



# **THE EUPHONIA**

**Quarterly Journal of Mexican Avifauna**

Volume 1, Number 2 December 1992

# THE EUPHONIA

Quarterly Journal of Mexican Avifauna



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# THE EUPHONIA

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## OBSERVATIONS OF NORTH AMERICAN MIGRANT BIRDS IN THE REVILLAGIGEDO ISLANDS

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Most observers to México's little-known Revillagigedo archipelago have, not surprisingly, concentrated on the endemic landbirds and breeding seabirds; records of migrants are somewhat few. During 9-22 February 1988 we visited Las Islas Revillagigedo (San Benedicto, Socorro, and Clarion) and on 25-26 April 1992 Howell visited San Benedicto with Steve Engel. Here we report the interesting selection of northern migrants we found on and near the islands. In the following list, a pound sign # indicates species new to the archipelago as a whole; an asterisk \* indicates first records for the relevant islands.

**Leach's Storm-Petrel** (*Oceanodroma leucorhoa*). Seven (including two dark-morphs) at sea between Roca Partida and Clarion, 18 February. Three intermediate morphs 5-35 nautical miles east of San Benedicto, 26 April.

**Great Blue Heron** (*Ardea herodias*). Socorro: one immature at Grayson Cove, 14 February; two immatures at Playa Blanca, 16 February. Clarion: one immature on 19-22 February.

## Revillagigedo Islands

**Cattle Egret** (*Bubulcus ibis*). Socorro: four at the naval base, 14 February. Clarion\*: 31 on 19 February, also present on 20 February, 30 to 40 on 21 February, 60 to 100 on 22 February.

**#Green-backed Heron** (*Butorides striatus*). Socorro: one adult at the naval base cove, 12-14 February.

**Osprey** (*Pandion haliaetus*). Socorro: one at Bahía Academy, 17 February. Clarion: one on 19-22 February.

**#Sharp-shinned Hawk** (*Accipiter striatus*). San Benedicto: one immature male, 25 April.

**American Kestrel** (*Falco sparverius*). San Benedicto\*: three on 10 February. Socorro\*: two to three on the slopes of Cerro Evermann, 13-14 February. Clarion: two on 20 February.

**#Merlin** (*Falco columbarius*). Socorro: one female at the southern end, 12 February.

**Peregrine Falcon** (*Falco peregrinus*). San Benedicto: one to two adults, one immature, on 25-26 April. Socorro: one adult and one immature, over Cerro Evermann, 13 February. Clarion\*: one immature on 19-22 February.

**Lesser Golden-Plover** (*Pluvialis dominica fulva*). San Benedicto\*: five on 10 February, four on 25 April. Clarion: up to three on 19-22 February.

**Semipalmated Plover** (*Charadrius semipalmatus*). Clarion\*: twelve on 22 February.

**Killdeer** (*Charadrius vociferus*). Clarion: four on 19-22 February.

**Wandering Tattler** (*Heteroscelus incanus*). San Benedicto: one on 9 February. Socorro: two at the naval base cove on 11 February, two at Grayson Cove, 14-15 February, two at Playa Blanca, 15-17 February, three at Bahía Academy, 17 February. Clarion: four on 19-22 February.

**Spotted Sandpiper** (*Actitis macularia*). Clarion: two on 22 February.

## Revillagigedo Islands

**Whimbrel** (*Numenius phaeopus*). Clarion: up to 15 birds, 19-22 February.

**Ruddy Turnstone** (*Arenaria interpres*). Clarion: up to 11 birds, 19-22 February.

**Sanderling** (*Calidris alba*). Clarion\*: one on 22 February.

**Western Sandpiper** (*Calidris mauri*). Clarion: two on 22 February.

**Least Sandpiper** (*Calidris minutilla*). Socorro\*: two on 12 February. Clarion: up to 16 birds, 19-22 February.

**Red Phalarope** (*Phalaropus fulicaria*). Two at sea between Roca Partida and Clarion, 18 February.

**Pomarine Jaeger** (*Stercorarius pomarinus*). Socorro: one immature off Playa Blanca, 16 February.

**Parasitic Jaeger** (*Stercorarius parasiticus*). One at sea between Roca Partida and Clarion, 18 February.

**Laughing Gull** (*Larus atricilla*). Clarion: four immatures on 19 February, three on 20-22 February.

**#Bonaparte's Gull** (*Larus philadelphia*). San Benedicto: one immature, long-dead, 9 February.

**#Herring Gull** (*Larus argentatus*). Clarion: one first-winter on 19-22 February.

**Mourning Dove** (*Zenaida macroura*). San Benedicto: one outer rectrix found, 9 February.

**Belted Kingfisher** (*Ceryle alcyon*). Socorro: one at Grayson Cove, 14 February; one at Playa Blanca, 16 February. Clarion: one female on 22 February.

## Revillagigedo Islands

**#Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** (*Sphyrapicus varius*). Socorro: one female at 550 m on Cerro Evermann, 14 February. This bird was identified by its white throat, red forecrown, lack of red in its nape, and extensive dusky creamy-buff mottling on its upperparts.

**American Pipit** (*Anthus rubescens*). Clarion\*: one on 19 February.

**#White-eyed Vireo** (*Vireo griseus*). Socorro: one near the naval base, 12-14 February. This bird was singing, which attracted our attention. The song was a short bright warble with an emphatic “chik!” at the start and/or end. The bird appeared typical of northern migrant White-eyed Vireos versus the distinct *perquisitor* subspecies of eastern México. The grayish head contrasted slightly with the olive upperparts that had two white wingbars; the whitish eyes were set in yellow spectacles. The throat was pale gray, the underparts white with yellowish sides.

**Yellow Warbler** (*Dendroica petechia*). Socorro: up to four near the naval base, 12-14 February.

**#Cape May Warbler** (*Dendroica tigrina*). Socorro: up to five near the naval base, 12-14 February. These birds were two males and three females and all were feeding in small ornamental sea grape trees. The males were unmistakable: warblers of similar size to Yellow Warbler but with finer, more pointed bills. They had a chestnut check patch set in a yellow face, a bold white wing panel, and fine blackish streaking on yellow underparts. The females were the same size and structure, distinguished by their fine dark streaking below, dull greyish-olive upperparts with olive-yellow rump, yellowish area on the sides of the neck, and narrow pale lemon superciliary. The call was a high, thin, slightly wiry “sik,” familiar to both observers.

There are many vagrant records of wintering Cape May Warblers in México, e.g. Sonora (D. Stejskal pers. comm.), Nayarit (Clow 1976), and Oaxaca (pers. obs.), and in northern Central America (Mason 1976). Socorro is at the same latitude as the Caribbean where this species normally winters, and the birds we saw may have followed a mirror-image misorientation path (DeSante 1973).

**Yellow-rumped Warbler** (*Dendroica coronata*). Socorro: up to thirteen, including 7-8 “Myrtle” Warblers and 3 “Audubon’s” Warblers, at the

## Revillagigedo Islands

south end, 12-14 February; one "Audubon's" at 900 m on Cerro Evermann, 13 February; one heard at Playa Blanca, 16 February.

**Townsend's Warbler** (*Dendroica townsendi*). Socorro: one at 800 m on Cerro Evermann, 13 February.

**#Palm Warbler** (*Dendroica palmarum*). Socorro: one near the naval base, 12-14 February. Clarion: one on 20 February.

**#Northern Waterthrush** (*Seiurus noveboracensis*). Socorro: one at Bahía Academy, 17 February.

**#Common Yellowthroat** (*Geothlypis trichas*). Socorro: two males near the naval base, 12 February. Clarion: one male on 22 February.

**#Lark Sparrow** (*Chondestes grammacus*). Socorro: two to three near the naval base, 12 February.

**#Hooded Oriole** (*Icterus cucullatus*). Socorro: one female near the naval base, 12 February.

Of this total of 39 species, 13 are new to the archipelago (Brattstrom and Howell 1956, Jehl and Parkes 1982, Pitman 1986, Everett 1988, Santaella and Sada 1991), and an additional eight first island records are reported. It seems likely, particularly with landbirds, that we observed only a small, surviving fraction of the migrants that had reached the islands the previous autumn. Interestingly, eastern landbirds were at least as common as western species.

An additional migrant record for the Revillagigedo archipelago is a Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*) flying due south, observed by Howell at 18°N 112°W (i.e. about 70 nautical miles west-southwest of Socorro), on 23 October 1989.

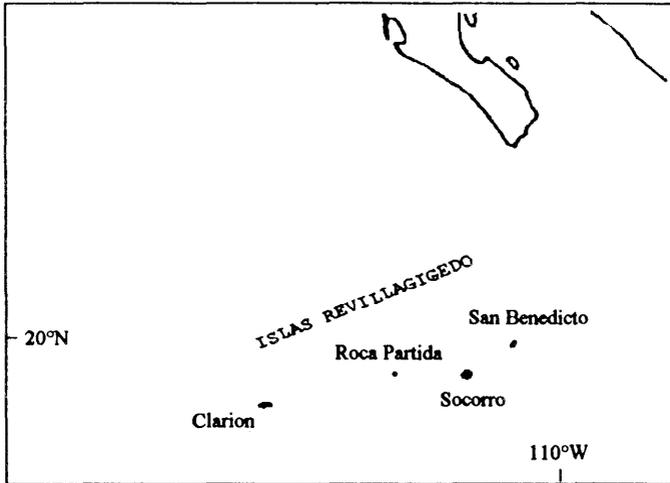


Figure 1. Location of Revillagigedo Islands relative to tip of Baja California.

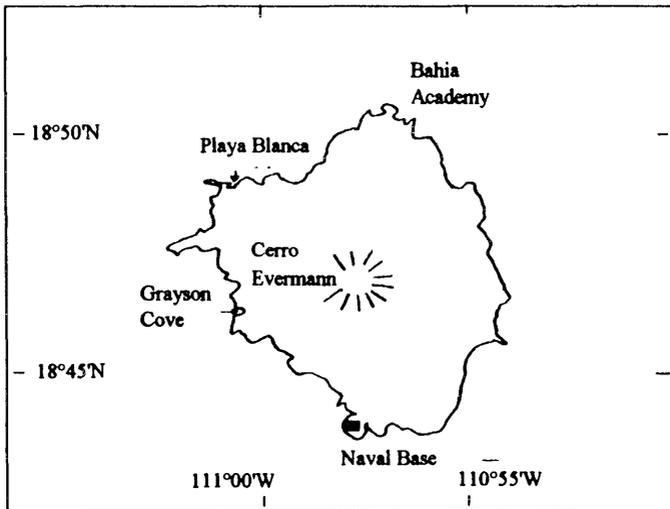


Figure 2. Isla Socorro, showing places mentioned in species accounts.

## Revillagigedo Islands

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank the Kelton Foundation, Captain Richard Kelton, and fellow crew members Michael Ronneberger, Mary Nicholls, Fred Geller, and Bob Chappel for helping make possible the 1988 and 1992 trips to the Revillagigedo islands. The kind hospitality extended us by Mexican naval personnel at the islands is also greatly appreciated.

### RESUMEN

Se enumeran las especies de aves migratorias observadas en las Islas Revillagigedo, México, durante una visita desde el 9 al 22 de febrero, 1988. (# indica especie nueva publicada para el archipiélago y \* primer registro para isla individual.) Registros de aves migratorias han sido relativamente escasas anteriormente en estas islas.

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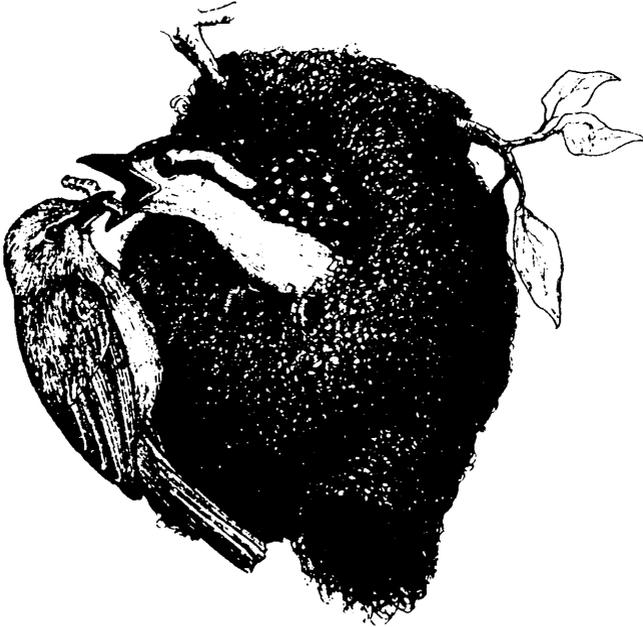
# PARASITISM OF YELLOW-OLIVE FLYCATCHER BY THE PHEASANT CUCKOO

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The Pheasant Cuckoo (*Dromococcyx phasianellus*) is known to be a brood parasite, but little is recorded about either its life history or breeding; thus, the following account of its parasitism is of interest.

On August 17, 1988, while exploring the edge of dense forest near the main pyramid of the ruins of Cobá in Quintana Roo, México, in the company of J. Stratton and S. Hough, we discovered a nest hanging from a thin twig about five meters above the ground and which I tentatively identified as that of a Yellow-olive Flycatcher (*Tolmomyias sulphureus*). The remaining strands of a tunnel entrance to the nest visible near the bottom of the sock distinguished it from a small oriole's nest, which it otherwise superficially resembled. A continuous high-pitched call was coming from the nest, but neither adults nor juveniles were visible. A few minutes later, a young bird poked its head through the wall of the nest and continued calling. Shortly after that an adult Yellow-olive Flycatcher appeared carrying food and entered the nest through the bottom entrance. Almost immediately it exited and fed the young bird (which had at least twice its bulk) through the newly created top entrance. It was obvious that the juvenile was some species of parasitic cuckoo, but with only its head and pale buff upper breast showing it was not clear if it was a Striped Cuckoo (*Tapera naevia*) or a Pheasant Cuckoo (the former species is not recorded from the northern Yucatán Peninsula). About five minutes later, while our attention was distracted by the adult flycatchers, the young bird left the nest and moved a few feet toward the trunk of the same tree. With its whole body visible, it was clearly a Pheasant Cuckoo, whose description is as follows: crown and cheek dark brown, post-ocular streak creamy; throat and breast buff with dark brown feathers almost hidden at sides of breast next to bend of wing; rest of underparts white; wings and upperparts dark brown, with most feathers tipped with buff especially heavy on the

wing-coverts which thus appeared marbled; tail dark brown to black, expansive but still short, most or all feathers tipped with buff underneath; feathers of crown rather long, coming to a projecting point at nape, making for a hammer-headed appearance. The bird was watched in the first instance for about thirty minutes and was fed twice during this period by the adult flycatchers, all the while maintaining its high-pitched call. On returning to the area about ninety minutes later, the bird was found a little higher up the same tree, still calling.



Sketch by Sophie Webb

The nest of the flycatchers was a flimsy affair, apparently made principally of dried grasses hanging from a branch which we estimated to be no more than about five millimeters thick at the point of suspension. That a relatively heavy terrestrial species such as the cuckoo, could lay its eggs in a nest with a bottom entrance in such a site seems quite remarkable. However, remarks in Ridgley (1976) notwithstanding, other records summarized in Wetmore (1968) suggest that flycatchers, especially those

which build hanging nests, may be one of the principal hosts of the Pheasant Cuckoo. The only other definite record, is of a juvenile Pheasant Cuckoo flushed from a hanging nest of an Eye-ringed Flatbill (*Rhynchocyclus brevirostris*); however, eggs possibly belonging to this species of cuckoo, have been taken from the nests of Pied Water-Tyrant (*Flavicola pica*) and the Barred Antshrike (*Thamnophilus doliatus*).

#### RESUMEN

Se describe un caso de parasitismo por el Cuclillo coliabánico (*Dromococcyx phasianellus*) en el nido de una pareja de Mosquerito ojiblanco (*Tolmomyias sulphurens*) al margen del bosque en Cobá Quintana Roo. El polluelo gigante había desplazado a los ocupantes legítimos, había también perforado una nueva entrada en el pequeño nido, y se le vio ser alimentado varias veces por los dos padres adoptivos. Es curioso que, al parecer, especies pequeñas de mosquero con pequeños nidos colgantes son las principales víctimas de este Cuclillo pesado y terrestre.

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# SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER RECORDS FOR BAJA CALIFORNIA

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Despite the well documented occurrence of the Semipalmated Sandpiper (*Calidris pusilla*) as a rare but regular fall transient in Southern California (Garrett and Dunn 1981, Unitt 1984), there are no published records of its occurrence to the immediate south on the Baja California Peninsula (Grinnell 1928, Wilbur 1987). Unfortunately, this information gap also exists for many other species whose occurrence on the Baja Peninsula can be reasonably inferred from contemporary knowledge of their distribution to the north. Both the lack of coverage during expected periods of movement and the absence of periodicals geared toward the publication of such information have contributed to this situation. The purpose of this note is to fill one of these many information gaps, and we hope, to stimulate others to publish similar contributions.

We are aware of five sight records of Semipalmated Sandpiper on the Baja California Peninsula. All records are from coastal locations, four on the Pacific coast and one from the Gulf of California. All records pertain to fall transients in juvenal plumage, and all occurred between mid August and early September, coinciding with their main period of occurrence in Southern California. The records follow:

- 21 August 1984 (Richard E. Webster). One near Campo Don Abel, about 16 km north of San Felipe.
- 5 September 1987 (Wurster). One at Río Guadalupe River mouth, 2 km west of La Misión.
- 31 August 1990 (Wurster and Radamaker). One at Río Guadalupe River mouth, 2 km west of La Misión.
- 15 August 1992 (Radamaker and Wurster). Two in Ensenada Harbor.

23 August 1992 (Rademaker and Wurster). One near Maneadero, approximately 25 km south of Ensenada.

We are unaware of any photographic or specimen records. All individuals were intensively studied with binoculars and spotting scopes, and were identified using a combination of plumage, morphological, and behavioral characteristics (see Veit and Jonsson 1984, for a discussion of identification criteria for small *Calidris* sandpipers).

To date there are no spring records for Semipalmated Sandpiper anywhere on the Baja California Peninsula, and there are no fall records south of 31° north latitude. Further field work is needed to clarify their movement through the peninsula and along the west coast of mainland México.

#### RESUMEN

Se describen cinco observaciones de Playerito semipalmeado (*Calidris pusilla*) en Baja California entre mediados de agosto y principios de septiembre. Esta especie no había sido anteriormente registrada en la península de Baja California, aunque es un transeúnte raro pero regular en otoño en Alta California. Se necesitan más investigaciones de campo para aclarar el status de esta especie en el Oeste de México.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank Richard E. Webster for use of his field notes.

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# RECENT RECORDS OF MAROON-CHESTED GROUND- DOVE IN MÉXICO

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The Maroon-chested Ground-Dove (*Claravis mondetoura*) is a little-known species and is generally considered rare and local throughout its range. In México, it is considered "very rare" (Friedmann *et al.* 1950, Peterson and Chalif 1973), with historical records from central Veracruz and Chiapas.

On 23 February 1984, in cut-over montane rain forest on the slopes of the Volcán Santa Marta, Bierra de los Tuxtlas, Veracruz, I heard an unfamiliar call, apparently a dove. Being familiar with the other columbids known from México, I concluded the call must have been that of Maroon-chested Ground-Dove, but I was unable to find the bird and verify the assumption. Subsequent experience with the species in Chiapas confirmed that the mystery dove heard in the Sierra de los Tuxtlas was indeed this species.

On 24 July 1988, at El Sumidero, Chiapas, I heard the same call that I had heard in Veracruz four years earlier. This time, however, after a frustrating hour or so, I finally obtained a good view of a male Maroon-chested Ground-Dove. I spent much of 21 and 25 July 1988 tracking down the calling doves, and ended up seeing five birds, including two females. I estimated at least eight to ten individuals were present between kilometer posts 16 and 18 on the El Sumidero road. While the birds were often calling from all around, seeing them in the dense brushy woodland was far from easy and, had they been silent, I might have missed them.

I am aware of only two other recent reports from México: single males seen at Cerro Huitepec, the PRONATURA sanctuary near San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, on 27 August 1989 and 11 August 1990 (P. Bubb pers. comm.). It is interesting that the central Chiapas records were all in July-August (when few birders visit the area) suggesting the species may engage in seasonal movements, as does the Blue Ground-

Dove (*Claravis pretiosa*) in several areas in México and northern Central America. It has also been suggested that the local and sporadic occurrences of Maroon-chested Ground-Dove may be linked with seeding bamboo. While bamboo was seeding at El Sumidero in July 1988, it has also been seeding on most other visits I have made to the site between November and May. Also, the bamboo specialist Blue Seedeater (*Amaurospiza concolor*) was no more common at El Sumidero in July 1988 than on other visits. To help with future encounters of Maroon-chested Ground-Dove, a description of the voice may be useful. The call is a far-carrying series of deep "woop" notes, somewhat suggesting Blue Ground-Dove, but with the interval between notes shorter and the duration of calling more prolonged than that species. It was given at the rate of 10 calls per 12-13 seconds, and steadily repeated up to 40 times or more. Less often given was a slower "huh'woop" or "hoop," at the rate of 10 calls per 15-20 seconds.

## RESUMEN

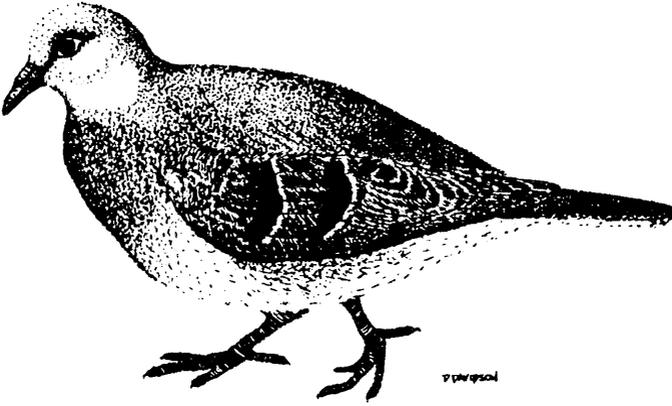
Se describen observaciones de Tórtola oscura (*Claravis mondetoura*) en el Volcán Santa Marta, Sierra de los Tuxlas, estado de Veracruz, el 23 de febrero, 1984 y en El Sumidero, estado de Chiapas, del 24 al 25 de julio, 1988. Esta especie está considerada escasa y local en toda su distribución, y en México, se considera como "muy rara", con registros históricos sólo de Veracruz central y Chiapas. El autor sabe de sólo dos otros registros recientes en México: en el Cerro Huitepec, cerca de San Cristóbal de las Casas, el 27 de agosto, 1989 y el 11 de agosto, 1990. La ocurrencia de la especie en Chiapas central sólo en julio y agosto (cuando visitan pocos observadores) es interesante y sugiere posibles movimientos estivales, como ocurre con la Tórtola azul (*Claravis pretiosa*), o posible dependencia en bambú en semilla. Se describe también la vocalización de esta ave, cual es sumamente útil para localizar especie tan secreta.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank Philip Bubb for communicating his unpublished observations. I would be interested to learn of other recent records of Maroon-chested Ground-Dove in México and northern Central America.

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Maroon-chested Ground-Dove (*Claravis mondetoura*).  
Sketch by Deb Davidson

# OBSERVATION OF A BENDIRE'S THRASHER FROM NORTHEAST BAJA CALIFORNIA

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On 14 January 1988, we found a Bendire's Thrasher (*Toxostoma bendirei*) in salt bush scrub (*Atriplex sp.*) adjacent to some homes at the northeastern edge of Algodones, Baja California. Algodones, a border town, is located along the Colorado River in the northeastern most corner of Baja California. The thrasher was within 20 meters of the fence demarcating the international boundary. As we observed this thrasher, we pushed it in hopes of it crossing the boundary into California (Imperial County). However, the thrasher moved over a fence and out of sight into a backyard.

At the time, we were aware of several records of Bendire's Thrasher cited in Wilbur (1987) and of its casual status in Imperial County, California. Although there was an awareness of the significance of this sighting, only Doug Willick recorded a description of this bird:

Brian found at east end of town, right near border- U.S. and México. They, Brian and Tom, even tried pushing the bird into Imperial County. Spotting on breast faint, but there. Fine. Pale eye. Relatively straight, short bill. Good record for Baja apparently.

The Bendire's Thrasher breeds from southeastern California, southern Nevada, southern Utah, and western and central New Mexico south to southern Sonora, México (AOU 1983). It winters from southern Arizona and southwestern New México south to southern Sinaloa, México (AOU 1983), although in Arizona wintering birds appear to be

restricted to the south-central region from the lower Salt River south to the Tucson area (Phillips *et al.* 1964). In California, the Bendire's Thrasher is a locally fairly common breeder in the Mojave Desert (Garrett and Dunn 1981), with four historical breeding records in the Colorado Desert (England and Laudenslayer 1989). Outside the breeding season in the interior of California, Garrett and Dunn (1981) considered the Bendire's Thrasher to be a casual transient.

Wilbur (1987) considered the status of the Bendire's Thrasher in Baja California to be uncertain, but "apparently an uncommon transient and winter visitor." This would seem to contradict the status as indicated above. Most recently, a publication detailing the status of birds for the lower Colorado River regarded the Bendire's Thrasher to be a rare and irregular visitor with some possible breeding around the periphery of the valley (Rosenberg *et al.* 1991). Due to relatively limited field work, it is appropriate to consider the status of Bendire's Thrasher in Baja California to be uncertain. However, considering this species status elsewhere, it appears that the Bendire's Thrasher is best considered to be a rare and irregular visitor to Baja California.

#### RESUMEN

Se describe la observación de un Cuitlacoche piquicorto (*Toxostoma bendirei*) en el extremo noreste de Algodones, Baja California, a sólo 20 metros de la frontera internacional con Alta California. Aunque anida en Sonora, esta especie está considerada sólo como visitante raro y irregular en Baja California.

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# RECENT ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

Bates, J.M. 1992. **Frugivory on *Bursera microphylla* (Burseraceae) by wintering Gray Vireos (*Vireo vicinior*, Vireonidae) in the coastal deserts of Sonora, México.** *Southwestern Naturalist* 37:252-258. The majority of vireos are insectivores throughout the year. Based on winter studies in Arroyo San Lorenzo and Cerro Prieto in Sonora, Bates learned that Gray Vireos became primarily frugivorous and defended winter foraging territories around areas supporting *Bursera microphylla*, a west Mexican elephant tree. Bates explains that the diet of wintering Gray Vireos in Sonora consists "almost entirely" of fruit of this tree. He also explores a possible symbiotic relationship between the trees and the vireos and notes that there is a "high degree of overlap" between the winter range of the vireo and the geographic distribution of this elephant tree species. [Museum of Natural Science and Department of Zoology and Physiology, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA 70803.] M.A.P.

Escalante-Pliego, P. and A. T. Peterson. 1992 **Geographic variation and species limits in Middle American woodnymphs (*Thalurania*).** *Wilson Bulletin* 104:205-219. This paper is of interest to Mexican birders as it recommends that the woodnymph of western México be considered a full species: *Thalurania ridgwayi*. This distinctive form was originally described as a species but later lumped with other Central American woodnymphs into Crowned Woodnymph (*T. colombica*). The paper is clear and well written, although it is heavy on statistics to demonstrate the obvious: that *ridgwayi* has a cleft tail versus the deeply forked tail of other Middle American *Thalurania*. Plumage differences (shown in a color frontispiece) also set *ridgwayi* apart and the authors suggest the English name Ridgway's Woodnymph; several other authors have more usefully called the bird Mexican Woodnymph. [Dept. of Ornithology, American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street, New York, New York 10024.] S.N.G.H.

Heath, M. and A. Long. 1991 **Habitat, distribution and status of the Azure-rumped Tanager *Tangara cabanisi* in México.** *Bird Conserva-*

*tion International* 1:223-254. The ecology, biogeography, and current population status of the threatened Azure-rumped Tanager are presented in this paper. This tanager occurs in the Sierra Madre de Chiapas in southern México and neighboring Guatemala, usually at elevations between 1000 m and 1700 m above sea level. They require "medium height" (roughly 30 m tall) humid, evergreen, broadleaf forest (also known as cloud forest), although they do apparently occur in the upper tropical zone in humid foothill forests as well. Of the 200,000 ha of suitable habitat in this range, only about 56% (112,000 ha) remains. Fortunately, the El Triunfo Biosphere Reserve protects about 39% (43,600 ha) of this remaining habitat. [Instituto de Historia Natural, Apartado Postal #6, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas, CP29000, México.] M.A.P.

Navarro S. A. G., A. T. Peterson, B.P. Escalante P., and H. Benitez D. 1992. *Cypseloides storeri*, a new species of swift from México. *Wilson Bulletin* 104:55-64. The authors describe a new taxon of *Cypseloides* swift from México based on four specimens: one collected in Guerrero and three taken in Michoacán. Although the authors go to great statistical lengths to convince the reader that *storeri* is indeed a good species, its distinctness from *C. cryptus* (White-chinned Swift) appears to rest on: (1) a more extensive area of whitish feathering in the face (hence the proposed English name "White-fronted Swift") and (2) the "gradually tapering (as opposed to more abrupt) shape of the face." Later, the authors admit that the "reliability of facial shape will have to be checked when skeletal series are available." No structural characters appear to separate *storeri* from *cryptus* (a conclusion supported by the authors' table and scatterplots). Further persuasions offered for the specific status of *storeri* are a "large range disjunction" and "the current tendency of the ornithological community is to split differentiated allopatric populations." The authors expect us to take on faith that *storeri* is resident (the only date provided is for the type specimen: 2 September 1983), let alone breeds in México. The paper concludes with an erroneous statement about biogeography in which the authors claim that species such as Flammulated Flycatcher and Black-throated Magpie-Jay are endemic to the mountains of western México. While *storeri* is apparently a valid taxon and may well prove to be a breeding resident in México, describing it as a species seems premature based on the information available. [Museo de Zoología "Alfonso L. Herrera," Departamento de Biología, Facultad de Ciencias,

Univ. Nacional Autónoma de México, A.P. 70-399, México D.F. 04510, México.] S.N.G.H.

Palacios, E., A. Escofet, and D. H. Loya-Salinas. 1991. **The Estero de Punta Banda, B.C., México as a link in the "Pacific Flyway": abundance of shorebirds.** *Ciencias Marinas* 17:109-131. Surveys of Estero de Punta Banda between October 1988 and April 1989 yielded 5,683 individuals of thirteen species of shorebirds. The number of individuals and the species composition in three different habitats (open beach, mud-flats, and seasonal pond) are provided. Most species were found to exclusively or nearly exclusively use only one of these habitat types. Seasonal movements were not found to be synchronic in the different habitats and status was found to change "rather neatly." Based on the surveys, the Estero was estimated to support 14,000 shorebirds each season (3,000 on the open beach and 11,000 on the mudflats). The sheer number of birds underscores the value of the Estero de Punta Banda as a shorebird stopover and as an integral part of the "Pacific Flyway" for migrant waterbirds. [Departamento de Ecología, Centro de Investigación, Científica y de Educación Superior de Ensenada (CICESE), Espinoza 843, Ensenada, Baja California, 22800 México.] M.A.P.

Rodriguez-Estrella, R., E. Mata, and L. Rivera 1992. **Ecological notes on the Green Parakeet of Isla Socorro, México.** *Condor* 94:523-525. The distinctive endemic form of Green Parakeet (*Aratinga holochlora brevipes*) on Isla Socorro has been a sadly neglected bird prior to this useful paper. The authors estimated a population of 400-500 birds and concluded that nesting activities began in November. Birds often occurred in flocks of 4-40 individuals and ranged around the island in search of food; their main food sources (the fruit of *Bumelia* and *Ilex*) probably occur throughout the year. While apparently in no immediate danger, the parakeet's distribution is more limited than in the past due to erosion caused by rampant overgrazing by sheep. [Centro de Investigaciones Biológicas, División de Biología Terrestre, Apartado Postal 128, La Paz 23000, Baja California Sur, México.] S.N.G.H.