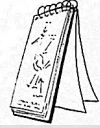


# Neotropical Notebook



Neotropical Notebook contains three sections. The first consists of short papers documenting records. Photos and descriptions are published where appropriate. The second section summarises records published elsewhere, following the format established in previous issues of *Cotinga*. The third lists unpublished and undocumented records. Please indicate, with submissions, in which section you wish your records to appear.

## SHORT NOTES

### Description of the first nest of Spotted Rail *Pardirallus maculatus* discovered in Cuba

Spotted Rail *Pardirallus maculatus* is widespread in the Neotropics, south from Mexico to south Brazil and north Argentina; in the Greater Antilles it has been reported from Hispaniola, is considered casual in Jamaica (where it may have bred in the 19th century) and in Cuba is known from Havana, Matanzas and Las Villas provinces, and probably the Isle of Pines<sup>1</sup>, and was recently reported from Guantánamo province<sup>4</sup>, perhaps suggesting that the species may be more widely distributed in the main island than previously supposed. The only detailed field information concerning the species in Cuba was presented by Gundlach<sup>3</sup> and Watson<sup>6</sup>.

Breeding biology for the species was most recently summarised by Taylor & van Perlo<sup>6</sup>. No nest data is available for the species from Cuba<sup>2</sup>, although Gundlach<sup>3</sup> described one egg (39 mm x 28 mm; white with an ochre wash mainly at the large end, with brown and lilac spots) found close to a dead adult in Zapata Swamp, and another, subsequently laid by a bird that was obtained in a market.

During a visit to Peralta, in the Ciénaga de Zapata, on 17 November 2000, we found a nest of the species, the first to be discovered in Cuba. It was located just above the water level and was attached to an *Annona glabra* (Annonaceae) bush, and consisted of a cup of weeds, with some dead leaves in the rather shallow depression. The overall diameter was 23 cm and the nest was 9 cm deep, while the internal cup measured 8 cm. Nest material comprised 12 species of flowering plants, most of them herbaceous—*Annona glabra*, *Thalia trichocalyx* (Marantaceae), *Conocarpus erectus* (Combretaceae), *Paspalum blodguettii* (Poaceae), *Sporobolus indicus* (Poaceae), *Chara* sp. (Characeae)—with several species of Cyperaceae, namely *Claudium jamaicense*, *Cyperus ligularis*, *Cyperus* sp., *Dichromena colorata*, *Eleocharis cellulosa*, *Rhynchospora cyperoides* and *R. globosa*. The bulk of the nest was constructed of leaves and inflorescences of the two Poaceae species, with some sticks of *Annona glabra*. *A. glabra* and *Thalia trichocalyx* leaves were used to line the nest, along with two *Conocarpus erectus* leaves. The nest contained five subelliptical eggs, creamy white with sparse dark reddish-brown and purple spots and small blotches, typically distributed uniformly, but in one concentrated at the larger end



Figure 1. Nest and eggs of Spotted Rail *Pardirallus maculatus*, Peralta, Zapata Swamp, 17 November 2000 (Chris Bradshaw)

(Fig. 1). Measurements (in mm) were: 36.5 x 25.4, 35.2 x 25.5, 35.4 x 26.4, 36.6 x 26 and 37.2 x 26.5. Confirmation that the nest belonged to a Spotted Rail came when one of the adults (videotaped) came within 5 m of AK while he was measuring the eggs. It was very active, constantly uttering its alarm call and moving around the nest. Incubation was estimated at 20 days; certainly by 9 December the nest was empty, the young having apparently departed.

### Acknowledgements

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#### Juvenile plumage of Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture *Cathartes burrovianus*

On 16 January 2002, Laurie Ness and I observed many Lesser Yellow-headed Vultures *Cathartes burrovianus*, including several juveniles and immatures, with Turkey Vultures *C. aura* and Black Vultures *Coragyps atratus* at Celestún dump, Yucatán, Mexico (20°51'N 90°23'W). The juvenile *C. burrovianus* were overall slightly browner than the adults, with greyish heads. Their primary projection and leg colour were indistinguishable from the adults'. Also like the adults, they lacked the scaly appearance created by the pale fringes to the upperwing-coverts characteristic of North American races of Turkey Vulture of all ages<sup>1</sup>. In addition, they appeared to lack the pale fringes to the mantle feathers characteristic of juvenile Turkey Vulture<sup>4</sup>. This plumage has not been adequately described in the literature<sup>2,3</sup> (S. N. G. Howell pers. comm.). The presence or absence of scaling, particularly on the wings, should distinguish juveniles (and other age classes) of the two species when at rest. Immatures of both species acquire a duller version of the adult head coloration at six months (S. N. G. Howell pers. comm.).

#### Acknowledgements

Steve N. G. Howell commented on a preliminary draft of this note.

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#### First record of Greater Scaup *Aythya marila* on the Yucatán Peninsula, Mexico

On 18 January 2002, while accompanied by Laurie Ness, I found a female Greater Scaup *Aythya marila* c.9 km east of Progreso, Yucatán, Mexico (21°17'N 89°33'W). It was swimming and diving in a mangrove lagoon south of the Dzilam de Bravo road, at a flamingo *Phoenicopterus*-viewing pavilion near the site of the narrow track opposite the Los Flamencos sign as described under Site 14.6 in Howell<sup>2</sup>. The bird was loosely associated with two female Lesser Scaup *A. affinis*, permitting good comparative views. Although we were looking into the sun and there was considerable glare, we were, with the aid of a good telescope, able to observe several key identification features.

The bird was obviously a female scaup on the basis of the white patch at the base of the bill, and was slightly longer bodied and stockier than the *A. affinis*. The crown was distinctly flat, highest in front, with a 'double-bump' effect reminiscent of Common Loon *Gavia immer*. In contrast, the crowns of the *A. affinis* clearly had peaks at the rear, sloping to the bill. The bill of the *A. marila* was distinctly longer and broader than those of the *A. affinis* and appeared slightly less curved on the culmen when viewed from the side. The bird had a diffuse but

obvious white patch on the ear-coverts, lacking on the two *A. affinis*; although this feature can be present on *A. affinis*, it tends to be more conspicuous and persistent in *A. marila*<sup>4</sup> and, in my experience, is considerably more prevalent in the latter. Unfortunately, the distance (never less than c.100 m) and light did not permit comparison of the bill nails, a useful distinguishing characteristic at close range<sup>4,6</sup>; and none of the birds displayed its wing stripe during the 30-minute observation period. Conditions did not permit photographic documentation.

Although identification of scaup can be problematic and distinguishing features are subtle and somewhat variable<sup>4</sup>, the features we observed were consistent and unambiguous throughout the observation period. Furthermore, I have considerable experience with both species, which are common winter residents in California.

According to Howell & Webb<sup>3</sup>, *A. marila* is a rare winter visitor to Baja California and Sonora, but the latter authors indicate no Mexican records outside those areas. However, it is also a rare winter visitor to the Texas coast and upper Rio Grande Valley<sup>1,5,6</sup>, and has been recorded in the vicinity of Matamoros, Tamaulipas<sup>6</sup>. This sighting is the first record of the species on the Yucatán Peninsula. Rare Bird Alerts for winter 2001–02 did not indicate an influx of *A. marila* into Texas or Florida, so this occurrence cannot be considered part of a larger event.

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#### Wintering 'Lawrence's' Warbler in northern Costa Rica

On 12 December 2001, while canoeing near Laguna del Lagarto Lodge, I found an adult male 'Lawrence's' Warbler. The lodge is situated on the río San Carlos, c.15 km upstream of its confluence with the río San Juan, on the Caribbean slope of Costa Rica. 'Lawrence's' Warbler is the result of hybridisation between Blue-winged Warbler *Vermivora pinus* and Golden-winged Warbler *V. chrysoptera*. The 'Lawrence's' phenotype is recessive and usually results from second-generation backcrosses<sup>1</sup>. The bird was with a mixed flock comprising a Slate-headed Tody-flycatcher *Todirostrum sylvia*, Lesser Greenlet *Hylophilus flavipes*, Yellow-throated Vireo *Vireo flavifrons*, Golden-winged Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia* and Chestnut-sided Warbler *Dendroica pensylvanica*, and was regularly observed until 12 February 2002. The composition of the flock that it accompanied changed little during this period.

Adult male 'Lawrence's' Warbler retains the black throat and ear-coverts of Golden-winged Warbler but maintains the body coloration of Blue-winged Warbler, although coloration can be highly variable in some individuals. This individual matched the above description with the exception of the dull olive colour reaching onto the crown, leaving only the forehead bright yellow. The black

throat contained some yellow flecking and the undertail-coverts had a slight yellow wash.

The dominant phenotype in this hybrid complex is referred to as 'Brewster's' Warbler<sup>1</sup>. The latter has been recorded around five times in Costa Rica<sup>4</sup>. It would appear not unusual to encounter a hybrid of this complex in the Caribbean lowlands of Costa Rica, as Golden-winged Warbler is considered an uncommon winter resident and Blue-winged Warbler a very uncommon to very rare winter resident in Costa Rica, but the latter is most frequent in the Caribbean lowlands<sup>3</sup>. This record is one of the few records of this recessive phenotype on the wintering grounds; Kirwan & Sharpe<sup>3</sup> mention a record for Venezuela, and Hilty<sup>2</sup> three others, which are apparently the only such occurrences in South America. The 'Lawrence's' and 'Brewster's' Warbler phenotypes should be searched for anywhere within the normal wintering range of either Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers.

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#### Notes on the avifauna of the lower río San Carlos, Costa Rica

La Laguna del Lagarto Lodge is situated on the río San Carlos c.15 km upstream from its confluence

with the río San Juan on the Caribbean slope of Costa Rica. The lodge property comprises over 480 ha of primary forest, a lesser amount of secondary forest, extensive cattle pasture and palm-heart plantations with scattered almendro *Dipteryx panamensis* trees. There are also several small lakes, 0.4–2.0 ha in size, scattered around the property. I recorded several interesting species and behaviour during a recent, three-month stay in the area.

In December 2001 there were several days of heavy rain, followed by flooding. During this period I recorded four species of larids on the río San Carlos. On the 24th, a flock of six Laughing Gull *Larus atricilla* was observed flying south. A winter-plumaged Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia*, observed flying north on the same date, may be the first record of this species on the Caribbean slope of Costa Rica<sup>2</sup>. On 28 December, I encountered a small flock of gulls on the river, flying north. It comprised two immature, probably second-year, Herring Gulls *Larus argentatus* and an adult Ring-billed Gull *L. delawarensis*. The only logical explanation for these arrivals must be the continuous rainstorms that were coming from the Caribbean at the time.

Scarlet Macaw *Ara macao* was observed on a daily basis on the lodge property. This species was extirpated from the Caribbean slope of Costa Rica by the 1950s, with the exception of the north-west Caribbean slope east to the río Frio<sup>2</sup>. This river is approximately 50 km west of the lodge. Employees of the lodge and local people commented that Scarlet Macaw had recolonised the area two years previously. Each day I encountered 2–4 individuals foraging on the forest edge and in scattered trees within pasture. On the río San Carlos the species was encountered with increasing frequency closer to Nicaragua. A roost tree was located early in December 2001. It was c.32 m-tall almendro, sited within a large cattle pasture, and was utilised regularly from early December

until early February. Thereafter, I surmise the birds began to roost at their nest sites. A maximum of 16 was recorded at the roost tree at one time. The birds had probably arrived from Nicaragua, where they were often observed flying in some numbers on the opposite side of the río San Juan. Increased logging in Nicaragua may be forcing the macaws to seek new areas, including within Costa Rica. In the 1990s logging rates in Nicaragua were ten times those of the Amazon<sup>1</sup>. It will be interesting to see if numbers continue to increase given continued destruction of the Nicaraguan forest.

Between eight and ten pairs of Great Green Macaw *Ara ambigua* occurred on and around the lodge property. During early January the birds' faces began to flush deep red, and I rarely encountered more than one pair utilising a feeding tree together. The repertoire of squawks, growls, and other loud calls diversified, and an increase in allpreening was observed. By late January courtship and copulation was regularly observed. In the first week of February, one pair was observed copulating while hanging upside-down from the thin outer branches of a tamarindo *Leucaena leucocephala* tree. The pair faced each other, while inverted, and bill-clacked during copulation. The process lasted c.1 minute, at which time the male took flight, but soon returned and the process was repeated up to three times. This behaviour continued for three days after the initial sighting, and the birds utilised the same branches each time.

#### Composition of army ant following flocks

I regularly encountered army ant swarms and the birds that associate with them, and spent much time following one such flock in the northern part of the forest, which had little understorey, permitting easy viewing of the flock. It is reasonable to assume that the flock was the same group, as the 'core birds' varied little in species composition and number: namely 2–3 Plain-brown

Woodcreeper *Dendrocincla fuliginosa*, 3–4 Northern Barred Woodcreeper *Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae*, a Black-faced Antthrush *Formicarius analis*, 6–8 Ocellated Antbird *Phaenostictus mcleannani*, 2–4 Bicoloured Antbird *Gymnopithys bicolor* and two Spotted Antbird *Hylophylax naevioides*. Other species were observed on a more sporadic basis. Rufous Motmot *Baryphthengus martii* was observed with the flock approximately 50% of the time. Rufous-winged Woodpecker *Piculus rubiginosus* was observed on two occasions, a solitary individual on the first occasion and subsequently a pair. A single Long-tailed Woodcreeper *Deconychura longicauda* was observed twice, the only times I saw the species descend from its usual haunt in the subcanopy. Cocoa Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus susurrans* was observed once, but was harassed constantly by a pair of Northern Barred Woodcreeper and eventually driven away. By far the strangest species I observed with an ant-following flock was a pair of Mealy Parrot *Amazona farinosa*. The birds were observed walking on the ground and were covered by the ants, but I did not observe the birds pick up anything with their beaks. They mostly focused on the antbirds that were actively feeding in the vegetation surrounding them. Why the parrots descended to the ground is intangible to me; possibly they were attracted to the loud, excited calls of the accompanying antbirds and woodcreepers. The pair spent approximately 45 minutes on the ground before returning the canopy.

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#### Verification of rare bird records from Trinidad and Tobago

A third group of records, mainly from 1997 to 2001, has been ratified by the Trinidad & Tobago Rare Birds Committee, and these are presented here. Records for 92 species have been accepted, some with photographic evidence. Records for 22 species were rejected. Those accepted include 13 first records for Trinidad and ten first records for Tobago. These results reflect much-increased activity among birders in recent years, assisted by improved communication via the Internet. For convenience, taxonomic order and nomenclature generally follow usage in *A guide to the birds of Trinidad and Tobago*, 1991 edition, by Rf.

#### Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris diomedea*

Dead individuals were found at Manzanilla beach on 29 January 1998, 2 February 2000 and 20 November 2001 (ER, GW, AA). Rarely recorded on Trinidad.

#### Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

One was found dead at Manzanilla beach on 14 November 1997 (PB); there are only six records for Trinidad.

#### White-tailed Tropicbird

##### *Phaethon lepturus*

One or two adults have been recorded on a number of occasions at Little Tobago, including in April 1998, on 26 November 2000 and 29 September 2001 (FH, MB, PD *et al.*). Only one previous confirmed record for Tobago.

#### Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Single immatures were found at Bon Accord, Tobago on 15 January 1999, and on Trinidad, at Trincity ponds, on 27 September 2001, and at Nariva Swamp, on 16 December 2001 (DF, PD, CR), constituting the first record for Tobago, and the second for Trinidad.

**Western Reef-heron** *Egretta gularis*

An immature was at Buccoo marsh on 16 December 2000 (MK); it was seen frequently in the area until at least January 2002. First record for Tobago.

**Rufescent Tiger-heron** *Tigrisoma lineatum*

One was at Cumuto Savannah on 1 August 2000 (MK). Few records on Trinidad.

**Jabiru** *Jabiru mycteria*

One or two were at Caroni rice fields in late June 1999 (RM, SR, FH), constituting only the second record for Trinidad. Also, one was photographed at Buccoo on 30 September–5 October 1998 (SW), the second record for Tobago.

**Maguari Stork** *Ciconia maguari*

One frequented the shore at Orange Valley for some time after 17 August 2001 (MK *et al.*). This is the first record for Trinidad; but the bird's condition cast some doubt on its wild status.

**Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus*

Individuals or small groups were at Caroni rice fields or Diego Martin River in May 1998, on 30 October 1999, in late July 2000 and on 8 January 2001 (GW, MG, MK). Uncommon on Trinidad.

**Roseate Spoonbill** *Ajaia ajaja*

An immature was at Caroni rice fields in September 1998, and an adult in the same area in August 1999 (GW *et al.*). Rare on Trinidad.

**Greater Flamingo***Phoenicopterus ruber*

Four, including two immatures, were at Brickfield mudflats in early September 1997 (GW). Occasional visitor to Trinidad.

**Fulvous Whistling-duck***Dendrocygna bicolor*

An adult was at Buccoo marsh in January–March 1998 (WP, DM, FH, Rf *et al.*). Only the second record for Tobago.

**Northern Pintail** *Anas acuta*

A female at Caroni rice fields on

9–13 June 2001 (MK, FH) was the first record for Trinidad.

**Green-winged Teal** *Anas crecca*

An adult male at Buccoo marsh on 23 November 1998 (GW) was the third record for Tobago.

**Lesser Scaup** *Aythya affinis*

A female at Caroni rice fields on 4 November 1998 (GW); occasionally winters in Trinidad.

**Ring-necked Duck** *Aythya collaris*

A male and two females at Lowlands pond on 23 November 1998 (GW) and in early 1999 (various observers) constituted the third record for Tobago.

**Comb Duck** *Sarkidiornis melanotos*

A male at Caroni rice fields on 9 September 1997 (GG *et al.*) and a group of up to 17 in the same area from mid- to late August 2000 (FH, various observers) are only the third and fourth records for Trinidad, although the species has long been known to local hunters.

**Hook-billed Kite** *Chondrohierax uncinatus*

A pair with two immatures was at Tableland on several occasions between May and December 1998 (GW), indicating probable local breeding. An immature female at Buccoo on 4 January 1998 (FH *et al.*) was only the second record for Tobago.

**Snail Kite** *Rostrhamus sociabilis*

An immature was at Nariva Swamp on 1 April 1998 (PDU *et al.*) and an immature at Caroni rice fields on 4 July 2000 and on many occasions in 2001 and 2002 (MK, various observers). This species presumably visits from the continent, but its occurrence is patchy.

**White-tailed Hawk** *Buteo albicaudatus*

An adult was near Oropouche Lagoon on 6 June 2001 (HK) and an immature at Caroni rice fields in late November 2001 (MK *et al.*). Rare nowadays on Trinidad.

**Swainson's Hawk** *Buteo swainsoni*

Records of light-morph adults over north-east Tobago on 17 March 1998 and 21 June 1998 (Rf, GE) are the third and fourth records for Tobago.

**Black-collared Hawk** *Busarellus nigricollis*

An adult of this rarely seen species was in Nariva Swamp on 11 October 1998 (GW).

**Rufous Crab-hawk** *Buteogallus aequinoctialis*

One considered to be a subadult was photographed at Nariva Swamp on 10 February 1996 (BB *et al.*). Very rare on Trinidad.

**Black Hawk-eagle** *Spizaetus tyrannus*

An adult was in the Waller Field area in September 1998–January 1999 (Rf, DF), and an immature was by the Blanchisseuse Road on 18 September 1999 (CR). Rare on Trinidad.

**Northern Caracara** *Caracara plancus*

An adult was at Galera Point on 10 August 2000 (GW); a rare visitor to Trinidad.

**Spotted Rail** *Pardirallus maculatus*

A dead individual was found on a road at Carapichaima on 6 July 1997 (GW); quite rare on Trinidad.

**Rufous-necked Wood-rail** *Aramides axillaris*

One was in mangroves by Blue River, Caroni on 16 September 1998 (Rf *et al.*) and two at Cacandee on 18 December 2000 (MK, GW). Well distributed throughout several islets off north-west Trinidad, but on the main island appears confined to the Caroni mangroves.

**Paint-billed Crake** *Neocrex erythrops*

One by Caroni rice fields on 16 September 2001 (MK) was only the fourth record for Trinidad (all have occurred between June and September).

**Azure Gallinule** *Porphyrola flavirostris*

Individuals at Caroni rice fields on 10 May 1999 (GW) and 22 August 2000 (MK) indicate that the species' local range has expanded beyond Nariva Swamp.

**American Coot** *Fulica americana*

An adult at Bon Accord ponds on 24 March 2001 (MK, GS) was the second record for Tobago. The species is easily confused with Caribbean Coot.

**Pied Lapwing** *Hoploxypterus cayanus*

An adult by the Arena Dam road on 12 March to early April 1998 (PG *et al.*) was the first record for Trinidad.

**American Oystercatcher***Haematopus palliatus*

Up to five on various occasions at Waterloo between late 1997 and March 1999 (various observers).

**Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus*

One at Waterloo on 28 June 1999 (MT *et al.*) was the first record for Trinidad and north-east South America (see *Cotinga* 16: 66).

**Upland Sandpiper** *Bartramia longicauda*

Three at Brickfield mudflats on 14 September 2001 (NL), one at Caroni rice fields on 19–25 September (MK *et al.*), and one at Hilton golf course, Tobago on 26 October 2001 (NH), the first Tobago record since the 19th century. Records of this species are sparse, but they tend to come in groups.

**Long-billed Curlew** *Numenius americanus*

Two at Buccoo marsh on 30 September 1988 (SW) provide the first authentic record of the species for Tobago since a dubious 19th century report.

**Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa*

An adult photographed on various occasions between 14 September 2000 and 21 January 2001 at Caroni rice fields and Orange

Valley (FH, MK) was the first record for Trinidad and South America (see *Cotinga* 17: 20–22).

**Red Knot** *Calidris canutus*

One in non-breeding plumage at Speyside on 7 September 2000 (Rf, PJ) was the first record for Tobago, though it is commonly seen on passage through Trinidad.

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper***Tryngites subruficollis*

Several were seen on passage through Trinidad in May/June and September/October 2000 and 2001 (MK); singles at Crown Point on 15 October and at Speyside on 16 October 2000 (MK, FH, BS) are the first records for Tobago since the 19th century.

**Wilson's Phalarope** *Phalaropus tricolor*

An immature at Caroni rice fields on 28 August–12 September 1998 (GG *et al.*) and two in the same location on 1 October 2000 (MK, FH) are the first records for Trinidad.

**Franklin's Gull** *Larus pipixcan*

Both immatures and adults have been found on the west coast of Trinidad between Port of Spain and San Fernando on several dates, including 5 January, 7–26 February, 14–20 March 1999, 2–3 December 2000, 22 January and 22 April 2001 (DBM, FH, GW, MK). The first records for Trinidad.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull***Larus fuscus*

Several, both adults and immatures, have been found on Trinidad's west coast in December–March in recent years (various observers). The species has clearly become a regular visitor to the area.

**Kelp Gull** *Larus dominicanus*

An adult was found at Waterloo on 8 July 2000 (FH, BS), remaining in the area until 1 October; a similar bird was at San Fernando until 10 February 2001 (HK). These constitute the first records for Trinidad (see *Cotinga* 18: 85–88).

**Large-billed Tern** *Phaetusa simplex*

An adult and an immature were at the Hilton lakes, Tobago on 20 May 2001 (RT). The first record for Tobago of this tern, which on Trinidad is largely confined to the west coast or adjoining wetlands.

**Mangrove Cuckoo** *Coccyzus minor*

Records from Bon Accord (FH) on 1 February 1999 and Lowland ponds (MK) on 7 January 2001 suggest the species is probably resident in small numbers in western Tobago.

**Dark-billed Cuckoo** *Coccyzus melacoryphus*

One was at Todd's Road on 26 August 1998 (GW); rare on Trinidad.

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

One at Caroni rice fields on 12 September 2001 (MK) was the first record for Trinidad.

**Rufous-shafted Woodstar***Chaetocercus jourdanii*

A female or immature was at Asa Wright Nature Centre on 28 August 2000 (Rf). Very rare on Trinidad.

**Scaled Antpitta** *Grallaria guatemalensis*

One seen by many observers (Rf, AM *et al.*) at the Asa Wright Nature Centre on 8 April–9 June 1999 was the first record in Trinidad for many years.

**Blue-backed Manakin***Chiroxiphia pareola*

Females were seen on nests at Gilpin Trace on 29 March 1998 (Mf) and 12 April 2000 (EC, Rf). These are the second and third breeding records for Tobago.

**Variegated Flycatcher***Empidonomus varius*

Two photographed at Asa Wright Nature Centre on 18 November 2001 (RW, RR). Rare in Trinidad.

**Venezuelan Flycatcher***Myiarchus venezuelensis*

A pair at a nest in a bamboo stump at Gilpin Trace on 19

March 1998 (Rf) was the first breeding record for Tobago.

**Spotted Tody-flycatcher**

*Todirostrum maculatum*

Two at Oropouche Lagoon on 6 March 1999 (GW) were a significant range extension on Trinidad from the Icacos peninsula, where hitherto all previous records have been made.

**Slaty Elaenia** *Elaenia strepera*

One at Brasso Seco on 21–22 July 1998 (CR, ER) was the first Trinidad record.

**White-winged Swallow**

*Tachycineta albiventer*

An adult and an immature at Speyside on 5 September 2000 (I & GB) was the first record for Tobago.

**Cliff Swallow** *Petrochelidon*

*pyrrhonota*

Singles were at Trincity ponds on 17 April 2000 (NA), and Caroni rice fields on 3 March and 19 September 2001 (MK). Few records in Trinidad.

**White-eyed Vireo** *Vireo griseus*

An immature at Buccoo in early January–February 1998 (WP, DM, FH) and an adult in the same locality on 28 January 1999 (RN) are the first records for Tobago.

**Black-whiskered Vireo** *Vireo*

*altiloquus*

Singles were at Arena forest on 19 February 2001 (MK) and near Scotland Bay on 28 April 2001 (CR); quite rare on Trinidad.

**Golden-winged Warbler**

*Vermivora chrysoptera*

An adult male was at Kings Bay Trail on 20 June 2001 (JK, AJ), an interesting date. The first record for Tobago of a species that has not been recorded in the Lesser Antilles.

**Northern Parula** *Parula*

*americana*

Single males were at Buccoo marsh on 9 February 1998 (FH, NT) and at Pointe-a-Pierre on 22 February 1998 (FH, GWi). The

fourth record for Tobago and the first for Trinidad.

**Cape May Warbler** *Dendroica*

*tigrina*

An adult male at Trincity ponds area on 31 December 1998–8 April 1999 (WP, DM, and various observers) was the second record for Trinidad, and the first to winter on the island.

**Cerulean Warbler** *Dendroica*

*cerulea*

An adult male at Heights of Aripo on 22 November 2000 (MB, CR *et al.*) was the first record for Trinidad.

**Blackburnian Warbler**

*Dendroica fusca*

An adult male at Morne Bleu on 26 March 2001 (CR *et al.*) was the sixth record for Trinidad.

**Chestnut-sided Warbler**

*Dendroica pensylvanica*

One was photographed at Lopinot Valley on 30 December 2000 (RN) and another was at Moka on 17 December 2001 (GW); rarely seen on Trinidad.

**Golden-rumped Euphonia**

*Euphonia cyanocephala*

An adult male was at Brigand Hill on 3 March 1999 (PH). This rarely seen euphonia is a much-desired target of bird catchers, so an escape from captivity cannot be ruled out.

**Scarlet Tanager** *Piranga*

*olivacea*

An adult male was at Aripo Agricultural Station on 18 April 2000 (MK), another at Nariva and a third at Arena forest in April 2001 (CR). All six recent records for Trinidad have been in spring.

**Summer Tanager** *Piranga rubra*

The diagnostic call of this species was heard at Grafton estate on 15 January 1999 (DF *et al.*), the first record for Tobago.

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak**

*Pheucticus ludovicianus*

Two males were at Morne Bleu in late January 1999 (KM, CR, FH), the fourth record for Trinidad.

**Yellow Grosbeak** *Pheucticus*

*chrysopeplus*

An adult male was at Asa Wright Nature Centre on 8 November 1999 (HB). The first record for Trinidad of this species, whose range in Venezuela extends east to the mountains of Monagas and Sucre. Captive origin is possible, but probably unlikely.

**Dickcissel** *Spiza americana*

An adult male at Speyside on 13 January 1998 (CA *et al.*) was the first Tobago record.

**Bobolink** *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*

Flocks up to 50 on several days in October 2000 and 2001, mainly at Caroni rice fields, but also at Galera Point (FH, MK *et al.*); this passage migrant may have been overlooked hitherto.

In addition to the above, records

were accepted for the following 20 species, whose status has already been established: Masked Booby *Sula dactylatra*, Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*, Masked Duck *Nomonyx dominicus*, King Vulture *Sarcoramphus papa*, Yellow-headed Caracara *Milvago chimachima*, Aplomado Falcon *Falco femoralis*, Trinidad Piping-guan *Pipile pipile*, Caribbean Coot *Fulica caribaea*, Marbled Godwit *Limosa fedoa*, Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*, Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*, Ring-billed Gull *L. delawarensis*, Yellow-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus americanus*, Green-throated Mango *Anthracothorax viridigula*, Short-tailed Pygmy-tyrant *Myiornis ecaudatus*, Bank Swallow *Riparia riparia*, Blackpoll Warbler *Dendroica striata*, Moriche Oriole *Icterus chryscephalus*, Yellow-bellied Seedeater *Sporophila nigricollis* and Ruddy-breasted Seedeater *Sporophila minuta*. One record was accepted without the species being certainly established, namely a Common *Chordeiles minor* or Antillean Nighthawk *C. gundlachii*, either of which would be a first record for Tobago. Records were accepted for Chukar *Alectoris chukar* and Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*, but both were considered

to be escaped captives. Records for 22 species were rejected for a variety of reasons, mostly uncertain identification.

Observers: C. Abrams, A. Adcock, N. Arnold, P. Bacon, M. Bowen, B. Bowman, I. & G. Broadbent, H. Brokaw, E. Clarke, P. Davis, P. Dukes, G. Engblom, M. French, R. French, D. Finch, P. Gaywood, M. Gillespie, G. Gomes, N. Hacking, P. Harris, F. Hayes, A. James, P. Jones, J. Kaplan, M. Kenefick, H. Kilpatrick, N. Lallsingh, C. Lowe, D. B. McNair, D. McRae, J. Mehmel, K. Mellen, A. Mendus, R. Mohammed, R. Neckles, W. Petersen, S. Ramsaran, N. Riches, C. Rooks, E. Rooks, R. Rowlett, I. Samad, B. Sanasie, G. Stephen, M. Taylor, R. Taylor, N. Trimm, S. Warry, R. Webster, G. Wilson, A. White, and G. White.

The Committee presently consists of Martyn Kenefick (Secretary), Richard French, Geoffrey Gomes, Floyd Hayes, William Murphy, Courtenay Rooks and Graham White. Records should be sent to the Secretary at [martynkenefick@netscape.net](mailto:martynkenefick@netscape.net). Copies of the Species Review List and the Rare Bird Report Form are available on the Internet at <http://www.geocities.com/trbc>.

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#### A unusual altitudinal record of White-cheeked Pintail *Anas bahamensis* in Ecuador

White-cheeked Pintail *Anas bahamensis* is a widespread Neotropical species, generally associated with coastal habitats, though occurring inland in southern South America, regularly to 2,550 m near Cochabamba, Bolivia, and once at 4,080 m, at Lago Junín, Peru<sup>1</sup>. In Ecuador, it is a common resident on the coast and in adjacent lowlands, where it has rapidly expanded its range since the first record in 1953<sup>2</sup>. On

17 March 2002, while censusing waterbirds on Laguna Mica, Napo Province, Ecuador, at 3,900 m, we found an adult White-cheeked Pintail. It was initially located by LL within a flock of 230 Yellow-billed Pintail *Anas spinicauda* roosting in the centre of the lake, and was seen well through a telescope in good light conditions. This is the first record away from the coastal hinterland in Ecuador and appears to be the second-highest altitudinal report ever.

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#### White-breasted Parakeet

#### *Pyrrhura albipectus*: a new record for Peru

White-breasted Parakeet *Pyrrhura albipectus* is considered endemic to Ecuador. In the light of new distributional records, it has been suggested that 'this species is likely to occur in adjacent Peru'<sup>1</sup>. Nevertheless, it has not previously been recorded there<sup>2</sup>.

Corporación Ornitológica del Ecuador (CECIA) has recently conducted surveys in the Cordillera del Condor, which forms part of the border between Ecuador and Peru. As part of these, a field visit to an area known as Condor Mirador (03°38'S 78°23'W; at 1,800 m), in Morona-Santiago province, was undertaken. On 19 December

2000, a group of 12–14 White-breasted Parakeet was observed flying 15 m overhead while I was stationed in one of the passes that represents the border between the two countries. The flock flew from the Ecuadorian side of the range into the valley of the Alto Cenepa and forest in Peru. The group was observed without binoculars for c.10 seconds, but the distinctive, broad white band across the breast, extending onto the head- and neck-sides, was clearly seen in the clear, sunny conditions.

The ecology of the cloud forest along the río Cenepa within Peru is identical to that on the Ecuadorian side where this parakeet is relatively uncommon. The entire area has been the subject of conflict between Ecuador and Peru, and, therefore, visiting the Peruvian side of the río Cenepa was politically difficult. This situation and the presence of land mines in the area prohibited visiting this remote Peruvian forest. This sighting is the first observation of the species for Peru.

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#### Further sightings of Selva Cacique *Cacicus koepckeae* in Manu National Park, Peru

Following its discovery in 1963 at Balta, dpto. Loreto<sup>4</sup>, Selva Cacique *Cacicus koepckeae* was among the most enigmatic of Neotropical birds. It evaded conclusive rediscovery until March–April 1998, when it was found on the upper río Camisea, dpto. Cusco, and later (in October 1998) on the nearby río Manu Chico, dpto. Madre de Dios<sup>2</sup>. In the interim, there were at least two inconclusive reports from Manu



National Park in the 1980s<sup>1,6</sup>. One of these—from Cocha Cashu Biological Station—was initially considered 'almost certain', and the species was therefore listed as provisional on a site inventory<sup>6</sup>. Despite an enormous amount of field work and mist-netting at this locality, no further observations were made, such that the species was removed from subsequent lists<sup>3</sup> and considered unlikely to occur in the immediate vicinity (J. Terborgh pers. comm. 2001).

In September 2001, I found three separate groups of Selva Cacique holding territories along a c.5 km stretch of shallow creek (c.5 m broad) flowing through pristine lowland forest, c.8 km from Cocha Cashu Biological Station (uplands trail). They were always along the creek itself, never in adjacent forest, and appeared to be restricted to disturbed riverine regrowth containing cane, bamboo, dense creepers and some *Heliconia*. All records of the species appear to be along small rivers<sup>2,4</sup>. The groups apparently comprised adults, and were stable in number (one of four, one of five and one of six individuals) and each tended to be found in the same stretch of creek over a four-week period. Previous sightings have been of 1–4 individuals, usually pairs<sup>2</sup>, and a group of six<sup>1</sup>. At Cocha Cashu, the groups ranged from the low understorey to the upper canopy, but spent most time 1–5 m above ground in dense tangles of bamboo or vines. The species was most frequently located by its loud and distinctive vocalisations<sup>5</sup> (see Fig. 1), which it often gave, although it tended to respond to playback of these calls

by flying away.

These are the first confirmed sightings of Selva Cacique at Cocha Cashu Biological Station, the most accessible locality for the species to date (N. G. Gerhart *in litt.* 2002). They follow 30 years of intensive field work at the site, albeit in a little-visited locale away from the main study grid. The species is not so much skulking as inconspicuous and highly local; knowledge of its vocalisations and habitat requirements will undoubtedly lead to many more records within its small range.

#### Acknowledgements

I thank INRENA and John Terborgh for permission to work at Cocha Cashu Biological Station, Manu National Park, Peru, and Nat Seddon for preparing the sonogram.

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#### Notes on breeding behaviour in Black-faced Cotinga

##### *Conioptilon mcilhennyi*

Black-faced Cotinga *Conioptilon mcilhennyi*—a relatively recently discovered species<sup>2</sup>—is restricted to tall floodplain forests in south-west Peru<sup>1</sup>, with recent records from adjacent Acre, western Brazil, in November 1994<sup>4</sup>, and Pando, northern Bolivia, in July 2001 (Armonía Bolivian Bird Database). As there is no information on its breeding behaviour<sup>3</sup> (G. Greene pers. comm. 2002), I describe two nests of this species that I found at Cocha Cashu Biological Station, Manu National Park, dpto. Madre de Dios, Peru, in 2001.

A bird was watched nest-building in an isolated streamside tree (*Cecropia* sp.) on 16 September. This nest site—c.15 m above ground—was abandoned for unknown reasons after two days, and another nest was commenced in the same tree at the same height. Nest-building was undertaken by one individual, presumably the female, although the 'male' was in constant attendance. The 'female' visited the site every few minutes through the middle of the day, carrying scraps of fine plant fibre that were wound onto two narrow, open branches at their fork. The 'male' was in constant attendance,

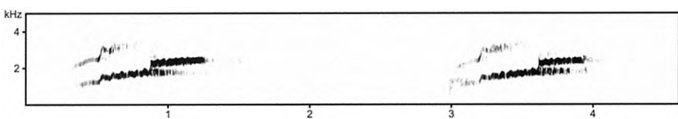


Figure 1. Sonogram of calls of Selva Cacique *Cacicus koepckeae* (probably one individual, although possibly a duet) recorded at Cocha Cashu Biological Station, Manu National Park, Peru, in September 2001. This was the only vocalisation given during the study period: two (1–3) high notes followed by two low notes (transcribed as *ching-ching chung-chung*), repeated frequently. Sonogram created with Avisoft-SASLab Pro on standard wide-band settings (FFT = 512, frequency bandwidth = 235 Hz, time resolution = 4 ms).

apparently mate-guarding, but never directly assisted with nest construction. Both individuals frequently called and 'sang' (see Fig. 1), and the nest-building operation was undertaken with little wariness. Nest-building occurred daily, but even after a week the nest itself was barely visible. It was not possible to return to this nest and further details are therefore unavailable.

Another pair was discovered feeding a single nestling c.35 m above ground in an enormous *Ceiba cf. pentandra* (Bombacaceae), on 28–30 September 2001. The nest—sufficiently small as to be invisible—was situated at the fork of two branches. Both adults fed the nestling, often vocalising loudly as they did so, drawing attention to themselves. The nest tree also contained an active nest of Ornate Hawk-eagle *Spizaetus ornatus*. The young appeared almost uniformly pale grey with no black visible on the head, and the face relatively pale. On closer inspection, this nestling was clearly well developed (almost the size of adults) but covered in down which was mottled pale and black; it was easily mistaken for a patch of lichen until it gaped for food.

These are the first breeding records, and therefore the first description of both nest and nestling for the genus. The main breeding season for most species in south-east Peru commences in August–September, continuing until December–March, and on these grounds *Conioptilon* was accurately predicted to breed at

this time<sup>3</sup>. Breeding behaviour in the cotinga family in general is extremely poorly known, largely because so many species are difficult to locate when not displaying or vocalising, and because so many of their inconspicuous nests are probably situated in the forest canopy.

Nest structure in *Conioptilon* is apparently typical for the family: most cotingas build open nests, these usually being tiny flimsy-looking saucer-shaped structures<sup>3</sup>. The dense covering of down in young *Conioptilon* is also a common feature of cotinga nestlings<sup>3</sup>. In the first *Conioptilon* nest described above, guarding of the female by the male was apparently intense during nest-building (and therefore presumably shortly before the fertile period). This behaviour is common in many temperate bird species but has not been previously reported in the Cotingidae; indeed, males of most cotingas either make no effort to protect their paternity or spend little time with the female during the breeding period<sup>3</sup>.

#### Acknowledgements

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#### Feeding behaviour of herons at sea off the coast of south-east Brazil

The following observations document behaviour by two heron species apparently foraging for waste from fishing boats at sea, near Baía da Ilha Grande, Parati, south-east Brazil, during 30 December 2000 to 18 March 2001. Parati is c.150 km west-southwest of Rio de Janeiro.

In the mid-morning of 18 January 2001, from a beach known as Prahinia, c.8 km north-east of Parati, I observed two Black-crowned Night-heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* around a fishing boat 400–500 m offshore. They were associated with 19 Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens*, eight Neotropic Cormorant *Phalacrocorax olivaceus* and c.6 terns (probably Royal *Sterna maxima* and Common *S. hirundo*). One of the herons remained high above the surface, the other came low (as did some of the other species), landed on the sea and flew off again.

At mid-morning of 2 February 2001, at the same location, I observed five Black-crowned Night-heron, c.15 terns (Royal or

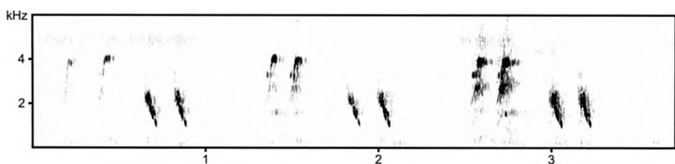


Figure 1. Sonogram of song and calls of Black-faced Cotinga *Conioptilon mcilhennyi*, recorded at Cocha Cashu Biological Station, Manu National Park, Peru. The 'song' is loud and distinctive, usually likened to one of the main calls of Smooth-billed Ani *Crotophaga ani* or an old-fashioned telephone: an upwardly inflected *brriing*. The call is a simple *pew* note. The two vocalisations were given regularly during nest-building and chick-rearing by both male and female. Sonogram created with Avisoft-SASLab Pro on standard wide band settings (FFT = 512, frequency bandwidth = 235 Hz, time resolution = 4 ms).

Cayenne *Sterna sandvicensis eurygnathus*), four Neotropic Cormorant and a Cocoli Heron *Ardea cocoi* around several fishing boats 400–500 m offshore. The latter flew c.50 m above the surface, then descended with legs outstretched, settled briefly on the sea, before flying low to the shore, where it perched on a boulder.

Finally, at 15h30, on 24 February 2001, from a yacht c.6 km east-northeast of Parati, I observed five Black-crowned Night-heron, which while apparently en route between the mainland and an island c.1 km offshore, circled behind a fishing boat, with 1–2 briefly alighting on the sea.

Although all my observations were at such distance that it was impossible to observe what, if anything, the herons took from the sea, that they briefly settled on the surface strongly suggests that they were feeding. Such behaviour close to fishing boats, which in two cases attracted other species known to scavenge fish waste, indicates that the herons were attracted by the same food resource. Del Hoyo *et al.*<sup>1</sup> and Hancock & Kushlan<sup>2</sup> mention that herons do forage aerially, albeit rarely, but apparently only in natural circumstances and not while scavenging around fishing boats. The only known instances of either species feeding offshore are recorded for the race *falklandicus* of Black-crowned Night-heron, which visits kelp beds 500 m from land<sup>2</sup>. Indeed, Cocoli Heron has not previously been recorded at sea<sup>1,2</sup>. A Cocoli Heron was also observed flying across the mouth of the bay at Prahinia, on 5 February, again a few hundred metres out.

Aerial foraging of herons appears not uncommon around Parati, given my observations over less than three months. It is also noteworthy that the behaviour occurred in full daylight, although Black-crowned Night-heron is principally a crepuscular/nocturnal feeder<sup>2</sup>. Several were regularly observed feeding on the mudflats at Parati, but only in late evening. The topography around Parati may have favoured

the development of such behaviour. Baía da Ilha Grande is a large bay (c.50 km x 40 km) of the Atlantic Ocean, with many forested islands of all sizes. Many small boats (c.10 m long) fish the bay, and herons regularly move between the mainland and islands during daylight. Sometimes, on these trips, the birds doubtless fly close to fishing boats, and may, in the past, have been attracted by other bird species congregating around these boats.

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#### Un nuevo registro del Benteveo *Pitangus sulphuratus* para Chile

El Benteveo *Pitangus sulphuratus* tiene una amplia distribución en Sudamérica, principalmente al este de los Andes, desde el norte de Colombia y por el este desde Venezuela, hacia el sur llegando al centro sur de Argentina, Neuquén y Río Negro, con unos pocos casos de errantes en Chile<sup>5</sup>.

El primer espécimen para Chile fue capturado en las cercanías de Cholguan (37°S), prov. de Ñuble, en julio 1966, por E. Lamothe<sup>4</sup>. Johnson<sup>1</sup> da erróneamente la fecha de este espécimen como enero de 1967 y da la localidad como cerca de los Angeles (c.37°S), prov. Bío-Bío. Luego Johnson<sup>2</sup> reportó un registro visual el 8 de septiembre de 1969, un poco al sur de Santo Domingo (33°S), prov. San Antonio. El segundo espécimen reportado para Chile, fue capturado en Quebrada de Suca (19°S), prov. de Iquique, el 7 de julio de 1986, por D. Veas<sup>3</sup>. Luego se reportó un segundo registro visual por J. Rottman en las cercanías de

Talagante (33°S), prov. Talagante, entre el 12 y 27 de abril de 1990<sup>6</sup>. Esta información es repetida de manera incompleta por Sallabery *et al.*<sup>7</sup>. Revisando la colección del difunto Francisco Behn, se encontró un tercer espécimen nunca reportado en la literatura. Este fue colectado por F. Behn, el 10 de febrero de 1968, en Caspana (22°S, 3.200 m), prov. del Loa. Se trata de un macho, pesando 57 g, testis 2.5 x 1 mm (CFB # 934).

Sin duda el Benteveo es una especie errante en Chile, y de momento no hay ningún patrón en estos movimientos, aunque la mayoría son entre el otoño y el invierno austral. No es posible determinar la subespecie, por carecer de material comparativo. En resumen, la especie ha sido encontrada en Chile en los meses de febrero, abril, julio y septiembre, en las regiones I, II, V, Área Metropolitana y VIII, y desde el nivel del mar hasta los 3.200 m de altitud.

#### Agradecimientos

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### WEST INDIES

#### Bermuda

**Mississippi Kite** *Ictinia mississippiensis* has recently been added to the Bermuda list, one over Nonsuch Island, on 20 May 2002<sup>53</sup>. Among other records from spring 2002, most significant were the second island record of **Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*, on 24 April to 3 May, the first **Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus* for about ten years, on 10 June, the latest ever spring record of **Veery** *Catharus fuscescens*, on 4 May, the first May record of **Prairie Warbler** *Dendroica discolor*, and the first summer record of **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** *Pheucticus ludovicianus*, on 10 June<sup>10</sup>. The globally threatened **Cahow** *Pterodroma cahow* enjoyed a record breeding season, 65 pairs succeeded in fledging 36 chicks<sup>33</sup>.

#### Barbados

The wintering grounds of **Caribbean Martin** *Progne dominicensis* are unknown but are presumed to be in South America. Observations in winter 2000/2001 indicate that at least small numbers overwinter on Barbados<sup>14</sup>.

#### Cuba

Winter surveys of high-altitude areas of the Sierra Maestra in 1999 and 2000 revealed the presence of 12 and 19 individuals of **Bicknell's Thrush** *Catharus bicknelli*, demonstrating that the species is apparently a regular wintering bird in this part of the island<sup>91</sup>. Wiley *et al.*<sup>52</sup> provide interesting data from surveys of

mogotes forest in the west of the country in June 2000.

#### Dominican Republic

A possible hybrid between **Kirtland's Warbler** *Dendroica kirtlandii* and **Blackburnian Warbler** *D. fusca* was trapped and photographed in October 1997<sup>28</sup>. The use of sea caves for nesting by **Antillean Palm Swift** *Tachornis phoenicobia* has recently been reported<sup>27</sup>; there are no previously well-documented records of the genus using habitats other than palms in which to breed.

#### Guadeloupe

Fifteen new species have recently been added to the island list, of which are three are considered unconfirmed<sup>29</sup>. Particularly notable, among confirmed observations, are those of **Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola* and **Bare-eyed Robin** *Turdus nudigenis*, which has been proved to breed. **American Coot** *Fulica americana* has recently (February–March 2001) been discovered to breed on the island<sup>30</sup>.

#### Puerto Rico

The sixth-ever (and first white-phase) **Reddish Egret** *Egretta rufescens* in the country was discovered in December 2001<sup>43</sup>.

#### St Kitts-Nevis

A recent survey found no evidence for the continued existence of the **West Indian Whistling-duck** *Dendrocygna arborea* in St Kitts-Nevis<sup>4</sup>. What was apparently the first **American Coot** *Fulica americana* to be recorded on the latter island was observed on 16 April 2001<sup>13</sup>.

### MIDDLE AMERICA

#### Costa Rica

Among interesting records from early 2002 were a subadult **Harpy Eagle** *Harpia harpyja* (photographed at an unknown location), perhaps the first **American Avocet** *Recurvirostra americana* on the Caribbean coast of the country, at Tortuguero Canals, on 31 January, a first-winter **Pacific Golden Plover**

*Pluvialis fulva* and 6–7 **Baird's Sandpiper** *Calidris bairdii* at Chomes, on 4 January, still one **Southern Lapwing** *Vanellus chilensis* at Playa Hermosa until 21 February (see *Cotinga* 18: 108), a possible **South Polar Skua** *Catharacta maccormicki* near Carate, on the Osa Peninsula, on 2 January, possibly the first **Eurasian Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto* in Costa Rica at Grecia, in December 2001, and at least eight **Cave Swallows** *Hirundo fulva* at La Ensenada Lodge, on 30 January 2002, with several of the same species at Chomes in February<sup>15</sup>.

Later in the year, on 19 June, a male **White-tailed Emerald** *Elvira chionura* was at Kiri Lodge, near Tapantí National Park, apparently the first record on the Caribbean side of the Cordillera de Talamanca. Further records of **Pearl Kite** *Gampsonyx swainsonii* continue to expand its known range northward in the country, while **Red-breasted Blackbird** *Sturnella militaris* is similarly expanding on the east slope. June and early July brought records of **Red Knot** *Calidris canutus*, five **Surfbird** *Aphriza virgata* and **Sanderling** *Calidris alba*, the first summer records of these species in the country<sup>16</sup>. Elsewhere, Holley *et al.*<sup>22</sup> present the first description of the nest and eggs of **Ochre-breasted Antpitta** *Grallaricula flavirostris* from observations in 1999 and 2000.

#### Mexico

The first record of **Hooded Merganser** *Lophodytes cucullatus* in Campeche involved a group of 15 in November 1999<sup>44</sup>. Five new species were recently added to the avifauna of Cozumel Island: **Orange-crowned Warbler** *Vermivora celata*, **Nashville Warbler** *V. ruficapilla*, **Canada Warbler** *Wilsonia canadensis*, **Red-throated Ant-tanager** *Habia fuscicauda* and **Blue-black Grassquit** *Volatinia jacarina*<sup>32</sup>. **Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus* has recently been reported breeding up to 390 km north of earlier nesting records in Baja Califor-

nia<sup>45</sup>. New breeding data, including descriptions of the nests and eggs, have recently been provided for **Green-backed Sparrow** *Arremonops chloronotus* and **Grey-throated Chat** *Granatellus sallaei*<sup>46</sup>. Further breeding, distributional and temporal data on 70 species in central Oaxaca are provided by Forcay<sup>12</sup> in the second part of his three-part paper, including observations of ten species not previously reported from or considered rare in the study area.

### Nicaragua

Recent field work at El Jaguar, Jinotega, has revealed the presence of four new species in the country: **Green-crowned Brilliant** *Heliodoxa jacula*, **Veery** *Catharus fuscescens*, **Plain Antvireo** *Dysithamnus mentalis* and **Bay-headed Tanager** *Tangara gyrola*, while two records of **Golden-cheeked Warbler** *Dendroica chrysoparia*, on 4 and 7 April 2002, are the first Nicaraguan records since 1891<sup>2</sup>.

### Panama

The presence of **Southern Lapwing** *Vanellus chilensis*, a rarity in the country, at Tocumen International Airport, one killed in February 1997 and two present between June and July 1999, has been reported recently<sup>19</sup>.

## SOUTH AMERICA

### Argentina

The presence of **Ruby Topaz** *Chrysolampis mosquitus* in Argentina has been confirmed through photographs of a juvenile male and observations of a male at Puerto Iguazú, Misiones, in April–May 2001<sup>41</sup>. New breeding records of **Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica* in Buenos Aires province are presented by Fiameni<sup>11</sup>, while Di Giacomo *et al.*<sup>9</sup> note the first confirmed Córdoba reports of **Plumbeous Ibis** *Theristicus caerulescens* and **Ash-throated Crake** *Porzana albicollis*, first confirmed La Pampa record of **Fulvous Whistling-duck** *Dendrocygna bicolor* and first confirmed San Luis records of

**Eastern Kingbird** *Tyrannus tyrannus* and **Stripe-capped Sparrow** *Aimophila strigiceps*, as well as a number of range extensions in these and Mendoza province. Details of the distribution of two poorly known raptors, **White-throated Hawk** *Buteo albigula* and **Rufous-tailed Hawk** *B. ventralis* are presented for Neuquén, Río Negro and Chubut provinces<sup>17,18</sup>. **Silvery Grebe** *Podiceps occipitalis* has recently been proven to breed in Buenos Aires province<sup>6</sup>; previous statements in the literature concerning the species' nesting there have been undocumented.

### Brazil

A juvenile **Eurasian Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia* was photographed on Ilha Fernando de Noronha during a stay of several weeks in January–February 1999 (K. Hazevoet in *Dutch Birding* 24: 205) and there is a previous record from the island in November 1996 (per J. F. Pacheco), the first records for South America. A recent desk study by Van Remsen<sup>42</sup> has demonstrated that the true winter range of the **Veery** *Catharus fuscescens*, which in the past has been variously considered to encompass much of northern South America east of the Andes, is probably confined to south-central and south-east Brazil, based on specimen analysis. Such studies, which serve to highlight the erroneous nature of previous assumptions concerning winter ranges of Nearctic migrants, may prove highly useful in the conservation of declining North American songbirds. The following species have recently been recorded at Estação Ecológica Uruçuí-Una, Piauí, being in each case the first state record: **Stygian Owl** *Asio stygius* (range extension of c.800 km north-west from Chapada Diamantina), **Checkered Woodpecker** *Picoides mixtus* (range extension of c.970 km north from Planaltina, Distrito Federal), **Spotted Puffbird** *Bucco tamatia* (range extension of c.600 km south-east from Couto de Magalhães, Tocantins) and **Sooty**

**Grassquit** *Tiaris fuliginosa*<sup>47</sup>. Vasconcelos<sup>48</sup> adds the following new records for Serra da Carapa, Minas Gerais: **Great Black-hawk** *Buteogallus urubitinga*, **Tawny-browed Owl** *Pulsatrix koeniswaldiana*, **Ferruginous Pygmy-owl** *Glaucidium brasilianum*, **Versicoloured Emerald** *Amazilia versicolor*, **Robust Woodpecker** *Campephilus robustus*, **White-throated Woodcreeper** *Xiphocolaptes albicollis*, **Sooty Tyrannulet** *Serpophaga nigricans*, **Hellmayr's Pipit** *Anthus hellmayri* and **Red-rumped Cacique** *Cacicus haemorrhous*. The discovery of **Band-winged Nightjar** *Caprimulgus longirostris* at Chapada dos Guimarães, Mato Grosso, marks the first record for the state<sup>49</sup>. D'Angelo Neto *et al.*<sup>7</sup> report three new localities for the globally threatened **Narrow-billed Antwren** *Formicivora itheringi* in Minas Gerais. Within a discussion of the avifauna of the mangroves at Santos-Cubatão, in São Paulo, Olmos & Silva e Silva<sup>49</sup> present a number of interesting updates to the status of several birds in the state, most of them migrants or recent colonists.

### Chile

The first country records of **Black-backed Grosbeak** *Pheucticus aureoventris* were made in Region I in December 1998<sup>25</sup> and February 2000<sup>38</sup>. The northernmost Chilean record of **Black-necked Swan** *Cygnus melancoryphus* was made at Taltal, in February 1999<sup>50</sup>. **Little Blue Heron** *Egretta caerulea* has recently been found to be a resident at a site in Region IV, well south of its known range in the country<sup>36</sup>. Wilson *et al.* have recently re-identified a specimen of **Little Penguin** *Eudyptula minor* taken in central Chile as an adult, not a young bird<sup>52</sup>. The discovery, in February 2000, of a nest containing two chicks of **Giant Conebill** *Oreomanes fraseri* in Region I confirms its resident status in Chile<sup>20</sup>. A new record of **Wattled Jacana** *Jacana jacana* in the same region was

made in May 1998<sup>37</sup>. **Swainson's Hawk** *Buteo swainsoni* has been confirmed to occur in Chile, based on specimens taken in the Juan Fernández Islands, in 1875, and the Andes of Curicó, in 1923<sup>35</sup>, and **Wilson's Plover** *Charadrius wilsonia* has recently (September 1999) been observed near Arica, Region I<sup>10</sup>. The first record of **Upland Goose** *Chloephaga picta* in the Juan Fernández was made in February 2000<sup>21</sup>, and **White-faced Storm-petrel** *Pelagodroma marina* has recently been confirmed to occur in Chilean waters, based on a specimen and photographs taken near Isla Alejandro Selkirk in February 2000<sup>24</sup>.

#### Colombia

The presence of **Ecuadorian Cacique** *Cacicus sclateri* in Tinigua National Park, dpto. Meta, has recently been confirmed with specimens, providing unequivocal documentation of the species' presence in Colombia<sup>3</sup>. Further information on the species' breeding biology was also collected. During a study of geographical variation within the **Rufous-crowned Tody-tyrant** *Poecilotriccus ruficeps* superspecies, Johnson<sup>23</sup> located previously overlooked specimens of *P. r. melanomystax* from Boyacá, in the eastern Andes, as well as Venezuela (see below).

#### French Guiana

The first country records of **Rufous Potoo** *Nyctibius bracteatus* were made around Saül in September 2000<sup>5</sup>, and the first nest data for **Wing-banded Wren** *Microcerculus bambla* were recently presented by Jullien & Cariveau<sup>26</sup>. Additional breeding data for **Blackish Nightjar** *Caprimulgus nigrescens* were presented recently<sup>9</sup>.

#### Paraguay

In April 2002, an exceptional concentration of up to 20,000 **Bobolink** *Dolichonyx oryzivorus* was present at Estancia Fortín Patria, 30 km north of Bahía Negra, with the last birds being

seen on 24 April (c.1 month later than previous records in the country)<sup>1</sup>. **Dusky-legged Guan** *Penelope obscura* has recently been added to the list of species reliably recorded from the country<sup>34</sup>.

#### Venezuela

Ned Johnson<sup>23</sup> has located previously unreported specimens of **Rufous-crowned Tody-tyrant** *Poecilotriccus ruficeps melanomystax* from Trujillo and Mérida (in this country, the species was previously known only from Táchira), as well as the eastern Andes of Colombia (see above). **Cory's Shearwater** *Calonectris diomedea* has been added to the list of species recorded in the country, based on a dead individual found at the Araya Peninsula, in December 1999<sup>31</sup>.

### OTHER RECORDS RECEIVED

#### Antigua

GM submitted the following observations relating to 2001: five **Double-crested Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax auritus* at Bird Island on 29 April (perhaps the first record), two **Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus* at Green Island on 4 May (an uncommon visitor), two **Swallow-tailed Kite** *Elanoides forficatus* over Green Island on 27 May (perhaps the first record), an immature **Common Black-hawk** *Buteogallus anthracinus* at Seatons on 10 May (perhaps the first record), an apparently nest-prospecting **American Oystercatcher** *Haematopus palliatus* at Green Island on 20 May (previously considered only a vagrant), four pairs of **Roseate Tern** *Sterna dougallii* and 50–70 **Sooty Tern** *S. fuscata* were nesting on Great Bird Island on 11 May (both are considered uncommon on Antigua), a **Bank Swallow** *Riparia riparia* at Green Island on 4 May (considered a vagrant throughout most of the Lesser Antilles), and a **Philadelphia Vireo** *Vireo philadelphicus* at Wallis on 25 May (vagrant to Antigua/Barbuda).

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