

## SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

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### ROOSTING BEHAVIOR OF THE SAYACA TANAGER (*THRAUPIS SAYACA*) IN SOUTHEASTERN BRAZIL

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**Comportamento e local de dormida do Sanhaço-cinza (*Thraupis sayaca*) no sudeste brasileiro.**

**Key words:** Sayaca Tanager, *Thraupis sayaca*, roosting, southeastern Brazil.

On 17 March 2001, we stopped briefly at 18:00 by a bridge of the Rio Araquá (530 m, 22°45'S, 48°28'W) São Paulo, Brazil. A light breeze was moving the leaves while dusk was settling. At 18:22 h, a pair of the Sayaca Tanager (*Thraupis sayaca*) came with a chip note and perched 4 m up in a 6-m bush (*Machaerium acutifolium*, Leguminosae) in front of the car where Oniki was sitting. The female sneaked into a clump of leaves, fluffing the ventral feathers and contracting her neck while settling on the perch, looking around a bit and pecking twice at leaves in front of her. The male, which had passed the tree and perched a little further on in bamboo, returned one minute later and perched about 20 cm below the female. He soon moved in to the same branch as the female. Willis passed below the tree while this was happening, but the pair did not leave the tree, despite noises of passing cars and fishermen talking and moving about nearby. We left at 18:40 h, when rather dark, with the birds still hiding among the leaves for the night.

On 24 March, we returned to the bridge.

It was a hot sunny day, so that a little later, at 18:28 h the pair arrived together from the west to roost again at the bush. The female perched on the same branch and immediately went to the same roosting site among the leaves while the male perched on a bamboo about 3 m east. He sallied to the air a few times, and turned back and forth. Three minutes later he returned, perching about 20 cm below the female and immediately moving up to join the female among the leaves. He used a zigzag route up, different from the more direct route of the female. As it was getting dark, at 18:38 h, Willis went below the bush to see if both were close together. The male was sitting next to the female, his beak pointed in the opposite direction. He flew out of the bush while the female remained hiding, when Oniki also walked near. When we retreated, one minute later, he returned to the same place and opposite orientation next to the female. At 18:50 h, we left. It is possible that the pair return each night to the same bush to roost after they nested there the year before (a nest similar to those built by the

species was on another branch, 30 cm distant and at the same height as the roost site), arriving about the same time each day. It is interesting that they chose this bush, in the open, at the edge of a very busy road so that the tree would shake each time a heavy truck passed.

On 26 April 1996, at 17:17 h, Willis had seen a pair of Sayaca Tanagers entering at 6 m in dense leaves at the tip of a horizontal tree branch over the open-zone entry road of the Santa Lúcia Reserve (650 m, 1958/4033) near Santa Teresa, Espírito Santo. They had flitted the wings, turning about as they watched him, before down to settle in the foliage; they fled when he passed underneath, then returned 17:22 h but flitted their wings nervously, finally flying off northwest rather than return to the site. They were definitely more timid than the Araquá birds, perhaps because few people use the Santa Lúcia road.

Palm Tanagers (*Thraupis palmarum*) sometimes roost in groups of 10–75 birds (Isler & Isler 1987), probably somewhat separated in a tree as otherwise ectoparasites could pass from one pair to another. Wetmore *et al.* (1984) indicate that related Blue-gray Tanager (*Thraupis episcopus*) “pairs come together to roost in large numbers.” Otherwise, little information is available.

Tanagers and parrots are well known to travel in pairs, this being an argument against the idea that partial frugivory causes nonmonogamy in birds of paradise, manakins, or

cotingas (Willis & Oniki 1998). Sleeping together shows strong monogamy, though the birds have to be careful to pick dense foliage (at edge or other sites where nocturnal predators are unlikely to occur) and flee to alternate sites if a possible predator is present at nightfall. The male can look about before joining the female, helping detect predators.

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