

*The Condor*  
Volume 109, Number 2  
May 2007 C.E.  
Abstracts

## FEATURE ARTICLES

### **BREEDING BIOLOGY OF PASSERINES IN A SUBTROPICAL MONTANE FOREST IN NORTHWESTERN ARGENTINA**

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Manuscript received 6 April 2006; accepted 10 January 2007.

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*Abstract.* The breeding ecology of south temperate bird species is less widely known than that of north temperate species, yet because they comprise a large portion of the world's avian diversity, knowledge of their breeding ecology can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the geographic diversity of avian reproductive traits and life history strategies. We provide the first detailed examination of the reproductive strategies of 18 forest passerines of subtropical, northwestern Argentina. Mean clutch sizes were smaller and egg mass was greater than for north temperate birds, but differed among species and nest types, with cavity-nesters having larger clutches than species with open-cup and enclosed nests. Across all species, the average breeding season duration was 50 days; thus, the common perception that southern species have smaller clutch sizes because of longer breeding seasons is not supported in this community. Daily nest predation rates were influenced by nest type, cavity nests suffering the least from predation, as found in north temperate systems. Only females incubated eggs in all but one species, whereas both parents fed and cared for nestlings in all species. Mean nest attentiveness was low compared to north temperate passerines. Mean hourly nestling feeding rates differed among species and were negatively related to nest predation risk. In short, coexisting species in this subtropical forest varied in their life history strategies, in part correlated with variation in nest predation risk, but also differing from north temperate species.

*Key words:* Argentina, breeding biology, life history, passerines, Yungas forest.