

First occurrence of the Fork-tailed Flycatcher at Lake Titicaca, Peru

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WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING, since 1971, the avifauna of the Peruvian Altiplano, and especially Lake Titicaca's basin. We have recorded hundreds of pictures of the different species which inhabit this high Peruvian-Andean habitat. Together with Professor F. De-Lucchi we have made several excursions throughout the region and during those excursions we were amazed by the variety of bird life in the Altiplano. Lake Titicaca lies at an elevation of 12,500 feet, 500 feet below the average level of the irregular plateau called Altiplano, in which it lies.

We were really surprised to record one species whose range is supposedly only in tropical areas. This is the Fork-tailed Flycatcher (*Muscivora tyrannus*). The discovery was made on October 5, 1974 on the northern side of Lake Titicaca, in the vicinity of Llata, which is 3 km from Conima, and about 60 km east of Juliaca in the Department of Puno, in Peru. Professor De-Lucchi was able to photograph the bird.

The bird was alone on the very shore of the Lake Titicaca. It was seen perching among bushes and stones of the lake nearby, catching insects. Since the bird was alone and no other like it was seen in the vicinity, we surmised that it was a vagrant. For about 15 minutes the bird was at a distance of about 50 meters only slightly above eye level, at times against a background of blue sky, but most of the time in front of bushy or stony background, which permitted a clear view of it. The observations permitted clear recognition, and under the circumstances we feel that there is no possibility of error in our identification.

Muscivora tyrannus, the striking Fork-tailed Flycatcher, is a widespread South American species whose lack of records for the Titicaca area until now, doubtless reflects the scanty field work in this area. According to available ref-

erences, this tyrant migrates as far south as Rio Negro in Argentina, and it arrives at the Argentinian capital at the end of September. It has apparently never been recorded in the Peruvian Altiplano before.

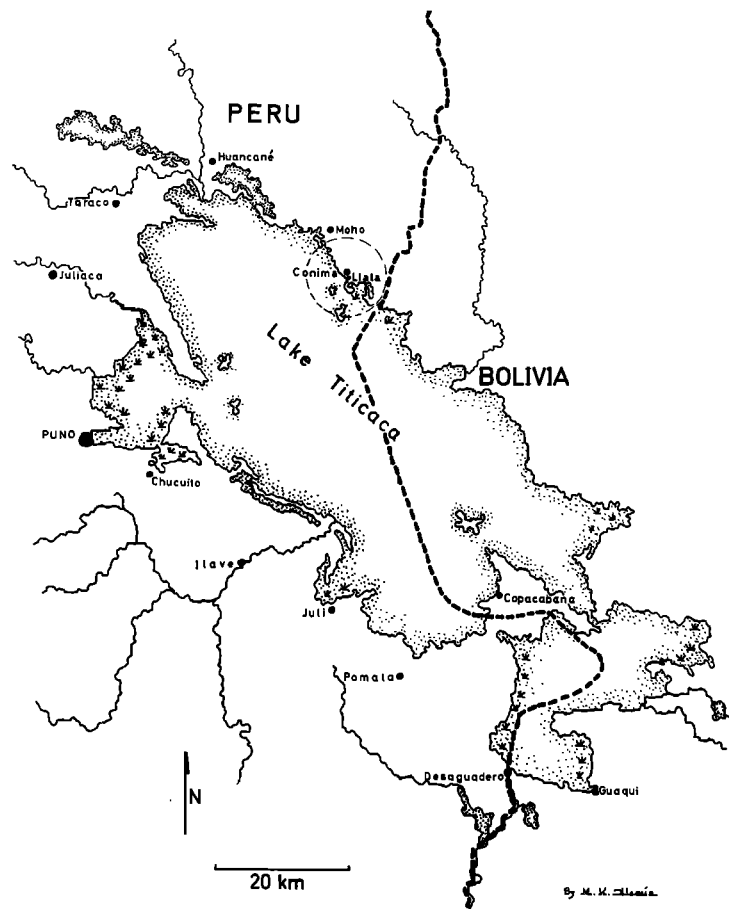
This record now extends the range of the *Muscivora tyrannus* up to high altitude zones, at least in the site above mentioned, in its route to its winter quarters in the South American continent. The present record, adds a new species to the large total of the Peruvian Altiplano's avifauna.

Literature Cited

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Photograph of *Muscivora tyrannus*. Oct. 5, 1974, in Llata, Titicaca (puno-PERU) by Fernando De-Lucchi.



Map of Lake Titicaca.