

RESULTS OF THE CARNEGIE MUSEUM OF NATURAL  
HISTORY EXPEDITIONS TO BELIZE.  
III. DISTRIBUTIONAL NOTES ON  
THE BIRDS OF BELIZE

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ABSTRACT

Much new information on the temporal and geographic distributions of the birds of Belize (Central America) has been gathered since the publication of Russell's (1964) monograph. We present here our data on bird distributions gathered during five expeditions to Belize from 1971 to 1985.

INTRODUCTION

Belize (until 1973 the British Crown Colony called British Honduras) has become in recent years an increasingly attractive area of Central America to students of ornithology. Relatively close to the United States, safe, English-speaking, and possessing a wealth of tropical life forms, it is, perhaps surprising that so little has appeared in print concerning the avifauna of the country. This may be explained in part by the high reputation enjoyed by Russell's (1964) excellent monograph on the distribution of the birds of the area. However, considerable additional fieldwork has been conducted in Belize in the past 20 years, yielding much new information on the distribution and status of the birds there.

Among the more important published records of Belizean birds since Russell's (1964) report are the annual Christmas Bird Counts (Young, 1973-1985) which cover two areas (Belize City and Belmopan) near the center of the country. Important additions have also been provided by Barlow et al. (1969, 1970, 1972), Erickson (1977), and Kiff and Kiff (1974). Several publications have reported the observations of British bird watching groups (Jenkins, [1983]; Hallchurch, 1982; Sherrard-Smith, 1982). A minimally annotated checklist (Weyer and Young, 1983) has recently been considerably revised and expanded by Wood et al. (1986). Other publications have dealt primarily with specific ornithological research projects in Belize (Kricher et al., 1984; Miller and Tilson, 1985; Orians, 1983; Stacey, 1981).

Representatives of the Section of Birds, The Carnegie Museum of Natural History, participated in two multidisciplinary expeditions to Belize in March-April 1984 and in June-July 1985. In addition, Leberman visited Belize on three other occasions between 1971 and 1983 in conjunction with fieldwork conducted in association with Manomet Bird Observatory. These five trips resulted in significant collections and observations of the country's avifauna. A primary objective during the 1984 and 1985 expeditions was to collect anatomical materials (skeletons and specimens preserved in alcohol). We preserved 858 specimens of

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191 species in alcohol and 839 specimens of 188 species as skeletons. For most of the skeletal preparations a spread feathered wing was also saved. In addition, we preserved 96 specimens of 73 species as traditional study skins; most of this latter group were either specimens in molt or species unusual to Belize. Also, our records include field observations of more than 350 species.

The purpose of this report is to comment on the distributions of the birds of Belize, especially where our observations supplement or modify Russell's (1964) findings. Thus, the accounts are presented below only for those species for which our information adds to or significantly changes what has already been reported in the literature.

#### GAZETTEER OF LOCALITIES

Russell's (1964) monograph provided an extensive ornithological gazetteer for Belize, many sites of which were visited during the course of our own fieldwork. However, we also visited and collected at a number of sites not listed by him. The locations listed below are mentioned in the individual species comments (with one exception, Cubetas, which is a previously unidentified Russell location). Each site is identified by latitude and longitude and referenced to a location on a major world atlas (National Geographic Society, 1981), to identified sites on both the 1:750,000 Belize map (Directorate of Overseas Surveys, United Kingdom, 1981) and on the 1:50,000 topographic map series (quadrangles numbered 1–42; Directorate of Overseas Surveys, United Kingdom, 1966–1980), and to one of Russell's (1964) numbered gazetteer localities. These maps are referred to in the locality descriptions as NG Atlas, Belize map, Topo map (number), and Russell (number), respectively. Three sites are of camps set up by Carnegie Museum teams away from any named locality; each is identified as a CM camp.

**Altun Ha:** Belize District; 17°45'N, 88°21'W; marked on Topo map 11 and NG Atlas; 2 km W of Cowhead Creek (on old Northern Highway) on Belize map; 14 km S of Maskall (Russell 6); same location as Rockstone Pond (Barlow et al. 1969, 1970). This is an excavated Mayan ruin maintained as an archaeological preserve. The habitat is primarily heavy second growth forest with several large stands of cohune palms (*Orbignya cohune*). The area around the main temples is kept cleared of heavy vegetation. A small pond (cenote) surrounded by forest is situated near the excavated sites.

**Big Fall:** Toledo District; 16°15'N, 88°52'W; indicated on Belize map and Topo maps 38 and 42; 18 km N, 8 km W of Punta Gorda (NG Atlas); village at the crossing of the Southern Highway over the Rio Grande. Our collecting locality was 3 km SE of the bridge and on the south side of the river. This site is gallery forest along the river with mixed cultivation, milpa, huamil, and second growth forest away from the flood plain. This site should not be confused with another important birding locality, Big Falls, Belize District, a rice plantation 40 km W of Belize City on the Belize River, referred to by Barlow et al. (1972); Hallchurch (1982); Jenkins [1983], and others.

**Chaa Creek:** Cayo District; 17°07'N, 89°04'W; a private resort 5 km S of San Ignacio on the western bank of the Macal River (=Eastern Branch of the Belize River [Belize map]). The area is very hilly and much of the land has been cleared for pasture. A large stand of cohune palms is located just west of the resort property. Uncleared land is primarily young second growth forest.

**Chan Laguna:** Orange Walk District; 18°07'N, 88°29'W; a small fresh water lagoon and cattail marsh marked on Topo map 5; 3 km S, 1 km E of San Estevan (Belize map); 7 km E, 3 km N of Orange Walk Town (NG Atlas, Russell 2). The area was originally scrub forest but has largely been cleared for the growth of sugar cane.

**CM Bladen Camp:** Toledo District; 16°33'N, 88°43'W; point at which the Bladen Branch of the Monkey River exits the foothills of the Maya Mountains; 2 km NW of Chun Bank (Topo map 35); 12 km N, 1 km E of Medina Bank (Belize map); 26 km W, 22 km N of Monkey River Town (NG Atlas, Russell 85). This point is in the ecotone between the low savanna and the steep forested foothills. The elevation of the river at this site is approximately 40 m with the immediately adjacent hills rising to 140 m. Most of the forest is high second growth with a few very large trees remaining, especially around the site of an old sawmill.

- CM Chiquibul Camp:** Cayo District; 16°36'N, 89°00'W; elevation approximately 600 m; point where a new logging road south from Millionario and Grano de Oro Camp crosses the Chiquibul River; close to spot marked Moses Head Camp on Topo map 33; 12 km E, 11 km S of Round Hole Bank (Belize map); 60 km S, 5 km E of San Ignacio (NG Atlas); 16 km S, 1.5 km W of Millionario (Russell 73). The camp was in high forest with many large trees although much of the more valuable timber had selectively been removed.
- CM Columbia Forest Camp:** Toledo District; 16°17'N, 89°01'W; elevation approximately 140 m; 1 km N of site marked Forestry Camp on Topo map 37; 1.5 km E, 0.5 km S of Jimmy Cut (Belize map); 5 km N of San Antonio (NG Atlas); 7 km W, 2 km N of San Pedro Columbia (Russell 86). This area was originally high forest (well logged) but is now milpa and huamil (except for the steepest and rockiest hillsides) for a distance of 1–2 km from the main roads. Our collecting localities were largely at the edges of the huamil and into the forest.
- Coco Plum Cay:** Stann Creek District; 16°53'N, 88°07'W; marked on Belize map; 11 km E, 9 km S of Stann Creek Town [Dangriga] (NG Atlas); 4 km W of Tobacco Cay (Russell 60).
- Columbia Forest Station:** Toledo District; 16°17'N, 89°01'W; marked Forestry Camp on Topo map 37; 1 km S of CM Columbia Forest Camp (q.v.). Also called Salamanca, this site is now a military training camp.
- Cubetas:** Cayo District; 16°47'N, 89°02'W; marked on Topo map 28; 3 km N of Millionario (Russell 73). Mentioned by Russell in his text but not included in his gazetteer.
- The Dump:** Toledo District; 16°14'N, 88°57'W; marked on Topo map 42; 1 km WNW of junction of Southern Highway and Punta Gorda-San Antonio Road (Belize map, NG Atlas); considerable open marsh and wet meadow area traversed by the Punta Gorda-San Antonio Road (large quantities of fill had to be dumped there to make the road, hence the name). This has become a frequent stop for birdwatchers.
- Garbutts Cay:** Stann Creek District; 16°59'N, 88°05'W; marked on Belize map; 14 km E of Stann Creek Town [Dangriga] (NG Atlas); 13 km N of Tobacco Cay (Russell 60).
- Guanacaste Park:** Cayo District; 17°16'N, 88°46'W; park on the banks of the Belize River and Roaring Creek at the junction of the Western and Hummingbird highways; just east of the town of Roaring Creek. The park is mostly second growth forest.
- Jimmy Cut:** Toledo District; 16°17'N, 89°02'W; marked on Topo map 37 and Belize map; 6 km N, 1 km W of San Antonio (NG Atlas). Formerly high forest, all areas near roads are now milpa.
- Las Lomitas:** Toledo District; 16°29'N, 88°35'W; fire lookout station 3 km S, 2 km W of junction of the Southern Highway and the Swasey Branch of the Monkey River (Belize map); 17 km NW of Monkey River Town (NG Atlas, Russell 85). This is an area of low hills covered in pine forest—pine savanna with dense brush along the waterways.
- Milepost 24–30:** Western Highway: Belize District; 17°22'N, 88°32'W (Milepost 30); 24 km E, 12 km N of Belmopan. An old stretch of the original Western Highway parallels the present highway to the south between these mileposts; this old road is passable for most of its length and is used as access for several properties. The area between the old and new highways is mostly pine savanna and includes a fairly extensive grass and sedge marsh near Milepost 24. Our collecting sites were primarily between the old and new highways.
- Salamanca:** Toledo District; Alternate name for Columbia Forest Station (q.v.).
- Union Camp:** Toledo District; 16°24'N, 89°09'W; elevation 720 m; marked on Topo map 37; just SW of Little Quartz Ridge (Belize map); 16 km N, 11 km W of San Antonio (NG Atlas). This camp was visited by the Royal Air Force group (see below; Jenkins, [1983]).

### SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Within each of the accounts, localities are either as described above or are keyed to identified sites in the National Geographic Atlas (National Geographic Society, 1981), or to sites on the 1:750,000 Belize map (Directorate of Overseas Surveys, United Kingdom, 1981).

Three organized groups are mentioned in several of the following accounts: The [British] Royal Air Force Ornithological Society mounted an expedition to Belize from February through April 1981; their records, summarized in an extensive report (Jenkins, [1983]), are credited to the RAFOS. Also included in this report is a summary of mist-netting at several locations from April through June 1979. The [British] Army Bird Watching Society mounted an expedition to Belize during February and March 1982, and published their records in a journal of very limited

distribution (Hallchurch, 1982); their sightings are credited to the ABWS. Several groups connected with Manomet Bird Observatory have participated in banding operations in Belize; their observations are credited to the Manomet group or to Mrs. Erma J. Fisk who organized the first two trips.

The classification and nomenclature used in this report follow the sixth edition of the *Check-list of North American birds* and supplement (American Ornithologists' Union, 1983, 1985). Specimens listed are in the collections of The Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The state of preparation of a specimen may be inferred from the catalog number given: A = complete specimen stored in alcohol; P = study skin; S = skeleton, usually with an associated spread feathered wing.

#### TINAMOUS—TINAMIDAE

##### Thicket Tinamou, *Crypturellus cinnamomeus*

One seen at close range in pine savanna habitat in Orange Walk District near the new Northern Highway just north of the Belize District line, 1 July 1985. Very few records of Thicket Tinamou exist for Belize. Russell (1964) listed the species as uncommon near Hill Bank (approximately 45 km SW of the present locality) in dense second growth forest and rare near Gallon Jug, also in forest. No other published records are available; the status listed in Wood et al. (1986) reflects Weyer's belief that the species occurs (very rarely) in the southern hardwood forests of the country and in the Mountain Pine Ridge.

#### GREBES—PODICIPEDIDAE

##### Pied-billed Grebe, *Podilymbus podiceps*

One seen on Crooked Tree Lagoon, 11 June 1985; one seen on Chan Laguna, 27 June 1985. Although Pied-billed Grebes are common winter residents throughout much of Belize, few summer records exist. Russell (1964) listed only two, both from May. The present records further support the belief that this species breeds in Belize. Monroe (1968) reported breeding of Pied-billed Grebes in Honduras.

#### CORMORANTS—PHALACROCORACIDAE

##### Olivaceous Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax olivaceus*

Common throughout Belize except on the cays. Records include: one collected (CM-A3837) of three seen on the Sibun River just north of the Hummingbird Highway bridge, 20 March 1984; two seen repeatedly near the CM Bladen Camp, 3–7 April 1984; two seen 5 km south of San Ignacio on the Macal River (Eastern Branch, Belize River), 16 June 1985; two seen repeatedly near the Guacamallo Bridge on the Macal River, 23–24 June 1985. Russell (1964) lists relatively few records for the country. The RAFOS also reported these birds to be common, and saw large numbers (50) on Cay Chapel.

#### ANHINGAS—ANHINGIDAE

##### Anhinga, *Anhinga anhinga*

One seen flying over savanna at Milepost 29, Western Highway, 19 February 1983. One seen repeatedly at Chan Laguna, 28–30 June 1985. Russell (1964) lists few records for Belize. The RAFOS recorded up to 30 at Northern Lagoon and

many elsewhere; the ABWS recorded four to six daily at Big Falls and the Airport Camp.

#### FRIGATEBIRDS—FREGATIDAE

##### Magnificent Frigatebird, *Fregata magnificens*

A very common species along the coast and on the cays, these birds occasionally stray inland: one was seen at Milepost 29 on the Western Highway, 4 July 1985.

#### BITTERNS AND HERONS—ARDEIDAE

##### Pinnated Bittern, *Botaurus pinnatus*

Breeding male collected (CM-S8655; testes 25 × 12 mm) at Milepost 21 on the Western Highway, 14 March 1984; non-breeding male found dead by Dora Weyer (CM-S10296; flat skin and skeleton; testes 9.2 mm), Milepost 14 on the Northern Highway, 21 April 1985; two seen several times at Milepost 24 on the Western Highway, July 1985. All records were from open savanna, especially marshy areas. This species is cryptic and difficult to observe. Wood flushed the specimen collected in 1984 from a distance of less than 10 m; it was unseen until it flew. In addition, these birds appear to be restricted to a habitat not usually frequented by birders. This, perhaps, accounts for the lack of published records for the country: Russell (1964) did not list the species (although he mentions Yucatan records). The first record and specimen for Belize was one found by Dora Weyer in 1970, also in savanna habitat (Barlow et al. 1972). Two were also seen during the 1982 Belize City Christmas Bird Count (Young 1973–1985). The bitterns seen by the ABWS (1982) at Big Falls (as many as five in one day) were probably this species. We feel certain that Pinnated Bitterns are much less rare than the records indicate; additional fieldwork is needed in wet savanna habitats.

##### American Bittern, *Botaurus lentiginosus*

One wing salvaged by Meg Price Craig (CM-P144864) from a bird shot by a local hunter near Mussel Creek (approx. 25 km WNW Belize City) in early February 1972. This is the first specimen record of this bittern for Belize; Russell (1964) listed two sight records. The bittern reported by the ABWS (1982) from The Dump may also have been this species.

##### Least Bittern, *Ixobrychus exilis*

Female collected (CM-S10235; largest ovum 6 mm) at Chan Laguna, 29 June 1985. Russell (1964) listed only two records: a transient collected on Half Moon Cay and a winter sight record for Hill Bank. Both the ABWS and RAFOS recorded at least three within 25 km of Belize City. Weyer (personal communication) has observed this species several times in fresh water lagoons along the coastal plain. We consider it to be an uncommon and local permanent resident with a small augmentation of winter visitors from the north.

##### Bare-throated Tiger-Heron, *Tigrisoma mexicanum*

Common in coastal pine ridges, especially in the wetter areas, but somewhat secretive. Among our records is one of four birds repeatedly seen in a marsh near Milepost 24 of the Western Highway, 26 June to 4 July 1985. This species is listed as uncommon in northern forests by Russell (1964). Between one and 10 have been seen on all but two Belize City Christmas Counts (Young, 1973–1985).

### Great Blue Heron, *Ardea herodias*

One found dead (CM-S8644) in the Belize River near Burrell Boom, 5 March 1984, is the first specimen of the species for Belize. One seen at Crooked Tree Lagoon, 11 June 1985; one seen at Milepost 24 of the Western Highway, 26 June 1985. No previous published records exist for the period June through October, although Weyer (personal communication) believes that a few breed each year on the northern cays. Griscom (1926) found the species breeding on the Culebra Keys, Quintana Roo, in January 1925.

### Great Egret, *Casmerodius albus*

An estimated 1200 seen at Crooked Tree Lagoon, 11 June 1985. Russell (1964) reported no documentation of breeding, but the present record strongly suggests that these birds nest in the country. Breeding is also to be expected since it has been reported from surrounding countries (Monroe, 1968; Paynter 1955).

### Snowy Egret, *Egretta thula*

An estimated 100 seen at Crooked Tree Lagoon, 11 June 1985. Russell (1964) listed no records for June.

### Little Blue Heron, *Egretta caerulea*

An estimated 250 seen at Crooked Tree Lagoon, 11 June 1985. Russell (1964) listed no records for the period 15 May–19 July. Weyer (personal communication) has recorded this species breeding on the northern cays.

### Tricolored Heron, *Egretta tricolor*

Three seen at Crooked Tree Lagoon, 11 June 1985. Russell (1964) listed no records for June or July.

### Reddish Egret, *Egretta rufescens*

Two seen at Crooked Tree Lagoon, 11 June 1985. Russell (1964) listed only one sight record and Kiff and Kiff (1974) reported the first specimen for the country. The ABWS (1982) recorded two on Cay Chapel. Weyer (personal communication) has recorded this species breeding on two northern cays.

### Cattle Egret, *Bubulcus ibis*

Abundant throughout the country in suitable habitat. Russell (1964) listed only a few records and thought that the species had only just become established as breeding birds at that time.

### Green-backed Heron, *Butorides striatus*

An estimated 25 seen at Crooked Tree Lagoon, 11 June 1985. Russell (1964) listed no June or July records and knew of no breeding records although he believed it to nest.

### Black-crowned Night-Heron, *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Three seen along Black Creek (near Crooked Tree Lagoon), 5 March 1984; two seen at Sand Hill, Belize District, 9 March 1984. Russell (1964) considered this species to be a rare transient and winter resident and listed only four records. However, we consider the bird to be fairly common; Young (1973–1985) recorded the species in most years for the Belize City Christmas Count (2–13 individuals per count) and both the RAFOS and ABWS encountered several birds. Weyer

(personal communication) believes some individuals may remain throughout the summer months.

#### IBISES AND SPOONBILLS—THRESKIORNITHIDAE

##### White Ibis, *Eudocimus albus*

Eight seen near Sand Hill, Belize District, 17–19 March 1984; 15 seen just west of Dangriga Airport, 21 March 1984; 200 seen at Crooked Tree Lagoon, 11 June 1985; small numbers seen repeatedly southwest of Belize City flying over the mangroves, 11 June–8 July 1985. Russell (1964) stated that there were no recent records of White Ibis for Belize. However, Erickson (1977) found 10 near Dangriga on 26 December 1976 and Young (1973–1985) listed the species for the first three Belize City Christmas Counts. Our records, those of the RAFOS and ABWS (up to 100 individuals per day), and records from more recent Christmas Counts (244 recorded on the 1983 Belize City count), suggest that these birds are increasing in numbers in Belize.

##### Roseate Spoonbill, *Ajaia ajaja*

Fifteen seen at Crooked Tree Lagoon, 11 June 1985. Russell (1964) listed only two records for the country. Young (1973–1985) recorded one bird on the Belize City Christmas Count in 1983 and again in 1984. The RAFOS recorded three just outside of Belize City. These birds are probably more common than the records indicate, but may be largely confined to the northeastern part of the country.

#### SWANS, GEESE AND DUCKS—ANATIDAE

##### Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, *Dendrocygna autumnalis*

Six seen at Crooked Tree Lagoon, 11 June 1985; two seen Milepost 29 on the Western Highway, 27 June 1985; two seen at Chan Laguna, 30 June 1985. Russell (1964) considered this species rare in Belize but remarked that it seemed to be increasing. Subsequent published notes (Barlow et al., 1969, 1972) and conversations with Dora Weyer and others in Belize, as well as our own observations, suggest that the species is now relatively common in the northern half of the country.

#### KITES, EAGLES, HAWKS AND ALLIES—ACCIPITRIDAE

##### Hook-billed Kite, *Chondrohierax uncinatus*

One seen each date at Columbia Forest Station, 5 December 1971 (Leberman and K. S. Anderson), 25 March 1972 (Leberman). Russell (1964) listed only two records for this rare hawk, neither from the southern forests. The only other published records are from the Belmopan Christmas Counts (Young, 1973–1985): one seen in 1982 and one in 1984.

##### Double-toothed Kite, *Harpagus bidentatus*

One seen along Hummingbird Highway northwest of Caves Branch, 23 February 1983 (Leberman and Manomet group); male collected (CM-S8722; testes  $8 \times 4.5$  mm) 1 km north of Columbia Forest Station, 22 March 1984. The only other published records for this species in Belize are one in Russell (1964) and two from the Belmopan Christmas Counts (Young, 1973–1985): one seen in 1978 and three in 1980.




Solitary Eagle, *Harpyhaliaetus solitarius*

One seen soaring above Guacamallo Bridge, 24 June 1985. Russell (1964) does not list this species for Belize. Weyer (personal communication) indicates that the bird we saw is probably one of a pair that has nested near Guacamallo Bridge for the past several years.

Broad-winged Hawk, *Buteo platypterus*

One captured, photographed (photo on file at CM) and released along the Hummingbird Highway south of Belmopan, 24 February 1983 (Leberman and Manomet group). The only other published records for this very rare transient (and winter visitant?) are the specimen (taken 22 October 1906) mentioned by Russell (1964) and one bird seen on the 1973 Belize City Christmas Bird Count (Young, 1973–1985). Broad-wings should be looked for during the fall since they migrate through Central America in large numbers (Monroe, 1968).



Swainson's Hawk, *Buteo swainsonii*


One seen at Caves Creek, 23 February 1983 (Leberman and Manomet group); one seen soaring over CM Columbia Forest Camp each day, 23–24 March 1984; one seen along Hummingbird Highway, 6 April 1984 (Manomet group). This species is not listed for Belize by Russell (1964), but has been frequently recorded (1–4 individuals) on both Belizean Christmas Counts (Young, 1973–1985).

Red-tailed Hawk, *Buteo jamaicensis*

One immature seen flying at close range just northwest of Belize City, 16 March 1984. Russell (1964) listed only Mountain Pine Ridge records. The only other published record is of one seen on the 1981 Belmopan Christmas Count (Young, 1973–1985).

Harpy Eagle, *Harpia harpyja*

One immature seen in high forest northwest of Columbia Forest Station near Jimmy Cut by Leberman and K. S. Anderson, 28 March 1972. The only other published record is from Gallon Jug (Russell, 1964).



Black-and-white Hawk-Eagle, *Spizastur melanoleucus*

One seen perched at Beaver Dam Creek (near Milepost 38 of the Western Highway, Cayo District), 25 March 1984 (Manomet group); one seen at the CM Bladen Camp, 3 April 1984; one seen at Milepost 29 of the Western Highway, 26 June 1985; one seen at Milepost 24 of the Western Highway, 3 July 1985 (the latter two records are likely of the same bird). This rare hawk seems to prefer the forest edge. Russell (1964) lists only three records but the species has also been seen three times on the Belmopan Christmas Counts (Young, 1973–1985).



Black Hawk-Eagle, *Spizaetus tyrannus*

One seen flying over Altun Ha, 18 March 1984. Black Hawk-Eagles are the most common of the three hawk-eagles in Belize despite the single record of Russell (1964); one or two individuals have been recorded on most of the Belmopan Christmas Counts and the species has also been recorded twice on the Belize City Christmas Count (Young, 1973–1985). Erickson (1977) saw one near Belmopan and the RAFOS recorded two in the Columbia Forest region. The present sighting is farther north than other published records for Belize; we think this species could be encountered anywhere in the forested regions of the country.



### Ornate Hawk-Eagle, *Spizaetus ornatus*

One seen at Milepost 30 of the Western Highway, 19 February 1983 (Leberman); one seen over the Sibun River southeast of Milepost 36 on the Western Highway, 5 July 1985. Although Russell (1964) considered this species as merely uncommon we think the birds quite rare and even less frequent than Black Hawk-Eagles. Ornate Hawk-Eagles have been recorded only once (Belmopan, 1984) on the Christmas Counts (Young, 1973–1985). The present records support Russell's observation that they occasionally forage in pine savannas, away from hardwood forests.

### CARACARAS AND FALCONS—FALCONIDAE

#### Barred Forest-Falcon, *Micrastur ruficollis*

One seen CM Bladen Camp, 7 April 1984; breeding adult female (CM-S9081; ovaries  $14 \times 7$ ,  $16 \times 8$  mm) collected near Rio Frio Cave, Augustine, Cayo District, 16 April 1984; immature molting into adult plumage captured, photographed and released at Guacamallo Bridge, 24 June 1985; one seen near San Estevan, Orange Walk District, 29 June 1985. This secretive falcon is undoubtedly more common than the few published records in Russell (1964) indicate. Most of our encounters with the species occurred when the falcon was attracted by struggling mist-netted birds.

#### Aplomado Falcon, *Falco femoralis*

At least five individuals seen hunting through smoke of a pine savanna fire near Milepost 29 of the Western Highway, 31 March 1984 (Manomet group); one seen at Las Lomitas, 9 April 1984; two seen in pine forest 4 km N and 1.5 km W of Melinda Forest Station, 19 June 1985. We consider this species to be more common in Belize than reported by Russell (1964). Young (1973–1985) has reported sightings for five of the Belize City Christmas Counts.

#### Orange-breasted Falcon, *Falco deiroleucus*

Adult and two immatures seen at close range sitting together in a dead snag near our CM Chiquibul Camp, 21 June 1985. Haney (1983) recorded this rare falcon not far north of our site and several other observations of these birds have been made in the Chiquibul in the past few years (Weyer, personal communication); the species apparently breeds in this area. The RAFOS encountered one individual at Lubaantun, the Maya ruin near San Pedro Columbia, 4 April 1981. These are the only published records of the species from Belize.

### RAILS, GALLINULES AND COOTS—RALLIDAE

#### Common Moorhen, *Gallinula chloropus*

Two seen at Crooked Tree Lagoon, 25 February 1983 (RCL and Manomet group); 20 seen at Sand Hill, Belize District, 9 March 1984; two seen on the New River at Orange Walk Town, 30 June 1985. Russell (1964) reports only a few sight records for this species. However, Barlow et al. (1969) reported three specimens taken from Rockstone Pond in April, Erickson (1977) noted the species between Belize City and Orange Walk in December, and Young (1973–1985) recorded them (sometimes in considerable numbers) on the Belize City and Belmopan Christmas Counts. The present summer record suggests these birds occur throughout the year, as they do in Honduras (Monroe, 1968).

## PLOVERS—CHARADRIIDAE

Black-bellied Plover, *Pluvialis squatarola*

Two or three seen on Tobacco and Coco Plum cays, 11–12 March 1984. Russell (1964) lists only three records for the country but Young (1973–1985) records the species on all Belize City Christmas Counts except two and the RAFOS and ABWS found them at Belize City, Dangriga and Cay Chapel. This species is probably common on the cays during winter and migration periods.

Wilson's Plover, *Charadrius wilsonia*

Two seen and photographed on Garbutts Cay, 10 March 1984. Russell (1964) lists very few records but Barlow et al. (1969) cite a number of additional records and specimens. The RAFOS encountered single birds at Dangriga and Punta Gorda, and the ABWS encountered 40 on Cay Chapel.

## STILTS AND AVOCETS—RECURVIROSTRIDAE

Black-necked Stilt, *Himantopus mexicanus*

Approximately 80 seen at Crooked Tree Lagoon, 27 March 1984 (Manomet group); six seen at Crooked Tree Lagoon, 11 June 1985. Russell (1964) listed only three records for Belize, all from spring, and Young (1973–1985) recorded the species on three Belize City Christmas Counts. The RAFOS and ABWS recorded considerable numbers (up to 40) in the Belize City area. Weyer (personal communication) reports that the species has been found nesting within the country in recent years.

## SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES—SCOLOPACIDAE

Greater Yellowlegs, *Tringa melanoleuca*

Two seen at Crooked Tree Lagoon, 11 June 1985. Russell (1964) listed very few records for this species, all from the period August–March. It was unrecorded on the Christmas Counts until December 1983 when 15 were seen in Belize City (Young, 1973–1985). The RAFOS and ABWS recorded the species from Big Falls Ranch.

Lesser Yellowlegs, *Tringa flavipes*

Four seen at Sand Hill, 9 March 1984. Russell (1964) listed very few records for this species (all from the period February–March) and it has been recorded only four times on the Christmas Counts (Young, 1973–1985). However, the RAFOS and ABWS encountered as many as 60 at a time at Big Falls Ranch.

Willet, *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*

Four seen at Dangriga, 20 March 1984. Russell (1964) listed very few records for this species and it has been recorded only twice on the Christmas Counts (Young, 1973–1985). Erickson (1977) noted it at Belize City and Dangriga in December. The RAFOS and ABWS recorded small numbers at many coastal localities and on Cay Chapel.

Upland Sandpiper, *Bartramia longicauda*

Female collected (CM-P162522; ovary  $9 \times 5$  mm) of two of this species seen in dry savanna just south of the CM Bladen Camp. This is the first published record in Belize since 1889 (Russell, 1964) but small numbers undoubtedly stop each year during migration; additional fieldwork is needed in grassland areas.



Long-billed Curlew, *Numenius americanus*

One seen in flight (cinnamon wing linings and enormous bill clearly visible) at Dangriga, 21 March 1984. This is the first published record for Belize but the species has been noted occasionally in the past (Weyer, personal communication). Belize is near the southern limit of the winter range of this species (American Ornithologists' Union, 1983).

SKUAS, GULLS, TERNS AND SKIMMERS—LARIDAE

Caspian Tern, *Sterna caspia*

Five seen at Crooked Tree Lagoon, 11 June 1985. Russell (1964) listed only three records and Erickson (1977) added a fourth (at Dangriga) but Young (1973–1985) recorded the species on every Belize City Christmas Count (as many as 32 individuals) except two.

Sandwich Tern, *Sterna sandvicensis*

Ten seen just north of Belize City, 9 March 1984. Erickson (1977) summarized the few records for Belize to that time. The RAFOS and ABWS encountered this species frequently along the coast and considered it common.

PIGEONS AND DOVES—COLUMBIDAE

Red-billed Pigeon, *Columba flavirostris*

Two to five seen at Chaa Creek each day, 20–23 April 1984; two collected (CM-A4458, 4485) at Chaa Creek, 21 and 23 April 1984; four collected (male, 2 females, immature female; CM-S10051, 10052, 10053, 10054) of at least 40 seen at Chaa Creek, 16 June 1985. Russell (1964) listed only one record (Corozal). Barlow et al. (1970) listed several records from Rockstone Pond and Erickson (1977) noted one near Dangriga. This species has been recorded on most Belize City Christmas Counts and twice on the Belmopan count (Young, 1973–1985). The RAFOS also recorded several individuals at Guacamallo Bridge. Despite the scarcity of records from the western part of the country, it was the commonest pigeon in the Chaa Creek area. This species deserves more attention in Belize since it is considered rare elsewhere on the Caribbean slope of Central America (American Ornithologists' Union, 1983).

White-tipped Dove, *Leptotila verreauxi*

Common in the northern half of the country; specimens from Milepost 30 of the Western Highway, Chaa Creek, Chan Laguna. Russell (1964) listed only two records and Barlow et al. (1969) reported on three specimens from the Rockstone Pond area. Young (1973–1985), however, has noted the species on every Christmas Count (both Belize City and Belmopan) except one. This dove appears to be largely absent from the southern half of Belize, the only record being one sighting by the RAFOS in the Columbia Forest area (Aguacate).

CUCKOOS AND ALLIES—CUCULIDAE

Striped Cuckoo, *Tapera naevia*

One seen near San Antonio, Toledo District, 4 December 1971 (Leberman, K. S. Anderson, D. Weyer); one seen near Milepost 29 of the Western Highway, 17 and 27 February 1983 (Leberman and Manomet group); one seen near Milepost 33 of the Western Highway, 21 March 1984 (Manomet group). Russell (1964)

noted only two records of this very shy species. Young (1973–1985) listed the species on five of the Belmopan Christmas Counts.

#### TYPICAL OWLS—STRIGIDAE

##### Vermiculated Screech-Owl, *Otus guatemalae*

Two nestlings brought by a local Indian to Columbia Forest Station, March 28 1972, and subsequently released; one heard at CM Columbia Forest Camp, 26 March 1984; rufous phase male found dead on road (CM-P162528; testes  $5 \times 3$  mm) at Milepost 36 of the Western Highway (Cayo District), 4 April 1984. This latter bird is the first specimen of the species for Belize. The only other published records are two sightings noted by Russell (1964), one bird reported on the 1981 Belmopan Christmas Count (Young, 1973–1985), individual birds heard by the RAFOS north of Guacamallo Bridge and in the Columbia Forest, and two birds mist-netted in the Columbia Forest (Jenkins, [1983]).

##### Least Pygmy-Owl, *Glaucidium minutissimum*

Immature found dead (CM-P162527; ovary(?)  $3 \times 2$  mm) in Belmopan, 23 March 1984; one mist-netted and photographed east of the Sibun River (in Belize District) southeast of Milepost 35 on the Western Highway, 14 April 1984 (Manomet group); two to four seen each day at Chaa Creek, 20–23 April 1984: two of these were seen copulating near their presumed nest hole on 21 April. Russell (1964) listed only one other record for the country.

##### Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl, *Glaucidium brasilianum*

Non-breeding male (testes  $3 \times 2$  mm; CM-S10251) collected in Orange Walk District near the new Northern Highway 0.5 km N of the Belize District line, 1 July 1985. Russell (1964) listed few records outside of the Mountain Pine Ridge but this species is widespread and fairly common in Belize.

##### Stygian Owl, *Asio stygius*

One photographed by Ford Young at Milepost 15 of the Western Highway (near Hattieville), 8 November 1971 (*vide* K. S. Anderson); one seen at Milepost 30 of the Western Highway, March 1983 (Manomet group); one found dead on road (CM-A5210) by Dora Weyer at Milepost 30 of the Western Highway, 10 March 1986. Only one published record exists for Belize, a bird collected in the Mountain Pine Ridge (Russell, 1964).

#### SWIFTS—APODIDAE

##### Chimney Swift, *Chaetura pelagica*

Female (CM-P162504; ovary  $3.5 \times 4$  mm) collected from a flock of approximately 100 swifts 3 km SE of Big Fall, Toledo District, 29 March 1984. This and similar flocks seen in the same area on 30 March and 1 April contained both Chimney and Vaux's (*C. vauxi*) swifts (as well as two Lesser Swallow-tailed Swifts); on 30 March at least six Chimney Swifts were present. The size difference between the two *Chaetura* species was quite obvious. Russell (1964) doubted the validity of the two alleged records of Chimney Swift for Belize. However, the Chimney Swift clearly migrates through the country, at least occasionally. Young (1973–1985) has recorded a few individuals in the past several years on Christmas Counts. Monroe (1968) considered this species an uncommon to common fall migrant and common spring migrant in the coastal lowlands of Honduras.

Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift, *Panyptila cayennensis*

Two seen in the large flock of swifts noted above on 30 March. Russell (1964) considered the species regular and probably nesting at Gallon Jug, but there are few records from elsewhere in Belize.

HUMMINGBIRDS—TROCHILIDAE

Band-tailed Barbthroat, *Threnetes ruckeri*

Two mist-netted Columbia Forest Station, 6, 14 December 1971 (E. J. Fisk); male (CM-P162501, testes  $2.5 \times 2$  mm) collected at CM Columbia Forest Camp, 24 March 1984; male and two of unknown sex (CM-S8787, testes 2.2 mm; CM-A3956; CM-A3977) collected at CM Columbia Forest Camp, 25 March 1984; male (CM-P162506, testes  $2.5 \times 2$  mm) collected 3 km SE of Big Fall, Toledo District, 29 March 1984. Barlow et al. (1972) reported the first record of this species for the country. The RAFOS and the ABWS mist-netted several in the Columbia Forest area. Our experience indicates that this species is not particularly rare in the southernmost parts of Belize.

Scaly-breasted Hummingbird, *Phaeochroa cuvierii*

One mist-netted at the Columbia Forest Station, 9 December 1971 (E. J. Fisk et al.); one collected (CM-A3905) at CM Columbia Forest Camp, 23 March 1984; one collected (CM-A4126) 3 km SE of Big Fall, Toledo District, 31 March 1984; two collected (CM-S8963 female, ovary  $4 \times 4$  mm; CM-A4971) at the CM Bladen Camp, 4, 5 April 1984. Russell (1964) reported only a few records of this inconspicuous hummingbird, all from the northern half of the country. However, the RAFOS and ABWS each mist-netted one in the Columbia Forest area. The present records indicate that it is at least as common in the south and perhaps more so than in the northern forests.

Wedge-tailed Sabrewing, *Campylopterus curvipennis*

One non-breeding male collected (CM-S8998, testes  $<1$  mm) of several seen at the CM Bladen Camp, 6 April 1984; one collected (CM-A4971) of five seen 6 km S, 6 km W of Progreso, Corozal District, 30 June 1985; several others collected at localities covered by Russell (1964). Russell was the first ornithologist to record this species in Belize; he considered it "moderately common" but local, whereas we found it nearly everywhere there was hardwood forest. However, despite their concentration on hummingbirds, neither the RAFOS nor the ABWS encountered this species. Hutson and Lyal mist-netted seven in the Columbia Forest area (Jenkins, [1983]).

Crowned Woodnymph, *Thalurania colombica*

Three collected (CM-P162502, testes  $<1$  mm; CM-S8777, male, testes  $2 \times 1.5$  mm; CM-A3951) at CM Columbia Forest Camp, 24, 25 March 1984. Russell (1964) reported only one record for Belize, a male taken near our locality. The RAFOS and ABWS each mist-netted one individual in the Columbia Forest area and Hutson and Lyal also netted two individuals there (Jenkins, [1983]).

Buff-bellied Hummingbird, *Amazilia yucatanensis*

Male collected (CM-P166042, testes  $3 \times 1.5$  mm) 3 km N, 1 km W of the Melinda Forest Station; male collected (CM-S10269, testes  $1 \times 0.5$  mm) 1.5 km east of Milepost 29 of the Western Highway; one seen at close range near Chan

Laguna, 30 June 1985. Russell (1964) listed only a few records, all from the lowland pine ridges. Our localities are all lowland but only one was in pines (Milepost 29 of the Western Highway). The Melinda Forest Station bird was taken in an island of broadleaf forest along Big Creek, surrounded by pine ridge. The Chan Laguna sighting was from northern hardwood forest remnants in an area dominated by sugar cane plantations.

Stripe-tailed Hummingbird, *Eupherusa eximia*

Female collected (CM-P144851) by D. Weyer, E. J. Fisk et al. at the Columbia Forest Station, 6 December 1971. This species was previously recorded only from the Cockscomb Mountains (Russell, 1964) and from Union Camp by the RAFOS; the present record is the first for the lowlands of Belize.

TROGONS—TROGONIDAE

Collared Trogon, *Trogon collaris*

Male captured, photographed and released near Rio Frio Cave, Augustine, Cayo District, 15 April 1984; at least three males and one female seen and heard near the CM Chiquibul Camp, 21 June 1985. Russell (1964) listed only five records for the country; the RAFOS added one record from the Columbia Forest area (Aguacate). This species appears to be quite rare north of the Mountain Pine Ridge and southeast of the Maya Mountains. However, in the Chiquibul it appears to be somewhat more common.

MOTMOTS—MOMOTIDAE

Tody Motmot, *Hylomanes momotula*

One captured, photographed and released of two seen repeatedly 1 km S of the Guacamallo Bridge, 23, 24 June 1985. Russell (1964) listed few records for Belize of this uncommon bird.

TOUCANS—RAMPHASTIDAE

Emerald Toucanet, *Aulacorhynchus prasinus*

Female collected (CM-P166050, ovary 11 × 7 mm) 12 km S, 1 km W of Millionario, 22 June 1985. Russell (1964) considered this species very uncommon. The largest populations may occur in the Chiquibul region.

WOODPECKERS—PICIDAE

Red-vented Woodpecker, *Melanerpes pygmaeus*

One adult and one immature male collected (CM-P166064, testes 5 × 3 mm; CM-P166065, testes 1.5 × 1 mm) of at least five seen west of Chan Laguna, 29 June 1985. Russell (1964) listed only two records, but the species has subsequently been reported by Barlow et al. (1969), Erickson (1977), and on two recent Belize City Christmas Counts (Young, 1973–1985). All encounters have been in the coastal lowland forests from Belize City north. We believe this species to be more common than the published records indicate, although restricted to the northeastern portion of the country, an area that has received relatively little ornithological investigation. The birds we encountered were in remnant patches of hardwood forest surrounded by sugar cane plantations.

Ladder-backed Woodpecker, *Picoides scalaris*

Female collected (CM-A3860) at Las Lomitas, 21 March 1984; one seen at close range in Orange Walk District 0.5 km N of the Belize District line near the new Northern Highway, 1 July 1985. The March record lies well within the species' range as described by Russell (1964). However, the July record considerably extends to the north the known range of this woodpecker in Belize, narrowing the gap between the Belize and Yucatan populations.

OVENBIRDS—FURNARIIDAE

Scaly-throated Leaf-tosser, *Sclerurus guatemalensis*

Two banded at the Columbia Forest Station, one each day, 13 December 1971 and 24 March 1972 (Manomet group); three collected (male, CM-S8769; female, CM-S8771; unknown sex, CM-A3949) at the CM Columbia Forest Camp, 24–25 March 1984. Russell (1964) listed few records for this elusive species and only one additional sighting has been published: Hutson and Lyal netted one bird in the Columbia Forest area (Jenkins, [1983]). Our specimens were mist-netted at the edge of high forest bordered by huamil.

WOODCREEPERS—DENDROCOLAPTIDAE

Strong-billed Woodcreeper, *Xiphocolaptes promeropirhynchus*

Male collected (CM-S8794: testes  $10 \times 6$  mm) at CM Columbia Forest Camp, 25 March 1984 in high forest. Russell (1964) listed very few records and none from the southern parts of the country. This species probably occurs in very low numbers wherever extensive high forest remains.

Streak-headed Woodcreeper, *Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*

Male collected (CM-S8953: testes  $12 \times 7$  mm) of two seen at the CM Bladen Camp, 4 April 1984. This species was considered quite uncommon by Russell (1964) and the above records represent the only individuals which we positively identified during our fieldwork (we collected and saw large numbers of Ivory-billed Woodcreepers, *Xiphorhynchus flavigaster*). Our experience echoed that of the RAFOS who found very few Streak-headed but large numbers of Ivory-billed Woodcreepers. In contrast, the Streak-headed Woodcreeper is recorded as frequently on both Christmas Counts as the Ivory-billed (Young, 1973–1985). Since distinguishing these two species in the field is difficult, requiring cautious identification, we consider the Streak-headed to be much less common than the Ivory-billed, Christmas Count data notwithstanding.

ANTBIRDS—FORMICARIIDAE

Great Antshrike, *Taraba major*

Three mist-netted along the Sibun River near Milepost 36 of the Western Highway, 22 February 1983 by the Manomet group; male collected (CM-A3842) by the Sibun River just east of the Hummingbird Highway bridge, 20 March 1984; two males collected (CM-S8732: testes  $2 \times 1$  mm; CM-A3986) of four birds seen at CM Columbia Forest Camp, 23–26 March 1984; female collected (CM-S8909: ovary  $5 \times 3$  mm) at Big Fall, Toledo District, 1 April 1984. Russell (1964) listed only two records for the country. Young (1973–1985) recorded the species on three separate Christmas Counts. The ABWS recorded one in the

Columbia Forest Region. Great Antshrikes appear to be very local and confined primarily to the southern half of Belize.

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS—TYRANNIDAE

TYRANNULETS, ELAENIAS AND ALLIES—ELAENIINAE

Ochre-bellied Flycatcher, *Mionectes oleagineus*

In contrast to Russell's (1964) comments ("widely distributed . . . but not common or at least not seen regularly") we found this species to be the most common flycatcher in the southern forests of Belize (we encountered as many as ten individuals in one day in the Columbia Forest as opposed to a maximum of eight for any other flycatcher).

Sepia-capped Flycatcher, *Leptopogon amaurocephalus*

One collected (CM-A3863) at CM Columbia Forest Camp, 22 March 1984; one seen at CM Bladen Camp, 5 April 1984; two collected (CM-A4945; female, CM-S10125; ovary  $4 \times 5$  mm) just south of Guacamallo Bridge, 23, 24 June 1985. An uncommon species (Russell, 1964), it probably occurs throughout the southern forests. The RAFOS recorded this flycatcher three times in the Columbia Forest area.

FLUVICOLINE FLYCATCHERS—FLUVICOLINAE

Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher, *Terenotriccus erythrurus*

Two banded at Columbia Forest Station, 13 December 1971 (E. J. Fisk et al.); four collected (CM-A3883; CM-A3926; CM-A4014; female, CM-S8795; ovary  $4 \times 3$  mm) at CM Columbia Forest Camp, 22–27 March 1984; two seen at CM Bladen Camp, 3 April 1984 and one seen (same bird?) the next day. Russell (1964) listed very few records for Belize, mostly from the Columbia Forest area.

Acadian Flycatcher, *Empidonax virescens*

One banded along the Sibun River southeast of Milepost 35 of the Western Highway, 20 March 1984 (Manomet group); male collected (CM-P162533; testes  $2 \times 1$  mm) 1 km west of Augustine, 15 April 1984, in broadleaf forest. Russell (1964) listed few records and none from the western part of the country.

"Traill's" Flycatcher, *Empidonax alnorum* or *E. traillii*

The first record of either species for Belize was an individual captured on 8 October 1971 in Barclay's Bank, Belize City, by James Waite and subsequently released. This bird had been banded by Leberman at The Carnegie Museum's Powdermill Nature Reserve, 4 km S of Rector, Pennsylvania on 12 September 1971. Unfortunately, these two species are only safely separable by voice so we cannot make positive identification. We know of no subsequent records of either species from Belize.

White-throated Flycatcher, *Empidonax albigularis*

Female collected (CM-P144852) at Columbia Forest Station, 9 December 1971; one mist-netted at Columbia Forest Station, 23 March 1972, by E. J. Fisk, RCL and others. This species is not listed for Belize by Russell (1964); the specimen is the first (and only) for the country. Young (1973–1985) lists one record on the 1979 Belmopan Christmas Count.



Vermilion Flycatcher, *Pyrocephalus rubinus*

A pair seen copulating near Milepost 35 of the Western Highway, 29 June 1985. This is a rather late date for such activity, judging by Russell's (1964) data, and may represent a second nesting.

TYRANNINE FLYCATCHERS—TYRANNINAE

Rufous Mourner, *Rhytipterna holerythra*

One seen or collected each day (CM-A3963; CM-A4000) at CM Columbia Forest Camp, 25–27 March 1984; three collected (CM-A4216; CM-A4240; female, CM-S8954: ovary 11 × 6 mm) at CM Bladen Camp, 4–6 April 1984; one collected of four seen (male, CM-S10092: testes 10 × 4 mm) at CM Chiquibul Camp, 21 June 1985. This species was listed by Russell (1964) from few localities. Both the RAFOS and ABWS found a few individuals in the Columbia Forest area. Young (1973–1985) recorded the species only twice on the Christmas Counts.

Great Crested Flycatcher, *Myiarchus crinitus*

Male collected (CM-P162539: testes 3 × 1.5 mm) 1.5 km north of Augustine, 17 April 1984. Russell (1964) considered this species to be a rare migrant. The present record is the latest spring date for the species in Belize.

Streaked Flycatcher, *Myiodynastes maculatus*

One collected of three seen (CM-A4452) at Chaa Creek, 20–21 April 1984; two collected of ten seen (CM-A4927; male, CM-S10073: testes 12 × 7 mm) at CM Chiquibul Camp, 20 June 1985; male collected of two individuals seen (CM-S10232: testes 12 × 7, 10 × 6 mm) near Chan Laguna, 29 June 1985. The only other published localities for this species are Gallon Jug and Ballerina Camp (Russell, 1964). This species seems to be much more common at the western edge of Belize, and in the Chiquibul it outnumbered the normally much more common Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher (*Myiodynastes luteiventris*).

TITYRAS AND BECARDS—TITYRINAE

White-winged Becard, *Pachyramphus polychopterus*

Male collected by Dora Weyer and John Dunning (CM-P144861) at Columbia Forest Station, 26 April 1970; female collected by Robert Askins (CM-P144862) at Columbia Forest Station, 21 August 1971; one banded at Columbia Forest Station, 10 December 1971 by E. J. Fisk et al.; male collected (CM-S8852: testes 2.5 × 1.5 mm) at Big Fall, Toledo District, 29 March 1984; one captured, photographed, and released at CM Bladen Camp, 6 April 1984. These constitute the only records known to us of this species for the country.

Gray-collared Becard, *Pachyramphus major*

One mist-netted near Milepost 31 of the Western Highway, 28 February 1983 by the Manomet group. Russell (1964) listed only three records for this species: two from the far south and one from Middlesex. One individual was recorded on the 1977 Belmopan Christmas Count (Young, 1973–1985).

Rose-throated Becard, *Pachyramphus aglaiae*

One mist-netted along the Hummingbird Highway just south of Belmopan, 24 February 1983 by the Manomet group; two collected (female, CM-P166066: ovary

7 × 4 mm, brood patch; male, CM-P166071: testes 11 × 6 mm) near Chan Laguna, 29, 30 June 1985; male collected (CM-P166069: testes 10 × 4.5 mm) 6 km south and 6 km west of Progreso, 30 June 1985. Russell (1964) listed eight specimens and considered the species uncommon. Barlow et al. (1969) reported an additional two specimens from Rockstone Pond but the Royal Ontario Museum has obtained several more specimens since then (Ross James, personal communication). Rose-throated Becards have been recorded on all but one Belize City Christmas Count and on three Belmopan Christmas Counts (Young, 1973–1985). The RAFOS also found this becard in the northeast (at Altun Ha) but, in addition, recorded individuals at Guacamallo Bridge and in the Columbia Forest area. This species appears to be considerably more common in the northeastern parts of the country than elsewhere.

Black-crowned Tityra, *Tityra inquisitor*

Two collected (CM-A3874; CM-A3999) of four seen at CM Columbia Forest Camp, 22–27 March 1984; at least two seen at CM Bladen Camp, 4–6 April 1984; two seen at Chaa Creek, 16 June 1985; two collected (male, CM-S10221: testes 7.5 mm; female, CM-S10222: ovary 9 × 4 mm, largest ovum 2.5 mm) of at least four seen near Chan Laguna, 28–30 June 1985. Russell (1964) listed only a few localities where this species had been recorded. Like Russell, we found this species in close association with the Masked Tityra *T. semifasciata*.

SWALLOWS—HIRUNDINIDAE

Tree Swallow, *Tachycineta bicolor*

Ten seen in Belize City, 15 March 1984; two or three seen at Big Fall, Toledo District and at The Dump (just west of the southern terminus of the Southern Highway), 29, 30 March 1984. These are relatively late dates for this species according to Russell's (1964) data.

Bank Swallow, *Riparia riparia*

One seen at close range over the Sibun River at Hummingbird Hershey Plantation, 20 March 1984. This is the farthest inland record; most sightings are from the cays (Russell, 1964).

WRENS—TROGLODYTIDAE

White-bellied Wren, *Uropsila leucogastra*

One banded at Guanacaste Park, 9 February 1983 (Manomet group); one seen at Big Fall, 1 April 1984; encountered several times throughout western Cayo District; one captured and released at Milepost 29 of the Western Highway, 3 July 1985. Russell (1964) listed only a few localities for this species: Gallon Jug, Hill Bank, and several from western Cayo District. The RAFOS mist-netted two individuals, one in the Mountain Pine Ridge and one near Jimmy Cut. Young (1973–1985) has recorded a few individuals on Christmas Counts (both locations).

Nightingale Wren, *Microcerculus philomela*

Male collected (CM-P144854) at Columbia Forest Station, 13 December 1971 (E. J. Fisk, Leberman et al.); male collected (CM-S8763: testes 4 × 2.5 mm) CM Columbia Forest Camp, 24 March 1984. Not listed by Russell (1964). These are the first specimens for the country. Nightingale Wrens appear to be restricted to the southernmost parts of Belize.

## MUSCICAPIDS—MUSCICAPIDAE

## GNATCATCHERS—SYLVIINAE

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, *Poliottila caerulea*

One seen at CM Columbia Forest Camp, 22 March 1984; one seen at Big Fall, Toledo District, 1 April 1984; very common in coastal pine savannas throughout the year: five collected (two immature females, CM-P166057, 166060: almost no skull pneumatization; two adult males, CM-P166056, 166058: testes  $4 \times 3$  mm on each; adult female, CM-P166059: ovary  $4 \times 2$  mm) near Milepost 24 of the Western Highway, 26 June 1985; one collected (adult male, CM-P166076: testes  $3.5 \times 3$  mm) of four seen just north of the Belize District—Orange Walk District line along the new Northern Highway, 1 July 1985. Russell (1964) noted that this species had been seen between 28 July and 5 April but he doubted that they bred in Belize. However, he evidently did not visit the northern coastal pine savannas during May and June where these birds nest quite commonly (Weyer, personal communication). Most earlier Belizean specimens in collections have been identified as migrants of the northern subspecies *P. c. caerulea* (Russell, 1964).

## SOLITAIRES, THRUSHES AND ALLIES—TURDINAE

Brown-backed Solitaire, *Myadestes occidentalis*

One seen near the CM Chiquibul Camp, 21 June 1985. Eye-ring and contrasting back and nape color noted. This species was not listed by Russell (1964) but has been observed on a very few occasions near the western border of the country (Weyer, personal communication). Although usually considered to be restricted to high elevations (Land, 1970; Peterson and Chalif, 1973), Monroe (1968) found this species as low as 600 m (the same elevation as our sighting).

Veery, *Catharus fuscescens*

Three collected (CM-A4369; male, CM-P162534: testes  $4 \times 2.5$  mm; male [destroyed by an opossum in camp]) near the Rio Frio Cave, 16–19 April 1984. Russell (1964) listed only two records for the country, both in the fall. Young (1973–1985) recorded one bird on the 1980 Belize City Christmas Count. We think small numbers of Veeries migrate through Belize both in spring and fall but are likely to be detected only through mist-netting.

Gray-cheeked Thrush, *Catharus minimus*

Three males collected (but subsequently destroyed by an opossum in camp) near the Rio Frio Cave, 18–19 April 1984; male collected (CM-P162543: testes  $2.5 \times 1.5$  mm) at Chaa Creek, 22 April 1984. Russell (1964) lists only a few records, all from near Belize City or the cays. Young (1973–1985) recorded this species on the 1982 Belmopan Christmas Count. We think this species, like the Veery, is more common than indicated by the available records but is difficult to observe and thus usually overlooked.

Swainson's Thrush, *Catharus ustulatus*

This species was collected or seen frequently from 23 March through 23 April 1984 in all parts of the country we visited. In addition to localities mentioned by Russell (1964), we encountered these birds throughout the southern forests

## VIREOS—VIREONIDAE

Yellow-throated Vireo, *Vireo flavifrons*

One seen in San Ignacio, 7 March 1984. Female collected (CM-S8874: ovary  $3 \times 4$  mm) near Big Fall, Toledo District, 30 March 1984. Russell (1964) noted this species as uncommon, but Young (1973–1985) has recorded this species on most Belize City Christmas Counts as well as on several Belmopan Christmas Counts.

Philadelphia Vireo, *Vireo philadelphicus*

One male collected (CM-P162538: testes 1 mm) of two birds seen near Augustine, 16 April 1984. Russell (1964) lists only one record from Belize, and Young (1973–1985) recorded one on the 1984 Belmopan Christmas Count.

Green Shrike-Vireo, *Vireolanius pulchellus*

Female collected (CM-S10103: ovary  $7 \times 5$  mm, largest ovum 2 mm) of at least five heard or seen at our CM Chiquibul Camp, 21 June 1985. Russell (1964) considered this species to be characteristic of the tall forests but not generally common in Belize. Young (1973–1985) has recorded one or two individuals on four of the last five Belmopan Christmas Counts. We found it only in the Chiquibul but it appeared to be common there.

Rufous-browed Peppershrike, *Cyclarhis gujanensis*

One seen at the edge of high hardwood forest just northeast of Columbia Forest Station, 14 December 1971 (Leberman); two collected (female in breeding condition: CM-P166077, ovary  $10 \times 5$  mm; bird of unknown sex: CM-A5010) of at least four birds seen between Milepost 24 and 29 of the Western Highway, 1–4 July 1985. In the Yucatan Peninsula, this species inhabits treetops in thin deciduous forest (Paynter, 1955; Parkes, personal communication), but Russell (1964) noted that in Belize these birds are restricted to dense undergrowth in lowland pine forests (and perhaps in mangrove swamps). While this species may be most common in the lowland pine forests, our experience indicates that they are not restricted to this habitat. Young (1973–1985) has recorded from one to five individuals on each of the last six Belize City Christmas Counts.

## EMBERIZIDS—EMBERIZIDAE


## WOOD WARBLERS—PARULINAE

Blue-winged Warbler, *Vermivora pinus*

Individuals either seen or collected at each of the locations we visited during March and April 1984 except Chaa Creek. A banded individual collected at the CM Bladen Camp is reported elsewhere (Wood and Adams, 1985). We consider the species to be more common than suggested by Russell (1964; 26 scattered records). Young (1973–1985) listed one to seven individuals on every Christmas Count except one.


Golden-winged Warbler, *Vermivora chrysoptera*

One seen near Rio Frio Cave, 14 April 1984. Russell (1964) listed only five records for Belize and Young (1973–1985) recorded one individual each on the 1979 and 1982 Belmopan Christmas Counts.



Tennessee Warbler, *Vermivora peregrina*

One or two seen each day at CM Columbia Forest Camp 23–27 March 1984; four collected (CM-A4068, 4092, 4106, 4137) of at least 12 seen at Big Fall, Toledo District, 29 March–1 April 1984; other individuals seen elsewhere in the country. Contrary to Russell (1964) we consider this species to be a common transient in Belize, at least in the forested sections.



Cape May Warbler, *Dendroica tigrina*

One seen near Punta Gorda, 4 December 1971 (Leberman and K. S. Anderson); one seen along Hummingbird Highway near the Sibun River, 24 February 1983 (Manomet group, Leberman); one seen on Coco Plum Cay, 11 March 1984. Russell (1964) lists only two records. Young (1973–1985) recorded two on the 1974 Belize City Christmas Count. However, this species is probably not as rare as the limited number of sightings suggests (Weyer, personal communication).



Black-throated Blue Warbler, *Dendroica caerulescens*

One seen at CM Columbia Forest Camp, 22 March 1984, the first published record from the southern parts of Belize. Young (1973–1985) recorded individuals of this species on three Christmas Counts.

Cerulean Warbler, *Dendroica cerulea*

Male collected (CM-P162530; testes  $5 \times 3$  mm) near Rio Frio Cave, 14 April 1984. Russell (1964) listed very few records for this rare transient and none from Cayo District. Young (1973–1985) recorded the species on the 1978 and 1984 Belize City Christmas Counts.

Swainson's Warbler, *Limnothlypis swainsonii*

One banded at Columbia Forest Station, 28 March 1972 (E. J. Fisk et al.); one banded along Sibun River southeast of Milepost 35 on the Western Highway, 4 February 1983 (Manomet group); six banded at Guanacaste Park, one each on 7 and 8 February 1983, two each on 23 and 24 March 1984 (Manomet group); two collected (CM-A3824, 3831) at Altun Ha, 18, 19 March 1984. Russell (1964) listed only four records for this rare warbler. The only other published records from Belize is of two seen on the first Belize City Christmas Count (Young, 1974–1985) and of one seen on Cay Chapel by the ABWS.

Ovenbird, *Seiurus aurocapillus*

We found this species to be one of the most abundant birds in the southern forests during our March 1984 visit; up to ten individuals were observed each day. Russell (1964) listed it as a moderately common transient and winter resident.



Louisiana Waterthrush, *Seiurus motacilla*

Several seen at Columbia Forest Station in December 1971 and March 1972 (E. J. Fisk et al.); one collected (CM-A4166) of two seen at the CM Bladen Camp, 3, 5 April 1984; female collected (CM-P162541, ovary  $6 \times 2.5$  mm) near Rio Frio Cave, 16 April 1984. Russell (1964) listed very few records but we think this species is more common than he suggested. Young (1973–1985) recorded the species on six Christmas Counts and both the RAFOS and ABWS reported individuals from the Columbia Forest area.

Gray-throated Chat, *Granatellus sallaei*

Female collected (CM-P144869, ovary not enlarged) at Columbia Forest Station, 24 March 1972 (E. J. Fisk et al.); male captured, photographed, and released at Chaa Creek, 16 June 1985. The Columbia Forest Station specimen is the first record from Toledo District. Only two locations (Gallon Jug and Cayo) are listed for this rare resident by Russell (1964).

BANANAQUITS—COEREBINAE

Bananaquit, *Coereba flaveola*

Three seen at close range in Guanacaste Park, 6 March 1984; one seen at Dangriga, 21 March 1984; two collected (CM-S8824, female, ovary  $5 \times 4$  mm; CM-S8825, male, testes  $7 \times 4$  mm) at Big Fall, Toledo District, 28 March 1984; one collected (CM-P162510, male, testes  $7 \times 4.5$  mm) of six seen at Big Fall, Toledo District, 31 March 1984; two seen at CM Bladen Camp, 4 April 1984. This species was not encountered by the Louisiana State University personnel, and Russell (1964) knew of only two old records. The fact that Russell spent relatively little time in the south of Belize may account for the lack of sightings, but Bananaquit populations may also be increasing; we consider the species common in the southern forests. Both the RAFOS and ABWS encountered this species in the Columbia Forest area. Young (1973–1985) reported up to four individuals on every Belize City Christmas Count except in 1977 and also listed it on four Belmopan counts.

TANAGERS—THRAUPINAE

Common Bush-Tanager, *Chlorospingus ophthalmicus*

One seen and carefully identified by Leberman and K. S. Anderson independently at Columbia Forest Station, 9 December 1971, is only the second record for Belize (Russell, 1964). Although this is thought to be a montane bird, some individuals apparently venture to lower elevations along the foothills of the Maya Mountains.

CARDINALS AND ALLIES—CARDINALINAE

Blue Grosbeak, *Guiraca caerulea*

We agree with Russell's (1964) comments for this species, except we found these birds common into the early part of April (rather than late March) and recorded four at Augustine as late as 16 April 1984 and one the following day.

EMBERIZINES—EMBERIZINAE

Olive Sparrow, *Arremonops rufivirgatus*

Five collected of many seen in open pine forest between Milepost 24 and Milepost 30 of the Western Highway, 13, 14 June 1985; at least six seen in open pine forest along the new Northern Highway at the Belize-Orange Walk District boundary. Russell (1964) apparently spent very little time in the pine forests between Belize City and Belmopan, otherwise he would have had to encounter this species which is common there. Russell's few records are from the north-eastern portion of Belize.

Grassland Yellow-Finch, *Sicalis luteola*

One collected (CM-P144865) at Mussel Creek Rice Station, 10 October 1971, the first record for Belize. Young (1973–1985) recorded a flock of 100 on the 1981

## Belize City Christmas Count and a flock of 16 on the 1984 Belize City Christmas Count.

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