The Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus* in Cuba

Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus* inhabits coasts, rivers, swamps and large lakes of northern North America south to Baja California and Sonora (Mexico), Arizona, Texas, and southern Florida (including the keys)\(^1\). It winters throughout the breeding range, but also disperses over much of the North American continent, with extralimital sight reports from Puerto Rico, Bermuda\(^2\), the southern Bahama Islands and even the Netherlands Antilles\(^3\).

In November 1997 WS made the first undocumented record in Cuba, on the north coast of Havana province, in the municipality of Caimito. The bird, a juvenile, was observed over Playa El Salado, being identified on the basis of its large size and plumage pattern. Subsequently, in late afternoon on 11 February 1998, at the mouth of the rio Banes (a few km west of Playa El Salado), another Bald Eagle was observed by WS, perched in a dead Black Mangrove *Avicennia germinans*, for three minutes from c.60 m. It was identified as an adult due to the white head and tail pattern. The rest of the plumage was brown, with yellow feet and a yellow cere. The bird appeared to be scanning for dead fish at the edge of the river. Thereafter it flew south. Due to the lack of tangible proof (i.e. photographs or a specimen), WS elected not to publish these observations.

The next sighting was made at Villa Soroa, Pinar del Río province, in late afternoon of 8 December 2002, when George Skinner saw an adult amongst a large group of Turkey Vultures *Cathartes aura* soaring around the Mirador de Venus. The larger raptor had all-brown wings and held the wings flat, rather than upward-tilted, and the all-white head and tail were clearly visible, given that the sun was behind the observer, who was using both binoculars and telescope.

Subsequently a second-year Bald Eagle was seen by Michael Good and three other observers close to the village of Las Terrazas, Pinar del Río province, in early-December 2002. MG picked out a much larger raptor flying on broad flat wings with his binoculars and followed it with a telescope as it flew south to south-west over the mountains before it half-closed the wings and flew fast out of sight. MG immediately sketched the bird in his notebook, clearly noting the underparts coloration, which was brown admixed with white.

During a birding tour, on 4 March 2004, AK and NN observed a Bald Eagle at El Salto dam, in the Viñales Valley, Pinar del Río province. The dam is c.4 km south-east of Viñales. The bird was initially spotted being chased by an Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*, immediately revealing the size of the eagle, which in total was observed for two minutes. The bird reappeared from behind a group of pines *Pinus caribaea*, and then located on the ground beside the lake, before it suddenly flew off at c.25 m above ground and 50 m from the observers, who were able to witness all of the best field marks, including the yellow cere, yellow feet, brown body, white underwing lining, and some white on the nape and upperwing-coverts. The tail was mostly brown and the bird was thus considered to be an immature. Next day AK returned with another tour, joined by Tom & Linda Rawles and several other observers. The bird was observed in flight on the opposite side of the lake, at c.150 m range with a group of Turkey Vultures. On 19 March AK and WS were leading another tour in the area during which the eagle was observed to land in a pine, c.12 m above ground, enabling several photographs to be taken (Fig. 1; see p.80).

Acknowledgements
We thank George Skinner, Anne Hanley and Michael Good for their assistance in preparing this note. Roger Craig and George Skinner provided photographs.

References

William Suárez and Arturo Kirkconnell
*Museo Nacional de Historia Natural*, Calle Obispo 61, Plaza de Armas, La Habana, CP10100, Cuba.

Nancy Norman
1983 Oakwell Farms Parkway 707, San Antonio, Texas 78218, USA.
Nuevo registro altitudinal del Chivi Tres Rayas Basileuterus tristriatus en Venezuela

El Chivi Tres Rayas Basileuterus tristriatus es una especie que normalmente se encuentra entre los 500–2.500 m de altitud, aunque se ha registrado entre los 300–2.500 m en Colombia, 1.000–2.200 m en Costa Rica, 600–2.250 m en Panamá, 700–2.000 m en Ecuador y 900–2.500 m en Perú. En Venezuela, habita principalmente en los sobrotosques de los bosques húmedos y nublados, así como rastrojos viejos y plantaciones de café que se desarrollan entre los 800–2.700 m.

Durante el mes de febrero del 2003, un individuo de B. tristriatus fue capturado con redes de neblina a 30 m de altitud, en una plantación de cacao del área conocida como Ocumare de la Costa (10°22'N 67°40'W). Se ubicó al norte de la faz limitada 10, 1.000 m de altitud.

In appearance, the juvenile was similar to that of adults. The most distinctive difference was the chestnut (rather than black) crown, bearing fine black vermiculations which extended onto the hindcrown and faded onto the nape, just reaching the upper back. Flight feathers were chestnut, as in the adult, and tertials bore indistinct subterminal black bands. The bill was black, except for the basal two-thirds of the lower mandible, which was fleshy orange. Otherwise, the plumage and soft-part coloration appeared similar to that of adults.

Acknowledgements
We thank the Jocotoco Foundation, especially F. Sornoza, R. Ridgely, and the staff at the Tapichalaca Reserve for their help and support of our natural history studies. Ruth Ann & John V. Moore generously support our work and the PBNHS continues to provide inspiration. This study was funded in part by a grant to HFG by the Whitley-Laing Foundation through the Rubfard Small Grants program. This is publication no. 34 of the Yanayacu Natural History Research Group.
Figure 1. Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, El Salto dam, Viñales, Pinar del Río province, Cuba (Roger Craig)

Figure 2. Masked Ducks *Nomonyx domicus*, río Tambopata, Reserva Nacional de Tambopata, Peru, 3 March 2004 (Claudia Torres S.)

Figure 3. Red Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*, Santa Cruz province, Argentina, 27 January 2004 (Roland van der Vliet)

Figure 4. King Penguin *Aptenodytes patagonicus*, Harberton, Beagle Channel, Tierra del Fuego, Argentina, 30 January 2004 (Roland van der Vliet)

Figure 5. Southern Martins *Progne elegans*, Roura, French Guiana, 14 August 2004 (Alexandre Renaudier)

Figure 6. Mississippi Kites *Ictinia mississippiensis*, Savanna La Mar, Jamaica, 21 March 2004 (Wim van der Schot)
The southernmost Tennessee Warbler Vermivora peregrina

On 4 March 2004 I was observing birds at 2,500 m in the newly protected ‘Hanne Bloch’ forest, 1.4 km south-west of Utuana (04°22’S 79°42’W), Loja province, Ecuador. Between two rain showers at 12h30, bird activity was rather high, when a drab bird drew my attention, which at first glance I took for a Lesser Greenlet Hylophilus decurtatus, but immediately rejected the identification due to altitude and habitat. On closer inspection, the following characters were noted: cap and face-sides, supercilium and underparts creamy white, belly pure white, wings brownish without clearly wingbars, and tail relatively short, but the white subterminal spots (from below) were not visible from the angle of view the bird offered, although G. Wallace (pers. comm.) notes that these are, in practice, very rarely visible in the field. Behaviour was slightly more active than a greenlet: the bird hopped quickly in the outer foliage of the border and crowns of trees (3–6 m), occasionally making short sallies. Once it captured a small caterpillar from a dead curled leaf, hanging upside-down on only one leg for a short period. A quick search in Ridgely & Greenfield’s revealed a non-breeding Tennessee Warbler Vermivora peregrina as the most similar species, but the text therein only describing breeding plumage. However the description of the behaviour of Golden-winged Warbler V. chrysoptera confirmed the identification as a V. peregrina acquiring adult male breeding plumage. Identification was subsequently confirmed using Peterson.

As the southernmost previous reports for South America are from north-central Ecuador, around Mindo and in Napo province, my observation extends the known wintering range of V. peregrina considerably further south, c.480 km, almost to the Peruvian border (just 11 km distant). It should also be noted that the elevation at which the bird was recorded is relatively high, although the species was recently recorded at Quito’s Parque Metropolitano at 2,900 m.

References

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Claudia Torres S.  
Universidad Peruana Cayetano  
Heredia, Laboratorio de Estudios de Biodiversidad, Unidad de Ciencias de la Conservación, Lima, Peru. E-mail: claudia_torres_sovero@hotmail.com.

Renzo Zeppilli T.  
Manu Expeditions, Cusco, Peru. E-mail: rasrenzo@hotmail.com.

Noteworthy records of migrant birds in the Bolivian Chaco

Bird migration patterns in Bolivia are poorly known, limited by a paucity of data on the temporal and geographic distribution of migrants. We opportunistically observed migrants between 7 March and 26 May 2003 at the ranch San Julián, Cordillera province, dpto. Santa Cruz (19°47'S 62°42'W; c.300 m), south-east Bolivia. The site is relatively intact Chaco thorn forest on the west bank of the rio Parapeti, c.60 km east-northeast of the provincial capital of Charagua.

Austral migrants

Snail Kite Rostrhamus sociabilis

On 15 March we observed a flock of c.180 Snail Kites flying north, relatively low, with some descending to perch briefly on exposed stumps in a shallow pond. Small numbers (1–6 birds), probably winter visitors or residents, were observed on 5, 22 and 26 May. The migratory status of this species in Bolivia is unclear, but March appears to be the month of peak northbound movement during the austral autumn. Davis also noted a large influx of this species on 15 March 1987, north-east of the city of Santa Cruz. In Paraguay, Hayes et al. observed large flocks (up to 200 birds) in March, apparently migrating north along the rio Paraguay, much like our observation on the rio Parapeti.

Tawny-crowned Pygmy-tyrant Euscarthmus melophyrs

We first observed this species, a single individual, on 12 April. Few data are available on this species’ timing of migration during the austral autumn. Based on Chesser’s earliest specimen date of 2 May, our observation appears to represent an early record.

Cinnamon-bellied Ground-tyrant Muscisaxicola capistrata

RCD observed a single on 6 May, as it foraged on the ground in a sandy road through scrubby shrub habitat (regenerating woodland) with scattered open areas. The bird foraged by standing still and searching for prey, regularly changing positions by abruptly running short distances. In addition to foraging behaviour, the bird’s shape and upright posture were typical of Muscisaxicola. It was intermediate in size between Lark-like Brushrunner Coryphistera alaudina and Rufous Hornero Furnarius rufus, both frequently seen in the area. Plumage was buffy orange on the belly and flanks, plain brownish grey on the back and pale greyish brown on the throat and breast. The forehead and crown were darker than the rest of the head, but there were no distinct markings. The folded wing was broadly edged brownish buff, suggesting that the bird was immature. There did not appear to be any rufous in the cap, which, although it is not always visible in adults, also suggests an immature. This is the second sight record of this montane species in the Bolivian lowlands, the first being an adult during the austral spring (13 September 1990), also in the Chaco of south-east dpto. Santa Cruz. The bird at San Julián was a relatively early migrant, based on high-elevation migrant records during the austral autumn in Bolivia (earliest date 5 May). The bird could not be relocated the next day or during the following weeks.

Tropical Kingbird Tyrannus melancholicus

We noted strong migratory movements upon our arrival at San Julián, observing 20–30 individuals per day on 8–21 March. Numbers subsequently declined and the species was absent by mid-April. Tropical Kingbirds then reappeared in late May, with three birds (a single and a pair) observed on 23 May, and another individual on 26 May. The latest record for dptos. Tarija, Chuquisaca, and southern dpto. Santa Cruz is 4 May. These late-May birds could be late northbound migrants or birds wintering south of what is currently recognised as the species’ primary winter range. The species’ status at the ranch after 26 May is unknown.

Fork-tailed Flycatcher Tyrannus savana

Peak movements of northbound migrants probably coincided with our arrival at San Julián, where (limited) observations of northbound transients ranged from 90–110 birds during the period 8–10 March, to 15 birds on 18 March, and a final individual on 26 March. On 17 April, we found a single late migrant or lingering individual c.50 km south of the city of Santa Cruz, along the road to Abapó. Previously, migration on this stretch of road had been impressive, with 1,400 northbound transients estimated on 10 March, and 1,000 on 14 March. The 17 April record is notable given Chesser’s earliest date of 1 April for south-east Bolivia. Davis also reported a late migrant in April at Concepción, in north-central dpto. Santa Cruz.

Nearctic–Neotropical migrants

Common Nighthawk Chordeiles minor

RCD observed a group of four birds, flying relatively high, just before dusk on 17 March. One or more of the birds gave the species’ typical nasal peent call several times, confirming the identification. Status and distribution of this species in Bolivia, and in South America in general, is unclear. The latest previously published record for Paraguay is 12 March.

Bobolink Dolichonyx oryzivorus

We regularly observed flocks migrating north between 15 March (possibly earlier) and 7 April. Flocks consisted of 20–100+ individuals, typically flying relatively high and calling frequently. We noted migrants
Other movements

Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture
*Cathartes barrovianus*

Apparently absent in March–April, this species was relatively common during May. The increase in Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture abundance coincided with falling water levels in the río Parapetí and an associated increase in the abundance of wading birds. Hayes4 described a similar correlation in the abundance of this vulture and wading birds, and water level on the río Paraguay in Paraguay. The migratory status of this species in Bolivia is unclear7, and our observations may simply reflect non-migratory movements associated with foraging opportunities along the river.

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References


Robert C. Dobbs

1705 Heatheridge Road H-201, Fort Collins, Colorado 80526, USA. E-mail: elzenia@ecomail.org.

Meribeth Huizinga

Department of Biology, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado 80523, USA.

Retificação do registro do Graveteiro *Phacellodomus ruber* na região sul de Minas Gerais, Brasil

Recentemente, nós apresentamos uma listagem da avifauna da região de Lavras e municípios adjacentes, no sul do estado de Minas Gerais, contendo 287 espécies. Um registro do Graveteiro *Phacellodomus ruber* foi realizado para os municípios de Bom Sucesso e Perdões, com base em gravações de um indivíduo, efetuadas no dia 17 de novembro de 2001, em uma área que está próxima a um fragmento florestal, às margens de um córrego que divide tais municípios (21°05’S 44°56’W). Cópias dessas gravações foram depositadas no Arquivo Sonoro Prof. Eliás Coelho (ASEC), Departamento de Zoologia, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro. Vocalizações semelhantes às gravações foram ouvidas em ambas as margens desse córrego no mesmo dia. Tal registro da espécie ampliaria sua distribuição para o sudeste de Minas Gerais, conforme os mapas de Ridgely & Tudor e Remsen. Entretanto, em uma nova amostragem conduzida nas mesmas áreas brejosas no dia 5 de dezembro de 2003, fizemos experimentos de playback com as gravações obtidas em 2001 e atraímos dois casais do João-botina *Phacellodomus erythrophtalmus ferrugineigula* em margens distintas do córrego supracitado. As vocalizações de um casal foram gravadas e depositadas no ASEC. Um exemplar de *P. e. ferrugineigula* foi abatido nessa ocasião, sendo tombado na Coleção Ornitológica do Departamento de Zoologia da Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (DZUFMG 4000). Assim, o registro de *P. ruber* apresentado para a região de Lavras deve ser desconsiderado, considerando-se a ocorrência de *P. e. ferrugineigula*.

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Referências

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First records of Narosky’s Seedeeater Sporophila zelichi in Paraguay

Narosky’s (Entres Ríos) Seedeeater Sporophila zelichi is one of a group of closely related Sporophila seedeaters commonly referred to as ‘capuchinos’ and found in the wet grasslands of southern South America. S. zelichi is the rarest of the group, being considered Critically Endangered by BirdLife International. The species was described as recently as 1977, and its breeding range was originally considered to be restricted to a small area of Entre Ríos province, Argentina. In February 1993, it was found for the first time outside that province, when a pair was trapped 7 km south of Colonia Carlos Pellegrini, Corrientes province, Argentina. The species has since been found in Uruguay, and here we present the first records for Paraguay.

On 13 December 1998, we discovered a male Sporophila zelichi in wet grassland at Nu Guazu, dpto. Itapúa, south-east Paraguay (26°56’S 56°18’W). The bird, still showing a few signs of a presumed pre-definitive male plumage, was clearly associating with a female-plumaged Sporophila. BF was able to obtain video footage which will, in due course, be archived at the Visual Resources for Ornithology, Philadelphia (USA). On 16 December 1998, we returned to Nu Guazu and found the bird near its original locality. On this occasion it sang several times, but a brief visit on 8 January 1999 failed to relocate the bird.

A description follows: a small Sporophila, with a restricted grey cap and white face, throat, breast, hindneck and nape, forming a complete white collar. The white extended onto the neck, almost to the rear crown. Mantle, scapulars and lower back were cinnamon, although the mantle-sides were pale brown. Belly and flanks cinnamon-chestnut, slightly darker than the uppersides. Vent and undertail-coverts paler, more similar to the upperside’s coloration. Wings and tail greyish-brown, with the greater coverts and secondaries fringed paler. Overall, the upperside and upperside’s coloration was more similar to the cinnamon lower upperside typical of Marsh Seedeeater S. palustris, rather than the rich chestnut plumage of Chestnut Seedeeater S. cinnamomea.

The male S. zelichi was found in an area of periodically inundated, tall, dense grassland. It seemed to favour an area where the tall, dense grass was intergraded with shorter grazed grass, with a notably higher diversity and density of flowering herbs. This area also held the only permanent standing water in the vicinity, although in most areas the soil was damp to waterlogged. Such a preference for areas of periodically inundated tall grasslands has already been noted for various members of this group, including S. zelichi. Notable numbers of S. cinnamomea were also observed at Nu Guazu (e.g. 23 males on 16 December 1998), and the area appears to support a breeding colony, with many of the males exhibiting breeding behaviour (e.g. regular singing, territoriality and apparently paired birds).

As with the other ‘capuchinos’ Sporophila seedeaters, S. zelichi is believed to be an austral migrant, although its wintering grounds are unknown, but presumably lie to the north. On 24 October 1999, RPC found a male S. zelichi within a flock of mixed Sporophila seedeaters, in wet grassland 8 km west of Retiro Mirabeau, Estancia San Luis, dpto. Concepción (22°24’S 57°28’W). Unlike the male at Nu Guazu, the San Luis bird was in full definitive plumage, with a neat blue-grey ‘skull cap’, clean white face, throat, upper breast and collar, and deep cinnamon underparts, back and rump. In the immediate vicinity, a male S. cinnamomea was seen the same day, and a male S. palustris the previous day. It remains uncertain whether the San Luis site represents part of the winter range or a migration stopover site for southbound Sporophila seedeaters.

Although these represent the first records of S. zelichi in Paraguay, they fit the pattern that is emerging for the occurrence of other members of the ‘capuchino’ group in the country: southbound migration through eastern Paraguay in October–November, and apparent breeding records in the grasslands of south-east Paraguay in December–January (Guyra Paraguay unpubl. data).

Acknowledgements

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Rob P. Clay and Brian Field
Guyra Paraguay, C.C. 1132, Cnel. Franco 381, Asunción, Paraguay. E-mail: rob@guyra.org.py.

Courtship displays of Wedge-tailed Hillstar Oreotrochilus adela
Wedge-tailed Hillstar Oreotrochilus adela is a poorly known species of arid and semi-arid Andean slopes in the central Andes. Previously considered a Bolivian endemic, its occurrence in Argentina was confirmed in January 1991, when seven individuals were mist-netted and photographed near Yavi (3,550 m), Jujuy province1. Yavi is 15 km east of La Quiaca and just c.5 km south of the Bolivian border. Wedge-tailed Hillstar has since been found regularly around the village, either in gardens or along a canyon immediately to the north, as well as at nearby Yavi Chico, but no other sites are known in Argentina2,3.

Like many hummingbirds, information on its courtship behaviour and breeding is virtually unknown. Fjeldså & Krabbe2 noted that the male produces a melodious song from an exposed perch, where it usually adopts a ‘slim upright pose and from side to side, bobbing the tail and fluffing the plumage rhythmically. Once the female perched on top of a bush, at which point the male perched c.30 cm distant, vocalising strongly. From this position, the male twisted sideways on an angled perch, until leaning almost upside-down, and swivelled slightly to face upwards. Thus contorted, the male directed his flared underparts towards the female and shivered the wings and tail for a few seconds. In the bright low sunlight, this served to show off the black and cinnamon underparts and iridescent green throat patch to good effect. The male emitted constant high-pitched calls (song?) throughout this performance, similar to those recorded in dpto. Cochabamba1. This vocalisation, a medley of intense twittering notes interspersed with a distinct descending cadence, is perhaps the song noted by Fjeldså & Krabbe2, although it could hardly be described as melodious.

Subsequently, on 19 October 2003, DT and I. Merle observed three individuals at the same site. At first, all three birds made erratic aerial chases, squabbling intermittently, until one disappeared. After a brief absence,
a pair settled in a nearby shrub. The male perched on a high bare branch while the female nestled discreetly lower down (again matching Belisario Riaja’s description from Cochabamba). The male pumped the breast feathers in and out, giving the impression that he was ‘panting’ after his exertions. His body was slightly hunched over, and his head was quickly switched from side to side at c.1-second intervals.

From this position the male performed an extraordinary display flight, flying c.2–3 m up from the perch, hovering momentarily and then flying to a point c.1–2 m away by descending then re-asending in a deep U-shaped curve. He repeated this flight-path back and forth for 5–10 seconds, before returning to the original perch, ‘panting’ and turning his head rhythmically. Display flights, accompanied by a very audible ‘snappy’ whirring of wings (i.e. the ‘rattle’ described above), were repeated at intervals of c.1–3 minutes. After c.15 minutes the two birds departed the area, led by the female, in direct dashing flight.

These observations suggest that male Wedge-tailed Hillstar has a variety of displays, including U-shaped flights, wing-rattles and a range of contortions to show off the bright underparts. The stereotypic display flight of adela is perhaps similar to the ‘low undulating display flight’ ascribed by Fjeldså & Krabbe to Andean Hillstar O. estella, although there is no mention of the flight being U-shaped. In addition, whilst estella undertakes steep display flights up to 30–40 m above ground, often spiralling upward, before diving back to a perch, this behaviour has not been reported for adela.

The habitat at Yavi consists of steep sheltered boulder-strewn slopes, with scattered stunted thorny trees near the valley floor (mostly Prosopis ferox and Acacia visco), terrestrial bromeliads (e.g. Puyas fiebrigii), flowering parasitic plants (Loranthaceae) and low dense shrubs. The hillstars fed on flowering Puyas columns and on the pink tubular flowers of low shrubs.

Given the courtship behaviour noted above it seems very likely that Wedge-tailed Hillstar breeds at this location, but there is some disagreement as to whether it is only a seasonal visitor to Argentina. Fjeldså & Krabbe suspected that the species might migrate, although their evidence was not presented. All records at Yavi are from August–January (M. Pearman in litt.), but this might be more informative concerning seasonal fluctuations in birdwatching activity than about the species’ behaviour. The records suggest that it is present at Yavi early in the breeding season, and it seems most likely that the species will prove to be resident in this part of Argentina. Further records year-round are needed to confirm this. Little is known of the population size and status of Wedge-tailed Hillstar, but it does seem locally common at Yavi and at certain sites in Bolivia. As much of its range is rarely visited, and under very little threat from habitat degradation, overall numbers are probably much higher than current information suggests.

Acknowledgements

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References


Discussion

Thirteen species were recorded migrating. In an overview of austral bird migration in South America most of the above-mentioned species are considered austral migrants, except Southern Martin Progne elegans and Patagonian Yellow-finch Sicalis lebruni. All of the observed migrants breed in Patagonia and move north for the austral winter, apart from White-rumped Calidris fuscicollis and Baird’s Sandpipers C. bairdii. Probably most observed birds were real migrants. However for shorebirds tidal movements cannot be excluded (S. Imberti pers. comm.), although they usually migrate in larger flocks. Moreover their migration was delayed in 2004, which does not correspond with our observations.

A total of 14,385 birds was recorded during the four-hour
Neotropical Notebook

Table 1. Bird species and their numbers migrating at Punta Norte, Peninsula Valdés, on 9 February 2004.

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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td>6,925</td>
<td>4,764</td>
<td>1,373</td>
<td>1,323</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Count. The real total may even have been higher, as we probably missed birds during periods of particularly strong passage. The passage was dominated by Patagonian Negrito Lessonia rufa: 12,021 individuals were noted or more than 80% of the total. Passage was most intense during the morning but, in particular, the migration of swallows continued steadily into early afternoon. One can only speculate as to the total number of birds that passed by Punta Norte on 9 February. Assuming that migration during the rest of the morning hours was as strong as during the first hour of the count c.40,000 birds may have passed between 06h00 and 12h00. In order to estimate the number of birds that might have passed between 12h00 and 21h00, we extrapolated using the final-hour total, resulting in an estimated 12,000 birds during this period and thus a total perhaps in excess of 50,000 during the entire day!

The strong passage observed on 9 February probably resulted from offshore winds that coincided with the migration of southern Patagonian breeders. The moderate south-west wind probably drifted migrants, usually passing by more dispersed, to the coast. The next day, when there was an onshore wind, very few passage birds were noted at the same location. Santiago Imberti commented that massive passage of migrants through coastal Patagonia is more frequently seen later in the austral autumn, but systematic counts appear to be lacking. Hopefully this short note may initiate more study into this interesting and spectacular phenomenon.

Reference

PUBLISHED RECORDS FROM THE LITERATURE

WEST INDIES

St Martin
Ruddy Duck Oxyura jamaicensis has recently become established as a breeder on the island.

MIDDLE AMERICA

Costa Rica
The first country record of Rusty-margined Flycatcher Myiasteles cayanensis was made near Golfito, on 7 April 2004, the bird being photographed. The second record of Striated Heron Butorides striatus involved a bird photographed and seen twice in the Paloverde area between October 2003 and February 2004. A juvenile Red-billed Tropicbird Phaethon aethereus was found dead at 1,800 m in the Central Valley on 6 February 2004.

Masked Yellowthroat Geothlypis aequinoctialis has recently been found in the Carara area, only the second Costa Rican locality for the species. A Black-headed Grosbeak Pheucticus melanocephalus was noted south of San José in mid-January 2004. Several records of Pectoral Sandpiper Calidris melanotos were made during the 2003–04 winter, whilst a Cape May Warbler Dendroica tigrina was observed at Hacienda Guachipelin, on 18 February 2004, with another at Savgre Mountain Lodge, 2 March 2004, a MacGillivray’s Warbler Oporornis tolmiei at Monteverde, in mid-February 2004 and a Bullock’s Oriole Icterus bullockii at Santa Rosa National Park, in late February. Perhaps the first record of Paint-billed Crane Neocrex erythrops on the Pacific slope of Costa Rica was made in April 2004, whilst equally what appears to be the first Caribbean-slope record of Pacific Screech-owl Otus cooperi was made in early 2004.

Mexico
Western Gull Larus occidentalis was discovered breeding in the Gulf of California in 2001; it was previously known only as a winter
visitor to this region\textsuperscript{15}. \textit{White-collared Swift} \textit{Streptoprocne zonaris} was found breeding further north than previously suspected in western Mexico, in Jalisco, in June 2000\textsuperscript{15}. The first record of \textit{Chihuahuan Raven} \textit{Corvus cryptoleucus} has been reported from southern Baja California\textsuperscript{1}. \textit{Ornate Hawk-eagle} \textit{Spizaetus ornatus} has been reported in Nayarit recently\textsuperscript{14}.

**SOUTH AMERICA**

**Argentina**

Surveys in the early years of the new millennium have revealed a dramatic decline (of almost 50\%) in numbers of \textit{Red Knot} \textit{Calidris canutus} wintering in Argentina, with peripheral populations in Patagonia having decreased by as much as 98\% since the mid-1980s\textsuperscript{27}. Trejo et al.\textsuperscript{28} provide new data on the breeding biology of the poorly known \textit{White-throated Hawk} \textit{Buteo albigula}.

**Brazil**

The first documented country record of \textit{Oilbird} \textit{Steatornis caripensis} has, strangely, come from western Amazonia, rather than the Venezuelan border area\textsuperscript{4}, whilst other first country records reported recently include \textit{Silvery Grebe} \textit{Podiceps occipitalis} (photographed in Santa Catarina and Paraná)\textsuperscript{3}, \textit{Cape Gannet} \textit{Sula capensis} (photographed at sea off Rio Grande do Sul)\textsuperscript{5,6}, \textit{Collared Pratincole} \textit{Glareola pratincola} (photographed on Atol das Rocas)\textsuperscript{7}, \textit{Franklin’s Gull} \textit{Larus pipixcan} (one photographed in São Paulo, following two previous reports without documentary evidence)\textsuperscript{8}, \textit{White-winged Black-tyrant} \textit{Knipolegus aterrimus} (photographed in Mato Grosso do Sul)\textsuperscript{9,10} and \textit{Pale-eyed Pygmy-tyrant} \textit{Atalatticus pilaris} (tape-recorded in Roraima)\textsuperscript{11,12}. On the other hand, the antpitta \textit{Grallaria guatimalensis roraimae} has now been removed from the Brazilian list as the only specimen is actually a Variegated Antpitta \textit{G. varia}\textsuperscript{13}. The exciting (and long-awaited) rediscovery of the Atlantic Forest population of \textit{White-winged Potoo} \textit{Nyctibius leucopterus} was made in late 1999, in coastal Bahia\textsuperscript{14}. A new female specimen of the incredibly poorly known \textit{Stresemann’s Bristlefront} \textit{Merulaxis stresemanni} has been located in Berlin; it was probably collected in the early-19th century\textsuperscript{15}. Mazar Barnett & Kirwan\textsuperscript{16} provide full details for several nests of \textit{Striated Softtail} \textit{Thripophasa macroura} found in Espírito Santo and Bahia, and compare these with the nest architecture of a nest of \textit{Plain Softtail} \textit{T. fusiceps}, found in Bolivia, offering some preliminary comments on intrageneric relationships in the process. Audubon’s \textit{Shearwater} \textit{Puffinus hermieri} has recently been discovered to be breeding on Fernando do Noronha\textsuperscript{17}. First or confirmed state records reported recently include the following: \textit{Light-mantled Sooty Albatross} \textit{Phoebetra palpebrata} (Santa Catarina)\textsuperscript{18}, \textit{Hook-billed Kite} \textit{Chondrohierax uncinatus} (Rio Grande do Sul)\textsuperscript{19} and \textit{Dusky-capped Flycatcher} \textit{Myiarchus tuberculifer} (Pernambuco)\textsuperscript{20}. The fourth Brazilian record of \textit{King Penguin} \textit{Aptenodytes patagonicus} involved one photographed in Rio Grande do Sul in December 2003\textsuperscript{21}, whilst Piacentini et al.\textsuperscript{22} report a new record of \textit{White-rumped Monjita} \textit{Xolmis velatus} in Santa Catarina. Further range extensions of \textit{Grey-backed Tachuri} \textit{Polystictus superciliaris} and \textit{Pale-throated Serra-finch} \textit{Embernagra longicauda} have been reported by Vasconcelos et al.\textsuperscript{23} \textit{A study of the San Salvador Valley, in the Santa Marta region, revealed a total of 374 species, including the second country record of \textit{Cooper’s Hawk} \textit{Accipiter cooperi}, a \textit{Wood Thrush} \textit{Hylocichla mustelina}, records of nine globally threatened species and many other notable sightings\textsuperscript{24}. \textit{Least Tern} \textit{Sternula antillarum} has recently been discovered breeding on the Caribbean coast\textsuperscript{25}.

**Chile**

A study of the San Salvador Valley, in the Santa Marta region, revealed a total of 374 species, including the second country record of \textit{Cooper’s Hawk} \textit{Accipiter cooperi}, a \textit{Wood Thrush} \textit{Hylocichla mustelina}, records of nine globally threatened species and many other notable sightings\textsuperscript{24}. \textit{Least Tern} \textit{Sternula antillarum} has recently been discovered breeding on the Caribbean coast\textsuperscript{25}.

**Colombia**

A study of the San Salvador Valley, in the Santa Marta region, revealed a total of 374 species, including the second country record of \textit{Cooper’s Hawk} \textit{Accipiter cooperi}, a \textit{Wood Thrush} \textit{Hylocichla mustelina}, records of nine globally threatened species and many other notable sightings\textsuperscript{24}. \textit{Least Tern} \textit{Sternula antillarum} has recently been discovered breeding on the Caribbean coast\textsuperscript{25}.

**Ecuador**

The nest, eggs and other breeding data have recently been described for the \textit{White-bellied Antpitta} \textit{Grallaria hypoleuca}, based on observations from the east slope of the Andes\textsuperscript{26}. Other newly available breeding information has also been presented for \textit{Spot-fronted Swift} \textit{Cypseloides cherruti}, \textit{Rusty-winged Barbtail} \textit{Premnornis guttuligerus} and the globally threatened \textit{Pale-headed Brush-finch} \textit{Atlapetes pallidiceps}, and the latter species has also been the subject of a paper discussing its population (17 pairs in 2002), as well as its vocalisations, conservation prospects and other original data\textsuperscript{27}. Freile\textsuperscript{28} presents new information that updates the status and distribution of 46 species in the country.

**Paraguay**

\textit{Brown-and-yellow Marshbird} \textit{Pseudoleistes virescens} has been
added to the list of species known to have reliably occurred in the country[30].

**Peru**

Vellinga et al. provide notable avian records from surveys of several localities in Ayabaca province, dpto. Piura, including the second country record of **Stygian Owl** *Asio stygius* and one of the few available Peruvian records of **Masked Saltator** *Saltator cinetus*.

**Venezuela**

A June 2001 record of **Canada Warbler** *Wilsonia canadensis* has been reported recently from the south of the country[32].

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### OTHER RECORDS RECEIVED

**Argentina**

A winter-plumaged Red Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius* was photographed on a shallow lake between San Julián and Río Gallegos, Santa Cruz province, on 27 January 2004 (JB, SI, AL & RV; Fig; 3; see p.80), a moulting **King Penguin** *Aptenodytes patagonicus* was photographed in a colony of Magellanic Penguins *Spheniscus magellanicus* on Harberton Island, Beagle Channel, Tierra del Fuego, on 30 January 2004 (JB, AL & RV; Fig; 4; see p.80), and a juvenile **Macaroni Penguin** *Eudyptes chrysolophus* was also photographed, at Cabo Virgenes, Santa Cruz province, on 28 January 2004 (JB, SI, AvK, AL, RV).

**Brazil**

**Tawny Piculet** *Picumnus fulvescens* has been found in Ubatara National Park, in Ceará: two together inside the park on 16 July 2004 and another in the garden of the Alemao Inn, 1.5 km outside the park entrance on 17 July 2004 (AR).

**Chile**

**Upland Sandpiper** *Bartramia longicauda* just north of Arica on 20 December 2003 is about the fifth record for the country, whilst two non-breeding-plumaged

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**Swallow-tailed Gulls** *Creagrus furcatus* were seen on a pelagic out of Arica on 15 December 2003 and a **Sandwich Tern** *Sterna sandvicensis* was at Maipo, San Antonio, on 21 December 2003 (about the eighth record). A flock of nine **Spot-winged Pigeons** *Columba maculosa* was seen at Putre on 20 December 2003. This species has not previously been mentioned for Chile, although there is apparently an, as yet, unpublished sight record at the same locality in early 2003 (all MGA, RAF & WR).

**Cuba**

Records from spring 2004 include: a single **Dunlin** *Calidris alpina* on Cayo Coco on 19 April, two **American Avocets** *Recurvirostra americana* at Las Salinas on 22 April at least, the regular adult **Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus* on Cayo Coco on 17 April, and a male **Scarlet Tanager** *Piranga olivacea* near Playa Larga on 20–22 April (JA, JF, SH & BW).

**ECUADOR**

ECUADOR sent the following new altitudinal records (figures in brackets indicate altitudes given in Ridgely & Greenfield 2001). At Cotinga Lodge, about 12 km west of La Libertad (Carchi), in early-November 2001, during exceptionally dry weather, **Toucan Barbet** *Semnornis ramphastinus* was found at 2,730 (2,400) m, **Plate-billed Mountain-toucan** *Andigena laminirostris* 3,000 (2,600) m, **Blue-winged Mountain-tanager** *Anisognathus somptuosus* 2,720, (2,500) m and **Blue-capped Tanager** *Thraupis cyanopepla* 3,900 m (1,900 m, a misprint, which should read 2,900 m). On 15 June 2003, at Puyango Petrifled Forest Reserve, **Black Phoebe** *Sayornis nigricans* was noted at 300 (500) m and **Strong-billed Woodcreeper** *Xiphocolaptes promeropirhynchus* at 340 m (west of Andes usually not below 600 m). At Tandayapa, on 2 June 2003, **Green-crowned Woodnymph** *Thalurania fannyi* was observed at 1,465 (800) m. At Manta Real, on 29 August 2003, **Fawn-breasted Brilliant** *Heliodoxa rubinoides* was found at 450 (1,000) m, and on 23 December 2003, a **Smoke-coloured Pewee** *Contopus fumigatus* at 470 (800) m and **Golden-crowned Flycatcher** *Mycodynastes chrysocephalus* at 410 (1,000) m. On the slopes of Volcán Tungurahua, on 29 December 2003, a **Grass Wren** *Cistothorus platensis* was observed singing at 2,180 (2,200) m. Along the rio Negro, at 01°28’S 78°11’W, on 30 December 2003, **Thrush-like Wren** *Campylorhynchus turdinus* was noted at 1,600 (1,000) m. At the Reserva Biológica Los Cedros, on 15–16 June 2004, there was a **Southern Nightingale-wren** *Microcercus marginatus* at 1,430 (700) m, **Striped-throated Hermit** *Phaethornis striigularis* 1,400 (800) m, **Rufous Motmot** *Baryphthengus martii* 1,530 (900) m and **Grey-rumped Swift** *Chacta cinereiventris* 1,400 m (1,000 m on western slope of Andes). In addition, the same observer discovered the second **Dark-faced Ground-tyrant** *Muscisaxicola macloviana* for the country, at Jatumpamba, above Sozoranga, in extreme southern Loja, on 19 June 2003.

**French Guiana**

All records relate to 2004 and were made by AR. On 31 July **Pale-tailed Barbthroat** *Threnetes leucurus* was observed near Saul, one of the first records for the country. On 3 August, a **Long-tailed Potoo** *Nyctibius aethereus* was photographed at Monts La Fumée, near Saul, and observed again on 11 August, on the same tree, whilst another was heard singing at Mont Galbao, also near Saul, on 6 August (the fourth and fifth country records). A **Speckled Tanager** *Tangara guttata* was seen near Saul on 9 August, the second record for the country.

Eight **Southern Martins** *Progne elegans* were photographed within a group of c.500 Brown-chested Martins *P. tapera* at Roura, on 14 August (Fig; 5; see p.80), and a male was photographed in Amana Nature Reserve, near Mana, on 25 August. The species is considered as a vagrant in the Guianas but is easily overlooked. Five **Wilson’s Snipes** *Gallinago gallinago delicata* were observed in rice
Cotinga 23

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fields near Mana, and two were seen again on 27 August. A juvenile Buff-breasted Sandpiper Dendropteryx sabini was noted at Pantiacolla 1. Agne, C. A. (2004) Conservação

Lodge, Manu National Park, on 18 August, the third country record.

Jamaica

A group of six Mississippi Kites Ictinia mississippiensis were photographed hawking insects at Savanna La Mar on 21 March 2004, the first record for the island and only the second for the Caribbean (Fig. 6; see p.80, WvdS).

Peru

An adult Sabine’s Gull Xema sabini was noted at Pantanocolla Lodge, Manu National Park, on 18 October 2002 (MK, SM).

Acknowledgements

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Peru

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References


