

SHORT ARTICLES

EXTENSION OF THE GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF *CEBUS UNICOLOR* SPIX, 1823, IN MATO GROSSO, BRAZIL

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Introduction

Spix's white-fronted capuchin, *Cebus unicolor* (Cebidae: Primates, Platyrrhini), is a medium-sized monkey found in the tropical forests of the southwestern Amazon basin (Defler and Hernández-Camacho, 2002, De la Torre et al., 2015). In their recent review, Boubli et al. (2012) recognized 14 species of *Cebus aequatorialis*, *Cebus albifrons*, *Cebus brunneus*, *Cebus cesarae*, *Cebus cuscinus*, *Cebus kaapori*, *Cebus malitiosus*, *Cebus versicolor*, *Cebus yuracus*, *Cebus capucinus*, *Cebus olivaceus*, *Cebus adustus*, *Cebus castaneus*, and *Cebus unicolor*.

The diagnostic description of *C. unicolor* presented by Spix (1823) was updated by Hershkovitz (1949), who referred to the form as the most uniformly and brightly-colored gracile capuchin, with a snuff or bister brown hood, buffy to ochraceous frontal region, ochraceous or tawny back lined with dark brown, sides less brown, with an ochraceous-buff to ochraceous-orange lateral fringe, chest and belly ochraceous-buff to white, extremities ochraceous-buff to tawny, contrasting with black lining (Defler and Hernández-Camacho, 2002).

Cebus unicolor is found throughout much of the southwestern Amazon basin, west of the Rio Tapajós, with the known southern limit of the species' range coinciding with the northern extremes of the Brazilian states of Rondônia and Mato Grosso (Rylands et al., 2013). Prior to the present study, the distribution of the species in Mato Grosso was thought to be restricted to the northwestern extreme of the state, between the middle Rio Aripuanã and the left bank of the lower Juruena. The present study provides a new record of *C. unicolor* in the region, extending its known distribution to the southeast.

The present record of *C. unicolor* was obtained during a survey of the primate populations of the headwaters of the Rio Aripuanã, which straddles the border between the Brazilian states of Mato Grosso and Rondônia (Fig. 1), 25–29 May 2016. This region encompasses a mosaic of contiguous protected areas, including the Enawenê-Nawê and Aripuanã Amerindian reservations, and, forest reserves located on private property. The local vegetation is typical of the transition between the Cerrado savanna of central Brazil and the Amazon forest (RadamBrasil, 1978). The local climate is of Köppen's *aw* type, that is, humid

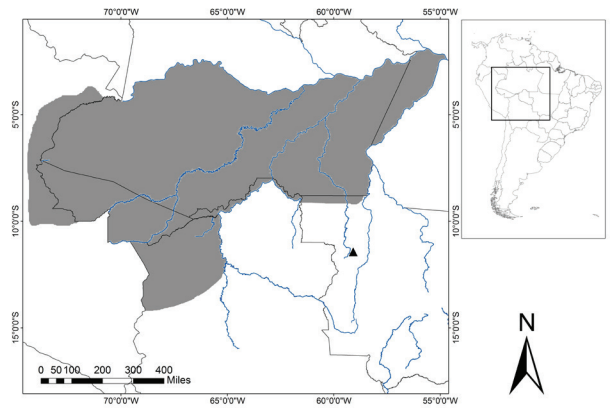


Figure 1. The geographic distribution of *Cebus unicolor* (in gray), based on Rylands et al. (2013), and the locality of the present record (black triangle).

tropical, with a well-defined dry season between June and September. Annual precipitation is approximately 2,200 mm, and the mean annual temperature is 22°C (Alvares et al., 2014).

Part of the survey was conducted on two trails within an area of continuous *terra firme* forest on the Fazenda Quilombo, in the municipality of Juína, Mato Grosso (Brazil). A total distance of 15 km was surveyed on foot along these trails using the line transect method (see Buckland et al., 2010). Additional data were collected by vehicular survey along the BR 174 federal highway and local dirt roads that link the municipalities of Vilhena, Rondônia, and Juína, Mato Grosso, including the district of Terra Roxa. During these surveys, stops with a duration of approximately 40 minutes were made to allow for the inspection of the forest at the edge of the road. In all, 427 km was driven during these surveys. Informal interviews were also conducted to confirm the presence of primate populations in the region. *Cebus unicolor* was identified based on the diagnostic traits proposed by Silva-Junior (2001) and Defler and Hernández-Camacho (2002). The photographs taken of the monkeys in the field were also compared with the images available in Rylands et al. (2013).

A group of *C. unicolor* with 26 members was observed and photographed (Fig. 2) at 10:50 h on 26 May 2016 (11°30'34"S, 59°04'59.5"W), in an area adjacent to Er 1 rural highway, 9 km from the district of Terra Roxa, in the municipality of Juína, Mato Grosso (Brazil). The group crossed the road in a tract of igapó swamp forest dominated by a stand of burití palms (*Mauritia flexuosa* M.). Local residents confirmed that groups of this species, containing up to 30 members, are observed frequently in the area.

The record of *C. unicolor* presented here is an extension of approximately 300 km to the southeast of the known distribution of the species (Fig. 1). The natural limit of the distribution of this species is thought to coincide with the



Figure 2. Adult *Cebus unicolor* sighted in the district of Terra Roxa, municipality of Juína, Mato Grosso, Brazil. Photograph: Gusmão, A. C.

transition between the Amazon forest and the Cerrado savanna of central Brazil. The presence of the species in the study region indicates that *C. unicolor* may also occurs in the tracts of Amazon forest that extend as far south as the headwaters of the Rio Jurueña. The potential occurrence of *C. unicolor* in the Enawene Nawe and Aripuanã would favor greatly the conservation of the populations of this and other primate species in the region (Sampaio et al., 2012), known as the Arc of Deforestation of the southern rim of the Amazon basin.

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