

First record of the Slate-colored seedeater (*Sporophila schistacea*, Emberizidae) for the state of Amazonas, Brazil

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RESUMO: Primeiro registro de *Sporophila schistacea* (Emberizidae) para o estado do Amazonas, Brasil. Observamos grupos de três ou quatro indivíduos de *Sporophila schistacea* na Reserva de Desenvolvimento Sustentável Aripuanã, no sul da Amazônia Brasileira. Foram feitas gravações nos dois tipos de ambiente em que os pássaros foram observados: floresta de terra firme e floresta alagável (restinga). Na floresta alagável as aves observadas estavam associadas a bambu nativo. As gravações foram depositadas no Arquivo de Sons da Amazônia (ASA) da Coleção de Aves do INPA. Este é o primeiro registro da espécie para o estado do Amazonas, Brasil, estendendo sua distribuição em aproximadamente 300 km.

PALAVRAS-CHAVES: Brasil, Amazônia, Emberizidae, distribuição geográfica.

KEY-WORDS: Brazil, Amazonia, Emberizidae, geographic distribution.

During an ornithological survey of the Aripuanã Sustainable Development Reserve (RDS Aripuanã), in the state of Amazonas, Brazil, we recorded small flocks of the passerine *Sporophila schistacea*. On 4 March 2007, we recorded one flock with three or four individuals at typical *terra firme* forest (8°36'S; 59°27'W). The birds were singing in the sub canopy of high trees (mean canopy height: 30 m). On 6 March 2007, we recorded another flock of this species in or near the sub canopy of bamboo in a flooded forest known for the local people as *restinga* (8°21'S; 59°50'W). At this time, singing birds were very territorial, being extremely responsive to playback. The male we saw had a large yellow bill and the body was almost all gray. Although we did not see some of the typical field marks of this species, such as the white spots on the lower neck and the white speculum at the base of the primaries (which can be difficult to see in the field), our recordings sound like typical *Sporophila schistacea*; this identification was confirmed by A. Whittaker and Robin Restall (pers. comm.). Birds were recorded with directional microphones and a digital recorder (Sound Devices model 702). Recordings were deposited in the Amazonian Sound Archive (ASA) of the Collection of Birds of the Brazilian National Institute for Research in the Amazon (INPA).

Previous studies suggest that *Sporophila schistacea* might be nomadic, apparently traveling long distances between bamboo stands (Willis and Eisenmann 1979, Parker 1982, Stiles and Skutch 1989, Stotz *et al.* 1996);

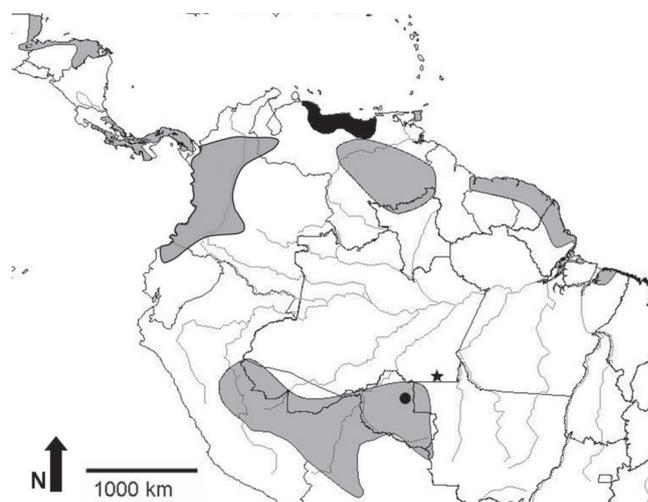


FIGURE 1: Known distribution of *S. schistacea*. Areas in grey based on Restall *et al.* (2006) and Ridgely and Tudor (2003); area in black based on R. Restall (pers. comm.). The circle depicts Cacheira Nazaré, the closest locality to our record (shown as a star) in the state of Amazonas where *S. schistacea* was recorded (Stotz 1997).

it has been observed in association with bamboo during 1961-1962, 1975, 1977-1978 by Willis and Eisenmann (1979) and by Neudorf and Blanchfield (1994) at Barro Colorado, Panamá. In Acre, western Amazonian Brazil, Whittaker and Oren (1999) found the species to be strictly associated with bamboo. These observations lend strong support to the hypothesis that *S. schistacea* is a bamboo specialist. However, Stotz *et al.* (1997) found *S. schistacea* in areas lacking bamboo and Whittaker (2004) observed the species associated with small rice fields. David Ascanio also observed the bird in domesticated-rice fields, and fields of wild rice, in Guyana, and it has been reported in rice in Ecuador and Peru (R. Restall pers. comm.). Our records reinforce *S. schistacea's* association with bamboo, but we also saw the species in areas without this vegetation (upland *terra firme* forest).

Our records are the first of *S. schistacea* for the Brazilian state of Amazonas, and extends its known distribution by over 300 km from the closest locality where it was previously recorded at Cachoeira Nazaré (Stotz 1997) (Fig. 1).

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