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### NEST AND EGGS OF THE WHITE-BROWED TAPACULO (*SCYTALOPUS SUPERCILIARIS*)

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Of the twelve species of *Scytalopus*, largest genus of the Rhinocryptidae (Meyer de Schauensee, A guide to the birds of South America, Livingston Publ. Co., 1970; Ridgely, A guide to the birds of Panama, Princeton University Press, 1976), the nest and eggs have been reported for only the Andean Tapaculo (*Scytalopus magellanicus*; Johnson, The birds of Chile and adjacent regions of Argentina, Bolivia, and Peru, Vol. II, Platt Establecimientos Graficos, 1967). On 7 November 1972, I found a nest of the White-browed Tapaculo (*S. superciliaris*) in an alder forest (*Alder jorullensis*) at 1500 m elevation (27°21'S, 65°58'W) near La Banderita, Tucuman Province, Argentina. Single-species stands of this tree occur at mid-elevations from Costa Rica to Argentina, but this tapaculo is characteristic of them only in Bolivia and Argentina.

The nest was in a tunnel between the roots of a flowering shrub that grew on a slope of a wooded ravine. Ferns, *Oxalis*, and other herbs grew in the rich loam soil. I observed an adult bird enter and leave the tunnel. The round entrance tunnel, 7 cm in diameter and 30 cm long, turned slightly to the left before reaching the nest chamber, the top of which was 15 cm under the ground. The chamber was 12 cm in horizontal diameter and 10 cm in height. The nest was a cup (Fig. 1), 5.0 cm in inside diameter, 11.5 cm in outside diameter, and 4.5 cm in outside height. It was made of roots, grasses and forbs with a lining of finer strands plus a few body feathers and three flight feathers (one from a Brown-capped Tit-spinetail, *Leptasthenura fuliginiceps*). Two white eggs, in an early stage of incubation, measured 24.5 and 25.0 by 19.0 mm. *S. m. magellanicus* builds a "complete nest of root-fibers, mosses and lichens, lining it with slender grass stems or horse hair" (Johnson 1967). It may be situated above the ground on a tree branch, in a crack between the bark and trunk,



FIGURE 1. Nest and eggs of the White-browed Tapaculo.

or on the ground in a tangle of roots. *S. m. fuscus* also builds a complete nest but "at the end of a 2 foot corridor or tunnel running through the tangle of thick vegetation growing over the face of such a miniature waterfall and parallel to it" (Johnson 1967).

Neither race of *S. magellanicus* builds its nest in an excavated tunnel as does *S. superciliaris*, but the nest cups are very similar. Within the Rhinocryptidae, similar nest tunnels are excavated by members of the genera *Scelorchilus* (Johnson 1967) and *Teledromas* (Wetmore, U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull. 133:289-293, 1926), and longer tunnels, to three meters, by *Pteroptochos* (Johnson 1967). These birds differ from *Scytalopus* in that their nesting cavities are lined with grasses and that no complete nest is constructed.

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