



Notes on Oaxacan birds

John M. Forcey^{1*} and Ramiro Aragón²

¹315 W. Ohio St. Rockville, IN 47872, USA. E-mail: *jforcey@hotmail.com

²Bugambilias 13, Tlacolula, Oaxaca, 70400, Mexico. E-mail: rambirds@hotmail.com

Abstract

New material is presented with regard to breeding, distribution, and movements of 46 Oaxacan bird species. Included are new details regarding observations of two species recently reported for the state for the first time and one of them for Mexico, as well as information on the presence or movement of eight other species that are known as non-breeding species in Oaxaca. We provide reports of observations confirming the breeding of 11 species for certain regions of the state (mostly Central Valleys and adjacent Sierras) and more limited evidence, mostly simple presence during the presumed breeding season, for 11 others. Other miscellaneous notes give new information regarding sympatry, short distance migration, and short distance vagrancy for various Oaxacan birds.

Key Words: Oaxaca, breeding birds, range, movements.

Notas sobre las aves de Oaxaca

Resumen

Se presentan datos nuevos acerca de la reproducción, distribución, y movimientos de 46 especies de aves de Oaxaca. Se incluyen detalles nuevos sobre observaciones de dos especies recientemente reportadas por primera vez en el estado y una de ellas para México, además de información sobre la presencia o movimientos de otras ocho especies que no se reproducen en Oaxaca. Se provee información que confirma la reproducción de 11 especies para ciertas regiones del estado (principalmente los Valles Centrales y las sierras adyacentes) así como evidencias de reproducción menos contundentes, principalmente la simple presencia durante la supuesta temporada de reproducción, para otras 11 especies. Finalmente, se aporta nueva información acerca de especies simpátricas, movimientos migratorios de corta distancia y especies vagantes en algunas regiones de Oaxaca.

Palabras claves: Oaxaca, aves reproductivas, áreas, movimientos.

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Introduction

As a basis for management and conservation of wildlife populations, basic information regarding breeding status, occurrence, and movements that is based on accurate field observations is essential. For many Mexican bird populations such data is still being gathered, and especially in the context of more limited geographic areas or vegetation cover, such data has never been published. We present data based on field observations and mist netting that update or clarify information previously reported mainly by Binford (1989), Howell and Webb (1995), and Forcey (2002a, 2002b, 2002c).

Methods

We gathered data on many species of Oaxacan birds in an opportunistic fashion during the period 1996 to 2009 at various locations throughout the state. Species, number seen, geographic location, and date were recorded. Identifications to species were made using binoculars and field guides, principally Howell and Webb (1995). Elevations were found by comparing locations to INEGI

topographic maps, 1:50000 scale, or with readings from a GPS locator.

For each species reported below we summarize the previously published material that serves as a basis for establishing the novelty of our records. We then present a brief description of our observations. Because of the difficulty of formulating a general discussion for so many species, we have included a brief discussion with results by species. Species are listed in the order given in AOU (1998, 2008).

Species accounts

Dendrocygna autumnalis **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck.** Forcey (2002a) reported the presence of this species in the Central Valleys of Oaxaca, but with some question as to whether his sightings represented wild or escaped birds. We recorded this species four times at three new locations in the Central Valleys from Tlacolula District to Zimatlán District. From two to 15 individuals were seen in these observations. These observations were made over three years from 2002 to 2005, inclusive dates from April 22 to July 27. This data confirm that the



species is an irregular spring and summer wanderer to the Central Valleys of Oaxaca.

Anas platyrhynchos diazi **Mallard (Mexican Duck)**. Grosselet and Forcey (2002) reported the first sighting of this species for Oaxaca, a single bird at Presa Piedra Azul, Teotitlán de Valle, Tlacolula District, 1700 m elevation, from March 30 to April 25, 2001. A single bird of this species was recorded by JF in the Central Valleys in every spring from the original sighting to 2005. Inclusive dates for all years are January 26 to May 24. Seen at original location, except for 2005 when seen at Presa Estudiante, Tlalixtac de Cabrera, Centro District, 1650 m elevation. The seasonal movements probably are those of a single wild bird, not an escape.

Bubulcus ibis **Cattle Egret**. Howell and Webb (1995) mapped this species as breeding in all of Oaxaca. Forcey (2002a) reported this species absent during summer in the Central Valleys, with no records from June 1 to August 5. On June 28, 2005 about 40 of these birds were seen by JF near the Tlacolula sewage pond west of Tlacolula de Matamoros, Tlacolula District, 1600 m elevation. Both breeding plumage and non breeding plumage birds were present, none in high breeding plumage nor downy individuals. No nests were seen. Though present during the summer, there is no evidence that this species breeds in the Central Valleys of Oaxaca.

Mycteria americana **Wood Stork**. Considered by Binford (1989) as a permanent resident in Pacific region and by Howell and Webb (1995) as winter visitor in Pacific and Atlantic regions with localized breeding populations along Pacific coast, unreported by Forcey (2002a) in Interior of Oaxaca. RA and K. Wilcox saw 6 individuals flying over marshy areas along the Río Salado near San Juan Guelavía, Tlacolula District, 1600 m elevation, November 12, 2003. The sighting probably represents vagrant birds during the species' normal winter wanderings. This is the first record for the Interior of Oaxaca.

Elanus leucurus **White-tailed Kite**. Forcey (2002a) reported observations that indicated breeding for this species in the Central Valleys of Oaxaca and stated that the "breeding season is hardly known but appears to be from Feb to Jun." On October 17, 2002 we saw an adult pair attending two chicks at a nest located in the top of a tree growing in agricultural areas near the Parque Bosque del Tequio, Oaxaca City, Centro District, 1500 m elevation. On November 9, 2002 one of the immature birds was still at the nest but able to fly while under observation. Also, an adult pair was observed attending an active nest from April 13 to May 8, 2009 about one kilometer west of Tlalixtac de Cabrera, Centro District,

1600 m elevation. Young birds could be seen in this nest at the end of the period. These observations confirm breeding in the area while considerably extending the known breeding season.

Buteo platypterus **Broad-winged Hawk**. Howell and Webb (1995) map this species as a transient in the Gulf slope and as a winter visitor on the Pacific slope of Oaxaca. JF has recorded three observations of this species in the Central Valleys and adjacent mountains from March 28 to April 12, 1500 to 2500 m elevation. Habitat ranged from agricultural areas to pine-oak forest. The species is a rare transient migrant in the Central Valleys and adjacent mountain areas during migration.

Spizaetus tyrannus **Black Hawk-Eagle**. Binford (1989) considered this species hypothetical for the state of Oaxaca. Schaldach *et al.* (1997) reported one specimen taken from near Tuxtepec in northern Oaxaca and other sightings from the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. JF saw an immature individual of this species flying along the Río Cajonos below the village of Santiago Lalopa, Villa Alta District, 350 m elevation on April 7, 2005. The sighting confirms the presence of the species in the tropical lowlands of the northern part of the state and extends its range approximately 80 km to the south.

Spizaetus ornatus **Ornate Hawk-Eagle**. Binford (1989) and Howell and Webb (1995) reported this species for the Gulf slope of Oaxaca (SL-1500 m elevation). Recently, Grosselet and Burcsu (2005) reported this species at Capulalpan de Méndez and La Cumbre, both Ixtlán District, presumably above 2200 m elevation. On January 10, 2006, an adult male was accidentally killed by local people at San Juan Yagila, Ixtlán District, 2100 m elevation; habitat was edge between cloud forest and *Alnus* forest. Due to the excellent condition of the skin, it was deposited in the Museo de Zoología of Facultad de Ciencias of UNAM (MZFC 19041). Also, residents of San Pedro Cajonos, Villa Alta District, killed and preserved an individual, photos of which were shown to JF and R. Guzmán. No dates were given for this record, nor was its precise habitat known, but lands of this town are at generally high elevations, above 2000 m elevation in pine-oak forest. The species is probably a rare breeder at higher elevations than indicated by previous authors.

Falco femoralis **Aplomado Falcon**. Both Binford (1989) and Howell and Webb (1995) report this species absent in northern Oaxaca. Gómez de Silva (1998) reported two observations in northern Oaxaca near Tuxtepec. JF and R. Antonio saw an individual perched in a tree in what was mostly cleared pasture land in lands of Santa María Jacatepec, Tuxtepec District, 60 m elevation, on March 9, 2005. A pair was seen at the same location on November



25, 2005 by JF, RA, and R. Antonio. The observations confirm the presence of the species in the northern lowlands of Oaxaca.

Charadrius vociferus **Killdeer**. Binford (1989) and Howell and Webb (1995) report this species absent during breeding season in Oaxaca. Forcey (2002a) reported a sighting on May 17 in which the bird performed a broken-wing display, possibly indicating a nearby nest. He has since recorded two birds at the sewage pond west of Tlacolula de Matamoros, Tlacolula District, 1600 m elevation, on May 29, 2003, and RA recorded the species four times at the same location from July 9 to 31, 2002. In addition, M. Grosselet (pers. comm.) reported two birds along the Río Atoyac near Oaxaca City, Centro District, 1500 m elevation, on June 8, 2003. No nesting has been observed. The species should be looked for as a rare breeder in the Central Valleys of Oaxaca.

Philomachus pugnax **Ruff**. Not previously recorded in Oaxaca. Howell and Webb (1995) discount previous reports from elsewhere in Mexico. JF saw one individual on November 20 and 22, 2001 at Barra de Colotepec, Pochutla District, near sea level. The bird appeared to be about as tall as two Greater Yellowlegs which were near it. Notes made at the time as follows: "Long legs yellow tinged pink, not bright yellow of Yellowlegs. Feeding on dry edge, but flew to belly deep water when flushed. Neck long, showed some smudgy streaks on sides of upper neck, but when seen from front appeared like faint bars on upper breast. Bill notably bicolor, slightly drooping. Plumage gray to dark gray above, with lighter feather edges. Wing linings white in flight. Large white area front of eyes (between eyes and bill). Narrow eye ring, broken before and behind eye. In flight tail showed U shaped white band across rump against V shape of dark lower back with dark tail proper sticking past on both sides of U. Feet extended past tail in flight." RA and K. Wilcox saw an individual at the same place on January 20, 2003. New species for Oaxaca and for Mexico.

Sternula antillarum **Least Tern**. Previous authors report this species absent in central Oaxaca. JF saw one individual on April 5, 2002 at Presa Estudiante, Tlalixtác de Cabrera, Centro District, 1650 m elevation. Rare vagrant during migration in Central Valleys.

Hydroprogne caspia **Caspian Tern**. Not reported for Central Valleys of Oaxaca by previous authors. JF, RA, K. Wilcox, and J. Kelly saw one individual with three Laughing Gulls at a small presa just north of Miahuatlán de Porfirio Díaz, Miahuatlán District, 1600 m elevation,

on January 14, 2005. Rare vagrant to the Oaxaca Central Valleys.

Thalasseus sandvicensis **Sandwich Tern**. Binford (1989) and Howell and Webb (1995) reported this species' range as extending northwest only to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. JF has recorded this species as present at Barra de Colotepec, Pochutla District, near sea level, during the winter months of November to January in three different years. Numbers were fairly low, 2 to 20 individuals. On May 21, 2003, he recorded about 200 individuals at the same location. The species is present on the Oaxacan south coast considerably to the west of where previously reported.

Streptoprocne zonaris **White-collared Swift**. Not previously reported in central Oaxaca. JF saw a flock of about 30 birds feeding low along the Río Salado on the road to San Juan Guelavía, Tlacolula District, 1580 m elevation, on May 17, 2005. It had rained heavily the previous night and low clouds were still present when these birds were seen. Also, K. Wilcox and RA reported at least one of these birds flying over the village of El Cerezal, Ixtlán District, 2400 m elevation, north of Oaxaca City on April 25, 2005, somewhat closer to their normal range. The species is a short distance vagrant to the Oaxaca Central Valleys.

Phaethornis longirostris **Long-billed Hermit**. Howell and Webb (1995) state "unknown if Mexican Hermit forms leks (?)". On October 6, 2004 JF and R. Antonio observed what appeared to be a lek of birds of this species at Finca El Pacífico, Pluma Hidalgo, Pochutla District, 650 m elevation. Habitat was humid evergreen forest on a thickly wooded slope above a small arroyo. At least six birds were seen or heard without making any attempt to census the entire area. Birds were perched on horizontal branches in shaded areas, calling repeatedly. Often one or more others would fly up to one of the perched birds, when these would open bills revealing light lower mandible color. Sometimes two and rarely three birds would briefly fly about in close proximity. This behavior appears to be the same as or similar to that reported by Snow (1973) in leks of *P. superciliosus* in northern South America. Lek formation is confirmed in the population of this species found in the Sierra Sur of Oaxaca.

Amazilia beryllina **Berylline Hummingbird**. Grosselet and Burcsu (2005) reported this species at Capulalpan de Mendez, Ixtlán District, 2700 m elevation, and also mention as a personal communication that RA captured one individual in the Sierra Juárez in 2004. This location and date are in error. The bird was captured at the town of Llano Grande, southern Ixtlan District, 3000 m



elevation, in the mountains northeast of Oaxaca City on November 16, 2003. This is the highest known location for the species in Oaxaca. The report of the species breeding at 3050 m elevation in Binford (1989) appears to be an error, as it does not agree with the elevations reported in Rowley (1984), from which Binford's statement is derived, according to the text.

Tilmatura dupontii **Sparkling-tailed Hummingbird.** Forcey (2002b) reported the first record for this species in central Oaxaca, a female seen at Monte Albán, near Oaxaca City, Centro District, 1800 m elevation, on July 2 and 3, 2000. The species was recorded by JF, R. Antonio, and M.A. Pérez from July 10 to 19, 2004 at the same location as the 2000 sightings. At least one female and one male were seen. The species is an irregular visitor to the Central Valleys of Oaxaca, during nectar flows in *Salvia* sp.

Trogon elegans **Elegant Trogon.** Both Binford (1989) and Howell and Webb (1995) reported this species as a permanent resident in interior Oaxaca. Forcey (2002b) reported it absent during winter in this area, recorded only from March 11 to September 30. JF recorded a single female in disturbed arid subtropical scrub near Monte Albán, Centro District, 1800 m elevation, on February 8, 2003. Though this confirms the winter presence of the species in the Central Valleys, it is still rarely seen, and may be partially migratory.

Myiopagis viridicata **Greenish Elaenia.** Forcey (2002b) reported the first breeding information for this species in central Oaxaca. JF, RA, and K. Wilcox observed and photographed an adult on a nest on June 4 and 7, 2005 at San Felipe Ecological Park, above Oaxaca City, Centro District, 1750 m elevation (Figure 1). This is the first observation of an active, completed nest in the area, confirming nesting in the Central Valleys.

Mitrephanes phaeocercus **Tufted Flycatcher.** Nesting for this species in central Oaxaca has not been previously reported. A pair was seen by JF on April 18, 2002 gathering spider silk for a substantially complete nest located in the crook of a horizontal tree limb in very steep-sided portion of San Felipe arroyo, San Felipe Ecological Park, above Oaxaca City, Centro District, 1825 m elevation. An adult was seen incubating on a similarly located nest in a nearby area on May 13 and 24, 2004. Confirms nesting in Central Valleys.

Empidonax albigularis **White-throated Flycatcher.** There are few breeding records for this species in Oaxaca (Binford 1989). JF, R. Antonio, and T. Love saw a pair of these birds constructing a nest in a small open meadow in pine-oak forest near the turn off to San Agustín

Loxicha, Miahuatlán District, Sierra Sur, 2700 m elevation, on May 1, 2004. The nest was just beginning to take shape in a large-leaved annual plant about 0.7 m above the ground. Also, we saw and heard a singing bird just south of San Pablo Cuatro Venados, Zaachila District, 2650 m elevation, on June 30, 2005 in a large area of bunch grass and open pine woodlands. No nest was seen.

Empidonax fulvifrons **Buff-breasted Flycatcher.** Binford (1989) reported the only previously known breeding area in Oaxaca in the Sierra de Miahuatlán. JF and R. Antonio recorded the species on three occasions from December 4, 2003 to February 24, 2005 in open pine-oak forest with bunch grass understory just south of San Pablo Cuatro Venados, Zaachila District, 2650 m elevation. Two to five individuals were recorded on these occasions. On June 30, 2005 we recorded eight birds in the same area. Four of these appeared to be a family group, moving about together and perching near one another; on three occasions adults flew to perched birds to feed them. This is a new breeding record of the species for Oaxaca. Also an individual was seen by RA and R. Straub at Monte Alban, Centro District, 1900 m elevation, on February 14, 2006. This is the fourth winter record for the Oaxaca Central Valleys.



Figure 1. Greenish Elaenia *Myiopagis viridicata* on nest, photographed June 7, 2005 at San Felipe Ecological Park near Oaxaca City (photo by RA).



Pyrocephalus rubinus **Vermilion Flycatcher**. Binford (1989) reported this species occurring from sea level, while Howell and Webb (1995) show its Oaxaca range as not extending to the southern coast except in the region of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. JF recorded this species near sea level four times in dune areas just behind beaches at Barra de Colotepec, Pochutla District and Playa Bacocho, Puerto Escondido, Juquila District. Observations were in winter from November 20, 2001 to December 8, 2002. The species does reach sea level in southern Oaxaca in winter, and the area should be checked for its presence in other seasons.

Myiodynastes luteiventris **Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher**. Binford (1989) stated that this species occurs in the interior of Oaxaca along the Río Atoyac to a point “about 7 mi...north of San Pedro Juchatengo” (p. 364). On April 22, 2003 JF, RA, and J. Kelly saw at least 10 of these birds at a location a further 25 km to the northeast, along the road from El Vado to San Sebastian de las Grutas, Ejutla District, 1550 m elevation. These birds were very active, chasing one another and vocalizing, in the riparian growth dominated by very large trees of *Taxodium mucronatum* which featured many woodpecker holes suitable for this species to use for nesting. JF, R. Antonio, and M.A. Pérez also saw individuals of this species in the northern interior of the state at Cuicatlán, 600 m elevation, and Tomellín, 600 m elevation, both Cuicatlán District, on May 13, 2003 and July 1, 2004, respectively. These observations confirm a more widespread, though local, occurrence of the species in the Interior of Oaxaca than previously reported.

Forcey (2002b) first reported this species in the vicinity of Oaxaca City at the San Felipe Ecological Park, Centro District, 1750 m elevation. R. Antonio (pers. comm.) reported a pair of these birds nesting above the Presa Piedra Azul, Teotitlán del Valle, Tlacolula District, 1750 m elevation, on May 23, 2002. JF was able to observe these nesting birds the following season on three occasions from May 29 to June 10, 2003 and once the following year on May 19, 2004. In both of these years the nest was situated on top of an old Great Kiskadee, *Pitangus sulphuratus*, nest, with a domed cover made of distinctly different material. The Sulphur-bellied Flycatchers were seen to enter this nest and stay for some extended period of time in both of these years. JF assumed that these birds were in fact nesting although the nest was not examined, nor was he able to visit the site when young birds might have been present, so that success of the effort could not be determined. In three visits to the site from May 3 to June 28, 2005, the nest was seen to be prepared in the same fashion as the previous year, and a pair of Sulphur-bellied Flycatchers was seen nearby, but no birds were seen to enter it until the last visit, when the nest was being used by Great

Kiskadees. Actual construction of the nest was never observed, but the nest type is more typical for the Great Kiskadees, and it seems likely that the Great Kiskadees were refurbishing an old nest that was then usurped by the Sulphur-bellied Flycatchers. Ligon (1971) reported Sulphur-bellied Flycatchers nesting on top of old nests of other species in flicker holes in Arizona. These observations confirm breeding in the Central Valleys as well as an unusual nesting type for this species.

Tyrannus savana **Fork-tailed Flycatcher**. Binford (1989) cited only one valid record of this species for the state of Oaxaca. Howell and Webb (1995) map it in northern Oaxaca west to about Tuxtepec. RA saw one male 7 km east of Tuxtepec, 35 m elevation, perched on a fence post on April 21, 2002. JF and R. Antonio saw two of these birds perched in flooded vegetation adjacent to a large dam about 30 km west of Tuxtepec, near the community of Pescadito, Tuxtepec District, 50 m elevation, on March 9, 2005. The species occupies a somewhat more extensive range in Oaxaca than previously recorded.

Pachyramphus major **Gray-collared Becard**. Binford (1989) reported the race *uropygialis* from the “Pacific Region west of Isthmus”, and the race *major* from “Atlantic Region”. Forcey (2002b) reported the former from the mountains north of Oaxaca City. We recorded a female showing the characteristic head markings of *uropygialis* at the village of Santa María Totomoxtla, extreme northwest Ixtlán District, 2200 m elevation, on April 27, 2003. This location in the Sierra Juárez is at the extreme north of Binford’s Interior Region. Habitat was dry, open pine-oak forest. The disjunction between the two races seems to be determined more by habitat than geography.

Vireo plumbeus **Plumbeous Vireo**. No nests have been previously recorded in central Oaxaca, although Forcey (2002b) reported breeding behavior that indicated a breeding season of April through June. On April 19, 2004 JF recorded a pair moving about together, one singing, one possibly carrying nesting material, just north of the Presa Piedra Azul, Teotitlán del Valle, Tlacolula District, 1750 m elevation. On May 3, he found a nest in the same area. Male was singing from nest located about 3 m up in a small tree. There was no sign of this nest when visited on May 17, but the species was still singing in the same area. Confirms nesting in the Oaxaca Central Valleys.

Psaltriparus minimus **Bushtit**. Forcey (2002c) reported an observed breeding season in central Oaxaca from April 17 (nest construction) to June 21 (dependent fledglings). JF, RA, and K. Wilcox observed an adult bird carrying fine material, presumably for nest lining, to



a substantially complete nest just south of San Pablo Cuatro Venados, Zaachila District, 2600 m elevation, on February 24, 2005. On March 24, 2005 JF, RA, and K. Wilcox saw a completed nest near the sewage pond west of Tlacolula de Matamors, Tlacolula District, 1600 m elevation. On June 25, 2005 a pair were seen carrying food to a complete nest at the San Felipe Ecological Park north of Oaxaca City, Centro District, 1750 m elevation. These observations indicate a nesting season from mid-February to mid-July at least. These observations extend the known nesting season by about two months.

Certhia americana **Brown Creeper**. Previous authors have not described any nesting in central Oaxaca. On April 7 and 19, 2004 JF, RA, and K. Wilcox saw a pair carrying food to a nest located under loose bark of a dead pine tree just above the town of Benito Juárez, extreme southern Ixtlán District, 3050 m elevation. Confirms nesting in central Oaxaca.

Thryothorus felix **Happy Wren**. Peterson *et al.* (2003) reported it in winter in the Cañada of northern Oaxaca. JF saw a pair moving about together at the town of San José El Chilar, Cuicatlán District, 700 m elevation, on May 16, 2003, and a single bird was vocalizing at the same location on July 2, 2004. El Chilar is located in the Cañada of northern Oaxaca, just a few kilometers south of Peterson's sites. The species was also observed by the authors on November 23, 2005 at the Puente de Fierro area near Guelatao, Ixtlan District, 1500 m elevation, an area in the same river system as the Cañada locations. The observations indicate year-round residency in the Cañada and contiguous low elevation areas of northern Oaxaca.

In the Oaxaca Central Valleys, this species has previously been reported only as a winter vagrant (Forcey 2002c). From May 3 to 9, 2009 two individuals of this species were seen and heard singing repeatedly along an arroyo about 2 km north of Tlalixtac de Cabrera. Such behavior at the dates indicated shows that the birds were attempting to breed, although we have no information on the success of those efforts.

Thryomanes bewickii **Bewick's Wren**. Previous authors have not described any nesting in central Oaxaca. On June 4 and 7, 2005 JF, RA, and K. Wilcox saw an adult bird carrying food to and removing fecal sacs from a nest in a hole in a road bank at San Felipe Ecological Park just north of Oaxaca City, Centro District, 1750 m elevation. Confirms nesting in Central Valleys.

Hylocichla mustelina **Wood Thrush**. Binford (1989) and Howell and Webb (1995) report this species absent from southern Oaxaca west of Isthmus. JF recorded one individual on March 16 and 17, 1999 in leafy understory

of a coffee plantation at Finca Soconusco, Pluma Hidalgo, Pochutla District, 1200 m elevation. On February 5, 2009 JF observed another individual of this species at Finca El Pacífico, Pluma Hidalgo, Pochutla District. In central Oaxaca, on April 24, 2005 RA and K. Wilcox saw an individual in riparian vegetation 2.5 km north of the community of El Estudiante, Centro District, 2480 m elevation. Observations of this species had been reported once before in the Central Valleys (Forcey 2002c). The species could be a rare winter resident in the Sierra Sur of Pochutla District, probably only vagrant to Central Valleys.

Parula americana **Northern Parula**. RA and K. Wilcox saw a male on the grounds of the Instituto Tecnológico del Valle de Oaxaca (ITVO), 1600 m elevation, Centro District, on October 16, 2003. This is the first record for this species in Central Oaxaca. Vagrant to Central Valleys.

Dendroica caerulescens **Black-throated Blue Warbler**. On January 4, 2004 a male was seen by R. Hoyer, J. Tietz, and R. Green (pers.comm.) in the Sierra Sur of Oaxaca near the Copalita exit on the Oaxaca-Pochutla highway, Pochutla District (1120 m elevation), and on February 10, 2004 RA and K. Wilcox saw it again at the same location. This is first record for the Sierra Sur and second for Oaxaca according to Binford (1989), Howell and Webb (1995), and Cisneros (2005).

Dendroica dominica **Yellow-throated Warbler**. Binford (1989) considered this species as rare in Oaxaca, while Howell and Webb (1995) map it in southern Oaxaca, but not to the coast. JF and RA recorded one individual at Laguna Mazunte, near Puerto Angel, Pochutla District, slightly above sea level, on January 13, 2005. Winter range extends to at or near sea level in southern coastal Oaxaca.

Geothlypis nelsoni **Hooded Yellowthroat**. Though Howell and Webb (1995) indicate an altitudinal range of 1400 to 3000 m elevation for the species in all of Mexico, Binford (1989) and Forcey (2002c) state that this species has previously been found only above 2700 m elevation in Oaxaca. For three days from June 14 to 16, 2004, JF saw at least one male singing loudly from fairly high exposed perches in the area just above the entrance to the San Felipe Ecological Park just north of Oaxaca City, Centro District, 1750 m elevation. The vegetation cover is disturbed arid subtropical scrub. The species had not been previously recorded at this location during several years that included visits during the spring season.



Euthlypis lachrymosa **Fan-tailed Warbler**. This species has not been previously recorded in central Oaxaca. On April 4, 2003, R. Antonio (pers. com.) reported one of these birds in hillside brush of the arroyo at San Felipe Ecological Park north of Oaxaca City, Centro District, 1780 m elevation, and on January 16, 2004 JF saw one individual at the same location. These are the first records for the species in the Central Valleys where the species is probably only present as a vagrant.

This species had been previously recorded in the Gulf Slope by Binford (1989) "5 mi west of Temascal" (p. 236), a location which he describes as being about 100 m elevation. On February 9, 2005 RA and K. Wilcox saw one bird at Santa Cruz Yagavila, Ixtlán District, in coffee plantations at about 600 m elevation. Six other records, of one to four birds, were made at the same area by RA and M.A. Pérez from August 9 through September 3, 2005, 600-1100 m elevation. The location is 90 km south of the Temascal location as well as 400-1000 m higher elevation. Breeding seems likely at the latter sites.

Tiaris olivaceus **Yellow-faced Grassquit**. Both Binford (1989) and Howell and Webb (1995) report this species as common on the Gulf slope, but absent in the Central Valleys. RA and K. Wilcox saw two males and one female on February 18, 2004 near the Presa Lic. Matías Romero, San Pablo Huitzo, Etna District, 1750 m elevation. This is the first record for the Central Valleys of Oaxaca (Figure 2). Short distance vagrant to Central Valleys.



Figure 2. Yellow-faced Grassquit *Tiaris olivaceus* photographed February 18, 2004 near San Pablo Huitzo, Oaxaca (photo by RA).

Melospiza kieneri **Rusty-crowned Ground-Sparrow**. The only previous record of this species in the Central Valleys of Oaxaca was that reported by Roberson and Carratello (1997) from Yagul, on December 21, 1995. JF saw one of these birds on May 21, 2005 at San Felipe Ecological Park north of Oaxaca City, Centro District, 1750 m elevation. This is the first breeding season record from the Central Valleys. Also, JF saw one of these birds on March 12, 2003 in the vicinity of the Puente de Fierro at the Río Grande below Guelatao, Ixtlán District, 1500 m elevation, an area contiguous with the location in San Juan Atepec, Ixtlán District from which Forcey (2002c) reported this species previously, but some 15 km to the southeast.

Aimophila notosticta **Oaxaca Sparrow**. Both Binford (1989) and Howell and Webb (1995) report that this species is allopatric with its congener *A. rufescens* Rusty Sparrow. R. Hoyer (pers. comm.) reported the presence of four birds of this species at the Puente de Fierro below Guelatao, Ixtlán District, 1500 m elevation, on December 27, 2003 and reported he had recorded it there in December 26, 1998. JF and R. Antonio saw one bird at the same location on May 10, 2005. JF also recorded *A. rufescens* at the Río Grande below San Juan Atepec, Ixtlán District, 1280 m elevation, on May 30, 2001 and at the Puente de Fierro location on March 12, 2003. Thus, there is an area of sympatry at or around the Puente de Fierro location.

RA y K. Wilcox mist netted two individuals of *A. notosticta*, one in December 26 and 28, 2003, and another one in January 16, 2004, at Yavecía river, 1.6 km west from Yavecía town, Ixtlán District. Together with the Puente de Fierro records these are the first records of *A. notosticta* north of the continental divide, which lies in the high mountains just north of Oaxaca City.

Oriturus superciliosus **Striped Sparrow**. Binford (1989) reported breeding dates for this species in Oaxaca from May 25 (enlarged follicle) to September 12 (prejuvenile). Just south of San Pablo Cuatro Venados, Zaachila District, 2650 m elevation, we recorded apparently paired birds and what appeared to be courtship behavior (begging, wing flicking in presence of another bird) on February 24, 2005, and juvenile birds showing striped breasts and gape flanges on June 30, 2005. The reproductive season for this species begins some three months earlier than previously recorded.

Spizella passerina **Chipping Sparrow**. Binford (1989) reported that this species breeds in arid pine-oak forest of interior Oaxaca, and Howell and Webb (1995) map a breeding population in central Oaxaca. Forcey (2002c) reported observations that indicated the species was strictly migratory in central Oaxaca. K. Wilcox and RA



observed an individual singing, apparently on territory on April 25, 2005 at El Cerezal, southwest Ixtlán District, 2360 m elevation. JF, RA, and K. Wilcox saw in individual in breeding plumage on June 4, 2005 in open eucalyptus plantations in San Felipe Ecological Park north of Oaxaca City, Centro District, 1750 m elevation, and saw and heard individuals singing repeatedly from treetops in the same area on June 7. Confirms breeding population in central Oaxaca.

Pheucticus chrysopleplus **Yellow Grosbeak**. In spite of Binford's (1989) report of this species from the Cañada area of Oaxaca, Howell and Webb (1995) did not map its presence in northern Oaxaca. Peterson *et al.* (2003) reported it from two sites in the Cañada during winter. JF and M.A. Pérez saw one individual of this species on July 2, 2004 at San José El Chilar, Cuicatlán District, 700 m elevation. Others were heard singing in the same area. The species is presumably a breeding resident at this location.

Passerina amoena **Lazuli Bunting**. Binford (1989) did not report this species from Oaxaca, but Howell and Webb (1995) report it as a rare winter visitor to central Oaxaca. We saw at least three of these with a flock of mostly Indigo Buntings (*P. cyanea*) on February 6, 2003 at the San Felipe Ecological Park north of Oaxaca City, Centro District, 1700 m elevation. JF saw one at the Presa Piedra Azul, Teotitlán del Valle, Tlacolula District, 1700 m elevation, on March 8, 2003, and he and R. Antonio saw one bird at the Puente de Fierro, Guelatao, Ixtlán District, 1500 m elevation, on March 12, 2003. All of these observations were of female birds, showing unstreaked, buffy breasts, white on belly, clearly lighter colored than nearby female Indigo Buntings. JF, RA, and K. Wilcox saw an adult male in breeding plumage with a large flock of Indigo Buntings at the Parque Bosque del Tequio south of Oaxaca City, 1500 m elevation, on April 12, 2003. RA and K. Wilcox saw two males molting into breeding plumage at Presa Lic. Matías Romero, San

Pablo Huitzo, Etna District, on February 18, 2004. Confirms presence of this species south to central Oaxaca as irregular migrant in winter.

Carpodacus cassinii **Cassin's Finch**. In regard to the description of individuals of this species reported from the mountains of central Oaxaca in January 2001 by Grosselet and Forcey (2002), H. Gómez de Silva (n.d.) wrote the following: "En Resultados, no...se incluyen algunos registros que se han publicado con tan escasa información que no es posible verificar sin mayores datos que los publicados...que la especie fue identificada con certeza (tales como el registro de ...*Carpodacus cassinii* en Oaxaca (Grosselet and Forcey 2002)...". We continue to hold that the birds seen were in fact *C. cassinii*. In support of this we submit notes JF included on his computer file the day of the sighting. These notes were made on return to Oaxaca City, but based on more sketchy notes made at the time of the observations. As stated in the original article, there was ample time to make careful observations, and Grosselet and Forcey were able to compare each field mark with the field guides they were using at the time. While the following descriptive notes are brief, we believe they provide a better description of the birds than that published in the original article. They describe the birds thus: "large conical bill, tail notched, M bright red crown stopping abruptly at nape, upper breast unstreaked, wings edged reddish or pink, F breast white and finely streaked, utcs streaked, whitish supercilium and moustachial stripe set off ear patch, submoustachial composed of fine streaks not solid, 3 in town, about 20 or more in campo, all feeding on cebada." These notes serve to confirm the identification as that of *C. cassinii*, thus giving the species a place in the list for the State of Oaxaca.

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Appendix 1. Geographic coordinates for sites mentioned in text.

Locality	District	Latitude N	Longitud W
Pescadito	Tuxtepec	18°08'56.52"	96°22'37.07"
Santa María Jacatepec	Tuxtepec	17°50'28.90"	96°12'08.58"
Cuicatlán	Cuicatlán	17°47'40.05"	96°57'31.09"
Tomellín	Cuicatlán	17°45'30.66"	96°57'29.39"
San José El Chilar	Cuicatlán	17°43'06.38"	96°56'05.19"
Santa María Totomoxtla	Ixtlán	17°36'49.23"	96°33'34.91"
San Juan Yagila	Ixtlán	17°27'45.35"	96°20'39.65"
Santa Cruz Yagavila	Ixtlán	17°27'27.95"	96°19'34.76"
San Juan Atepec	Ixtlán	17°25'13.24"	96°34'09.82"
Capulalpan de Méndez	Ixtlán	17°18'28.62"	96°26'17.53"
Puente de Fierro (Gualatao)	Ixtlán	17°18'22.87"	96°30'33.92"
El Cerezal	Ixtlán	17°14'23.14"	96°33'43.09"
Yavecía	Ixtlán	17°14'19.30"	96°25'51.88"
La Cumbre	Ixtlán	17°10'27.04"	96°36'16.20"
El Estudiante	Ixtlán	17°08'44.95"	96°37'18.63"
Llano Grande	Ixtlán	17°08'43.97"	96°24'37.88"
Benito Juárez	Ixtlán	17°06'47.63"	96°29'33.89"
Santiago Lalopa (Río Cajonos)	Villa Alta	17°26'30.77"	96°14'00.74"
San Pedro Cajonos	Villa Alta	17°10'10.48"	96°15'46.11"
Lic. Matías Romero, Presa (San Pablo Huitzo)	Etla	17°16'43.45"	96°55'39.93"
San Felipe Ecological Park (Oaxaca)	Centro	17°06'56.27"	96°42'37.34"
Estudiante, Presa (Tlalixtac de Cabrera)	Centro	17°05'35.57"	96°39'14.18"
Tlalixtac de Cabrera	Centro	17°04'27.71"	96°38'53.55"
Monte Albán	Centro	17°02'43.66"	96°46'05.44"
ITVO	Centro	17°01'59.05"	96°44'02.85"
Bosque del Tequio, Parque (Oaxaca)	Centro	17°00'15.19"	96°43'12.72"
Piedra Azul, Presa (Teotitlán del Valle)	Tlacolula	17°02'34.94"	96°30'55.54"
Río Salado (San Juan Guelavía)	Tlacolula	16°58'13.08"	96°32'27.55"
Tlacolula de Matamoros (sewage ponds)	Tlacolula	16°58'01.40"	96°29'49.07"
San Pablo Cuatro Venados	Zaachila	16°57'21.58"	96°54'52.89"
El Vado - San Sebastián de las Grutas road	Ejutla	16°36'07.12"	96°53'28.54"
Miahuatlán de Porfirio Díaz, presa	Miahuatlán	16°21'51.39"	96°37'47.70"
San Agustín Loxicha road	Miahuatlán	16°00'10.72"	96°31'54.83"
Bacocho, Playa (Puerto Escondido)	Juquila	15°51'54.90"	97°05'25.70"
Copalita	Pochutla	15°57'55.16"	96°27'48.88"
El Pacífico, Finca (Pluma Hidalgo)	Pochutla	15°56'53.12"	96°27'42.56"
Soconusco, Finca (Pluma Hidalgo)	Pochutla	15°56'03.04"	96°26'39.16"
Barra de Colotepec	Pochutla	15°48'34.10"	97°01'07.08"
Mazunte, Laguna (Puerto Angel)	Pochutla	15°40'00.33"	96°33'18.53"