A range extension for Curl-crested Araçari *Pteroglossus beauharnaesii*: implications for avian contact zones in southern Amazonia

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The monotypic Curl-crested Araçari *Pteroglossus beauharnaesii* occurs south of the Amazon from northern Peru (south of the río Marañón) and western Brazil (north-east to the mouth of the rio Madeira and south-east in a narrow tongue to the headwaters of the upper rio Xingu), and south to northern and central Bolivia in Pando and Cochabamba (Short & Horne 2002). Recent molecular analyses place it within the Red-necked Araçari *P. bitorquatus* species-group (Eberhard & Bermingham 2005). ACL visited the Novo Progresso region, southern Pará, on 23–24 August 2006, to search for the enigmatic Golden-crowned Manakin *Lepidothrix vilasboasi*. At 11.15 h on 23 August an adult *P. beauharnaesii* was observed departing a tree cavity in moderately disturbed *terra firme* forest west of Novo Progresso at *c*.07º13'S, 55º32'W. The bird did not return within the next hour, perhaps indicating it was merely prospecting suitable nest sites. Subsequently that day, four *P. beauharnaesii* were located with a mixed-species foraging flock of five *P. bitorquatus reichenowi* and three Black-necked Araçaris *P. a. aracari* in *Cecropia* trees in the same area. ACL obtained digital images of one bird in poor light (Fig 1.). *P. beauharnaesii* was not recorded in this region by a recent survey (Pacheco & Olmos 2005), but the species is patchily distributed around Alta Floresta, northern Mato Grosso (Zimmer *et al*. 1997), and thus easily overlooked in rapid avifaunal surveys.

Figure 1. Curl-crested Aracari *Pteroglossus beauharnaesii*, near Novo Progresso, Pará, Brazil, 23 August 2006 (Alexander C. Lees)

These records are the first of *P. beauharnaesii* in Pará north of the Serra do Cachimbo (a *Cerrado* region that serves as a fairly important faunal barrier to forest species), and a range extension of 260 km north-east from the nearest known site in southernmost Pará, at 09º27'S, 56º01'W (ACL pers. obs.). Haffer (1974, 1997) used the Ramphastidae as a key family to illustrate distributional patterns of parapatry in Amazonian birds. The distribution of *P. beauharnaesii* was used as an example to illustrate contact zones between birds in the Madeira–Tapajós interfluvium: 'The northern portion of the … interfluvium is inhabited by the Black-necked Aracari (*P. aracari*), which probably meets its southern representative [*Pteroglossus beauharnaesii*] in the same general area where the parrots *Pionopsitta vulturina*/*P. barrabandi*, as well as … several other species pairs, have established contact' (Haffer 1997). *P. a. aracari* occurs in several disjunct populations in north-central, east and south-east Brazil; in Amazonia, west to the rio Madeira, east to Maranhão and south to north-east to Mato Grosso and Goiás (Short & Horne 2002). Our record of *P. beauharnaesii* extends the area of known sympatry with *P. aracari* over a minimum 300 km-wide swathe of southern Amazonia either side of the Serra do Cachimbo in northern Mato Grosso and southern Pará, south as far as Alta Floresta and north at least to Novo Progresso. These species were formerly thought to occur sympatrically only in the southern Serra do Cachimbo (Haffer 1997).

Further complicating the distribution patterns hypothesised by Haffer is the recent description of Bald Parrot *Gypopsitta aurantiocephala* (Gaban-Lima *et al*. 2002), which has

been found sympatrically with Orange-cheeked Parrot *G. barrabandi* at Alta Floresta (R. Hoyer pers. comm.) and with Vulturine Parrot *G. vulturina* on the middle Tapajós (Gaban-Lima *et al.* 2002). The range of *G. aurantiocephala* is still inadequately known but its preference for *campinarana* forest (Gaban-Lima *et al.* 2002) suggests it could occur sympatrically (but perhaps not syntopically) with either *G. barrabandi* or *G. vulturina* over a considerable area. The contact zones hypothesised by Haffer for the Madeira–Tapajós interfluvium appear to be not only much broader, but perhaps more complex than previously imagined, as evidenced by recent observations of *Pteroglossus* and *Gypopsitta*. These discoveries do not invalidate the importance of the rio Teles Pires region as a contact zone, but do illustrate the difficulty of determining where such zones lie and how much overlap exists between parapatric taxa given the dearth of basic presence/absence information for avian distributions in much of Amazonia.

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