

**First records of Red-eyed Thornbird
Phacellodomus erythrophthalmus
ferrugineigula and Pale-breasted Thrush
Turdus leucomelas for Uruguay**

by Jorge Cravino & Santiago Claramunt

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We report two new resident species for north-west Uruguay based on surveys c.20 km south-east of Rivera city, between the Cuchilla de Santa Ana in the north-east (the Uruguay/Brazil border) and Cuñapirú stream in the south-west, dpto. Rivera. Natural habitats include campo grasslands, gallery forests and other riparian habitats along the main watercourses, cliff forest at the base of tablelands and plateaux, and isolated patches of swamp forest. Main economic activities are traditional cattle ranching and forestry. Between 22 February 2001 and 2 March 2002 we conducted biodiversity surveys of lands owned by the forestry company COFUSA, which operates c.50,000 ha of *Eucalyptus* and *Pinus* plantations, most of them younger than 20 years old. We surveyed birds by direct observation, sound-recording, mist-netting and collecting, during ten trips totalling 37 days. Specimens are deposited in the Museo Nacional de Historia Natural y Antropología (MNHN) in Montevideo.

Species accounts

RED-EYED THORNBIRD *Phacellodomus erythrophthalmus ferrugineigula*

An adult male (MNHN 5952) was mist-netted in an oxbow swamp of Cuñapirú stream, estancia Trinidad (31°01'S, 55°29'W), on 23 February 2001. On 18 November 2001, a second bird was caught there. On 9 March 2001, an adult male (MNHN 5965) and young female (MNHN 5964) were mist-netted in Bañado de los Alazanes, in the same estancia (30°59'S, 55°28'W). We also heard vocalisations at estancia Batoví (31°02'S, 55°25'W) on 10 August 2001, and at Bañado de los Chanchos (31°03'S, 55°26'W). Our specimens refer to *P. e. ferrugineigula*, which is postulated to be specifically distinct, based on differences in plumage, habitat and vocalisations (Ridgely & Tudor 1994, Rensen 2003).

At the headwaters of Bañado de los Alazanes (30°59'S, 55°26'W), we found two active nests, 300 m apart, in *Citronella congonha* trees (Icacinaceae) at the border of swamp forest and *Baccharis* sp. thickets (Asteraceae). Both nests were pendulous, attached to the distal part of low branches (1.1 and 1.4 m above the water), which curved downwards at angles of 45° and 70° to the vertical trunk. Branches with green leaves protruded from the nest's roof and lateral walls indicating extensive structural support. Nests were boot-shaped like that of other *Phacellodomus* (Narosky *et al.* 1983, Sick 1984), but relatively small (nest 1: length 32 cm, height

22 cm; nest 2: length 29 cm, height 23 cm, width 13 cm). They differed from all other *Phacellodomus* nests, including *P. e. erythrophthalmus*, in being of dry stalks and non-lignified twigs (2–4 mm diameter), instead of woody sticks. The nest chambers were directly below the branch bifurcation, and the entrances (4 cm diameter) faced outwards from the tree trunk. As in congeners (Narosky *et al.* 1983, Sick 1984, Zyskowski & Prum 1999), both had an antechamber between the entrance and incubation chamber.

We found the first nest on 19 November 2001. Nearby, we heard a pair alarm-calling from dense *Baccharis* shrubs. On 5 December we flushed an adult from the nest and found two hatched eggs in the antechamber. When the second nest was found on 6 December, it also contained two hatched eggs in the antechamber. In February 2002 both nests were abandoned and partially destroyed, but we observed three birds (presumably a family) in *Eryngium pandanifolium* (Apiaceae) and isolated shrubs in the marsh.

P. erythrophthalmus was considered endemic to the Brazilian Atlantic Forest (Stotz *et al.* 1996, Silva *et al.* 2004). In Rio Grande do Sul, the species reaches the south-eastern hills (Belton 2000), 200 km east of estancia Trinidad. Recent records (JC unpubl.; Azpiroz & Menéndez in press) suggest that the species is widespread in north-east Uruguay, but has perhaps been overlooked due to its cryptic habits. The species was mentioned for Uruguay by Azpiroz (2001) and Claramunt & Cuello (2004) based on the present records.

PALE-BREADED THRUSH *Turdus leucomelas*

Found mostly around the main buildings of estancia Trinidad (30°59'S, 55°26'W), where we saw three feeding on *Schinus molle* (Anacardiaceae) fruits, and it was first recorded on 23 and 25 February 2001, when we collected two specimens (MNHN 5953, 5963), and again on 3 February 2002. On 26–27 October 2001, we saw three feeding on food taken from a trashcan in the garden of estancia Trinidad.

In November–December 2001 a pair nested in Puesto Batoví (31°02'S, 55°26'W). On 3 November we found a nest of sticks and mud with one egg and two chicks in a partially open barn, on a wooden rafter 3 m above ground. On 4 December we found a second nest in a small square opening in a cabin wall, 20 m from the barn. It was constructed of mud and green herbaceous plants. On 27 December it contained three eggs.

Our records are the first for Uruguay. Historical references are ascribable to *Turdus amaurochalinus* (Hellmayr 1934), whilst recent reports (Azpiroz 2001, Claramunt & Cuello 2004) are based on the present records. Our records are also the southernmost of the species and probably relate to *T. l. leucomelas*. The closest populations are those in north-west Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil), c.300 km distant (Belton 2000), though Bencke & Grillo (1995) reported new records in eastern Rio Grande do Sul in *Eucalyptus* groves and urban areas, suggesting the species is expanding its range in disturbed landscapes. *T. leucomelas* may benefit from food sources such as trash and fruiting trees near houses, and the availability of buildings

and other man-made structures for nest sites, as *T. leucomelas* is known to use these elsewhere (de la Peña 1989, Clement 2000). Our records are consistent with such explanations in terms of geography, habitat and nest site, and suggest that the arrival of *T. leucomelas* in Uruguay reflects the expansion of anthropogenic habitats.

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Addresses: Jorge Cravino, CYGNUS Wildlife Consulting, Eduardo Acevedo 864, 11200 Montevideo, Uruguay, e-mail: jcravino@uruguaybirding.com. Santiago Claramunt, Museo Nacional de Historia Natural y Antropología, Casilla de Correo 399, 11000 Montevideo, Uruguay, e-mail: sclara1@lsu.edu