

Range extension of *Hapalopsittaca fuertesi* (Psittacidae): a new record in Las Hermosas-GVC National Natural Park, Colombia

Ampliación de la distribución de *Hapalopsittaca fuertesi* (Psittacidae): un nuevo registro en el Parque Nacional Natural Las Hermosas-GVC, Colombia

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Abstract

We report a new record of 17 individuals of the Indigo-winged Parrot (*Hapalopsittaca fuertesi*), one of the most threatened psittacine species in Colombia, on the border of the Las Hermosas-Gloria Valencia de Castaño National Park, in the municipality of Palmira, Valle del Cauca department at an elevation of 3188 m, in a mosaic of natural vegetation and artificial grasslands. This parrot was previously considered to be restricted to four sub-populations located in the limit zone of the Caldas, Quindío, Risaralda, and Tolima departments. This record extends the known distribution of *H. fuertesi* approximately 122 km southward on the Central Andes of Colombia, to the limit of its previously hypothesized distribution. Las Hermosas-Gloria Valencia de Castaño National Natural Park could well be the most important conservation area to protect this species.

Key words: Indigo-winged Parrot, protected areas, range extension, threatened species

Resumen

Obtuvimos un nuevo registro de 17 individuos de la Cotorra coroniazul (*Hapalopsittaca fuertesi*), una de las especies de psitácidos más amenazados de Colombia, sobre el límite oeste del Parque Nacional Natural Las Hermosas-Gloria Valencia de Castaño en el municipio de Palmira, departamento del Valle del Cauca, a una elevación de 3188 m en un mosaico de vegetación natural y pastos. Previamente se consideraba que esta especie estaba restringida a cuatro subpoblaciones en área limítrofe de los departamentos de Caldas, Quindío, Risaralda y Tolima. Este registro extiende la distribución conocida de *H. fuertesi* aproximadamente 122 km hacia el sur sobre la Cordillera Central de los Andes colombianos, hasta el límite sur de su distribución hipotética. El Parque Nacional Natural Las Hermosas-GVC bien podría ser el área de conservación más importante para esta especie.

Palabras clave: áreas protegidas, aves amenazadas, cotorra coroniazul, extensión de distribución

As a result of the socio-political changes that the country has gone through in recent years and the improvement of the public-private partnerships, it has become possible to access zones, including part of the protected areas, not previously possible. This context has made it possible to scientifically explore areas that were banned, to plan and carry out research on the ecology and conservation status of various species (Bota-Sierra 2017, Paya *et al.* 2019, Atuesta-Dimian *et al.* 2020, Castaño *et al.* 2020) in order to review

conservation priorities and environmental management of these areas (Pullin & Knight 2005, Nichols & Williams 2006). This has permitted the Las Hermosas-GVC National Natural Park surveillance patrols to extend sampling efforts into the park to implement monitoring plans for this protected area. On 7 Nov 2020, at 08:20, we observed 17 individuals of Indigo-winged Parrot (*Hapalopsittaca fuertesi*) foraging fruits in a *Chrysochlamys* cf. *colombiana* (Cuatrec.) tree close to the west boundary of the park, in the

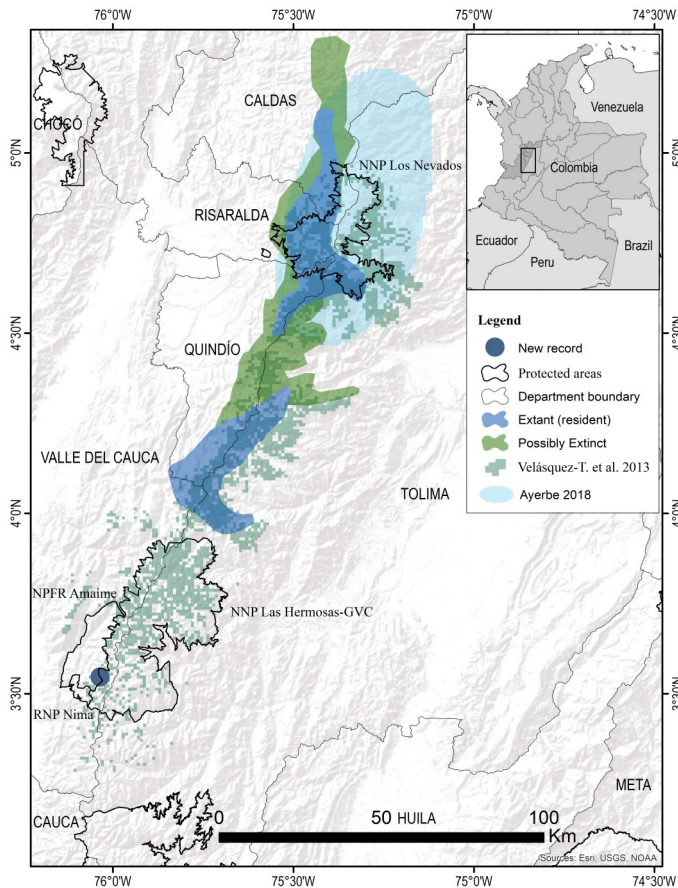


Figure 1. New record and documented distribution (Ayerbe-Quiñones 2018), probable distribution (Velásquez-Tibatá *et al.* 2013) and IUCN distribution, extant and possibly extinct (BirdLife International 2021).

municipality of Palmira, Valle del Cauca department at an elevation of 3188 m (Figs. 1 and 2).

Hapalopsittaca fuertesi is categorized as an Endangered (EN) B1ab(iii); D (BirdLife International 2021) or CR C2a(i), EN B2ab(iii); D1, VU B1ab(iii); D2 (Renjifo *et al.* 2014) species and its population, estimated between 230 and 300 individuals, appears to be increasing (BirdLife International 2021). *H. fuertesi* was considered to be restricted to an area of around 3,000 km² in the border zone of Caldas, Quindío, Risaralda, and Tolima departments (Ayerbe-Quiñones 2018), with a theoretical extent of occurrence estimated 7,869 km² and a remaining area weighted by suitable habitat of around 972 km². Its habitat may have

been reduced by around 46.7 % (Renjifo *et al.* 2014). Its total extent was apparently around 1300 km² up to 60 km to the north of our record (BirdLife International 2021) (Fig. 1).

With this record, the distribution of *H. fuertesi* is extended to the southward from 60 km (BirdLife International 2021) to more than 120 km (Ayerbe-Quiñones 2018) from the previously documented southern limit of its distribution. This extension also is in accordance with its theoretical distribution model (Velásquez-Tibatá *et al.* 2013). The group size could be the usual size for this species, which has a mean of 5.6 individuals but with an apparent fission-fusion system (Silk *et al.* 2014) with a temporal group size of up to 42 individuals. The population of the Las Hermosas-GVC National Natural Park could be one of the most abundant and protected. This park includes the total southernmost suitable habitat for *H. fuertesi*, as defined by Velásquez-Tibatá *et al.* (2013). More than 97 % of the park's original land cover of Andean forest and paramo remains, and the land previously used for agricultural activities is recovering (Instituto de Hidrología Meteorología y Estudios Ambientales [IDEAM], 2021). However, even though the area adjacent to the park also includes the nominally protected areas of the Río Amaime National Protective Forest Reserve (24,212 ha) and Nima Regional Natural Park (3,037 ha), with more than 50 % within the elevation range of *H. fuertesi*, only 32 % (8952 ha) is forest, its preferred habitat (Tovar-Martínez 2009a, 2009b, 2014), plus 20 % (5,478 ha) of grasslands and shrublands with different levels of intervention. The rest of their more than 27,000 ha are pastures, crops and forest plantations (IDEAM 2021). These results may be reflecting a continuous reduction or degradation of the habitat as a result of the lack of effective management of the established conservation strategies. Thus, it is necessary to increase surveillance efforts to determine the presence of



Figure 2. Indigo-Winged Parrot (*Hapalopsittaca fuertesi*) recorded in Las Hermosas National Natural Park-GVC, Franco-P®

H. fuertesi in other areas of the Las Hermosas-GVC National Natural Park, as well as in adjacent conservation areas to better estimate its population size and structure.

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