

New Records of the House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) in the Brazilian Amazon

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RESUMO. Novos registros de pardais (*Passer domesticus*) na Amazônia brasileira. Foram registradas em anos recentes novas localidades na Amazônia onde o pardal (*Passer domesticus*) pode ser encontrado. Em Manaus o pardal foi observado pela primeira vez em 1987 na região do bairro Parque 10. A população de pardais neste bairro está em expansão e estima-se atualmente a presença de pelo menos 18 casais no local. No Amapá pardais foram registrados em pelo menos quatro localidades entre 1994 e 1996: Macapá, Santana, Serra do Navio e Porto Grande.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Amazônia, pardal, *Passer domesticus*.

KEY WORDS: Amazon, House Sparrows, *Passer domesticus*.

The House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) was introduced in Brazil early this century in the city of Rio de Janeiro, and spread throughout in the South, Southeast, Central west, and Northeast of Brazil (Sick 1959, 1985). The House Sparrows were detected in the Brazilian Amazon in the mid-1970's (Smith 1973). The species expansion in the Western Amazon was facilitated by the Belém-Brasília highway opened in 1964 and by 1980 the presence of House Sparrows had already been documented for at least 10 localities in the state of Pará (Smith 1980). Recently, we

found new localities for the species in the Brazilian Amazon.

1) Manaus: A pair of House Sparrows was first observed in Manaus by A.W. on 17 May 1987 in the neighborhood "Parque 10" (3°4,91'S, 60°0,50'W - coordinates from a Global Positioning System). The female was building a nest under a roof. A.W. also observed a female building a nest on June 3, 1987. In October of the same year, A.W. saw a female near the Manaus airport. S.H.B. observed a pair of these birds in December 1993 in the same neighborhood where A.W. had seen them previ-

ously. Subsequent observations in January 1994 revealed at least 10 individuals in the area, including young birds and females carrying nest material in their bills. Two years later, S.H.B. estimated the number of pairs in the same locality at 18. The House Sparrows were observed in small groups of up to three pairs perched in mango trees and in a *Terminalia* sp. (Combretaceae), a common tree at the spot. Other bird species observed at the site included *Ammodramus aurifrons*, *Tyrannus melancholicus*, and *Estrilda astrild*. No interactions were observed between the House Sparrows and these other species. The origin of the House Sparrows that colonized Manaus is unknown. However a resident living in the neighborhood for over twenty-five years said that the House Sparrows had escaped from cages in the mid-1980's. Another possibility is the transport of individuals by boat from Belém, where these birds are common in the vicinity of the port (Silva and Oren 1990). House Sparrows were observed as hidden passengers on boats on the Rio São Francisco and may have reached the state of Pernambuco (Northeastern of Brazil) this way (Sick 1985). Our observations indicate that the population of *Passer domesticus* is increasing in Parque 10 and expanding to other neighborhoods. Sick (1985) also mentioned without details, the presence of House Sparrows in the area of Balbina, north of Manaus.

2) Amapá State: J.F.P. found House Sparrows in the city of Macapá (00° 01' N, 51° 04' W) on 10 and 24 January 1994, where the population appeared to be fairly small. In the state of Amapá, House Sparrows were observed in three other localities (Santana, Serra do Navio, and Porto Grande). In Santana, a municipality situated at the outskirts of Macapá a pair was observed on 11 January 1994 on the main street. On the 4 August 1994, House Sparrows were

observed for the first time by JFP in the town of Serra do Navio (00° 54' N, 51° 58' W). A total of six individuals were counted near the employee housing of a local manganese mining company. Also, in February 1996, A.W. observed at least 10 pairs of *Passer domesticus* in the vicinity of Serra do Navio. In the municipality of Porto Grande, located midway between Macapá and Serra do Navio, House Sparrows were more easily found than in other localities in Amapá State (6 August 1994, J.F.P. pers. obs.). Like in Manaus, the way the House Sparrows arrived in Amapá is unknown. However, the dispersing of this bird in the Amapá is clearly facilitated by the road BR 210.

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