**THE EUPHONIA**  
Quarterly Journal of Mexican Avifauna

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Spanish Abstracts:</td>
<td>Alfonso Del Toro, Luis Santaella</td>
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*I thank Sophie Webb for the beautiful cover illustration.*
Contents

33 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE BIRDS OF COLIMA AND ADJACENT JALISCO, MEXICO

Steve N.G. Howell

55 WESTERN GULL IN ACAPULCO: FIRST RECORD FOR THE MEXICAN STATE OF GUERRERO

Richard A. Erickson

59 RECENT ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

Michael A. Patten

Annual membership includes Aves Mexicanas Newsletter
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE BIRDS OF COLIMA AND ADJACENT JALISCO, MEXICO

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The avifauna of the small state of Colima and adjacent areas in the state of Jalisco has been the subject of several papers (Zimmerman and Harry 1951, Davis 1960, Phillips and Schaldach 1960, Schaldach 1963, 1969). Friedmann et al. (1950) and Miller et al. (1957) listed with few details species known from both states. The annotated checklist of Arizmendi et al. (1990) covers the Chamela area (Figure 1), but lacks specific documentation for species included. Like all areas of Mexico, much remains to be learned about the avifauna of this interesting region.

I here summarize observations of 58 species that supplement the information available on the avifauna of Colima and adjacent Jalisco (referred to below as “the region”); 21 of the species represent new records for Colima, and 14 are new for Jalisco. Additional species are discussed briefly in the text, especially under Eurasian Wigeon. The observations were made on 112 days during nine field trips to the region: 17-22 December 1983 (with Peter Pyle), 24 December 1986-3 January 1987 (with Sophie Webb), 30 March-10 April 1988 (with Webb), 3-17 March 1989 (with Robert A. Behrstock), 2-17 March 1990, 28 February-14 March 1992, 26 February-10 March 1993, 26 February-8 March 1994 (with Behrstock), and 24 February-7 March 1995 (with Jon L. Dunn). I also summarize relevant unpublished data contributed by Chris D. Benesh and David Stejskal. Some of these records are noted briefly by Howell and Webb (1995); supporting details are provided in this paper. Figure 1 shows locations mentioned in the following species accounts.
COMMON LOON (*Gavia immer*). Although the A.O.U. (1983) reported this species as wintering south in western Mexico only to Baja California and Sonora, Common Loons have been known as regular winter visitors to Nayarit since the mid-1970s (Clow 1976, pers. obs.). Arizmendi et al. (1990) listed the species from Chamela ("accidental in winter") without supporting details. The following appear to be the first specific records from Jalisco and Colima where small numbers occur regularly. Jalisco: 8 off Playa La Fortuna, near Chamela, 18 December 1983, 2 at Barra de Navidad, 26-27 February 1995. Colima: in Manzanillo Bay, singles on 22 November 1985 (Stejskal), 9 February 1986 (Stejskal), 3 January 1988 (Benesh and Stejskal), 12 and 13 March 1992, and 6 March 1995; off Playa

Figure 1. Sketch map of Colima and adjacent Jalisco showing sites mentioned in the species accounts. A: Volcán de Nieve. B: Volcán de Fuego. Jalisco: 1, Puerto Vallarta; 2, Tomatlán; 3, Chamela; 4, El Tecuan; 5, Barra de Navidad; 6, La Huerta; 7, El Tigre; 8, Puerto los Mazos; 9, Aultán; 10, Tonaya; 11, El Floripondio; 12, Ciudad Guzmán; 13, Atenquique; 14, Sayula; 15, Guadalajara. Colima: 16, Marabasco, 17, Manzanillo airport, 18, La Ciénega; 19, Playa de Oro; 20, Peña Blanca; 21, Manzanillo; 22, Minatitlán; 23, Ciudad Colima; 24, San Antonio; 25, La Maria.
de Oro, 1 on 5 January 1988 (Benesh and Stejskal), 2 on 4 March 1990. All birds were in juvenile/basic plumage and were studied carefully. The very stout, grayish bill, large, angular head, whitish surround to the eyes, and smudgy, jagged dark/light neck pattern were noted, ruling out Pacific Loon (G. pacifica) and other loon species.

WEDGE-TAILED SHEARWATER (Puffinus pacificus). Although this species is often common off western Mexico (Pitman 1986, Howell and Engel 1993), two light-morph birds 4 km off Manzanillo, Colima, on 15 March 1990 were notably close inshore.

GALAPAGOS (WEDGE-RUMPED) STORM- PETREL (Oceanodroma tethys). Like the preceding species, Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrels are common off western Mexico (Pitman 1986, Howell and Engel 1993). One 4 km off Manzanillo on 13 March 1992 was notably close inshore.

MASKED BOOBY (Sula dactylatra). A juvenile 1.5 km off Manzanillo, 16 March 1989, and an adult 2 km off Manzanillo, 15 March 1990, were notably close inshore.

BLUE-FOOTED BOOBY (Sula nebouxii). Single immatures at Barra de Navidad, Jalisco, 2 March 1992, 26 February 1994, and 26 February 1995, and 2 km off Manzanillo, 13 March 1992, and up to six birds at Manzanillo, 6-7 March 1994, may reflect irregular wandering, in particular following years of pronounced El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) phenomena, such as occurred in 1991/1992. The Blue-footed Booby is a common but largely sedentary breeding resident from the Gulf of California south to small islands off Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco; I have found no previous published reports of its occurrence in Colima.

BROWN BOOBY (Sula leucogaster). Behrstock and I saw an apparently pure albino Brown Booby, flying with a line of normal adults, 4 km off Manzanillo on 16 March 1989. Albinism has been reported for Northern (Morus bassanus) and Cape (M. capensis) gannets (Nelson 1978, Lansdown and Rees 1987) but I have found no prior report of it in boobies.

LEAST BITTERN (Ixobrychus exilis). Based on calls, Least Bitterns are quite common at the Manzanillo airport marshes, where on 7 March 1995 Dunn and I heard this species’ song, supporting Schaldach’s (1969; pers. comm.) opinion that Least Bitterns nest in Colima.
GLOSSY IBIS (*Plegadis falcinellus*). I found a Glossy Ibis at Manzanillo airport marshes, 7 March 1994. The bird was still present on 8 March when it was photographed by Behrstock. We studied the bird with binoculars and Questar telescopes from 1830-1900 on 7 March and 1230-1300 on 8 March, in overcast and bright sunny conditions at ranges of 50-75 m. A single White-faced Ibis (*P. chihi*) fed in the same marshy area as the Glossy and other White-faceds were available for comparison nearby. The Glossy resembled a White-faced Ibis in size, shape, and overall dark coloration. It was essentially in alternate plumage: the head, neck and underparts were a rich chestnut color and lacked any whitish streaking; no white feathering was present on the face. The lores were slaty gray with a pale blue-gray or bluish-white border above and below, the upper border slightly thicker and the lower border longer, beginning under the eyes (Figure 2). This pale border was clearly naked loral skin, not feathering. The eyes were rich dark brown. The bill and legs were fleshy gray. Behrstock and I have considerable experience with these two similar species, and have seen both together in Texas and SE Mexico. We consider the features observed to be diagnostic of Glossy Ibis. All 500+ White-faced Ibises we had studied carefully in the preceding week (in both basic and alternate plumage) showed red eyes and a distinct pinkish or

![Figure 2. Face pattern of Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) observed at Manzanillo airport marshes, 7-8 March 1994, based on field sketches of Steve N. G. Howell.](image-url)
reddish wash to the lores, even at ranges greater than 100 m.

The first confirmed Mexican record of Glossy Ibis was in 1985, and the status of this species in Mexico was summarized by Howell and de Montes (1989). The Colima record appears to be the first from the Pacific Slope of Mexico.

WOOD DUCK (Aix sponsa). Behrstock and I saw five alternate-plumaged males and a single female at Laguna La Maria, on 6 March 1994, and a male and female, apparently paired, were at the same lake, 6 March 1995. Williams (1987) summarized the status of this species in Mexico, but listed no records from Colima.

EURASIAN WIGEON (Anas penelope). I saw a male in flooded grassland at kilometer post 54 on highway 54D, i.e., about 9 km N of Sayula, Jalisco, on 27 February 1993. This bird was with 450 American Wigeon (A. americana). I watched it from 1045-1110, with the sun at my back, at ranges down to 200 m with a Questar telescope. It was a similar size and shape to the American Wigeon, i.e., a medium-sized dabbling duck with a steep forehead, flattish crown, and fairly small bluish bill with a black nail. The head was bright orange-rufous with a yellowish-buff forehead patch, slightly longer than the creamy forehead patch of male American Wigeon; the face appeared solidly orange with no trace of green to suggest interbreeding with American Wigeon. The chest was vinaceous, the back and sides pearly gray with the white forewing visible as a line along the sides, and a broad white band forward of the black tail coverts. The median underparts were whitish.

The Eurasian Wigeon is a regular winter visitor in small numbers to NW Baja California, and also has been recorded from Baja California Sur, Sonora, and Tamaulipas (Howell and Webb 1995).

The marshes and lakes along highway 54D between kilometer posts 33 and 60, about 3 to 30 km N of Sayula, lie at around 1500 m elevation at the southwestern corner of the Mexican plateau. This area generally holds good numbers of waterbirds and shorebirds in winter but on 27 February 1993 the concentrations were notably large, prompting me to check through them thoroughly. The birds present included 1450 American White Pelicans (Pelecanus erythrorhynchos), 70 Great Blue Herons (Ardea herodias), 900 Great Egrets (Casmerodius [Egretta] alba), 700 Snowy Egrets (Egretta thula), 40 Tricolored Herons (E. tricolor), 800 White-faced Ibis, 16 Roseate Spoonbills (Ajaia ajaja) 1300 Snow Geese (Anser caerulescens, including 1.5% blue morphs), 2000 Green-winged

**HOODED MERGANSER** (*Lophodytes* [*Mergus*] *cucullatus*). I saw two female-plumaged birds on a reed-fringed lake on the east side of highway 54D about 12 km N of Sayula, on 27 February 1993. They were small, overall gray-brown ducks, similar in size to adjacent Ruddy Ducks, and readily identified by their fan-like cinnamon crests and slender dark bills with some orange below at the base. The Hooded Merganser is generally a rare winter visitor to Mexico, with few records as far south as central Mexico (Saunders and Saunders 1981, Howell and Webb 1995); I have found no previous records from Jalisco.

**MASKED DUCK** (*Oxyura dominica*). At a small pond 6.5 km SE of Barra de Navidad, Jalisco, I saw one on 27 February 1993, and 5 on 1 March 1993; all were female-plumaged. Although the Masked Duck has been recorded from Jalisco (Friedmann et al. 1950, Arizmendi et al. 1990), there are few specific records.

**WHITE-TAILED KITE** (*Elanus leucurus*). The dramatic spread of this species throughout much of North and Middle America, dating from the 1960s, has received considerable attention (Eisenmann 1971, Pruett-Jones et al. 1980). There were no records of White-tailed Kites in Colima and adjacent Jalisco through the summer of 1966 (Schaldach 1963, 1969), and I saw none there during my 1983 visit. On visits since 1988, however, I have noted White-tailed Kites regularly, and Arizmendi et al. (1990) considered the species an “irregular resident” in the Chamela region. Elsewhere in north and central Mexico, the 1980s saw the first records of White-tailed Kites from several states (Chihuahua, Coahuila, Durango, Zacatecas, Aguascalientes, Guanajuato, and Mexico; pers. obs.) showing that the species is still expanding its range.

My records for Colima and Jalisco are as follows. Jalisco: highway 54D near the Sayula junction, 1 on 31 March 1988, 2 on 13 March...

DOUBLE-TOOTHED KITE (Harpagus bidentatus). On 2 March 1993 I saw an adult Double-toothed Kite over highway 80 at El Tigre, Jalisco, a wooded barranca about 15 km by road south of Autlán. I watched the bird in good light with binoculars and a Questar telescope from 1120-1130, at times within 300 m. On 7 March 1993 I saw another Double-toothed Kite soaring and gliding over the road at La Maria, Colima, from 1210-1220. On two previous occasions I had seen birds I suspected to be Double-toothed Kites in this area: one at Puerto Los Mazos, Jalisco, on 7 March 1990, and one a La Maria on 11 March 1992. These two birds, however, unlike those in 1993, were seen fairly briefly and not well enough to establish their identity. The following description is taken from my field notes of the El Tigre bird; the bird at La Maria was essentially identical, and seen soaring and gliding overhead, at one time in a thermal with Black Vultures (Coragyps atratus).

"The shape was distinctive: its wings were fairly long and rounded, but tapered toward the tips and pinched-in slightly at base on the trailing edge, with the secondaries forming a slight bulge. The tail was of medium length and held closed. Seen head-on, the wings were held slightly bowed while soaring and gliding. It was about 20% larger than a (male?) American Kestrel (Falco sparverius) that harassed the kite briefly. The kite’s throat was white with dark median stripe, the underbody appeared dark with some coarse paler barring, and long white undertail coverts looked fluffy and spread up over the sides of the tail, which was dark and crossed by two whitish bands. The underwings were fairly bright whitish with coarse dark barring, or checkering, across the outer primaries; the tips of secondaries were slightly dusky or indistinctly barred."
I am very familiar with the Double-toothed Kite, a common raptor of the humid lowland forests on the Atlantic slope in SE Mexico and Central America (Howell and Webb 1995), which also has been recorded on the Pacific Slope of Mexico in Guerrero (Dixon and Davis 1958, Howell and Webb 1994b) and eastern Oaxaca (Binford 1989). The Double-toothed Kite can be added to the list of tropical species that occur locally on the Pacific Slope of Mexico and reach their northern limit in the humid forests on the coastal slopes of the mountains in Colima, western Jalisco, and adjacent southern Nayarit. This list includes Ornate Hawk-Eagle (Spizaetus ornatus), Singing Quail (Dactylortyx thoracicus), Mexican [Long-tailed] Hermit (Phaethornis [superciliosus] mexicanus), Green Jay (Cyanocorax yncas), and Golden-crowned Warbler (Basileuterus culicivorus).

BROAD-WINGED HAWK (Buteo platypterus). This species was listed without comment from both Colima and Jalisco by Friedmann et al. (1950) and reported once from Colima, in December 1958, by Schaldach (1963). It appears to be a local winter visitor, typical of the humid forest zone where Double-toothed Kite and the other species noted above occur, as indicated by the following records: 1 adult, 1 juvenile at La Maria on 14 March 1990, 1 adult there on 7 March 1993, and 1 adult at Puerto Los Mazos on 5 March 1992.

LONG-TAILED WOOD-PARTRIDGE (Dendrortyx macroura). On 5 March 1995 I heard the distinctive, loud rollicking calls of this species from a hillside of wooded coffee plantation and second growth brushy pasture near San Antonio. While common in adjacent Jalisco on the nearby volcanoes, this species has not been recorded previously from Colima (Schaldach 1963, 1969, Howell and Webb 1995). Although my numerous other encounters with the species throughout its range have been in relatively pristine forest, both Bearded Wood-Partridge (D. barbatus; Gomez de Silva G. and Aguilar R. 1994) and Buffy-crowned Wood-Partridge (D. leucophrys; Stiles and Skutch 1989, pers. obs.) have been found in similarly disturbed habitats.

RUDDY CRAKE (Laterallus ruber). Stejskal heard what he thought was this species at the marshes adjacent to Manzanillo airport, on 10 November 1987 and 4 January 1988. At the same marshes I heard and tape-recorded a Ruddy Crake on 15 March 1990, and saw one bird well on 16 March 1990; I again heard the species there on 9 March 1993, 7 March 1994, and
7 March 1995. The one bird seen approached me to within 4 m. It was a tiny crake, overall ruddy, duskier above, with a slaty-gray hood, red eyes, black bill and slaty-olive legs and feet.

The Ruddy Crake had been known to occur on Mexico’s Pacific coast north to Guerrero (A.O.U. 1983, pers. obs.). The lack of previous records in Colima is probably a result of the species’ skulking habits, combined with a common call that strongly resembles the trill of Least Grebe (*Tachybaptus dominicus*).

**KING/CLAPPER RAIL (*Rallus elegans/R. longirostris*).** On 9 March 1993 I clearly heard the *ka-ka-ka...* call of a King/Clapper Rail from the Manzanillo airport fresh-water marshes. On 24 February 1995, Dunn and I heard at least six King/Clapper Rails giving territorial “kek” vocalizations steadily, as well as several *ka-ka-ka...* calls. The latter calls had a rhythmic or “pumping” quality more like King Rail than the flatter call of Clapper Rail which, together with the fresh-water habitat, led to this population being attributed by Howell and Webb (1995) to King Rail. King Rails occur in the marshes of central Mexico at 800-2500 m elevation (Williams 1989) and in fresh-water marshes at sea level, e.g., within 200 m of the ocean, in central Veracruz (Dickerman 1971, Howell and Webb 1987). I have found no previous records of either form in Colima.

**LIMPKIN (*Aramus guarauna*).** Stejskal and Doug McRae first discovered this distinctive species at the Manzanillo airport marshes in November 1994 when they saw and tape-recorded one bird. Dunn and I watched two Limpkins feeding on snails at the same marsh, 26 February 1995, and heard the species’ unmistakable loud wailing calls there on the evening of 7 March 1995. Although Limpkins wander locally in response to local water levels (Stiles and Skutch 1989, pers. obs.), the Colima records represent a remarkable range extension of 1000 km WNW from Tehuantepec, Oaxaca, the closest known site on Mexico’s Pacific coast (Binford 1989, Howell and Webb 1995).

Given the nature of these records, I here provide a brief description of the birds from my notes: “They were watched for 15 minutes at 250 m range, in good light, with binoculars and Questar telescopes. They were slightly larger than nearby White-faced Ibis, with a heavier build, a more massive body, a thicker neck and a notably thicker, straightish bill. The bill was pinkish orange with a dark culmen and tip. The plumage was overall dark brown with dense white streaking on head and neck, and sparser, coarser white flecks or “splashes” on the back and upperwing
coverts. They fed by slow stalking and picking with their bill, with one seen to catch a large snail.”

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER (*Pluvialis squatarola*). Single birds at the marshes N of Sayula, 31 March 1988 and 27 February 1993 are notable since there are few records of this species away from the coast in Mexico.

AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER (*Pluvialis dominica*). Webb and I saw 11 birds in a flooded field beside highway 54D N of Sayula, on 31 March 1988. Golden-plovers are fairly common spring transients through much of Mexico (Howell and Webb 1995), although there are few specific published records, and I have found none from Jalisco.

COLLARED PLOVER (*Charadrius collaris*). The apparent lack of records of this species from Colima (cf. Friedmann et al. 1950, Schaldach 1963, 1969) presumably reflects little more than a neglect of studying shorebirds. I have seen 1-2 pairs of Collared Plovers on every visit to the ponds adjacent to Manzanillo airport, and I noted courtship there in March 1992. Two birds beside highway 54D N of Sayula on 2 March 1994 are additional to those listed by Howell and Webb (1994a); visits to this latter site later in the season would help resolve if Collared Plover, Snowy Plover, or Gull-billed Tern (see below) nest in the apparently suitable habitat in this area.

SNOWY PLOVER (*Charadrius alexandrinus*). Eighty-five birds around the shallow seasonal salt lake E of highway 54D between kilometer posts 35 and 40, 2 March 1995, are additional to those listed by Howell and Webb (1994a).

WILLET (*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*). At the marshes beside highway 54D N of Sayula I saw one on 30 March 1988, 2 on 13 March 1989, 29 on 27 February 1993, and 3 on 2 March 1994. Like the Black-bellied Plover, this and the following three species are recorded rarely away from the coast in Mexico.

MARBLED GODWIT (*Limosa fedoa*). At the marshes beside highway 54D N of Sayula I saw 2 on 6 March 1992, one on 9 March 1992, and 15 on 2 March 1994; see under Willet.

RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*). I saw single birds on a
The Birds of Colima and adjacent Jalisco, Mexico

rocky causeway across a lake beside highway 54D N of Sayula on 27 February 1993 and 2 March 1994; see under Willet.

SANDERLING (*Calidris alba*). I saw 7 on 27 February and 4 on 4 March 1993 on a rocky causeway across a lake beside highway 54D N of Sayula; see under Willet.

STILT SANDPIPER (*Calidris himantopus*). Although described as "a little known migrant, perhaps only casual in winter" by Friedmann et al. 1950, and noted as wintering "casually northward through Middle America" by A.O.U. (1983), this species is a common transient and often also a winter visitor through much of Mexico (e.g., Wilson and Ceballos-L. 1986, Lopez O. et al. 1989, Howell and Webb 1995).


WILSON’S PHALAROPE (*Steganopus [Phalaropus] tricolor*). This species appears to be an irregular winter visitor in Mexico, although there are few specific published records, e.g., Wilson and Ceballos-L. (1986). Pyle and I noted 35 Wilson’s Phalaropes on the lakes beside highway 54D, N of Sayula, on 22 December 1983, and I saw 25 in the same area on 27 February 1993. Other winter records include 2 birds at Lago de Cuitzeo, Michoacán, on 16 January 1984 (Howell and Pyle), and one at San Blas, Nayarit, on 28 January 1985 (Howell and Pyle). In Colima, whence I have found no previous records, I noted single birds at Laguna Cuyutlan, E of Manzanillo, on 8 April 1988 and 3 March 1989.

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE (*Phalaropus lobatus*). Although recognized as a common to fairly common transient migrant off Mexico’s Pacific coast (e.g., Binford 1989, Howell and Engel 1993), this species is also an irregular winter visitor, e.g., 300 reported off Manzanillo on 13 February 1980 (Pitman 1986). At coastal lagoons around Manzanillo and out to 5 km from shore I have noted the following: 800-1000 on 2 January

May 1994

**HERRING GULL (Larus argentatus).** Two first-years at Manzanillo on 6 March 1994, and 3 on 7 March 1994 are the only Herring Gulls I have seen in this region despite checking gull flocks regularly. The birds were in the harbor and were compared directly with other gull species, including several California Gulls (*L. californicus*). The only other record I am aware of from Colima is from the Revillagigedo Islands (Howell and Webb 1992).

**GULL-BILLED TERN (Sterna nilotica).** Behrstock and I saw 6 alternate-plumaged adults at the lakes near Sayula, 2 March 1994, and Dunn and I saw 2 there on 2 March 1995. I have found no previous published records of this species from Jalisco, although it occurs regularly, at least in February-March, on the coast in Colima (pers. obs.).

**SANDWICH TERN (Sterna sandvicensis).** Pyle and I saw single Sandwich Terns at El Tecuán, Jalisco, on 18 December 1983, and at Manzanillo on 20 December 1983, the latter an immature. Dunn found an alternate-plumaged adult Sandwich Tern at Manzanillo, 6 March 1995. Both Manzanillo birds were with tern flocks around the power station cooling ponds and outfall, the former with 10 Elegant (*S. elegans*), 500 Common (*S. hirundo*), 30 Forster’s (*S. forsteri*), and 700 Black (*Chlidonias niger*) terns, the latter with 3 Gull-billed, 35 Royal (*S. maxima*), 5 Elegant, and 110 Common terns. The Sandwich Terns clearly were larger than Common Terns and slightly smaller than Elegant Terns, similar in structure to the latter species. We noted the fairly long, slender, yellow-tipped black bills; the December birds had black postocular stripes running into a short, shaggy black crest, while the March bird had a shaggy black cap.

The Sandwich Tern is a regular and often fairly common winter visitor on the Pacific coast of the Americas from the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in Oaxaca south through Middle America (A.O.U. 1983, Howell and Webb 1995); the only previous records north of there, however, are from southern California (Langham 1991). The occurrence of birds in Colima and Jalisco may have been linked with well-developed ENSO events.
The Birds of Colima and adjacent Jalisco, Mexico

prevailing at both times.

THICK-BILLED PARROT (*Rhynchopsitta pachyryncha*). On the slopes of the Volcán de Fuego I noted 60 birds on 12 March 1989, and a flock of 28 birds on 9 March 1992. Local people reported that the species occurred on the volcanoes from late December to April. Snell et al. (1974) summarized earlier records of this endangered species from the Volcán de Colima.

MANGROVE CUCKOO (*Coccyzus minor*). Schaldach (1963) pointed out that this species should, logically, occur in the region but despite “intensive and long-continued search in the mangroves” he did not find it. I observed a Mangrove Cuckoo in mangroves at Barra de Navidad on 2 March 1992, and Grant (1964) collected one on 15 June 1961 in tropical deciduous forest inland of Puerto Vallarta. These appear to be the only two specific records of this easily overlooked species from Jalisco, although Arizmendi et al. (1990) listed it as a “scarce resident”; it remains unrecorded from Colima.

BURROWING OWL (*Speotyto cunicularia*). Webb and I found a Burrowing Owl in sandy coastal scrub at Playa de Oro, Colima, on 31 December 1986, apparently the first record of this species for mainland Colima, and presumably a migrant. There is a resident form on Isla Clarión, in the Revillagigedos. Although Arizmendi et al. (1990) listed this species as a “scarce resident” at Chamela it is almost certainly only a non-breeding migrant there.

CHESTNUT-COLLARED SWIFT (*Cypseloides rutilus*). Schaldach (1963, 1969) did not record this species from Colima or Jalisco, although Friedmann et al. (1950) listed the species without comment from the latter state. I have found Chestnut-collared Swifts four times in the region although they are wide-ranging and unpredictable in occurrence. Jalisco: 150-200 low over Sayula on 31 March 1988; 70-100 feeding low over fields with swallows near Tonaya, 3 April 1988 (photographs deposited at VIREO). Colima: 30-40 over Playa de Oro, 2 March 1992; 300 between Ciudad Colima and Minatitlan on 11 March 1992.

WHITE-COLLARED SWIFT (*Streptoprocnezonaris*). On 1 March 1992 I noted 70-80 White-collared Swifts circling low over Playa de Oro, Colima. They were unmistakable: very large black swifts with a broad
white collar across the upper chest, broad wings spread into a paddle-like bulge when soaring, and tails with a well-defined notch, or fork. I am very familiar with the species from elsewhere in Mexico.

There are no documented, published reports of this species on Mexico’s Pacific coast north of Guerrero (second-hand reports from Sinaloa by Morlan 1985 and Erickson et al. 1989 require verification), where the species is a common resident (A.O.U. 1983, Howell and Webb 1994b). However, Benesh and others have seen small flocks of White-collared Swifts near Barra de Navidad on a few occasions between November and February since the mid-1980s. The species appears to be an irregular, non-breeding visitor to this region.

GREAT SWALLOW-TAILED SWIFT (*Panyptila sanctihieronymi*). Whereas the A.O.U. (1983) listed this species in Mexico only from Michoacán, Guerrero, Oaxaca, and Chiapas, it has a much wider distribution and occurs (and probably nests) also in the states of Mexico (R. G. Wilson pers. comm.), Jalisco, Colima, and Nayarit (pers. obs.). Schaldach (1963) reported this unmistakable species from Colima in 1959, and my records from the region are as follows. Jalisco: 2 at Puerto Los Mazos, 7 April 1988. Colima: 2 at La Maria, 21 December 1983; 4 along the new Minatitlan road, 35 km west of Ciudad Colima, 11 March 1992; 7 near San Antonio, 5 March 1994, and 2 there on 5 March 1995.

OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER (*Contopus borealis*). This species appears to be an uncommon and local winter visitor in the region, as shown by the following records, all from Jalisco: at El Floripondio, on the slopes of Volcán de Nieve, singles on 19 December 1983, 28 December 1986, 4 March 1994, 4 March 1995; on the slopes of Volcán de Fuego, singles on 26 December 1986, 17 March 1990, 8 March 1992, 1 March 1994, and 2 on 11 March 1989.

Most winter records of the Olive-sided Flycatcher in Mexico refer only to the Atlantic Slope (A.O.U. 1983, Binford 1989), although Pyle and I saw 3 at La Soledad, on the Pacific Slope of the Sierra de Miahuatlan, Oaxaca, on 2 February 1983.

WHITE-THROATED FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax albigularis*). In Mexico this species breeds mostly in the interior and highlands and withdraws to the coastal lowlands in winter where it favors fresh water marshes with tall rushes and reeds (pers. obs.). This *Empidonax* can be identified readily by its plumage and unmistakable burry call. In Colima,
whence I have found no previous records, White-throated Flycatchers winter in the marshes near Manzanillo airport where I have noted singles on 8 April 1988, 16 March 1989, 28 February 1993, 7 March 1994, 2 on 9 March 1993, and 3-4 on 24 February and 7 March 1995. The species also is a locally common winter visitor in marshes near San Blas, Nayarit, where, for example, Pyle and I found 29 birds in December 1983; the A.O.U. (1983) reported wintering only from Jalisco south.

EASTERN PHOEBE (Sayornis phoebe). Dunn and I studied an Eastern Phoebe at La Maria, 6 March 1995, after Mary Rydell drew our attention to the bird. The following description is taken from my notes: “We watched it from 0900-0930 in good light at ranges of about 30 m, with binoculars and Questar telescopes. It was slightly larger and longer-looking than nearby Vermilion Flycatchers (Pyrocephalus rubinus). It perched conspicuously at heights of 1-3 m above the ground at edge of weedy field near lake. It occasionally sallied for insects, and often dipped its tail like a typical phoebe. Its behavior, slender shape, slender black bill, and fairly long tail were diagnostic of a phoebe. Its head was sooty blackish paling to olive-gray on upperparts. Its wings showed paler, but not striking, wingbars and edgings to tertials. Its tail was blackish with whitish outermost webs. Its throat and underparts were lemon-white with dusky gray patches at the chest sides not quite meeting in the center.”

Patten (1992) summarized the few records of Eastern Phoebe from the Pacific Slope of northwest Mexico, and this is the first from Colima. The species typically winters on the Atlantic Slope and in the interior of Mexico (Howell and Webb 1995).

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER (Tyrannus forficatus). This species appears to occur with some regularity in the region, although it was not recorded there by Schaldach (1963, 1969). Davis (1960) saw one just N of Playa de Santiago, Colima, on 29 and 31 October 1957 and I have the following records. Jalisco: 1 at Barra de Navidad, 29 December 1986; 3 between Barra de Navidad and Autlan, 7 April 1988; 1 near La Huerta, 7 March 1989 and 6 March 1990. Colima: 1 along the coastal toll highway, 10 km east of Manzanillo, 10 March 1993.

SINALOA MARTIN (Progne sinaloae). I saw a male and female (apparently a pair) of this little-known bird on the lower slopes of the Volcán de Fuego, Jalisco, on 5 March 1993. This is two weeks earlier than the species has been reported previously from Mexico, although Phillips
(1986) noted a probable sighting on 1 March from SW Michoacán.

CACTUS WREN (Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus). Dunn and I noted two birds, possibly a pair, in open desert scrub 15 km N of Sayula, 2 March 1995. This appears to be at least 100 km WSW from the known published range for the species (Selander 1964, Howell and Webb 1995), indicating that Cactus Wrens and other species (e.g., Gray Flycatcher [E. wrightii], which we also saw there) occur locally in pockets of suitable habitat right up to the SW edge of the Mexican plateau.

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET (Regulus satrapa). Although not listed from Jalisco by Miller at al. (1957), there is a series of specimens at the American Museum of Natural History from the Volcánex de Colima, Jalisco (Phillips 1991). I saw at least five Golden-crowned Kinglets in firs at 3000 m elevation on the Volcán de Fuego, Jalisco, on 10 March 1990.

AZTEC THRUSH (Zoothera [Ridgwayia] pinicola). Although this little-known species is usually considered at best uncommon, on the Volcán de Fuego Webb and I found flocks totalling 80-100 birds on 1-2 April 1988, and Dunn and I saw a flock of 100 birds (and two smaller flocks of 8-10 birds) on 1 March 1995. On other March visits, 5-10 Aztec Thrushes per day were typical, although a flock of 30 birds was seen on 3-4 March 1994. Usually the birds have been in flocks of 5-25 individuals, often with White-throated Thrushes (Turdus assimilis) and Gray Silky-Flycatchers (Ptilogonys cinereus), feeding at berry-bearing trees and bushes.

RED-THROATED PIPIT (Anthus cervinus). I found two Red-throated Pipits at the ponds adjacent to Manzanillo airport on 13 March 1992. I watched the birds in good light, at ranges down to 10 m, with binoculars and a Questar telescope from 1740-1805. Both were slightly smaller than a nearby American Pipit (A. rubescens) and differed from that species in several ways, notably bold dark streaking and 2 pale "braces" on the back, bright pink legs and feet, and call: a thin, hissing or wheezy, slightly drawn-out teez. One bird was mostly in basic plumage, with a bold dark malar stripe and dark streaks on its chest and flanks; the second bird was mostly in alternate plumage, with a largely brick-orange face, throat, and chest, and dark streaks on the flanks. I am quite familiar with this species, having seen hundreds in the western Palearctic and western North America. Together with a record from coastal Michoacán in April 1988 (Howell and Webb 1989) and a specimen from southern Baja California
The Birds of Colima and adjacent Jalisco, Mexico

in January 1883 (Ridgway 1883), the Colima record suggests a pattern of wintering by vagrant Red-throated Pipits in western Mexico, which is at a similar latitude to the species’ winter grounds in the Old World.

MAGNOLIA WARBLER (Dendroica magnolia). Pyle and I saw 2 Magnolia Warblers in roadside thorn forest near Tomatlán, Jalisco, on 17 December 1983; I noted singles in mangroves at Playa de Oro on 31 December 1986 and at Manzanillo airport on 1 March 1992. I have found no previous records from Colima or Jalisco, although this species, like many other typically “eastern” wood-warblers, appears to winter regularly north to around San Blas, Nayarit (Clow 1976, pers. obs.).

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER (Dendroica virens). Miller et al. (1957) listed this species from Jalisco, and Schaldach (1963) reported single birds from Colima and Jalisco. The Black-throated Green Warbler appears to be a regular winter visitor to the region, and is characteristic of the humid forest zone, where one finds Double-toothed Kite, Broad-winged Hawk, etc. My records are as follows. Jalisco: at Puerto Los Mazos, singles on 19 December 1983 and 7 April 1988. Colima: at and near La Maria, 3 on 22 December 1983, 1 on 14 March 1990, 2 on 11 March 1992 and 7 March 1993, 1 on 8 March 1993, 2 on 5 March 1994, 6 on 6 March 1994, 5 on 5-6 March 1995.

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER (Dendroica dominica). I watched an individual of this unmistakable species feeding in coconut palms at Barra de Navidad on 2 March 1992. I have found no previous records from Jalisco of this species, a vagrant to western Mexico, although the species has been noted to the north in Nayarit (Clow 1976) and Sinaloa (R. J. Cannings pers. comm.).

PALM WARBLER (Dendroica palmarum). I saw single Palm Warblers at Barra de Navidad on 5 March 1990 and 28 February-2 March 1992, and at Manzanillo airport on 28 February 1993, 7 March 1994, and 24 February 1995. This species is one of the most widespread vagrant warblers to winter in western Mexico, with records from Sonora (pers. obs.) to Oaxaca (Binford 1989), though I have found no previous records from Jalisco, and the only prior records from Colima are from the Revillagigedo Islands (Howell and Webb 1992).

OVENBIRD (Seiurus aurocapillus). I noted singles near La Maria on 9
April 1988, 11 March 1992, and 8 March 1993. Miller et al. (1957) and the A.O.U. (1983) stated that this species winters as far north as Sinaloa, but I have found no previous records from Colima.

PYRRHULOXIA (*Cardinalis sinuatus*). Dunn and I saw one or two Pyrrhuloxias in weedy roadside thickets near Atenquique, 3 March 1995, amid a concentration of hundreds of other seed-eating birds, mainly grosbeaks, buntings, and sparrows. This record is at least 150 km SW of the published limit of the species’ range on the Mexican plateau (Miller et al. 1957, Howell and Webb 1995) and, as I have not seen Pyrrhuloxias in the area on numerous other visits, suggests some wandering or dispersal in winter.


RUDDY-BREASTED SEEDEATER (*Sporophila minuta*). Schaldach (1963) considered this species an uncommon summer resident in Colima. I have found the Ruddy-breasted Seedeater to be locally common in winter and assume that it is resident in Colima; the previous lack of winter records may reflect the fact that this species’ basic plumage is confused easily with that of the White-collared Seedeater (*S. torqueola*). Key identification points noted include the dull orangish bill, contrasting pale wing-edgings, and smaller size in direct comparison with White-collared Seedeater (Howell and Webb 1995). Specific records are as follow. Colima: at Playa de Oro, 100+ on 30 December 1986-1 January 1987; at Manzanillo airport, 25 on 5 March 1989, 30+ on 16 March 1989, 20 on 3 March 1990, 120 on 13 March 1992, 50+ on 28 February and 9 March 1993, 10+ on 7 March 1994, 40 on 26 February 1995.

SLATE-BLUE [BLUE] SEEDEATER (*Amaurospiza[concolor?] relicta*). The first records of this little-known bird from Colima are a male I watched at close range feeding in roadside bamboo near San Antonio, 12 March 1992, and a pair in bamboo at the same site, 7-8 March 1993. None was found at the site in 1994 or 1995, as most of the bamboo appeared to have died off. Schaldach (1969) reported the first specimens of this form from Jalisco in August 1966. Elsewhere it is known only from Cañon de Lobos.
in Morelos, and the Sierra Madre del Sur in Guerrero and Oaxaca.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE (*Icterus g. galbula*). I have found no specific records of this form from Colima, although the A.O.U. (1983) stated that it wintered from Nayarit south. Near Manzanillo airport I have seen single males on 5 March 1989, 4 March 1990, and 28 February 1993, 3 males, 2 females on 16 March 1989, 3 males, 3 females on 26 February 1995, and 3 females on 7 March 1995. Stejskal has also found the Baltimore Oriole to be fairly common in coastal Colima and SW Jalisco during November to February. Bullock’s Oriole (*I. g. bullocki* or *I. g. parvus*) apparently replaces the Baltimore as one moves inland and climbs in elevation, although both occur near Manzanillo airport and can be compared directly, as in 1995.

RESUMEN

Esta publicación resume las observaciones de 58 especies, que suplementan la información disponible en la avifauna de Colima y Jalisco. Los registros incluyen 21 nuevas especies para el estado de Colima y 14 para el estado de Jalisco. Las observaciones fueron hechas durante 112 días de trabajo de campo, en nueve viajes a la región, entre Diciembre de 1983 y Marzo de 1995.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank Sophie Webb, Peter Pyle, Bob Behrstock, and Jon Dunn for company in the field, David Stejskal and Chris Benesh for sharing their unpublished records, and Michael A. Patten for bringing the Arizmendi et al. checklist to my attention. Will Russell and WINGS Inc. assisted greatly with field work from 1989 to 1995. The manuscript benefitted from comments by Allan R. Phillips. This is contribution number 591 of the Point Reyes Bird Observatory.

LITERATURE CITED


I observed an adult Western Gull (*Larus occidentalis*) on the bay at Acapulco, Guerrero, Mexico, on 25 June 1992. The bird was loafing with two or three Laughing Gulls (*L. atricilla*) on the back side of the beach at a small estuary (creek mouth) just west of Parque Papagayo. It was seen through 9x binoculars and videotaped at 10x by Linda Erickson (Figures 1 and 2) from as close as 50-60 m over a period of about four minutes before being flushed from the beach. The following description was written two days later.

SIZE AND SHAPE: A typical large *Larus* gull, dwarving the Laughing Gulls it was associating with, being perhaps as much as double their bulk.

PLUMAGE: Head and underparts appeared pure white. Mantle uniform dark gray (as typical of *L. o. wymani*) except for white tips to the secondaries and distally black outer primaries that showed essentially no white (no white visible on the wingtips while standing, with only a suggestion on the outermost primaries seen as the bird took flight). Tail appeared pure white but heavily worn. Underwings not well seen [but note Fig. 2].

BARE PARTS: Eyes dark, orbital ring color not discernable. Bill stout with an obvious gonydeal angle, but not so large as to suggest Yellow-footed Gull (*L. livens*). Indeed, the bill appeared to be on the slender side for this species and was not unlike a typical Herring Gull (*L. argentatus*) in structure. Bill color dull yellow with a reddish spot on the lower mandible. Legs and feet dull pink; one leg obviously injured, causing the bird to walk with a conspicuous limp.

The description and video images indicate this was an adult Western Gull, probably of the southern subspecies *L. o. wymani*. The
plumage was well worn, as is typical of many individuals at this time of year, and the relatively small bill suggests it was a female. Upon my return to California, I was able to study hundreds of wymani on the beaches of Orange County, many of which closely matched the Acapulco bird in appearance.

Howell and Webb (1992, 1995) recently summarized southern records of Western Gulls; although the A.O.U. (1983) suggested the species is casual south to Nayarit and possibly the Revillagigedo Islands, these authors considered an adult they saw near Salina Cruz, Oaxaca, on 27 April 1988 the only previous reliable record south of the tip of Baja California. There are apparently no previous reports from Guerrero.

I believe it is most likely that this bird strayed south on its own. Some may consider the bird’s injury as evidence that it arrived in the busy

Figure 1. Adult Western Gull (Larus occidentalis) at Acapulco, Mexico, 25 June 1992. Note its large size in comparison to the adjacent Laughing Gull (L. atricilla). Videotape by Linda Erickson.
Figure 2. *Adult Western Gull* (*Larus occidentalis*) at Acapulco, Mexico, 25 June 1992. Note the large bill, dark mantle, and extensively dark underwing. Videotape by Linda Erickson.

port of Acapulco by unnatural means (ship-assisted passage for instance), however, as has been suggested for some previous extralimital gull records (*Band-tailed* [*L. belcheri*], *Black-tailed* [*L. crassirostris*] and *Swallow-tailed* [*Creagrus furcatus*] gull accounts in A.O.U. 1983, A.B.A. 1990, DeBenedictis 1994, and Heindel and Garrett 1995).

**RESUMEN**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank Linda Erickson for accompanying me in Acapulco and obtaining the videotape. Leslie Lieurance kindly provided guidance in turning the video images into usable prints. Paul E. Lehman directed me to relevant literature concerning extralimital gulls of controversial origin. Adolfo G. Navarro S. commented on the manuscript.

LITERATURE CITED

This past year has seen the unveiling of two landmark publications concerning Mexican avifauna: the *Bibliografía de las Aves de México* (1825-1992) compiled by Claudia A. Rodríguez-Yañez, Roció M. Villalón C., and Adolfo G. Navarro S. (Rodríguez et al. 1994) and *A Guide to the Birds of Mexico and Northern Central America* by Steve N. G. Howell and Sophie Webb (Howell and Webb 1995). Each publication represents a major step forward in Mexican ornithology, and provides a wealth of information not previously available in a single source.

*BIBLIOGRAFÍA DE LAS AVES DE MÉXICO* (1825-1992)

This monumental undertaking summarizes nearly 3,600 references on Mexican birds from 1825 through 1992. The bulk of the 146 page text consists of a list of publications, alphabetized by first author. What makes this list so eminently useful, however, are the three cross-referenced lists in the back, one by subject (e.g., anatomy, song, ecology, taxonomy, etc.), one by geographic location (arranged by state from northwest to southeast), and one by species (ordered by family and scientific name of species).

A preliminary analysis (in Spanish, like all of this publication) of the compiled literature precedes the main text. This analysis, which includes bar graphs for various aspects of the publications, is quite informative. Firstly, and not surprisingly, there has been a steady increase in publications concerning Mexican birds over the past century. Secondly, and again, perhaps, not surprisingly, there has been far more published about birds in Baja California, Sonora, Veracruz, and Chiapas (especially the first two states) than for any other states. By contrast, published information specifically about birds in Aguascalientes, Querétaro, and Tlaxcala is almost non-existent. Indeed, the last state has but one listing,
and it is a paper not specific to Tlaxcala, but rather concerns the taxonomy of Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*) throughout central and southern Mexico (Dickerman and Phillips 1970).

Also of interest in this analysis is the outlet and subject of summarized publications. The vast majority have appeared in *Auk* and *Condor*, and to a lesser extent in *Wilson Bulletin* and the *Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington*. It would seem, in fact, that these four journals have published more on Mexican avifauna than all others combined, although much of this bias reflects past publishing practices. Currently, I suspect that *Western Birds*, the *Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club*, and, of course, *Euphonia*, publish the bulk of information on Mexican birds. The subject of published material reflects not only a past but a present bias, as the vast majority of publications have concerned distribution and taxonomy. There remains an enormous amount of baseline data that needs to be gathered regarding the distribution, status, taxonomy, and habitat requirements of Mexican birds.

Although errors (typographic and otherwise) can be found throughout the work, the sheer volume of material summarized makes this bibliography an indispensable resource, and corrections and comments are welcome, so future editions should prove to be even better. Furthermore, efforts are underway to make this reference available via Internet (C. A. Rodriguez in litt.), which will only increase its value. This bibliography is available at no charge from the Museo de Zoologia, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Apartado Postal 70-399, México D. F. 04510, México. Despite the “free” price tag, I imagine that a contribution of at least enough to cover postage would be appreciated.

*A GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF MEXICO AND NORTHERN CENTRAL AMERICA*

Few books in recent memory have been so eagerly awaited as Howell and Webb's guide to avifauna of Mexico and northern Central America, and with good reason, as the book is superb. Not only do the text and illustrations far outshine those of any other field guide for the birds of Mexico (i.e., Blake 1953, Davis 1972, Edwards 1972, 1989, Peterson and Chalif 1973), but the distributional information is solid and thorough, providing a much-needed updating of the seminal works by Friedmann et al. (1950) and Miller et al. (1957). In this regard, this book goes well beyond being a mere field guide, but instead is an up-to-date *handbook* of Mexican avifauna.
A Guide to the Birds of Mexico is invaluable in this latter regard alone, if nothing else in that it provides the first range maps of all species of Mexican birds produced anywhere. Furthermore, as should be obvious from the extensive bibliography (spanning 25 pages in tiny type), the distributional information is relatively thorough, although there are a few overlooked Mexican publications that could have added at least a bit of information (e.g., Arizmendi et al. 1990, Brown 1990). Even so, the status and distribution information presented by Howell and Webb are such a major step forward, past not only Friedmann et al. (1950) and Miller et al. (1957), but also past A.O.U. (1983) or any other publication for that matter, that it is probably unfair to quibble. Besides, the introduction makes it clear that this book should be used as a stepping stone, something that can be built upon by future work.

But Howell and Webb’s achievement will ultimately be measured by its utility as a “field guide.” Whereas this book is really too bulky to be carried directly in the field, the value of the illustrations and text make this a must for anyone with an interest in Mexican birds and, indeed, for anyone with an interest in North American avifauna (i.e., including those interested only the birds of the United States and Canada). I have long used several sources when attempting to learn about the birds of Mexico, as I found the most useful text to be that provided by Blake (1953) and the most helpful illustrations to be those in Peterson and Chalif (1973). Works by Edwards (1972, 1989) and Davis (1972) supplemented these field guides, but none was up-to-date (save, perhaps, the disappointing 2nd edition of Edwards [1989]; I believe that the original is better!) and piecing together information about identification and distribution was often a maddening task.

Again, Howell and Webb appear to alleviate this problem, for their text is as thorough (often moreso) as anything in Blake (1953), and the illustrations are far better than those in Peterson and Chalif (1973), although a few could be improved. For example, I certainly do not think that Wedge-tailed Sabrewing (Campylopterus curvipennis) and Long-tailed Sabrewing (C. excellens) are nearly as different as they are portrayed; Lowery and Dalquest (1951) suggested that these two species differed only in measurements and, to my eye, they are basically identical in the field. And I suppose that yet another generation of field observers will struggle with Gray Thrasher (Toxostoma cinereum) identification. This species carries a most unfortunate name, and I have long wondered if it was called “Gray Thrasher” only because the name “Brown Thrasher” was already taken for T. rufum. In any case, both subspecies of Gray

May 1994
Thrasher are distinctly coffee-brown in dorsal color, much browner than truly gray, spot-breasted species such as Curve-billed (*T. curvirostre*), Bendire's (*T. bendirei*), and Sage (*Oreoscoptes montanus*) thrashers. Note that the text includes a more accurate description of the dorsal coloration. But, again, I feel as if I am definitely quibbling, as the illustrations in Howell and Webb are, on the whole, spectacular, accurate, and informative.

The taxonomy and nomenclature employed in the book, while perhaps a more accurate reflection of reality, will probably be frustrating or confusing to many users. To this end, I recommend a careful reading (and re-reading) of the introductory material to get a better feel for the authors' approach to this subject. Authors certainly should use whatever taxonomy with which they feel most comfortable, and the one that they feel best expresses their view of true avian relationships. I think that Unitt's (1984) taxonomy, phylogeny, and nomenclature, for example, was more stimulating than frustrating, invariably because Unitt cited a source (or several) that supported his treatment. Nevertheless, so many departures from A.O.U. (1983) in Howell and Webb will probably only confuse most users, rather than stimulate further research, particularly because many departures lack helpful explanations. The placement of Roseate Spoonbill (*Ajaia ajaja*) in the Old World spoonbill genus *Platalea*, for example, may be a better representation of this species' relationships, but it is a move followed almost nowhere, and Howell and Webb, rather than provide a source for this taxonomic treatment, state only that Roseate Spoonbill is "Often placed in the monotypic genus *Ajaia*." Such examples are scattered throughout the text, as are the usage of certain common names no longer used by the A.O.U., such as "Galapagos Storm-Petrel" for Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma tethys*) or "Cabanis' Tanager" for Azure-rumped Tanager (*Tangara cabanisi*). In any case, because the alternate name is consistently provided (and indexed), confusion in these cases should be minimal or absent.

There are numerous "splits" and "lumps" throughout the text as well, some of which are well supported by previously published information (e.g., the *Chlorostilbon* treatment was published by Howell 1993). Others, such as the apparent splitting of "Black-crested" Titmouse (*Parus bicolor atricristatus*) from Tufted Titmouse (*P. bicolor*) or the splitting of "Brown-throated" Wren (*Troglodytes aedon brunneicollis*) from House Wren (*T. aedon*) are accomplished with nary a comment, save placement of the parental form's specific name, with a question mark, in parentheses, i.e., "*Troglodytes (aedon?) brunneicollis*." I would find it much more
thought-provoking to find a reference or two in the "notes" section of the accounts in which an unexpected split or lump was made. I realize that the intention of the authors' was probably not to treat these forms as full species (see pp. 64-68 of the introduction). Rather, their intent seems to lay in providing a English name for distinct subspecies or subspecies groups, as birders frequently would with such groups as "Red-shafted" Flicker (Colaptes auratus ssp.) or "Audubon's" Warbler (Dendroica coronata ssp.). I wholeheartedly concur with using English names for field-identifiable subspecies groups, for it only promotes a greater awareness of the avian diversity one encounters in the field, and can more significantly contribute to our knowledge of avian status and distribution. Thus, I am impressed by the authors' efforts to that end. Nevertheless, I am not sure that the method used by Howell and Webb makes it clear enough to the users of their work that they are not rendering taxonomic decisions. Indeed, I know several rather avid "listers" of Mexican birds who eagerly awaited the appearance of this book so that their lists might grow.

In the end, however, the vast majority of the taxonomy follows the A.O.U. (1983), and I hope that differing taxonomic treatments in Howell and Webb spark curiosity rather than create problems, as they are the only potential flaw in this magnificent publication. Without a doubt, the distributional information, wonderful illustrations, and thorough accounts of current status and identification criteria make this book indispensable. Quite simply, A Guide to the Birds of Mexico and Northern Central America is far superior to any of its competitors (e.g., Peterson and Chalif 1973, etc.). Whereas I am sure that I will continue to make at least some use of these other sources (particularly Blake 1953), I cannot foresee failing to turn first to Howell and Webb, and I imagine that my search will most often end there.

LITERATURE CITED