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Slender–billed Schiffornis *Schiffornis stenorhyncha*, a newly split near–endemic species for Colombia proposed in a paper in this issue. Photograph taken at Santa Cecilia, Bolivar on 7th January 2010. Photo by Blanca Huertas and Thomas Donegan.

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Conservación Colombiana es publicada gracias al apoyo de nuestros donantes:



First record of Rufous-breasted Wood-Quail *Odontophorus speciosus* for Colombia

Primer registro de la Perdiz Pechirrufa Odontophorus speciosus para Colombia

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Abstract

We present the first confirmation of Rufous-breasted Wood-Quail (*Odontophorus speciosus*) for Colombia with sound-recordings from the east slope of the Andes in southern Nariño near the Ecuadorian border.

Resumen

Se presenta la primera confirmación de *Odontophorus speciosus* en Colombia por medio de grabaciones de los cantos en la vertiente oriental de los Andes al sur de Nariño, cerca de la frontera con Ecuador.

The Wood-Quails (genus *Odontophorus*) are a group of birds that comprises 15 species restricted to the Neotropics (Carroll 1994) ranging from central Mexico to northeastern Argentina and being the richest genus in the Odontophoridae (Johnsgard 1979). They are small birds that inhabit most tropical and subtropical forests and because of their secretive habits are far better known by their beautiful dueted vocalizations heard at dawn or dusk (Johnsgard 1979, McMullan *et al.* 2010). The fact that knowledge of the natural history of most species is lacking and that these birds have often been overlooked by historic collecting efforts, have led to a number of recent range extensions for members of this genus in Colombia (*e.g.* Stiles *et al.* 1999, Salaman *et al.* 2002, 2004) and promoted study and discovery of important populations of some species (*e.g.* Donegan *et al.* 2005, Fierro-Calderón & Franco 2006).

Because Wood-Quails are generally highly associated to dense forest, deforestation is a major threat to them and this is mainly why six of the species are listed as of conservation concern (IUCN 2011). Furthermore, although most species are considered of low conservation priority, their subpopulations and subspecies may be highly threatened due to habitat loss and fragmentation (*e.g.* *O. hyperythrus*), and this is why experts have recommended an assessment of the taxonomic and conservation status especially of the Andean Wood-Quails in order to effectively protect their populations (Fuller *et al.* 2000).

Colombia is the country with the highest number of Wood-Quail species recorded within its borders. Seven species are widely known to occur within the country (Hilty & Brown 1986, McMullan *et al.* 2010), including two endemic species

(*O. strophium* and *O. hyperythrus*) and three near endemic (*O. atrifrons*, *O. dialeucos* and *O. melanonotus*). Here, we present the first confirmed record of Rufous-breasted Wood-Quail (*Odontophorus speciosus*) for Colombia.

The Rufous-breasted Wood-Quail was found in a subtropical foothill forest of southeast Nariño department, in the eastern slope of the Andes in southwestern Colombia. This species was previously considered to occur in foothills and tropical and subtropical forest below 1,700 m in Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia (Carroll 1994) and is described as scarce and local in Ecuador (Ridgely & Greenfield 2001).

Several family groups (at least four) were heard between 1,300–1,700 m elevation on both sides of the Chingual River (00° 28'N 77° 31'W) between 12–18 of May 2011. The Chingual River forms the border between Colombia and Ecuador and the basin is in general composed of steep intact forest, with very little intervention. Sound recordings were obtained on the Colombian side of the river and compared with other three species of *Odontophorus* that occur in the region (Figure 1). Rufous-breasted Wood-Quail can be distinguished in voice from Chestnut Wood-Quail *O. hyperythrus*, which extends on the East Andes down to the head of the Magdalena Valley in Huila department, and from Marbled Wood-Quail *O. gujanensis*, widespread in the Neotropics and found in the Amazonian lowlands and foothills of the east slope of the Andes up to 700 m (Salaman *et al.* 2004), due to its higher pitched and simpler song with clear spaces between phrases. The song of Rufous-breasted Wood-Quail is more similar to the song of Dark-backed Wood-Quail *O. melanonotus*, of the Pacific foothills in western Nariño and northwestern Ecuador, as also stated by Ridgely & Greenfield (2001). In this case, notes of the former are more spaced and this can be noted comparing the first three seconds of both recordings analyzed (Figure 1).

Wood-Quails have recently been heard on the Pasto-Mocoa road (M. McMullan pers. obs.) and may also have been of this species or of *O. hyperythrus*. The latter species was reported in nearby Serranía de los Churumbelos, Cauca between 1,450–2,500 m with Marbled Wood-Quail *O. gujanensis* at lower elevation sites (Salaman *et al.* 1999, 2004, 2007). Available sound recordings from the latter study were checked, but did not include *Odontophorus*

recordings (P. Salaman & T. Donegan *in litt.* 2011). Recordings of other expedition participants would need to be checked to confirm the species involved.

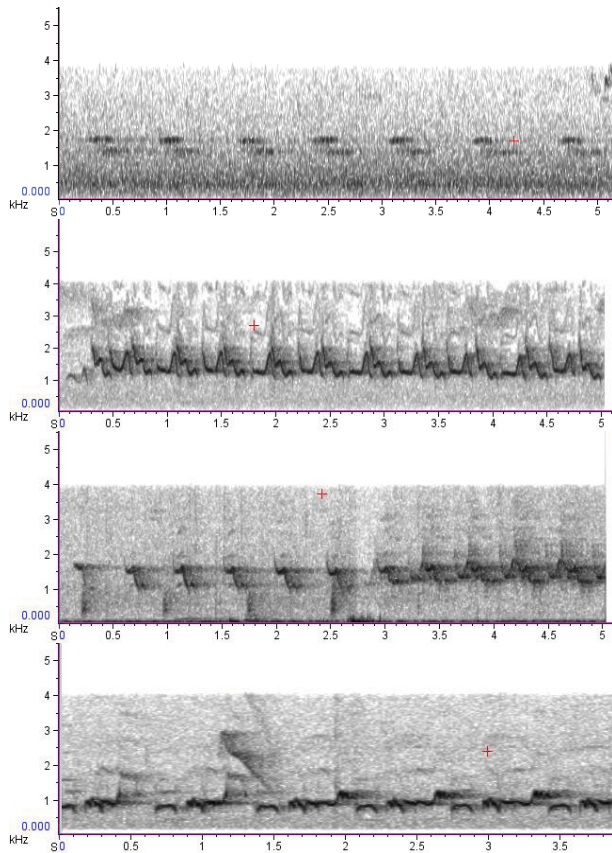


Figure 1. Comparison of sonograms of four species of Wood-Quails (*Odontophorus*). Recordings available in www.xeno-canto.org. From top to bottom: first, *O. speciosus* recorded in SE Nariño (Colombia) by Christian Olaciregui; catalogue no.: XC81797. Second, *O. gujanensis* recorded in Serranía de Las Quinchas (East Andes – Colombia) by Nick Athanas; catalogue no.: XC32220. Third, *O. melanonotus* recorded in Mindo (Pichincha, Ecuador) by Roger Ahlman; catalogue no.: XC12993. Fourth, *O. hyperythrus* from El Mirador Natural Reserve (Quindío) recorded by Frank Lambert; catalogue no.: XC16847. Note: All recordings are edited; first 5 seconds of each vocalization are shown.

This novel record is a distribution extension for Rufous-breasted Wood-Quail and the first confirmation of the species for Colombia. The subspecies involved is assumed to be *soederstroemii* based on Carroll (1994). Groups heard on the Ecuadorian side of Chingual River (0°28' N 77°31' O, La Bonita, Sucumbíos Province) would represent the northernmost record for this species within that country. Previously, it was known to occur in Ecuador up to the Rio Verde area (Vriesendorp *et al.* 2009) meaning our records represent an extension of 27 km for the species. Colombia, with eight confirmed species of wood-quails (50% total

species) will continue to be the richest country in terms of these important gallinaceous birds, followed by Panamá with six species. Starred Wood-Quail (*Odontophorus stellatus*) could also occur in extreme SE Colombia and should be looked for.

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