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NATURAL HISTORY NOTES ON SOME POORLY KNOWN BOLIVIAN BIRDS

PART 3

J.V. REMSEN, JR., C. GREGORY SCHMITT and DONNA C. SCHMITT

INTRODUCTION

As with the first two papers in this series (Remsen, Parker and Ridgely, 1982; Remsen, 1984a), the purpose of this paper is to present natural history information on several species of Bolivian birds about which virtually nothing has been written. Most field observations presented herein were gathered during our fieldwork in Bolivia in 1984. Museums were surveyed for specimens of the nine species discussed herein to give as complete as possible picture of their true distributions.

Locality: not listed in the recent Neotropical gazetteers (Paynter, Traylor, and Winter, 1975; Paynter and Caperton, 1977; Paynter and Traylor, 1977, 1981; Paynter, 1982, 1985; Stephens and Traylor, 1983, 1985) are placed in quotes, as are those for which only an imprecise locality is available. Localities from Brazil, which lacks a gazetteer, are not differentiated by quotes. Localities recorded in the literature but for which we were unable to locate the specimens are referred to by appropriate literature citation only. The number of specimens for literature-only localities precedes the citation, whereas actual counts of museum specimens follow the appropriate museum abbreviation (see Acknowledgments for abbreviations). Soft part colors were taken from living or freshly killed individuals. Capitalized color names are from Smith (1975).

Buff-bellied Hermit, Phaethornis subochraceus

Until our fieldwork in 1984, this species had not been collected for over sixty years (1923). It is still known from only 18 specimens from 9 localities in eastern Bolivia and extreme southwestern Brazil as noted below. To put this and other specimen totals in this paper in perspective, we note that a recent survey by Hamel (1986) of all known specimens of the nearly extinct and always rare Bachman's Warbler, Vermivora bachmani, located 332 specimens. Brazil: Mato Grosso: San Juan Fazenda, Cuiabá River (AMNH 1); Descalvados
Near Tambo, we found it daily on steep slopes with dense undergrowth in arid hilly terrain dominated by xeromorphic shrubs and columnar cacti. These earthcreepers were noted frequently in patches of terrestrial bromeliads, as had been pointed out to us by T.A. Parker. We also found it along the edges of large washes where shrub density was relatively high. One bird was found in dense thickets bordering agricultural fields in the floodplain next to the hills. All individuals noted were solitary, wary, and difficult to observe, and were feeding on the ground, often by rummaging in leaf litter and debris, usually within dense vegetation. Alarmed birds often fled by running quickly. Highest densities were found in a very steep, brushy canyon 3.8 km W Tambo, where at least eight were noted in about 1 linear km.

During our June and July visit to the area, the birds were rather silent, only occasionally giving their distinctive, buzzy, loud "hreeeeeep!" call, which was reminiscent of the buzzy calls of Schizoeus or Scryalopus. The song was heard on only 2-3 occasions and was a very dry, raspy, harsh, descending, bouncing-ball song reminiscent of that of Craniolca pyrrhopla but still drier and harsher. Although current taxonomic treatments place Synallaxis between Upucerthia and Craniolca, the similarity in the songs of the latter two, and the difference between their songs and the simple songs of Synallaxis, suggests that the current arrangement (e.g., Meyer de Schauensee, 1966; Vaurie, 1980) should be re-examined.

Of the recently collected LSUMZ specimens, all in late June and early July, none was in breeding condition. Eight lacked any subcutaneous fat and one had "light fat". Six were not molting and three showed some body molt. None of the skulls was scored as more than 25% ossified; it is likely that this species never has a completely pneumatized skull. The mean body weight for males was 24.9 g (23.6-26.2, N = 3) and for females, 22.8 g (21.6-23.8, N = 6); an unsexed alcoholic specimen weighed 23.3 g. All contained insects in their stomachs, and one also contained a tiny mollusk. Typical soft parts were: iris Raw Umber; maxilla blackish; mandible basally pale blending to blackish tip; tarsi and toes Brownish-Olive or gray.

Vaurie (1980) considered Upucerthia harterti to be a subspecies of U. certhioidees of the Chaco of Paraguay and Argentina. Vaurie's reason was that the two taxa "do not differ by any character which seems to be of species importance in Upucerthia, and all the differences which distinguish them are relative and a matter of degree." Although we do not have the series of certhioidees that would allow us to examine Vaurie's claims that certain populations approach harterti in coloration, we feel that, in view of Vaurie's consistent dismissal of pronounced geographic variation in the Fumariidae as trivial (Pitpatrick, 1982; JVR, pers. obs.), Vaurie's claims require corroboration and his cursory, qualitative examination does not warrant a change in current taxonomy.

Buff-browed Spinetail, Synallaxis (azarae) superciliosa

This spinetail is known from 91 specimens and 29 localities from Dpto.
Cochabamba, Bolivia, to Prov. Tucumán, Argentina, as follows: Bolivia: Dpto. Cochabamba: “Carahua, 2900 m (250 km E Cochabamba)” (IML 1); “Quebrada Majoe, 6.6 km by road beyond Lopez Mendoza, at km 98 from Cochabamba, 3150-3250 m, Prov. Carrasco” (LSUMZ 4). Dpto. Santa Cruz: Samajeta (UMMZ 4, ANSP 1; type of samajeta); Santa Ana, Prov. Valle Grande (1, Cory and Hellmayr 1925). Dpto. Chuquisaca: Rio Azoro (ANSP 6); 25 km E Padilla (ANSP 2); 16 km N Monteagudo (FMNH 1). Dpto. Tarija: Entre Rios (ANSP 1), Yacuiba (CM 1). Argentina: Prov. Jujuy: San Lorenzo (Cory and Hellmayr, 1925); Arenal (MLP 2, IML 1), Prov. Salta: La Caldera, 10 km S limite con Jujuy (AMNH 1); Rio Santa Maria (MACN 2); Rosario de la Frontera (IML 1). Prov. Tucumán: Concepcion (MACN 9, FMNH 7, ZMC 3); above San Pablo (AMNH 14); Villa Nougués, 1000 m (AMNH 1, IML 1); San Javier (type specimen); Cerro San Javier, 1000 m (IML 1); San Pedro de Colalao (IML 1); Taí (AMNH 1); Taí, 600 m (IML 1); Taí Viejo, 700 m (IML 4, MACN 2); Sarriento (AMNH 1); Horco Molle (AMNH 1); Aconquija (IML 1). Also, there are sight records from Prov. Catamarca: “Cuesta del Clavillo” and “Balcosas de Afeurua” (Nore and Yuzurieta, 1983a). The populations from Dptos. Cochabamba and Santa Cruz occur at relatively high elevations, from 1630 to 3250 m, but from Dpto. Chuquisaca south, specimen localities are at much lower elevations, from 400 to 1500 m.

Virtually nothing has been written concerning the natural history of this species other than Ofrog’s (1979) statement that in Argentina, it occurs in the lower strata of humid montane forest, 1000-2500 m. Narosky et al. (1983) summarized the fragmentary information on this species’ nest and eggs. *Synallaxis superciliosa* was scarce at Quebrada Majoe (see Compsospiza garleppi account), where single individuals were noted on only 4 of 16 field days, always in dense thickets of *Polylepis* and mixed species of shrubs.

Of the four recently collected LSUMZ specimens, all from May or August, three were males in adult plumage with partly (10-20%) plumatomized skulls, and one was in juvenile plumage with a 5% plumatomized skull. None was in breeding condition, none showed more than light fat, and all stomachs contained insects. One stomach also contained two brown seeds 3 x 2 x 2 mm, and another contained three apparent insect eggs 2 x 1 x 1 mm. Body weights for the adults were 9.9, 12.0 and 14.0 g, and for the juvenal, 11.5 g. Typical soft part colors were: iris Amber; maxilla black; mandible Medium Neutral Gray; tarsi and toes Olive-Gray. The juvenile’s soft parts were: iris Cinnamon Brown; maxilla Fusous; mandible Flesh; and tarsi and toes Glaucous.

Within the genus *Synallaxis*, *S. superciliosa* traditionally has been considered most closely related to *S. ruficapilla*, *S. poliophrys*, or *S. frontalis* (Cory and Hellmayr, 1925; Peters, 1951; Meyer de Schauensee, 1966; Vaurie, 1980). We, however, feel that it is most closely related to *Synallaxis azurea*, a species that occupies an elevational range similar to that of *S. superciliosa* in the Andes from Cochabamba north to Venezuela. Although all of the above taxonomic arrangements place *azurea* very close to *superciliosa*, none proposed that the two are sister taxa. Not only are *superciliosa* and *azurea* generally distributed parapatrically, at similar elevations in similar habitat, but two subspecies of *azurea*, *S. a. ochracea* of southern Ecuador and northeastern Peru and *S. a. elegantior* of Colombia, are very similar to *superciliosa* in plumage, more so than either is to most other subspecies of *azurea*. (Contra Vaurie, 1980, elegantior and other northern forms are best considered subspecies of *S. azurea*; T.S. Schuelenberg and T.A. Parker, in prep.). In fact, these taxa together are an example of the “leap-frog” pattern of geographic variation (Remsen, 1984b). Other taxa with a similar pattern of variation, i.e. with the populations of the western Andes more similar to those of the southern Andes of Bolivia than either is to intervening taxa in Peru, are *Ochthoechos* (frontalis) jelkii and *O. f. boliviana*, *Cyanocephala* (viridicata) turcosa and *C. v. viridicata*, *Chamaepetes gouldii fagani* and *C. g. rufiventi* and *Rupicola peruviana sanguinolenta* and *R. p. saurara*.

Although *Synallaxis superciliosa* has always been recognized as a species distinct from *S. azurea*, we here propose that it is best considered as only a subspecies of the latter. Of the discussions of geographic variation in *S. azurea* (e.g., Zimmer, 1936; Cory and Hellmayr, 1925, 1925; Vaurie, 1980), only Chapman (1926: 430) recognized the striking similarity between some subspecies of *azurea* (see above) and *superciliosa*. Furthermore, JVR’s examination of geographic variation in *azurea* populations from Dpto. Huánuco, Peru, to Dpto. Cochabamba, Bolivia, an area that includes the darkest and therefore least *superciliosa*-like subspecies, reveals that most characters regarded as diagnostic of *superciliosa* are present to varying degrees in populations of *azurea*. In fact, *superciliosa* represents the endpoint in clines of three characters within *azurea* populations. For example, the distinct eyebrow of *superciliosa* appears with increasing frequency in *azurea* populations as one approaches their area of contact (Table 1). With respect to the narrow frontal band of *superciliosa*, its extent decreases climally in *azurea*, from broad in Dpto. Huánuco to narrow in Cochabamba. With respect to the pale ventral coloration of *superciliosa*, many

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>trace</th>
<th>moderate</th>
<th>strong</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>S. a. &quot;fimbriata&quot;</em> (Huánuco, Pasco)</td>
<td>24 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>S. a. &quot;ubambae&quot;</em> (Cusco)</td>
<td>13 (100)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>S. a. &quot;carabuyae&quot;</em> (Puno)</td>
<td>4 (80)</td>
<td>1 (20)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>S. a. azurea</em> (La Paz)</td>
<td>5 (63)</td>
<td>5 (63)</td>
<td>2 (25)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>S. a. azurea</em> (Cochabamba)</td>
<td>3 (19)</td>
<td>6 (38)</td>
<td>5 (31)</td>
<td>2 (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>S. s. samajeta</em> (Coch., Santa Cruz)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>S. s. superciliosa</em> (Argentina)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
specimens of azarae from Prov. Chapare, Cochabamba, approach superciliosa in paleness. Finally, the northern subspecies of superciliosa, S. s. samaiapatae, is intermediate in dorsal coloration and extent of frontal band between nominate superciliosa and nominate azarae from Prov. Chapare. In our small samples of samaiapatae there is also a suggestion that samaiapatae may be intermediate in eyecolor between S. s. superciliosa (taa) and S. a. azarae (buffy).

A series of 19 skins of azarae from Prov. Chapare, Cochabamba, shows great variability in development of the eyecolor (Table 1) and other characters critical in the diagnosis of superciliosa. In belly color, some (e.g., CM 85710) are as dark as the darkest LSUMZ specimens of S. azarae from Peru, whereas others (e.g., CM 119737) are as pale as topotypes of S. s. samaiapatae. The width of the frontal band varies from as much as 6-7 mm to as little as 3 mm, and some individuals (e.g., CM 85054) have most feathers tipped rusty, as in samaiapatae. Some individuals (e.g., CM 119739) have as much white in the sides of the throat as topotypical samaiapatae. Back color varies from nearly all gray to as brown as topotypical samaiapatae. Crown color varies from ochraceous to chestnut. Additionally, two specimens from “Yungas of Cochabamba, 1500 m” (CM 85348, 85385), a locality not possible to locate precisely, are particularly perplexing in showing mostly characters of samaiapatae except in lacking an eyecolor.

One interpretation of this variability would be to assign the extreme specimens in the series to samaiapatae, with the consequence that azarae and superciliosa would then be sympatric. This is apparently what Vaurie (1980) did, although the 300 km area of sympatry in his range map is inexplicable. We believe, however, that this variability indicates introgression from true samaiapatae populations in southern Cochabamba.

Information concerning vocalizations of samaiapatae is consistent with its treatment as a subspecies of S. azarae. The typical call of samaiapatae is a double-noted “ka-kwéeék” virtually identical to that of azarae populations further north (R. S. Ridgely, in litt.).

Therefore, we believe that all available information supports the treatment of S. superciliosa as a subspecies of S. azarae.

It should also be noted that although the type locality for S. azarae, “Carcuata” (= Cajuata), is usually given as being in Dpto. Cochabamba (e.g., Peters, 1951), it is actually in Dpto. La Paz (Payner, Traylor, and Winter, 1975). So, the La Paz populations traditionally included in S. a. carabuye are actually referable to the nominate race. In view of the variability of the Cochabamba population, reassignment of the type locality to La Paz is fortunate.

Examination of azarae specimens from Huánuco to Cochabamba left many doubts as to the validity of the four subspecies described within this region. Zimmer (1936) considered S. a. carabuye of Puno to be the darkest subspecies, with infuscata of Huánuco and Pasco slightly paler, and then urubambae and the nominate race slightly paler still. The LSUMZ specimens from these areas show no consistent pattern, with the darkest specimens from Dpto. Puno not as dark as some individuals from Machu Picchu (urubambae) or Huánuco (infuscata) and matched by some individuals from the nominate race. Individual variation in birds in adult plumage is extensive, particularly in the Cochabamba populations as noted above. The width of the frontal vandy is clinal, as is the extent of the eyecolor. Although a thorough examination is clearly needed, we feel that the named subspecies are evidently arbitrary points on a cline and that all those from Huánuco south to Cochabamba should be merged into one form, S. a. azarae.

**Stripe-backed Antbird, Myrmecillus strigilis**

This odd antbird is known from at least 224 specimens from 73 localities from two disjunct regions, one in dry northeastern Brazil and the other from extreme southwestern Brazil and southern Bolivia to eastern Argentina and Paraguay. Brazil: Ipira: Arara (FMNH 5); Paraguá (AMNH 4); in Vienna Museum, Jde Cory and Hellmayr 1924). Ceard: Varzea Formosa (FMNH 4); Jua, near Ignati (FMNH 2), Pernambuco: Garanhuns (AMNH 2), Rio Branco (AMNH 2), Fazenda Ammapa, Agrestina, 500 m (MZUSP 1). Alagoas: Palmeira dos indios, 300 m (MZUSP 1). Bahia: Tamburi (AMNH 3); Iguy (AMNH 1); Santa Rita (AMNH 2); Santa Rita de Cássia, Rio Preto, 440 m (LACM 3, MZUSP 1); Barra, 400 m (MZUSP 8, AMNH 1); Barra do Rio Grande, Fazenda da Serra (3, Cory and Hellmayr, 1924); Joazeiro, 384 m (MZUSP 1); Sincorá (AMNH 1); Lambaré (AMNH 2); Cacheoira, Rio Paraguassú (MNRJ 1); Lapa do Bom Jesus (MNRJ 7); Euclides da Cunha (MNRJ 1); “Bahia” (BM 2, USNM 2). Paraiba: Curema, 250 m (MZUSP 6, LACM 2). Minas Gerais: Divisópolis (MNJR 1); Almenara (Sick 1985). Mato Grosso: Corumbá (MZUSP 1); Urucum, near Corumbá (AMNH 6). Bolivia: Dpto. Santa Cruz: Palmariito (CM 1); Lagunillas (ANS 2); Chaparaju (MCZ 1); Curiche (CM 1); “Proyecto Apató-Izoqog, ca. 35 km E Apató, 375 m, Prov. Cordillera” (LSUMZ 13); 8 km N Gutiérrez (FMNH 2); “Laguna Caucaya, 10 km E Gutiérrez, 1100 m, Prov. Cordillera” (DMNH, LSUMZ 1); “Cerro Colorado, Chaco, Prov. Cordillera” (EBD 3); “Estancia Pericon, Chaco, Prov. Cordillera” (EBD 1); Buyiui (MACN 1); Valle de Tucabaca (FMNH 4); Santiagooma (FMNH 1); Santiago de Chiquitos (FMNH 5); Dpto. Tarija: Fortín Campero (ANS 8); “5 km NNE Capirienda,” Prov. Gran Chaco (LACM 2); Villa Montes (ANS 5, UMM 2); Yaculha (MACN 2, ANSP 1, CM 1); “Laguna Palmar, 2 km S, 10 km E Tiquipa (12.4 km by road ESE Tiquipa), 555 m” (DMNH 1). Paraguay (departmental designations follow Payner and Caperton, 1977): Chaco: 256 km W Puerto Casado (MACN 4, UMMZ 6); “29 km by road N Fortín Madrelón” (UMZ 1). Alto Paraguay: Puerto Casado (FMNH 1); Puerto Guaraní (MACN 1). Boquerón: Colonía Fernheim (FMNH 1); “50 km S Oriolo” (ZFMK 2); Filadelfia (ZFMK 1); “210 km S Filadelfia” (ZFMK 1). Presidente Hayes: Lichtenau (AMNH 9); Fortín Juan de Zalazar (DMNH 1, YPM 1); 80 km W Pinasco (DMNH 3); Walkthatingamayal (Cory and Hellmayr, 1924); Fort Wheeler (AMNH 5). Also “Paraguay” (USNM 2). Argentina: Prov. Jujuy: San Lorenzo (Cory and Hellmayr, 1924); Yuto
southwestern Amazonia. Brazil: Acre: Sena Madureira, Area do Triangulo (MEPG 1); Mato Grosso: Vila Bela de Mato Grosso (= Vila Bela da Santissima Trinidad) (3, Heilmayr, 1929); “Mato Grosso” (BM 1). We are unable to locate specimens for western Amazonas as indicated in the range of this species by Snow (1979). Peru: Dpto. San Martin; El Tingo (ANSP 1); Shapaja (ANSP 1). Dpto. Ucayali: Balta (LSUMZ 1) (first record for Ucayali). Bolivia: Dpto. Pando: “ca. 12 km by road S Cobija, ca. 8 km W on road to Mucuden, 325 m, Prov. Nicholas Suarez” (LSUMZ 1); Victoria (9, Gyldenstolpe 1945a); Dpto. Beni: Rurrenabaque (ZFMK 1); Balta (ZFMK 1); Riberalta (12, Gyldenstolpe 1945a); 25 km S Riberalta (LSUMZ 1); “Río Iténez, Puente Costa Márguez” (AMNH 2); “Río Glacé, 26 km de la boca” (AMNH 1); “San Joaquín, Río Mamore” (ANSP 1); Dpto. La Paz: “iximbas, 221 m, Prov. Inurradale” (LSUMZ 2); Chiqui (ANSP 4, UMMZ 2); Río Kaka, Teoponte (ANSP 1); “Río Beni, ca. 20 km by river N Puerto Linare, 600 m” (LSUMZ 10). Dpto. Cochabamba: Río San Mateo (1, Heilmayr, 1929); Todos Santos (ANSP 4, FMNH 4); mouth Río Chapare (ANSP 1); Dpto. Santa Cruz: Buena Vista (CM 2, FMNH 1, LSUMZ 1, UMMZ 1); Río Surutí (CM 3); Río Ichilo (FMNH 1); Palmari (CM 1); Cercado (FMNH 1); “Río Quizer on San Ramón Concepcion road, 300 m, Prov. Nuño de Chávez” (LSUMZ 1); “w. bank Río Pucera, 4 km upstream from Río Iténez, 450 m, Prov. Velasco” (LSUMZ 5); “10 km SSW Piso Firme, Prov. Velasco” (LSUMZ 1). Thus this species is found mainly in the lowlands of Bolivia in the Beni drainage. The populations in Peru and Acre are apparently disjoint, because numerous intervening localities in Madre de Dios, Cuzco, and Pasco have been sampled extensively.

Our experience with this species from the Río Beni and Río Quizer localities above indicates that it is an inconspicuous inhabitant of dense undergrowth, almost always in riverine forest and usually in or near bamboo thickets. Although all of our 15 observations were in or within 10 m of extensive bamboo thickets, we hesitate to call this species a bamboo specialist without larger sample sizes. The geographic distribution of this species is similar to that of birds considered to be bamboo specialists, although it is apparently absent from areas rich in bamboo specialists in Dpto. Madre de Dios, Peru (Parker and Remsen, unpubl. data). Because this species is very rare, we were unable to obtain foraging data. However, of 12 stomachs examined, 9 were full of arthropod parts, 1 contained fruit skins and 2 were empty; thus, in contrast to most piprids, it does not seem to be frugivorous.

The plumage resembles that of a tyrannid flycatcher so closely, especially with the presence of a yellow coronal patch, that one specimen was described as a new flycatcher taxon (Myiopagis viridicala huallaga, Carriker, 1934). The call note is a series of 3-4 doubled, hoarse, almost frog-like, low-pitched, raspy, scolding notes that do not immediately recall call notes of any manakins or tyrannids in particular. Transcriptions of the vocalizations of N. aurifrons by Slick (1985) indicate that the two species have similar voices. Although recent allozyme comparisons (Lanyon, 1985) were consistent with the current classification (Snow, 1979) of Neopelma as a piprid, an analysis based primarily on syringeal and cranial morphology indicated that it is not a piprid and is more closely related to tyrannids (Prum and Lanyon, 1989).

Virtually nothing has been published concerning the natural history of this species other than brief notations such as “amongst low bushes in monte” (Kerr, 1901). At the Proyecto Abapa-I spozog locality above, Myrmochilus striigatus was one of the most common birds, with 29-30 recorded daily. The habitat there was a deciduous thorn forest of low stature, with most trees and shrubs under 6 m in height; some trees were as tall as 15 m. The anthills remained concealed in the dense undergrowth and fed on or near the ground by hopping, often in the vicinity of large terrestrial bromeliads. Most individuals were solitary, but some seemed to associate in pairs. The most common call was a clear, imitable whistle of about 1 sec duration “whaaaaa” ascending to an accented portion followed by an abrupt descent. Sometimes this was introduced by a “whick” note that made the call sound like a wolf-whistle. The song, heard much less frequently, was a series of about 5 buzzy, descending “beee” notes, the terminal one slightly downward inflected. Recordings of all vocalizations were deposited at the Florida State Museum.

Current taxonomic arrangements (e.g., Peters, 1951; Meyer de Schauensee, 1966) place the monotypic genus Myrmochilus near the genera Myrmotherula, Dichroishora, Hoplolechus and Microhopsis quixensis. From our observations of vocalizations and behavior, we see no obvious relationships of Myrmochilus to any of these. Rather, in plumage it bears greater resemblance to Formicivora (as noted by Slick, 1985) and Dryaphila, two genera that share a predominantly southern South American distribution with Myrmochilus (as pointed out to us by T.A. Parker).

Of the recent LSUMZ specimens, all from April, July or August, mean body weight for males was 24.4 g (21- 26.4, N = 11) and for females, 23.4 g (22-26.3, N = 6); all were scored as “no fat” or “light fat” except for a “moderate fat” August male; none showed molt except for a trace on the back of the only April specimen. None was in breeding condition. All stomach contents contained insects. Typical soft part colors were: iris dark brown or Raw Umber; maxilla black; mandible variable, from black with pale gray tomium to gray to pale neutral gray with dark tip; and toes smoke gray to brownish olive.

Sulphur-bellied Tyrant-Manakin, Neopelma sulphureiventer

This manakin is known from 84 specimens from 29 localities in
Of the 17 recent LSUMZ specimens, all were adults with completely pneumatized skulls, taken in June, August and October, and none was in breeding condition: 15 were noted as having no fat or light fat, and 2 were marked as having moderate fat; and none was undergoing body molt. Mean body weights were as follows: males = 17.3 g (15-19.4 g, N = 12); females = 14.5 g (14-16 g, N = 5). Typical soft part colors are as follows: iris very pale gray, dull yellow, cream, or orange-brown; maxilla black; mandible light gray, sometimes with blackish tip; tarsi fleshly gray; toes gray.

**Cochabamba Mountain-Finch, Poospiza (Compsospiza) garleppi**

This finch has one of the most restricted distributions of any South American bird and until our 1984 fieldwork, had not been collected since 1937. It is known from only 10 localities in southern Dpto. Cochabamba, Bolivia, and from only 63 specimens. Bolivia: Dpto. Cochabamba: Vacas (type); Titiraju (ANSP 11, FMNH 2, MCZ 2, AMNH 1, USNM 1, UMMZ 1, ZMC 1); Pocona (CM 2); Colomi (CM 1, ZFMK 1); Lirii (SMNH 8, BM 1); Quebrada Majón, 6.6 km by road beyond López Mendoza, at km 98 from Cochabamba, 2950-3150 m, Prov. Carrasco (LSMZ 7); "120 km de Cochabamba en dirección a Santa Cruz de la Sierra, 3500 m, Prov. Carrasco" (EBD 1); "Faldas del Mte del Abra, 3200-3260 m" (SMNH 1); "Cerro Huacapu, 3800-4000 m" (SMNH 19); "Toncomá, 3200-3250 m" (SMNH 2). All localities are from 2950 to 3650 m, except for Pocona at 2658 m. Published natural history information on this species is scarce. Berlepsch (1893) reported G. Garlepp’s observations from the type locality; Garlepp noted that this species was usually seen in pairs, often resting for a time in bare branches of shrubs, and was wary. Vuilleumier (1969) saw one bird in *Polyplepis* woodland mixed with cultivated land. Our experience with this finch in the Quebrada Majón area indicated that it is a conspicuous and common inhabitant of *Polyplepis* sp. woodland. Quebrada Majón is in a fairly typical inter-Andean valley in Bolivia, i.e., with steep, often rocky slopes with patchily distributed *Polyplepis* woodlands as well as various shrubs, herbaceous plants, bunch grasses, and scattered agricultural clearings. Along the stream itself are thickets of *Baccharis* sp., *Hesperomis sp., Amsmyia sp., Brachyosum sp., Berberis* sp., *Polyplepis* sp. and other shrubby species, some of which are very dense. The *Polyplepis* woodland was more common in wetter, more sheltered slopes, and so formed more extensive woodlands on south and southwest-facing slopes. In the more isolated and uncut areas, *Polyplepis* trees attained heights averaging 6 m, and in some areas, individual trees reached 7 m in height. At least two species of *Puya* sp. were found in this area as well.

At Quebrada Majón, CGS and DCS saw C. garleppi on 10 of 16 field days. At least 90% of the observations of Cochabamba Mountain-Finches were of birds perched in *Polyplepis*. On one occasion, two individuals were observed pecking and scratching on the ground. Most observations were of one or two individuals, most of which were relatively tame and easily approached. On 4 May 1984, two adults were feeding what appeared to be insect larvae to a juvenile capable of at least short-distance flights.

Because *Polyplepis* in this area is used extensively for firewood and to a lesser extent for building and thatching material, and because the woodlands are also being cleared for agriculture (particularly potatoes, wheat, beans and other vegetables), populations of this species are vulnerable. In view of the very limited geographic range of this species and its restriction to a threatened habitat, we strongly recommend that conservation efforts be taken on its behalf.

A survey of the extent of *Polyplepis* woodlands in the region would be particularly important. Parker (1981) discussed birds restricted to *Polyplepis* woodland in Peru and their conservation problems.

Of the recent LSUMZ and EBD specimens, two adult males both weighed 35 g, and another male in the same plumage but with skull 75% ossified weighed 33 g. An adult female weighed 34.5 g, and a female in apparent adult plumage but with skull 50% ossified weighed 32.5 g. An unsexed alcoholic specimen weighed 33.5 g. None was in breeding condition (May and August), none was molting, and only one had subcutaneous fat ("light", the young male). The adult female (EBD 3671A) had apparent parasitic worms (nematodes?) in its muscle mass. Typical soft part colors were: iris Cinnamon Brown; maxilla Blackish Neutral Gray; mandible Medium Neutral Gray; tarsi and toes Fuscous or Burnt Umber. Stomachs contained small seeds and grit; one also contained insects. Two additional specimens, collected on 5 and 6 May, were in juvenile plumage. This plumage, previously undescribed, is as follows: entire dorsal surface and face uniform gray-fuscous; wings fuscous with covertaries and secondaries edged olive-fuscous; tail fuscous with inner rectrices with faint olive-fuscous and buff, the former predominating; throat, breast and flanks broadly and obscurely streaked with gray-fuscous and buff, the former predominating; the grey-fuscous streaks become narrower and more distinct towards the center of the belly and undertail coverts, where buff is the predominant color; iris Raw Umber; maxilla dusky brown or Fuscous; maxilla buff or buff with Fuscous edges; gape buff; tarsi and toes buff yellow, fuscous on upper surface of one. The female weighed 32 g and the male 27.5 g. Their stomachs contained seed fragments and insects.

**Fulvous-headed Brush-Finch, Atlapetes fulvigaster**

This species is known from 124 specimens from 34 localities in the Andes, mainly from 1500 to 3200 m, from Dpto. La Paz to northern Argentina. Bolivia: Dpto. La Paz: Titilito (BM 1). Dpto. Cochabamba: Pocona (FMNH 8, CM 2, UMMZ 1); Totora (FMNH 1); Tui-Tui (FMNH 1); Tujma, 8200 ft. (AMNH 3); Lirii (SMNH 18, EBD 2); "Pilpina, 2400-2700" (SMNH 1); Quebrada Majón, 6.6 km by road beyond López Mendoza, at km 98 from Cochabamba, 3150-3250 m, Prov. Carrasco (LSMZ 7); "120 km de Cochabamba a Santa Cruz de la Sierra, 3500 m, Prov. Carrasco" (EBD 1).

Dpto. Santa Cruz: Santa Ana, Prov. Valle Grande (1, Hellmayr, 1938); Dpto. Chuquisaca: Padilla (ANSP 7, UMMZ 1); Tomina (ANSP 5, UMMZ 1); 25 km E Padilla, 8200 ft. (ANSP 4); 34 km SE Padilla, Prov. Tomina, 7800 ft. (FMNH 1); Rio Bermejo (1, Hellmayr, 1938). Dpto. Tarija: 80 km S Tarija, 6400-7000 ft. (FMNH 9); 67 km E Tarija, 7400 ft. (FMNH 5); ca. 108 km ENE Tarija, 6400 ft. (FMNH 4); 25 km NW Entre Rios, 5400 ft. (FMNH 2).
(first records from Tarjia). "Bolivia" (1, Hellmayr, 1938). Argentina: Prov. Jujuy: Abra de Canas (IML 3); El Jordán (IML 1); Alto Calligua, 2800-3000 m (IML 6); El Duraznillo, Calilegua, 2600-2700 m (IML 6, CM 1, UMMZ 1); El Duraznillo, Alto Calligua, 3000 m (IML 2); Valle Grande, Serrania de Calilegua (MLP 2); Valle Grande, 1700 m (MAGN 1); "Valle Colorado, 3700 m, Dpto. Valle Grande". (IML 2); San Francisco, 1500-1800 m (IML 2, MACN 1); "La Quita" (MACN 1); Termas de Reyes, 1850 m (ZMC 2). Prov. Salta: Los Toldos (IML 1); Valle de Lerma (MACN 1); Lesser (Hellmayr, 1938); Corralito (MACN 1). The latter locality, at 200 m (Paynter, 1985), is lower by 1000 m than any other for this species. The furthest south record is the sight record by Noreas and Yzurieta (1981) at Quebrada San Lorenzo. Paynter (1978) noted that this species was especially rare in Argentina; the compilation of localities above and recent fieldwork in Argentina (M. Noreas, in litt.) indicate that this is not the case.

Paynter (1978) could find nothing published concerning the habitat and habits of A. fulviceps. Observations of this species at Quebrada Majón (see Compsospiza garleppli account) were limited. It was wary and difficult to observe; only six individuals were detected (on five separate days) in 16 days of fieldwork by CGS and DCS. They were seen within 10 m of the ground in dense shrub thickets (Polyplepis sp., Alnus sp., and Berberis sp.) within 10 m of a small stream that drained the Polyplepis woodland. M. Noreas (in litt.) has found this species to be common in alder woodland in Salta and Jujuy, where groups of up to 10 individuals were seen.

Of the eight recently collected LSUMZ and EBD specimens, all in May and October, five were adults with completely ossified skulls. A male weighed 32.5 g, and the three females with weights were 26.9, 27.5 and 32 g. None was in reproductive condition, none was molting body feathers, and all showed no fat or "light fat". Soft part colors were: iris Amber or raw Umber; bill Blackish Neutral Gray; and tarsi and toes Olive-Brown or Burnt Umber. All stomachs contained small seeds and grit. Three specimens had skulls that ranged in degree of ossification from 5 to 95%: none showed noticeable plummage differences from the adults. The body weights of two males with skulls 5-10% pneumatized were 32.4 and 34.9 g; the female with skull 95% pneumatized weighed 32.2 g; and two unsexed alcoholic specimens weighed 26.5 and 31.5 g.

Rufous-bellied Saltator, Saltator rufiventer

This saltator is known from only 60 specimens from 17 localities in Dptos. La Paz, Cochabamba, and Chuquisaca, Bolivia, mainly 2570-3500 m elevation, and from an apparently disjunct population at one locality in extreme northwestern Argentina. Bolivia: Dpto. La Paz: vicinity of Inquisivi (type). Dpto. Cochabamba: near Palca (2, Hellmayr, 1938); Cochabamba, 2370 m (LSUMZ 11); "Parque Nacional Tumari, 25 km NE Cochabamba, 3000 m" (EBD 1); "Parque Nacional Tumari, ca. 20 km NE Cochabamba, 3000 m" (EBD 1); Tiraque (ANSP 2, AMNH 1); Caluyo, 3500 m (CM 1); Poconoa (FMNH 14, UMMZ 2, CM 1); Lirio (SMNH 4, FMNH 1); Tutumayo (ANSP 1); "Toncoma, 3200-3250 m" (SMNH 5); "Pilpina, 3300 m" (SMNH 1);

"Quebrada Majón, 6.6 km by road beyond López Mendoza, at km 98 from Cochabamba en dirección a Santa Cruz de la Sierra, 3500 m, Prov. Carrasco" (EBD 2); "Bellavista, 25 km N Quillacollo" (EBD 1). Dpto. Chuquisaca: El Cabrado, Posta (BM 1). Argentina: Prov. Jujuy: El Duraznillo, Alto Calligua, 3000 m (IML 1); elevation given as 2800 m in Orolg and Contino, 1970.

Virtually nothing has been published concerning the natural history of this species. It was seen by CGS and DCS on 10 of 16 field days in the Quebrada Majón area, 4-13 May and 18-23 August 1964, where it was fairly common and conspicuous. Like Compsospiza garleppli (see above), this species was associated with Polyplepis woodland, although it was often seen in shrubby thickets and occasionally in agricultural fields. Generally, observations were of one to three individuals, but on one occasion, a group of five was pecking the ground in a plowed field. During the May fieldwork, Rufous-bellied Saltators were seen eating the purplish-red fruits of the 1.5-3 m tall Berberis sp. and Heteromelias sp. shrubs that were common in the area. Other bird species noted feeding on these fruits were Tardus fuscator, Ampelion rubrocristatus and Saltator aurantirostris. The vocalization most frequently given by S. rufiventer was a soft "plueet-plueet" and a louder "whueet-whueet". These call notes were somewhat less harsh and lower than those of S. aurantirostris, which often associated with S. rufiventer.

Although Saltator rufiventer has a larger range than, and is less restricted to Polyplepis woods than, Compsospiza garleppli, on a world scale, it is still a very restricted and potentially vulnerable species.

Of the 15 recent LSUMZ specimens, all collected in May or August, none was in breeding condition except for a 9 May female that was intermediate. All showed "no fat" or "light fat". Half of the May adults were molting but none of the August adults, all of which were in fresh plumage, was molting. Birds in juvenile plumage were collected in both May and August. Mean body weight for adult males was 76.4 g (68-80.5, N = 4), for adult females 75.3 (75.8-79.8, N = 6), for juvenile males 69.0 (65-73.1, N = 3), and the juvenile female weighed 72.3 g. Two unsexed alcoholic specimens, both adults, weighed 71 and 78 g. The stomach contents of all birds contained vegetable matter, either green plant fibers or fruit seeds ranging in size from 6 x 3 to 7 x 4 mm. Typical soft part colors of adults were: iris Amber; bill Dusky Brown with base of mandible Cream; tarsi and toes Fuscous. Soft parts of juveniles were similar except that the bill, especially the mandible or the tip, was paler.

Velvet-fronted Grackle, Lampropus sarangrinerus

This species is known from at least 352 specimens from 78 localities in the Amazon and Orinoco. Venezuela: Sucre: Cartapano (Hellmayr, 1937); El Pilar (AMNH 2); Caño Guanoco (Hellmayr, 1937); Monagas: Río Guaruiche (AMNH 1); Caño Vagre (Hellmayr, 1937); Río Guanipa (Hellmayr, 1937). Delta Amacuro: "Caño Mariusa, 150 km NE Barrancas, Río Orinoco Delta" (LACM 1). Bolivar: Ciudad Bolivar (1, Hellmayr, 1937). Amazonas: Munduapio, Río Orochoc (AMNH 5; +2, Hellmayr, 1937). Dpto. unknown:
“Carapita” (YPM 1). Also “Venezuela” (MZSUP 1). Guyana: North West:
Koriba (YPM 1). Also “Br. Guiana” (type of L. r. guianensis). Three
additional sight records for Guyana are listed in Snyder (1966). Brazil: Pará:
“Para” (3; Hollmay, 1937). Amazonas; Barra do Rio Negro (A. Hollmay,
1937); Panias dos Tonatins, Rio Solimões (CM 2); Caviana, Rio Solimões
(CM 1); Rio Umbú, N Rio Amazonas, 60 m (MZUSP 3); San Isidro Tefé
(AMNH 4); Tefé, Rio Solimões (AMNH 1); Lago do Baptista, S Rio
Amazonas, 50 m (MZUSP 3, FMNH 1); Itacotiuará, N Rio Amazonas, 80
m (MZUSP 2); Igarapé Anibá (Gyldenstolpe, 1945b; Codajas (Gyldenstolpe,
1945b); Estirão do Equador, Rio Javari (LSUMZ 2, MPEC 1); Rio Javari (BM
1, USNM 1; both presumably Brazil); Santo Antonio, Rio Eirí, (24,
Gyldenstolpe, 1945b; AMNH 1, FMNH 2); Santa Cruz, Rio Eirí (20, Pinto,
1944); Eirunepé, Rio Eirí, 130 m (MZUSP 36; João Pessoa, Rio Jurú (10,
Pinto, 1944; 8, Gyldenstolpe, 1945b); Igarapé do Gorjão, Rio Jurú (1,
Gyldenstolpe, 1945b); Lago Grande (8, Gyldenstolpe, 1945b); Rio Jurú
(AMNH 2); São Paulo do Olivença, Rio Solimões (CM 2); Lago Beny (3,
Gyldenstolpe, 1951); Arunru (2, Gyldenstolpe, 1951; CMZ); Reden çoão,
Rio Purús (7, Gyldenstolpe, 1951; UUMZ 1); Jaburú, Rio Purús (9, Gyldenstolpe,
1951); Labeira, Rio Purús (2, Gyldenstolpe, 1951); Huyatanáh (= Huitanalá,
Rio Purús (CM 8, YMP 4); Cachoeira, Rio Purús (MPEC 2); Bom Lugár, Rio
Purús (Hollmay, 1937); Porto Alegre, Rio Purús (MPEC 1); Bolívar, Rio
Madeira (AMNH 8); Maniconé, Rio Madeira (1, Hollmay, 1937); Humaíta,
Mato Grosso: Barra do Jacaréba, Rio Guaporé (Gyldenstolpe, 1951). Edó:
unknown: Barra (BM 1); Igarapé Amara (AMNH 12); San Antonio de Uayara
(AMNH 8). Colombia: Caquetá: Tres Esquinas (Dugand and Borroto, 1946).
Amazonas: Isla de Santa Sofía and Quebrada Tucuchita, ca. 20 miles northwest
of Leticia (J. V. Remsen, sight records); Parque Nacional Amacayacu (S. L.
Hilty, sight record, in litt.). Ecuador: Napo: “Rio Napo” (Hollmay, 1937;
not known whether these were taken within modern boundaries of Ecuador or
Peru); Boca Lagarto Cocha (AMNH 3, whether this locality is on the
Ecuadorian side of the river or on the opposite bank, now in Peru, is unknown).
Puazuza: Rio Curaray (Pinto, 1944; it is uncertain whether this locality is on
that portion of the Curaray within the modern boundaries of Ecuador).
Peru: Diplo. Loreto: Boca Curaray (AMNH 10); Rio Papaya, N. bank Rio Napo,
NW Libertad, ca. 80 km N Iquitos (LSUMZ 2); 1.5 km S Libertad, S. bank Rio
Napo, 80 km N Iquitos (LSUMZ 1); Puerto Indiana (AMNH 18; Sarayacu, Rio
Ucayali (AMNH 5); Rio Pancha, right bank of Amazon River (FMNH 3);
“Santa Rita, Iquitos” (FMNH 3); Pampachica, Iquitos (FMNH 1); 40 mi E
Iquitos, near Rio Napo (FMNH 1); “Isla Resaco, s. side Rio Amazonas, ca. 78
km NE Iquitos” (LSUMZ 5); Rio Samiria (BM 2); “Estação Biol. Pithecia, S.
bank Rio Marañon, along Rio Samiria, 150 m” (ANSP 7, LSUMZ 1); Santa
Cruz (BM 1); Lagunas, lower Huallaga (FMNH 1); Diplo. Ucayali: Lagarto,
Alto Ucayali (AMNH 7); Pacaya (1, Hollmay, 1937); “U. Ucayali” (BM 1).
Bolivia: Diplo. Beni: El Consuelo (7, Gyldenstolpe, 1945a); “6 km W Casarabe,
230 m” (AMNH 2); “Anita de Costa Márquez, Rio Iténez” (AMNH 1)
“Boca del Rio Baures, Rio Iténez” (AMNH 3); “26 km de la boca Rio
Ibaré” (AMNH 3); Rio Mamore (AMNH 1); “4 km de la boca Rio Tijamuchí”
(AMNH 3); “Monte Grande, 90 km N Trinidad” (IML 1); “Laguna Bolivia,
Rio Ichoa, Prov. Mosox” (LSUMZ 2); “38 km by road W Trinidad, 175 m,
Prov. Mosox” (LSUMZ 3); “6 km by road SE Trinidad, 175 m, Prov.
Cercado” (LSUMZ 9); Diplo. Santa Cruz: Buena Vista (CM 1); Rio Surutí
(CM 3, IML 2); Palmarito (CM 3) (first records for Santa Cruz). Thus, this
species is known from the Orinoco Basin and from numerous localities in
western Amazonia but is scarce or absent from most of eastern Amazonia.
The high number of specimens from several localities indicates that it is locally
common.

Published information on the natural history of this species is scanty. Beebe
(1909) noted that it was “Common in small flocks all along the Rio Guarapiche
and the Caño Guanoco. Very tanager-like in actions and call-note. They were
feeding wholly on small insects.” A. M. Ollala (in Gyldenstoke, 1945b) noted
that it was very common in large flocks in inundated areas, as also noted by Sick
(1985). Remsen and Parker (1983) classified this species as one restricted to
riverine habitats, mainly “varza” forest. Hilty and Brown (1986) described its
flocking and foraging behavior, habitat preferences, and vocalizations.

We are familiar with this species from fieldwork near Leticia, Colombia, and
at several localities in central Bolivia. In our experience, this species is
seldom found far from water and is highly gregarious. Tight-knit, noisy flocks
(6-12 birds along the Amazon and 20-75 birds in central Bolivia) forage in the
canopy and subcanopy of river- and lake-edge trees by probing and gleaning
epiphytes, leaf clusters, and barb. Usually, flock members give a variety of calls
that result in a nearly continuous outpouring of vocalizations from the flock as a
whole; these sounds, mostly melodious short whistles and liquid notes, recall
those made by other flockingicterid blackbirds, such as Gnorimopsar chopi and
Agelaius phoeniceus.

The nest of this species has not been described (Orians, 1985). On 13 Feb.
1977, at Laguna Bolivia, Rio Ichoa, JVR found a nest of L. t. bolivianus under
construction about 4 m above ground in a 5 m tall “mutucú” palm in a small
opening in the middle of an island of trees surrounded by flooded “pampas”
grassland. The habitat in this area was a mixture of seasonally flooded
grasslands and patches of mostly low-stature forest on the higher ground. Most
trees were under 10 m in height, but a few reached 35 m. Palms were abundant.
Two birds, presumably a pair, built strands of what was apparently grass,
usually at least 30 cm in length, to the nest about every 10 minutes. The nest
itself, in the early stages of construction, consisted of such strands woven into
and perpendicular to the leaves of the supporting palm about half the way out
from the branch. It appeared as if the nest might eventually be a hanging basket,
but it was too early in nest-building to be certain. It could not be determined
whether both birds were participating in its construction. The birds frequently
gave a very nasal, three-noted call “chew-chew-chew.” A deep “chuck” note
was given in situations of mild alarm.

Of the recent LSUMZ specimens of L. t. tanagrínus collected in August,
two males and one female were in breeding condition, two females (one a
juvenile) were not in breeding condition, one female was intermediate, and one
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS


SUMMARY

Data from specimen, literature, and recent field observations are used to summarize current knowledge concerning the distribution, habitat, behavior, body weight, diet, and soft part colors for nine little-known bird species that occur in Bolivia: Buff-bellied Hermit, Phaethornis subochraceus (Trochilidae), Bolivian Earthcreeper, Upucerthia hartelli (Furnariidae), Buff-browed Spinetail, Synallaxis (arazei) superciliosa (Furnariidae), Stripe-backed Antbird, Myrmotherula nigrita (Furnariidae), Sulphur-bellied Tyran-Manakin, Neoplectana sulphureiventris (Tyrannidae), Cockadumbe Mountain-Finch, Poopiza (Compsopiza) garloppi (Emberizinae), Fulvous-headed Brush-Finch, Atlipetes fuliceps (Emberizinae), Rufous-bellied Saltator, Saltator rufiventer (Cardinalinae), and Violet-fronted Grasskel, Lampornis calmeletta (Icteridae). Data are presented that strongly suggest that Synallaxis superciliosa is best regarded as a subspecies of S. arazei.

LITERATURE CITED


MEYER DE SCHAVENSEE, R. M. 1966. The species of birds of South America and their distribution.
**RESUME**

Les données provenant de l'étude de spécimens, de la littérature et des observations de terrain récentes ont été utilisées pour résumer les connaissances relatives à la distribution, l'habitat, le comportement, le poids, le régime alimentaire et les couleurs des parties dérivées de neuf espèces d'oiseaux non communs de Bolivie. Les espèces traitées sont les suivantes: *Phaeornis subochraceus* (Trochilidae), *Upceria harteri* (Pitangidae), *Synallaxis (azarae) superciliosa* (Pitangidae), *Myrmochilus striigatus* (Formicariidae), *Neopelma sulphureiventer* (Tyrannidae), *Pooopsis (Compsoptila) gareli* (Euphidae), *Attilipes fuliceps* (Ereithidae), *Salvator rufiventris* (Cardinalidae) et *Lamprospis tanagris* (Icteridae). Les données récoltées suggèrent que *Synallaxis superciliosa* devrait être reclassée comme sous-espèce de *S. azarae*.

**SAMENVATTING**


J.V. REMSEN, Jr., *Museum of Natural Science, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803, USA.*

C. Gregory SCHMITT and Donna C. SCHMITT, *Box 15818, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87506, USA.*

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