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NOTES ON NESTS AND BREEDING ACTIVITY OF FOURTEEN BIRD SPECIES FROM SOUTHWESTERN COLOMBIA

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Notas sobre nidos y actividades de anidación de catorce especies de aves del suroccidente de Colombia.

Key words: *Nests, breeding activity, southwestern Colombia.*

INTRODUCTION

This report presents new or additional data on the breeding ecology of fourteen species of birds from the Pacific Andean slope of southwestern Colombia. The observations were made during a field study of tanagers (Thraupinae) conducted in 1996–1998 in the private Nature Reserves La Planada (1°5'N, 77°24'W), Municipio Ricaurte, and Río Nambi (1°18'N, 78°05'W), Municipio Barba-coas, on the Pacific slope of the Andes in departamento Nariño, SW Colombia (Strewe 1999).

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Sickle-winged Guan (*Chamaepetes goudotii*). On 11 May 1997, during an excursion to a farm near La Planada Nature Reserve, a female was disturbed from the nest. The nest site was located on a steep slope within humid premontane forest at 1780 m. It was found in dense undergrowth of primary forest 15 m from a small trail. The nest, a small simple platform of twigs and green leaves, was constructed c. 3 m above ground on a cross of

strong broken branches. The clutch comprised three unpitted white eggs. Previously, white finely-pitted eggs of this species were reported from Antioquia (Sclater & Salvin 1879, Hilty & Brown 1986). Fledglings were reported in June at 2400 m in Santa Marta (Colombia), in September in Pichincha (N Ecuador), and in February–May in Peru (Hilty & Brown 1986, Fjeldsa & Krabbe 1990, del Hoyo *et al.* 1994).

Dark-backed Wood-quail (*Odontophorus melanotus*). The relatively little known Dark-backed Wood-quail is a range-restricted species of the endemic bird area (EBA) chocó and is classified as near threatened (Collar *et al.* 1994, del Hoyo *et al.* 1994, Stattersfield *et al.* 1998). On the Pacific slope in Nariño, the species is not uncommon within primary forest at altitudes between 1100 and 2200 m. Along a 2000 m transect at altitude 1840–2050 m on a slope within the La Planada Nature Reserve, seven territories were occupied in April 1998. Several pairs accompanied by 3–5 juveniles of different ages were recorded in 1997–98. Downy chicks were found on 9 June 1997 and 2 December 1997;

young were registered on 4 September 1997, 1 January 1997, and on 10 January 1998.

Velvet-purple Coronet (*Boissonneaua jardini*). The nest of the Velvet-purple Coronet is known from one description from Ecuador (Ruschi 1973, Hilty & Brown 1986, del Hoyo *et al.* 1999). On 9 September 1997, a nest of this species was found below the La Planada Nature Reserve in the Rio Pialapi Valley at 1740 m. The habitat was a border of a landslide within broken primary forest. The moss and lichen-covered cup nest was constructed on a strong horizontal branch, with SE exposure, at 10.5 m height in the canopy of a *Clusia* sp. (*Clusiaceae*) tree. The nest was covered by another horizontal branch. An adult was observed feeding young at the nest five times during a period of 20 min. Additionally, one individual was observed collecting nest material from a tree fern at a forest border at 1050 m close to the village Junín, Municipio Barba-coas, on 6 July 1997.

Brown Inca (*Coeligena wilsoni*). One nest of the chocó endemic Brown Inca was found on 9 September 1996 in a secondary forest within the La Planada Nature Reserve at 1880 m. The cup nest was constructed c. 1.50 m above ground in the top of a young 1.80 m tall *Elaeagia* sp. (*Rubiaceae*) tree; the large leaves covered the nest completely. The relatively deep cup nest was constructed of moss and lichen. It was situated 6 m beside a small path in the undergrowth of relatively open secondary forest (age c. 20 years) close to a primary forest complex. Two pullis were found inside the nest. On 14 September 1996 the pullis were still alive; during the next visit on 16 September 1996 the nest was empty. There is one previous report of a similar nest, which was built of moss and soft seed fiber in a fork of young tree 2–3 m above ground (del Hoyo *et al.* 1999).

Fulvous-dotted Treerunner (*Margarornis stella-*

tus). Previously, there was no available information about the breeding ecology of the Fulvous-dotted Treerunner, a chocó endemic. The observations of a copulating pair in primary forest canopy at 1660 m on 5 February 1998, and of an adult carrying food at 1740 m on 10 April 1998, represent the first data on the breeding activity of this relatively poorly known species. Both records were in humid premontane forest in the Pialapi Valley below La Planada Nature Reserve, where the species is uncommon within mixed-species flocks.

Pacific Tuftedcheek (*Pseudocolaptes johnsoni*). For the genus *Pseudocolaptes*, only two nest descriptions are known to exist. A nest of the Streaked Tuftedcheek (*P. boissonneaultii*) was discovered in an abandoned woodpeckerhole in a decaying treetrunk (Colombia) (Fjeldsa & Krabbe 1990). For the Buffy Tuftedcheek (*P. lawrencii*), from which the Pacific Tuftedcheek was separated (Ridgely & Tudor 1994), one nest in a woodpeckerhole, 10 m up in a forest opening, was reported from Costa Rica (Hilty & Brown 1986, Stiles & Skutch 1989). The first nest description of Pacific Tuftedcheek comes from humid premontane forest within the Pialapi Valley at 1740 m. On 2 June 1997, a nest was encountered in an abandoned woodpeckerhole in a decaying treetrunk (diameter c. 55 cm) c. 11.5 m above ground at a forest border. Interestingly, a pair of Golden-olive Woodpecker (*Piculus rubiginosus*) was feeding its nesting young in a cave only c. 1.20 m below the Pacific Tuftedcheek nest hole. During the course of several days, a pair of Pacific Tuftedcheek was observed carrying food to the nest cavity. In April 1998, probably the same pair of Pacific Tuftedcheek used the identical treetrunk, but later moved to the nest cavity that Golden-olive Woodpecker had constructed and occupied the year before. Between 6 and 10 April 1998, both adults of Pacific Tuftedcheek were observed carrying food. On 11 September 1996, only c.

2.5 km from the Pacific Tuftedcheek nesting site, a pair of Streaked Tuftedcheek was observed feeding two dependent juveniles within the plain of La Planada at 1840 m. The two *Pseudocolaptes* species were never observed within the same habitat of the same altitude, an indication that Pacific Tuftedcheek is replaced at higher elevations by Streaked Tuftedcheek. However, the respective elevations of the breeding localities differed by only 100 m.

Uniform Treehunter (*Thripadectes ignobilis*). The breeding biology of the Uniform Treehunter, another chocó endemic, is practically unknown. Here, three nest sites are described from different altitudes. In June 1997, an active nest was found in humid montane forest in the Miraflores Valley at 2050 m. The burrow was dug in the bank of a path at 1 m height. Its entrance had a diameter of 7 cm. Within the La Planada Nature Reserve at 1840 m, a nest was found in the bank of a small reservoir, the water level of which was low due to dry periods caused by El Niño. This burrow was located 80 cm above the water surface and was covered by roots of bordering trees. On 2 September 1997, two adults were observed carrying food to the burrow entrance. Within the Rio Ñambi Nature Reserve, a pair used the same bank of a small artificial channel for the construction of the burrow in June 1997 and in May 1998.

Orange-breasted Fruiteater (*Pipreola jucunda*). There is no information available about the breeding biology of the chocó endemic Orange-breasted Fruiteater. This species was recorded regularly in the premontane zone on the Pacific slope up to 1850 m. On 10 April 1998, a pair was observed at the border of a small landslide within a primary forest complex in the Pialapi Valley (1740 m). The male was calling intensively and the female was carrying food. Both flew into a dense

clump of vines on a very steep slope; it was impossible to locate the nest.

Black-billed Peppershrike (*Cyclarhis nigrirostris*). On 10 March 1997, an adult Black-billed Peppershrike was observed nest building in the canopy of a *Clusia* tree (Clusiaceae) at 16 m height. The nest was a thin-walled finely woven deep cup, suspended by the rim from the crotch of a branch. The habitat of the nest locality was disturbed primary forest within the plain of the La Planada Nature Reserve at 1850 m. The nesting tree was situated c. 15 m beside from a main path.

Golden-bellied Warbler (*Basileuterus chrysogaster*). Golden-bellied Warbler is not well known in Colombia and no information about its breeding ecology has been published (Hilty & Brown 1986, Ridgely & Tudor 1989). Three observations within the lower premontane zone of the Pacific slope give hints about the breeding period of this species. On 2 October 1996, two individuals were observed carrying nest material at a forest border beside the Rio Ñambi at 1480 m. Also within the Rio Ñambi Nature Reserve, a pair was seen feeding fledglings at 1400 m on 9 June 1997. On 29 January 1998, an adult was recorded carrying nest material in the lower Rio Ñambi Valley at 850 m.

Yellow-collared Chlorophonia (*Chlorophonia flavivirostris*). For the chocó endemic Yellow-collared Chlorophonia, no exact breeding data are known to exist; only Hilty noted pairs believed nesting in the upper Anchicaya Valley in June (Hilty & Brown 1986, Isler & Isler 1999). On 3 May 1997, a pair of this species was observed nest building at a forest border along a landslide in the Pialapi Valley at 1740 m. Only the female carried nest material and constructed the closed nest out of moss and grass with a side entrance, while the male accompanied her. The nest was situated in a

canopy of *Alchornea* sp. (Fabaceae), heavily laden with epiphytes and moss, close to the trunk at a height of c. 14 m. The nest was nearly finished when the pair was disturbed and finally exiled by a pair of Beryl-spangled Tanager (*Tangara nigroviridis*), which started constructing their nest in the same canopy.

Dusky Bush-Tanager (*Chlorospingus semifuscus*). The first nest of Dusky Bush-Tanager, endemic for the EBA chocó, was found within the La Planada Nature Reserve on 23 April 1997. A female was encountered carrying grass and dry bamboo leaves to a canopy close beside a path at 1840 m. The nest was situated below a strong horizontal branch c. 2 m from the trunk at a height of 7.5 m. The nest cup was embedded in moss and epiphytes. The progress of breeding success was checked several times, but finally in May no activity was registered. A second nest was found c. 200 m away on 29 June 1998. This nest was not visible, but the adults were carrying food and the pullis were heard begging. In addition, stub-tailed young with feeding adults were recorded on 2 June 1997, and four more times in April 1998 and on 11 July 1998, at different localities within humid premontane forest of the La Planada plain.

Orange-crowned Euphonia (*Euphonia saturata*). On 30 April 1997, a female was observed collecting nest material (dry roots and bamboo leaves) at a forest border within the PIALAPI Valley (1790 m). On 17 April 1998, a female was again seen carrying material for nest construction. A globular grass and moss nest with a side entrance was discovered in epiphytes close to the trunk, covered with heavy moss. The dry tree was situated at a border of humid premontane forest and pastures on a ridge at 1740 m. The male was always present, in company with the female, and sang from an exposed branch of the nesting tree (tape recorded).

Golden-collared Honeycreeper (*Iridophanes pulcherrima*). On 7 June 1997, a pair of Golden-collared Honeycreeper was observed carrying food at 1600 m within the PIALAPI Valley. Unfortunately, it was impossible to locate the presumptive nest site exactly, as it was on a very steep slope covered with dense low vegetation. On two other occasions adults of this species were seen carrying food, on several days in May 1997, at a forest border at 1740 m and, on 5 June 1998, within La Planada at 1840 m. On 26 September, a dependent juvenile with two adults was recorded in the Río Ñambi Nature Reserve at 1350 m. These individuals foraged for fruits in a *Miconia* sp. (Melastomataceae) canopy and searched for insects at *Clusia* flowers; only the female fed the young.

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