Spizaetus

Neotropical Raptor Network Newsletter

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Asio stygius in Colombia

Glaucidium brasilianum in Costa Rica

Falco femoralis in El Salvador

Harpia harpyja in Ecuador

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Table of Contents

The NRN is a membership-based organization. Its goal is to aid the research and conservation of Neotropical raptors by promoting communication and collaboration among biologists, raptor enthusiasts, and other conservationists working in the Neotropics. To join please e-mail the NRN coordinator, Marta Curti, at mcurti@peregrinefund.org, stating your interest in Neotropical raptor research and conservation.

Ferruginous Pygmy-owl (*Glaucidium brasilianum*) predation on a Rose-breasted Grosbeak (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) in Alajuela, Costa Rica

By **David Araya-H.**[1], **Sergio A. Villegas-Retana**[1] and **Erick Rojas**[2]

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The Ferruginous Pygmy-owl (*Glaucidium brasilianum*) is a small strigid that weighs between 45 and 95 g and measures 15 cm long. Like other species in the genus *Glaucidium*, this species is active mostly at dawn and sunset, though it can also hunt in daylight or at night (Proudfoot and Beason 1997, König et al. 1999). This pygmy-owl inhabits deserts, deciduous and evergreen forests, woodland, semi-open areas, second growth forests, plantations and suburban areas. Its distribution ranges from the southeastern United States to central Argentina and from 0 to above 2000 masl. (Proudfoot and Beason 1997, König et al. 1999). In Costa Rica the Ferruginous Pygmy-owl is a common resident in the northwestern lowlands and hills of the Pacific and Central Valley up to 1500 m.a.s.l. (Stiles and Skutch 1989). Pygmy owls are known to prey on large insects, small vertebrates, reptiles and also birds (Proudfoot and Beason 1997, König et al. 1999).

The Rose-breasted Grosbeak (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) is 18 cm long and is distributed from southern Canada to central and western United States. It winters from Mexico to Venezuela and Peru (Stiles and Skutch 1989, Brewer 2016). This species inhabits second growth forests. During winter it frequents open wooded areas, forest edges, gardens and plantations. The Rose-breasted Grosbeak can be found up to 3800 masl. In Costa Rica, where it is an uncommon to common winter resident and passage migrant (Stiles e Skutch 1989, Wyatt and Francis 2002, Garrigues and Dean 2014) it is most likely present between Mid-October and Mid-April. This bird has been reported as prey of diurnal raptors such as Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) (Wendt et al. 1991), Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*) and Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*) (Wyatt and Francis 2002). There are no known reports of Ferruginous Pygmy-owl preying on Rose-breasted

Grosbeak. Here we present the first record of this predation event.

Observation

On 7 April 2016 ER was birdwatching at a coffee plantation in la Guaria of Piedades Sur, San Ramón, Alajuela, Costa Rica (10°05'56"N 84°32'39"W). At 17:30 hrs he heard a pair of Clay-colored Thrush At 17:30 hrs he heard a pair of Clay-colored Thrush (*Turdus grayi*) making some alarm calls and observed a few Red-legged Honeycreepers (*Cyanerpes cyaneus*) acting restless. He scanned the surrounding trees to find a Ferruginous Pygmy-owl perched in a guava tree (*Psidium guajava*) 2 meters from the ground holding a Rose-breasted Grosbeak in its left talons. The owl stayed for around 10 minutes and then carried its prey a few meters away to another guava tree, where it spent another 5 minutes. During the observation period, the owl remained quiet and in alert status. After that the owl flew away to an inga tree (*Inga spp.*). Since the observation was made after the prey had already been killed, the entire predation event was not recorded. After the owl flew for the second time, it was not followed, so as not to disturb it.

Discussion

Ferruginous Pygmy-owls are generalist predators and bird predation is well known for this species. Birds make up around 10% of its diet, which includes species that are larger than themselves (Proudfoot and Beasom 1997). The observations documented here could be related to the fact that, in this case, both predator and prey share the same habitat as both species are relatively common in plantations (i.e. coffee) and are also found at similar altitudes in Costa Rica (Stiles and Skutch 1989, Garrigues and Dean 2014). Besides that, the abundance of *P. ludovicianus* as a winter resident and passage migrant could also be important since Preston (1990) mentions that there is a relationship between prey density and the predation on them.

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Notes on Stygian Owl (*Asio stygius*) breeding in Bogotá, Colombia

By **Reinaldo Vanegas[1], David Ricardo Rodríguez-Villamil[2,3]** and **Sergio Chaparro-Herrera[4,5]**

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Adult Stygian Owl was present in the nest during one of our visits. Photo © Reinaldo Vanegas.

There are six subspecies of Stygian Owl (*Asio stygius*) distributed from western Mexico to Paraguay and northern Argentina from sea level up to 3,100 masl. The Stygian Owl inhabits forests, forest borders and open areas with some trees (König et al. 2008, Chaparro-Herrera et al. 2015, Olsen and Kirwan 2017). In Colombia it is found in the western Andes in the Cauca and Valle del Cauca Departments; in the central Andes from Antioquia to Nariño and in the eastern An-


Stygian Owl nestling (in various stages of development) and egg. Photos © Reinaldo Vanegas.

des from Santander to Huila principally between 1,700 and 3,000 masl (Hilty and Brown 1986, Chaparro-Herrera et al. 2015). A recent record from Apia (Risaralda) extends its known distribution range in the western Andes (J. Sanabria, *pers. comm.*).

In Colombia there is little information about the nesting and breeding biology of this species. The known records include: a breeding female from 8 May in the city of Bucaramanga-Santander (with no other information available) (Borrero 1955); an adult and two nestlings in Monserrate (Bogota D. C.) in May 1991 (M. Brand in BAO 2000); and one juvenile in Santa Elena (Medellín, Antioquia) at the beginning of July 2016 (I. Mesa *pers. comm.*). In other countries it has been documented nesting throughout the year on the ground or in trees and bushes using old nests built by other birds. Females lay two or three white eggs (BAO 2000, Lopes et al. 2004, Phillips 2011, Holt et al. 2014). Here we present some notes about a Stygian Owl nest and eggs in Bogota, Colombia, which represent new information about its breeding biology in the country.

In 2011, a Stygian Owl nest was found in the Parque Ecológico Distrital de Montaña El Delirio, located in the town of San Cristobal in southern Bogotá (4° 33' N; 74° 03'W, 2900 masl). Unfortunately, RV does not have an exact date for this discovery. The nest was located on the ground in a stunted forest of approximately five meters in height, composed mainly of encenil-

Young Stygial Owl photographed during the authors' last visit to the nest. Photo © Reinaldo Vanegas.

los (*Weinmannia* sp.), glory bushes (*Miconia squamulosa*), heaths and ferns *(Pteridium aquilinum*) and some outstanding scattered trees (*Clusia* sp.). The nest was located in a depression in the ground and was identified as "simple unlined" by Simon and Pacheco (2005). On the first visit, we observed one rounded white egg. Three days later, we found two eggs but we did not measure them. On several occasions during these and subsequent visits, we observed one of the adults flying from the nest to the top of some nearby shrubs, usually encenillos (*Weinmannia* sp.). It usually flew between four and nine meters away from the nest whenever observers approached. On subsequent visits, we were able to observe the development of the nestling (only one of the eggs hatched).

During the last observation period, when we approached the nest, the nestling began to sway from side to side while extending its wings and at the same time making "clicking" sounds with its beak (see: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DupVZxGWPJQ). At this time, the nestling already exhibited some growth of its flight feathers as well as the black coloration of its mask.

This observation, though lacking information on nesting dates, nest or egg measurements, or

detailed monitoring of plumage development in nestlings, does comprise the first contribution of reproductive aspects of the Stygian Owl, which have been unknown in the country. At the same time, it is an invitation to carry out further studies on this and other owls, since we lack knowledge of basic aspects of the biology of these species in Colombia.

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Increase of the geographic distribution of Aplomado Falcon (*Falco femoralis*) in El Salvador

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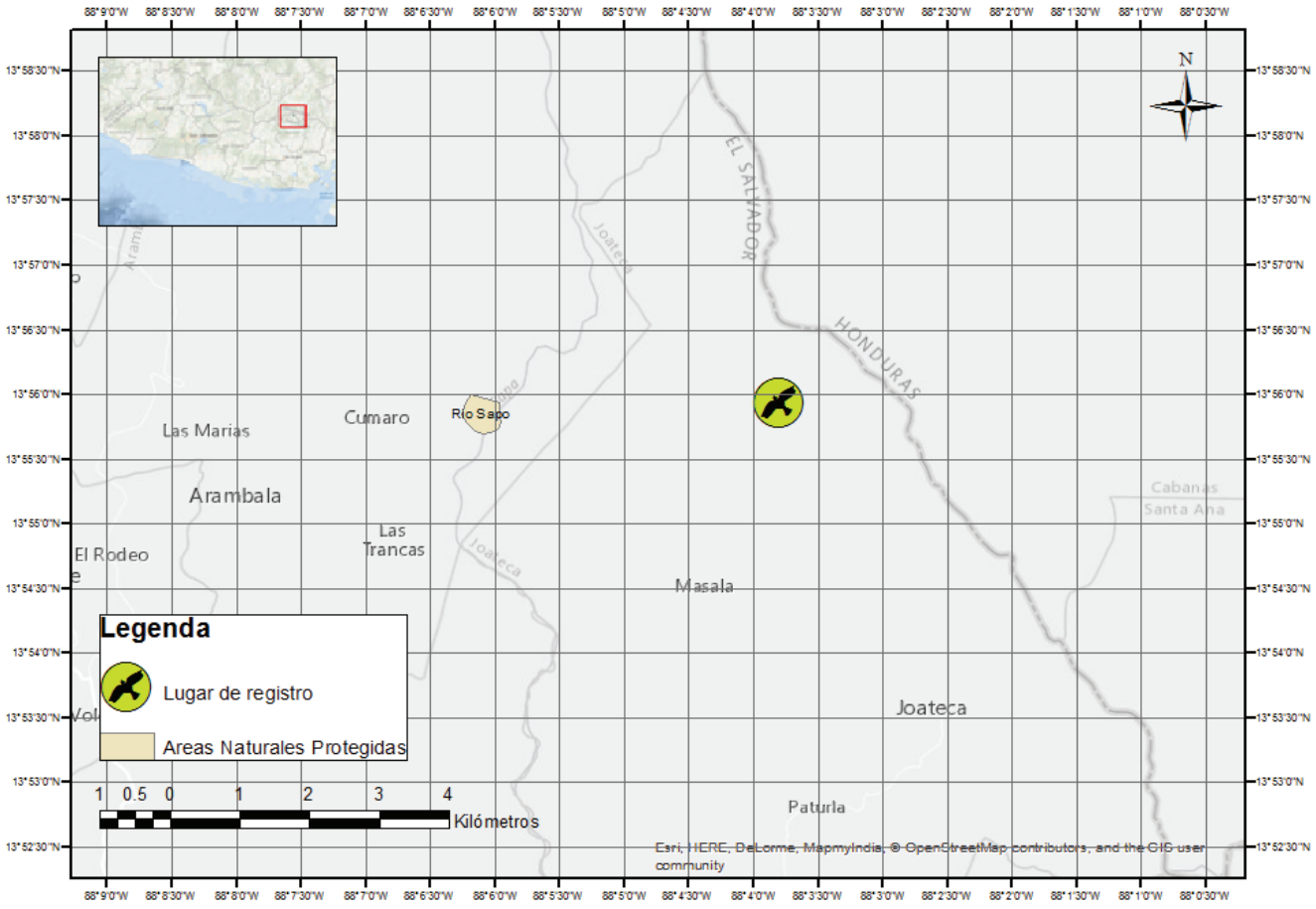
The Aplomado Falcon (*Falco femoralis*) is found from the extreme southwestern United States to Mexico, locally in Central America (rarely frequenting Belize, the Mosquitia [Mosquito Coast], rare in Honduras, and a vagrant in other parts of northern Central America – it is present in Nicaragua and Panama) and throughout South America (with the exception of the forested Amazon) to Tierra del Fuego and the Falkland Islands.

According to Lee-Jones and Komar (2006), the increase in the number and intensity of storms and hurricanes in the Caribbean could impact bird migration. There have been several reports of birds observed outside of their known range during and after hurricanes in Central America. The authors suggest that it is probable that a small population of Aplomado Falcons exists on the coast of El Salvador. This short note documents the presence of one live Aplomado Falcon in El Salvador, which serves as the most recent record for the species and an increase in its geographical range for the country.

The Aplomado Falcon prefers savannas, cleared groves, and pasturelands with isolated trees. It often searches for prey from an exposed perch. When prey is spotted, the falcon takes off in fast pursuit and returns to the exposed perch to consume its quarry, which includes mainly birds but also small mammals and large insects. This species takes advantage of pastureland fires, sometimes pursuing prey as they are fleeing the smoke and flames. It can be seen at dusk, catching and eating prey in flight. Its altitudinal range runs to 3,610 feet (1,100 masl) (Howell and Webb 1995; Stiles and Skutch 2007; Fagan and Komar 2016).



Map showing location of Aplomado Falcon record in the La Ermita Natural Protected Area

The male measures 38 cm in length and weighs around 220g. The female measures 43 cm with a weight of 330g. The striking pattern on the face is diagnostic. Adults of both sexes are blackish above including malar and postocular stripes. Its cheeks, throat, chest and the broad stripe that goes from the top of the eye to the nape are buffy colored. Its sides and the lower chest are blackish with white barring. Its abdomen, thighs and the infracaudal region are cinnamon-colored. And its long tail is blackish with grey barring. The iris is dark brown, and the cere, eye-ring and legs are yellow. Immatures are similar to adults but darker brown and their chest is striated with black. The vocalizations consist of repetitive notes and penetrating whistles (Howell and Webb 1995; Stiles and Skutch 2007; Fagan and Komar 2016). Some similar species include Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), which has wider wings and a shorter tail, a bolder moustachial stripe, and lacks the black ventral band; Bat Falcon (*F. rufigularis*), which is smaller; and the Orange-breasted Falcon (*F. dei-*

Photographs of *Falco femoralis* in La Ermita Natural Protected Area. Photos © Christian Aguirre Alas.

roleucus), which is more easily confused with Peregrine Falcon, as both have blackish heads and lack distinct white tail bars (Howell and Webb 1995).

In El Salvador, Ibarra-Portillo (2009) reported the presence of an Aplomado Falcon in the country for the first time. The individual was found dead, after having collided with a plane in September 2005. It was documented by airport runway personnel of the El Salvador International Airport (13°26'N 89°03'O), located in the municipality of San Luis Talpa, La Paz Department. It is unknown whether the collision occurred within or outside of the territory of El Salvador. The specimen was deposited in the El Salvador Museum of Natural History (MUNHES) with the code number 60836.

On a regional level, the Aplomado Falcon is classified as a species of Least Concern, with a declining population (IUCN 2016). In regard to El Salvador, the Aplomado Falcon isn't found on the official list of threatened or endangered wildlife species (MARN 2015). Ibarra-Portillo (2013) classified the species as migratory vagrant for the country.

Location of Latest Record

The La Ermita Natural Protected Area, with an extension of 169.87 hectares, is located in the mountainous zone of the Arambala and Joateca Municipalities, in northern Morazan Department, in the high basin of Sapo River, which also forms the basin of the Torolo River. The area is a mosaic of intervened vegetation and pine-oak forests which have suffered overexploitation of resources due to fires, selective logging and invasive plague species (Herrera 2011).

Widening Distribution

On October 24, 2016, during a sampling tour within the framework of the project "Biodiversity baseline in sites of interest in the north of Chalatenango, Cabañas and Morazán" (Pineda et.al. 2016), an adult Aplomado Falcon was pho-

tographed at the coordinates 13 ° 55 '941 "N and 88 ° 3' 806" W at 961 masl, 200 m before the control booth of the La Ermita Natural Protected Area.

The bird was seen at 1645 hrs, perched on the branch of a bare pine tree approximately 150 m away. It was observed for five seconds before it flew into the forest to the northeast and briefly returned on a southwest course in a dive. At this point, the observers were able to take two photographs of the individual using a Canon Eos Rebel T 3i camera and a Canon EF 100-400mm f / 4.5-5.6L IS USM telephoto lens, respectively.

The falcon was about 40 cm in length, larger than a Bat Falcon and similar in size to an Orange-breasted Falcon. However when analyzing the photographs carefully and after consulting with experts, it was observed that the specimen did not present very much white in the throat. Additionally, the barring pattern on the wings and the dark shoulder eliminated it as an Orange-breasted Falcon. The most indicative feature was the long tail, barred coloration, and the broad black stripe above the eye. The cere and eye ring were yellow and the infracaudal region was tan or almost orange in color.

Conclusions

This record represents the first for the species in the La Ermita Natural Protected Area, Morazan Department, and the eastern region of El Salvador. It also confirms the record of a living individual in the country. Clearly, it is important to continue monitoring this species in the La Ermita National Protected Area and search for additional individuals in other areas of the country, such as Miramundo, Chalatenango and the Montecristo National Park, Santa Ana. This will help increase scientific knowledge of the Aplomado Falcon in the region.

Acknowledgments

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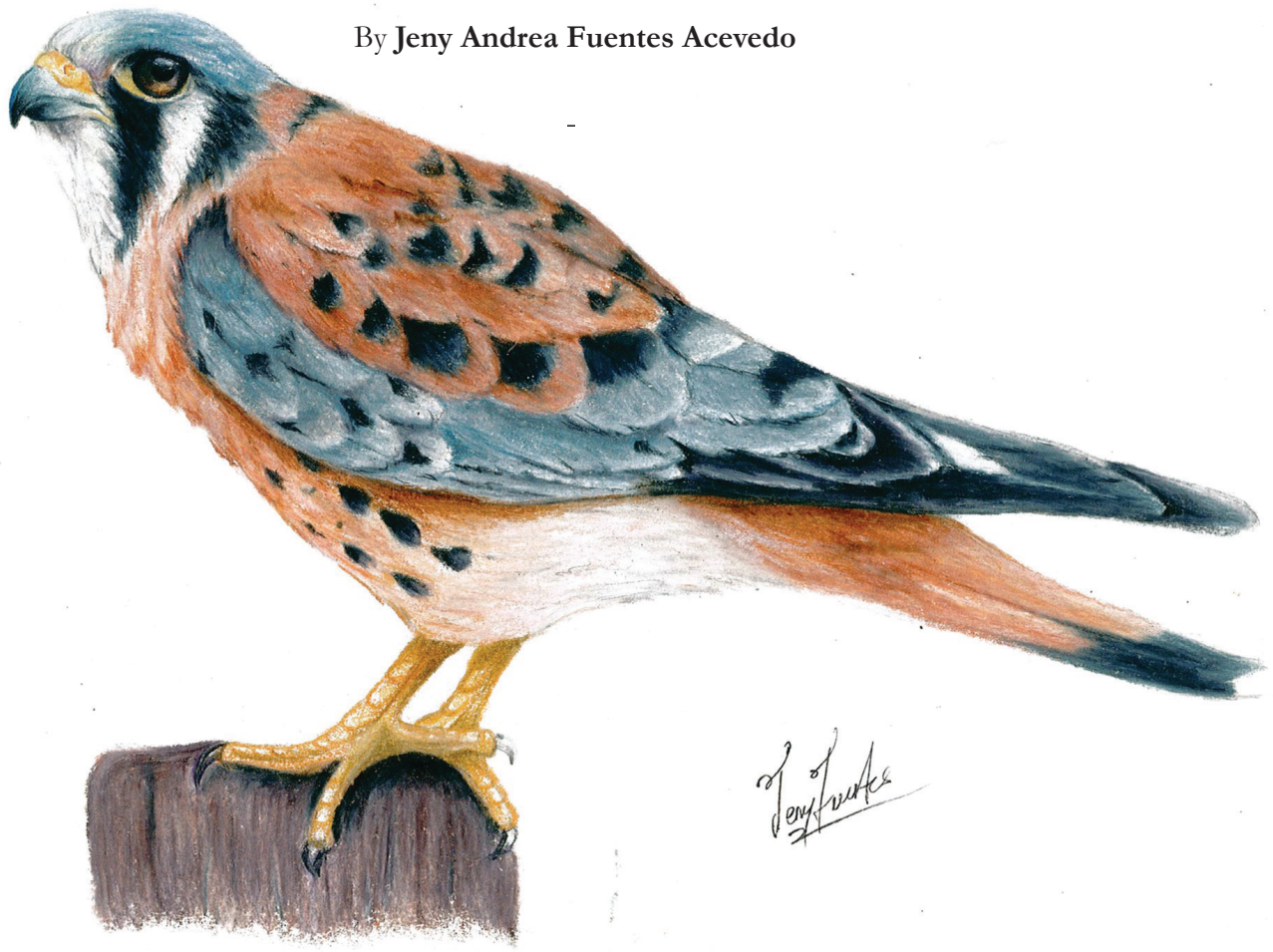
Art as a form of expression of ornithological experiences: An approach to conservation

By **Jeny Andrea Fuentes Acevedo**



Falco sparverius **using colored pencils on Durex paper.**

Colombia is a diverse country in biological and cultural terms. It presents 98 types of general ecosystems (terrestrial continental and insular, aquatic, coastal continental and marine) of which 74 correspond to natural ecosystems and 24 to transformed ecosystems (SIAC, 2015). Within these ecosystems there are approximately 1,928 bird species, placing Colombia as the number one country for bird diversity. However, as a result of some political, economic and cultural dynamics, Colombia faces socio-environmental problems such as the destruction and transformation of habitats, the illegal trade of fauna and the contamination of ecosystems. These prob-

Pulsatrix perspicillata **juvenile using colored pencils and Durex paper.**

lems have had a direct impact on the avifauna. As a consequence, the country has suffered the total loss of some species, such as the Colombian Grebe (P*odiceps andinus*), which a few years ago could be seen in the wetlands of the eastern mountain range and which today is considered extinct.

Considering this situation, it is necessary to think about strategies that allow for the valuation and conservation of Colombian avifauna. One of these strategies has to do with art and its relation to sensitivity and human expression. At certain stages of our lives, especially during childhood, most of us have created art, without focusing on how beautiful or ugly the end result would be. Indeed, it is not only the technical work of a piece, or the attractiveness or grotesqueness of it, but rather the expression of the creativity of the artist that matters.

Ornithologists, bird watchers and bird lovers see in these beings something that inspires them. Going beyond a simple check list, ornithologists can be moved by the emotion of seeing, recognizing, identifying, and contemplating birds and by the creation of new anecdotal and academic knowledge. All of these events become more complex when coupled with other experiences such as educational, social and political - which make us who we are. These individual feelings can undoubtedly be expressed in art.

In 2017, we organized an educational activity with a rural community in the municipality of Tópaga in Boyacá Department - Colombia. With community members, we participated in several days of birding in the páramo and cloud forest. Halfway through one of the days we heard a Rufous Antpitta (*Grallaria rufula*) singing from deep inside thick brush. Upon hearing the call, the participating community members commented that they had already heard the song and that it was a cricket making the noise. They had never seen

the "cricket" because of its small size. When we told them it was actually a bird and showed them some pictures of the Antpitta, they were interested and intrigued. One elderly lady laughed out loud at such an amazing discovery. Her laugh was contagious and it was a pleasant moment shared by all. As a result of this experience everyone agreed, from that moment onwards, that they would commit themselves to pay more attention to the birds of their municipality.

Many different emotions arose in the people from this experience, which helped them create a deeper connection to the birds in the area. The author, as well, wanted to create artwork representing her feelings during that experience. She created a drawing of a *campesina* Rufous Antpitta. In the image, the female bird is wearing a hat and skirt, and as braids - an image inspired by the old woman with the contagious laugh and the pleasant moment shared with the community. Later, the author shared some of her other artistic creations with community members - who were surprised and delighted by the images and what they represented. This was a good teaching moment and a great time to talk about valuing the local avifauna.

When the woman with the contagious laugh saw the drawing, she said she identified with the picture and that it motivated her to spread the word about the local birds, especially the Antpitta, thereby reducing people's ignorance about birds and helping to protect them. Another community member saw the image, and recalled that as a child, his father told him that this animal was a spirit who wandered the land and that it could never be seen. The community member recalled that he had seen it on the ground, once, and from a distance, but that with the passage of time had

Left: Drawing of female "campesina" Rufous Antpitta. Right: The woman with the contagious laugh - a source of inspiration for the drawing.

Above: *Colibri coruscans* **using colored pencils on Durex paper.**
Right: *Micrastur ruficollis* **using colored pencils on Durex paper.**

forgotten. Simply seeing the artwork helped him to recall a childhood memory and to remember a bit about the Antpitta's behavior and ecology, as indeed it is a difficult bird to see and does spend time on the ground.

Art does not only evoke ecological knowledge, but also traditional knowledge that reflects the bio-cultural memory of a community. It can help bring back practices and customs, related to birds, that have been established over time.

Art is just one example of how to begin developing activities that promote the valuation, teaching, and conservation of birds. Showing birds as important beings and promoting a strong bond between Man, birds and nature are important steps for conservation. In the case of Tópaga, one can conclude that the birding and other art-based activities endowed the people with meaning and experiences related to birds. This was an

important step in the conservation of the birds of this municipality, since it encourages local residents to open their hearts and minds to the observation and care of the birds.

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Conversations from the Field

By **Markus Jais & Yennifer Hernandez**

Markus Jais has been interested in nature since childhood. His main interests are the ecology and conservation of predators, such as large cats, wolves and birds of prey - especially eagles. He manages the website www.europeanraptors.org and is a collaborator with www.africanraptors.org. Markus recently interviewed Ruth Muñiz López, Coordinator of FAUNAETUS and the president of ACCIPITER ASSOCIATION.

Markus Jais: *How long have you been studying Harpy Eagles?*

Ruth Muñiz López: I started as a volunteer in Panama in 1999… and in the year 2000 I started my own project studying them in Ecuador.

MJ: *What is known about the current population status of the Harpy Eagle in Ecuador?*

RML: The area occupied by one pair is known (the latest data indicate that in our study area there are 5 nests / 100 km^2) and that the fast habitat modification due to extensive agriculture, and the consequences of mining and oil activity, affects them seriously, losing sightings in areas where we know they were present a decade ago.

MJ: *What is the preferred food of Harpy Eagles?*

RML: One of our diet studies seems to show that they prefer medium to larger-sized monkeys, like the species in the genus *Lagothrix* or *Aotus*, but in places where these primates are rare, the Harpies feed almost always on sloths.

MJ: *What is the preferred nest tree of Harpy Eagles?*

RML: In Ecuador, it is *Ceiba pentandra*, but in

Biologist Ruth Muñiz López with a young Harpy Eagle in Ecuador. Photo © Pete Oxford / PCAHE

Adult male Harpy Eagle. Photo © Enrique de la Montaña / PCAHE

other countries this can vary, although they are always tall trees, such as *Cavanillesia*.

MJ: *How do Harpy Eagles interact with other eagles like the Crested Eagle or the Hawk-Eagles? Do the smaller species avoid areas with Harpy Eagles?*

RML: In our studies we encountered nests of both Crested Eagles (*Morphnus guianensis*) and Ornate Hawk-Eagle (*Spizaetus ornatus*) very close to the nest of the Harpy Eagle, including using the nest tree as a perch for hunting. We believe that in environments with sufficient resources, there are no aggressive interactions, but we don't know what is happening in other situations.

MJ: *There is a lot of myth regarding the size and strength of Harpy Eagles. How big and heavy do Harpy Eagles become in Ecuador and what wingspan do they have?*

RML: We have registered weights of more than 7kg for very young females (about 7 months old) and average wingspan measurements of 2.22 meters. In the places where we work (Chocó Ecuatoriano and Amazoía) the first thing people who know or have heard of Harpies mention is exactly their size

and strength. The Harpy Eagle is one of the 3 spirits (spirit of the air) of the forest (The spirit of water is the Anaconda and the one of the earth is the Jaguar).

MJ: *What is the main threat to Harpy Eagles in Ecuador beside direct conflict with humans?*
RML: All the important threats have to do with human activities. Genetically its population is still healthy and in all cases it's a long-living species. We have detected some juvenile mortality but only natural (mostly falls from the nest when the chicks are still young). Like I've said before, what is mostly affecting them is the loss of conditions that allow them to access the resources they need, like food and places to nest. We know that these birds have certain flexibility regarding habitat changes but this is slower than the rapid modifications their habitat is suffering from.

MJ: *How big is the conflict between humans and eagles in Ecuador? And how can the conflict be resolved?*
RML: In places where there is certain competition for food between eagles and humans (especially with some individuals who apparently capture chickens or domestic animals), or where people are afraid of Harpy Eagles, is where the eagles are shot and killed. To resolve this conflict, our best tool has been our presence in the communities, explaining how the Harpy behaves during an encounter with a person (normally the eagle, as a super predator who doesn't fear being hunted by other animals, shows curiosity and can look intensively at a human instead of flying away. Because of that, people think they will be attacked) and helping ensure domestic animals are confined in secure enclosures in places where there is a possibility that they might be trapped by a raptor.

MJ: *How do you see the future of the Harpy Eagle?*
RML: Although this species still has a wide distribution, we have to take into account that in regions such as Chocó, the Brazilian Atlantic Forests, or Central America, their populations are in a crtical state or gone altogther. In the eastern Andean Range, the situation is less dire, although we are starting to feel changes in the sections neighboring forests. However, the habitat fragmentation that occurs in these areas is also worrying and it will surely have negative effects on this species as it continues to increase.

MJ: *How can bird watchers and other scientists help?*
RML: Each observation record, that includes the most information possible, is important data for researchers. These days, it is easy to locate research/conservation groups through social media or internet searches. In any case, if one can't find a contact, he or she can always consult specialists

from other countries, especially since we all know each other and we can help with communication. It is also important that these groups understand how to observe birds without bothering them or interfering in the natural processes of this species. They can also get in touch with research or conservation groups in their country to learn more about this.

MJ: *What advice would you give to a young researcher wanting to study tropical forest eagles?*
RML: These researchers must be willing to work in harsh environmental conditions and have a high degree of patience. Working with these species is not easy but with enthusiasm, good planning of objectives and activities and ability to integrate into the (also social) environment, they will certainly achieve good results!

MJ: *¿What was your best moment with a Harpy Eagle?*
RML: The first time I saw this species. It was in Panama. It was a four-month-old nestling. It seemed impossible that I would ever be able to find myself in the presence of a Harpy Eagle. When it did finally happen, I felt like the luckiest person on Earth!

* * *

Of Interest...

Conferences

Annual Meeting of the Raptor Research Foundation & Neotropical Raptor Network Conference

4-8 October 2020, Boise, Idaho, USA
www.raptorresearchfoundation.org/conferences/upcoming-conferences/

The year 2020 is just around the corner and The Peregrine Fund is excited to host you at the 2020 Annual Meeting of the Raptor Research Foundation and the Neotropical Raptor Network!

The Peregrine Fund will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary that year and is working to make RRF2020 a true celebration of raptor science and conservation.

Conference hosts include The Peregrine Fund, Boise State University, Intermountain Bird Observatory, Golden Eagle Audubon, and USGS Idaho. Conference co-chairs are Sarah Schulwitz, Director of the American Kestrel Partnership, and Rick Watson, President and CEO of The Peregrine Fund. For any questions please contact Sarah at Schulwitz.Sarah@peregrinefund.org or Marta at mcurti@peregrinefund.org.

Grants

Crowder-Messersmith Conservation Fund
https://anshome.org/crowder-messersmith-fund/

These grants support small, local projects focused on conservation and/or education in developing countries. Seed money is available for communities or individuals whose projects have not received major funding from other sources. Grants up to $2,000US are available. Application deadline is in February of each year.

Francois Vuilleumier Fund
http://www.neotropicalornithology.org/funds-grants/

One or more cash grants per year will be awarded for thesis studies of Neotropical birds to graduate students from any country in Latin America and the Caribbean. The funds are provided to assist thesis research by students, enrolled in an institution in the Neotropics who have little or no access to funds within their country or at their institution. Awards range between $500–$1000. Students from Latin America and the Caribbean enrolled in a graduate degree program (Masters or Ph.D.) at an institution in the Neotropical Region are eligible to apply. Application deadline 15 September of each year.