

SHORT COMMUNICATION

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NOTES ON THE EGGS OF THE SCALY THROATED LEAFTOSSER *SCLERURUS GUATEMALENSIS*

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On 19 February 1992 while mistnetting in an area of rain forest, previously logged but with many mature trees still standing, in the hill just north of Salamanca Camp, Toledo District, Belize, a bird was continually flushed on my approach to one of the nets. The net was partially suspended over an old wheel rut from a large logging tractor, approximately 50 cm deep and 1 m wide. The bird evaded capture by flying along the depression, and under the net. Curious to ascertain the identity of the bird, I blocked the space below the net with twigs and small branches.

On the next approach to the net, the bird was again seen to fly along the wheel rut, but on this occasion was forced to rise over the obstruction, and thus into the mist net. On examination it was found to be a Scaly-throated Leaf-tosser, *Sclerurus guatemalensis*. The bird had a large brood patch.

The obstruction below the net was removed, and the bird released.

On the following net round I watched along the length of the wheel rut, while my companion approached the net. The bird was seen to emerge from the bank of the rut, and fly off.

A short search located the entrance to the nest tunnel, and the contents, two eggs, were removed from the nest for examination, and photographed before being replaced.

The tunnel had an oval shaped entrance 20 mm high, 55 mm wide, directly under the top of

the rut. No vegetation concealed the entrance, which was well hidden in shadow. The tunnel sloped slightly upwards for 30 cm, widening at the end (nest chamber). I removed a sample of the nest material, and found it to be plant matter, mainly leaf veins, much as described by Skutch (1969) from nests on Barro Colorado Island, Panama, and from El General, Costa Rica, however the eggs differed markedly from his description of plain white. They were speckled with reddish-brown, and dark chocolate markings. The markings were more concentrated at the broad end of the eggs. These marks were too clearly defined and regular to be staining.

Stone (1918), describes eggs of this species similarly marked, from near Gatun, Canal Zone, Panama, although this description was later discounted by Wetmore (1972).

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