

SOME UNUSUAL BIRDS OF SOUTHERN BUENOS AIRES PROVINCE

During several days (2-4 December 1967) of field study west of Bahía Blanca, southern Buenos Aires Province, I and my companions Richard S. Crossin and Francisco Espínola collected specimens and made observations of the following species.

Spiziapteryx circumcinctus (Kaup). Halconcito gris. An individual of this species flew across a road in low chaco woodland 24 km northwest of Médanos on 3 December. The bird proved to be an adult male with moderately enlarged testes (7 by 5 mm), no fat, and weighing 151 grams. Soft part colors recorded were: iris, bright yellow; feet, yellow; bill, black distally with the base and cere yellow; and, bare orbital skin yellow. This species is reported as "accidental" in Buenos Aires Province by Olrog (Lista y distrib. aves arg., Opera Lilloana 9: 117, 1963). The securing of this individual with enlarged gonads in southwestern Buenos Aires Province suggests that the species may occur more frequently in that province, and may occasionally breed there.

Chrysophilus melanolaimus patagonicus Laubmann. Carpintero real. Three specimens of this woodpecker were obtained 21 km west of Médanos in low chaco woodland. The male and female of a pair were collected at holes in telephone poles at the edge of the woodland (the female was ready to commence laying, with ova to 10 mm). This subspecies, previously known only from La Pampa, Neuquén and Río Negro, follows the low chaco woodland from La Pampa into Buenos Aires Province as far east as the vicinity of Médanos. Interestingly, another woodpecker, *Dendrocopos mixtus berlepschi* (Hellmayr), apparently also occurs in this region of Buenos Aires Province within the same chaco woodland (at Argerich, unpublished data from specimens in the Museo Argentino de Ciencias Naturales, Buenos Aires).

Phaeotriccus hudsoni (Sclater). Viudita negra chica. A female of this little-known species was secured 21 km west of Médanos in low chaco woodland on 3 December. Its ovary was enlarged (6 by 4 mm, ova 2 mm) and it weighed 12.4 grams. Although known as a migrant in Buenos Aires Province (Olrog, op. cit.: 251), this is the first apparently breeding individual obtained therein. Although difficult to distinguish from other viuditae (genus *Knipolegus*), the falcate outer primaries of both sexes of *Phaeotriccus hudsoni* are diagnostic.

Pezites militaris militaris (Linnaeus). Pecho colorado grande. The pecho colorado grande has not been known to breed in Buenos Aires Province (Olrog, op. cit.: 300), but we found this species common, with males singing and on territory from the border of La Pampa eastward to Bahía Blanca, and northward to about 100 km north of Bahía Blanca. An adult territorial male collected 23 km west of Bahía Blanca on 4 December had enlarged testes

(11 by 6 mm) and a large cloacal protuberance. The relationship between *Pezites militaris* and *P. defilippi* will be discussed in a separate report.

Diuca diuca minor Bonaparte. Diuca. This form has been known only as a migrant in Buenos Aires Province. Two females (ovary 7 by 4 mm, with brood patch; and ova to 5 mm, one egg laid) were taken 21 km west of Médanos in low chaco woodland. Nests containing 2 or 3 eggs were found in the crotch of a small tree 20 cm above the ground, and inside the stick nest of *Pseudoseisura gutturalis* 21 km west of Médanos, and along the edge of a field 23 km west of Bahía Blanca. Thus, this form breeds in Buenos Aires Province. The sexes are essentially alike in *Diuca diuca minor*.

Poospiza ornata (Leybold). Monterita canela. A male weighing 12.4 grams, and with enlarged (7 by 5.5 mm) testes and a large cloacal protuberance, was collected in low chaco woodland 21 km west of Médanos on 3 December. The bird was singing and apparently on territory, although no female was encountered. This uncommon monterita may thus breed sporadically in southwestern Buenos Aires Province; it is presently listed (de Schauensee, The species of Birds of South America, p. 531, 1966) as a wintering bird in that province. Soft part colors of this male were: iris, brown; legs, brownish; bill, black above and silver black below. — LESTER L. SHORT, JR., *The American Museum of Natural History, New York, December 1967*.