

# New record extends the northern limit of distribution of *Scytalopus petrophilus* (Passeriformes: Rhinocryptidae) in the Espinhaço Range, Minas Gerais, Brazil

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**Abstract:** I recorded an individual of Rock Tapaculo (*Scytalopus petrophilus*) on 15 October 2010, in a rocky outcrop (*campo rupestre*) formation at Sempre-Vivas National Park, at Bocaiúva municipality, northern Minas Gerais, Brazil. This record extends the northern limit of distribution of this species.

**Key words:** biogeography, range extension, rocky outcrops, Rock Tapaculo, Sempre-Vivas National Park

The Rock Tapaculo, *Scytalopus petrophilus* Whitney, Vasconcelos, Silveira & Pacheco, 2010 is a recently described passerine (Whitney *et al.* 2010). The applicability of this name has been disputed (Raposo *et al.* 2012, Nemesio *et al.* 2013), but presently it is accepted as the valid name for the Rock Tapaculo (Mauricio *et al.* 2014; Remsen *et al.* 2014). This species forms a monophyletic clade with other three species included in the *Scytalopus speluncae* group: *S. novacapitalis* Sick, 1958, *S. pachecoi* Mauricio, 2005 and *S. diamantinensis* Bornschein, Mauricio, Belmonte-Lopes, Mata & Bonatto, 2007. The latter two species were recently described (Mauricio 2005; Bornschein *et al.* 2007), and all of three species have slow-paced songs.

*Scytalopus petrophilus* occupy a wide range of habitats, mostly between 900 and 2100 m above sea level (a.s.l.). It occurs in open areas on mountaintops, shrubs formations in rocky outcrops (*campos rupestres*), and in forested areas near foothills with or without watercourses (Whitney *et al.* 2010; Sigrist 2013). In southern Minas Gerais state, this species might occur in secondary semi-deciduous forests (Whitney *et al.* 2010).

The Rock Tapaculo forages mostly on ground, alone or in pairs. It hops slowly among or scuttles quickly over rocks and crevices in the dense vegetation of *campos rupestres* and in the tangled understory of cloud forests. In the drier woodlands of south-central Minas Gerais, these birds forage picking and probing in leaf litter (Whitney *et al.* 2010). From the analysis of stomach contents of five individuals, this species is considered mainly an insectivorous animal (Whitney *et al.* 2010). The breeding period probably occurs in the spring, from September to November (Whitney *et al.* 2010).

As currently known, *S. petrophilus* is patchily distributed along the Espinhaço Mountain Range of south-central Minas Gerais and adjacent Mantiqueira range in the southernmost sector of this state, with Pico Dois Irmãos (18°24' S, 043°21' W, within Rio Preto State Park, Minas Gerais) as the northern limit of its distribution (Whitney *et al.* 2010).

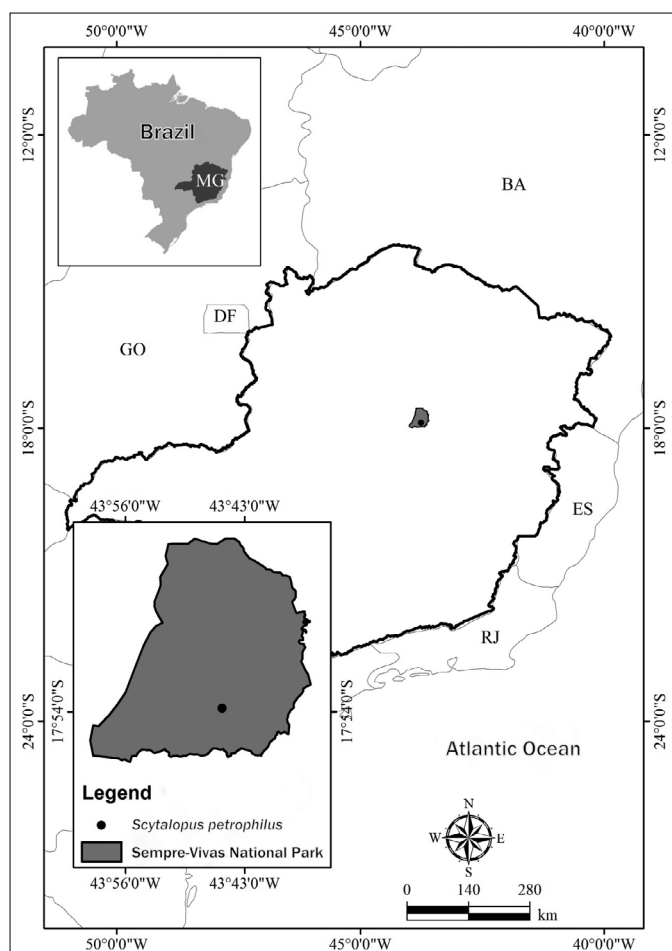
Recently, the southern limit of its distribution has been expanded, with the first documented record for the state of São Paulo (Souza 2013). This record was obtained in a disturbed area located in the southern slope of Serra da Mantiqueira, near the Rio Paraíba do Sul basin, between the municipalities of Monteiro Lobato and Pindamonhangaba (Souza 2013). The aim of this note is to report a new locality for *S. petrophilus*, extending this species' range northwestward in the Espinhaço Range.

Between 7 and 15 October 2010, I carried out a preliminary bird survey in the southern portion of the Sempre-Vivas National Park (SVNP). This protected area, created on 13 December 2002, covers an area of 124,555 ha. It is located within Jequitinhonha and São Francisco river basins, in the municipalities of Diamantina, Bocaiúva, Buenópolis and Olhos D'Água, in the Espinhaço Range, Minas Gerais.

On the morning of 15 October 2010, in a *campo rupestre* area, an individual of *S. petrophilus* was observed in a tangled understory of wet hillside (17°53'37" S, 043°45'27" W; altitude: 1,300 m a.s.l.) (Figure 1). This individual was recorded while it was foraging on the ground, sneaking through shrubs. Its vocalization was tape-recorded (Mafia 2010). From the tape-recording, I obtained a sonogram (Figure 2) to check the diagnostic features of the species song. This sonogram was elaborated with the software Raven Pro 1.5.

The exact site of this record is ca. 4 km from the SVNP main lodge. This region is under the jurisdiction of the municipality of Bocaiúva, northern Minas Gerais. It is an area of high altitude (average 1,200 m) where it is possible to find different vegetation types, but dominated by *campos limpos*, *campos rupestres* and woodlots.

This record, the first within Sempre-Vivas National Park, extends the distribution of *S. petrophilus* approximately 70 km to the northwest of its previously known geographical distribution.



**Figure 1.** Map showing the locality where *Scytalopus petrophilus* was recorded at Sempre-Vivas National Park, Minas Gerais, Brazil.

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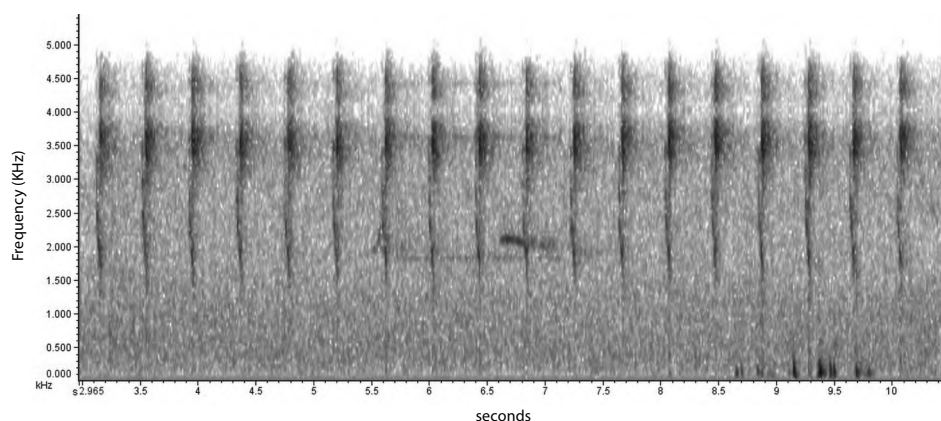
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**Figure 2.** Sonogram of the vocalization of *Scytalopus petrophilus* tape-recorded in an area of *campo rupestre* at Sempre-Vivas National Park, in the municipality of Bocaiúva, Minas Gerais, Brazil.