

wild, feel obliged to comment on the assumed inappropriateness of its name (cf. Bailey 1992, *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 112: 275–276).

Gallicolumba stairii apparently is a shy and wary species, wherever recent authors, and these are not many, have seen these birds. The locations were usually remote areas of inhabited islands which are infested with cats and, in case of the large Fiji islands, with mongooses.

My studies in Tonga, and the distribution pattern of ground-doves in French Polynesia, provide clear evidence that ground-doves and introduced mammalian predators, including humans, do not coexist on any island. All three species (*G. stairii*, *G. erythroptera* and *G. rubescens*) are now restricted to very few islands. And these refuges of ground-doves in Polynesia have been visited by few biologists.

Thus, it has escaped the attention of the ornithological community that *G. stairii* in its natural state is extraordinarily abundant, and an extremely confiding, a truly friendly species (Rinke 1991, *Notornis* 38: 151–171). I had similar experiences with the species on all the other islands in Tonga where it has survived (Rinke, in prep.).

Its timidity on inhabited islands is just an observer's impression when experiencing the difficulties of locating the species, which survives in low numbers only in the remotest areas on such islands. Its true nature, which it shows in a "friendly environment", is friendliness. And this is the main reason why it has been hunted to extinction on so many islands, either by humans or by introduced predators.

I propose that the name "Friendly Ground-dove" should be retained, because this name is very descriptive, it refers to the origin of the type specimen of the species, and it has been widely used in the literature. The proposed name "Shy Ground-dove" would only create confusion, apart from its inappropriateness.

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OBSERVATIONS AT A NEST OF THE PACIFIC ROYAL FLYCATCHER
ONYCHORHYNCHUS CORONATUS OCCIDENTALIS

The Royal Flycatcher *Onychorhynchus coronatus* is a widely distributed species found from Mexico to Bolivia. The isolated, subspecifically distinct population found on the Pacific side of Ecuador and immediately adjacent northwestern Peru was originally described as a distinct species, *Onychorhynchus occidentalis* Sclater, 1860. It is known from only a few localities, in low-lying humid forest. During survey work carried out in January 1992 around the village of San Miguel del Azuay (c. 2°48'S, 79°30'W) on the Pacific slope of Azuay province, Ecuador, a pair of Royal Flycatchers was observed displaying and nest-building. What follows appears to represent the first documented description of the nest of *O. c. occidentalis*. The sighting itself is also significant, being the highest altitude (c. 900 m) at which this species

has been recorded, and the first documented record for the province (published in outline in Collar *et al.* 1992, *Threatened Birds of the Americas*).

The birds were observed for approximately one hour, displaying and continuing to build a half-constructed nest. The nest was roughly 200 m from the edge of the village of San Miguel del Azuay, overhanging a small stream on the edge of primary forest, only 30 m from a regular crossing place used by local villagers. It was suspended 5 m above the water from the outer branches of a 20–25 m tall tree, being easily visible and unprotected by any vegetation. The nest itself was about 1 m long and made of loosely interwoven twigs (mostly 10–20 cm long), giving it an untidy appearance. The side entrance was only partially constructed. The nest and its site were typical of the species (Hilty & Brown 1986, *A Guide to the Birds of Colombia*). The only nest of the species which I have seen elsewhere (*O. c. coronatus* in Mexico 1991) was also in an open position and unprotected by vegetation.

During the hour-long observations, the female spent most of the time sitting in the nest, weaving new twigs into the structure. Occasionally she left the nest for a few minutes, returning with more twigs. The male was not observed helping with nest-building, but on several occasions was observed displaying to her. He would fly towards and around her, occasionally raising and lowering his crest, and sometimes hovering for very short periods in front of her. He would then return to perch on a nearby branch. Each period of display lasted for less than 30 seconds.

The area surrounding San Miguel del Azuay was surveyed for a week but only one pair of Royal Flycatchers was encountered. The subspecies is rare at other known sites (Collar *et al.*, *loc. cit.*), suggesting it is a low-density species. The low-lying humid forest to which it is confined now exists only in small isolated patches. *O. c. occidentalis* is therefore given the classification "Endangered" in the Red Data Book for the Americas (Collar *et al.* 1992, *loc. cit.*).

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MEASUREMENTS OF *DIOMEDEA EXULANS ANTIPODENSIS* AND
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The detailed standard measurements supporting the erection of these two subspecies of the Wandering Albatross (Robertson & Warham 1992. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 112: 74–81) were deliberately omitted from that paper as they were due to be published in a more general paper on the Wandering Albatrosses of Australia and New Zealand. Due to the



Whittingham, M. J. 1994. "Observations at a nest of the Pacific Royal flycatcher *Onchorhynchus coronatus occidentalis*." *Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club* 114, 131–132.

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