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Records of new and unusual birds from northern Bolivia

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Recent fieldwork by the authors in northern and central Bolivia has yielded numerous noteworthy distributional records of birds, including 14 species not previously reported from the country (*Sterna paradisaea, Nannopsittaca* sp. nov., *Lurocalis semitorquatus, Eubucco tucinkae, Automolus dorsalis, Xenops milleri, Frederickena unduligera, Conopophaga peruviana, Oxyruncus cristatus, Mionectes olivaceus, Phylloscartes* sp. nov., *Cyphorhinus thoracicus, Conothraupis speculigera* and *Psarocolius oseryi*), and numerous species until now known in the country from only one or a few localities.

Much of the information included in this paper results from avifaunal surveys undertaken to determine the biological importance of little-known regions not previously visited by biologists. This work was jointly carried out by personnel of the Museo de Historia Natural (La Paz), Instituto de Ecología (La Paz), and the Rapid Assessment Program of Conservation International (Washington, DC). Critical logistical support was provided by Hermes Justiniano, Director of Fundación Amigos de la Naturaleza (Santa Cruz). Also included are some observations made by Parker and colleagues during visits to the Río Heath, along the Bolivia–Peru border, in August 1988, and to the Serranía de Huanchaca of eastern Santa Cruz in August 1989; that work was supported by the Louisiana State Museum of Natural Science (LSUMNS). Specimens were deposited in the Museo de Historia Natural La Paz (MHNLP), and sound recordings are housed in the Library of Natural Sounds, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York (LNS). Plant identifications were provided by

Robin Foster (Field Museum of Natural History), Alwyn Gentry (Missouri Botanical Garden), and Stefan Beck (Herbario Nacional, La Paz).

The majority of records included herein were obtained at seven localities.

(1) Dpto. La Paz: lower Río Heath, from Puerto Pardo upriver c. 50 km. Parker (and P. Marra, D. Ricalde, K. Rosenberg, C. Walton and W. Wust) surveyed birds of riverine and high-ground forests 10–19 August 1988.

(2) Dpto. La Paz: Alto Madidi (13°40′S,69°00′W), a logging camp on the south bank of the Río Madidi opposite the mouth of the Río Enatagua, c. 100 km NW of Ixiamas. A variety of tall evergreen forest types along a transect c. 5 km × 200 m was surveyed by Parker and Castillo 15 May–1 June 1990; 403 species of birds were found, including 60 species not previously reported from the department.

(3) Dpto. La Paz: Ixiamas (13°40′S,68°10′W), a small town at the western edge of an extensive savannah bordered by more extensive forests, 100 km NW of Rurrenabaque. Parker and Castillo surveyed grasslands 0.5 km north and 0.5–7.0 km E of the town 1–3 June 1990.

(4) Dpto. La Paz: Calabatea (14°45′S,68°33′W), a road construction camp c. 35 km SW of Apolo along a new road to La Paz. From 7 to 12 June 1990 Parker surveyed birds in pristine lower montane forests at 1300 to 1600 m. (Note: this is not the Calabatea of Carriker (Bond & Meyer de Schauensee 1942.)

(5) Dpto. Beni: Estación Biológica del Beni (14°38′S,66°18′W), 50 km E of San Borja. Includes records obtained by Rocha during extensive fieldwork in 1988–1989, and by Parker and Gell-Mann 17–18 June 1989.

(6) Dpto. Beni: Serranía Pilón (14°50′S,67°20′W), c. 40 km W of San Borja. From 13 to 16 June 1990, Parker, Gell-Mann and Spencer Beebe surveyed lower montane forests on both slopes of Serranía Pilón, 600–1000 m.

(7) Dpto. Beni: Versalles (13°00′S,62°50′W), a small village (pop. 130) on the Bolivian side of the Río Iténez/Guaporé. Riverine and high-ground forests were inventoried 16–17 June 1990 by Parker, Rocha and Hermes Justiniano.

Species accounts

VARIEGATED TINAMOU *Crypturellus variegatus*

One calling (LNS) at dusk on 28 May 1990 in upland forest at Alto Madidi represents the second record for Bolivia, and the southernmost anywhere for the species. The exceptional diversity of tinamous (9 forest species) at this locality underscores the biological importance of the region.

BRAZILIAN TINAMOU *Crypturellus strigilosus*

Although there are few published records of this species in Bolivia (Remsen & Traylor 1989), it is apparently widespread and locally common in the eastern third of the country. In August 1990 Parker and Rocha heard (LNS) several each day in stunted, vine-rich forests along the upper Río Negro at Perseverancia, Dpto. Santa Cruz, and also heard one

on 20 August in similar forest west of Versalles, Dpto. Beni (the first departmental record). The species was recently found to be common in forests along the western edge of the Serranía de Huanchaca, Dpto. Santa Cruz (Bates *et al.*, in press).

LESSER YELLOW-HEADED VULTURE *Cathartes burrovianus*

This species is common and widespread in the savannahs of northern and central Bolivia. Up to 30 were noted each day in open grasslands at Ixiamas, Dpto. La Paz, and even larger numbers were seen daily in the San Borja, Dpto. Beni, area in June 1989 (e.g., 28 were counted on consecutive fenceposts in seasonally inundated grassland 27 km E of San Borja, and 46 were seen in the air at once a few km farther west). On 25 June 1990 we counted a minimum of 200 individuals within 30 km of San Borja. Many were gathered on the ground or fenceposts near small, rapidly shrinking ponds filled with fish (*Hoplias* sp.). We have observed equally large numbers from a small plane during overflights of pristine savannahs along the Río Negro in southern Dpto. Beni, and over similar areas along the Río Grande in the northwesternmost portion of Dpto. Santa Cruz. In all of these regions, *C. burrovianus* outnumbers *C. aura* in grassland.

Surprisingly, the first Bolivian records of *C. burrovianus* were reported only within the last 10 years (Remsen & Ridgely 1980, Schmitt & Schmitt 1987).

TINY HAWK *Accipiter superciliosus*

One perched tamely in canopy at the edge of tall foothill forest at 650 m on the lower east slope of Serranía Pilón apparently represents the first record for Dpto. Beni, and one of only a few for the country (Remsen & Traylor 1989). The small size, whitish, lightly barred underparts, yellowish cere and orbital flesh, and yellowish legs distinguish this little-known species from similar raptors.

SOLITARY EAGLE *Harpyhaliaetus solitarius*

Two adults circling low over mossy, ridgetop forest at c. 1050 m on Serranía Pilón represent a first record for Dpto. Beni, and one of the few for the entire country (Remsen & Traylor 1989).

BLACKISH RAIL *Rallus nigricans*

In late May 1990, Parker heard the unmistakable calls of a pair of this species several times at Alto Madidi, where at least one pair inhabited a 1 ha marshy area of tall grasses (*Paspalum* sp.) in several cm of water. This is only the second record of *R. nigricans* for Bolivia, the first being a sighting from Dpto. Pando (Parker & Remsen 1987). Vocalizations heard at Alto Madidi included a series of strident *wheee* notes, probably given by the male, and a low, almost inaudible *bubububu* series given simultaneously by the other (female?) individual.

GREY-BREASTED CRAKE *Laterallus exilis*

Although reported for the first time in Bolivia only recently (Schulenberg & Remsen 1982), this inconspicuous species is apparently common and widespread in lowland northern and central Bolivia. At least 3 pairs were calling (LNS) in thick grasses at the edge of a flooded depression

bordered by an expansive grassland c. 27 km E of San Borja, Dpto. Beni, on 24 June 1989, and 2 pairs called from tall grass along the airstrip at Rurrenebaque, Dpto. Beni, on 21 May 1990. The species was common (LNS) at Alto Madidi and Ixiamas, in dry and flooded areas of tall grasses (*Paspalum* spp.) along the edge of the airstrips, and in small marshy places; at least 12 pairs were located at Alto Madidi, and 2–3 pairs were heard at Ixiamas. Rufous-sided Crakes *Laterallus melanophaius* were heard in the same small marshes at Alto Madidi.

On 17 August 1990, Parker and Rocha heard the distintive calls (*tink-tink-tink*) of at least 2 *L. exilis* in floating mats of *Paspalum* along the Río Negro at Perseverancia, Dpto. Santa Cruz; these are the first records for the department and southernmost for the country.

RUSSET-CROWNED CRAKE *Laterallus viridis*

A male and a female (AMNH 791736, 791737) collected by J. Cuello along the Río Mamoré at Guayaramerin, Dpto. Beni, on 2 May 1965 represent the first documented Bolivian record (A. Capparella, *in litt.*). Remsen & Traylor (1989) considered Niethammer's (1953) sight record from Dpto. La Paz to be hypothetical.

OCELLATED CRAKE *Micropygia schomburgkii*

This little-known rail is apparently numerous and widespread in a variety of grassland habitats in Bolivia, although until now it was known in the country from only one specimen collected at San Joaquin, Dpto. Beni (Blake 1977). We here report additional records from Dptos. Beni, La Paz, and Santa Cruz.

This species was fairly common in June 1989 in open *Trachypogon* grassland almost devoid of bushes, in three areas c. 15–30 km E of San Borja, Dpto. Beni. At least 8 sang (LNS) sporadically from dawn until 08.30, in an area of c. 400 × 200 m dense grassland averaging 1 m in height, c. 25 km E of San Borja. The ground was muddy, indicating that the habitat may be flooded during wetter months. Six individuals were heard (LNS) in c. 500 m^2 of drier, upland grassland dotted with small shrubs (Melastomataceae, Asteraceae) c. 28 km E of San Borja, and 4 were heard at dusk in similar habitat c. 5 km N of San Borja along the road to Reyes. From 1 to 3 June 1990, several *M. schomburgkii* were heard (LNS) each morning in seasonally flooded grasslands with scattered trees at Ixiamas. In August–September 1990, the species was fairly common in dense, dry campo grasslands (*campo sujo* and *campo limpo*; see Eiten 1978 for habitat descriptions) at 650–750 m on the Serranía de Huanchaca plateau; as many as 4 territorial pairs were counter-calling at once at dawn and dusk within c. 500 m^2 of open grassland (LNS); the seemingly small territories of these birds (less than 0.5 ha?) appeared to be centred on clumps of shrubby vegetation and tall grasses around termite mounds. Calling birds could not be lured more than a few metres from such cover. The species disappeared from this area after a fire (on 1 October) destroyed much of the vegetation (J. Bates, pers. comm.). On 21 August 1990, Parker heard *M. schomburgkii* in similar *campo limpo* habitat on Cerro San Simón, in eastern Dpto. Beni (Parker & Rocha, in press).

In summary, *Micropygia schomburgkii* is apparently widespread and numerous in the grasslands of northern and central Bolivia. It occurs in

both well-drained and seasonally flooded areas, and nearly pure, open grasslands (*campo limpo*) as well as those with an abundance of shrubs and small trees (*campo sujo*).

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea*

On 22 May 1990, Parker and Hermes Justiniano found an adult-plumaged Arctic Tern at Laguna Santa Rosa, along the lower Río Tuiche, Dpto. La Paz. The bird was observed for more than 30 minutes as it flew back and forth 6–12 m above the water, and poor but identifiable photographs (LSUMZ) were taken by Justiniano. This extraordinary record is the first for Bolivia, and may be the first for the interior of South America.

BLUE-HEADED MACAW *Ara couloni*

The first Bolivian records were reported by Parker & Remsen (1987). On 21 June 1989 one pair was seen at a distance and several others were heard 2–8 km N of Rurrenabaque, just north of the Río Beni, in Dpto. La Paz. These records indicate that *A. couloni* ranges as far south in the Bolivian foothills as 14°30'S, and it probably occurs, at least occasionally, in Dpto. Beni. Its occurrence in lowland southeastern Peru is erratic (pers. obs.), so we were not surprised when we did not record the species during two weeks of fieldwork at Alto Madidi.

CRIMSON-BELLIED PARAKEET *Pyrrhura rhodogaster*

Five feeding on *Cecropia* catkins in high-ground forest c. 2 km W of Versalles on 20 August 1990, and a previously unpublished male (AMNH 791770) collected there on 21 July 1964 by J. Cuello (A. Capparella, *in litt.*), represent the first records for Dpto. Beni. First reported from forests bordering the Serranía de Huanchaca, Dpto. Santa Cruz (Bates *et al.* 1989), Parker and Rocha also saw several flocks (5–12 individuals) of *P. rhodogaster* in *Ficus*-dominated forests at Perseverancia, along the Río Negro, Dpto. Santa Cruz, c. 150 km W of Huanchaca. The species probably occurs widely in eastern Bolivia east of the Río Mamoré.

Nannopsittaca sp. nov.

This small, inconspicuous parrot was recently discovered in Peru (O'Neill *et al.* 1991); it will probably be found to occur throughout much of southwestern Amazonia. The first Bolivian records are as follows: 3+ in river-edge trees (including small *Calocophyllum spruceanum* and *Cecropia membranacea*) along the lower Río Heath, Dpto. La Paz, on 16 August 1988, and two flocks (4,5+ individuals) in river-edge forest at Alto Madidi by Parker and Castillo on 24 and 28 May 1990 (tape-recordings/LNS). Parker has observed small groups feeding on a variety of small fruits and seeds, including those of an arboreal, epiphytic cactus (*Rhipsalis* sp.?; Cactaceae), *Cecropia* catkins (Moraceae), and seeds of a *Vernonia* sp. (Compositae).

SCARLET-SHOULDERED PARROTLET *Touit huetii*

A vocal flock of 8 in rapid flight high over forest along the lower Río Heath on 11 August 1988, c. 15 km upriver from Puerto Pardo, Dpto. La Paz, represents the second Bolivian record (LNS). This species is almost surely nomadic in upper Amazonia, for it is rarely found in one area for more than a few weeks at a time (Parker, pers. obs.).

ORANGE-CHEEKED PARROT *Pionopsitta barrabandi*

As in other upper Amazonian forests, this species was fairly common at Alto Madidi and along the lower Río Heath, but was rarely seen except in rapid flight low over the canopy of *terra firme* forest away from the rivers. It was unusually numerous at Alto Madidi, where up to 16 were heard each morning along c. 5 km of a logging road; the birds passed over singly, in pairs, and regularly in groups of 6 individuals; we once saw at least 12 flying together in a compact flock, this being the largest number we have ever seen at one time, except for the large numbers (up to 40 or more) that regularly gather with other parrots at mineral licks on steep riverbanks in upper Amazonia (pers. obs.; C. Munn, pers. comm.).

While foraging these parrots were silent and almost invisible; they slowly crept along branches and pulled off fruits without rustling the foliage. Three together fed on *Ficus sphenophylla* figs, and another pair was noted in the crown of a fig with larger fruits. The high density of *P. barrabandi* at Alto Madidi may relate to the relative scarcity of *Pionus menstruus* and *Amazona* spp. in the area. In August 1988 Parker observed small numbers of *P. barrabandi* each day, always in flight, over the lower Río Heath, and Parker and Rocha heard (LNS) one over forest at Versalles, Dpto. Beni, the southernmost record ever for the species. The only previous Bolivian records were reported by Remsen & Ridgely (1980) and Parker & Remsen (1987).

SEMICOLLARED NIGHTHAWK *Lurocalis semitorquatus*

A specimen of *L. s. nattereri* collected by Rocha at the Estación Biológica del Beni on 24 October 1988 is the first documented record of this species for Bolivia. Sight records of *L. semitorquatus* from Mucden, Dpto. Pando, in June 1986 (Parker, unpubl.), several seen at dusk over stunted forest near Aserradero Moira, west of the Serranía de Huanchaca, Dpto. Santa Cruz, in August 1989 (Bates & Parker, unpubl.), and tape-recordings (LNS) of one flying over high-ground forest 1 km W of Versalles, Dpto. Beni, at first light on 21 August 1990 were almost surely of this form. Previous published records of *Lurocalis* from Bolivia pertain to the highland species *rufiventris*, whose morphological and vocal differences warrant separation of *rufiventris* from *semitorquatus*. All forms of the latter are vocally similar (P. Schwartz, pers. comm.; pers. obs.; Hardy & Reynard 1988).

BAND-TAILED NIGHTHAWK *Nyctiprogne leucopyga*

Bates *et al.* (1989) reported the first Bolivian records from the Río Paragua at Piso Firme, Dpto. Santa Cruz. Eight individuals (AMNH 791795-791802) collected by J. Cuello along the Río Iténez, "frente de Costa Marques", "arriba de Costa Marques", and at the "boca del Río Baures", Dpto. Beni, from 31 August to 3 October 1964 (A. Capparella, *in litt.*), are the first Bolivian specimens. The species is apparently abundant along the Río Iténez/Guaporé, for Parker and Rocha observed more than 60 flying low over shrubby vegetation on the high west bank of the Río Iténez at Versalles, Dpto. Beni, at dusk on 20 August 1990; these were accompanied by one *Chordeiles rupestris* and at least one male *Hydropsalis climacocerca*, the latter not previously reported from Dpto. Beni.

Nyctiprogne will no doubt be found along the entire length of the Río Iténez/Guaporé, as well as other blackwater rivers in Beni and Santa Cruz.

GREY-RUMPED SWIFT *Chaetura cinereiventris*

On 20 June we watched small groups of 3–4 displaying pairs (LNS) of *C. cinereiventris* circling low over tall, lower montane forest at 800 m on the east slope of Serranía Pilón, Dpto. Beni. At least two large flocks of (up to 60) *cinereiventris* accompanied by smaller numbers of *C. egregia* were observed flying low over the lower Río Heath, Dpto. La Paz, on 11 August 1988, following the passage of a cold front. The species was also fairly common (up to 12 noted daily) over foothill forest at Alto Madidi in late May 1990. On 20 September 1989 two specimens (LSUMNS) were collected by T. J. Davis over humid evergreen forest 30 km E of Aserradero Moira, at the west base of Serranía Huanchaca, Dpto. Santa Cruz. These are the first records of *Chaetura cinereiventris* for the departments of La Paz, Beni and Santa Cruz. The first Bolivian records were from Dpto. Pando (Parker & Remsen 1987).

LESSER SWALLOW-TAILED SWIFT *Panyptila cayennensis*

Two flying low over gallery forest c. 60 km E of San Borja on 23 June 1989, and two flying high (LNS) over foothill forest at Alto Madidi on 20 June 1990 represent the second and third Bolivian records (see Parker & Remsen 1987) and first departmental records for Beni and La Paz. The species is undoubtedly widespread but uncommon over much of northern Bolivia. Its solitary habits (rarely are more than 2 seen at once) and tendency to forage very high make the species difficult to detect.

SCARLET-HOODED BARBET *Eubucco tucinkae*

This little-known species, until now thought to be endemic to Peru, was found in floodplain forest within 150 m of the river at Alto Madidi in late May 1990. At least two pairs were located in tall (35 m) forest dominated by a relatively small number of tree species, the most conspicuous of which were *Terminalia oblonga, Sapium marmieri, S. ixiamasense, Acacia loretensis, Cedrela odorata, Erythrina* sp. and *Nectandra reticulata*, with smaller under-story trees including a *Sorocea* sp. and *Triplaris poeppigiana* (R. Foster, pers. comm.). The middle-story was open, but there was a dense ground cover of *Heliconia metallica* and scattered thickets of spiny bamboo (*Guadua* sp.). The barbets were repeatedly observed in dense vine tangles high in the crowns of *Terminalia* and other tall trees, where they searched curled, dead leaves trapped in the tangles, in the manner of other Neotropical barbets (Remsen & Parker 1984). Calling males responded aggressively to tape playbacks of their songs, low-pitched, resonant series (*boo-boo-boo-boo-boo*) lasting about 4 seconds, given at intervals of 10–15 seconds (Bolivian recordings in LNS); the *boo* notes almost run together, occasionally producing a quavering effect. While vocalizing, birds often perched conspicuously on an open branch, with the bill held down almost touching the breast feathers. These barbets occasionally associated with mixed-species flocks containing such river-edge forest species as *Campylorhynchus turdinus, Cissopis leveriana* and *Ramphocelus nigrogularis*. Parker has also seen *Eubucco tucinkae* feed on a variety of fruits, including those of several *Ficus* spp. (especially *perforata*), *Cecropia membranacea* (Moraceae), *Psychotria* spp. (Rubiaceae), and *Tabernaemontana* sp. (Apocynaceae).

This is the first report of *Eubucco tucinkae* in Bolivia, although it will probably soon be found in Dpto. Pando, Bolivia, and Estado do Acre, Brazil. It is one of several upper Amazonian species found primarily in tall floodplain forests as well as foothill or lower montane forests at higher elevations (*E. tucinkae* ranges to at least 850 m in SE Peru; pers. obs.); others include *Aulacorhynchus prasinus dimidiatus, Cephalopterus ornatus* and *Philydor rufus*.

GOLDEN-COLLARED TOUCANET *Selenidera reinwardtii*

This species was fairly common at Alto Madidi in the canopy of tall forests away from the river; up to 3 pairs, and occasionally 3–4 individuals together, were noted daily. Parker & Remsen (1987) report the first Bolivian records from Dpto. Pando. The species probably occurs in forests west of the Río Mamoré in Dpto. Beni, where it replaces *S. maculirostris*.

SPOT-BILLED TOUCANET *Selenidera maculirostris*

At least 3 males calling (LNS) in the canopy of forest 1–3 km W of Versalles represent the second Bolivian record (see Bates *et al.* 1989), and first for Dpto. Beni. This toucanet probably occurs widely in tall forests between the Ríos Mamoré and Iténez/Guaporé.

ASH-BROWED SPINETAIL *Cranioleuca curtata*

This canopy-dwelling spinetail was until now known in Bolivia from one specimen from Dpto. Cochabamba, and from sight records from Serranía Bellavista, Dpto. La Paz (Remsen & Ridgely 1980). We found it to be a common member of mixed-species flocks in the canopy of tall forest on both slopes of Serranía Pilón, Dpto. Beni, where it occurred from 800 m to the ridgetops (1100 m). Singles or pairs were noted with 3–4 mixed flocks daily along c. 4 km of road; they foraged along moss- and bromeliad-laden limbs and branches, in vine tangles (where they probed trapped dead leaves) and in palm fronds, mainly at 15–25 m. Several were tape-recorded (LNS). The species was also fairly common in mossy forest at 1200–1550 m on ridges above the Río Yuyo, c. 35 km SW of Apolo, Dpto. La Paz. At least 5 pairs were observed daily in that locality.

GREATER THORNBIRD *Phacellodomus ruber*

Surprisingly, this large furnariid was not known from Dpto. La Paz. It was common at Ixiamas near water in tall grassy areas with clumps of bushes and small trees; at least 4 vocal pairs were found in thick vegetation along the airstrip north of the village. It was also numerous on relatively dry, scrub-covered slopes in the Apolo area, especially where tall grass was prevalent c. 25–30 km SW of Apolo at elevations of 1100–1400 m; these areas were apparently covered with some type of forest until recently. In the Apolo region *P. ruber* occurred up to the lower edge of cloudforest, and a few individuals were even noted in *Chusquea* bamboo thickets along humid forest edges. Their large, stick nests almost invariably were built on the branches of isolated trees (mostly in *Didymopanax pittieri*) in open areas. We would not be surprised if the seemingly

isolated Apolo population were found to represent an undescribed form, although all individuals found there sounded very like those at Ixiamas (LNS).

POINT-TAILED PALMCREEPER *Berlepschia rikeri*

This highly specialized inhabitant of *Mauritia flexuosa* swamps was first found in Bolivia at Porvenir, Dpto. Pando (Parker & Remsen, 1987). On 22 May 1990 Parker heard 2 pairs counter-singing from *Mauritia* along the north edge of Laguna Santa Rosa, along the lower Río Tuiche, Dpto. La Paz, and on 2 June 1990 he heard another pair in *Mauritia* at the edge of gallery forest in savannah c. 7 km E of Ixiamas. In August 1988 Parker and colleagues also found palmcreepers to be relatively common in *Mauritia*-dotted savannah on the Pampas de Heath, Peru; they are presumably common in similar habitat on the Bolivian (La Paz) side of the river as well. In May 1988 S. L. Hilty (*in litt.*) found two pairs of *Berlepschia* in a small *Mauritia* swamp surrounded by hill forest at Misión Fátima, c. 5 km W of the Río Mainique, Dpto. Beni. This small, isolated stand of *Mauritia* is many kilometres from the nearest suitable habitat to the northeast (pers. obs.).

OLIVE-BACKED FOLIAGE-GLEANER *Automolus infuscatus*

Not surprisingly, this widespread foliage-gleaner was a common inhabitant of older floodplain and upland (*terra firme*) forests at Alto Madidi. It presumably occurs throughout lowland La Paz, Pando (where first reported for the country by Parker & Remsen (1987)), and possibly northern Beni.

CRESTED FOLIAGE-GLEANER *Automolus dorsalis*

Our observations and tape-recordings of *A. dorsalis* in dense bamboo thickets at Alto Madidi (along the north bank of the river opposite camp), are the first for Bolivia. In southwestern Amazonia, and possibly throughout its range, the species is restricted to *Guadua* bamboo thickets inside floodplain or disturbed upland forests (in SE Peru as high as 800 m). It has recently been found in similar habitats in Brazil (Parker *et al.* MS). At Alto Madidi (and in the Tambopata Reserve in adjacent Madre de Dios, Peru) pairs rummaged in dead leaves and other debris trapped in the tangled upper portions of thickets, usually 4–10 m above ground. Contrary to Terborgh (1985), they regularly share river-edge bamboo thickets inside forest with *Automolus rufipileatus*, which tends to forage lower, and also with *Simoxenops ucayalae*, which splits open decaying bamboo stalks in search of arthropods. *A. dorsalis* regularly associates with other bamboo specialists, such as *Cymbilaimus sanctaemariae* and *Cercomacra manu*, the latter of which was also heard at Alto Madidi (the second Bolivian locality; see Parker & Remsen 1987). The voice and behaviour of *Automolus dorsalis* recall those of the bamboo-dwelling *Anabazenops fuscus* of southeastern Brazil. Both species utter staccato, antiphonal duets, in addition to a variety of other vocalizations (LNS).

RUFOUS-TAILED XENOPS *Xenops milleri*

One prolonged sighting (on 18 May 1990) by Parker of an individual foraging along vines and open branches in the canopy (20 m) of tall, high-ground forest at Alto Madidi is the first for Bolivia. In this locality the

species was clearly outnumbered by *Xenops rutilans*, of which one or two were found in most large canopy flocks. The scarcity of *milleri* was paralleled by the relative scarcity or absence of other floodplain forest birds at Alto Madidi. *Thamnomanes schistogynus* was similarly scarce, and *Automolus melanopezus*, *Automolus rubiginosus*, *Myrmotherula iheringi* and *Ramphotrigon fuscicauda* were not found at all. All of these occur regularly in floodplain forests, especially those with abundant bamboo understory, of the Tambopata Reserve and Manu National Park not far to the north. The restriction of floodplain forests to narrow bands of habitat along the Río Madidi (R. Foster, unpubl.) no doubt explains the absence of such species.

UNDULATED ANTSHRIKE *Frederickena unduligera*

A male observed and tape-recorded (LNS) in dense, *Heliconia*-dominated undergrowth of tall, swampy forest at Alto Madidi represents the first Bolivian record. The bird's song was a rising series of 6–8 short whistles; it differed in pattern and quality from songs of more northerly populations (north of the Ríos Napo and Amazonas in northern Loreto, Peru) which give a more rapid series of upward-inflected notes on one pitch. The relationship of populations of *F. unduligera* separated by the Amazon should be investigated, as more than one biological species may be involved. The previous southernmost record of *F. unduligera* is an unpublished specimen, a male (LSUMZ 84761) collected in June 1977 by G. R. Graves at Quebrada Juliaca on the Peruvian side of the lower Río Heath, Dpto. Madre de Dios, Peru. The species is everywhere uncommon or rare, and very difficult to detect during brief periods of fieldwork. The first record for the Tambopata Reserve, Dpto. Madre de Dios, for example, was obtained in August 1990 following 14 years of almost continuous inventory.

UPLAND ANTSHRIKE *Thamnophilus aroyae*

Remsen *et al.* (1982) summarized what was known of this Bolivian near-endemic. In June 1989 we discovered a population of *T. aroyae* in lower montane forest (at c. 800–1000 m) on Serranía Pilón, Dpto. Beni. Here 10–11 pairs held territories linearly spaced along the road-edge in (*Chusquea*?) bamboo and shrubby vegetation 1–3 m tall. Individuals foraged inside forest up to 30 m from edges; one male was noted as high as 4 m in a dense vine tangle. At Calabatea, Dpto. La Paz, only one pair was found, in forest-edge undergrowth of *Chusquea* bamboo and vine tangles (to 3 m up) on tree trunks. In both areas pairs gleaned insects (including a 1.5 cm green caterpillar and a small green orthopteran) from bamboo foliage by reaching or short-sallying to leaves and stems; they also searched clusters of dead bamboo and other leaves trapped in tangled branches. The species is presumably a colonizer of early successional vegetation in natural landslides, and is apparently now spreading along roads and other man-made clearings throughout the Yungas region of northern Bolivia.

SCLATER'S ANTWREN *Myrmotherula sclateri*

Parker & Remsen (1987) published the first Bolivian (Pando) records of this inconspicuous canopy antwren. The species was unusually common

at Alto Madidi in tall, vine-rich forests on high-ground, where pairs were observed in every flock of small insectivores in the canopy; as many as 12 individuals were noted each day. In August 1988 Parker heard (LNS) *M. sclateri* in the canopy of *terra firme* forests on both sides of the lower Río Heath, and in August 1989 collected one (LSUMNS) male of several pairs found in moderately tall forest at the west base of the Serranía de Huanchaca, eastern Santa Cruz. The latter is the southernmost known locality for the species.

LEADEN ANTWREN *Myrmotherula assimilis*

A male (AMNH 792018) collected by J. Cuello along the Río Iténez opposite Costa Marquez, Brazil (Remsen & Traylor 1989), was the first record for Dpto. Beni and a considerable southerly range extension. In August 1990 Parker and Rocha found this antwren even farther south, in a narrow band of seasonally flooded forest on both sides of the Río Iténez/Guaporé at Versalles. Here pairs were noted (and taped, LNS) in association with other small canopy insectivores, including, somewhat surprisingly, *Myrmotherula menetriesii* and *M. axillaris*.

WHITE-FRINGED ANTWREN *Formicivora grisea*

Although found for the first time in Bolivia only recently (Cabot *et al.*, in press), this formicariid is apparently widespread in the eastern third of the country. In September 1989 Bates *et al.* obtained additional specimens from the first Bolivian locality, the Serranía de Huanchaca region of Dpto. Santa Cruz, and in August 1990 Parker and Rocha found it to be fairly common in low thickets along forest edges at Perseverancia, along the upper Río Negro, Dpto. Santa Cruz, and H. Justiniano tape-recorded and photographed a pair in the shrubby edge of forest along the airstrip at Versalles, Dpto. Beni.

CHESTNUT-SHOULDERED ANTWREN *Terenura humeralis*

Pairs or families (of 3–4) of this inconspicuous antwren were noted with nearly all large mixed-species flocks in the canopy of tall *terra firme* forest at Alto Madidi, the second Bolivian locality (see Parker & Remsen 1987) and southernmost ever for the species. A female (MHNLP) was collected.

WHITE-LINED ANTBIRD *Percnostola lophotes*

Two males collected (MHNLP) by Parker in bamboo thickets in river-edge forest at Alto Madidi, where common, are the first for Dpto. La Paz and the second for Bolivia (Parker & Remsen 1987).

GOELDI'S ANTBIRD *Myrmeciza goeldii*

Several pairs tape-recorded (LNS) in *Guadua* bamboo and *Heliconia* undergrowth of tall floodplain forest within 150 m of the river at Alto Madidi were the first for Dpto. La Paz and the second for Bolivia (Parker & Remsen 1987).

SOOTY ANTBIRD *Myrmeciza fortis*

This large formicariid was unusually common in the undergrowth of *terra firme* forests at Alto Madidi, the southernmost known locality for the species, the second for Bolivia (see Parker & Remsen 1987), and first for Dpto. La Paz. A female (MHNLP) was collected by Castillo.

STRIATED ANTTHRUSH *Chamaeza nobilis*

This uncommon antthrush was heard only once (on 19 May 1990) at Alto Madidi, during nearly two weeks of fieldwork in its upland forest habitat. Parker has noticed the tendency for the species to be silent for up to several weeks at a time, in contrast to most other Amazonian formicariids, which vocalize almost daily during clear weather throughout the year. There is only one previous report of this species for Bolivia (Parker & Remsen 1987).

ASH-THROATED GNATEATER *Conopophaga peruviana*

One tape-recorded (LNS) in undergrowth of high-ground forest at Alto Madidi is the first record for Bolivia. The species is usually uncommon, local, and difficult to detect, but it will eventually be found in other lowland forests in Dpto. La Paz, and possibly also in the western part of Dpto. Pando.

SHARPBILL *Oxyruncus cristatus*

This species, not previously reported from Bolivia, was fairly common in stunted montane forest on sandy soil south of the Calabatea camp, c. 33 km SW of Apolo, at c. 1400–1600 m. Two to four were observed daily (5–7 June 1990), always singly with canopy mixed-species flocks of insectivores such as *Philydor rufus, Anabacerthia striaticollis, Leptopogon superciliaris*, and a peculiar mix of tanagers (e.g. *Chlorospingus ophthalmicus, Hemithraupis guira, Tangara punctata, T. gyrola, T. cyanotis*). One sharpbill watched for two minutes hung upside down and probed several clusters of leaves at the ends of branches in the lower canopy (at 8–10 m); it also perch-gleaned small purple fruits. Another individual fluttered along branches and scanned foliage in the manner of a typical flycatcher. We occasionally heard the distinctive call of *O. cristatus*, a long, down-slurred whistle that becomes burry towards the end.

The occurrence of *Oxyruncus cristatus* in the interior yungas of northern Bolivia is not unexpected because the species has been found as far south as the Serranía Pantiacolla, Dpto. Cuzco, Peru (Fitzpatrick *et al.*, MS); its distribution along the eastern slopes of the Andes is patchy, however, and it apparently occurs mainly in stunted forests on rather sandy soils near the crests of outlying ridges, as opposed to taller, more floristically diverse forests on the main ridges. *Oxyruncus* habitat at Calabatea was dominated by a palm (*Dictyocaryum* sp.) that has a similarly local distribution (A. Gentry, pers. comm.).

PLANALTO TYRANNULET *Phyllomyias fasciatus*

Parker and Gell-Mann were surprised to discover a population of this small flycatcher in lower montane forest on the east slope of Serranía Pilón, Dpto. Beni, at c. 850–900 m. The first Bolivian specimen was recently collected in the Serranía de Huanchaca, in extreme eastern Dpto. Santa Cruz (Cabot *et al.*, in press). We watched 3 individuals foraging in crowns of small trees at the edge of mossy forest; their calls or songs (descending series of 3–4 plaintive, short whistles) and bubbling antiphonal duets were tape-recorded (LNS). These vocalizations sounded faster and higher-pitched than those of birds Parker has heard in SE Brazil and NE Argentina. In response to playbacks, all three individuals

were lured into the open, lower branches of a small tree, where they nervously turned from side to side, flicked their wings and tails, and vocalized in unison. Another pair was heard in nearby forest canopy. The Pilón population may represent an undescribed form that probably ranges to the north and south on the forested slopes of outlying Andean ridges; it should even be looked for in Peru.

ROUGH-LEGGED TYRANNULET *Phyllomyias burmeisteri*

This frequently overlooked tyrannulet of the canopy was seen or heard in five different areas on the east slope of Serranía Pilón at 800–1000 m. All were solitary individuals perched in the uppermost branches (25–30 m) of tall trees (3 of 5 had sparse, small foliage); they persistently gave high-pitched *feeent* notes at regular intervals of several seconds, and occasionally gave long descending series of 12–16 closely spaced, similar notes. After calling for more than 5 minutes, two of the birds flew 150–200 m to another treetop and resumed calling. Territories are apparently quite large. At Calabatea singles were seen with two large canopy flocks in stunted montane forest on sandy soil, c. 33 km NW of Apolo at c. 1300–1400 m; both were sluggish and rather vireo-like in appearance and behaviour; they peered about for up to 10 sec at a time, and made short, upward sallies to the undersides of small and medium-sized leaves. One bird twice hover-gleaned the tip of a larger leaf.

Surprisingly, *P. burmeisteri* was also found in deciduous montane forest at Chaquimayo, along the Río Machariapo, c. 17 km N of Apolo at 1000 m (tape-recordings by L. Emmons and E. Wolf). The above records suggest that this species is more widespread in Bolivia than previously thought; it was until now known from only 2 specimens from Dptos. Cochabamba and Santa Cruz (Bond & Meyer de Schauensee 1943, Remsen *et al.* 1987).

WHITE-LORED TYRANNULET *Ornithion inerme*

Although there is only one published record of this tyrannid for Bolivia (Parker & Remsen 1987), it is actually fairly common throughout northern Bolivia south to central Dpto. Santa Cruz. We found it at three localities in Dpto. La Paz: (1) Alto Madidi, (2) along the lower Río Heath, (3) c. 25 km S of Tumupassa; four localities in Dpto. Beni: (1) on both slopes of Serranía Pilón up to 875 m, (2) c. 6 km SE of Rurrenabaque, (3) c. 25 km E of San Borja, (4) c. 1–5 km W of Versalles; and in Dpto. Santa Cruz: (1) upper Río Saguayo, Parque Nacional Amboró, (2) Perseverancia, upper Río Negro, (3) Parque Nacional Noel Kempff Mercado (throughout forested portions of park, including those on the Huanchaca meseta at 600–750 m). This is perhaps the most frequently overlooked canopy tyrannid in Amazonia.

SHARP-TAILED TYRANT *Culicivora caudacuta*

This species occurs locally, but widely, in the open grasslands of Dpto. Beni, where first found by Schmitt & Schmitt (1987). Parker and Gell-Mann observed 4 families (of 5, 4, 4 and 3 individuals) in open, tall *Trachypogon* grassland with only a few widely scattered bushes, c. 26–35 km E of San Borja; another group of 4 was noted 10 km SW of San Borja. These tiny flycatchers move about in closely knit groups, perching within a few feet of each other at or near the tops of tall grass stalks. After foraging for several minutes in one area they almost invariably fly 50 or more metres to another area. The territory of one pair was at least 300 m^2. They foraged by sally-striking and sally-hovering to grass stalks and foliage of small bushes. They also clung upright to stalks and picked at dried flowers. Among tyrannids, only this species and *Myiornis* spp. have a whirring, hummingbird-like manner of flight. The nasal, rather buzzy call notes of *Culicivora* are far-carrying but easily overlooked. Pairs periodically deliver antiphonal duets (LNS) while perched close together high on grass stalks.

On 2 June 1990 Parker and Castillo found a group of at least 4 *C. caudacuta* in the largest expanse of open grassland c. 7 km E of Ixiamas; this is the first record for Dpto. La Paz, and the westernmost for the species. Another population was discovered in August 1990 by Parker and Rocha on Cerro San Simón, a small, isolated mountain in eastern Beni (Parker & Rocha, in press).

Culicivora caudacuta also inhabits open grasslands (*campo limpo*) of the Serranía de Huanchaca, Dpto. Santa Cruz, at 600–750 m, where found in widely scattered groups of 3–4 individuals during August–September 1989 (pers. obs.; J. Bates, pers. comm.). In drier upland areas *Culicivora* are most often found in lusher areas of sedges and grasses known as valley side campos (see Eiten 1975 for descriptions of *campo* plant communities).

OLIVE-STRIPED FLYCATCHER *Mionectes olivaceus*

One to several individuals observed daily in upland forest at Alto Madidi, and a specimen collected there by A. Castillo (MHNLP) are the first Bolivian records. Singles were noted with most large canopy flocks; they characteristically perched upright, peering about (with bobbing head) for many seconds at a time, and regularly sally-hovered to leaves in the manner of other *Mionectes* spp. 1–3 *M. olivaceus* fed frequently on the large, dark fruits of a small forest tree, *Amaioua corymbosa* (Rubiaceae). These fruits also attracted unusually large numbers of *Dacnis lineata* and *Pipra chloromeros*, and smaller numbers of *Pipra coronata*, *Chlorophanes spiza* and *Dacnis cayana*.

Phylloscartes sp. nov.

This undescribed tyrannulet was previously known from a small number of specimens and sight records from 4–5 Peruvian localities in Dptos. Huánuco, Pasco, and Cuzco (J. Fitzpatrick, pers. comm.; pers. obs.). Parker, Gell-Mann and S. Beebe studied two pairs in forest canopy on Serranía Pilón at c. 875 m, and tape-recorded two types of vocalization (LNS). The birds foraged in rather sparse, small foliage of forest-edge treetops (esp. *Inga* spp.) 12–18 m above ground. They made short upward sallies (1–2 cm) to leaves and stems. Their horizontal *Phylloscartes* posture (with tail held straight back or slightly cocked) and periodic wing flashes, combined with the chestnut coloration around the eyes, were diagnostic. Calls included a double *chip* note, and a similar note followed by a trill.

SNETHLAGE'S TODY-TYRANT *Hemitriccus minor*

First reported for Bolivia from the Serranía de Huanchaca, Dpto. Santa Cruz by Bates *et al.* (1989), this species is apparently widespread in the eastern third of the country. In August 1990, Parker and Rocha found it to be common in stunted, vine-rich forests along the upper Río Negro at Perseverancia, Dpto. Santa Cruz, and in similar forest at Versalles, Dpto. Beni.

ZIMMER'S TODY-TYRANT *Hemitriccus aenigma*

This enigmatic tyrannid was known from 8 specimens from 4 localities along the Rio Tapajos, Brazil (D. F. Stotz, pers. comm.), and from 6 specimens recently collected in stunted forests (9–12 m tall) on sandy soil in the Serranía de Huanchaca, Dpto. Santa Cruz (J. Bates and Parker, pers. obs.). On 21–22 August 1990 Parker and Rocha found at least 3 vocal individuals at 16–20 m in the canopy of somewhat taller (avg. 20 m), vine-rich forest on lateritic soil c. 1–5 km W of Versalles, Dpto. Beni. Their calls, soft twittering trills (LNS), are fairly loud but ventriloquial and difficult to locate. This species probably occurs widely east of the Río Mamoré in Dptos. Beni and Santa Cruz.

YUNGAS TODY-TYRANT *Hemitriccus spodiops*

Remsen *et al.* (1982) summarized the scanty available information on this Bolivian endemic. It is probably more widespread and common than previously thought, and almost surely occurs in Dpto. Puno, Peru. In June 1989 Parker and Gell-Mann found up to 12 each day in bamboo and dense, shaded forest-edge shrubbery on both slopes of Serranía Pilón above 875 m. Nearly all individuals called from 1–3 m up in bushes and small trees. At least 20 different individuals were heard along c. 4 km of road E and W of the pass. The species was also common in similar habitat at Calabatea, Dpto. La Paz, at c. 1200–1600 m; up to 12 were noted each day along c. 3 km of road; others were heard at a distance in shrubby vegetation and bamboo along edges of natural landslides, this surely being the original habitat of the species. Other records include several tape-recorded by L. Emmons and E. Wolf at the edges of semideciduous forest at Chaquimayo, along the Río Machariapo, c. 17 km N of Apolo, Dpto. La Paz.

PLUMBEOUS TYRANT *Knipolegus signatus*

A male perched 1–2 m above ground on bamboo stalks in forest-edge at the road pass on Serranía Pilón at c. 1000 m is the first record for Dpto. Beni. The bird was uniformly ash grey, with red eyes and a whitish, dark-tipped bill; it looked very like LSUMZ specimens of nominate *signatus* from northern and central Peru, which are noticeably larger and darker soot-grey or blackish, with 'brown' or 'chestnut' eyes. These morphological differences suggest that two species may presently comprise *signatus*.

COCK-TAILED TYRANT *Alectrurus tricolor*

This beautiful species is known from only 3 Bolivian localities (Bond & Meyer de Schauensee 1942, Remsen 1986). We found it to be uncommon and local in the most extensive, open grasslands c. 15–35 km E of San Borja; a few were also noted 9–11 km SW of San Borja along the road to Yacumo. On 24 June 1989 we found 10 males, 7 with or near single females, and on 25 June 4 males (3 with females) were seen. Males were widely separated, all at least 300 m apart, in nearly pure stands of *Trachypogon* grassland 1–1.5 m tall. This habitat was muddy underfoot and is probably inundated during the wet season. All individuals perched conspicuously near the tops of grass stalks, occasionally dropping deep into the grass (presumably to capture insects) or sallying to nearby stalks. They also sallied 4–8 m up into the air in pursuit of small insects in flight. Flying females usually stimulated males to undertake flight displays. The full male display is spectacular: the bird flies (silently) with rapid, shallow wingbeats in a low arc over the grass, gradually reaching a height of 3–6 m, while flicking its broad, flag-like outer tail feathers well above the back. These flights vary in length depending upon the location of visible females, but probably average 30–40 m. Inexplicably, we found no *Alectrurus* in large areas of seemingly suitable habitat (pure stands of tall grass) east and west of the above localities. Its relative scarcity and patchy distribution suggest that the species may be sensitive to a variety of factors such as seasonal flooding, overgrazing and trampling by cattle, and frequent burning.

On 2 June 1990 Parker and Castillo found 4 male and 3–4 female *A. tricolor* in tall, nearly pure grassland c. 7 km E of Ixiamas, Dpto. La Paz; this is the first record for the department and westernmost ever for the species. Although *Alectrurus tricolor* occurs mainly in upland (*campo limpo*) grasslands in central Brazil (pers. obs.), it appears to frequent both well-drained and seasonally flooded grasslands in Bolivia.

STREAMER-TAILED TYRANT *Gubernetes yetapa*

Like *Alectrurus tricolor* and *Culicivora caudata*, this grassland species occurs very locally and in small densities, in tall grasslands with scattered trees and bushes. In June 1989 we found it to be relatively numerous (as compared to its scarcity in at least 4 Brazilian *campo* localities frequently visited by Parker); at least 7 pairs or families (of 4–5 individuals) were noted during two mornings of fieldwork c. 11–50 km east of San Borja; several pairs were also observed near the Estación Biológica del Beni.

On 2 June 1990, Parker and Castillo found 3 pairs (1 with 2 immatures) along c. 2 km of road through open grassland with scattered trees c. 6–8 km E of Ixiamas. The species had not previously been found west of the Río Beni, or in Dpto. La Paz. At both Ixiamas and San Borja, *Gubernetes yetapa* was found in tall grasslands (of *Trachypogon* spp. mixed with other coarse, tall grasses) that are inundated during the wet season. Trees (especially *Curatella americana*) and shrubs are conspicuous but widely spaced. Whether *Gubernetes* moves seasonally to this habitat from well-drained areas is not known.

These flycatchers perch conspicuously atop bushes and isolated, small trees, and drop into the grass or onto open ground in pursuit of large arthropods, including grasshoppers and beetles. They also make long flights to capture flying prey, especially grasshoppers, and a pair was one

observed clinging to tassles at the ends of grass stalks, where they captured two brownish caterpillars about 4 cm long. Pairs of adults aggressively defend very large territories of at least 500 m^2; in response to playback of calls or songs they invariably fly (from as far as 300 m away) directly toward the sound source and land on the nearest tree or bush, where they perform an extraordinary visual and vocal display well described by Belton (1985).

WHITE-THIGHED SWALLOW *Neochelidon tibialis*

One was collected (MHNLP) on 23 May 1990 by Castillo from a group of 6 perched on bare branches in the top of a tall forest tree above a small stream at Alto Madidi; other small groups (4–8) were observed on two days flying low through the canopy of hilly upland forest at the same locality. These are the first records for Dpto. La Paz, and only the second for Bolivia (see Parker & Remsen 1987).

TAWNY-HEADED SWALLOW *Alopochelidon fucata*

At least 6 of these swallows were observed flying low and high over dry grassland with scattered trees c. 27 km E of San Borja, Dpto. Beni, on 25 June 1989. Several were 'singing' while in flight (LNS), which suggests that the birds represent a resident population. The habitat (*campo sujo*) is very like that preferred by breeding *A. fucata* in central Brazil (pers. obs.). Two others were seen over open grassland c. 40 km E of San Borja on 24 June. These are the first records of this species for Dpto. Beni.

CHESTNUT-BREASTED WREN *Cyphorhinus thoracicus*

On 7 June 1990 Parker heard the unmistakable songs of a pair of this species in a densely vegetated ravine in mossy forest near Calabatea at 1400 m, c. 33 km SW of Apolo, Dpto. La Paz. Although this is the first report of *C. thoracicus* for Bolivia, it has been collected (LSUMNS) at Abra Maruncunca, 10 km SW of San Juan del Oro, Dpto. Puno, Peru, within a few kilometres of the Bolivian border.

LAWRENCE'S THRUSH *Turdus lawrencii*

Parker & Remsen (1987) reported the first Bolivian records from Dpto. Pando. The species also occurs widely in Dpto. La Paz, where found to be fairly common in tall floodplain forest along the lower Río Heath within 30 km of Puerto Pardo in August 1988 (up to 10 heard each day); it was rare or not vocal in similar forest at Alto Madidi in May 1990 (calls of only 2 were heard during two weeks), and one was heard in full song in swamp forest at the edge of Laguna Santa Rosa, along the lower Río Tuiche on 22 June 1990. The latter is the southernmost (14°30'S) locality for the species.

VIOLACEOUS JAY *Cyanocorax violaceus*

Recent Bolivian records, the first for Dpto. La Paz and second for the country (see Parker & Remsen 1987) include a flock of 5 flying over second-growth forest c. 3 km N of Rurrenabaque, and another group heard in forest-edge trees c. 15 km S of Tumupassa. In May 1990 two flocks (of 6 and 7 individuals) were constantly in second-growth woodland and young river-edge forest within 1 km of the Alto Madidi camp.

These birds were usually found in association with large mixed foraging flocks of oropendolas and caciques (especially *Psarocolius angustifrons, P. decumanus* and *P. bifasciatus*). This jay is apparently fairly common at the base of the Andes in Dpto. La Paz, and probably occurs, at least occasionally, south of the Río Beni in Dpto. Beni. It is replaced in the gallery forests and cerrado at Ixiamas, and in second-growth forests to the south, by *Cyanocorax cyanomelas*.

MASKED CRIMSON TANAGER *Ramphocelus nigrogularis*

One collected on 24 May 1990 by Castillo in tall swamp forest at Alto Madidi, where uncommon, is the first specimen for Bolivia, although sight records from the Río Tahuamanu above Porvenir, Dpto. Pando, were reported by Parker & Remsen (1987).

OPAL-CROWNED TANAGER *Tangara callophrys*

A pair tape-recorded (LNS) in the tops of tall upland forest trees at Alto Madidi on 24 May 1990, and a few others observed with large canopy flocks of *Tangara* spp. and other tanagers at the same locality, represent the second Bolivian record (see Parker & Remsen 1987), and southernmost ever for the species. This tanager was observed on one occasion with a small group of Opal-rumped Tanagers *T. velia,* not previously recorded in Dpto. La Paz, and 6–8 Paradise Tanagers *T. chilensis*.

BLACK-AND-WHITE TANAGER *Conothraupis speculigera*

A female-plumaged individual observed by Parker in river-edge forest vine tangles (4–6 m above ground) at Alto Madidi on 28 May 1990 is the first record for Bolivia. The bird associated with a large mixed-species flock comprised of *Ramphocelus carbo, Thryothorus genibarbis* and other medium-sized insectivores. The *Piranga*-like shape and size of the bird, its olive upperparts and pale yellowish underparts, and the diagnostic streaking on its breast were all noted. This species should be looked for, especially from June to August, in floodplain forests throughout upper Amazonia (see Isler & Isler 1988).

CASQUED OROPENDOLA *Psarocolius oseryi*

One tape-recorded (LNS) in forest-edge trees along the airstrip on 26 May 1990, and later seen several times in riverine forest at Alto Madidi, represents the first record for Bolivia. The species is probably more numerous in foothills west of Alto Madidi, and will probably also be found along the Río Heath to the north. It is fairly common in upland forests of the Tambopata Reserve, Dpto. Madre de Dios, Peru, not far to the northeast.

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Taxonomic status of the Sword-billed Hummingbird *Ensifera ensifera caerulescens*

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Ensifera ensifera caerulescens (Lowe, 1939) was described from an unique specimen in the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter. According to Lowe (1939: 73) the new taxon is distinguished by "its smaller dimensions and by having the sides of the neck and band across the chest, when held to the light, bright metallic blue". Walters (1986) was apparently the first since Lowe to critically examine the type. He confirmed Lowe's diagnosis and concluded that *caerulescens* may be a valid taxon and that there was no reason to suppose that the colour was due to an aberration. As part of a comprehensive review of Sword-billed Hummingbird systematics I examined the type of *E. ensifera caerulescens*. Here I present evidence that casts doubt on its taxonomic validity.

The specimen is a taxidermy mount with head and bill tilted upwards to the left; the left side of the neck and upper breast are slightly concealed from view. The plumage is faded, especially the throat and breast. When male specimens of nominate *E. ensifera* are viewed head-on in direct light, the lower throat is bordered posteriorly from shoulder to shoulder by a brilliant green pectoral band. In *caerulescens*, the colour of the pectoral band is bluish-green (changing with the angle of inspection) on the exposed right side, becoming slightly greener on the concealed left side. The feathers that reflect the bluest light when viewed head-on are violet or bluish-violet in indirect light. These are asymmetrically distributed; about twice as many violet feathers occur to the right of the ventral midline as to the left. When viewed under a 7-30× stereo microscope the bases of violet feathers that are concealed by overlapping feathers are green as in nominate *E. ensifera*. In other words, only portions of the pectoral feathers that are exposed to light are violet.

The asymmetric distribution of blue or violet feathers strongly suggests that the distinguishing character of *caerulescens* is an artifact, possibly the result of exposure to light. The occurrence of unfaded feather bases in the affected area corroborates that possibility. In sum, the evidence indicates that the distinguishing character of *E. e. caerulescens* Lowe, 1939 is due to postmortem change. It should thus be placed in the synonymy of *Ensifera ensifera* (Boissoneau, 1839).

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