

New and noteworthy bird records from the Venezuelan Andes and Maracaibo basin

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The Venezuelan Andes are a north-eastern extension of the Cordillera Oriental of Colombia. They extend from Táchira state in the south-west to Lara state in the north-east but the main range is located within the territory of Mérida state. They are divided longitudinally by the Táchira depression into two: (1) the Tamá Massif in the south-west, shared with Colombia, and (2) the Cordillera de Mérida. Owing to the importance of the Cordillera de Mérida as a center of diversity and endemism, large parts of this mountain range is protected by the Sierra Nevada and Sierra de La Culata National Parks, classified both as an Endemic Bird Area (Vuilleumier and Ewert 1978, Stattersfield *et al* 1998). Moreover, the tropical Andes have been recognized as a global hotspot, supporting extremely high levels of endemism for plants (6.7% of the global total) and vertebrates (5.7% of the global total) and representing one of the most biologically diverse forest systems of the Neotropics (Henderson *et al* 1991, Myers *et al* 2000).

The Maracaibo Basin a foreland basin found in the north-western corner of Venezuela, is surrounded by two mountain ranges, the Cordillera de Mérida to the south-east and the Sierra de Perijá to the west, with the Lago de Maracaibo to the north. After fifty years of human intervention, little is left of the natural dry forests in the region (Escalona and Mann 2006). The remaining native vegetation consists of small isolated patches that include savannas with trees and deciduous forests. The main impact on the natural vegetation has been caused by shifting cultivation, and by an extent network of roads surrounding Lake Maracaibo (INPARQUES 1996, MARNR 2001, Rodríguez and Rojas-Suárez 1998, 2015). Although the avifauna is unique to the country including several endemic species (Stattersfield *et al* 1998, Pirela *et al* 2009, Lentino and Esclasans 2005, Rodríguez and Rojas-Suárez 2015), less than 10% of the total area extension is protected in the Parque Nacional Ciénagas de Juan Manuel y Reserva de Fauna Silvestre Ciénagas de Juan Manuel: Aguas Blancas y Aguas Negras (INPARQUES 1996, MARNR 2001, López *et al* 2000, Rodríguez and Rojas-Suárez 2015).

Since the publication of the fundamental works “Birds of Venezuela” by Meyer de Schauensee and Phelps in 1978 including the update in 1994, and “Birds of Venezuela” by Steven Hilty in 2003, some studies have

added information on the avifauna of the Venezuelan Andes and Maracaibo Basin regions (Fjeldså and Krabbe 1990, Weller and Rengifo 2003, Rengifo *et al* 2005a,b; Pasariello *et al* 2006, Rengifo *et al* 2007, Restall *et al* 2006a,b; Pirela *et al* 2009, Lentino and Salcedo 2010, Escola *et al* 2011, Avendaño 2012, Ramoni-Perazzi *et al* 2014, Cárdenas-Avella and Ayala-Ochoa 2016, Ramoni-Perazzi *et al* 2016). These areas exhibit the highest and unique bird diversity in the country. Recent ornithological studies have proved that our knowledge of the Venezuelan Andes and Maracaibo Basin avifauna are still at the inventory level (Rengifo *et al* 2005b, 2007) and that the distribution of some species is still poorly known (Rengifo *et al* 2005a,b; Pirela *et al* 2009, Avendaño 2012).

The goal of this paper is to reflect on biogeographical (distribution, altitude) aspects of 79 bird species found in the Venezuelan Andes and the Maracaibo Basin, covering endemic as well as more common and widespread taxa and migratory species, including several first records for the Venezuelan Andes.

Species were recorded using binoculars Zeiss 10X40 and in several cases additional photographic documentation was obtained. At particular sites, mist-netting was undertaken. Coordinates, altitudes and habitat of the localities included in this report are presented in Table 1. Localities were geo-referenced using a Garmin GPS. Collected individuals were deposited in Colección de Vertebrados de la Universidad de los Andes (CVULA). Catalogue numbers are indicated in parenthesis.

With respect to range and altitude extensions, the most common type of account in this document, we incorporated those records of more than 200 km away from the known distribution, or altitude extensions of more than 200 m. We also included all extensions that involved new states records or ecological units, new for a biogeographical region such as the Venezuelan Andes or Maracaibo Basin, and described some migratory patterns. The species account follows the taxonomy proposed by South American Classification Committee (Remsen *et al* 2016) and Spanish common names follow Verea *et al* (2017). Finally, the data presented in this paper is the result of casual observations and several research projects conducted in the Venezuelan Andes for more than 15 years.

TABLE 1. Locality, geographic location, altitude, habitat, and coordinates of sites referred to in the text. Arranged alphabetically. Vegetation nomenclature follows Ataroff and Sarmiento (2003).

Locality name	Geographic location	State	Habitat	Altitude (m asl)	Coordinates
Agua Blanca	2 km south-east from La Azulita	Mérida	Shade-coffee plantations	1,050	08°42'36"N-71°25'59"W
Apartaderos	40 Km east of Mérida city	Mérida	Paramo, plantations	3,200	08°48'17"N-70°51'22"W
Bachaqueros	2 km north-west of La Azulita	Mérida	Shade-coffee plantations, gardens	800	08°43'18"N-71°26'22"W
Boca de Monte	27 Km south-east of Mérida city	Mérida	High-montane cloud forest, elfin forest	2,800	08°23'16"N-71°0'41"W
Chiguara	45 Km West of Mérida city	Mérida	Thorn scrub, low-montane dry ever green forest	900	08°28'50"N-71°32'19"W
El Quince	El Vigia	Mérida	Second-growth, pastures	87	08°34'59"N-71°46'39"W
El Vigia	60 Km west of Mérida city	Mérida	Pastures and second-growth	80	08°40'25"N-71°40'31"W
Embalse de Tucupido	30.7 Km south-west of Guanare, Portuguesa	Portuguesa	Second-growth	260	08°56'45"N-69°59'47"W
Teleférico de Mérida	Mérida city	Mérida	Second-growth, gardens	1,582	08°35'30"N-71°08'30"W
Facultad Ing. Forestal	Mérida city	Mérida	Second-growth, gardens	1,751	08°37'23"N-71°08'21"W
La Azulita	37 Km north-west of Mérida city	Mérida	Shade-coffee plantations, gardens	1,050-1,100	08°42'48"N-71°26'35"W
La Mucuy	Sierra Nevada NP, 14 Km east of Mérida city	Mérida	High-montane cloud forest	2,000	08°37'52"N-71°02'21"W
Laguna de Mucubají	Sierra Nevada NP, Mérida	Mérida	Paramo	3,550	08°47'48"N-70°49'32"W
Laguna la Rosa	Mérida city	Mérida	Second-growth, gardens	1,319	08°33'46"N-71°11'24"W
Laguna Victoria	47 Km at north-east of Mérida city	Mérida	Paramo	3,200	08° 48'46"N-70°48'04"W
Los Parchos	3,5 Km at south-west of Aricagua	Mérida	Shade-coffee plantations, Second-growth	1,680	08°12'25"N-71°09'52"W
Mérida downtown	Mérida city	Mérida	Gardens, second-growth	1,573	08°35'43"N-71°09'08"W
Monaicito	4 Km north-east of Monay	Trujillo	Humid submontane forest, Second-growth	300	09°33'27"N-70°25'40"W
Mucuchies	32 Km east of Mérida	Mérida	Paramo	2,900	08°44'58"N-70°55'18"W
Mucumi	32 Km west of Mérida city	Mérida	Thorn scrub	900	08°30'11"N-71°21'53"W
Olinda	6 km north-west of La Azulita	Mérida	Montane semi-deciduos forest	1,200	08°45'43"N-71°29'11"W
Palo Quemao	41 Km south-east of Mérida	Barinas	Humid submontane forest	550	08°17'39"N-71°55'22"W
Puerto Concha	South Coast of Lago de Maracaibo	Zulia	Moist forest, marsh, pastures	0	09°02'06"N-71°44'58"W
Rio Aricagua	40 Km South of Mérida city	Mérida	Shade-coffee plantations, pastures	1,300	08°13'28"N-71°08'12"W
Rio Canagua	50 Km west to Barinas	Barinas	Humid submontane forest	500	08°34'08"N-70°40'18"W
San Cristobal downtown	San Cristobal	Táchira	Gardens, second-growth vegetation	1,000	07°46'43"N-72°12'51"W
San Jose de Acequias	30 Km south-west to Mérida	Mérida	Pastures and second-growth	2,200	08°21'43"N-71°19'12"W
San Jose de Limones	10 km north-west of La Azulita	Mérida	Humid submontane forest	550	08°46'28"N-71°26'04"W
Urbanización Carabobo	Merida city	Mérida	Montane semi-deciduos forest remanent	1,206	08°34'03"N-71°10'45"W

SPECIES ACCOUNT

Anas cyanoptera Cinnamon Teal. Local name: Barraquete Colorado. This species is known in Venezuela from a single record (Phelps and Meyer de Schauensee 1994, Hilty 2003). Four individuals were sighted in Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m): October 2007 (one individual); October 2010 (two); and October 2014 (one). All birds were in the company of Blue-winged Teals *Anas discors*. In the past, Cinnamon Teals have been probably overlooked because of the latter species.

Merganetta armata Torrent Duck. Local name: Pato de Torrentes (Fig 1a). An adult couple with two ducklings was recorded at Rio Canaguá (500 m), March 2002. This species has been recorded in Venezuela between 2,000–3,000 m (Phelps and Meyer de Schauensee 1994, Hilty 2003). The datum sets the lowest altitudinal record for the Torrent Duck in the country.

Ortalis ruficauda Rufous-vented Chachalaca. Local name: Guacharaca (Fig 1b). Several individuals of the *O. r. ruficrissa* (Hilty 2003, del Hoyo and Kirwan 2017) were sighted and photographed at Chiguara (900 m), January 2005. This is the first record for this subspecies of Chachalaca in the Venezuelan Andes.

Nyctibius grandis Great Potoo. Local name: Nictibio Grande. One individual was collected (CVULA-405) at San José de Limones (550 m), November 2007. Another was sighted at Facultad de Ingeniería Forestal, Mérida City (1,751 m), February 2015. These are the first records for the Great Potoo in Mérida state.

Hydropsalis cayennensis White-tailed Nightjar. Local name: Aguaitacamino Rastrojero. Two individuals were mist-netted; one collected (CVULA-507) at Mucumi (900 m), October 2005. No prior distribution data for the White-tailed Nightjar is known for Mérida state.

Doryfera ludovicae Green-fronted Lancebill. Local name: Pico Lanza Frentiverde. One specimen was collected (CVULA-202) at San José de Limones (550 m), March 2002. This species has been recorded in Venezuela between 1,600–2,200 m (Hilty 2003). The datum sets the lowest altitudinal record for the Green-fronted Lancebill in the country.

Klais guimeti Violet-headed Hummingbird. Local name: Tucúsito Cabeza Azul. Several individuals were sighted and one collected (CVULA-530) at Agua Blanca (1,050 m), February 2006. These are the first records for the Violet-headed Hummingbird in the western slopes of the Venezuelan Andes.

Coeligena coeligena Brown Inca. Local name: Colibrí Inca Bronceado. More than 30 individuals were

mist-netted at Agua Blanca (1,050 m), between December 2004 and March 2009. These are the first records for the Brown Inca in the western slopes of the Venezuelan Andes.

Porphyrio martinicus Purple Gallinule. Local name: Gallito Azul. Three individuals were found dead near-by Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m), October 2003. One individual was collected (CVULA-472). The Purple Gallinule's altitudinal range has usually been reported below 1,025 m (Hilty 2003, Ramoni-Perazzi *et al* 2014). These data set the highest altitudinal record for the Purple Gallinule in the country. Additional records in the Andes, above 1,200 m, include one individual collected (CVULA-325) in Mérida city, March 2005. It could suggest a migratory pattern between the lowlands of Lago de Maracaibo and the llanos region.

Vanellus chilensis Southern Lapwing. Local name: Alcaraván. Several records near Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m) since 2004. This species has been recorded in Venezuela below 3,000 m (Hilty 2003). These data set the highest altitudinal record for the Southern Lapwing in the country.

Himantopus mexicanus Black-necked Stilt. Local name: Viuda Patilarga. Four individuals were recorded at Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m): August 2005 (two individuals); September 2010 (one); September 2016 (one). In Venezuela, the Black-necked Stilt has been recorded up to 1,935 m, mostly below 400 m (Hilty 2003, Ramoni-Perazzi *et al* 2014). These data set the highest altitudinal record for the species in the country.

Limosa haemastica Hudsonian Godwit. Local name: Becasa de Mar. One individual was photographed at Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m), September 2002. The species has usually been recorded at sea level (Hilty 2003). This is the first record for the Hudsonian Godwit in the Venezuelan Andes, and it sets its highest altitudinal range level for the country.

Calidris himantopus Stilt Sandpiper. Local name: Playero Patilargo. Six individuals were recorded at Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m), August 2004. This species has been recorded in Venezuela below 400 m (Hilty 2003). This is the first record for the Stilt Sandpiper in the Venezuelan Andes, and it sets its highest altitudinal range level for the country.

Calidris minutilla Least Sandpiper. Local name: Playerito Menudo. It was recorded at Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m), August 2002 and September 2004. This species has been recorded in Venezuela below 400 m (Hilty 2003). This is the first record for the Least Sandpiper in the Venezuelan Andes, and it sets its highest altitudinal range level for the country.

Calidris mauri Western Sandpiper. Local name: Playerito Occidental. Four individuals were recorded at Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m), September 2002. All previous records at sea level (Hilty 2003). This record is the first for the Western Sandpiper in the Venezuelan Andes, and it sets its highest altitudinal range level for the country.

Calidris pusilla Semipalmated Sandpiper. Local name: Playerito Semipalmeado. One individual was recorded at Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m), September 2002. All previous records were below 400 m (Hilty 2003). This is the first record for the Semipalmated Sandpiper in the Venezuelan Andes, and it sets its highest altitudinal range level for the country.

Phaetusa simplex Large-billed Tern. Local name: Guanaguanare Fluvial. Two individuals were recorded at Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m): September 2005 (one individual); September 2006 (one individual). The Large-billed Tern was also recorded in 1975 by Vuilleumier and Ewert (1978) in the same location. These records suggest a migratory pattern between the southern Maracaibo basin and the llanos region.

Leucophaeus atricilla Laughing Gull. Local name: Guanaguanare. Ten individuals sighted at Puerto Concha (0 m), February 2010. This is the first record for the Laughing Gull in the southern Maracaibo Basin.

Larus delawarensis Ring-billed Gull. Local name: Guanaguanare Pico Anillado. Ring-billed Gull is only known from few records in the Venezuelan eastern coasts (Hilty 2003). Seven individuals were recorded at Puerto Concha (0 m): March 2007 (three individual); February 2012 (four individuals). These are the first records for the Ring-billed Gull in the Maracaibo Basin.

Rynchops niger Black Skimmer. Local name: Pico de Tijera. One individual was sighted at Laguna de La Rosa (1,319 m), September 2010; and other in Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m), September 2014. This species has been recorded in Venezuela below 550 m (Phelps and Meyer de Schauensee 1994, Hilty 2003). These are the first records for the Black Skimmer in the Venezuelan Andes, and they set its highest altitudinal range level for the country.

Jabiru mycteria Jabiru. Local name: Garzón Soldado. Two individuals were sighted at El Vigía (80 m), September 2012. This is the first record for the Jabiru in southern Basin of Lago de Maracaibo.

Tigrisoma fasciatum Fasciated Tiger-Heron. Local name: Pájaro Vaco Oscuro. One individual was sighted at Río Chama, Urbanización Carabobo (1,206 m), October 2010. A second individual was also recorded at Río Aricagua (1,300 m), November 2012. Both

are the first records for the Fasciated Tiger-Heron in Mérida state.

Syrigma sibilatrix Whistling Heron. Local name: Garza Silbadora. One individual was sighted at Puerto Concha (0 m), September 2006. This is the first record for the Whistling Heron in the south end of Lago de Maracaibo.

Agamia agami Agami Heron. Local name: Garza Pechi-castaña. One individual was sighted in Laguna Victoria (3,200 m), January 2004. This species mainly occurs below 1,000 m (Hilty 2003). The datum sets the highest altitudinal record for the Agami Heron in the country.

Eudocimus ruber Scarlet Ibis. Local name: Corocoro Colorado. Scarlet Ibis was sighted at Puerto Concha (0 m), December 2003. This is the first record for the species in south Zulia state. Also, a flock of 12 individuals was recorded at San José de Acequia (2,200 m), March 2007. This species mainly occurs below 500 m, one record at 1,500 m (Hilty 2003). The flock was probably migrating between Maracaibo basin and the western Venezuelan llanos. These data set the highest altitudinal record for the Scarlet Ibis in the country.

Ictinia plumbea Plumbeous Kite. Local name: Gavilán Plomizo. One individual was sighted at Puerto Concha (0 m), September 2006. This record is one of the few known for the Plumbeous Kite at sea level north of the Orinoco.

Circus cyaneus Northern Harrier. Local name: Aguilucho Pálido. The Northern Harrier is known in Venezuela from one isolated record (1903), 20 Km east of Mérida city, 2,500 m asl (Phelps and Meyer de Schauensee 1994, Hilty 2003). Several individuals were recorded during the annual migration (2007–2015) at Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m): one adult male was recorded on October 8, 2007; two juveniles and one adult male on October 9–10, 2009, respectively; two juveniles on October 29, 2012; one adult female on October 14, 2013; one juvenile on November 02, 2015. All individuals were soaring along with Turkey Vultures *Cathartes aura* and Broad-winged Hawks *Buteo platypterus*. These data set the highest altitudinal record for the Northern Harrier in the country.

Buteogallus meridionalis Savanna Hawk. Local name: Gavilán Pita Venado. It was sighted below La Azulita, Mérida (1,200 m). This species has been recorded in Venezuela up to 870 m (Ramoni-Perazzi *et al* 2014). This is the first record for the Savanna Hawk in the western slopes of the Venezuelan Andes, and it sets its highest altitudinal range level for the country.

Buteo nitidus Gray-lined Hawk. Local name: Gavilán Gris. One individual was sighted at La Mucuy (2,000

m), November 2015. This species has been recorded north of the Orinoco up to 1,600 m (Hilty 2003). This datum sets the highest altitudinal record for the Gray-lined Hawk in the country.

Buteo albonotatus Zone-tailed Hawk. Local name: Gavilán Negro. One immature individual was recorded at Chiguara (900 m), January 2005; and one adult was also sighted at Teleférico de Mérida (1,582 m), October 2011. This species has been recorded in Venezuela below 600 m (Hilty 2003). These records are the first for the Zone-tailed Hawk in the Venezuelan Andes, and they set its highest altitudinal range level for the country.

Micrastur semitorquatus Collared Forest-Falcon. Local name: Halcón Semiacollarado. One individual was sighted at La Mucuy (2,000 m), April 2002. This species typically occurs up to 1,500 m (Phelps and Meyer de Schauensee 1994, Hilty 2003, Rengifo *et al* 2005b). The datum sets the highest altitudinal record for the Collared Forest-Falcon in the country.

Ciccaba nigrolineata Black-and-White Owl. Local name: Lechuza Blanquinegra. One individual was sighted at Monaquito (300 m), November 2009. This is the first record for the Black-and-White Owl in Trujillo state. Additionally, one individual was sighted at Embalse de Tucupido (260 m), January 2014. This is also the first record for the Black-and-White Owl in Portuguesa state.

Asio clamator Striped Owl. Local name: Lechuza Listada. One individual was found dead in San José de Limones (550 m), March 2008 (CVULA-522). This is the first record for the Striped Owl in the western slopes of the Venezuelan Andes.

Trogon caligatus Gartered Trogon. Local name: Sorocúa Morado. Two individuals were sighted at Olinda (1,200 m), February 2005. No prior distributional data is known for the Gartered Trogon in Mérida state.

Momotus subrufescens Whooping Motmot. Local name: Pájaro León Garganticanela. One individual was mist-netted and photographed at Chiguara (900 m), January 2005. This species has been recorded north of Orinoco up to 600 m (Hilty 2003, Rengifo *et al* 2005b). This record sets the highest altitudinal range level for the Whooping Motmot in the country.

Ramphastos vitellinus Channel-billed Toucan. Local name: Diostedé Garganticitrón. Several individuals of *R. v. citreolaemus* (Hilty 2003) were sighted at Agua Blanca (1,050 m), February and March 2007. Channel-billed Toucans typically occurs below 500 m (Hilty 2003). These records set the highest altitudinal range level for the species in the country.

Forpus conspicillatus Spectacled Parrotlet. Local name: Periquito Ojiazul. Several individuals were photographed at San Cristobal, Táchira (1,000 m), March and May 2004. This species has been recorded in Venezuela up to 100 m (Hilty 2003). These are the first records for the Spectacled Parrotlet in the Venezuelan Andes, and they set its highest altitudinal range level for the country.

Pionus sordidus Red-billed Parrot. Local name: Perico Pico Rojo. More than 10 individuals were sighted close to La Azulita, Mérida (1,050 m), September 2002; March 2003; and May 2003. These are the first records for the Red-billed Parrot in the Venezuelan Andes.

Pionus chalcopterus Bronze-winged Parrot. Local name: Cotorra Negra. Several individuals were sighted at Rio Aricagua (1,300 m), November 2012. This is the first record for the Bronze-winged Parrot in the eastern slopes of the Venezuelan Andes.

Amazona amazonica Orange-winged Parrot. Local name: Loro Guaro. A flock of more than 15 individuals was frequently observed roosting below La Azulita (1,100 m). This species occurs up to 500 m north of the Orinoco; and up to 1,500 m south of it (Hilty 2003). The datum sets the highest altitudinal record for the Orange-winged Parrot in north Orinoco region.

Thectocercus acuticaudatus Blue-crowned Parakeet. Local name: Carapaico. Several sight records at San José de Limones (550 m): March, April, and May 2003. These are the first records for the Blue-crowned Parakeet in the Venezuelan Andes.

Scytalopus atratus White-crowned Tapaculo. Local name: Tapaculo Corona Blanca. White-crowned Tapaculos were sighted at Olinda (1,200 m): October and December 2002, and January and February 2006. An additional individual was mist-netted and photographed in March 2006. These are the first records of the White-crowned Tapaculo in the western slopes of the Venezuelan Andes.

Scytalopus griseicollis Rufous-rumped Tapaculo. Local name: Tapaculo de Tamá (Fig 1c). One individual was mist-netted and collected (CVULA-654) at Boca de Monte (2,800 m), August 2007. This is the first record for the Rufous-rumped Tapaculo in Mérida state.

Sclerurus mexicanus Tawny-throated Leaf Tosser. Local name: Raspahoja Pechirrojo. The Tawny-throated Leaf Tosser was sighted at Olinda (1,200 m), September and October 2002. An additional individual was mist-netted in the same location in January 2007. These are the first records for the Tawny-throated Leaf Tosser in the western slopes of the Venezuelan Andes.

Sclerurus albigularis Gray-throated Leaf-tosser. Local name: Raspahoja Gargantigrís. The Gray-throated Leaf-tosser was sighted at Agua Blanca (1,050 m), February and March 2007. This is the first record for the species in Mérida state.

Dendrocincla homochroa Ruddy Woodcreeper. Local name: Trepador Rojizo. One individual was mist-netted in Monaquito (300 m), November 2009. This is the first record of the Ruddy Woodcreeper in Trujillo state.

Leptopogon amaurocephalus Sepia-capped Flycatcher. Local name: Levanta Alas Gorro Sepia. Several individuals were mist-netted in Monaquito (300 m), November 2009. This is the first record for the Sepia-capped Flycatcher in Trujillo state.

Platyrinchus mystaceus White-throated Spadebill. Local name: Pico Chato Gargantiblanco. One individual was mist-netted and photographed at San José de Limones (550 m), February 2004. An additional individual was collected (CVULA-534) at Agua Blanca (1,050 m), March 2004. These are the first records for the White-throated Spadebill in Mérida state.

Empidonax virescens Acadian Flycatcher. Local name: Atrapamoscas Copete Verde. Several individuals were found dead around Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m) between September and October 2005. One individual was collected (CVULA-467). This species has been recorded between 600–1,200 m (Hilty 2003). The datum sets the highest altitudinal record for the Acadian Flycatcher in the country.

Cnemotriccus fuscatus Fuscous Flycatcher. Local name: Atrapamoscas Cejita. One individual was mist-netted, photographed, and collected (CVULA-503) at Chiguara (900 m), October 2005. This is the first record for the Fuscous Flycatcher in Mérida state.

Machetornis rixosa Cattle Tyrant. Local name: Atrapamoscas Jinete. More than 20 individuals were sighted at Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m) since 2005. This species has been recorded in Venezuela up to 2,700 m (Ramóni-Perazzi *et al* 2014). The datum sets the highest altitudinal record for the Cattle Tyrant in the country.

Myiodynastes maculatus Streaked Flycatcher. Local name: Gran Atrapamoscas Listado. One individual of the austral migrant *M. m. solitarius* (Hilty 2003) was found dead near Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m), September 2006 (CVULA-607). This migrant subspecies has been recorded in Venezuela up to 300 m (Hilty 2003). This is the first record for the Streaked Flycatcher austral migrant in the Venezuelan Andes, and it sets its highest altitudinal range level for the country.

Myiarchus crinitus Great Crested Flycatcher. Local name: Atrapamoscas Copetón. One individual

was found dead nearby Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m), October 2006 (CVULA-407). This species mainly occurs below 1,200 m (Hilty 2003). The datum sets the highest altitudinal record for the Great Crested Flycatcher in the country.

Ampelioides tschudii Scaled Fruiteater. Local name: Comefruta Talabartero. Several observations at Olin-da (1,200 m): August 2001; March and April 2003. These are the first records for the Scaled Fruiteater in Mérida state. Given that Scaled Fruiteater has been usually recorded at 1,250–2,000 m, our datum sets the lowest altitudinal record for the species in the country.

Vireolanius eximius Yellow-browed Shrike-Vireo. Local name: Sirirí Real Gorro Azul. One individual was sighted as part of an insectivorous mixed-flock in Palo Quemao (550 m), August 2004. This is the first record for the species in Mérida state.

Vireo olivaceus Red-eyed Vireo. Local name: Julián Chiví Ojirrojo. Several individuals were found dead around Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m) between September and October 2005. One individual was collected (CVULA-446). This species has been recorded in Venezuela below 3,000 m (Hilty 2003). The datum sets the highest altitudinal record for the species in the country. For more than 10 years, continuous records in the area, between September and October, define a migratory pattern for the Red-eyed Vireo in Venezuela.

Vireo altiloquus Black-whiskered Vireo. Local name: Julián Chiví Bigotinegro. Two individuals were found dead around Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m) between September and October 2005. One individual was collected (CVULA-453). This species has been recorded in Venezuela below 3,000 m (Hilty 2003). The datum sets the highest altitudinal record for the Black-whiskered Vireo in the country.

Progne tapera Brown-chested Martin. Local name: Golondrina de Río. One individual of the austral migrant *P. t. fusca* (Hilty 2003) was mist-netted and collected (CVULA-420) at Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m), October 2003. This species has been recorded in Venezuela up to 1,900 m (Hilty 2003). This is the first record for the Brown-chested Martin austral migrant in the Venezuelan Andes, and it sets its highest altitudinal range level for the country.

Progne chalybea Gray-breasted Martin. Local name: Golondrina Urbana. Six individuals were collected (CVULA-410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415) at Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m), September 2002, and October 2003. This species has been recorded in Venezuela below 1,200 m (Hilty 2003, Rengifo *et al* 2005a). The-

se data set the highest altitudinal record for the Gray-breasted Martin in the country.

Cinclus leucocephalus White-capped Dipper. Local name: Pájaro de Agua. White-capped Dipper was sighted at San José de Limones (550 m), April 2002. This species has been recorded in Venezuela between 890–3,100m (Hilty 2003, Rengifo *et al* 2005a, Rengifo *et al* 2005b, Ramini-Perazzi *et al* 214). The datum sets the lowest altitudinal record for the White-capped Dipper in the country.

Catharus fuscescens Veery. Local name: Paraulata Cachetona. One individual was found dead near Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m), October 2006. This species has been recorded in Venezuela up to 3,000 m (Verea *et al* 2016). The datum sets the highest altitudinal record for the Veery in the country.

Turdus leucops Pale-eyed Thrush. Local name: Paraulata Ojiblanca (Fig 1d). One individual was mist-netted at Agua Blanca (1,050 m), January 2006. This is the first record for the Pale-eyed Thrush in the western slopes of the Venezuelan Andes.

Nemosia pileata Hooded Tanager. Local name: Frutero de Coronita. Several observations at Bachaqueros (800 m): January and March 2003; and June 2004. This species has been recorded in Venezuela below 600 m (Hilty 2003). These are the first records for the Hooded Tanager in the Venezuelan Andes, and they set its highest altitudinal range level for the country.

Diglossa gloriosa Mérida Flowerpiercer. Local name: Robanéctar Carbonoso. One individual was mist-netted and photographed at Agua Blanca (1,050 m), January 2006. This species has been recorded in Venezuela between 2,500–4,150 m (Hilty 2003, Rengifo *et al* 2005a). The datum sets the lowest altitudinal record for the Mérida Flowerpiercer in the country.

Arremon schlegeli Golden-winged Sparrow. Local name: Maizcuba. Two individuals were sighted, and one was mist-netted, at Chiguara (900 m), August 2005. Mist-netted individual was collected (CVULA-502). This is the first record for the Golden-winged Sparrow in Mérida state.

Atlapetes albofrenatus Moustached Brush-Finch. Local name: Guardabosque Freno Blanco. Moustached Brush-Finches were sighted at Apartaderos (3,200 m) and Mucuchies (2,900 m) in March 2012. This species has been recorded in Venezuela between 2,100–2,500 m (Hilty 2003, Rengifo *et al* 2005a). The datum sets the highest altitudinal record for the species in the country.

Piranga rubra Summer Tanager. Local name: Cardenal Migratorio. Several individuals were found dead around

Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m) between September and October 2005. One individual was collected (CVULA-589). This species has been recorded in Venezuela up to 3,050 m (Hilty 2003). The datum sets the highest altitudinal record for the Summer Tanager in the country.

Piranga olivacea Scarlet Tanager. Local name: Cardenal Migratorio Alinegro. Two individuals were sighted at Agua Blanca (1,050 m), December and January 2003. This species has been recorded in Venezuela below 630 m (Hilty 2003). This is the first record for the Scarlet Tanager in the Venezuelan Andes, and it sets its highest altitudinal range level for the country.

Euphonia trinitatis Trinidad Euphonia. Local name: Curruñatá Saucito. One individual was mist-netted, photographed, and collected (CVULA-605) at Mucumi (900 m), October 2005. This is the first record for the Trinidad Euphonia in the Venezuelan Andes.

Parkesia noveboracensis Northern Waterthrush. Local name: Reinita de los Charcos. Eleven individuals were found dead around Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m) between September and October 2005. One individual was collected (CVULA-467). This species has been recorded in Venezuela between 0–2,200 m (Hilty 2003, Rengifo *et al* 2005a). The datum sets the highest altitudinal record for the Northern Waterthrush in the country.

Parkesia motacilla Louisiana Waterthrush. Local name: Reinita de Luisana. One individual was mist-netted and banded in Agua Blanca (1,050 m), January 2008. Another was also mist-netted and banded in La Mucuy (2,000 m), December 2010. This species has been recorded in Venezuela between 500–1,800 m (Hilty 2003). These are the first records for the Louisiana Waterthrush in the Venezuelan Andes, and they set its highest altitudinal range level for the country.

Mniotilta varia Black-and-white Warbler. Local name: Reinita Trepadora. Five individuals were found dead around Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m) between September and October 2013. One individual was collected (CVULA-541). This species has been recorded in Venezuela below 2,500 m (Hilty 2003). The datum sets the highest altitudinal record for the Black-and-white Warbler in Venezuela.

Geothlypis philadelphia Mourning Warbler. Local name: Reinita Enlutada. Two individuals were found dead around Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m) between September and October 2010. Previously recorded up to 3,000 m (Hilty 2003, Rengifo *et al* 2005 a). The datum sets the highest altitudinal record for the Mourning Warbler in Venezuela.



FIGURE 1. Noteworthy records of four species: a, male and female Torrent Duck *Merganetta armata* sighted at Rio Canaguá (500 m), south Mérida; b, Chachalaca *Ortalis ruficauda* photographed at Chiguara (900 m), western Mérida. The individual belongs to the *O. r. ruficrista* subspecies (white tipped tail); c, Rufous-rumped Tapaculo *Scytalopus griseicollis* captured at Boca de Monte (800 m), Parque Nacional Sierra Nevada, 27 Km south-east of Mérida; d, Pale-eyed Thrush *Turdus leucops* captured at Agua Blanca (1,050 m), 2 km south-east of La Azulita, Mérida. Photos: C. Rengifo and R. Puente

Geothlypis aequinoctialis Masked Yellowthroat. Local name: Reinita Equinoccial. One individual was mist-netted and banded at Los Parchos (1,680 m). This is the first record for the Masked Yellowthroat in the eastern slopes of the Venezuelan Andes.

Setophaga petechia Yellow Warbler. Local name: Canario de Mangle Migratorio. Seven individuals of the migratory *S. p. aestiva* (David *et al* 1994, Curson 2017) were found dead around Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m) between September and October 2005. One individual was collected (CVULA-464). This subspecies has been recorded in Venezuela below 3,000 m (Hilty 2003). The datum sets the highest altitudinal record for the Yellow Warbler in the country.

Setophaga petechia Mangrove Warbler. Local name: Canario de Mangle. Several individuals of the resident *S. p. cienagae* (David *et al* 1994, Curson 2017) were mist-netted at El Quince (87 m), January 2007. This is the first record for the Mangrove Warbler in the Maracaibo basin.

Setophaga virens Black-throated Green Warbler. Local name: Reinita Gorginegra. Three individuals were found dead around Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m) between September and October 2005. One individual was collected (CVULA-472). This species has been recorded between 0–2,200 m (Hilty 2003). The datum sets the highest altitudinal record for the Black-throated Green Warbler in the country.

Setophaga cerulea Cerulean Warbler. Local name: Reinita Cerúlea. Two individuals were found dead around Laguna de Mucubají (3,550 m) between September and October 2005. One individual was collected (CVULA-478). This species has been recorded in Venezuela below 1,900 m (Hilty 2003, Rengifo *et al* 2005b). The datum sets the highest altitudinal record for the Cerulean Warbler in the country.

Setophaga pensylvanica Chesnut-sided Warbler. Local name: Reinita Lados Castaños. One individual was mist-netted and banded at Agua Blanca (1,050 m), January 2006. This species has been recorded in Venezuela below 1,000 m (Phelps and Meyer de Schauensee 1994, Hilty 2003). This is the first record for the Chesnut-sided Warbler in the Venezuelan Andes, and it sets its highest altitudinal range level for the country.

Quiscalus mexicanus Great-tailed Grackle. Local name: Galandra. One individual was sighted, and other mist-netted at San José de Limones (550 m), December 2003. This species has been recorded in Venezuela up to 100 m (Hilty 2003). This is the first record for the Great-tailed Grackle in the Venezuelan Andes, and it sets its highest altitudinal range level for the country.

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