

This species is known only from the type-locality in the East Andes of Santander department, Colombia, where it was originally collected in 1945 and was rediscovered there in 1989 when two birds were found in a remnant patch of acacia.

DISTRIBUTION Nicéforo's Wren (see Remarks) is endemic to the western slope of the East Andes in Santander department, Colombia, where it is known only from the type-locality at San Gil (6°33'N 73°08'W) on the río Fonce, south of Bucaramanga (Meyer de Schauensee 1946, Ridgely and Tudor 1989; coordinates from Paynter and Traylor 1981).

POPULATION Numbers are unknown. Seven specimens (including the type) were taken in October and November 1945 (Meyer de Schauensee 1946, 1948-1952), after which there appear to have been no further records until 1989 when a pair was seen a short distance (c.1 km) east of San Gil (P. Kaestner *in litt.* 1992).

ECOLOGY San Gil is situated in the upper tropical zone at 1,095 m (Meyer de Schauensee 1948-1952, Paynter and Traylor 1981), in a region generally comprising light woodland and coffee plantations (Hilty and Brown 1986); however, the recent observations (see Population) suggest that this species inhabits thick xeric acacia scrub along the río Fonce (P. Kaestner *in litt.* 1992). No birds were found in the coffee plantations that dominate the hills to the north of the type-locality (P. Kaestner *in litt.* 1992).

THREATS The vegetation around the type-locality is highly disturbed, with agriculture dominated by coffee plantations, which in turn are mixed with plantain and sugarcane cultivation and pasture (LGN). Whether this habitat alteration has been at the expense of the apparently favourable acacia scrub, and has therefore had a detrimental effect on the species's population, is unknown.

MEASURES TAKEN None is known.

MEASURES PROPOSED The welcome confirmation of this species's survival must now be followed up with fieldwork to determine its population size and precise ecological requirements (see Remarks). Only with these basic data can a comprehensive conservation strategy be initiated, although it appears that what remains of the acacia scrub at San Gil should be protected if this bird is to survive.

REMARKS Mayr and Greenway (1960) and Ridgely and Tudor (1989) suggested that this bird may be a well-marked subspecies of the widespread Rufous-and-white Wren *Thryothorus rufalbus*, which in Colombia is found from the Caribbean lowlands to the llanos east of the Andes (Hilty and Brown 1986). The recent observations of Nicéforo's Wren showed that it sounds exactly like Rufous-and-white Wren, and indeed responded to a tape of that species (P. Kaestner *in litt.* 1992). The pattern and quality of this bird's song need to be assessed so that these taxonomic doubts can be resolved (Ridgely and Tudor 1989).