First record of Mexican Whip-poor-will *Antrostomus arizonae* in Nicaragua

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Previamente, la distribución conocida del Pocoyo Gritón Sureño *Antrostomus arizonae* se extendía hasta el sur de Honduras. Aquí, documentamos el primer registro de esta especie en Nicaragua, avistada y escuchada en junio de 2016 durante una expedición a la serranía de Dipilto-Jalapa. Este registro, en conjunto con varios nuevos registros para Nicaragua en esta serranía, y nuevos registros de *A. arizonae* en la región, indican que las distribuciones de las aves de esta zona son poco conocidas.

Mexican Whip-poor-will *Antrostomus arizonae* primarily inhabits pine–oak forest from the south-west USA to Honduras[1,3]. Here, we provide the first record of *A. arizonae* for Nicaragua, documented during a survey of the Serranía de Dipilto-Jalapa in June 2016. Subsequent to our discovery, the species has been detected at an additional Nicaraguan location, suggesting that targeted surveys of this caprimulgid may be warranted to ascertain its status in country.

A. arizonae was detected during an ornithological survey of the Reserva Natural Serranía de Dipilto-Jalapa, conducted by the University of Kansas Biodiversity Institute, Lawrence, and the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, Philadelphia, on 1–19 June 2016. The Serranía de Dipilto-Jalapa straddles the Nicaragua–Honduras border (Fig. 1) and has been poorly surveyed[4]. To our knowledge, the only thorough surveys to have been conducted in the vicinity of these mountains were undertaken by Thomas Howell in 1953 and 1955, near the town of El Corozo, and W. B. Richardson, who collected many specimens at 'Santa Cruz', 'Santa Cruz, Rio Coco' and 'Rio Coco' in 1896, 1898 and 1908, all of which are suspected to have been taken in vicinity of the nearby town of Jalapa[4]. Both Howell and Richardson failed to detect *A. arizonae*[4]. Prior to our discovery, birders in the area also failed to detect the species[3].

Field observations

We detected *A. arizonae* on multiple occasions, mostly by vocalizations. The first record was by MBR at 04h45 on 4 June 2016, at 1,400 m elevation (13°44'28.5684"N 86°22'50.4156"W). A male was also observed by MBR in the early morning on 6 June. MBR detected two individuals singing on 9 June at 04h45 and again on 10 June at 04h35. These individuals were presumably counter-singing. JCC detected by ear an individual at 04h45 on 16 June. MBR & JPH observed a female in the morning of 17 June at 11h50. MBR sound-recorded one of the individuals detected on 9 June (recording deposited at the Macaulay Library, Cornell Lab of Ornithology; ML 523424), clearly capturing the burrier and slower quality of their *whirr-p-wiir* call. All individuals were recorded in pine–oak forest and the records are archived on eBird[2].

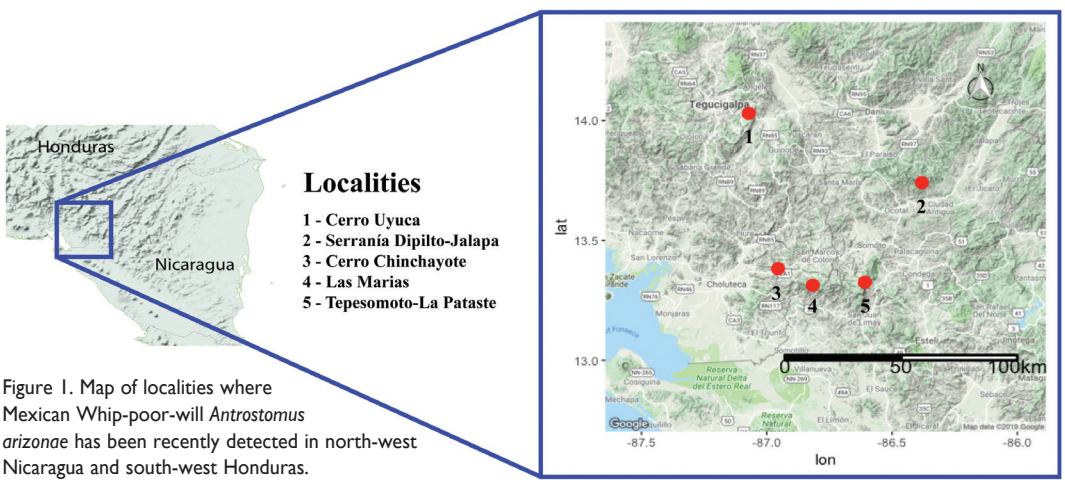

Figure 1. Map of localities where Mexican Whip-poor-will *Antrostomus arizonae* has been recently detected in north-west Nicaragua and south-west Honduras.

Discussion

Our observations represent the first documented records of *A. arizonae* in Nicaragua. It is worth noting that *A. arizonae* was formerly considered conspecific with Eastern Whip-poor-will *A. vociferus*, and that three specimens of the latter have been collected in Nicaragua, on 22 March 1909, 15 February 1917 and 2 December 1961. The specimens dating from 1909 (AMNH 103565) and 1917 (AMNH 423496) were collected by W. B. Richardson, while the 1961 specimen (UCLA 37711) was collected by T. R. Howell[4]. These individuals probably represented migrants or winter residents, given the time of year they were collected. This taxon winters as far south as Panama[6]. Because *A. vociferus* and *A. arizonae* are so similar in plumage, it is possible that some misidentifications, even of specimens, could have occurred. Howell[4] concluded that only *A. vociferus* 'is certainly recorded' in Nicaragua, suggesting the possibility that at least one of these specimens is *A. arizonae*. From photographs of all three specimens, we cannot confirm or deny Howell's suspicion. To our knowledge, only males of these species can be distinguished morphologically, by the degree of white on the outer rectrices[5]. Two of the specimens, AMNH 103565 and UCLA 3711 are females, and the other, AMNH 10356, is tail-less, precluding us from assigning any of them to species (P. Sweet & J. Marcot pers. comm.). Provided that these taxa are best distinguished by voice, the sound-recording obtained by MBR is the first definitive record of *A. arizonae* in Nicaragua.

A. arizonae was previously thought to range as far south as southern Honduras[3], with the Guayape fault system presumably acting as a biogeographic barrier. It has been postulated that this acts as a barrier for a few other avian species, including Mountain Trogon *Trogon mexicanus* and Garnet-throated Hummingbird *Lamprolaima rhami*. Our nightjar record, in addition to the recent discovery of Black Thrush *Turdus infuscatus* in 2013 (eBird S14621757) and Unicoloured Jay *Aphelocoma unicolor* in 2011 (eBird S22081849) at this locality, both previously unrecorded in Nicaragua[4], suggest that the perceived impermeability of this barrier may be influenced by a paucity of surveys on the Nicaraguan side. Prior to our discovery, *A. arizonae* had been recorded as far south as Cerro Chinchayote in Honduras, 74 km south-west of our location (Fig. 1). Subsequent to our discovery, this species has been detected at two new localities in the vicinity, including Las Marías, Honduras, 67 km south-west of our location, where first documented on 15 September 2018 (eBird S48722685; Fig. 1), and Tepesomoto-La Pataste, Nicaragua, 52 km south-west of our location, where first documented on 14 October 2017 (eBird S39929621; Fig. 1). Our observation of *A. arizonae* adds to the growing number of new country records in the Serranía de Dipilto-Jalapa and highlights the need for continued surveys of both resident and migratory birds in this region.

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