



# First record of Swallow-tailed Cotinga, *Phibalura flavirostris* Vieillot, 1816 (Aves, Cotingidae) in Campo Grande, Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil

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## Abstract

The Swallow-tailed Cotinga, *Phibalura flavirostris*, is a rare Neotropical bird. Its geographic distribution in Brazil is limited to the country's south and south-east regions and a small area in the center of the state of Goiás. However, an adult individual was recorded in a fragment of Cerrado in the municipality of Campo Grande, in central Mato Grosso do Sul, indicating an expansion in the distribution of the species in Brazil.

## Keywords

Geographical distribution; Neotropical birds; new occurrence.

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## Introduction

The Swallow-tailed Cotinga, *Phibalura flavirostris* Vieillot, 1816, is a representative of the family Cotingidae, a typically Neotropical group of well-diversified birds (Sick 1997). The diet of *P. flavirostris* consists of fruits and insects caught on short flights around the landing point (Snow 1982). The nest is composed of lichens and mosses; it is difficult to identify and provides camouflage for the offspring, whose immature plumage resembles the color of lichens (Avalos 2010).

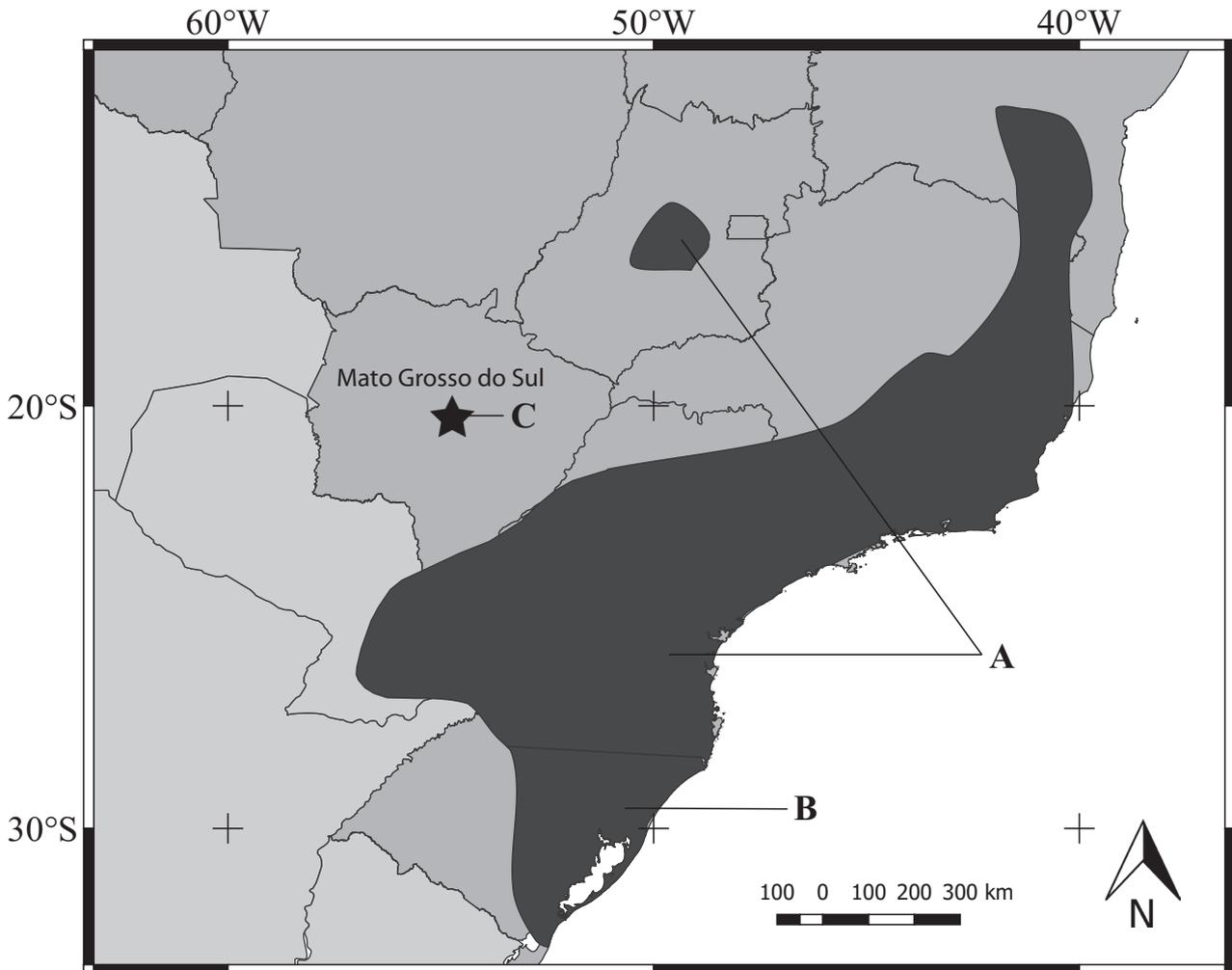
*Phibalura flavirostris* is the only Brazilian cotingid with a long forked tail. The geographic distribution of this species covers part of south and southeastern Brazil, especially the southern end of the state of Mato Grosso do Sul and a small region in the center of the state of Goiás (Gwynne et al. 2010). According to Birdlife International

(2015), the geographical distribution of *P. flavirostris* covers parts of Argentina and Paraguay, in addition to Brazil (Fig. 1). The species is probably a migrant to Rio Grande do Sul, where it occurs during the summer breeding season (Ridgely and Tudor 1994). Generally rare, this species is classified as Near Threatened (Birdlife International 2015).

It is suspected that populations of *P. flavirostris* are decreasing, mainly due to habitat loss, as this species depends on secondary vegetation, areas with partial to high levels of afforestation such as the interior of forest patches, and forest edges (Ridgely and Tudor 1994).

## Methods

The record was part of a systematic survey in forest fragments of Cerrado located in the urban area of the municipality of Campo Grande, Mato Grosso do Sul.



**Figure 1.** Distribution of the Swallow-tailed Cotinga *Phibalura flavirostris*: (A) resident populations; (B) breeding grounds of possible migratory populations; (C) record in Campo Grande, Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil. Adapted from Birdlife International (2015).

## Results

**New record.** Brazil: state of Mato Grosso do Sul: Campo Grande: São Vicente Institute, Dom Bosco Catholic University (20°23'09.32" S, 054°36'29.41" W, 636 m above sea level), observed by Allan Corral, 10:32 a.m., 17 May 2015, 1 male individual (Fig. 2).

The sighting was a Cerrado fragment located in an urban area located about 10 km from downtown Campo Grande. The Cerrado fragment, which is 191 ha, consists of protected areas of Cerrado vegetation surrounded by pastureland.

**Identification.** The bird was identified by its characteristically long, forked tail and the color of its plumage; the male of *P. flavirostris* has a black crown and a distinctive white band on the sides of the head (Gwynne et al 2010).

## Discussion

The status of *P. flavirostris* in Mato Grosso do Sul is still uncertain given the scant information on this species. Therefore, aspects such as migration, breeding season, and behavioral characteristics require further studies,

considering its uncertain conservation status (Peixoto et al. 2013). The only record of *P. flavirostris* in Mato Grosso do Sul was in a large forest fragment in Novo Horizonte do Sul in May 2011 (Della-Flora 2011). Furthermore, the sighting in Novo Horizonte do Sul occurred in May increases the likelihood that this was a winter migratory movement in this region.

*Phibalura flavirostris* is distributed primarily in the Atlantic Forest of southeastern Brazil, as well as in high regions of the country, as this species prefers altitudes between 400 and 1,200 m, but varying according to the season (Hennessey 2011).

Snow (1982) stated that the migration of *P. flavirostris* is related to the altitude of habitats, because it seeks higher areas such as rocky and mountainous regions during the breeding season. According to Smith et al. (1999), *P. flavirostris* presents sedentary behavior in the mountainous regions of Bolivia, while in southeastern Brazil, this species is migratory.

The fact that this species has recently been recorded in an area far northwest of its previously known distribution might be attributed to the connection between the Bolivian portion of the Andes and the Brazilian south-



**Figure 2.** Swallow-tailed Cotinga *Phibalura flavirostris*, 17 May 2015, São Vicente Institute, Dom Bosco Catholic University, municipality of Campo Grande, Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil. (Photographed by Allan Corral).

east, which was interrupted in the Pleistocene by the Chaco and Pantanal and, more recently, by rural areas (Hanagarth 1993). Avalos (2011) elucidates the question of the distribution of the species, ascribing its possible distribution in areas of the Cerrado.

Therefore, the distribution of *P. flavirostris* is subject to factors of both biogeography and environmental pressure, which affect both the expansion and restriction of this species' geographical distribution. Our new record expands the known distribution of this species by over 250 km north of the nearest previously recorded occurrence, which suggests possible migratory movements to the north, or even isolated, northern populations.

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## Authors' Contributions

AC photographed and identified species; AC, CLRS, CMEC, KCC, and LMV wrote the text.

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