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## THE NEST AND EGGS OF THE CHESTNUT-VENTED CONEBILL *CONIROSTRUM SPECIOSUM* (TEMMINCK, 1824)

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The genus *Conirostrum* (Lafresnaye & d'Orbigny, 1838) comprises nine species, all endemic to the Neotropical Region, where it is widely distributed (Meyer de Schauensee 1982). Of the species of this genus, only *C. bicolor* and *C. cinereum* have had their nests and eggs described (Herklots 1961; Johnson 1967; French 1973).

In addition, Miller (1947) described the construction of a nest of *C. leucogenys*, but did not include details of materials or shape.

The Chestnut-vented Conebill, *Conirostrum speciosum* (Temminck 1824) is widely distributed throughout the Neotropics, from the eastern Andes to eastern Peru, Bolivia, Amazonian and eastern Brazil, to southern Paraguay and northern Argentina (Meyer de Schauensee 1982). Our study was carried out in the municipality of Viçosa (20° 45'S 42° 54'W), State of Minas Gerais, Brazil. There this species is found in the canopy of secondary forests, in shrubs and on the campus of Universidade Federal de Viçosa (UFV). It is frequently found in mixed-species

flocks with the Hooded Tanager (*Nemosia pileata*), the Rufous-headed Tanager (*Hemithraupis ruficapilla*), the Black-throated Honey-Creeper (*Dacnis cayana*) and the Gilt-edged Tanager (*Tangara cyanoventris*) (pers. observ.).

We found the *Conirostrum* nest in the Centro de Pesquisas em Florestas Naturais (also known as the Mata do Paraíso), a 344 ha secondary forest fragment (of which 196 ha constitute a reserve of the UFV), situated 5 km southeast of the city of Viçosa. The vegetation there is mostly well developed secondary forest, in places 20 m high, with some bamboo patches, a dense understory in almost all the area, and with many liana patches. A dirt road bisects the forest longitudinally, and it is bordered by forest along most of its length.

On 4 November 1994, a pair of *C. speciosum* was observed on a dry "embaúba" leaf (*Cecropia* sp.) hanging from a thin liana 4.5 m from the ground at the forest edge by the dirt road. The birds flew off when we approached, but this did not attract our attention and we did not examine the leaf at the time. One week later, on 11 November, we saw a ♂ *C. speciosum* (probably of the same pair) again on the same shriveled leaf. Upon inspecting the site closely, we found a female in a hidden nest, "wrapped" by the leaf.

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The cup-shaped nest was built of fine dry petioles and measured 62 mm external diameter, 45 mm internal diameter, 53 mm total height and 22 mm in height of the chamber. The three eggs were bluish-green with brown spots around the large ends. They were oval in shape (de la Peña 1987) and measured 17.4 x 12.0; 16.5 x 12.5 and 16.3 x 12.6 mm, with a mean mass of 1.5 g. No further data were collected. The cup-shaped nest of *C. speciosum* agrees with those of *C. bicolor* and *C. cinereum*. However, it differed with respect to the material used in its building, since the latter two species used material of animal origin, i. e., horse hair or feathers (Johnson 1967; ffrench 1973). The color pattern of the eggs of *C. speciosum* agreed with that given by Herklots (1961) ("pale bluish-green with spots of two shades of brown fairly evenly and thickly distributed over the surface") for *C. bicolor*, but the description by ffrench (1973) differed for the same species ("pale buff with dark brown blotches mainly in the larger end").

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