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A ferruginous-backed antbird, *Myrmeciza ferruginea*, nest from central Amazonas, Brazil

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The ferruginous-backed antbird, *Myrmeciza ferruginea* (Thamnophilidae), is a terrestrial insectivore found in a variety of habitats including undisturbed continuous forest as well as areas that are naturally (*e.g.* treefalls) and anthropogenically disturbed (Ridgely and Tudor 1994, Stratford 1997, Stratford and Stouffer 1999). In this paper, I document a nest of the ferruginous-backed antbird, *M. ferruginea* that I discovered in the Brazilian state of Amazonas on 31 June 1995. Despite the ubiquity of this species north of the Amazon, this is only the third report of a nest and the first report from the state of Amazonas (Haverschmidt 1968, Tostain *et al.* 1992).

I discovered the nest in reserve 1501 of the Biological Dynamics of Forest Fragments project, located approximately 80 km north of Manaus (2°30'S, 60°W) in Amazonas. The reserve is within a vast area of continuous terra firme forest. The canopy averages about 35 m in height with emergents up to 55 m. The understory is relatively open and dominated by stemless palms of the genus *Bactris* (see Lovejoy *et al.* 1986 for complete description of the study site).

I visited the nest daily from the day of discovery through 7 August 1995 for a total of 39 days. Observation of the nest ended at this time due to logistic constraints. The nest was located on a relatively flat ridge at least 500 m from flowing water. Canopy height was approximately 30 m and the vegetation could be considered typical for undisturbed areas. The nest rested on the ground, approximately 20 cm from the base of a *Bactris* palm and 30 cm from a moderately used trail. The nest was nearly completely concealed by a 10 cm juvenile palm and a larger decomposing palm frond of the same species: from 1 m above the nest, only 10% of the nest was visible.

The nest was triangular in shape and constructed of dead leaves similar to those in the nearby leaf litter (figure 1). There were a few plant fibers or roots lining the bottom of the nest but not enough to obscure the base. The nest material did not appear to be interwoven and there were no feathers or other typical lining materials present. The nest was similar in construction to the nests previously described by Haverschmidt (1968), Tostain *et al.* (1992) and Sick (1993: 405). Although the breeding season is not well documented for this species, Haverschmidt (1968) reported an active nest in Surinam in June and Tostain *et al.* (1992) reported an active nest in French Guiana in September.

The nest in Amazonas was active at the time of discovery and contained two eggs for the duration of the observation period. The eggs were white with light purple mottling, similar to those described by Haverschmidt (1968) and Tostain *et al.* (1992). Every time I visited the nest the eggs were always in the same position in the center of the nest. The female was frequently found on the nest and when present, refused to flush from the nest even when I was within 1 m. In fact, the female was consistently observed on or near the nest despite constant disruptions from an Organization of Tropical Studies course that was in progress at the site. Once flushed from the nest, the female typically flew approximately 10 m to a perch 2 m from the ground and then called. Only on one occasion was a male seen within a few meters of the nest at which time the female was on the nest. On the last day of observation the female was still incubating.

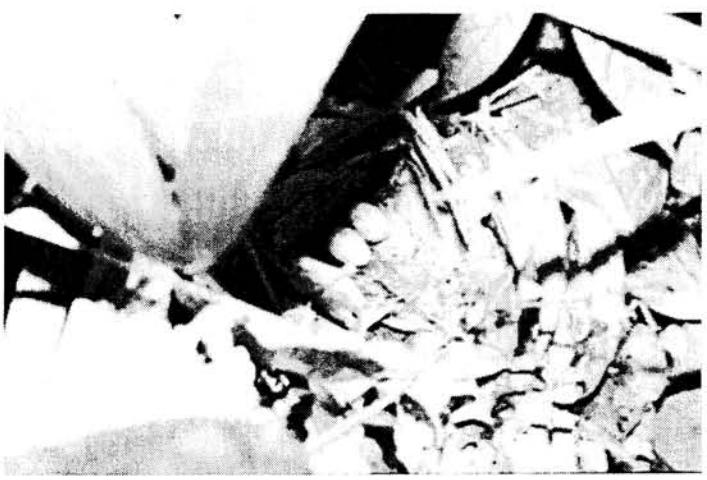

Figure 1. A nest of the Ferruginous-backed Antbird, *Myrmeciza ferruginea* discovered on 31 July, 1995 at camp 41 of the Biological Dynamics of Forest Fragments Project north of Manaus, Brazil.

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