

GENERAL NOTES

Wilson Bull., 92(4), 1980, pp. 506–508

First description of the nest, eggs and nestling of the Guayaquil Woodpecker (*Campephilus* [*Phloeocastes*] *gayaquilensis*).—On 29 May 1978, with J. William Eley, Enrique Ortiz, Bernard Peyton and our Peruvian guides, Daniel Cruz Quispe and Bernabé Florez Cobos, I discovered an active nest of the Guayaquil Woodpecker (*Campephilus* [*Phloeocastes*] *gayaquilensis*). Although the species occurs from SW Colombia to NW Peru (Meyer de Schauensee, *The Species of Birds of South America and their Distribution*, Livingston, Narberth, Pennsylvania, 1966:227), my notes apparently provide the first description of the nest, eggs and nestling of this woodpecker.

The nest-site was in the valley of the Quebrada de Pavas (5°39'30"S, 79°45'15"W; elev. 355 m) in the western foothills of the Andes, 36 km N of the town of Olmos and 12 km NE of the small village of Boca Chica, Department of Lambayeque, Peru. The mountains and valley in the vicinity of the nest (Fig. 1) were covered with virgin dry tropical forest. Macedo Ruiz (Boletín de Lima 1:5–11, 1979) lists the common trees and shrubs of these forests.

At 10:30, as I walked along a trail that ascends the valley, a Guayaquil Woodpecker (sex unknown) flushed from a living tree containing its nest. Sr. Ortiz and our guides identified this tree as a frejolillo or huayruro. The Peruvian name "frejolillo" is sometimes used to refer to trees in at least 2 genera in different families: *Capparis*: Capparidaceae (Mapa Ecologico del Peru: guía explicativa. Oficina Nacional de Evaluacion de Recursos Naturales, Lima, 1976) and *Erythrina*: Fabaceae (Macedo Ruiz 1979). In Soukup (Vocabulario de los Nombres Vulgares de la Flora Peruana, Colegio Salesiano, Lima, 1970), huayruro refers to *Erythrina*; and although "frejolillo" does not appear, the name "frijol del arbol," refers also to *Erythrina*.

The nest cavity was in the main trunk about 6 m above the ground. Its irregularly shaped entrance was large enough (about 75 × 100 mm) to admit my hand, and it was about 30 cm deep. I could not reach the cavity's bottom or its contents, but using a mirror, I saw 1 egg and 1 newly-hatched young. The shell of the hatched egg was still in the nest. The eggs were white and immaculate—typical large woodpecker eggs. The nestling was making weak chirping sounds. Its eyes were closed, and it appeared naked; however, in the dim light of the cavity, sparse down probably would not have been obvious. It had a conspicuous eggtooth.

I visited this nest again at 13:50. After approaching within 6–8 m of the female at the cavity entrance, I made several color transparencies (Frontispiece). I never saw more than 1 adult at this site.

Casual reference to the nesting of this species has been made at least twice in the literature. Goodfellow (*Ibis* 44:207–233, 1902) stated, "A pair of these woodpeckers bred in October [1898] in the trunk of a tall dead tree standing in the clearing near our hut." This was near Santo Domingo de los Colorados, Pinchincha, Ecuador. Leck (*Auk* 96:353–363, 1979) said the species, ". . . was found nesting in 1977 . . .," also in Ecuador, in an area 47 km S of Santo Domingo de los Colorados along the Rio Palenque. Leck (pers. comm.) wrote, "I don't have the details . . . the nesting record was passed on to me without any specifics."

The closest relative of *C. gayaquilensis* is the widely distributed Crimson-crested Woodpecker (*C. melanoleucos*). Peters (Check-list of Birds of the World, Vol. 6, Harvard Univ. Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1948) regarded *C. gayaquilensis* as a subspecies of *C. melanoleucos*, but Meyer de Schauensee (1966) maintained them separate on the basis of strikingly different plumage patterns.



FIG. 1. Nest-site of the Guayaquil Woodpecker in dry tropical forest, NW Peru.

Regarding the nesting of *C. melanoleucos* in Surinam, Haverschmidt (Birds of Surinam, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh and London, United Kingdom, 1968) stated, "[it] makes a hole with an oval entrance in dead trees . . ." Kilham (Wilson Bull. 84:28-47, 1972) implied that on his study area in the humid forests of Panama, *C. melanoleucos* nests only in dead trees, and concluded, "most pairs had difficulty finding suitable nest stubs . . . [and] in some cases failed to nest." Three nests of another close relative, the Pale-billed Woodpecker (*C. guatemalensis*), found by Skutch (Pacific Coast Avifauna, No. 35, 1969) in Costa Rica were all in dead trunks that stood in clearings in the forest. As Short (Wilson Bull. 91:16-28, 1979) has pointed out, the advantages of nesting in an isolated tree may be sufficient to cause a woodpecker to depart from its typical nesting site. Our information on this point is likely to be biased, however, since we can find nests in clearings more easily. Short (1979) reasoned that cavities in live trees generally reduce losses to competitors and predators. Perhaps in a dry tropical forest with fewer predators and competitors, Guayaquil Woodpeckers can afford to take the extra time required to excavate a cavity in a living tree. In these relatively "safer" forests, however, there should be less pressure to nest in living trees. Possibly excavating a cavity in a hard dead tree in a dry forest, where decomposition is slow, is more difficult than excavating in some living trees. The irregularly shaped entrance of the Lambayeque nest cavity suggests that it may have been an enlargement of an existing hole, perhaps a further inducement to excavate in a living tree. Since the only other reported nest of the Guayaquil Woodpecker was in a dead tree in a clearing, which nest site, if either, is typical remains unknown.

This pair of woodpeckers presumably began their nesting in early May at the end of the rainy season. *Campephilus melanoleucos* and *C. guatemalensis* follow this same pattern in Panama (Kilham 1972) and Costa Rica (Skutch 1969), respectively.

Acknowledgments.—I am grateful to Babette M. Odom, John S. McIlhenny, Edmund W.

Mudge, H. Irving Schweppe and Laura R. Schweppe for their financial support of the LSUMZ Peruvian expeditions, and to our colleagues of the Dirección General Forestal y de Fauna of the Ministerio de Agricultura in Lima for granting the necessary permits for fieldwork. The knowledge and hospitality of Srs. Manuel A. Plenge and Gustavo del Solar greatly facilitated my studies of Peruvian birds. I thank E. Eisenmann, J. A. Jackson, J. P. O'Neill, K. C. Parkes, J. V. Remsen and L. L. Short for their comments and suggestions during the preparation of this note. A grant from the Chapman Memorial Fund enabled me to study the nests and eggs of neotropical birds at the American Museum of Natural History in 1979.—MORRIS D. WILLIAMS, *Museum of Zoology, Louisiana State Univ., Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70893. Accepted 5 Aug. 1980.*

Wilson Bull., 92(4), 1980, pp. 508–509

The nest and territoriality of a female Tyrian Metaltail.—There are no previous records of nesting of the Tyrian Metaltail (*Metallura tyrianthina*), or any other species in this genus. A female Tyrian Metaltail was discovered building a nest on 19 July 1978, in a small cave at 2400 m on the slopes of Cerro Fonté, Vereda de Ferralarada, Municipio de Choachi, Cundinamarca, Colombia (4°32'N, 73°51'W). The small cave measured 1.2 m deep by 2.4 m wide by 1.8 m high and the pendent nest was attached to plant rootlets and moss near the back wall at a height of 1.3 m. Because we had to leave the area on 25 July neither a completed nest nor contents were seen. The nest, collected before departure, consisted of a mass of moss with pieces of fern and plant fibre and measured 14 × 7.5 × 7.5 cm; at the top was a small nest chamber partially covered by a domed roof of moss. The nest cup lacked lining material.

A total of 9.5 h on 5 days was spent watching in the territory of the nesting female metaltail. Building occurred between 07:25–09:54 on 3 days, when material, mostly moss, was collected nearby, so close that often the female went in with it every 30 sec, entering through the open mouth of the cave and slipping out at the side through overhanging vegetation. On 21 July, the last day building was observed, all material brought was added to the roof. The female also engaged in frequent nest shaping on this day, entering the nest cup and pressing down with her tail as she faced inwards, with her breast and neck as she faced outwards, pausing to adjust the material of the roof above her.

The feeding territory of this female consisted of a triangle of woodland measuring 20 × 25 × 24 m, 1 side being a rocky boundary with the cave. This rocky face extended 46 m and was covered with a 1–7 m wide strip of shrubby vegetation, ending in a group of young eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* sp.) trees, 1 of which was in flower. All this wooded and shrubby area was included in the female's territory; it was surrounded by rough pasture with scattered trees.

The main nectar resource in the territory on 17 July, when the female's territorial activities were first noted, consisted of a number of *Palicourea angustifolia* (Rubiaceae) shrubs with a total of 59 flowering spikes, 8–10 blooms per spike. The female defended this resource from other metaltails, including a male, and from a female Mountain Velvetbreast (*Lafresnaya lafresnayi*). The female metaltail also fed within the territory on 2 vines of *Manettia coccocypseloides* (Rubiaceae), flowering eucalyptus, and some shrubs of *Palicourea* cf. *anacardifolia* with only a few blooms still in flower.

Within the territory the female metaltail uttered a *chack* call between feeding probes. She occasionally sang in flight and when perched, particularly in the morning between dawn and