## A nest of Black-collared Hawk *Busarellus nigricollis* at Serra do Amolar, Pantanal, Brazil

Black-collared Hawk *Busarellus nigricollis* occurs in tropical lowlands from Mexico to north-central Argentina[1], including much of Brazil[9]. Given its diet, mainly fish[6], the species inhabits areas near freshwater bodies in open or semi-open country, e.g. marshes, mangroves and flooded fields[3,4]. As wetlands are among some of the most fragile and threatened ecosystems due to human activities[5], the species' populations are declining in parts of the Neotropics[8,12].

In the Pantanal of western Brazil, Black-collared Hawk is widespread and considered abundant[13,14], yet there are no nesting records in the region. Here, we present the first nest record of Black-collared Hawk in Brazil.

Serra do Amolar is located in subregion Paraguay[10] at the border of Mato Grosso do Sul and Mato Grosso states, and Bolivia. The presence of hills associated with the Paraguay River makes this region particularly unique. Instituto Homem Pantaneiro (IHP), an NGO that promotes development and environmental improvement, monitors the Paraguay River and its wildlife on a monthly basis.

On 29 May 2010, at 10h57, while conducting a monthly survey, we observed an adult Black-collared Hawk at a nest (Fig. 1) beside Bonfim canal (18°15'38"S 57°25'16"W; 114 m) between the Paraguay River and Lake Mandioré, on a strip of floodplain. To the west was a series of hills about 500–600 m high; the nest was flanked by canals and the Paraguay River to the east, north and south. The strip of land comprised riparian vegetation including *Ipomoea* sp., *Cissus* sp., *Bactris* sp., *Cobretum* sp., *Cecropia* sp., as well as flood-influenced plants (Fig. 2).

The nest was sited in a *Vochysia divergens* (Vochysiaceae), a tree native to the Amazon but invasive in the Pantanal[5,7]. It was constructed in a fork of secondary branches c.15 m above the ground. Above, additional secondary branches helped shade the nest. Nests in the Argentine Chaco[2] were reported to be 9–17 m high. The nest can be described as a low cup / fork type[11], as described also by Di Giacomo[2]. Due to the height of the tree and the bird's presence, we did not climb to the nest and confirm the breeding stage. However, the hawk appeared to be incubating.

In 2010 this nest was visited monthly, but the bird was not seen again. However, on 29 March 2011 at 08h40 we observed an adult visiting the same nest with narrow branches up to 30 cm long. Nest reuse over several seasons was also observed in the Argentine Chaco where Black-collared Hawks were recorded incubating in July–November[3]. However, in the Pantanal, which has a hydrologic regime characterised by large seasonal floods followed by droughts, high water in the Serra do Amolar is in April–June, during which period the species seems to be incubating.

We took the following measurements: diameter of the nest tree at breast height 2.8 m; distance between the nest and main trunk 10 m; tree height ± 17 m; and nest height above the water 15 m. The lower part of the nest was occupied by Rufous Cacholotes *Pseudoseisura unirufa*.

Knowledge of the biology of Black-collared Hawk is limited and there are few records of nests[2,4] with none from Brazil. This is

Figure 1. Black-collared Hawk *Busarellus nigricollis*, Bonfim canal, Serra do Amolar, Pantanal, Brazil, May 2010 (Alessandra Bertassoni)

Figure 2. The nest tree (*Vochysia divergens*) and the riparian vegetation that surrounds it, Serra do Amolar, Pantanal, Brazil (Alessandra Bertassoni)

perhaps due to the bird's relative abundance, which might make it less interesting to researchers. However, data on this species could support its conservation in areas where it is threatened.

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