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NOTA

Blackish-blue Seedeaters (*Cyanoloxia moesta*) and Red-crested Finches (*Coryphospingus cucullatus*) foraging in bamboo *Chusquea ramosissima*

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RESUMO: Negrinho-do-mato (*Cyanoloxia moesta*) e Tico-tico-rei (*Coryphospingus cucullatus*) forrageando sobre o bambu *Chusquea ramosissima.* Relatamos o registro de Negrinho-do-mato *Cyanoloxia moesta* e Tico-tico-rei *Coryphospingus cucullatus* forrageando sementes e flores de bambu *Chusquea ramosissima* no centro-oeste do Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Cyanoloxia moesta, Coryphospingus cucullatus, Chusquea ramosissima,* Floresta Atlântica.

KEY-WORDS: *Cyanoloxia moesta, Coryphospingus cucullatus, Chusquea ramosissima,* Atlantic Forest.

The bamboo *Chusquea ramossisima* Lindm. (Poaceae) is found throughout Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay and Bahia, São Paulo, Paraná, Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil (Judziewicz *et al.* 1999). It is the most common species of *Chusquea* in Rio Grande do Sul, occurring in both natural and altered areas (Schmidt 2009). Flowering was noticed in Rio Grande do Sul in July 1949, March, May and December 1980, September 1981, November 1983, July 1992 and December 2003 (Clark 2001).

Bamboo seeds, such as the genus *Chusquea,* are food resources of many animals, mainly granivorous birds that live in the understory of forests (Jackson 1974, Janzen 1976, Olmos 1996). Although many bird species have been reported foraging on bamboo seeds (Janzen 1976, Lebbin 2006) and flowers (Franklin 2005), few are considered experts on this resource. In this communication, we present observations about feeding flowers and seeds of *Chusquea ramossisima* by two primarily granivorous species: Blackish-blue Seedeater *Cyanoloxia moesta* and Red-crested Finch *Coryphospingus cucullatus.*

Blackish-blue Seedeater has a wide distribution in the Atlantic Forest, occurring in south Espírito Santo, south-east Minas Gerais, east São Paulo, Paraná, Santa Catarina and north Rio Grande do Sul, with one historical record in south Maranhão, east Paraguay and northeast Argentina (Ridgely and Tudor 1989, Storer 1989, Brooks *et al.* 1993, Lowen *et al.* 1995, Sick 1997, Birdlife International 2008). In the provinces of Missiones and Corrientes in Argentina, parts of the Serra do Mar and Paraná in Brazil, Blackish-blue Seedeater is considered a resident and locally common species, but in other areas, its populations are declining (Ridgely and Tudor 1989, BirdLife International 2008). Besides, there is no information if the species is resident throughout the year in those places or if it performs local migrations in search for bamboo in flowering and fruiting, such as Uniform Finch *Haplospiza unicolor* (Olmos 1996). In Rio Grande do Sul, the species is treated as of "unknown of occurrence" status, because it has rare records centralized in the north and north-east region (Belton 1994, Bencke 2001) and only one record in the central region (Krugel *et al.* 2002). In that State, these birds were recorded in the period between mid-August and mid-September and between mid-February and mid-May, and all had inactive gonads (Belton 1994).

Red-crested Finch is widespread throughout South America, preferring savannas, Chaco forest, *capoeiras,* dry or scattered forests, wetlands or humid areas, grasslands, plantations and rural zones (Belton 1994, Sick 1997, Sigrist 2009). It is common in most of Rio Grande do Sul State, but becomes rare in the south coast and in the border with Uruguay (Belton 1994, Azpiroz 2006). It is

omnivorous, feeding on fruits, seeds and insects (Voss and Sander 1980, Foster 1987, Casenave *et al.* 1998), being able to live alone, in couples, in mixed flocks or gregarious (Kratter *et al.* 1993, Belton 1994, Sick 1997, Sigrist 2009).

In our study, we observed one male individual of Blackish-blue Seedeater and one male of Red-crested Finch in Boca do Monte District, Santa Maria, Rio Grande do Sul. The place is located in Deciduous Seasonal Forest between the coordinates 29°38'07.2"S 53°54'06.0"W, with 150 m elevation. The birds were identified by plumage, bill and vocalization. The studied species was sighted on August 27 and 29, and September 24, 2009.

During the observation time, Blackish-blue Seedeater foraged flowers of bamboo *C. ramosissima* in the understory and in the middle story of the forest. On day 27, the male was sighted in the morning close to a stream and on day 29, it was observed in the afternoon, at the forest edge, near the site previously stated. On the other hand, Red-crested Finch was observed foraging bamboo seeds in the middle story on September 24nd in the morning. The bird remained foraging in tangles of bamboo, lianas and branches of trees inside the forest, 50 m far from the edge. Unlike Blackish-blue Seedeater, *C. cucullatus* did not vocalize while foraging.

Blackish-blue seedeater is recorded regularly and appears to forage on a wide variety of seeds and insects (Areta and Brodati, unpublished data). Blackish-blue Seedeater feeds on seeds and shoots of bamboo (Belton 1994) and it is commonly found in formations of the genera *Chusquea* and *Guadua* in the understory of the forest (Ridgely and Tudor 1989, Lowen *et al.* 1996, Parker *et al.* 1996). However, the degradation and loss of habitat, mainly in lowland forests, makes the species to be regarded as worldwide near-threatened (BirdLife International 2008). Still, the presence of *C. cucullatus* might be rare to observe once the species is opportunistic, with no reports of their feeding of seeds or any other piece of bamboo (flower or vegetative buds).

Although our data are scarce due to the short period of flowering and fruiting of de *C. ramossisima,* they become significant because there is little knowledge about the interaction between birds species feeding on bamboos (Cockle *et al.* 2009). Besides that, the presence of *C. moesta* during few days in the study area, shows that this species moves to other areas along the maturation of the bamboo, and it may be dependent on this resource, at least, in this time of year. However, the report of *C. cucullatus* is new in the literature regarding the feeding on seeds of the genus *Chusquea.*

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