

Scientific note**FIRST DOCUMENTED RECORD OF CRIMSON-COLLARED GROSBEAK (*RHODOTHRAUPIS CELAENO*) FROM CENTRAL VERACRUZ, MEXICO**

RESUMEN. Se informa el primer registro visual y vocal fuera de su área actual de distribución en Veracruz, del Picogordo cuello rojo (*Rhodothraupis celaeno*), especie endémica del noreste de México. El nuevo registro en Chavarrillo, representa la localidad más sureña en la distribución de esta especie en el estado de Veracruz y en México.

The Crimson-collared Grosbeak (*Rhodothraupis celaeno*) is an uncommon endemic and resident bird of northeastern Mexico, and it is evaluated as Least Concern (IUCN 2007). It is associated with tropical deciduous forest and second growth vegetation (0 to 1200 m) (Howell & Webb 1995). It is found in Mexico on the Atlantic slope including central Nuevo Leon, Tamaulipas, San Luis Potosi, Queretaro, Hidalgo, Puebla, Coahuila, and northern Veracruz (Howell & Webb 1995, Garza de León *et al.* 2007); however, the species has also been reported as a rare and irregular winter visitor to southern Texas (Braun & Emanuel 1982). For the northeastern region, the majority of published reports come from Tamaulipas and San Luis Potosi (Eitniear & Aragón 2000). In Puebla, a specimen was collected 14 mi east of Villa Juárez (DMNH 47887; A. T. Peterson pers. comm.). Published records found within the state of Veracruz are from Tamiahua, Papantla, Pánuco and Misantla (AOU 1998). This species is an uncommon resident in northern Veracruz, but it has not been reported south of Misantla (Loetscher 1941) or from central Veracruz (Bojorges & López-Mata 2006, González-García 2006) but has been considered a hypothetical species (Straub 2006). Here, we report the first documented observation and audio recording of the *R. celaeno* outside of its known range in the state of Veracruz, Mexico.

Material and methods. The study area is located to 950 m southeast of the town of Chavarrillo (19° 25' 49" N, 96° 45' 31" W), at an altitude of 870 m. Opportunistic observations were done on a ridge top trail at the Cerro Tepeapulco, on July 15, 2005; December 2, 9, 16, 23, 2006; January and March, 2007 and August 29, 2007. The town is located in a mosaic landscape made up of tropical deciduous forest and remnants of tropical semi-deciduous forest associated with coffee plantations. Recordings were made with a Sharp DR-7 Walkman Minidisc and a Telinga parabola. Call recordings were made on January 5, 2007 (recordings were deposited in the Mexican Bird Sound Library, GOGF07-342-08). During some surveys, playback calling was used and the recorded call was obtained from Boesman (2006) and Coffey & Coffey (1989).

Results. On July 15, 2005 near mid-day, Aldo Contreras Reyes (ACR), photographed an adult male of *R. celaeno* perched in a mango tree (*Mangifera indica*)

on the outskirts of the town of Chavarrillo. The bird was located in a site known as La Pedrera (19° 25' 17.4" N, 96° 47' 10.2" W), at an altitude of 770 m to the east of the Chavarrillo. From the plumage characteristics demonstrated in the photo, it was determined that the individual was an adult male of *R. celaeno* (Howell & Webb 1995). On December 2, 2006, at 10:30 a. m., the call of an unknown bird in that area was heard. This call was similar to the call of *R. celaeno* and was emitted from the dense understory of a remnant patch of semi-deciduous tropical forest associated with coffee plantation. On December 23, 2006 while walking a trail of approximately 1.5 km in length and located at the base of the Tepeapulco Hill (Chavarrillo), for the first time, male and female individuals of *R. celaeno* were observed when two distinct pairs were encountered. On January 1, 2007 we recorded the calls of the Crimson-collared Grosbeak (n = 3). Its call is a short and penetrating whistle: sssiiuu o pwiis (Howell & Webb 1995). Our most recent record of this species was of an adult pair observed on August 29, 2007 near the tunnel of a railroad tracks.

Discussion. Based on 17 accepted records in Texas (from November to June), *R. celaeno* is considered as a winter vagrant by natural dispersion, which has yet to be documented breeding in Texas (Braun & Emanuel 1982, Lockwood 2006). The adult pair observed on August 29 suggests a resident breeder. It is necessary to look for this species throughout at least one year, including the reproductive season to determine its seasonality and of course the evidence of reproduction. When comparing the call recordings (January 1, 2007) with the description in Howell & Webb (1995) and with recordings of the same species (Coffey & Coffey 1989) we realized that it was precisely the call of *R. celaeno*. Aside from the visual records, the species has only been heard by its call but not by its song. It is probable that *R. celaeno* is less territorial outside of the breeding season (March-June) and their weak response to playback was probably the result of their lack of territorial activity (Braun & Emanuel 1982). *Rhodothraupis celaeno* expands its known range in Veracruz by 57 km considering Misantla as the southernmost published record. The new record from Chavarrillo represents the southernmost record for the range of this species, supporting the predictions of Peterson *et al.* (2000), stating that the true range of this species could be farther south than the known range and, the precise limit or limits of the range of species undoubtedly requires a great effort through field work.

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