

SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

REPRODUCTIVE BIOLOGY OF THE VIOLET-CHESTED HUMMINGBIRD IN VENEZUELA AND COMPARISONS WITH OTHER TROPICAL AND TEMPERATE HUMMINGBIRDS

KAROLINA FIERRO-CALDERÓN¹ AND THOMAS E. MARTIN

U.S. Geological Survey Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, University of Montana, Missoula, MT 59812

Manuscript received 28 December 2006; accepted 23 April 2007.

¹ E-mail: kavafiana@yahoo.com

Abstract. We provide details on the breeding biology of the Violet-chested Hummingbird (*Sternoclyta cyanopectus*) based on 67 nests studied in Yacambú National Park, Venezuela, from 2002 through 2006. Clutch size was two white eggs, usually laid every other day. Fresh egg mass (0.95 ± 0.14 g) was 15% of female mass. Incubation and nestling periods were 20.4 ± 0.3 and 26.0 ± 0.4 days, respectively. Nest attentiveness increased from 60% in early incubation to 68% in late incubation. The female spent 50% of her time brooding young nestlings, but ceased brooding by 13 days of age. Only the female fed the young, with a low rate of nest visitation (3.3 trips per hour) that did not increase with age of the young. Growth rate based on nestling mass ($K = 0.28$) was slow. Daily predation rates decreased across stages and were 0.064 ± 0.044 , 0.033 ± 0.008 , and 0.020 ± 0.006 during the egg-laying, incubation, and nestling periods, respectively. Most, but not all, life history traits of the Violet-chested Hummingbird were similar to those reported for other tropical and temperate hummingbirds, providing further evidence that this family shows a relatively narrow range of life history variation.

Key words: reproductive biology, *Sternoclyta cyanopectus*, tropical hummingbirds.