

THE GREAT POTOO (*NYCTIBIUS GRANDIS*) AS A PROBABLE RESIDENT IN SOUTHERN MEXICO

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In 1987, the Great Potoo, *Nyctibius grandis* was recorded for the first time in southern México (Rangel-Salazar & Vega-Rivera 1989). At that time, the species was considered to be occasional or accidental (Rangel-Salazar 1990). The Great Potoo is endangered or threatened in northern Central America (Ramos 1985).

During an expedition to the Lacandona Forest in southern Chiapas, México, we heard the Great Potoo calling within the rain forest of the Montes Azules Biosphere Reserve, along the banks of the Lacantun River, close to the village of Boca del Chajul. Chajul is approximately 130 km from the Polochic Valley and 70 km from the Salinas River Valley, previous records of the Great Potoo from Guatemala (Land & Schultz 1963).

We first heard the characteristic vocalization at 19:15 on 17 May 1989, in our camp just in front of San José creek (16°05' N, 90°56' W). This vocalization was the barking *abrrr* or *barr* (Fig. 1), like that on a cassette released by Hardy *et al.* (1989). It was followed by a short deep *mbuo*, given more frequently than the first and lasting until 21:30. This vocalization agrees with the strong and attention getting *wow*, described by Slud (1979) for young birds.

At 22:15 on 18 May on the same day, we twice heard the *barr* call. We recorded sounds between 21:35 and 22:35, the single bird continued calling until 01:00 on 19 May. (A tape recording has been deposited in the Florida Museum of Natural History Bioacoustic Archives). Local people seemed unaware of its call. At 19:35 to 22:00 the next night, we heard the *mbuo* at intervals of 10 to 20 minutes.

Apparently the calls were those of adult and juvenile potoos. As a result, we assume that the Great Potoo may breed near Chajul. The time of year agrees with the breeding chronology described by Haverschmidt (1948) for Surinam, and Vanderwerf (1988) for Venezuela.

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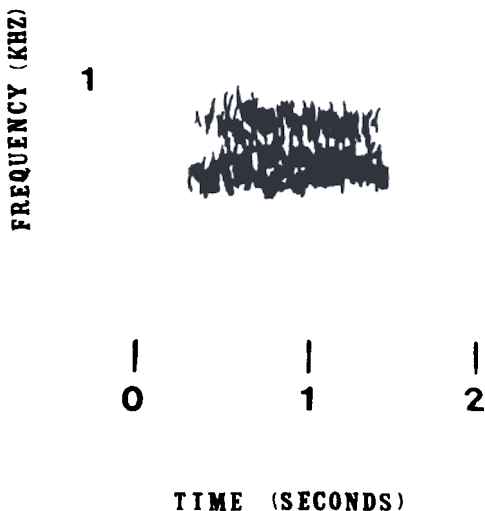


FIG. 1. Barking *abrrr* or *barr* of the Great Potoo, recorded on San José creek in the Lacandona rain forest, southern México.

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