

Rare birds in French Guiana in 2005–07

Alexandre Renaudier and Comité d'Homologation de Guyane

Received 22 May 2009
Cotinga 32 (2010): OL 95–104
published online 16 March 2010

Le Comité d'Homologation de Guyane (CHG) a été créé en 2005, dans le but de collecter et valider les observations d'oiseaux rares et accidentels en Guyane. Le CHG est actuellement le seul comité d'homologation en Amérique du sud, avec Trinidad & Tobago. Ce premier rapport couvre les deux mois de démarrage du comité en novembre–décembre 2005, puis les années 2006 et 2007. Ce rapport inclut des données documentées pour plusieurs espèces nouvelles ou très rares à l'échelle continentale ou régionale : premier Traquet motteux *Oenanthe oenanthe* et seconde Sarcelle à ailes vertes *Anas crecca carolinensis* pour l'Amérique du Sud continentale, première Barge rousse *Limosa lapponica*, premiers *Empidonax alnorum* / *traillii*, Pioui de l'ouest *Contopus sordidulus* et Tangara écarlate *Piranga olivacea* pour le plateau des Guyanes. Au total, 143 fiches ont été examinées et 84% ont été acceptées. Une version française détaillée de ce rapport, avec d'avantage de photos, est téléchargeable à : <http://pagesperso-orange.fr/gepog/CHG/>.

The aim of the Comité d'Homologation de Guyane (CHG), created in November 2005, is to adjudicate on observations of vagrant and rare birds in French Guiana, to guarantee their credibility⁴. The CHG is, until now, the only rarities committee on mainland South America, although there is one for Trinidad & Tobago. This first report covers the period November–December 2005 and the years 2006–07. Some 143 observations were submitted of which 84% were accepted. Documented records for several species new or very rare at a regional or continental scale are presented here: the first Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* and the second Green-winged Teal *Anas crecca carolinensis* for continental South America, and the first Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*, *Empidonax* sp. (*alnorum* / *traillii*), Western Wood Pewee *Contopus sordidulus* and Scarlet Tanager *Piranga olivacea* for the Guianan Shield. Eleven taxa have been added to the bird list of French Guiana. A French version of this report with additional photographs can be downloaded at <http://pagesperso-orange.fr/gepog/CHG/>.

Systematic list of accepted records

American Wigeon *Anas americana*

Two females were at the Lac du Bois Diable, Kourou, on 4–6 January 2006 (PS, JV, OT), and three males in eclipse plumage and two females, were at the same lake on 22–24 October 2007 (PS, JV, AV *et al.*). These observations are the third and fourth for French Guiana. The first record was at the Lac du Bois Chaudat, Kourou, on 12 January 1994 (AD, PD) and the second at Larivot in Matoury, near Cayenne, on 3 November–4 December 1999 (GEPOG).



Figure 1. Two male Green-winged Teals *Anas crecca carolinensis*, Rémire-Montjoly, French Guiana, 26 November 2006 (O. Tostain)

Green-winged Teal *Anas crecca carolinensis*

Two males were at the salines of Rémire-Montjoly, a suburb of Cayenne, on 26 November–3 December 2006 (AR, RP, OT; Fig. 1). This observation is the second for continental South America, following the first in northern Colombia^{15,20}.

Fasciated Tiger Heron *Tigrisoma fasciatum*

An adult was photographed at Saut Manivelle, with one at Saut Parasol, both rapids on the Sinnamary River, on 27 December and 29 December 2005 respectively (MA, TL, BV). These observations are the third and fourth for French Guiana, following two individuals along the Mana River on 24 and 30 June 1995 (MC), and two along the Camopi River in August 2002 (SP). The 2005 observations are the first documented records in French Guiana of this elusive species, which was only recently discovered

near the Raleigh Falls on the Suriname River in Surinam, in 2001¹⁷.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

One was photographed in rice fields near Mana on 30 September 2006 (AR). This observation is the fifth for French Guiana, following the first in 2005. These observations reflect the general increase in records for the Americas¹⁶. Nonetheless, Little Egret remains rare in South America, where it has been observed in just three other countries: there >50 records in Trinidad & Tobago¹⁰, but just single observations in Brazil² and Surinam⁹ respectively.

White Ibis *Eudocimus albus*

Two were seen flying over the western part of the Piste Quesnel, near Macouria, on 30 November 2005 (NP). This is the first authenticated observation for the Guiana Shield. The nearest populations are found on Trinidad and in the llanos of Venezuela²¹, with just one observation for Surinam (J. H. Ribot pers. comm.).

Maguari Stork *Ciconia maguari*

One was seen flying over the marshes of Matiti along the D15 road to Dégrad Guatemala, on 23 December 2005 (MG). This stork is rare in French Guiana, with on average c.1 observation per annum.

White-tailed Kite *Elanus leucurus*

An adult was at the wastewater treatment pond at Awala-Yalimapo on 19 March 2006 (AR, MR) with one at Wayabo, near Kourou, on 29 November 2006 (MG). In French Guiana, this species is only regularly observed at the rice fields of Mana.

Bicoloured Hawk *Accipiter bicolor*

An adult of this elusive hawk was seen at the Crique Passoura, near Kourou, on 5 November 2006 (PS, JV, AV), with an adult at the village of Saül on 2 December 2007 (TD, OC).

Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus*

One was seen at Trésor Nature Reserve on 16–29 January 2006 (KP, OT *et al.*), an adult was photographed at Roche Tablon along the N2 road on 12 March 2006 (ND, TL), an adult was at Camp Patawa, on the Montagne de Kaw, on 9 December 2006 (FE, BG, TL), and an adult was photographed at the Carrefour Eskol, also on the Montagne de Kaw, on 10 December 2006 (TL, BV). Two were photographed at the village of Saül on 2 December 2007 (TD, OC). Montagne de Kaw is a favoured wintering site in French Guiana. Only ten observations are known for Surinam, all from the Brownsberg Nature Reserve in November–March.



Figure 2. Adult female Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*, off Awala-Yalimapo, French Guiana, 27 December 2007 (L. Ponge)

Eurasian Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

An immature was photographed along the Piste de la Carapa at Kourou on 18 January 2006 (PS, JV), a moulting female was photographed in the rice fields near Mana on 12 February and was seen again there on 20–25 March 2006 (AR, MR *et al.*; cf. *Cotinga* 26: 77), and an adult female was photographed aboard a ship, 274 km off Awala-Yalimapo, on 26 December 2007–2 January 2008 (LP; Fig. 2). These observations are the third to fifth country records of this Eurasian species¹³. All of the observations to date of Common Kestrel in continental South America were in French Guiana, and all arrived between late December and early March.

Ocellated Crake *Micropygia schomburgkii*

Three singing individuals were tape-recorded in the Pripri de Yiyi near Sinnamary on 24 July (AR) and one was seen in the Savane des Pères near Kourou on 4 October and 3 December 2007 (AV). All observations of this little-known crake in French Guiana are from the coastal region, although in Surinam the only available records are from the vast Sipaliwini savanna in the south of the country²².

Yellow-breasted Crake *Porzana flaviventer*

Two were at the wastewater treatment pond at Awala-Yalimapo on 24 November 2005, with one on 27 November, three on 4 December, four photographed on 13 December and one on 18 December 2005, respectively (AR, MR). At the same site, one was seen on 18 November 2006 (AV) and one on 20 December 2006 (AR), with one in the rice fields west of Mana on 10–11 September 2007 (AR). These observations confirm this crake's presence in the region of the lower Mana River. All observations are from the dry season.

Paint-billed Crake *Neocrex erythrops*

One was seen near the Lac du Bois Diable, Kourou, on 2 July 2007 (AV). This crake remains uncommon in French Guiana.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

An adult was at the wastewater treatment pond in Awala-Yalimapo on 9–10 November 2005, with two adults on 16 November, two on 27 November and a juvenile, which was photographed, on 4 December 2005 (DL, AR, MR). An adult was seen in the centre of Roura on 9 May 2007 (SU). The species' status in French Guiana is poorly known. It certainly is rare, which is surprising for this globally common species, which is also widespread in South America.

Pied Lapwing *Vanellus cayanus*

Two adults were photographed at Loka near Papaïchton on 1–11 May 2007 (GF, AR, NP *et al.*).

Giant Snipe *Gallinago undulata*

One at the sand quarry of the Lac du Bois Diable, Kourou, on 5 November 2006 (AV). This poorly known snipe is a threatened breeding species in French Guiana.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

An immature was photographed at the estuary of the Kourou River on 7–8 and 15 November 2007 (AV, TP; Fig. 3). This observation is the first for the Guiana Shield and the fourth documented record for continental South America, following singles photographed in Venezuela in 1985¹⁴ and two separate records in north-east Brazil in 2006⁶. There is also one documented and several sight-only records from Brazilian offshore islands²³.



Figure 3. Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*, Kourou, French Guiana, 7 November 2007 (A. Vinot)

Buff-breasted Sandpiper *Tryngites subruficollis*

A flock of nine was seen in the rice fields west of Mana on 1 October 2006 (AR, MR), the largest-ever flock seen in the Guiana Shield. This sandpiper is observed annually, always in small numbers, in the rice fields around Mana.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

An immature male was seen in the rice fields west of Mana on 9 September 2007 (AR). The species was already known in French Guiana from five records in February, August and September, including one individual photographed. There are no records for Surinam or Guyana.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

An adult was seen at the estuary of the Kourou River on 21 March 2007 (JV). This pelagic tern winters in small numbers off the coast of northern South America⁸.

Blue Ground Dove *Claravis pretiosa*

An immature male was seen at Couachi near Mana on 12 February 2006 (AR, MR) and a male in Awala on 23 October 2006 (OC). This is a rare species in French Guiana, it being restricted to the lower Maroni River in the north-west of the country.

Eared Dove *Zenaidura macroura*

One was seen along the Piste de la Carapa, near Kourou, on 23 January 2006 (JV) and one at km 14 along the D8 road, near Mana, on 19 February 2006 (AR, MR). In the marshes of Matiti, along the D15 road to Dégrad de Guatemala, 15 were photographed on 11 February, 34–46 on 7 March, 20 on 17 March, three on 29 March, an immature on 1 April, and five on 10 May 2007 (AV). Ten were photographed in the Savane de Saint-Elie, near Sinnamary, on 15 March 2005 (AV) and an adult was at the Digue de Panato, near Awala-Yalimapo, on 17 May 2007 (VR). The D15 road is a favourite birding site and therefore it is difficult to judge if the increase in observations represents a real change in the species' status in French Guiana. This dove was first observed at Awala-Yalimapo in June–July 1983²⁵. Since 2002, it has been observed more regularly.

Red-shouldered Macaw *Diopsittaca nobilis*

Nine were seen at the Crique Saint-Martin, near Roura, on 22 June 2006 (TL, BV). A pair was seen mating. This species is very rare in French Guiana, but is rather common in the coastal savannas of Surinam, especially in August–April (J. H. Ribot pers. comm.).

Dusky-billed Parrotlet *Forpus sclateri*

A male, probably immature, was seen near the Lac du Bois Diable, Kourou, on 11 March 2007



Figure 4. Blue-cheeked Parrot *Amazona dufresniana*, Crique Limonade, Saül, French Guiana, 12 December 2007 (O. Claessens)

(AV). This is the second record for French Guiana, and its location is surprising. The first was made at Monpésoula, on the Haut Marouini River, in December 1999 (O. Tostain pers. comm.).

Blue-cheeked Parrot *Amazona dufresniana*

Six were seen at the inselberg of Armontabo, near Saint-Georges, on 24 November 2006 (OC), and seven were seen and tape-recorded along the Piste du Dégrad Florian, near Mana, on 22 October 2006 (OC, AR, MR). Eighteen were seen and tape-recorded at Trinité Nature Reserve, near Saint-Elie, on 15–23 October 2007 (OC), with two at the Petit Croissant inselberg, near Saint-Georges, on 7 November and four on 24 November 2007 (OC), and four were photographed along the Crique Limonade, Saül, on 5 and 12 December 2007 (OC; Fig. 4). This species is certainly less rare than supposed, as suggested by the increase in observations. Knowledge of its flight-call is essential to detect this parrot, which is endemic to the Guiana Shield.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus americanus*

One was seen near the wastewater treatment pond at Awala-Yalimapo on 26 March 2006 (AR, MR), and one was photographed in the marshes of Matiti along the D15 road to the Dégrad Guatemala on 1 February 2007 (MG; Fig. 5). These are interesting observations from semi-open coastal habitat near marshes and mangrove, on unusual dates. In



Figure 5. Yellow-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus americanus*, marshes of Matiti, Kourou, French Guiana, 1 February 2007 (M. Giraud-Audine)

Surinam, all 25 observations were made in April–June²².

Mangrove Cuckoo *Coccyzus minor*

One was seen at Mont Ravel in Rémière-Montjoly, a suburb of Cayenne, on 6 March 2006 (AR, MR *et al.*). This cuckoo is normally found in mangrove, but this individual was seen in dry vegetation near a beach.

Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia*

One was photographed at Wayabo, near Kourou, on 27 August–6 September 2006 (MG, OT *et al.*), and two were photographed in the Savane de Corossony, near Sinnamary, on 11 and 26 November 2006 (LA). One was photographed at the Centre Spatial Guyanais, near Kourou, between May and August 2007 (MC), and one was at the Savane de Corossony, near Sinnamary, on 24 July 2007 (AR)¹⁷. These observations at three different sites confirm that the species is now established in French Guiana. Farmers confirmed that this owl was already present near Sinnamary in 2004–05. This addition to the French Guiana avifauna reflects its general expansion through the Guiana Shield. In early March 2007, the species was also discovered at the Johan A. Pengel international airport, near Zanderij, in Surinam¹⁹.

Stygian Owl *Asio stygius*

One was tape-recorded at Camp Patawa, on the Montagne de Kaw, on 26 November 2007 (FD, AR). This species' discovery in French Guiana was a surprise. In Surinam, it has been tape-recorded only twice, in the Bakhuisgebergte in October 2005²² (B. O'Shea & O. Ottema pers. comm.).

White-winged Potoo *Nyctibius leucopterus*

One was heard along the road to the Dégrad Florian, near Mana, on 5 October 2006 (AR, MR). One was tape-recorded at the same site on 28 August 2007 (AR, OO). In French Guiana, it was discovered at Saint-Eugène, near the lake of Petit Saut, in 1995, and at Saül in 2004³. Dégrad Florian is the third locality where this little-known potoo has been tape-recorded in French Guiana.

Rufous Potoo *Nyctibius bracteatus*

An adult and a nestling were photographed west of Maripasoula on 31 January–22 February 2006 (TD). An adult was photographed at the same site in mid April–early June 2007 (RP). The first observations were made along the Crique Arataye, Nouragues Nature Reserve, in October 1998, and at Saül in September 2000; thereafter it was found at Trinité Nature Reserve in October 2003¹¹. Maripasoula is the fourth locality in French Guiana and the photographs of the nestling were the first for this species.

Unidentified swift *Cypseloides* sp.

Four swifts, of which at least one was a juvenile, were at the Digue de Panato, Awala-Yalimapo, on 13 July 2007 (AR); they were probably White-chinned Swifts *C. cryptus*, but this species is difficult to identify. A flock of c.500 White-chinned Swifts was seen in June 2003 at the Tafelberg in Surinam¹⁸.

White-tailed Goldenthrroat *Polytmus guainumbi*

One was seen at the Digue de Panato, Awala-Yalimapo, on 2 September 2007 (SU). This hummingbird is rare in French Guiana.

Amethyst Woodstar *Calliphlox amethystina*

A female or juvenile was seen at the Bassin Mine d'Or, near Mana, on 17 December 2006 (AR) and another female or juvenile at the same site on 10 February 2007 (AC, AR, MR). This hummingbird is rare but regularly seen in French Guiana.

Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon*

One, probably a male, was at the Lac du Bois Diable, Kourou, on 25 November 2006 (AV). The first record in French Guiana involved a bird seen on 14–17 November 2004, initially at the Centre Spatial Guyanais and then the Lac du Bois Diable (O. Claessens, A. Renaudier & O. Tostain pers. comm.).

Tawny-throated Leaftosser *Sclerurus mexicanus*

One was mist-netted and photographed at Mont Galbao, near Saül, on 30–31 January 2006 (BB, LB, AK *et al.*), and one was mist-netted and photographed at Nouragues Nature Reserve, near Régina, on 12 November 2007 (BM). This species was previously known in the country solely on the basis of five specimens held at the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris, which were collected at Trois Sauts in 1975. Better knowledge of its vocalisations and identification criteria will doubtless increase our knowledge of this rare leaftosser.

Short-billed Leaftosser *Sclerurus rufifularis*

One was seen along the Boucle Roche Bateau, near Saül, on 3 January (AR), and one was mist-netted and photographed at the Massif Lucifer, near Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni, on 9 November 2006 (OC, KP). At least three were tape-recorded at Trinité Nature Reserve on 12, 15 and 21 October 2007 (OC), with two mist-netted and photographed there on 22 October 2007 (OC, SU), and one mist-netted and photographed at Nouragues Nature Reserve on 20 November 2007 (BM). Like Black-tailed Leaftosser *S. caudacutus*, this leaftosser is widespread in the interior of French Guiana.



Figure 6. Female Spot-throated Woodcreeper *Deconychura stictolaema*, Trinité Nature Reserve, French Guiana, 16 October 2007 (O. Claessens)

Black-tailed Leaftosser *Sclerurus caudacutus*

An adult female was mist-netted and photographed at Mont Galbao, near Saül, on 30 January 2006 (LB, AK *et al.*), with another adult female there on 9 February 2006 (LB, AK *et al.*) and a singing bird was tape-recorded on the inselberg of Armontabo, near Saint-Georges, on 25 November 2006 (OC). One was tape-recorded at Trinité Nature Reserve, near Saint-Elie, on 13 October 2007 (OC), and one was mist-netted and photographed there on 22 October 2007 (OC), with two mist-netted and photographed along the Crique Limonade, near Saül, on 6 and 15 October 2007, respectively (OC). It is interesting to note that both Short-billed and Black-tailed Leaftosser are equally frequent in the interior of French Guiana.

Rufous-tailed Xenops *Xenops milleri*

One was seen along the Boucle Roche Bateau, near Saül, on 19 February 2007 (AV), and one was at Trinité Nature Reserve, near Saint-Elie, on 14 October 2007 (OC). This xenops is rarely observed in French Guiana.

Spot-throated Woodcreeper *Deconychura stictolaema*

An immature male and adult female were mist-netted, photographed and tape-recorded at Trinité Nature Reserve, near Saint-Elie, on 16–17 October 2007 (OC, SU; Fig. 6), with another adult female mist-netted and photographed there on 21 October 2007 (OC, SU). These observations confirm the species' presence in French Guiana, from where it was previously only known from a specimen, held in the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris, collected at Trois Sauts in 1975. This woodcreeper,

which is generally a canopy-dwelling species, was captured in mist-nets low above the ground.

Sooty-headed Tyrannulet *Phyllomyias griseiceps*

Four were at Papaïchton on 11 May 2007 (AR), the first record in French Guiana, although the species was known from the Brownsberg Nature Reserve in Surinam. Knowledge of its song is useful in locating this canopy-dwelling tyrannulet, which should be present on forested hills of the interior.

Small-billed Elaenia *Elaenia parvirostris*

One was seen along the dirt road at km 9 off road N1 near Kourou on 8 July (AR, AV) and one at Awala-Yalimapo on 23 July 2007 (AR). The dates are normal for this austral migrant which is seen annually in French Guiana from May to October. The observation near Kourou is noteworthy, as most observations are made in the region of Awala-Yalimapo.

Lesser Elaenia *Elaenia chiriquensis*

Four were seen and tape-recorded in the savannas around Kourou aerodrome on 2 April 2007 (AV). This is the first documented record for French Guiana of this difficult-to-identify and little-known elaenia. It is also rare and local in Surinam (O. Ottema pers. comm.).

Yellow Tyrannulet *Capsiempis flaveola*

More than eight were at the Ouanary landing stage on 1 November 2005 (FE, TL, AR *et al.*), and one was at the Canal Leroy, in Kourou, on 13 November 2005 (PS, JV). The site at Ouanary is already known²⁵, but Kourou is a new locality. The species' true distribution in French Guiana is unknown.

Bearded Tachuri *Polystictus pectoralis*

Two were photographed in the Savane de Trou Poissons, near Sinnamary, on 30 August 2006 (JP; Fig. 7). A male was seen at Matiti, near Kourou, on 20 September 2007 (NP). The savannas at Trou Poissons represent the species' stronghold in French Guiana, whilst the observation near Kourou is more unexpected.

Euler's Flycatcher *Lathrotriccus euleri*

At Saül, one was tape-recorded at Camp Cariacou, on the left bank of the Crique Limonade, on 27 December 2005 (NP, AR *et al.*), and another was tape-recorded near the viewpoint along the Mont La Fumée trail on 29 and 31 December 2005 (AR, MR). One was photographed and tape-recorded along the Crique Limonade, near Saül, on 6–14 November 2007 (OC), and a pair (with a nest on a moss-covered trunk) and two fledglings were mist-netted and photographed at another site along the Crique Limonade on 11–12 November 2007 (OC, VP). Until now, Saül is the only locality in



Figure 7. Bearded Tachuri *Polysticus pectoralis*, savanes de Trou Poissons, Sinnamary, French Guiana, 30 August 2006 (J.-P. Policard)



Figure 8. Willow / Alder Flycatcher *Empidonax traillii / alhorum*, Awala, French Guiana, 5 November 2005 (A. Renaudier)

French Guiana where this flycatcher has been found. The nest at the Crique Limonade is the first breeding record for French Guiana.

Willow Flycatcher / Alder Flycatcher *Empidonax traillii / alhorum*

An *Empidonax* flycatcher mist-netted and photographed at Simili, near Awala-Yalimapo, on 5 November 2005 (AR *et al.*; Fig. 8), represents the first record of this genus for the Guiana Shield. However, neither the biometrics nor the photographs permitted identification to species level. An excellent paper on the identification of these flycatchers was published recently²⁷.

Western Wood Pewee *Contopus sordidulus*

One was seen and tape-recorded at the inselberg of Armontabo, near Saint-Georges, on 20 and 22 November 2006 (OC). This is the first record for the Guiana Shield of a species that normally winters in the northern Andes, and it is also the easternmost in South America. Its tape-recorded call permitted North American and Ecuadorian ornithologists to separate it from the similar Eastern Wood Pewee *C. virens*, which species was more expected.

Sharpbill *Oxyruncus cristatus*

Four or five singing individuals were heard at the Massif Lucifer, near Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni, on 30 October–9 November 2006 (OC, KP). A pair was seen and tape-recorded there on 8 November 2006. This locality is typical for this rare species, which occurs on low forested hills in the interior.

Cayenne Jay *Cyanocorax cayanus*

One was tape-recorded along the Crique Limonade near Saül, at its confluence with the Crique Cochon, on 6 December 2007 (OC, TD). This jay is surprisingly rare in French Guiana, where it occurs

in lowland forest. Elsewhere in the Guiana Shield, it is mostly found at edges of white-sand forest.

Caribbean Martin *Progne dominicensis*

A male at Kourou golf course on 11 October 2007 (AV) is the first record for French Guiana. Although its wintering grounds are still unknown²⁶, they are most probably situated in northern South America, as demonstrated by observations of this species amongst a large gathering of *Progne* martins near Paranam in Surinam²² (O. Ottema pers. comm.). Flocks of larger martins should be carefully checked for this species.

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

An adult male of the race *O. o. leucorhoa* was photographed at the village of Kaw on 20 October 2006 (CB, FB; Fig. 9); the first observation for continental South America. It followed an influx of the species into the eastern USA and south-west Canada, where there was a total of 44 seen between 6 August and 4 November 2006²².

Red-capped Cardinal *Paroaria gularis*

An immature was seen in the Savane Serpent, at Stoupan near Roura, on 5 February 2007 (SU). This record is the fifth for French Guiana.

Dotted Tanager *Tangara varia*

A pair was seen at the inselberg of Armontabo, near Saint-Georges, on 18 November 2006 (OC, VP). Rare and little known in French Guiana, Meyer de Schauensee¹⁵ mentioned it for the department, and subsequently the species was observed at the Dégrad Pierrette, on the Approuague River near Régina, in December 1980 and January 1981²⁵. The only other observation is a male in Trésor Nature Reserve, near Roura, on 10 June 2005 (T. Luglia pers. comm.).



Figure 9. Male Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe leucorhoa*, Kaw, French Guiana, 20 November 2006 (F. Brochard)

Speckled Tanager *Tangara guttata*

One was seen along the trail to the Carbet Mais, near Saül, on 18 February 2007 (AV). Both previous observations are from the region of Saül, one at Belvédère on 13 May 2001 (VP)¹¹ and one between Mont Boeuf Mort and Mont Galbao on 9 August 2004 (AR).

Chestnut-vented Conebill *Conirostrum speciosum*

A pair was photographed at the Digue de Panato, near Awala-Yalimapo, on 1 April 2006, and a male was also there on 30 April 2006 (AR, MR *et al.*). The species' status in French Guiana is unknown: Tostain *et al.*²⁵ mentioned a dozen observations for the interior and a series of observations was made around Awala-Yalimapo in January 2004, where it regularly frequents second-growth forest in coastal marshes.

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra*

A male was photographed at km 14 along the Route des Plages at Rémière-Montjoly on 8 January 2006 (MM, JS), and another male was seen at Sinnamary on 28 February 2006 (FE, RP). The dates and localities are typical for this rare migrant.

Scarlet Tanager *Piranga olivacea*

An adult male was photographed at Simili, near Awala-Yalimapo, on 15 April 2007 (MD; Fig. 10). This observation is the first for the Guiana Shield⁵. The species normally winters in the western part of continental South America.

Capped Seedeater *Sporophila bouvreuil*

A male was photographed at the Ranch Terre Rouge, near Mana, in late November 2006 (JR);



Figure 10. Male Scarlet Tanager *Piranga olivacea*, Awala-Yalimapo, French Guiana, 15 April 2007 (M. Dechelle)



Figure 11. Male Capped Seedeater *Sporophila bouvreuil*, Terre Rouge, Mana, French Guiana, November 2006 (J.-C. Raffard)

Fig. 11). This observation might have involved an escaped cagebird, and was therefore not accepted by the CHG as a new species for French Guiana.

Blackpoll Warbler *Dendroica striata*

A male and female were seen along the Piste de l'Anse, Sinnamary, on 21 January 2007 (AR, MR), and one, possibly a male, was seen at the Lac du Bois Diable in Kourou on 5 December 2007 (AV). The localities and dates are typical, but there are just 12 previous observations, all between late October and mid April.

American Redstart *Setophaga ruticilla*

A female was seen along the Piste de l'Anse, Sinnamary, on 21 January 2007 (AR, MR). It accompanied two Blackpoll Warblers *Dendroica striata* in a small flock at the edge of mangrove and dry forest on a coastal sand-ridge.

Northern Waterthrush *Seiurus noveboracensis*

Singles were photographed in the marshes of Matiti along the D15 road to the Dégrad Guatemala on 7 December 2005 (MG), 7 November 2006 (MG) and 10 May 2007 (AV). A typical locality and dates

for this migrant, but this series of observations is surprising, as Northern Waterthrush had only been observed a dozen times previously in French Guiana. The scarcity of observations probably reflects its discreet behaviour and the use of mangrove as its favoured habitat.

Bobolink *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*

Three females or juveniles were seen at the Kourou golf course on 5 October 2006 (AV), one was photographed in the marshes of Matiti along the D15 road to Dégrad Guatemala on 10 February 2007 (AV) and a male was photographed at the Saut Lessé Dédé, near Papaïchton on the Lawa River, on 23 April 2007 (RP). Only three previous observations were available for French Guiana. The species has occurred in both the coastal region and the forested interior.

List of observers

The following observers are mentioned in the text: LA = Luc Ackermann, MA = Marie Avinain, BB = Bruno Bayou, CB = Charlotte Briand, FB = Fabrice Brochard, LB = Laurent Brucy, AC = Antoine & Agathe Chabrolle, MC = Marc Chrétien, OC = Olivier Claessens, MC = Michel Clément, MD = Maxime Dechelle, ND = Nicolas Delelis, PD = Patrice Dellièvre, FD = Fernand Deroussen, TD = Tanguy Deville, AD = Alain le Dreff, FE = Fabien Escalière, FE = Frédéric Espy, GF = Guillaume Feuillet, HG = Hubert Géraux, MG = Michel Giraud-Audine, BG = Bertrand Goguillon, AK = Alain Kim, DL = David Laloi, MM = Maylis Malbec, BM = Borja Mila, TL = Thomas Luglia, OO = Otte Ottema, TP = Thomas Pagnon, VP = Vincent Pelletier, RP = Rémy Pignoux, KP = Kévin Pineau, JP = Jean-Pierre Policard, LP = Laurent Ponge, SP = Sylvestre Popinet, NP = Nyls de Pracontal, JR = Jean-Charles Raffard, AR = Alexandre Renaudier, VR = Vincent Rey, MR = Marion Rodet, JS = Julien Semelin, PS = Pascal Studer, OT = Olivier Tostain, SU = Sylvain Uriot, JV = Jean-Jacques Vacquier, BV = Bruno Verdier and AV = Alexandre Vinot.

Acknowledgements

We thank all those ornithologists who made available their observations, tape-recordings and photographs of the birds mentioned in this paper. Many observations in the forested interior, especially by Olivier Claessens, were made during field work supported by the Office National des Forêts. We are grateful to the following who helped identify difficult species: Pierre Banon, Olivier Barden, Rasmus Boegh, Peter Boesman, Olivier Chastel, Normand David, Michel Gosselin, Frédéric Jiguet, Niels Krabbe, Otte Ottema and Brian O'Shea. We thank Olivier Claessens for his useful remarks and comments, Jan Hein Ribot and Johan Ingels who provided pertinent information, and the GEPOG (Groupe d'Étude et de Protection des Oiseaux en Guyane) for its support and use of its database.

Johan Ingels kindly translated the manuscript. We greatly appreciate the useful comments and editing by Guy Kirwan.

References

- Ackermann, L., Chrétien, M., Giraud-Audine, M., Vinot, A. & Ingels, J. (2008) Further observations on the Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia* in French Guiana. *Alauda* 76: 254–256.
- Bencke, G. A., Ott, P., Moreno, I., Tavares, M. & Caon, G. (2005) Old World birds new to Brazilian territory recorded in the archipelago of São Pedro and São Paulo, equatorial Atlantic Ocean. *Ararajuba* 13: 126–129.
- Claessens, O., Pelletier, V. & Ingels, J. (2005) First records of White-winged Potoo *Nyctibius leucopterus* for French Guiana. *Alauda* 73: 61–68.
- Comité d'Homologation de Guyane (2008) Liste des oiseaux de Guyane. Version December 2008. <http://pagesperso-orange.fr/GEPOG/CHG/>.
- Dechelle, M. & Ingels, J. (2007) The Scarlet Tanager *Piranga olivacea*, a new species for French Guiana. *Alauda* 75: 38–40.
- Girão, W., DiCostanzo, J., Campos, A. & Albano, C. (2006) First record of the Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* (Linnaeus, 1758) for the Brazilian mainland. *Rev. Bras. Orn.* 14: 468–469.
- Giraud-Audine, M., Ackermann, L., Tostain, O. & Ingels, J. (2007) The Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia*, a new species for French Guiana. *Alauda* 75: 421–422.
- Hamilton, J. (1981) Recoveries of wintering Roseate Terns. *J. Field Orn.* 52: 36–42.
- Haverschmidt, F. (1983) First record of the Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*) in Suriname. *Wilson Bull.* 95: 315.
- Hayes, F. E. & White, G. L. (2001) Status of the Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*) in Trinidad and Tobago. *El Pitirre* 14: 54–58.
- Ingels, J., Cleere, N. & Pelletier, V. (2003) Noteworthy observations on some French Guianan birds. *Alauda* 71: 59–67.
- Ingels, J., Cleere, N., Pelletier, V. & Hequet, V. (2008) Recent records and breeding of Rufous Potoo *Nyctibius bracteatus* in French Guiana. *Cotinga* 29: 144–148.
- Le Dreff, A. & Raynaud, P. (1993) First record of the Eurasian Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) in French Guiana. *J. Raptor Res.* 27: 125–126.
- Mercier, F., McNeil, R. & Rodriguez, J. R. (1987) First occurrence of Bar-tailed Godwit in South America, and status of the Marbled Godwit in northeastern Venezuela. *J. Field Orn.* 58: 78–80.
- Meyer de Schauensee, R. (1966) *The species of birds of South America and their distribution*. Narbeth, PA: Livingston Publishing.
- Murphy, W. L. (1992) Notes on the occurrence of the Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*) in the Americas, with reference to other Palearctic vagrants. *Colonial Waterbirds* 15: 113–123.

17. Ottema, O. (2002) A possible population of Fasciated Tiger-heron *Tigrisoma fasciatum* on the upper Coppename, Surinam. *Cotinga* 18: 103.
18. Ottema, O. (2004) Sight records of bird species new to Surinam. *Cotinga* 22: 103–104.
19. Ottema, O., Ramcharan, S., Ouboter, P. & Chin-Foe, F. (2009) Four bird species new to Surinam. *Cotinga* 32: 140–141.
20. Remsen, J. V., Cadena, C. D., Jaramillo, A., Nores, M., Pacheco, J. F., Robbins, M. B., Schulenberg, T. S., Stiles, F. G., Stotz, D. F. & Zimmer, K. J. (2008) A classification of the bird species of South America. Version 31 December 2008. www.museum.lsu.edu/~Remsen/SACCBaseline.html.
21. Restall, R., Rodner, C. & Lentino, M. (2006). *Birds of northern South America*. London, UK: Christopher Helm.
22. Ribot, J. H. (2009) Distribution of birds in Suriname. <http://webserv.nhm.nl/~ribot/english/index.htm> (accessed April 2009).
23. Silva e Silva, R. & Olmos, F. (2006) Noteworthy bird records from Fernando de Noronha, northeastern Brazil. *Rev. Bras. Orn.* 14: 470–474.
24. Smith, M. (2007) The Northern Wheatear invasion of fall 2006. *Birding* 38(3): 52–55.
25. Tostain, O., Dujardin, J.-L., Erard, C. & Thiollay, J.-M. (1992) *Oiseaux de Guyane*. Brunoy: Société d'Etudes Ornithologiques.
26. Turner, A. K. (2004) Family Hirundinidae (swallows and martins). In: del Hoyo, J., Elliott, A. & Christie, D. A. (eds.) *Handbook of the birds of the world*, 9. Barcelona: Lynx Edicions.
27. Wilson, K. (2008) The Alder Flycatcher in Cornwall – a new British bird. *Birding World* 21: 425–431.

Alexandre Renaudier

Bourg d'Awala, Rue Aliluwai, F-97319 Awala-Yalimapo, France. E-mail: alex.renaudier@wanadoo.fr.

Comité d'Homologation de Guyane

E-mail: oclaessens@wanadoo.fr.