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RANGE EXPANSION OF *Sakesphorus canadensis loretoyacuensis* (AVES: THAMNOPHILIDAE) TOWARDS THE YAGUAS RIVER, LORETO, PERU

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ABSTRACT

Sakesphorus canadensis is a thamnophilid antbird distributed along the major river systems of northern South America. In Peru, it is typically associated with blackwater habitats in the northern Amazon, particularly within the Loreto Department. Here, we report the first record of *S. c. loretoyacuensis* in the Yaguas River basin, Putumayo Province, near the border with Colombia. This finding represents the northernmost record of the species in Loreto, extending its known distribution by approximately 120 km northward. The presence of this species in the Yaguas basin underscores the importance of continued biodiversity surveys in remote regions to improve our understanding of the country's avifauna.

KEYWORDS: Riparian thicket, Parque Nacional Yaguas, Putumayo river, black water lakes

EXPANSIÓN DEL RANGO DE *Sakesphorus canadensis loretoyacuensis* (AVES: THAMNOPHILIDAE) HACIA EL RÍO YAGUAS, LORETO, PERÚ

RESUMEN

Sakesphorus canadensis es un thamnophilido distribuido a lo largo del eje de grandes ríos en el Norte suramericano. En el Perú, es típicamente conocido por su asociación con cuerpos de agua negra en la Amazonía norte, principalmente en el departamento de Loreto. Aquí reportamos el primer registro de *S. c. loretoyacuensis* en la cuenca del río Yaguas, provincia del Putumayo, cerca de la frontera con Colombia. Este hallazgo constituye el registro más al norte de la especie en el departamento de Loreto, extendiendo su distribución conocida 120 km hacia al norte aproximadamente. La presencia de esta especie en la cuenca del Yaguas representa la importancia de continuar con los esfuerzos de inventarios en regiones remotas para incrementar el conocimiento sobre la avifauna del país.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Matorral ribereño, Parque Nacional Yaguas, río Putumayo, cochas de aguas negras

In northern Peru, the black-crested antshrike (*Sakesphorus canadensis*), a member of the Thamnophilidae family known for its association with Amazonian blackwater bodies, is present, along the axes of the Amazon, Marañón, and Ucayali rivers in the departments of Loreto and Ucayali (del Hoyo *et al.*, 2023; Schulenberg *et al.*, 2010; Zimmer, 1993). The species consists of six subspecies distributed among South America, but in Peru the only subspecies present is *S. c. loretoyacuensis* Bartlett 1882 (del Hoyo *et al.*, 2023; Zimmer, 1993), which at the level of South America is distributed discontinuously between the Negro River (Brazil), southeast of the Colombian Amazon and the rivers already mentioned in Peru.

In the Peruvian Amazon, *S. c. loretoyacuensis* is known to reach its upper distributional limit in the Nanay River basin, specifically along lake and river margins with shrubby vegetation (Schulenberg *et al.*, 2010). It can forage alone, in pairs, or in mixed flocks, feeding mainly on insects, including hemipterans, homopterans, and beetles (del Hoyo *et al.*, 2023).

Although *S. c. loretoyacuensis* has a wide distribution, there are many areas where it has not been previously recorded, such as the Putumayo River basin. This manuscript describes the discovery of *S. c. loretoyacuensis* in the Yaguas River basin, a region outside the known distribution range for the species.

The records of *S. c. loretoyacuensis* were made on September 27 and October 13, 2023; each observation was located on the shores of a black water lake, locally known as "cocha," within the Yaguas River basin, Putumayo Province, Loreto Department, Peru (Figure 1). The first record was made at Cocha Capitarí (2°42'57.43"S, 70°38'37.23"W), located in the buffer zone of Parque Nacional Yaguas (Figure 1), while the second sighting occurred at Cocha Urresti (2°44'11.25"S, 70°48'18.58"W) within the park.

In both cases, adult males were observed vocalizing in shrubs along the edge of the cocha.

The species identification was made both visually and by sound (Figure 2), with diagnostic field characteristics including the black head with a relatively long crest, black wings with white bars, and black plumage extending from the head to the chest and part of the belly. White plumage was observed on the belly and sides, contrasting with the black plumage (del Hoyo *et al.*, 2023; Schulenberg *et al.*, 2010). Additionally, audio recordings were made using a mobile phone (Redmi 10 Pro), generating WAV (Waveform Audio File Format) files with its native recording software. The recording from Cocha Capitarí is available at link <https://ebird.org/checklist/S192377314>, and the one from Cocha Urresti at link <https://ebird.org/checklist/S192377643> (Figure 2).

Our records of *S. c. loretoyacuensis* are the first to be documented in the Yaguas River basin, also adding a new species to the bird registry of Parque Nacional Yaguas. Considering the species' expected distribution according to BirdLife International (2024) and Schulenberg *et al.* (2006), our records are located 120 km north of the expected range; they are also 80 km west of the record by M. Kesley (<https://ebird.org/checklist/S72606652>), which was made in 1989 in the Cotuhé River basin in Colombia, though it lacks photo or video evidence. Our records are consistent with this description since the Yaguas River is a white-water body, and the adjacent lakes are black-water. Although we do not have additional records from other lakes in the Yaguas basin, we consider that *S. c. loretoyacuensis* is distributed throughout the Yaguas basin because along its axis there are numerous lakes with vegetation characteristics similar to those where we have recorded the species; in addition, del Hoyo *et al.* (2023) present a distribution model for this species, estimating its presence throughout this

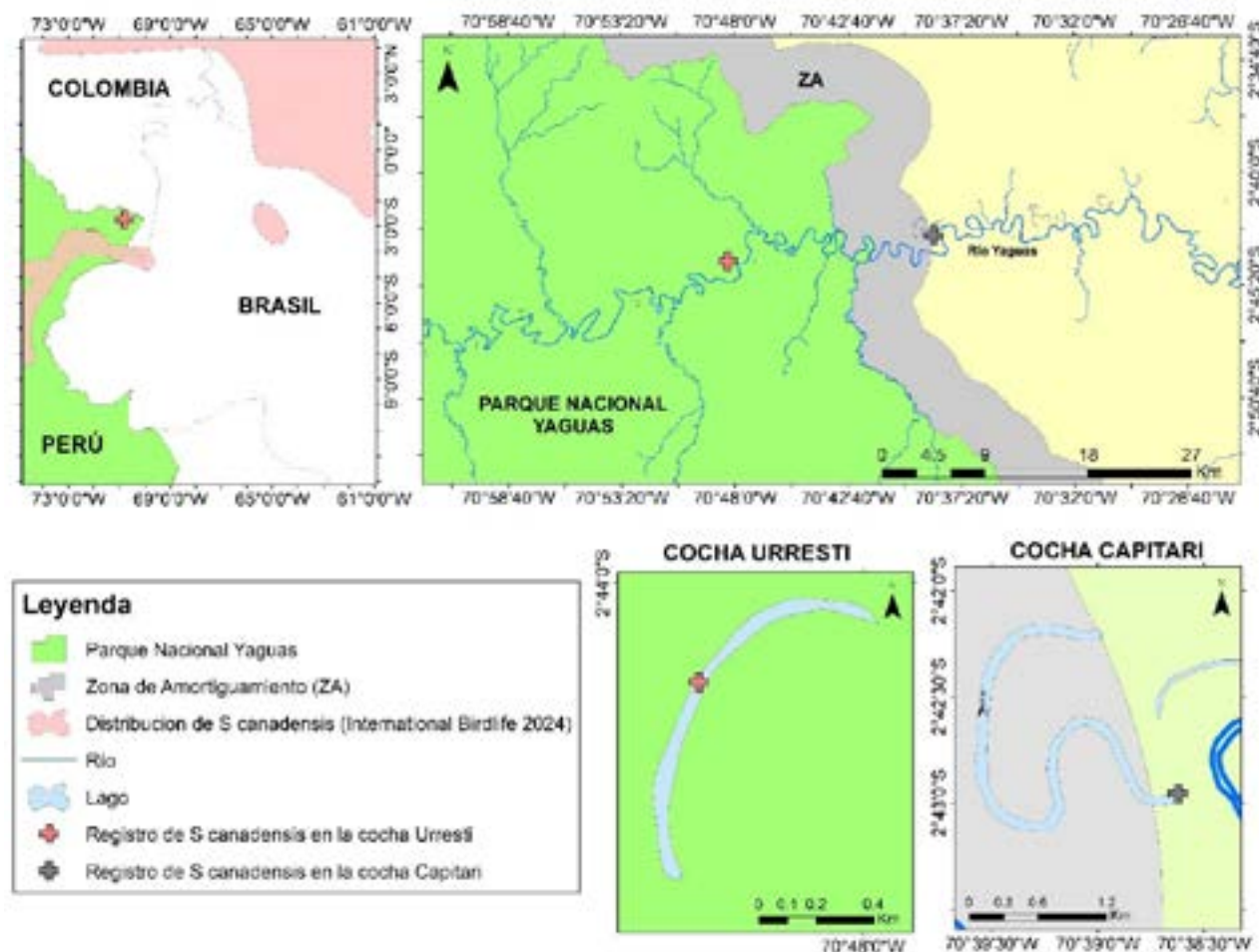


Figure 1. Map of new records of *S. c. loretoyacuensis* at Cocha Capitari and Urresti in the Yaguas River basin, Putumayo Province, Loreto Department.

basin and that of the Putumayo River, of which the Yaguas is a tributary. It is important to highlight that several portions of the Yaguas River basin have previously been surveyed during rapid biological inventories conducted by The Field Museum (Pitman *et al.*, 2004, 2011; Jarrett *et al.*, 2021).

However, *S. c. loretoyacuensis* was not recorded during these efforts. We suggest that this absence may be attributed to logistical constraints, particularly the limited access to black water lakes (cochas), which require small wooden boats for effective navigation and survey. These conditions likely restricted the exploration of specific habitats during the rapid inventories,

which prioritized areas with easier accessibility within a limited timeframe. Additionally, certain bird species, such as *S. c. loretoyacuensis*, may go undetected due to their high habitat specificity, being closely associated with shrubby vegetation along the margins of isolated cochas, which are underrepresented in broad-scale inventories.

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Figure 2. Photographic record of an adult male *S. c. loretoyacuensis* at Cocha Capitari, Yaguas River (A) and Sonogram of the vocalization of *S. c. loretoyacuensis* recorded at Cocha Urresti (B). Sonogram obtained from the song recording uploaded to eBird.

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