



A new species of *Formicivora* antwren from the Chapada Diamantina, eastern Brazil (Aves: Passeriformes: Thamnophilidae)

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Abstract

Formicivora grantsau **sp. nov.** (Sincorá Antwren) is described from a series of specimens from the valley of the Rio Cumbuca (12°58'29"S, 41°21'29"W, elevation 860 m), 3.5 km northeast of Mucugê, Bahia, Brazil, and adjacent areas. It is more closely related to *F. acutirostris*, *F. grisea*, and *F. rufa* than to other species of the genus, differing from them by a combination of plumage and vocal characters. The new species is known only from the *campo rupestre* vegetation of the Serra do Sincorá between 850 m and 1100 m in the Chapada Diamantina, which is part of the Espinhaço Range, a distinctive area of endemism for birds and other groups of organisms in South America. In places it occurs sympatrically with *F. rufa*, but the two occupy different habitats.

Key words: Campo rupestre, Chapada Diamantina, Espinhaço Range, *Formicivora*, new species, taxonomy, Thamnophilidae

Introduction

Formicivora Swainson (*sensu* Gonzaga 2001; type, *Turdus griseus* Boddaert) currently comprises seven species of small and long-tailed antwrens with strong sexual dichromatism that inhabit a variety of non-forest habitats and forest edges in Central and tropical South America: *F. erythronotos* Hartlaub, *F. littoralis* Gonzaga & Pacheco, *F. melanogaster* Pelzeln, *F. serrana* (Hellmayr), *F. acutirostris* (Bornschein, Reinert & Teixeira), *F. grisea* (Boddaert), and *F. rufa* (Wied). Further taxonomic work on this group is needed and may result in the recognition of species status of several named subspecies, especially in the *F. grisea* complex, which includes distinctive forms such as *F. g. fumosa* (Cory) and *F. g. orenocensis* Hellmayr (Cory & Hellmayr 1924; Gonzaga 2001; Zimmer & Isler 2003).

On 2 January 1997, while making observations near Lençóis, on the northeastern border of the Serra do Sincorá, which lies at the northern portion of the Espinhaço Range in the Chapada Diamantina region (Fig 1), DRCB and AMPC observed and tape recorded some scolding calls of an antwren whose streaked underparts resembled a female of *F. rufa*, but whose voice sounded unlike any of the calls that DRCB knew for this species. Buzzetti played his recording to LPG, who could not identify the calls either, despite the extensive experience he had acquired during a study of the genus started years before (Gonzaga 2001). Two years later, at the same habitat in rocky outcrops with scrubby vegetation ("campos rupestres"), and close to the site where he and DRCB had found the bird, AMPC collected and sent to LPG two adult males of supposedly the same species. These resembled *F. rufa*, but were darker and less rufescent above and lacked the characteristic yellowish hue which is present on the flanks of both males and females of that species. It was the first unequivocal evidence for LPG that an undescribed taxon might be involved.