DOCUMENTED RECORDS OF ASH-COLORED CUCKOO
(Coccycua cinerea) IN AMAZONIAN PERÚ

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ABSTRACT

The Ash-colored Cuckoo (Coccycua cinerea) is considered a hypothetical species for Peru and there are no documented records of its presence within the country. It is considered to be a rare austral migrant to the lowlands of the southwest Peruvian Amazon. It is considered a vagrant in the northern Peruvian Amazon. Here we report four documented records of the species from the southern Peruvian Amazon and confirm its occurrence in the country. We further discuss the seasonality of the records and the species’ status within Peru and propose to change its status from Hypothetical to rare austral migrant.

KEYWORDS: austral migrant, occurrence, peruvian amazon.

REGISTROS DOCUMENTADOS DEL CUCLILLO GRIS
(Coccycua cinerea) EN LA AMAZONIA PERUANA

RESUMEN

El Cuclillo Gris (Coccycua cinerea) es considerado como una especie hipotética para el Perú y no existen registros documentados de su presencia dentro del país. Se le considera como un raro migrante austral en la llanura amazónica del suroeste peruano. Es considerado un divagante en el norte de la Amazonía peruana. Aquí reportamos cuatro registros documentados de la especie al sur de la Amazonía peruana y confirmamos su ocurrencia en el país. Además, analizamos la estacionalidad de los registros y el estado de la especie en Perú y proponemos cambiar su estado de hipotético a migrante austral raro.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Amazonía peruana, ocurrencia, migratorio austral

DOI: https://doi.org/10.24841/fa.v27i1.449
INTRODUCTION

The Ash-colored Cuckoo (Coccycua cinerea) is found in Paraguay (except in the far northwest), Uruguay, Northern Argentina (South to Río Negro) and locally in southern Brazil (Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul). It winters in central and west Brazil, east and north Bolivia, and southern and northeastern Peru and extreme southeast Colombia (Payne, 2018).

In Peru, C. cinerea is considered a Hypothetical species (Plenge, 2018; Remsen et al., 2018), since, as until now, there are no documented records of its presence in the country. Schulenberg et al. (2010) consider the species as a rare austral migrant to lowlands of the southwest and very rare on the north bank of the Amazon River.

There are at least two published undocumented records for the country. The first record belongs to one individual observed on July 13th 1977 in the Tambopata River, Madre de Dios department (12°50′S / 69°16′W, 205 m) (Parker, 1982) (Figure 1, red triangle 2). The bird was in transitional forest, hopping along branches and vines in the lower canopy of a tall forest tree, and was apparently associating with a mixed-species flock that included Chestnut-winged Hookbill (Ancistrops strigilatus), Rufous-tailed Xenops (Microxenops milleri), Spot-winged Antshrike (Pygiptila stellaris) and numerous tanagers, honeycreepers and greenlets.

The second published record pertains to one individual seen foraging low above the ground in an agricultural plot at Intuto, Loreto department (03°29′22″S / 74°46′59″W, 120 m) on February 19th 1994 (Figure 1, red triangle 2). This locality is along the Tigre River that flows to the Marañon just before this meets the Ucayali and forms the Amazon. Its occurrence is presumably accidental (Díaz-Alvan et al., 2017).

As for documented records, one individual was observed and photographed (Figure 2, above left) by Percy Avendaño on September 4th 2016 at Villa Carmen Biological Station, Cuzco department (12°53′40.5″S / 71°24′11.1″W, 517 m) (Figure 1, green square 12). The bird was in the gardens of the biological station.

On September 9th 2017, one individual was observed and photographed (Figure 2, above right) by JAAF at 6:23 am in a degraded gold mining area on the north bank of the Madre de Dios River, west of Puerto Maldonado (12°34′17.78″S / 69°04′18.56″W, 202 m) (Figure 1, green square 13). The bird was perched 2 m above the ground level in riverine vegetation surrounding a pond in flooded forest (including Tessaria integrifolia).

On September 12th 2018, two individuals were observed and photographed (Figure 2, bottom left) by FAP at 8:35 am at Amazonia Lodge, Madre de Dios department (12°52′10.86″S / 71°22′26.93″W, 493 m) (Figure 1, green square 15). There were perched at 6 m above the ground level in a leafless tree at the border of a forest clearing.

On October 7th 2018, one individual was observed and photographed at 9:55 am at Isla Rolín, an island on the Madre de Dios River, Madre de Dios department, just in front of Inkaterra Lodge (12°32′54.93″S / 69°03′9.27″W, 177 m) (Figure 1, green square 16). The observers were Dennis Osorio, Noé Huaraca, Plinio Arapa and the bird was photographed by David Ascanio (Figure 2, bottom right). The bird was perched on a Tessaria integrifolia bush, in successional vegetation.

Ash-colored Cuckoo was included as hypothetical on the birds of Peru list following the record by Parker (1982) (Schulenberg et al., 2010; Plenge, 2018), and remained there due to the lack of confirmed published records from Peru. With this article, we document its presence within the country and propose to move it from Hypothetical to rare austral migrant status on the Peru list.
Documented records of ash-colored cuckoo (*Coccycua cinerea*) in Amazonian Peru

Figure 1. Records of *Coccycua cinerea* from Madre de Dios and Loreto departments and adjacent Colombia. Red triangles: previous published and undocumented records. Green squares: documented records presented in this manuscript. Black dots: other records from eBird (2018). Red text are river names.
Documented records of ash-colored cuckoo (Coccycua cinerea) in Amazonian Peru

Vol. 27 (1) 2018. 25-30

DOI: https://doi.org/10.24841/fa.v27i1.449

Figure 2. Coccycua cinerea at Villa Carmen Biological Station, Cuzco department. Photo by P. Avendaño (upper left). C. cinerea at the north bank of the Madre de Dios River, west of Puerto Maldonado, Madre de Dios department. Photo by J. Alferez (upper right). A pair of C. cinerea at Amazonia Lodge, Madre de Dios department. Photo by F. Angulo (bottom left). C. cinerea at Isla Rolín, Madre de Dios River, Madre de Dios department. Photo by D. Ascanio (bottom right).

Figure 3. Number of records of Coccycua cinerea per months of the year.
Documented records of ash-colored cuckoo (*Coccycua cinerea*) in Amazonian Peru

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N°</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>N° Ind.</th>
<th>Observers</th>
<th>Documented</th>
<th>Department/Country</th>
<th>Coordinates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>1977</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ted Parker</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Frank Murphy</td>
<td></td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>1993</td>
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<td>12°33'16.4&quot; S - 69°03'13.9&quot; W</td>
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</table>

Table 1: Records of *Coccycua cinerea* in Peru and adjacent Colombia. Records are chronologically displayed.
There are a minimum of 14 records of Ash-colored Cuckoo for Peru (Figure 1, Table 1) (eBird, 2018). All involve one individual, except the record from Amazonia lodge by FAP, which involves two. Most of the records are from Madre de Dios except one in Cuzco (Figure 1, green square 12), and two in Loreto: the record mentioned in Díaz-Alvan et al., (2017), and one by M. Ugarte, which are located in Northern Amazonia (Loreto) (eBird, 2018) (Figure 1, red triangle 5, black dot 9). Thirteen (n=13) records are between June and November, with the highest number on September (n=5) and one is from February (Figure 3, Table 1). So, it would seem that the species is a rare austral migrant to the southern Peruvian Amazon and very rare to the northern Amazon. There are a further two records of the species in Colombia, adjacent to the Peruvian border in northern Loreto, near Leticia (eBird, 2018) (Figure 1, black dots 1 &11). Both are from July, that makes records from July n=3 (Figure 3).

As for the habitat used by this species, and derived from the five records described in this article, we can see that the species primarily uses successional/transitional forest, forest border and secondary forest. As for the chronology of the records, there is one record from Peru as old as 1977, one from the 1980’s, two from 1990’s, and the rest are post 2000. It is interesting to note that the species is still documented 40 years after the first records. The FAP observation has been sent to review to the Peruvian Rare Birds Committee (Comité de Registro de Aves del Perú-CRAP).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To Percy Avendaño and David Ascanio for sharing their photos and records. To Dan Lane and Manuel Plenge for helping locating bibliography and records. To Barry Walker for reviewing the manuscript. To the editorial team of the journal, that make useful comments. FAP want to acknowledge Manu Expeditions Birding Tours and participants Yve Morrell, Michael Brothers, Bob & Susan Steele, Mitch Harris and Bob Wallace.

REFERENCES


Recibido: 19 de mayo de 2018   Aceptado para publicación: 18 de julio de 2018