

Notes on the nests of Spotted Antpitta *Hylopezus macularius* and Alta Floresta Antpitta *Hylopezus whittakeri* in Brazil

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Os Grallariidae são uma diversa família de suboscinos sujeitos a mudanças taxonômicas constantes, com até 70 espécies sendo reconhecidas atualmente por diferentes abordagens taxonômicas. A história de vida da maioria das espécies de *Hylopezus* amazônicos é pouco conhecida, especialmente a sua ecologia reprodutiva – aqui fornecemos descrições dos ninhos de dois dos quatro taxa no complexo torom-carijó *Hylopezus macularius*: *H. macularius* e o torom-de-alta-floresta *H. whittakeri*. Apenas o ninho de *H. macularius* do Escudo das Guianas foi descrito anteriormente e com base num único ninho. Neste trabalho, fornecemos detalhes de um segundo ninho de *H. macularius* além de uma breve descrição do primeiro ninho documentado do recentemente descrito *H. whittakeri* do sul da Amazônia a partir de uma imagem histórica publicada.

The Grallariidae are a speciose family of suboscine passerines subject to constant taxonomic splits and shuffles, with up to 70 species currently recognised by the various taxonomic approaches. The life history of most Amazonian *Hylopezus* species is poorly known, especially their reproductive ecology³. Here we provide descriptions of the nests of two of the four taxa in the Spotted Antpitta *Hylopezus macularius* complex, namely *H. macularius* and *H. whittakeri*. Only the nest of *H. macularius* from the Guiana Shield has been previously described, and then based only on a single nest⁸. Here, we provide details of a second *H. macularius* nest and provide a brief description of the first documented nest of the recently described² Alta Floresta Antpitta *H. whittakeri* from a published historical image.

Spotted Antpitta *Hylopezus macularius* nest

On 5 February 2024, OCM and CAN were obtaining sound-recordings of *H. macularius* in an area of continuous *terra firme* rainforest at the research farm ('Fazenda Experimental') of the Universidade Federal do Amazonas (UFAM), Amazonas, Brazil (2°38'20.3" S, 60°03'28.6" W; 80 m elevation) for an ecoacoustic project. We obtained good views of a single bird at 07h38, observing it singing while standing on a nest platform built on a low leaf of an *Attalea* sp. palm (Fig. 1). After singing continuously for c.10 min without interruption, the bird moved to a new location and resumed singing; this allowed us to obtain measurements of the temporarily vacated nest.

The nest consisted of a low cup supported from the base (following Simon & Pacheco⁶). It comprised a loose amalgamation of sticks and broad

leaves along the central leaf rachis, which formed an outer structural layer (terminology hereafter as per Hansell & Overhill⁴), with a tighter cup woven from fine woody stems forming an unlined, inner structural layer in the middle (Fig. 2A). An unusually high number of broad, dry leaves from a range of plant species were positioned both along the palm rachis and under some of the nest sticks, leading us to believe that they were deliberately placed as a decorative outer layer.

The nest diameter was 32 cm, although we departed slightly from the Hansell & Overhill guidelines by measuring from what we considered to be the interlinked elements of the nest that were farthest apart, discounting loose leaves. The cup diameter was 9.7 cm at its widest and 8.7 cm at its narrowest. Depth was not measured due to the nest's fragile placement on the palm frond (Fig. 2A). The nest was 82 cm from the ground. These measurements match closely those of the only previously described nest, found near Saül, French Guiana, on 16 April 1983⁸, which was built on a young *Astrocaryum paramaca* palm leaf, 76 cm from the ground, with a nest-cup diameter of 7 cm and an outer nest diameter of 30 cm (the latter including protruding twigs).

We assume we recorded the same *H. macularius* within this territory on three separate dates (2, 5 and 7 February 2024), as we only ever observed and heard a single individual each time. Singing continued until late morning (up until 10h45 on 5 February 2024; on this occasion unprompted by playback). This was in contrast to a pair of *H. macularius* in a neighbouring territory exactly 2 km distant; at 08h30 on 7 February 2024, these birds rapidly responded in unison to playback, albeit only by giving calls rather than responding



Figure 2. **A** Nest of Spotted Antpitta *Hylopezus macularius* and **B** nest location on a palm leaf. Universidade Federal do Amazonas Fazenda Experimental, Amazonas, Brazil, 5 February 2024 (Oliver Metcalf).



Figure 3. Alta Floresta Antpitta *Hylopezus whittakeri* sitting tight on a nest at night, Fazenda São Nicolau, Mato Grosso, Brazil, 15 December 2009 (Domingos de Jesus Rodrigues). Previously published as Figure 2j in Oliveira et al.⁶.