

Neotropical Notebook



Records constitute published material, mostly from the period 1993-1994 (unless otherwise stated) and personal communications submitted to the editor. Subject matter includes new country records, rediscoveries, range extensions of over 250 km and significant new localities or records of threatened and near-threatened species. Some records may, on occasion, require further confirmation while their authenticity is vetted, as far as possible, by the editors.

CARIBBEAN

BAHAMA ISLANDS

A **Virginia Rail** *Rallus limicola* reported by an experienced observer near Lucayan National Park, Grand Bahama on 4 November 1994 (see¹⁴) apparently represents only the second record for the West Indies. Up to 5 **Shiny Cowbird** *Molothrus bonariensis* were observed regularly, between 13-30 July 1994, near Staniard Creek, North Andros Island¹ (also *Neotropical News*). The spread continues and these records are apparently the first for Bahamas. A sub-adult **Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus* recorded at New Plymouth Harbour, Green Turtle Cay, Abaco Islands on 19 February 1994 (see¹⁴) apparently represents the first record for Bahamas. The reported **Hooded Warbler** *Wilsonia citrina* (*Cotinga* 2: 26, 1994) is apparently not unusual on the Bahamas (SL), the species more likely an occasional winter visitor and does not represent the first record for the islands *contra* Norton¹³.

JAMAICA

Two more sightings of a **Spotted Rail** *Pardirallus maculatus* at the Upper Black River Morass in 1994¹⁰ apparently refer to the same individual reported as the third country record reported in *Cotinga* 2: 26, 1994 although further details are not available.

ANTIGUA

Gricks⁷ reported a winter plumage **Wilson's Phalarope** *Steganopus tricolor* (first island record) at McKinnon's salt pond, present from

8-14 March 1994; and a **Ruff Philomachus** *pugnax* (second island record) at Potworks Dam on 19 February 1994 and at McKinnon's salt lake on 14 and 19 March 1994. The **White Stork** *Ciconia ciconia* (see *Cotinga* 2: 26, 1994) first reported near St John's in August 1993 was re-located on 31 March 1994⁷ and was still present on 8 July 1994 with a sighting at Potworks Dam (CG).

ST. LUCIA

An **Alpine Swift** *Tachymarptis melba* photographed at the Moule a Chique headland on 19 August 1992² represents the third record for the Americas, after a specimen collected on Barbados in 1955 and a record at Desecheo Island, off Puerto Rico in July 1987. One or possibly two **Collared Plover** *Charadrius collaris* at Arch Pond on 27 June 1993 and Green Pond on 25 July 1993 (see¹⁴) represents only the fourth island record.

BARBADOS

A first-winter **Black-headed Gull** *Larus ridibundus* at Congo Road on 5 December 1993 (see¹⁴) appears to represent the first record for the island.

TRINIDAD

Ffrench⁶ (also RF) presented numerous recent records of interest including four new records for Trinidad and nine for Tobago as follows: a **Sooty Shearwater** *Puffinus griseus* picked up dead at Manzanilla Beach, near Nariva Swamp on 12 December 1991 was the first record for Trinidad; an adult **Northern Gannet** *Sula bassana* observed less than 100 m off Speyside, Tobago on 29 November 1991 was the first record for the island; 12 **Masked Booby** *Sula dactylatra* were observed at St. Giles Islands on 20 January 1993, with 4 being photographed there in March 1993 representing the first records for Tobago; an adult **Jabiru** *Jabiru mycteria* at Caroni on 12 May 1990 was the first Trinidad record; a pair of **Ring-necked Duck** *Aythya collaris* and a female and 2 immature **Masked Duck** *Oxyura dominica* at Buccoo Marsh on 18-19 January 1992 and 13 February

1994 respectively both represent a first record and a first record this century for Tobago; a female **Hook-billed Kite** *Chondrohierax uncinatus* photographed at Speyside on 13-14 August 1992 was the first record for Tobago; a **Savanna Hawk** *Heterospizias meridionalis* reported at the Lowlands Estate, Tobago in August 1990 was the first for the island; an immature male **American Kestrel** *Falco sparverius* observed at Grafton Estate and near Crown Point Airport on 9/10 February 1991 is the first record for Tobago; a **Double-striped Thick-knee** *Burhinus bistriatus* at Orange Grove on 14 August 1991 was the second record for Trinidad; a **Pomarine Skua** *Stercorarius pomarinus* seen at Buccoo Reef on 19 January 1992 was a first for Tobago; a **Lesser Black-backed Gull** *L. fuscus* at Turtle Beech on 19 January 1992 was only the second record for Tobago; the first record of **Burrowing Owl** *Speotyto cunicularia* for Trinidad relates to a single and later a pair (photographed) in April-July 1992 at Point Lisas Industrial Estate which, after excavating a burrow, later abandoned it due to industrial activity; a group of **Oilbirds** *Steatornis caripensis* observed at Hillsborough Dam, Tobago in September 1988 is the first record for Tobago and the first instance of the species undertaking a sea crossing of up to 30 km, from Trinidad, where the species is a well known breeder; three records of **Cliff Swallow** *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota* at Kilgwyn Lake on 6 December 1990, Buccoo Beach on 7 February 1991 and Port of Spain sewage ponds on 15 January 1992 represent the first records for Trinidad; a **Black-throated Blue Warbler** *Dendroica caerulescens* at Aripo Heights on 22 March 1992 was the second record for Trinidad; a male **Bay-breasted Warbler** *D. castanea* photographed at Aripo on 6 April 1993 was the seventh record for Trinidad; a male **Canada Warbler** *Wilsonia canadensis* photographed at Asa Wright Nature Centre, Trinidad on 18 December 1993 was the first record for Trinidad; a **Scarlet Tanager** *Piranga olivacea* on Little Tobago in March 1992 was the third record for the island.

CENTRAL AMERICA

COSTA RICA

In November 1992 an **Orange-breasted Falcon** *Falco deiroleucus* was found 3 km from the entrance to Tapanti Biological Reserve, perched on a dead tree on a heavily wooded steep hillside (MR). An unconfirmed sighting near La

Selva is the only other record in the last 30 years. At Tapanti also comes the report of **Lattice-tailed Trogon** *Trogon clathratus* at 1,550 m, extending the altitudinal range for the species by 450 m. Two very localised hummingbirds, **Black-crested Coquette** *Lophornis helenae* and **Snowcap** *Microchera albocoronata*, generally regarded as altitudinal migrants, have been found year-round at Rancho Naturalista, near Turrialba (MR)

BELIZE

Groups of 7 and 12 **White-naped Swift** *Streptoprogne semicollaris* were observed along the upper Rio Raspaculo (520 m) during April and May 1993 by the JSSEUR expedition, representing the first records for the country¹². The species was previously believed to be endemic to Mexico although there are unconfirmed reports from Honduras. An immature **Rufescent Tiger-heron** *Tigrisoma lineatum* on 14 April 1994, observed by a group from Manomet Bird Observatory at Chan Chich Creek¹², appears to be the first record for Belize.

SOUTH AMERICA

FRENCH GUIANA

A male **American Wigeon** *Anas americana*, present from 3 to 10 January 1994 at a man-made lake near Kourou was the first record for the country and the most southerly record of the species⁹.

COLOMBIA

A new locality for the recently rediscovered **Gold-ringed Tanager** *Bangsia aureocincta* has been found at Alto de Los Galápagos, Chocó/Valle department border (JF) with records of six males, three females/juveniles between 1,800-2,100 m in March 1994. **Tanager-finch** *Oreothraupis arremonops* was also recorded there, representing a new locality for this seldom seen and poorly known species.

ECUADOR

A recently published report of the Amaluza Project¹⁶ concerning threatened avifaunal surveys in southern Ecuador in 1990 and 1991 provide a number of interesting records as follows: an **Andean Tinamou** *Nothoprocta pentlandii* near Chachaco (c. 1,600 m), south of Cariamanga, Loja province is believed to be the first record of the species in Ecuador for over 50 years; **Mountain Caracara** *Phalcoboenus megalopterus* was

found to be fairly common on the Cordillera de Sybanilla near Amaluza in 1990, apparently representing the first Ecuadorean records with more recent records from the Cordillera de Quichiragua, close to the Peruvian border; a **Marañón Spinetail** *Synallaxis gujanensis* was mist-netted in lush roadside vegetation at 1,100 m near Palanda on 4 August 1991 representing the first Ecuadorean record, with more recent sightings from the Zumba region, Zamora-Chinchipec (ANSP expedition); and an **Ovenbird** *Seiurus auricapillus* netted at Río Bombuscaro, P.N. Podocarpus on 27 November 1991 was the second record for Ecuador.

A second-winter **Laughing Gull** *Larus atricilla* photographed at Lago de Colta (c.3,250 m), near Santiago de Quito, Prov. Chimborazo on 20 November 1991 represents a new altitude record for the species and the southernmost far inland occurrence in South America⁸.

Other noteworthy records for Ecuador (RC, SJ and JPV) include a **Green Heron** *Butorides virescens* at Sua, Esmeraldas province on 10 March 1994, the first record for western Ecuador; a first-year **Grey-hooded Gull** *Larus cirrocephalus* at Atacames, Esmeraldas on 11 March 1994, the most northern record of the species; and a male **Cerulean Warbler** *Dendroica cerulea* at Mindo, Pichincha on 15 March 1994, apparently also the first record for western Ecuador.

PERU

A recent expedition to the Cordillera de Colán, Amazonas department⁵ (also *Neotropical News*) in July 1994 produced a number of interesting records as follows: the recently described (1975) **Royal Sunangel** *Heliangelus regalis*, previously known from only two localities (in Cajamarca and San Martín departments) was found to be common, primarily in elfin scrub, above San Cristobal; a **White-faced Nunbird** *Hapaloptila castanea* at 2,600 m on a ridgetop above Comboca on 30 July is a new locality for this scarce species; and **Barred Anthrush** *Chamaeza mollissima* was recorded with regularity above Comboca, representing the first known locality south of the Marañón River in northern Peru.

BOLIVIA

A **Giant Snipe** *Gallinago undulata* tape-recorded at Flor d'Oro, PN Noel Kempff Mercado, Santa Cruz department, while displaying two hours after dusk on 6 April 1993 (SM) is the first record for Bolivia. An adult male **Blue-**

winged Teal *Anas discors* at Laguna Alalay (2,250 m), Cochabamba department on 6 December 1991³ is another new record for Bolivia. A number of interesting records representing northward range extensions and new departmental records come from the Vallegrande-Masicuri road, Santa Cruz department¹¹ as follows: several pairs of the near-threatened **Red-faced Guan** *Penelope dabbeni* were located in January and February 1993 at 2,350-2,500 m; the near-threatened **Alder Amazon** *Amazona tucumana* was found to be common on various visits November 1991-February 1993 at 2,200-2,500 m.

The poorly known **Rufous-sided Pygmy-tyrant** *Euscarthmus rufomarginatus* has been found in numbers along the Riberalta-Guayamirim road, Santa Cruz department in April 1994 where it was the commonest bird species present in roadside cerrado and natural grassland (SM). A pair of **Straw-backed Tanagers** *Tangara argyrofenges* were discovered 25 km north-west of Entrerios on the Tarija-Villa Montes road, Tarija department on 10 November 1994 (SM) representing at least a 300 km southward range extension.

BRAZIL

Among a spate of unexpected finds at the southern Bahian hotspot of Boa Nova come recent sightings of the threatened **Fork-tailed Tody-tyrant** *Hemitriccus furcatus*; a pair 12 km east of Boa Nova on 16 March 1992 (FL) and again a single on 17 December 1993 (CB) representing a huge northward range extension of over 1,000 km; and an **Oustalet's Tyrannulet** *Phylloscartes oustaleti* on 17 March 1992 (FL), a northward range extension of c.500 km.

ARGENTINA

In September 1994, J. Mazar and J. Herrera (A.P.N. wardens) collected the first specimens of **Sooty Grassquit** *Tiaris fuliginosa* (a male and female) close to the falls in P.N. Iguazú, Misiones (*vide* EA), representing the first record of the species in Argentina. This is a remarkable record with the nearest known populations in the Atlantic Forest of coastal São Paulo and far to the north in central Minas Gerais.

The wintering range of the poorly known and recently described (1974) **Hooded Grebe** *Podiceps gallardoi* has been discovered on the Atlantic coast of Santa Cruz province with 462 grebes located in the Coyle Estuary, north of Río Gallegos in the austral winter of 1994. More detailed surveys of coastline are likely to reveal

the rest of the estimated 3,000-5,000 population (see *Neotropical News*).

FALKLAND ISLANDS/ISLAS MALVINAS

A **Tawny-headed Swallow** *Stelgidopteryx fucata* was reported at 52°42'S, 61°30'W on 9 November 1993, some 1,200 km south of its known range¹⁵ and represents the first record for the island group. A number of other important records, all referring to 1992, have recently come to light in Curtis⁴ as follows: 2 adult **Shy Albatross** *Diomedea cauta cauta* with trawlers 80 nautical miles south of Falkland Sound on 27 January represents the seventh record for the Falklands/Malvinas; an adult summer plumage **Grey-headed Gull** *Larus cirrocephalus* near South Jason Island on 25 March was a first record for the island group, as was a winter plumage **Trudeau's Tern** *Sterna trudeaui* near Steeple Jason Island on 30 April; at Bertha's Beach a **Pectoral Sandpiper** *Calidris melanotos* on 30 March appears to be the fourth record; and a **Ruddy Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres* on 29 March appears to be the first record since unconfirmed records prior to 1921; a **Surfbird** *Aphriza virgata* on Kukri Island on 8 March is an exceptional record (and a first) as the species is only known to migrate along the Pacific coast of South America to Tierra del Fuego; and 2 **American Golden Plover** *Pluvialis dominica* at Mare Harbour on 12 April represents yet another first record for the islands.

SOUTH GEORGIA/ISLAS GEORGIANAS DEL SUR

A recently published record⁴ of 4 **Grey Petrel** *Procellaria cinerea* at 6 nautical miles north of Bird Island on 7 April 1992 constitutes the first record in Georgian waters.

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compiled by Mark Pearman

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