

Range extension for the endangered Cochabamba Mountain-Finch (*Compsospiza garleppi*) in Bolivia and new avifaunal records for Potosí department

Extensión del rango de distribución de la ave amenazada, monterita de Cochabamba (*Poospiza garleppi*) en Bolivia y nuevos registros de avifauna para el departamento de Potosí

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The Cochabamba Mountain-Finch (*Compsospiza garleppi*) is an endemic bird of Bolivia, inhabiting open woodlands in the transitional zone between dry inter-Andean valleys and Puna from 2,700 m to 3,900 m (Hennessey *et al.* 2003, BirdLife International 2009). It is also found in crops surrounded by native vegetation (Fjeldså & Krabbe 1990, Balderrama *et al.* 2009). The Cochabamba Mountain-Finch is currently considered as Endangered (BirdLife International 2004, 2009) due to its restricted distribution and ongoing habitat fragmentation. It is also considered as zoogeographic endemic to the Central Andes (Stotz *et al.* 1996, Hennessey *et al.* 2003), and it is found in Endemic Bird Area 056 (High Andes of Bolivia and Argentina; Stattersfield *et al.* 1998, Hennessey *et al.* 2003). The Tunari National Park is the only protected area where it occurs (Hjarsen 1997, Balderrama & Ramirez 2001, Hennessey *et al.* 2003, BirdLife International 2009).

Known distribution

The Cochabamba Mountain-Finch principally is restricted to mountains surrounding Cochabamba city (Cochabamba department; Fjeldså & Krabbe 1990). The easternmost distributional records were reported from 98-120 km east of Cochabamba city on the road to Santa Cruz (Rensen *et al.* 1988). According to BirdLife International (2004), the species is documented from 10-11 localities (Rensen *et al.* 1988, Fjeldså & Krabbe 1990, Fjeldså & Kessler 1996, Balderrama *et al.* 2009). Its estimated distributional range (Extent of Occurrence) is 3,700 km² (BirdLife International 2009).

New distributional record

I conducted bird censuses in *Polylepis* woodlands of Llallahuani (18°03'56"S, 66°04'11"W, altitude 3,300 m, 6 km by road south of Acasio) in extreme northern Potosí department (SW Bolivia) in December 2005. This locality contains several small *Polylepis neglecta* forest fragments (totaling ca. 10 ha) that are highly disturbed by agricultural activities, with many open areas and presence of livestock, especially sheep.

On 9 December 2005, I observed five Cochabamba Mountain-Finch individuals, two presumed pairs and one lone individual (two individuals were videotaped; video deposited at the Centro de

Biodiversidad y Genética). These observations constitute the first record of the species for Potosí department and the southernmost record of the Cochabamba Mountain-Finch, which was thought to be restricted to the Tunari basin in Cochabamba department (Fjeldsá & Krabbe 1990, Hennessey *et al.* 2003, BirdLife International 2004). The population documented in Llallahuani is somewhat isolated from populations in Cochabamba department (Fig. 1), presumably due to the lack of suitable habitat in interjacent areas.

Recent surveys (27-29 November 2008) in the same area in northern Potosí department permitted us to record nine additional Cochabamba Mountain-Finch individuals in two other *Polylepis* fragments in La Porta and

Sikiri (5 ha and 3 ha, respectively). La Porta (18°06'32"S, 66°06'17"W; 3,500 m), where seven individuals were observed, is somewhat disturbed by agricultural activities, with some open areas and presence of livestock. Sikiri (18°05'51"S, 66°08'28"W; 3,500 m) on the other hand, where only two individuals were observed, is highly disturbed by agricultural activities, close to a road and with clear evidence of continuous logging.

I also found three other restricted-range species in the same sites: Maquis Canastero (*Asthenes heterura*), Bolivian Warbling-Finch (*Poospiza boliviana*) and Bolivian Blackbird (*Oreopsar bolivianus*). Observations of Puna Tapaculo (*Scytalopus simonsi*), Cinereous Conebill (*Conirostrum cinereum*), Rusty Flowerpiercer (*Diglossa sittoides*) and Bolivian

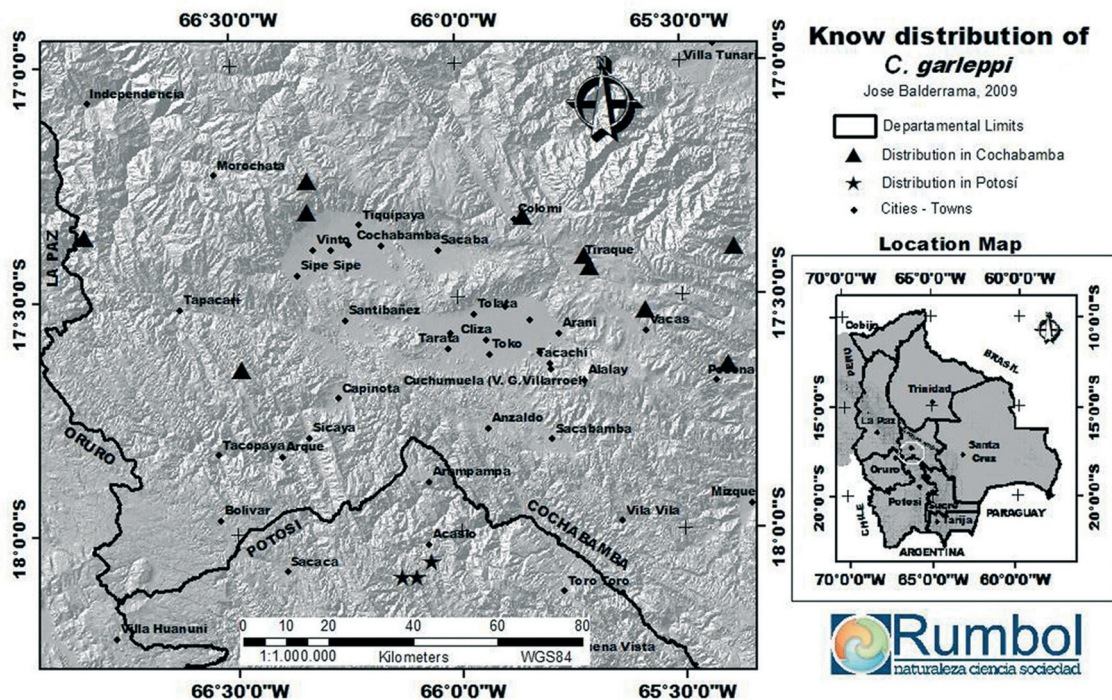


Figure 1. Map of the distribution of the Cochabamba Mountain-Finch (*Compsospiza garleppi*).

Black triangles indicate localities in Cochabamba department (Remsen *et al.* 1988, Fjeldsá & Krabbe 1990, Fjeldsá & Kessler 1996, BirdLife International 2004, Balderrama *et al.* 2009), a black star the new distributional record in Potosí department.

Warbling-Finch are first records for Potosí department (Hennessey *et al.* 2003). Moreover, Stripe-crowned Spinetail (*Cranioleuca pyrrhophia*) reaches its highest altitudinal record in this area (Hennessey *et al.* 2003).

Further surveys near Acasio may find the Cochabamba Mountain-Finch in additional *Polylepis* fragments, and this area could potentially be declared an Important Bird Area (IBA) in Bolivia (Soria-Auza & Hennessey 2005), in part also due to the presence of at least three other restricted-range species.

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