

Almost nothing is known of this bird, which is presumed to live in the undergrowth of the few rapidly diminishing forests in coastal Bahia, where it was recorded once this century and once last.

DISTRIBUTION Stresemann's Bristlefront (see Remarks) is known from two specimens from coastal Bahia, eastern Brazil (King 1978-1979, Sick 1985). The type-specimen (male) was collected between 1831 and 1838 in the vicinity of Salvador, and a second (female) was taken on 8 May 1945 near Ilhéus (Sick 1960).

POPULATION Numbers are unknown, but conceivably very small; the species has aptly been considered rare (Sick and Teixeira 1979, Sick 1985), and recent brief surveys in coastal Bahia (in 1977 and 1987) failed to find it (King 1978-1979, LPG).

ECOLOGY Nothing has been reported concerning the habitat where the specimens were taken, which was presumably the undergrowth of humid forest. A detailed description of the vegetation around Ilhéus in 1944 is given by Veloso (1946).

THREATS Little apparently suitable habitat remains in coastal Bahia owing to extensive deforestation and cacao cultivation (LPG), and remaining forests in the state are now disappearing "at a ferocious rate" (Oliver and Santos 1991). The species was not found during brief surveys in 1986 and 1987 at Una Biological Reserve, the largest protected area close to its range (Gonzaga *et al.* 1987).

MEASURES TAKEN This species was not protected by Brazilian law (*contra* King 1978-1979) until 1989 (Bernardes *et al.* 1990).

MEASURES PROPOSED Fieldwork is needed to rediscover Stresemann's Bristlefront and to provide information on its ecological requirements and status. Searches in coastal Bahia should also target a second endemic rhinocryptid, the Bahia Tapaculo *Scytalopus psychopompus*, and the Fringe-backed Fire-eye *Pyriglena atra* (see relevant accounts). Collection of further specimens should not be countenanced.

REMARKS This species was considered to be a larger sibling of Slaty Bristlefront *Merulaxis ater*, which was collected as close as the rio Jequitinhonha (Belmonte), 120 km south of Ilhéus (Sick 1960). Both probably form a superspecies (Mayr 1971, Sick 1985).