Significant ornithological observations from the Rio São Francisco Valley, Minas Gerais, Brazil, with notes on conservation and biogeography

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RESUMO. Observações ornitológicas de importância no vale do Rio São Francisco, Minas Gerais, Brasil, com notas sobre conservação e bioegoegrafia. Chama-se a atenção para a importância das florestas tropicais decíduas do vale do Rio São Francisco, com referência especial a uma área pouco explorada, mas protegida, o Parque Nacional Cavernas do Peruaçu, que contém duas espécies globalmente ameaçadas (*Aratinga auricapilla* e *Xiphocolaptes falcirostris*) e cinco quase-ameaçadas (*Crypturellus noctivagus*, *Herpsilochmus sellowi*, *Hylopezus ochroleucus*, *Megaxenops parnaguae* e *Arremon franciscanus*). São relatadas observações ornitológicas relevantes, incluindo várias extensões de distribuição (*Sakesphorus cristatus*, *Arremon franciscanus* e *Molothrus rufoaxillaris*) e dois novos registros estaduais (*Penelope jacucaca* e *Stigmatura budytoides*), assim como observações da história natural e informação que aumentam o conhecimento das relações ecológicas de várias espécies pouco conhecidas. São apresentadas evidências sobre uma aparente relação próxima entre *Phyllomyias reiseri* e *P. sclateri*. Finalmente são apresentadas algumas recomendações para trabalhos de campo futuros e ações conservacionistas.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Rio São Francisco, registros de aves, florestas decíduas, conservação, Brasil.

ABSTRACT. Further attention is drawn to the ornithological importance of the tropical deciduous forests of the São Francisco Valley, with particular reference to a little-explored, but protected, area, Cavernas do Peruaçu National Park, which supports two Globally Threatened (Aratinga auricapilla and Xiphocolaptes falcirostris) and five Near Threatened bird species (Crypturellus noctivagus, Herpsilochmus sellowi, Hylopezus ochroleucus, Megaxenops parnaguae and Arremon franciscanus). Significant ornithological observations, including several range extensions (Sakesphorus cristatus, Arremon franciscanus and Molothrus rufoaxillaris) and two new state records (Penelope jacucaca and Stigmatura budytoides), as well as natural history observations and information that increases our knowledge of the ecological relationships of a number of poorly known taxa, are reported. Evidence is presented for an apparent close relationship between Phyllomyias reiseri and P. sclateri. Finally some recommendations for future field work and conservation action are presented.

KEY WORDS: São Francisco River, bird records, tropical deciduous forests, conservation, Brazil.

Neotropical dry forests have been relatively little studied and remain poorly known (Pennington *et al.* 2000). The dry forests of central Brazil are one of the more neglected habitats in terms of conservation initiatives, given little recognition even at national level (Silva and Oren 1992). These deciduous forests grow on fertile soils, associated with limestone, and reach up to 25 m tall, with characteristic species including *Astronium urundeuva* (Anacardiaceae), *Piptadenia macrocarpa* (Leguminosae), *Cedrella fissilis* (Meliaceae) and sometimes *Cavanillesia arborea* (Bombacaceae) (Ratter *et al.* 1978, Silva and Oren 1992, see also Willis and Oniki 1991).

Current plant species' distributions support the hypothesis of a historical link between the present-day disjunct centres of seasonally dry forests (Pennington *et al.* 2000). The dry forests of the São Francisco depression conform to this pattern, as their floral composition is associated with that of other Neotropical dry forests (Prado and Gibbs 1993, Silva 1997), being considered vestiges

of a formerly continuous seasonal woodland formation (Ratter *et al.* 1988, Prado and Gibbs 1993). Pennington *et al.* (2000) considered that all, currently disjunct, areas of Neotropical seasonally dry forests should be treated as a unit in biogeographic analyses, and proposed to study their relationships via a cladistic biogeographical approach. The region's avifauna, however, has varied origins and affinities and some taxa have their closest relatives in (or even extend their distribution to) other domains, e.g. the caatinga or Atlantic Forest (Silva 1989).

The conservation importance of the tropical deciduous forests of the valley and its surroundings have been highlighted elsewhere (e.g. Silva 1989, Silva and Oren 1992, 1997, Silva and Straube 1996, Silva 1997). The main threats consist of clearance for agriculture, charcoal and timber extraction, and limestone quarrying (Ratter *et al.* 1988, Silva and Oren 1992), while Silva and Oren (1997) estimated that less than 5% of these forests would survive more than five years given current levels of destruction.

The area of Jaíba, on the right bank of the São Francisco, is also being cleared of its native vegetation, in order to open land for one of the largest irrigation projects in Latin America (Raposo 1997, Pimentel 1997, R. Ribon *in litt*. 2001 and information presented by R. Ribon and J. Simon at the VI Congresso Brasileiro de Ornitologia).

Here, we report significant ornithological observations made during visits to the region and, in addition, highlight the importance to several threatened bird species of a little-explored protected area, Parque Nacional Cavernas do Peruaçu. We also evaluate the possible relationships of Reiser's Tyrannulet *Phyllomyias reiseri* in light of our observations. Records of two other interesting and little-known species - caatinga Nighthawk *Chordeiles vielliardi* and Minas Gerais Tyrannulet *Phylloscartes roquettei* - will be presented elsewhere. Our observations serve to underscore earlier reports, to draw attention to the opportunities available to field workers within this area and to sound an alarm that infrastructural development increases apace.

METHODS

Between February 1997 and December 1999, coworkers (Mark Elwonger et al., Marco della Seta and Robert Williams) and ourselves made three short visits to the middle reaches of the Rio São Francisco, in central and northern Minas Gerais, Brazil. We surveyed a number of localities, consisting largely of tropical dry forests and gallery forest, at the junction of three main biomes, the Atlantic Forest, Cerrado and Caatinga. Details of the principal localities visited are presented below. At each site we walked existing roads and trails, at a speed of c. 4 km/h, observing and tape-recording as many individual birds as we could. Species identifications were made using binoculars and a telescope, on the basis of extensive previous field experience of virtually all observed taxa and with key reference works, e.g. Ridgely and Tudor (1989, 1994) for passerines, and to published and unpublished sound-recordings of certain key taxa. We did not aim to conduct thorough surveys or a formal census. Appendix 1 presents a complete species list from our visits. Given the brief nature of these, we do not provide more than the minimal data of a species' presence at the principal study localities, with an additional column for other sites visited, including observations in transit through the region.

Voucher tape-recordings, made by J. M. B. and J. M., have been or will be deposited at the Library of Natural Sounds, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, Ithaca, New York, U.S.A., the National Sound Archive, London, U.K. and the Arquivo Sonoro Elías Coelho, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (see Appendix 1). J. M. B. used a Sony TCM-5000 tape-recorder and a Sennheiser

ME-66 microphone. J. M. used Sony TCM-5000 and Sony TCD-D10PROII tape-recorders and Sennheiser ME-62 and ME-67 microphones, the former with a 25" reflector. Unless otherwise stated observations in 1997 are by G. M. K. and J. M. B. with Robert Williams, those in 1998 pertain to G. M. K. *et al.*, while those in 1999 are by all three authors, together with Marco della Seta.

STUDY AREAS

Pirapora. The area visited between 16 and 18 December 1999 is c. 11 km south-east of the town, at c. 17°23'S 44°48'W, and consists of patches of gallery forest within low caatinga scrub and agriculture, adjacent to the Rio das Velhas, a major tributary of the São Francisco. The area previously possessed varied landscapes, with rich forests being described from the lower Rio das Velhas (Hartt 1870), but these have obviously suffered notable destruction, as we found woodland to be restricted to the fringes of waterways.

Parque Nacional Cavernas do Peruaçu. Visited on 10-11 March 1997, 8 November 1998, and 19 and 21 December 1999. The protected area lies 5 km south of Itacarambi and the section visited is centred on c. 15°09'S 44°15'W. It consists of 56,800 ha of the watershed of the Peruaçu stream, which flows into the São Francisco. The principal habitat is tall deciduous forest within high limestone outcrops and walls. We also found dense patches of "mata de Jaíba" adjacent to some woodlands. Elsewhere, relatively large areas have been cleared for cattle grazing, but it was unclear if these fields are within the reserve. The protected area is under the stewardship of IBAMA, but we lack further details as to the boundaries of the reserve or the degree of formal protection it receives. Some tracts of forest appear to have been subject to smallscale clearance.

Fazenda Olho d'Água. Visited on 18-19 December 1999. The fazenda is now divided between two owners, with the larger area now within Fazenda Nossa Senhora Aparecida. We visited patches of woodland and limestone outcrops close to the headquarters of both. Dry forest occurs within both, especially the last-named fazenda, which is situated further west of the main road. Unfortunately, we found few access roads and were thus unable to explore the area more thoroughly.

Mocambinho. Centred on 15°03'S 44°02'W, this area is on the right bank of the São Francisco and was visited on 8-9 November 1998, and 20 December 1999. The habitat consists of patches of secondary deciduous woodland, dense caatinga forest, or "mata de Jaíba", and more open scrubby caatinga fringing the São Francisco. Taller woodland persists only as patches within a largely agricultural landscape, related to the Jaíba irrigation project.

Other localities were visited, such as Manga and patches of habitat beside the main road between Januária and the state of Bahia. However, only brief stops were made en route between main sites and fuller details are provided in the relevant species accounts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We recorded a total of 292 species at the four principal study sites and a number of subsidiary localities visited only briefly (see Appendix 1). Details of our observations of 11 species are presented below, where these add to our knowledge of the avifauna of the region; these include several range extensions, more detailed behavioural information than previously existed for some poorly known forms, new localities for several globally threatened species and two first state records.

White-browed Guan Penelope jacucaca. Three were seen on 8-9 November 1998, in low caatinga scrub on the right bank of the São Francisco, by the road to Mocambinho. They were not wary, permitting close approach in a vehicle on the second date, perching atop the low caatinga scrub and feeding on the road. This locality appears to represent the southernmost limit of its range; it was not mentioned for the state by Sick (1997). Recently considered Near Threatened (BirdLife International 2000), due to habitat loss and fragmentation, trade and hunting. The habitat in the region continues to deteriorate (see below) and we noted evidence of hunting.

Silvery-cheeked Antshrike Sakesphorus cristatus. Several pairs were observed and tape-recorded, on 16-18 December 1999, in degraded caatinga scrub by the Rio das Velhas, southeast of Pirapora. This appears to be the most southerly and western record of the species as, for Minas Gerais, Sick (1997) mentioned it only for Almenara, further north. It is however numerous at Mocambinho (R. Ribon in litt. 2001; pers. obs. 1998). We also found it between Itacarambi and Manga, on 10 November 1998, and at PN Cavernas do Peruaçu, on 21 December 1999. The species is probably locally not uncommon in the middle reaches of the São Francisco Valley.

Red-shouldered Spinetail Gyalophylax hellmayri. One observed and tape-recorded in dense, thorny low caatinga scrub between Itacarambi and Manga, on 10 November 1998. The habitat in this area is typical of the species, e.g. at Canudos, Bahia (pers. obs.) This area appears to be the southernmost limit of its distribution; it had previously been recorded in Minas Gerais at Mocambinho (R. Ribon in litt. 2001). Considered Near Threatened (BirdLife International 2000), further details of its ecology and vocalizations can be found in Whitney and Pacheco (1994).

Caatinga (Rufous) Cacholote Pseudoseisura cristata. A pair was observed in scrubby caatinga southeast of Pirapora, on 17 December 1999. We also tape-recorded

several individuals, on 8-9 November 1998 and 18 and 20 December 1999, on the right bank of the São Francisco, by the road to Mocambinho; on 19 December 1999 at PN Cavernas do Peruaçu and on 21 December 1999 at Fazenda Nossa Senhora Aparecida. All were in low-lying caatinga woodland and scrub adjacent to the river. Pairs were separated from their nearest neighbours by c. 300-400 m, as reported by Zimmer and Whittaker (2000) to be typical of this form. Several nests were also noted. These appear to be only the third and fourth localities in the state, after the lower Serra do Cipó (Willis and Oniki 1991) and Mocambinho (R. Ribon in litt. 2001); Zimmer and Whittaker (2000) knew of no specimen records for Minas Gerais. Given our observations, it may be assumed to be locally common within its preferred habitat.

Great Xenops Megaxenops parnaguae. One was attracted to playback, on 9 March 1997, in dense and partially degraded caatinga woodland (similar to "mata de Jaíba"), c. 15 km north of Itacarambi. On 9 November 1998, one was attracted to playback in "mata de Jaíba" near Mocambinho, close to the type locality of Arremon franciscanus, where Raposo (1997) and R. Ribon (in litt. 2001) also recorded the species. Interestingly, this individual did not respond vocally to playback. Another was noted feeding in dense caatinga woodland at PN Cavernas do Peruaçu, in the same area as the first Arremon (see below). It searched its surroundings rather passively and investigated a termite nest, sometimes hanging upsidedown. Andrade (1998) listed five localities in Minas Gerais, including Mocambinho, but our other localities are new for the species. Recently classified as Near Threatened (BirdLife International 2000), Whitney and Pacheco (1994) provided a detailed review of the distribution, ecology and relationships of the species.

Moustached Woodcreeper Xiphocolaptes falcirostris. On 10 March 1997, three were observed in a dry woodlot, c. 5 km north of Itacarambi, beside the main road to Bahia. However, in early November 1998, when G. M. K. revisited this area with the specific intention of searching for the species, this woodland had largely been cleared through road widening and improvement work. A pair was attracted to playback of the song of X. albicollis early in the morning of 19 December 1999 at PN Cavernas do Peruaçu. Though they approached relatively swiftly, they did not respond very vigorously, moving through the tall dry forest at midheights around trunks and main branches. They appeared not to be associated with a mixed-species flock in the same area. A lone individual was subsequently observed nearby. At Fazenda Nossa Senhora Aparecida, south of Itacarambi, we discovered a pair later the same day. One vocalized with typical dawn and dusk calls, similar to those of X. albicollis: iíeiiiii-chjk! Possibly the same pair was observed and heard at the same locality in the morning of 22 December 1999. Individuals in this region pertain to franciscanus, which is restricted to the left margin of the São Francisco (Silva and Oren 1997), with previous records from Jaíba, on the right margin, now discarded (Ribon 2000). The species was recently classified as Vulnerable (BirdLife International 2000), and threats and conservation strategies were thoroughly reviewed by Silva and Oren (1997) and BirdLife International (2000). We suggest that the area between PN Cavernas do Peruaçu and Fazenda Nossa Senhora Aparecida be considered a prime area for additional field surveys and studies of the species, while conservation measures should concentrate on providing corridors of habitat between now largely isolated woodlots.

Wagler's (Scaled) Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes* (*squamatus*) wagleri. Observed on 19 and 21 December 1999 at PN Cavernas do Peruaçu, and in wooded patches at Fazenda Nossa Senhora Aparecida, on 19 and 22 December 1999, with up to eight seen daily. Also noted in patchy tall dry deciduous forest, north of Itacarambi, on 9 March 1997 and 10 November 1998. Much of this habitat has subsequently been cleared (see *Xiphocolaptes falcirostris*).

Individuals usually followed mixed-species flocks, moving through the upper half of tall trees, principally on narrower branches. Willis and Oniki (1991), who recorded it as common around Januária, observed similar behaviour there. Silva and Straube (1996), in reviewing taxonomy of the squamatus complex concluded, on the basis of morphological evidence, that wagleri demanded species status under the Phylogenetic Species Concept, but noted a lack of vocalization data. Though we did not specifically record any vocalizations, a prolonged woodcreeper-like whistle tape-recorded at Peruaçu may pertain to this taxon, as suggested by D. Buzzetti (pers. comm.). We remain uncertain as to its identity, but the call differs from a probably homologous vocalization in squamatus. However, Willis and Oniki (1991) reported call notes similar to those of squamatus from the Januária area and J. M. recorded one call, on 22 December 1999 at Fazenda Nossa Senhora Aparecida which sounds almost identical to the nominate. We heard and tape-recorded calls similar to individuals from São Paulo, delivered by birds observed south of Pirapora, on 17 December 1999. These individuals were faintly marked with buffy spots, at least on the necksides (the crown being concealed), and this voice and plumage pattern concords with Silva and Straube's (1996) analysis, who consider the individuals east of the Rio São Francisco within the nominate form.

Wagleri occurs west of the São Francisco and it was tentatively proposed that the formation of the river's present-day course represented the vicariant event leading to differentiation from *squamatus* (Silva and Straube 1996). The dating of mitochondrial DNA sequence divergence between the two forms supports this novel hypothesis (García-Moreno and Silva 1997).

Reiser's Tyrannulet Phyllomyias reiseri. At PN Cavernas do Peruaçu a pair was observed on 11 March 1997, three separate singles on 8 November 1998 and up to eight were seen and tape-recorded on 19 December 1999, including a solitary individual, a pair and an apparent family. They principally moved between 3 m and 7 m above ground, but occasionally down to 1 m, within tall dry deciduous forest and its edge. Rather active, they performed mostly upward sallies within branches to catch insects and appeared to prefer more open vegetation and thin branches, such as those found at mid-heights in taller trees or the canopy of medium Leguminosae-type trees with sparse foliage. They occasionally produced a short wing flicking. On 21 December 1999 up to four were noted high in the canopy at the same locality. At least one was observed in woodland north of Itacarambi, on 10 March 1997.

Phyllomyias reiseri has endured a controversial taxonomic history, elucidated by Silva (1996) who studied new specimen material. Though *P. reiseri* has usually been considered to form a superspecies with *P. virescens*, of the Atlantic Forest, and *P. urichi*, from lowland northern Venezuela (which has even been considered a subspecies of virescens by some), Silva (1996) had already suggested a possible relationship between this group and Sclater's Tyrannulet *Phyllomyias sclateri*, from the Andean foothills of southern Peru to northwest Argentina (for the distribution of these four taxa see Silva 1996).

The vocalizations of P. reiseri and P. virescens differ strikingly (Belton 1985, Willis and Oniki 1991, Silva 1996, pers. obs.), while the voice of P. urichi is unknown. We found the most common voice of P. reiseri to bear a strong resemblance to the principal similar vocalization given by P. sclateri (see Ridgely and Tudor 1994, Schulenberg 2000), which could indicate a closer link between reiseri and sclateri than previously realised, both being more closely related to each other than either is to virescens (contra e.g. Nores 1992). Vocalizations, especially within suboscine passerines, are increasingly used in taxonomic studies (e.g. Isler et al. 1998, 1999), but we are unaware of their use to infer inter-specific relationships (but see Whitney et al. 2000: 886-887). We also found that, structurally, these two species resemble one another, being shorter and stockier than virescens, and have less horizontal postures than the latter. In the field, their tails also appear shorter than virescens (see Silva 1996) and are not as frequently held half-cocked as in that species (see also Clay et al. 1998).

The suggested relationship also appears to be supported by the distribution of these species, which conforms to a known biogeographic pattern. Silva (1989, 1992) suggested two different processes for the origin of certain central Brazilian taxa. That hypothesised for *Knipolegus franciscanus* and *Phylloscartes roquettei* was based on the expansion of central Brazilian forests during

the Late Pleistocene (Ab'Saber 1977). Climate amelioration and a return to more humid regimes fragmented these forests during the early Holocene. Vegetation studies point to a close relationship between these currently isolated patches of deciduous forest, supporting this hypothesis (Pennington et al. 2000). Phyllomyias reiseri and P. sclateri currently occupy two such forested areas. For Cercomacra antbirds, Silva (1992) pointed to the importance of tectonism during the Plio-Pleistocene transition. The pattern of distribution and relationships of certain Cercomacra appear to parallel, to some extent, that of reiseri-sclateri (but see Zimmer et al. [1997] for arguments against the relationships proposed by Silva [1992]). Subsequently, Fjeldså (1994) suggested that this tectonism, and the subsidence of the unstable Chaco plain, interrupted the contact between a number of current sister taxa (with a circum-Amazonian distribution pattern, see Remsen et al. 1991). The distributions of these tyrannulets may have also resulted from such forces. We are unaware, however, of which other Phyllomyias could belong to the potential group, occupying the gap between south Peru and coastal Venezuela. These biogeographic hypotheses and the composition of the putative species group (as well as the validity of the genus Xanthomyias), should be tested using molecular data, which could provide the temporal perspective required to approximately date the separation between them and thus assign the vicariant event to one of the processes described above, or to elaborate a new hypothesis concerning their relationships.

Phyllomyias reiseri occurs in highland interior eastern Brazil, from southern Piauí, through southern Goiás, the Distrito Federal and eastern Mato Grosso do Sul, to northeast Paraguay (Ridgely and Tudor 1994). It is considered most frequent in gallery forest within Cerrado (Clay et al. 1998), though we consider that the subtropical, dry deciduous forests of northern Minas Gerais are also important to the species. No concerns have been raised as to its conservation status (BirdLife International 2000), presumably due to its comparatively broad geographical range. Nonetheless, ongoing and severe habitat destruction and fragmentation within the Cerrado and these deciduous forests must represent a threat. We advocate close attention be paid to the species and that it be considered a potential future candidate in the formulation of global and national red lists.

Greater Wagtail-tyrant Stigmatura budytoides. A pair observed and tape-recorded in low scrubby caatinga just south of Mocambinho, on 18 December 1999. Two forms in the genus inhabit northeastern Brazil, namely Stigmatura budytoides gracilis and Stigmatura napensis bahiae. This latter was described by Chapman (1926) within budytoides, but Zimmer (1940) subsequently placed it within napensis. Their distribution and relationships to each other and other Stigmatura taxa are poorly understood, but both taxa are recognisable in the field and may be separated by their

ecological requirements (J. M. pers. obs., J. M. C. da Silva and B. M. Whitney pers. comm.). Those observed at Mocambinho reminded us of those from near Curaçá, northeastern Bahia, of which we have more ample experience and where we have only noted one taxon in the scrubby caatinga. Those at Mocambinho appear to belong to the same form. Based on the descriptions presented by Chapman (1926) and Zimmer (1940, 1955), a brief analysis of specimens housed at the American Museum of Natural History, by J. M. B., vocalizations and plumage pattern, as well as size, we conclude that we have encountered S. b. gracilis. Zimmer (1955) mentioned specimens of this form from Juazeiro, Barra and Remanso, in Bahia, and we have noted this form near Curaçá and Canudos, within the same area. We are unaware of records away from this region, and Ridgely and Tudor (1994) only map this restricted area. This would appear to be the first state record and a considerable southward range extension. Sick (1997) also mentioned the species only for Bahia.

A taxonomic revision of this group based on further specimens from throughout the caatinga and extensive analyses of vocalizations should endeavour to elucidate their status and several yet unanswered questions such as the origins and sympatry of bahiae and gracilis.

Ash-throated Casiornis Casiornis fusca. Near Mocambinho, on 9 November 1998, four lone individuals were observed, all but one closely associated with mixed-species flocks. All were in tall, largely leafless, dry deciduous forest, feeding in upper and mid levels. At PN Cavernas do Peruaçu, singles were seen on 19 and 21 December 1999 loosely following large mixed-species flocks. Perching mostly on exposed branches and performing long airborne sallies in mid and upper levels of tall dry forest, they generally behaved in a manner reminiscent of *C. rufa* but were perhaps less conspicuous. Another was observed nearby at Mocambinho, east of the São Francisco, in a patch of tall deciduous (apparently more humid) forest. This area was highly fragmented with only patchy forest remaining within an agricultural landscape. This individual also loosely associated with a mixed-species flock.

São Francisco Sparrow Arremon franciscanus. Only recently described, from the Mocambinho area (Raposo 1997), the species was subsequently found in caatinga just outside Parque Nacional Chapada Diamantina, Bahia (Parrini et al. 1999). On 9 November 1998, very near the type locality at Mocambinho, G. M. K. et al. observed a singing male (tape-recorded by Mark Elwonger) in taller (canopy height c. 5 m), more humid forest than the low caatinga described by Raposo (1997). On 21 December 1999, we observed and tape-recorded at least three individuals at PN Cavernas do Peruaçu, the first records west of the São Francisco. They were in the dense undergrowth of "mata de Jaíba" at the edge of tall caatinga woodland, moving nervously in the lower branches of dense shrubs and small trees. This woodland, up to 3 m tall, has a rather open canopy, but very dense foliage and undergrowth up to 1.5 m. *A. franciscanus* is perhaps more widely distributed than might be inferred from its four published localities, but its habitat is under considerable threat, even within protected areas such as PN Cavernas do Peruaçu, where we noted that large areas had been cleared for cattle grazing, and which is one of only two protected areas where the species occurs (BirdLife International 2000). Such pressure was also noted at the type locality (Raposo 1997), leading to its classification as Near Threatened (BirdLife International 2000).

Screaming Cowbird Molothrus rufoaxillaris. On 16 December 1999, at least one was observed, perched atop tall, open gallery forest within an open caatinga landscape southeast of Pirapora. Though Shiny Cowbird M. bonariensis was also present here, the diagnostic short bill was noted. A group of approximately six was found, on 18 December 1999, at the entrance to Fazenda Olho d'Água, south of Itacarambi, and one at PN Cavernas do Peruaçu. We also recorded it near Januária, in December 1999. The species is currently spreading north through Minas Gerais, with observations since late 1993 in the region of Francisco Sá (D'Angelo Neto 2000). Our record near Itacarambi extends its range north by a further c.150 km. It will be extremely interesting to follow this process and record interactions between it and the distinctive local form of the Baywing Agelaioides (badius) fringillarius, which until now has not been exposed to parasitism by Molothrus rufoaxillaris, the specialized brood-parasite of nominate badius further south (Jaramillo and Burke 1999).

CONSERVATION

The Januária-Itacarambi area lies within an Endemic Bird Area (EBA 074) (Stattersfield et al. 1998). Our observations within PN Cavernas do Peruaçu have revealed the presence of two Globally Threatened species, Golden-capped Parakeet Aratinga auricapilla and Moustached Woodcreeper Xiphocolaptes falcirostris, as well as five Near Threatened species, Yellow-legged Tinamou Crypturellus noctivagus, caatinga Antwren Herpsilochmus sellowi (see Whitney et al. 2000), Whitebrowed Antpitta Hylopezus ochroleucus, Great Xenops Megaxenops parnaguae and São Francisco Sparrow Arremon franciscanus. Additionally, we have noted other poorly known species that are to some extent restricted to this general area, e.g. Wagler's (Scaled) Woodcreeper Lepidocolaptes (squamatus) wagleri, Reiser's Tyrannulet Phyllomyias reiseri and Ash-throated Casiornis Casiornis fusca. The threatened Brazilian Black-tyrant Knipolegus franciscanus was recorded at Peruaçu (Andrade 1990), but we failed to find it during our visits.

Despite evidence of poor application of its protected status and some degradation within the reserve's boundaries, PN Cavernas do Peruaçu is of significant conservation importance for several rare and declining species (see Andrade 1990). It is also of key importance from the standpoint of conservation of the threatened dry forests, it representing the only protected area within EBA 074 (Stattersfield et al. 1998). No management plan exists for the national park, though this is clearly of critical importance: as broad guidelines, we suggest that its protected area status is more stringently enforced and its boundaries more effectively delimited. In the longer term, areas outside the current reserve should be surveyed to identify areas warranting annexation, though much of its hinterland is a designated Área de Proteção Ambiental ("Caverna do Peruaçu"). Approaches to landowners, whose properties encompass patches of dry forest, should be made in order to reach agreement as to the use of this habitat. Awareness and environmental education campaigns directed at schools in the region are desirable. Ecological research is required to establish sound conservation planning and management options for the region, as are studies of several of the threatened and poorly known species that occur in the area. Silva and Oren (1997) concluded that Moustached Woodcreeper represented an excellent indicator species of the habitat type and that future studies afford particular attention to this species. PN Cavernas do Peruaçu is an ideal location to focus such action.

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Appendix 1. List of 292 species recorded at the principal study sites: (A) Pirapora, (B) PN Cavernas do Peruaçu, (C) Fazendas Nossa Senhora Aparecida and Olho d'Água, (D) Mocambinho, and (E) Others (C = Carinhanha, principally the river close to town, I = principally woodlots between Itacarambi and Manga, and marshy areas north of the latter, J = Januária, principally areas south of the town, and P = tall humid forest c. 30 km northeast of Pirapora). An x indicates presence at any of the four principal study sites. An * indicates species that were tape-recorded (see Methods). Systematic order and nomenclature follows Sick 1997, with the exception of *Hydropsalis torquata*, where we follow Pacheco & Whitney (1998), *Thamnophilus pelzelni*, where we follow Isler *et al.* (1997), *Herpsilochmus sellowi*, where we follow Whitney *et al.* (2000), *Lepidocolaptes wagleri*, where we follow Silva and Straube (1997), *Compsothraupis loricata*, where we follow Ridgely & Tudor (1989), and *Agelaioides (badius) fringillarius*, where we follow Jaramillo and Burke (1999).

		A	В	C	D	E
Tinamidae						
Undulated Tinamou	Crypturellus undulatus *				X	
Yellow-legged Tinamou	Crypturellus noctivagus *		X	X	X	C
Small-billed Tinamou	Crypturellus parvirostris	X				
Tataupa Tinamou	Crypturellus tataupa *		X	X	X	
White-bellied Nothura	Nothura boraquira	X			X	C
Spotted Nothura	Nothura maculosa				X	
Podicipedidae						
Least Grebe	Tachybaptus dominicus					J
Phalacrocoracidae						
Neotropic Cormorant	Phalacrocorax brasilianus				X	
Ardeidae						
Cocoi Heron	Ardea cocoi					J
Great Egret	Casmerodius albus	X			X	C
					•	Continued

Appendix 1. Continued.

	Taxa	A	В	C	D	E
Snowy Egret	Egretta thula	X		X	X	С
Cattle Egret	Bubulcus ibis	X			X	I,J
Striated Heron	Butorides striatus	X		X	X	C
Whistling Heron	Syrigma sibilatrix					J
Capped Heron	Pilherodius pileatus				X	
Black-crowned Night-heron	Nycticorax nycticorax *				X	J
Threskiornithidae						
Roseate Spoonbill	Platalea ajaja				X	
Cathartidae						
King Vulture	Sarcoramphus papa					I
Black Vulture	Coragyps atratus		X	X	X	I
Turkey Vulture	Cathartes aura	X			X	C,I,J
Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture	Cathartes burrovianus					I
Anatidae						
White-faced Whistling-duck	Dendrocygna viduata	X	X	X		J
Black-bellied Whistling-duck	Dendrocygna autumnalis	X		X	X	C,J
Comb Duck	Sarkidiornis melanotos					C,I
Brazilian Duck	Amazonetta brasiliensis	X	X	X	x	
Muscovy Duck	Cairina moschata				X	
Anhimidae						
Horned Screamer	Anhima cornuta					I
Accipitridae						
White-tailed Kite	Elanus leucurus					J
Pearl Kite	Gampsonyx swainsonii					J
Grey-headed Kite	Leptodon cayanensis		X			
Hook-billed Kite	Chondrohierax uncinatus		X			
Plumbeous Kite	Ictinia plumbea	X	X			
Snail Kite	Rostrhamus sociabilis					I
Bicolored Hawk	Accipiter bicolor					I
Rufous-thighed Hawk	Accipiter striatus					I
White-tailed Hawk	Buteo albicaudatus					J
Short-tailed Hawk	Buteo brachyurus		X			
Grey-lined Hawk	Asturina nitida *			X		J
Roadside Hawk	Rupornis magnirostris	X	X	X	X	I
Savanna Hawk	Buteogallus meridionalis			X	X	I
Black Hawk-eagle	Spizaetus tyrannus		X			
Crane Hawk	Geranospiza caerulescens	X	X			

Appendix 1. Continued.

		A	В	С	D	Е
Pandionidae						
Osprey	Pandion haliaetus	X				C
Falconidae						
Laughing Falcon	Herpetotheres cachinnans					I
Collared Forest-falcon	Micrastur semitorquatus		X			
Barred Forest-falcon	Micrastur ruficollis		X			
Yellow-headed Caracara	Milvago chimachima *	X	X		X	I
Southern Crested Caracara	Polyborus plancus	X	X	X		I,J
Peregrine Falcon	Falco peregrinus					J
Bat Falcon	Falco rufigularis		X			I,J
Aplomado Falcon	Falco femoralis		X	X		I
American Kestrel	Falco sparverius	X		X	X	I
Cracidae						
White-browed Guan	Penelope jacucaca				X	
Aramidae						
Limpkin	Aramus guarauna					I
Rallidae						
Grey-necked Wood-rail	Aramides cajanea	X				J
Giant Wood-rail	Aramides ypecaha *					J
Common Moorhen	Gallinula chloropus				X	
Purple Gallinule	Porphyrula martinica					I
Cariamidae						
Red-legged Seriema	Cariama cristata			X		
Jacanidae						
Wattled Jacana	Jacana jacana *	X		X		C,J
Charadridae						
Southern Lapwing	Vanellus chilensis *	X		X	X	J
Pied Plover	Hoploxypterus cayanus *	X		X		
Collared Plover	Charadrius collaris	X				
Scolopacidae						
Solitary Sandpiper	Tringa solitaria			X		J
Lesser Yellowlegs	Tringa flavipes	X	x			I
Greater Yellowlegs	Tringa melanoleuca	X				I
Spotted Sandpiper	Actitis macularia	X				J
Recurvirostridae						
Black-necked Stilt	Himantopus himantopus	X	X		X	J

Appendix 1. Continued.

	Taxa	A	В	С	D	Е
Laridae						
Large-billed Tern	Phaetusa simplex *				X	J
Rynchopidae						
Black Skimmer	Rynchops niger				X	C
Colombidae						
Picazuro Pigeon	Columba picazuro	X		X	X	C,I,J
Pale-vented Pigeon	Columba cayennensis	X	X			
Plumbeous Pigeon	Columba plumbea *		X			
Eared Dove	Zenaida auriculata		X			I
Plain-breasted Ground-dove	Columbina minuta		X	X	X	J
Ruddy Ground-dove	Columbina talpacoti	X	X	X	X	I,J
Picui Ground-dove	Columbina picui	X	X	X	X	C,J
Blue Ground-dove	Claravis pretiosa		X		X	
Scaled Dove	Scardafella squammata *	X	x	X	X	I,J
White-tipped Dove	Leptotila verreauxi *		x	X	X	I
Grey-fronted Dove	Leptotila rufaxilla	X			X	
Psitacidae						
Blue-winged Macaw	Propyrrhura maracana				X	I
White-eyed Parakeet	Aratinga leucophthalmus *		X			I
Golden-capped Parakeet	Aratinga (solstitialis) auricapilla *		X	X		I
Caatinga Parakeet	Aratinga cactorum *	X	X	X	X	I
Peach-fronted Parakeet	Aratinga aurea					I
Blue-winged Parrotlet	Forpus xanthopterygius *	X		X	X	P,J
Yellow-chevroned Parakeet	Brotogeris chiriri *	x	x	X	x	C,I,J
Turquoise-fronted Amazon	Amazona aestiva *	X			X	
Orange-winged Amazon	Amazona amazonica					I
Cuculidae						
Dark-billed Cuckoo	Coccyzus melacoryphus *	X	X		X	P
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Coccyzus americanus			X		
Squirrel Cuckoo	Piaya cayana *	X	X		X	
Smooth-billed Ani	Crotophaga ani	X	x	X	X	J
Greater Ani	Crotophaga major *				X	
Guira Cuckoo	Guira guira				X	J
Striped Cuckoo	Tapera naevia *	X	x	X	X	J
Strigidae						
Tropical Screech-owl	Otus choliba *		X			C
Ferruginous Pygmy-owl	Glaucidium brasilianum *		X		X	I,J
Burrowing Owl	Speotyto cunicularia	X	x	X	x	I,J
						Continue

Continued

156

		A	В	С	D	Е
Nyctibiidae						
Common Potoo	Nyctibius griseus *		X		X	
Caprimulgidae						
Short-tailed Nighthawk	Lurocalis semitorquatus *		X			
Common Nighthawk	Chordeiles acutipennis	X			X	J
Caatinga Nighthawk	Chordeiles vielliardi *	X			X	
Nacunda Nighthawk	Podager nacunda					J
Pauraque	Nyctidromus albicollis *	X	X		X	
Rufous Nightjar	Caprimulgus rufus *		X			
Scissor-tailed Nightjar	Hydropsalis torquata					I
Apodidae						
White-collared Swift	Streptoprocne zonaris		X	X		I
Biscutate Swift	Streptoprocne biscutata		X		X	I
Ashy-tailed Swift	Chaetura cinereiventris			X		
Trochilidae						
Planalto Hermit	Phaethornis pretrei		X			
Grey-breasted Sabrewing	Campylopterus largipennis			X		
Swallow-tailed Hummingbird	Eupetomena macroura	X				
Glittering-bellied Emerald	Chlorostilbon aureoventris	X	X	X	X	
Ruby-topaz Hummingbird	Chrysolampis mosquitus					I
Fork-tailed Woodnymph	Thalurania furcata	X	X		X	
Versicolored Emerald	Amazilia versicolor			X	X	
Glittering-throated Emerald	Amazilia fimbriata	X			X	I,J
Stripe-breasted Starthroat	Heliomaster squamosus					I
Trogonidae						
Surucua Trogon	Trogon surrucura	X	X			
Blue-crowned Trogon	Trogon curucui *		X	X	X	
Alcedinidae						
Ringed Kingfisher	Ceryle torquata	X			X	
Amazon Kingfisher	Chloroceryle amazona				X	
Green Kingfisher	Chloroceryle americana	X				
Galbulidae						
Rufous-tailed Jacamar	Galbula ruficauda *	X	X		X	I
Bucconidae						
Spot-backed Puffbird	Nystalus maculatus *	X	x		X	I
Rusty-breasted Nunlet	Nonnula rubecula *	X	X			

Appendix 1. Continued.

		A	В	С	D	Е
Picidae						
White-wedged Piculet	Picumnus albosquamatus					P
Spotted Piculet	Picumnus pygmaeus *		X	X	X	I,P
Green-barred Woodpecker	Colaptes melanochloros	X	x	X		
Golden-green Woodpecker	Piculus chrysochloros		x		X	
Blond-crested Woodpecker	Celeus flavescens			X		
Little Woodpecker	Veniliornis passerinus *		X		X	
Crimson-crested Woodpecker	Campephilus melanoleucos *	X	X	X		
Thamnophilidae						
Great Antshrike	Taraba major *	X	X		X	
Silvery-cheeked Antshrike	Sakesphorus cristatus *	X	x		X	I
Barred Antshrike	Thamnophilus doliatus		X		x	I
Planalto Slaty-antshrike	Thamnophilus pelzelni *	X	X		X	I
Stripe-backed Antbird	Myrmorchilus strigilatus *				X	
Black-capped Antwren	Herpsilochmus atricapillus *	X	x			I
Caatinga Antwren	Herpsilochmus sellowi *		x		X	
Black-bellied Antwren	Formicivora melanogaster *		X		X	P
Formicariidae						
White-browed Antpitta	Hylopezus ochroleucus *		X		X	
Conopophagidae						
Rufous Gnateater	Conopophaga lineata	X	X			
Furnariidae						
Rufous Hornero	Furnarius rufus *	X	X	X	X	J
Pale-legged Hornero	Furnarius leucopus *	X	X		X	I
Wing-banded Hornero	Furnarius figulus *	X	X	X	X	
Chotoy Spinetail	Schoeniophylax phryganophila *	X				I
Sooty-fronted Spinetail	Synallaxis frontalis *	X	X		X	
Pale-breasted Spinetail	Synallaxis albescens		X			
Ochre-cheeked Spinetail	Poecilurus scutatus *	X	X			
Red-shouldered Spinetail	Gyalophylax hellmayri *					I
Yellow-chinned Spinetail	Certhiaxis cinnamomea *					I
Grey-headed Spinetail	Cranioleuca semicinerea *		X	X		
Common Thornbird	Phacellodomus rufifrons *	X	X			J
Greater Thornbird	Phacellodomus ruber	X				I,J
Caatinga (Rufous) Cacholote	Pseudoseisura cristata *	X		X	X	
Henna-capped Foliage-gleaner	Hylocryptus rectirostris *	X	x			
Streaked Xenops	Xenops rutilans *		x	X	X	
Great Xenops	Megaxenops parnaguae *		X		X	I

		A	В	C	D	Е
Dendrocolaptidae						
Olivaceous Woodcreeper	Sittasomus griseicapillus *	X	X	X		I
Moustached Woodcreeper	Xiphocolaptes falcirostris *		X	X		I
Planalto Woodcreeper	Dendrocolaptes platyrostris		X	X		I
Narrow-billed Woodcreeper	Lepidocolaptes angustirostris	X	X		X	I
Scaled Woodcreeper	Lepidocolaptes squamatus *	X				
Wagler's Woodcreeper	Lepidocolaptes wagleri *		X	X		I
Red-billed Scythebill	Campylorhamphus trochilirostris		X			
Tyrannidae						
Planalto Tyrannulet	Phyllomyias fasciatus *	X	X			
Reiser's Tyrannulet	Phyllomyias reiseri *		X	X		I
Southern Beardless Tyrannulet	Camptostoma obsoletum	X	X		X	I,J
Mouse-colored Tyrannulet	Phaeomyias murina *	X	X		X	
Suiriri Flycatcher	Suiriri suiriri *				x	
Greenish Elaenia	Myiopagis viridicata *		X	X	X	I
Grey Elaenia	Myiopagis caniceps *	X	X	X	X	
Yellow-bellied Elaenia	Elaenia flavogaster	X				
Large Elaenia	Elaenia spectabilis *	X				
Lesser Elaenia	Elaenia chiriquensis		X			
Greater Wagtail-tyrant	Stigmatura budytoides *				X	
Tawny-crowned Pygmy-tyrant	Euscarthmus meloryphus		X		X	
Sepia-capped Flycatcher	Leptopogon amaurocephalus *	X	X			
Southern Bristle-tyrant	Phylloscartes eximius	X				
Minas Gerais Tyrannulet	Phylloscartes roquettei *	X				
Southern Antpipit	Corythopis delalandi *		X			
Stripe-necked Tody-tyrant	Hemitriccus striaticollis	X				
Pearly-vented Tody-tyrant	Hemitriccus margaritaceiventer	X			X	
Common Tody-flycatcher	Todirostrum cinereum *	X	X		X	I
Yellow-olive Flycatcher	Tolmomyias sulphurescens	X	X	X		
Yellow-breasted Flycatcher	Tolmomyias flaviventris *		X		X	
Black-tailed Flycatcher	Myiobius atricaudatus		X			
Bran-colored Flycatcher	Myiophobus fasciatus	X				
Tropical Pewee	Contopus cinereus *		X			
Euler's Flycatcher	Lathrotriccus euleri		X			
Fuscous Flycatcher	Cnemotriccus fuscatus *	X		X	X	
Grey Monjita	Xolmis cinerea	X				
White-rumped Monjita	Xolmis velata	X				
White Monjita	Xolmis irupero		X	X	x	C,I
Masked Water-tyrant	Fluvicola nengeta *	X			X	
White-headed Marsh-tyrant	Arundinicola leucocephala				X	

Appendix 1. Continued.

		A	В	С	D	Е
Long-tailed Tyrant	Colonia colonus		X			
Cliff Flycatcher	Hirundinea ferruginea *		X			
Cattle Tyrant	Machetornis rixosus	X	X			C,I
Rufous Casiornis	Casiornis rufa	X				
Ash-throated Casiornis	Casiornis fusca *		X		X	
Sirystes	Sirystes sibilator *		X	X		
Short-crested Flycatcher	Myiarchus ferox	X	X			
Brown-crested Flycatcher	Myiarchus tyrannulus *				X	
Swainson's Flycatcher	Myiarchus swainsonii		X		X	
Great Kiskadee	Pitangus sulphuratus *	X	X	X	X	J
Boat-billed Flycatcher	Megarhynchus pitangua *	X	X	X		C,I
Social Flycatcher	Myiozetetes similis *	X		X	x	I
Rusty-margined Flycatcher	Myiozetetes cayanensis				x	
Streaked Flycatcher	Myiodynastes maculatus *	X	X	X	x	I
Variegated Flycatcher	Empidonomus varius	X	x	x	x	
Crowned Slaty Flycatcher	Griseotyrannus aurantioatrocristatus *	X				
Fork-tailed Flycatcher	Tyrannus savanna	X				I
Tropical Kingbird	Tyrannus melancholicus *	X	x	x	x	
Green-backed Becard	Pachyramphus viridis *	X				P
Chestnut-crowned Becard	Pachyramphus castaneus		X			
White-winged Becard	Pachyramphus polychopterus *		X	X	x	P
Crested Becard	Pachyramphus validus	X				
Black-tailed Tityra	Tityra cayana *		X	X		I
Black-crowned Tityra	Tityra inquisitor			X		
Hirundinidae						
White-winged Swallow	Tachycineta albiventer				x	
White-rumped Swallow	Tachycineta leucorrhoa				x	
Brown-chested Martin	Phaeoprogne tapera				x	
Grey-breasted Martin	Progne chalybea		X			
Southern Rough-winged Swallow	Stelgidopteryx ruficollis	X			X	
Sand Martin	Riparia riparia	X				
Corvidae						
White-naped Jay	Cyanocorax cyanopogon *		X	X	x	I
Troglodytidae						
Black-capped Donacobius	Donacobius atricapillus					I
Buff-breasted Wren	Thryothorus leucotis *	X	X			
House Wren	Troglodytes aedon *	X	X		x	I

	A	В	С	D	Е
Muscicapidae					
Tropical Gnatcatcher Polioptila plumbea *	X			X	
Rufous-bellied Thrush Turdus rufiventris		X	X	X	
Pale-breasted Thrush Turdus leucomelas	x	X	X		
Creamy-bellied Thrush Turdus amaurochalinus *		X			
White-necked Thrush Turdus albicollis *		X	X		
Mimidae					
Chalk-browed Mockingbird Mimus saturninus	x				I
Vireonidae					
Rufous-browed Peppershrike Cyclarhis gujanensis *	x	X	X	x	
Chivi Vireo Vireo olivaceus *		X	X		
Grey-eyed Greenlet Hylophilus amaurocephalus		X		X	
Emberizidae					
Tropical Parula Parula pitiayumi *		x		X	
Flavescent Warbler Basileuterus flaveolus *	x	X		X	
Golden-crowned Warbler Basileuterus culicivorus *		x			I,P
White-browed Warbler Basileuterus leucophrys *		X			P
Bananaquit Coereba flaveola *	x				
Scarlet-throated Tanager Compsothraupis loricata *	x			X	J
Orange-headed Tanager Thlypopsis sordida	x				
Guira Tanager Hemithraupis guira *		X		x	
Hooded Tanager Nemosia pileata	x	X	X		P
White-lined Tanager Tachyphonus rufus *	x	X		x	J
Sayaca Tanager Thraupis sayaca	x	X		x	
Palm Tanager Thraupis palmarum *	x				
Purple-throated Euphonia Euphonia chlorotica *		X		X	J
Burnished-buff Tanager Tangara cayana	x				
Blue Dacnis Dacnis cayana	x				
Chestnut-vented Conebill Conirostrum speciosum *	x		X	X	J
Rufous-collared Sparrow Zonotrichia capensis	x			X	J
Grassland Sparrow Ammodramus humeralis	x				I
Orange-fronted Yellow-finch Sicalis columbiana *	x	x	X		
Saffron Finch Sicalis luteola				X	C,I
Blue-black Grassquit Volatinia jacarina *	X		X	x	C,I
Lined Seedeater Sporophila lineola				X	
Yellow-bellied Seedeater Sporophila nigricollis *		X		x	I
São Francisco Sparrow Arremon franciscanus *		X		x	
Grey Pileated Finch Coryphospingus pileatus *	X	X	X	X	

Appendix 1. Continued.

		A	В	С	D	Е
Red-cowled Cardinal	Paroaria dominicana	Х		X	X	C,J
Green-winged Saltator	Saltator similis	X	X			
Greyish Saltator	Saltator coerulescens *				x	
Ultramarine Grosbeak	Cyanocompsa brissonii		X			
Solitary Cacique	Cacicus solitarius *	X			X	
Epaulet Oriole	Icterus cayanensis *	X			x	
Troupial	Icterus jamacaii *	X	X	X		I
Chestnut-capped Blackbird	Agelaius ruficapillus		X	X		I,J
White-browed Blackbird	Leistes superciliaris					J
Chopi Blackbird	Gnorimopsar chopi *		X	X	X	J
Baywing	Agelaioides (badius) fringillarius *		X	X	X	J
Shiny Cowbird	Molothrus bonariensis	X			x	J
Screaming Cowbird	Molothrus rufoaxillaris *	X	X	X		J
Giant Cowbird	Scaphidura oryzivora				X	
Fringillidae						
Hooded Siskin	Carduelis magellanica		X			
Passeridae						
House Sparrow	Passer domesticus	X	X		X	C,J