut Lake: OC; www.xeno-canto.org/23044), the species is undeniably rare in the country, as well as in Surinam²⁶. The male photographed in Nouragues Nature Reserve, and the songs of those at Petit Croissant and Saint-Eugène, which are quite different from that of *M. c. caniceps* south of the Amazon, attest to the presence of resident *M. c. cinerea* in French Guiana. The possible occurrence of austral migrants (*M. c. caniceps*) in French Guiana and elsewhere in northern South America remains to be established.

Rufous-crowned Elaenia *Elaenia ruficeps*

Two seen and tape-recorded at Roche Bénitier inselberg, Trinité Nature Reserve, Saint-Elie, on 24 October 2009 (OC, AR). This elaenia, which typically occurs in coastal savannas, seemed to have disappeared from French Guiana, as it had not been observed for more than two decades³⁸. Therefore, although its rediscovery might have been predicted, the species was not expected on the slopes of an inselberg in the interior, where its presence had previously gone unrecorded despite numerous bird surveys. It should be systematically searched for on other inselbergs in the centre and south of the country, and of course in coastal savannas.

Crested Doradito *Pseudocolopteryx sclateri*

One at Chemin de Carapa, Kourou, on 19 October 2010 (AV) is the first record for French Guiana. The species' highly fragmented distribution in northern South America is partly the result of its sporadic occurrence in ephemeral habitats, but perhaps also reflects its migratory habits¹⁷. The site where it was observed is a swampy savanna with tall herbaceous vegetation, a habitat that is actually quite common in the coastal region, but difficult to access and often overlooked by birdwatchers. The bird's small size and quiet vocalisations make it even more difficult to observe. It is present in Guyana but unknown in Surinam^{3,26}.

Olive-green Tyrannulet *Phylloscartes virescens*

Four records in 2009 from distinct localities: one at Roche Corail, Kourou, on 9 May (AV), one photographed at Montagne des Chevaux, Roura, on 30 June (TD; Fig. 20), two tape-recorded at Laussat, Mana, on 25–26 August (AR), and two at Trinité Nature Reserve, Saint-Elie, on 22 October (OC). Previous records were restricted to a few specimens from Trois Sauts, in the extreme south-east of the country, and now in the Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle (Paris).

Yellow-breasted Flycatcher *Tolmomyias flaviventris*

One tape-recorded at Kanawa, Awala-Yalimapo, on 31 May and 5 October 2008 (AR) is the sole record since the CHG was created. This flycatcher is easily recognised and distributed throughout the littoral in Surinam²⁶; however, to date it has surprisingly escaped the attention of birdwatchers, possibly suggesting that it is at the edge of its range in French Guiana.

Euler's Flycatcher *Lathrotriccus euleri*

While resident *L. e. lawrencei* is rare but widespread in the forested interior, one photographed at Crique Deux-Flots, Piste de Counamama, Iracoubo, on 29 March 2009 (MGA, AV), might represent the first record of one of the southern migrant subspecies (*L. e. argentinus* or *L. e. euleri*) in the Guiana Shield. However, the subspecific identification requires confirmation by experts from southern South America.

Social Flycatcher *Myiozetetes similis*

Two pairs at Savanes-roches de Monpé Soula, Maripasoula, on the upper Marouini (02°36'N 54°01'W), of which one was trapped and photographed, and one tape-recorded, between 8 and 21 December 1998 (HG, JMT, OT). Three at Savane-roche 'Beeriana', south of Mount Itoupé, Parc Amazonien de Guyane, Maripasoula (02°55'N 53°05'W), on 19 December 2009 (OT). First



Figure 22. Grey-chested Greenlet *Hylophilus semicinereus*, Roura, French Guiana, 28 January 2008 (S. Uriot)
 Figure 23. Blue-and-white Swallow *Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*, Kourou, French Guiana, 3 June 2010 (M. Giraud-Audine)
 Figure 24. White Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrellii*, Saint-Joseph Island, French Guiana, 17 November 2010 (T. Luglia)
 Figure 25. Blackburnian Warbler *Setophaga fusca*, off Cayenne, French Guiana, 17 November 2009 (J. Chevalier)

records in French Guiana, where the species' distribution appears to be restricted to certain inselbergs in the south of the country.

Eastern Kingbird *Tyrannus tyrannus*

One at Piste de Carapa, Kourou, on 8 February 2009 (AV) is the first observation in French Guiana. The date is consistent with records from Surinam where the species is known only from three undocumented sightings²⁶. It winters from

the Colombian Andes to western Amazonia and northern Argentina.

Black-whiskered Vireo *Vireo altiloquus*

One photographed at Saül on the particularly early date of 14 August 2009 (MD, AS; Fig. 21). The first photographic record in French Guiana, and the first at this locality in the interior. Another was seen at Montagne des Pères, Kourou, on 4 October 2009 (AV).

Grey-chested Greenlet *Hylophilus semicinereus*

Two trapped and photographed at the Mahury River, Roura, on 28 January, 27 March and 3 July 2008 (TL, SU; Fig. 22) represent the first records in French Guiana, and were followed

by a series of observations in 2010: seven tape-recorded at Ouanary on 11–13 March, three singing birds at Îlet Biche, Ouanary, on the Oyapock River, upstream of its confluence with the Crique Ouanary, on 9 June, one tape-recorded at Corossony, Régina, on 7 September, and two tape-recorded at Régina on 14 September (AR). These records indicate a range restricted to extreme north-east French Guiana, in wet edges to wooded patches in semi-open areas, contrary to previous assumptions³⁸.

Blue-and-white Swallow *Pygochelidon cyanooleuca*
Eight photographed at Irakompapi / Aztec beach, Mana, on 1–2 July 2008 (AR, RW, TP) and two juveniles at Pariacabo harbour, Kourou, on 3–14 June 2010 (MGA, SU, AV; Fig. 23) are the first documented records for French Guiana, although several observations were reported in 1985–89³⁸. A well-marked collar on the juvenile photographed at Kourou in 2010 eliminates *P. c. melanoleuca* and assigns this individual to southern *P. c. patagonica* (R. Restall pers. comm.), with the bird's moult state consistent with the timing of breeding in Argentina and Chile (J. I. Areta & A. Jaramillo *in litt.* 2011).

Purple Martin *Progne subis*

Adult male at Pariacabo, Kourou, on 20 and 22 November 2008 (AV), the first record of this boreal migrant in French Guiana. This lone observation is in contrast to the situation in Surinam, where this martin, although only identified as recently as 2007, winters between July and April, and forms large flocks of up to 100 birds within an enormous roost of Grey-breasted Martins *P. chalybea* at an aluminum factory at Paranam²⁶.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Two well-documented observations are the first records for continental South America: a juvenile *M. a. alba* photographed at Îlet Léopard in the Approuague River, Régina, 90 km inland on 26 October 2009 (PI, TL *et al.*), and a first-winter female *M. a. yarrellii* photographed on Saint-Joseph Island, off Kourou, on 17 November 2010 (CH, TL; Fig. 24). Another individual was seen on Trinidad in September 2009, one month before the Approuague River record. Another sighting in French Guiana in September 2009 has not been submitted to the CHG. The three records in 2009 suggest that a group of migrants were diverted west by strong north-east trade winds over the Atlantic Ocean during the post-breeding period¹⁹. On the other hand, the 2010 record was of the subspecies *yarrellii*, which is native to the British Isles and north-west France, and largely sedentary, making this observation truly exceptional and might well indicate a ship-assisted vagrant. The

first record for South America was on Trinidad in 1987²⁴.

Yellow-bellied Seedeater *Sporophila nigricollis*

Adult male photographed at Piste de Saut Maripa, Saint-Georges, on 28 July 2010 (JT). Previously known from two observations, the first at Centre Spatial Guyanais, Kourou, in March 2001 (OT).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak *Pheucticus ludovicianus*

Juvenile male in a garden at Montjoly on 28 November 2009 (PI), the fourth record for French Guiana, with the first also being near Cayenne on 3 December 1975²³. Winters mainly in north-west South America and the Greater Antilles. Unrecorded in Surinam²⁶ and Guyana³.

Blackburnian Warbler *Setophaga fusca*

One, probably an adult male, photographed on an oil research platform 100–150 km off Cayenne on 17 November 2009 (JC; Fig. 25). Second record for French Guiana, following a record from the Piste de Saint-Elie in February 1988 (MP)³⁸.

Baltimore Oriole *Icterus galbula*

Single males photographed in consecutive years: at Salines de Montjoly, Rémire-Montjoly, on 4 July 2008 (PI, AL, GL) and at La Carapa, Macouria, on 12 May 2009 (MGA). There was just one previous record, an adult male at Matoury on 12 May 2001 (TD). The observation in July is also quite atypical for this Nearctic migrant.

Bobolink *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*

An adult male at Kourou on 12 May 2008 (EW), is the latest record in spring; and in autumn, one was at Kourou on 11 October (EW). In 2009, an adult male was at La Césarée, Macouria, on 28 and 30 April (TD, OT), with a second bird in Awala-Yalimapo on 6 October (SC, SN, HM) and one at Mana rice fields on 7 November (EW, JH). All were photographed. No records in 2010. Regular during both spring and autumn throughout the country.

List of observers

The following observers are mentioned in the text: LA = Luc Ackermann, SA = Stéphane Arnoux, OA = Olivier Auguste, RB = Rachel Berzins, JLB = Jean-Luc Betouille, CC = Clément Cambrézy, FC = François Catzéfis, MHC = Marie-Hélène Cervero, JC = Johan Chevalier, MC = Michel Clément, MCh = Marc Chrétien, OC = Olivier Claessens, MD = Maxime Dechelle, TD = Tanguy Deville, BD = Benjamin Dubat, JLD = Jean-Luc Dujardin, MF = Mathias Fernandez, TF = Thomas Friedrich, YG = Yves Gaugris, LG = Laure Gauthier, HG = Hubert Géraux, MGA = Michel Giraud-Audine, BG = Bertrand Goguillon, CH = Christophe Heyrend,

PI = Patrick Ingremeau, AL = Allan Lefranc, GL = Guillaume Léotard, ALS = Antoine Le Sausse, SL = Sylvain Lieutenant, ML = Matthieu Luglia, TL = Thomas Luglia, AM = Alexis Martin, RM = Richard Martin, HM = Hervé Michel, SN = Serge Nicolle, TN = Thierry Nogaró, TP = Thomas Pagnon, VP = Vincent Pelletier, MP = M. Philippe, KP = Kévin Pineau, JPP = Jean-Pierre Policard, NdP = Nyls de Pracontal, CR = Claude Rabanit, AR = Alexandre Renaudier, VR = Vincent Rufroy, JLS = Jean-Luc Sibille, PS = Pascal Studer, JT = Johann Tascon, MT = Marc Thibault, OT = Olivier Tostain, SU = Sylvain Uriot, JJV = Jean-Jacques Vacquier, AV = Alexandre Vinot, EW = Emilien Weisenbacher, RW = Ronald Wongsopawiro.

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