Revision of the status of bird species occurring or reported in Colombia 2013

Revisión del estatus de las especies de aves que han sido reportadas en Colombia 2013

Thomas M. Donegan, W. Miles McMullan, Alonso Quevedo, & Paul Salaman
c/o Fundación ProAves, Cra. 20 #36–61, Bogotá, Colombia. Email: tdonegan@proaves.org

Abstract
The following species are added to Colombia's bird checklist: Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator* (photograph, San Andrés & Providencia), Black Scoter *Melanitta americana* (sight record) and Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus* (photographic record). A new subspecies of Common Bush-Tanager *Chlorospingus flavopectus olsoni* is recognized. Proposed splits are accepted of Oxypogon Helmetcrests into four species (three in Colombia), Lineated Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes albolineatus* into five species (one in Colombia), Curve-billed Scythebill *Campylorhamphus procurvooides* into three species (one in Colombia), Stipple-throated Antwren *Epinecrophylla haematonota* into at least three species (one in Colombia) and *Sirystes* into four species (two in Colombia). The Green-crowned Woodnymph *T. fannyi* is lumped back into Purple-crowned Woodnymph *T. colombica*. Dunlin *Calidris alpina* becomes a confirmed species (photograph) and Caribbean Coot *Fulica caribaea* is confirmed from mainland records (photograph). A possible vagrant record of Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* is presented. Zebra Finch *Taeniopygia guttata* and Fischer’s Lovebird *Agapornis fischeri* are new escaped species known only from sight records and Java Sparrow *Lonchura oryzivora* becomes confirmed as an escapee. Several amendments to genus and species names, English names and linear order are confirmed as an escapee. Several amendments to genus names are new escaped species known only from sight records and Java Sparrow *Lonchura oryzivora* becomes confirmed as an escapee. Several amendments to genus and species names, English names and linear order are made, following recent publications. As a result of these changes, the Colombian checklist again increases in size, for the first time for any country, passing the landmark of 1900 species (one in Colombia). Se reconocen las separaciones propuestas de Oxypogon en cuatro especies (tres en Colombia), Lepidocolaptes albolineatus en cinco especies (una en Colombia), Campylorhamphus procurvooides en tres especies (una en Colombia), Epinecrophylla haematonota en por lo menos tres especies (una en Colombia) y Sirystes en cuatro especies (dos en Colombia). Se reconoce la nueva subespecie Chlorospingus flavopectus olsoni. Thalurania fannyi se vuelve otra vez una subespecie de T. colombica. Calidris alpina se vuelve una especie confirmada (fotografía) y Fulica caribaea se confirma en el territorio continental (fotografía). Se presenta un registro de un individuo posiblemente accidental de Anas platyrhynchos. Taeniopygia guttata y Agapornis fischeri son especies exóticas registradas por observaciones y Lonchura oryzivora se vuelve especie confirmada como especie escapada. Se realizan varias modificaciones a los nombres de géneros y especies, nombres en inglés y el orden del listado. A raíz de estos cambios, el listado Colombiano aumentó nuevamente, superando 1900 especies por primera vez para cualquier país del mundo, a 1903 especies (excluyendo especies exóticas), de las cuales 1831 han sido confirmadas con registros en el continente. La gaviota Larus dominicanus se categoriza como la especie número 1900 para Colombia.

Palabras clave Mergus serrator, Melanitta americana, Larus dominicanus, Chlorospingus flavopectus olsoni, Lepidocolaptes albolineatus, Oxypogon, Campylorhamphus procurvooides, Epinecrophylla haematonota, Sirystes, Larus dominicanus, listado, aves, Colombia.

Introduction
This is the 13th year of the National checklist to the Birds of Colombia, a list which has grown steadily, as set out in three checklist books (Salaman et al. 2001, 2008b, 2010), two field guide editions (McMullan et al. 2010, 2011) and recent annual updates (Salaman et al. 2008a, Donegan et al. 2009, 2010a, 2011, 2012). The checklist will be available online in the near future. This paper sets out details of further changes to the Colombian list since our last update was published in October 2012.

New for Science
Common Bush-Tanager *Chlorospingus flavopectus olsoni*

We recognize this new subspecies for science, described from the east slope of the East Andes (Avendaño et al. 2013). It is illustrated in Fig. 1.
Species added

Black Scoter *Melanitta americana*
Sight record of seven individuals at sea between Utría and El Valle reported by Barnes (2013) during February 2013. An escaped origin is not a plausible explanation for so many sea-ducks, compared to vagrancy. The locality of the observation is more consistent with vagrancy. Although the report lacks detail, this species would be familiar to the observers. The species is added as known only from sight records (Obs) for Colombia. It is hoped that further information relating to these records will be published in due course.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*
Photographic records off San Andrés and Providencia (Ward-Bolívar & Lasso-Zapata 2012) leave no doubt that this migratory duck species can now be added to Colombia’s checklist. It is included as confirmed for the San Andrés region (SA) but not on the mainland. Various other records of this species in Mexico, Belize and elsewhere were overlooked in the summary of Caribbean records accompanying publication of this record (e.g. Howell & Webb 1995, Jones et al. 2002). As for Black Scoter, an escaped origin does not seem a plausible explanation compared to vagrancy.

Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus*
A photographic record by Fagan & McMullan (2013) allows the species to be considered confirmed for Colombia’s mainland.

Splits and lumps considered

**Crowned Woodnymphs* Thalurania colombica/fannyi**
Green- and Purple-crowned Woodnymphs are lumped following publication of details of intermediate populations in Serranía de San Lucas and the northern Central Cordillera (Donegan 2012a), consistent with Remsen et al. (2013a) and Chesser et al. (2013)’s approach. Escalante-Pliego & Peterson (1992) had previously split the two species. The new treatment is a reversion to Hilty & Brown (1986)’s taxonomy. This results in a change in English name for *T. colombica* back to Crowned Woodnymph and deletion of Green-crowned Woodnymph *T. fannyi* from the checklist as a species, *fannyi* becoming a subspecies of *colombica*.

**Green-bearded Helmetcrest* Oxypogon guerinii**
**Blue-bearded Helmetcrest* O. cyanolaemus**
**Buffy Helmetcrest* O. stubellii**
We accept the splits set out in Collar & Salaman (2013), resulting in recognition of three species occurring in Colombia, *guerinii* in the Central Andes, *cyanolaemus* in Santa Marta and *stubellii* in the East Andes. All are known from specimen records in Colombia so can be considered confirmed for the country.

**Lineated Woodcreeper* Lepidocolaptes albolineatus**
**Duida Woodcreeper* L. duidae**
Batista Rodrigues et al. (2013) published data on the striking vocal differences and relatively deep (>3.4% mtDNA) molecular structure between five proposed species in this group. Populations in Eastern Colombia, which remain known only from sight records (Willis 1998, Donegan et al. 2010) should now be considered part of Duida Woodcreeper *L. duidae*. We accept this split, resulting in a change in name for Colombian populations from *albolineata* to *duidae*.

**Curve-billed Scythebill* Campylorhamphus procurvoides**
Populations of this species in Colombia (subspecies *sanus*) are closely related to *C. (p.) gyldenstolpei*, which was described by Aleixo et al. (2013). Vocal differences between these two taxa and nominate *procurvoides* are only in the note shape of part of the song; and in note shape of a call comprising a single note similar to the variable note of the song. Typically for antbirds, multiple (>3) diagnostic vocal differences are recommended to treat populations as separate species (Isler et al. 1998). In the absence of studies into the extent of vocal variation between sympatric scythebills (e.g. Brown-billed and Red-billed Scythebills in Colombia), we treat *sanus*, *procurvoides* and *gyldenstolpei* as allopatrically distributed subspecies of the same species. Molecular (<1.2% mtDNA), biometric and plumage differences between the three taxa initially appear relatively minor. We instead adopt Aleixo et al. (2013)’s alternative three-way split of *procurvoides* (including *sanus* and *gyldenstolpei*) from extralimital species *probatus* (including recently-described *cardosoi* of Portes et al. 2013) and *multostriatus*. Such a
treatment separates out vocally highly divergent populations with deep (4.3%-6.7%) molecular differentiation and avoids paraphyly with eastern populations of Red-billed Scythebill *C. trochilirostris*. However, further splitting of *procurvoides* (or other taxa in this complex) lack support of a detailed vocal study. Further consideration needs to be given to vernacular names for this group and to the inclusion of vocally distinctive Colombian populations of *C. trochilirostris* (cf. Donegan 2012a) in molecular studies. No change of names of Colombian populations results from accepting Aleixo *et al.* (2013)’s three-way split.

**Amazonian Barred Woodcreeper *Dendrocolaptes certhia***

Batista *et al.* (2013) proposed a multi-pronged split of this species based on molecular and morphological differentiation. However, they also found the loudsong of newly described *D. retentus* not to “differ constantly from those of other taxa in the *D. certhia* complex”. Moreover, all proposed split taxa demonstrate less than 2% mtDNA differences. We do not recognize proposed splits in this species in the absence of a detailed vocal study.

**Stipple-throated Antwren *Epinecrophylla haematonota*  "Negro Stipple-throated Antwren" *Epinecrophylla pyrrhonota***

Whitney *et al.* (2013) have proposed treating *E. pyrrhonota*, and others as species separate from *E. haematonota* based on impressive molecular differentiation and some vocal and plumage differences. Differences in loudsongs appear to fall a little below those generally regarded as necessary for recognition of species in antbirds (Isler *et al.* 1998, Remsen *et al.* 2013). Molecular results included impressive (>5%) differentiation between various groups in a polytomy comprising: *spodionota, dentei+amazonica, haematonota+fjeldsaai* and *pyrrhonota*. Because *spodionota* and *pyrrhonota* are fully sympatric in the East Andes of Colombia (Salaman *et al.* 2002) and specimens from the zone of sympathy were sampled in the molecular study, lumping the polytomy is not a viable proposition. Proposed new species *E. (amazonica) dentei* is a weaker candidate for species rank but extralimital for Colombia so its status does not require consideration here. Recognition of this split results in a change of the name for populations occurring in Colombia from *haematonota* to *pyrrhonota*.

**Choco Sirystes *S. albogriseus*  White-rumped Sirystes *S. alboinereus***

The split of Western from Eastern Sirystes (Ridgely & Greenfield 2001) and of Eastern Sirystes into three species (Donegan 2013b) are adopted here, resulting in recognition of two species occurring in Colombia. Both are known from specimen records in Colombia, so they can both be considered confirmed.

**Changes of Category**

**Pink-footed Shearwater *Puffinus creatopus***

Previously known in Colombia only from sight records in the late 1970s (Hilty & Brown 1986). Mangel *et al.* (2013) placed satellite trackers on a number of individuals, revealing 2% of subsequent transmissions of this Vulnerable species from Colombian waters. A number of records come from maritime regions of the south-west Pacific region of Colombia in particular. Figure 2 shows movements of one individual, which reached the Colombia/Ecuador marine border on or around 7 October 2009, moved northwards up the Pacific coast of Colombia, presumably through seas bordering deptos. Narino, Cauca and Valle to Chocó almost up to the Panamanian border on 20 October 2009 and then returned back into Ecuadorian waters by 27 October 2009.

![Figure 2](http://www.seaturtle.org/tracking/index.shtml?tag_id=39144&anime=1&lang, reproduced in Fig. 2. Other individuals appear to have been registered in Colombia by Mangel *et al.* (2013: Fig. 6) using similar methods. Consistent with recent acceptance of other satellite transmitter records (e.g. Fea's Petrel for South America: Ramirez *et al.* 2013, Remsen *et al.* 2013), this species is now considered confirmed for Colombia.

**Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos***

Discussed in several previous checklist updates (Salaman *et al.* 2008a, Donegan *et al.* 2010). Another record is of a male showing typical wild plumage and morphology
observed at Laguna Santoya, mun. Cabuyaro, dpto. Meta (04°13’57.7''N, 72°49’14.7’W) on 8 January 2011 by A. Quevedo. This is a remote location in the Colombian llanos, far from any major human settlement. The individual was free flying, associating with an Orinoco Goose Neochen jubata. This record is considered more likely than not to pertain to a vagrant from northern populations, given its state of plumage and distance from major human habitations. Mallard is also reported as a vagrant or migrant in the Orinoco region of Venezuela by Restall et al. (2006).

Mallard is introduced in Bogotá (Salaman et al. 2008a, Donegan et al. 2010). There are populations of c. 30-40 individuals at Simón Bolívar, c. 20-25 at Parque Timiza, and records of smaller numbers of birds at other localities such as Parque de los Novios, Salitre, Humedal Santa María del Lago and Humedal Jaboque, but many of these individuals are leucistic, melanistic and/or of inelegant morphology, descended from domesticated birds. This possible vagrant record may cast light on the status of the elevated numbers of individuals, including several "wild-type" birds at Parque Timiza in December 2007-January 2008 (Salaman et al. 2008a) which were not seen in subsequent visits (Donegan et al. 2010).

Mallard changes in status to being both an established introduced species (Int) (based on the long-established Bogotá park populations) and a vagrant based only on sight records (Obs), a unique category on the Colombian checklist.

**Caribbean Coot Fulica caribaea**

Previously regarded as known only from sight records on San Andrés island (Donegan et al. 2010). The species is here upgraded from "SA Obs" to confirmed on the mainland, on account of Ellery (2013)'s photographic record of an individual which in all likelihood appears to be of this species.

**Dunlin Calidris alpina**

Upgraded from "Obs" to confirmed, on account of Fagan & McMullan (2013)'s impressive and unmistakable photographic records of this species. The species was known in Colombia previously only from sight records (Salaman 1995, Donegan et al. 2010).

**Java Sparrow Lonchura oryzivora**

Changed from "escaped" and known only from sight records (Esc and Obs) to being confirmed as an escaped species (Esc only), based on the photographs and sound recordings in Donegan (2013a).

**Colombia's 1900th bird**

Following the records discussed here, Colombia, the world's most diverse country for birds, becomes the first country in which 1900 bird species have been recorded (Table 1, Fig. 3). This landmark is a testament to the outstanding work of the Colombian ornithological community as well as the collaboration of a growing contingent of birders visiting Colombia.

In date order, Colombia's list can be considered to have changed as follows (in chronological order):

**1898** (2012 checklist total) (Donegan et al. 2012)

**1899** (Earlier, but nominally for present purposes) Red-breasted Merganser Mergus serrator, 4 January 2008

**1898** Data concerning lump of Thalurania published, T. fannyi removed: September 2012.

**1899** Black Scoter record – February 2013

**1900** Kelp Gull record – 25 March 2013

1901-3 novel splits recognized in this edition.

The honor of reaching this milestone therefore falls to Jesse Fagan, Miles McMullan and colleagues for their Kelp Gull record. This is one of a string of new records of vagrants uncovered by the increasing number of birding tours taking place in Colombia.

Figure 3 shows how Colombia's bird checklist has increased over time, with large numbers of new records and taxonomic treatments between publication of Meyer de Schauensee (1964) and Hilty & Brown (1986)'s first field guides and Salaman et al. (2001)'s first checklist. From 2001 to 2009 the Colombian list remained fairly static, despite many new records being published (e.g. Salaman et al. 2008a), as these were offset as a result of species split by Salaman et al. (2001) being lumped to follow earlier editions of Remsen et al. (2013) (in Salaman et al. 2007). Moreover, several species known only from dubious records were removed from the checklist (in Salaman et al. 2007, 2008b, Donegan et al. 2009, 2010). In the last few years, the Colombian list has grown steadily with new records and in light of the findings of taxonomic research (summarised in Donegan et al. 2010, 2011, 2012 and herein), both which have been facilitated by the improving security situation in Colombia.
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Table 1: Summary of changes resulting in changes of numbers of species in particular categories and new species total.

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<td>Buffy Helmetcrest <em>O. stubelii</em></td>
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TOTAL BIRD SPECIES FOR COLOMBIA 1,903

Genus names, linear order, spellings, English names and pended proposals

The following additional changes to names and orders, which are either under consideration or have been accepted by Remsen et al. (2013a), are relevant to Colombia and adopted here. Proposal numbers and, where appropriate, key references supporting these changes are cited below:

543. English names for Schiffornis (genus and species) (F.G. Stiles) (except usage of "Western Schiffornis" instead of "Northern Schiffornis" for western S. viraepacis).
558. Treat Thalurania fannyi and Thalurania colombica as conspecific (Donegan 2012a) (see above).
578. Divide Arainga into four genera (Remsen et al. 2013b) (J.V. Remsen & A. Urantówka).
583. Change English name for Myrmeciza immaculata (II) to "Blue-lored Antbird" (T. Donegan).
589A. Split Epinecrophylla haematonota (M. Isler) (see above).
591. Revise the classification of the Pipridae (Ohlson et al. 2013) (J.V. Remsen).
594B. Revise linear sequences of species in Cinclodes (Derryberry et al. 2011) (J.V. Remsen).
599. Revise classification of the Psittaciformes (Joseph et al. 2012) (J.V. Remsen) (noting in addition that escaped species Melopsittacus undulatus, Nymphicus hollandicus and Agapornis fischeri are Psittaculidae and Cacatua galerita is a Cacatuidae).
The following AOU-SACC proposal was already dealt with prior to this publication for the Colombian list:

566. Treat Geotrygon purpurata as a separate species from G. saphirina (Donegan & Salaman 2012).

We pend a decision on the following matters that are subject to ongoing AOU–SACC discussions, until next year:

570. Change the English names of Chlorospingus species from “Bush-Tanager” to “Chlorospingus” (J.V. Remsen).
572. Recognize Cracidae subfamilies (II) (Donegan 2012b)
573. Split Gymnophithys leucaspis into two species (Brumfield et al. 2007) (B. Freeman)

We also pend decisions on species limits in Three-striped Warbler Basileuterus tristriatus (Gutiérrez-Pinto et al. 2012), Sclerusus (d’Horta et al. 2013) and Henicorhina leuophrys (Caro et al. 2013) to give time for other apparently forthcoming publications on these groups.

Newly Recorded Escaped species

Fischer’s Lovebird Agapornis fischeri
Three individuals were observed in the field at vereda el Totumo, mun. Ibagüé, dpto. Tolima (00°23’N, 75°11’N, 1,100 m), associating with a flock of Orange-chinned Parakeet Brotogeris jugularis by William Figueroa (pers. comm. to A. Quevedo) in June 2010. The species is known to be held in captivity in Colombia (Baptiste et al. 2010, Donegan 2013a) but has not previously been recorded free flying. It is added as an escaped species (Esc) owing to lack of evidence of any established or breeding population.

Zebra Finch Taeniopygia guttata
Donegan et al. (2012) concluded that despite the existence of two Colombian museum specimens, there are no acceptable records of this species in Colombia, even as escapes. Just weeks after this publication, T. Ellery (in litt. 2012) reported an escaped bird in west Bogotá at Barrio Villa Gladys, calle 64c, carrera 112, near Humedal Jaboque in October 2012. The bird was captured and brought to Ellery in an office in central Bogotá. However, no photographic record was made. The individual was kept in captivity by its finder but died some weeks later. Notably, several other escaped bird species have been recorded recently in the Humedal Jaboque area (e.g. Cortés & Donegan 2012). The individual recorded here is clearly an isolated escapee. Zebra Finch can now (finally) be added as an escaped, non-established species but without a confirmed record (Esc and Obs).

Threat Categories

Updates to the threat status of a single species occurring in Colombia follows a further review process by BirdLife International that concluded in September 2013: Black-browed Albatross Thalassarche melanophrys changes from EN to NT.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to Jesse Fagan and Trevor Ellery for advance sight of their papers in this issue, to Trevor Ellery and William Figueroa for allowing us to publish details of their sight records of escaped species and to Juan Carlos Verhelst and Alex Monsalve for their comments. We acknowledge the work of Remsen et al. (2013a) (American Ornithologists’ Union South American Classification Committee), which annually leads to multiple helpful enhancements being made to the Colombian checklist.

References


