

Molothrus bonariensis  正體中文

System: Terrestrial

Kingdom	Phylum	Class	Order	Family
Animalia	Chordata	Aves	Passeriformes	Icteridae

Common name tordo renegrado (Spanish), shiny cowbird (English), tordo vaquero (Spanish), tordo lustroso (Spanish), vacher luisant (French)

Synonym *Molothrus bonariensis*, subspecies *maxillaris* Lafresnaye

Similar species

Summary *Molothrus bonariensis* (shiny cowbird) is a brood parasite, relying on a host to incubate its eggs and rear its chicks. It is not host-specific, laying eggs in the nests of other species of birds, some of which will accept and rear the chicks. *Molothrus bonariensis* has expanded its range in its native South America and West Indies, reaching the North American continent and negatively affecting some threatened bird species that are already at risk due to habitat loss.



[view this species on IUCN Red List](#)

Species Description

Molothrus bonariensis (shiny cowbird) belongs to the family Icteridae, which includes five species of parasitic cowbirds that form the natural genus *Molothrus* (as determined by phylogenetic analyses of mitochondrial DNA sequences) (Lowther, 2004). *Molothrus* includes the giant cowbird *Molothrus* [formerly *Scaphidura*] *oryzivorus* and excludes the non-brood parasitic bay-winged cowbird *Agelaioides* [formerly *Molothrus*] *badius*.
Field identification should be based on the presence of a slender conical bill, a uniform dull blue-black plumage and squared-off tail, and a solid dark eye-colour (Kluza, 1998). Males have a purplish shine on their head, neck, breast and upper back and a blue shine on their wings, while females are grey-brown with whitish eyebrows and throats (The Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, 1999). Nestlings have flesh-coloured skin with scattered tufts of blackish down. The oral flanges range from white to yellow and the mouth lining is reddish.
Seven subspecies are recognised and may differ markedly in size. The smallest subspecies is *M. bonariensis minimus* (males average: 39g, females average: 32g), the largest is *M. b. cabanisii* (males average: 64g, females average 56g), with the nominal *M. b. bonariensis* being intermediate (males average: 56g, females average: 45.6g) (Wiley 1986; Kattan 1996; Mermoz and Reboresda 2003, and in M. E. Mermoz., pers. comm, 2005).

Notes

Parasitic cowbirds have developed behavioural and cognitive mechanisms to deal with the spatial demands associated with brood parasitism. Neurological studies have revealed that parasitic cowbirds have larger hippocampal formations (the part of the brain associated with spatial memory acquisition) than non-parasitic cowbirds. In sexually dimorphic species, such as *M. bonariensis* (in which the females alone perform the parasitic behaviour), only the female has the larger hippocampus. This is believed to be important in patrolling the home range for appropriate nests, remembering the location and status of nests for subsequent identification, and updating the nest status after each egg has been laid in a nest. Interestingly this difference occurs only during the breeding season, indicating neural change takes place seasonally (Nair 2002).

Lifecycle Stages

The incubation period of *Molothrus bonariensis* (shiny cowbird) is about 11 - 13 days.

Eggs have an extraordinary diversity in the colour and markings and can be pure white or flesh coloured with sparsely or densely scattered pink or red flecks. Some may have fine marks like pen scratches while others may have large chocolate brown spots. There is no such thing as characteristic markings in the eggs of this species although the eggs of the same individual show a "family resemblance". In general eggs may be white-immaculate or spotted; spotted eggs may have a white, pale gray or pale blue background with a variable pattern of gray and reddish-brown spots. In size they may vary from 20mm x 26mm to 18mm x 22mm (Friedmann, 1929).

Habitat Description

Molothrus bonariensis (shiny cowbird) is a native inhabitant of the South American pampas. The pampas cover c. 900,000 km² between latitudes 28°-39°S and longitudes 50°-65°W in the southernmost part of Brazil, the whole of Uruguay and the central-eastern part of Argentina. The climate is mild with precipitation of 600-1200mm more or less evenly distributed through the year. The soils are very rich and the dominant vegetation types are grassy prairie and grass-steppe in which numerous species of the Gramineae tribe Stipeae (*Stipa* and *Piptochaetium*) are particularly conspicuous. There is an almost absolute lack of native trees, except along main watercourses (CPD, Undated).

The climate of central Argentina and Uruguay (Buenos Aires, Cordoba, Rosario, Santa Fe, Mar Del Plata, Montevideo, Punta del Este, Colonia Sacramento) is naturally changeable (as this region is in the mid-latitudes). Winters are cool to mild and summers are very warm and humid. Rainfall is fairly uniform throughout the year but is a little heavier during the summer. Annual rainfall is heaviest near the coast and decreases gradually further inland. Rain in late spring and summer usually arrives in the form of brief heavy showers and thunderstorms. More general rainfall occurs during the remainder of the year as cold fronts and storm systems move through. Although cold spells during the winter often send night-time temperatures below freezing, snow is quite rare. In most winters, a few light snowfalls occur over inland areas. Snow is extremely rare near the coast (Papandrea, 2000).

M. bonariensis is able to adapt to a wide variety of habitat-types other than its native pampas. It is common in cultivated land in its native region (much of which has been modified to graze cattle or plant soybeans). In Chile, *M. bonariensis* is common in the marshes of the central provinces (Marín, 2000). In this country dry years with little or no snow have been noted to correspond to higher abundances of cowbirds (Rahmer, in Friedmann 1929). Subspecies *bonariensis* skips heavily forested areas while subspecies *cabanisii* may occur in the lower borders of cloud forests. Subspecies *aequatorialis* is found in a variety of ecosystems, from dry sandy habitats with stunted vegetation to mangrove forests to impenetrable jungle (Friedmann, 1929). In Ecuador in the area around the Rio Jubones drainage system in the Yunguilla valley *M. bonariensis* has been reported to favour warm dry habitats (Oppel *et al.* 2004). *M. bonariensis* avoids the following regions in South America: the Amazonian forests, the High Andes and southern Patagonia (Friedmann, 1929; Fraga, 1985, Wiley, 1985, in Mermoz and Rebores 1994).

Reproduction

Molothrus bonariensis is an obligate brood parasite, that is, it has completely abandoned the task of building nests, incubating eggs, and feeding and rearing nestlings. It is an extreme generalist, basing its reproductive success on high fecundity, which is estimated to be 60 to 100 eggs per breeding season (Hudson, 1920 in Friedmann, 1929). Another estimate is 120 eggs per year (Kattan, 1993, in Kattan, 1996). Shiny cowbirds monitor host nests in their territory but are sloppy at synchronising egg-laying with that of their host. Katten (1996) found that 33% of cowbird eggs were laid in coincidence with the host's laying period, while 55% were laid before and 12% after. There appears to be no specificity in terms of which host-species *M. bonariensis* prefers in any area. High cowbird density or low host nests availability may induce shiny cowbirds to be wasteful, laying eggs on the ground or in nests crowded with up to 36 other cowbird eggs (Kattan, 1996). Such nests are necessarily abandoned by the host!

The breeding season of *M. bonariensis* is October to January in Argentina, but may be extended in the South American tropics. Shiny cowbirds have been known to synchronise breeding with that of their high quality hosts (Wiley 1988, in Mermoz and Reboresda 2003). In Ecuador *M. bonariensis* visited the Yunguilla Reserve during the breeding season of the pale-headed brushfinch (*Atlapetes pallidiceps*), a resident host (Schmidt and Schaefer, 2003). The reproductive success of cowbirds depends on the size and life traits of the host; cowbird chicks in the nests of smaller hosts such as the house wren *Troglodytes aedon* have high survival rates due to cowbirds having a competitive edge over their "siblings" (Katten, 1996., in Katten 1997). Cowbird chicks in the nests of large hosts such as the chalk-browed mockingbird *Mimus saturninus* have lower survival rates (Fraga, 1985., in Katten 1997). Although it is large, the brown-and-yellow marshbird *Pseudoleistes virescens* has "helper" birds that aid in chick rearing, which increases chick survival rates (Mermoz and Reboresda, 1994). Other traits that increase the value of a cowbird host include: the construction of open nests, low nest attentiveness during egg-laying, a clutch size of 4 to 5 eggs, an extended breeding season and a long incubation period. Some hosts reject unusual looking eggs or eggs laid before or after their own by pushing them out of the nest, building the nest over them or abandoning their nest (Friedmann, 1929; Wiley, 1988; Schmidt and Schaefer, 2003; Kattan, 1996; Mermoz and Reboresda, 1994). For example cowbird chicks hatch 1 to 4 days before brown-and-yellow marshbird chicks, which may give them up to a 4-day head-start on their nest-mates (Mermoz and Reboresda, 2003).

Nutrition

Omnivorous: Studies indicate that nestling cowbirds require a diet composed of protein, which most passerine species will provide for their young (Mason, 1986). For example, pale-headed brushfinch feed their fledglings (and any cowbird parasitic fledglings in their nest) small invertebrates such as crickets, caterpillars, adult Lepidoptera, beetles and earthworms (Lumbricidae) (Schmidt and Schaefer, 2003). Resident birds have been noted to eat a greater proportion of insects in their diet, while migrant birds rely on seeds to a greater extent (Friedmann, 1929). They have been observed feeding on the nectar of flax (*Phormium tenax*) flowers (Isacch, 2002)

General Impacts

Molothrus bonariensis (shiny cowbirds) affect their victims by destroying or devouring their eggs. They burden victims that accept responsibility for their eggs with the additional and significant costs involved in incubating eggs and feeding and rearing the changelings. Competitive pressure on host young is also increased due to the generally relatively early hatching (and sometimes relatively larger) cowbirds. The extent to which a host species is affected depends on a number of elements, including the overlap between the host and cowbird breeding season in a region, the physical ability of the host to care for cowbird chicks, and the presence or absence of a host species' evolved behavioural response to cowbird eggs. Species that have not co-evolved with brood parasitism are often more vulnerable. (Cruz *et al.* 1995).

Shiny cowbirds are currently a threat to several vulnerable bird species on some West Indian islands where they have spread to (from continental South America and other islands already populated with the shiny cowbird).

For example, on the island of Puerto Rico the yellow-shouldered blackbird (see [Agelaius xanthomus in IUCN Red List of Threatened Species](#)) is thought to be endangered mainly due to parasitism by *M. bonariensis* (Lopez-Ortiz *et al.* 2002). Another species endemic to this region, the Puerto Rican vireo (*Vireo latimeri*), is also threatened by the brood parasitism of *M. bonariensis*, which threatens to wipe out the local population in the Guánica Forest reserve (Puerto Rico's largest dry forest reserve) (Woodworth 1999). In fact, nest predation and parasitism are believed to be the primary causes of reproductive failure in northern temperate passerine songbirds (Woodworth 1999) (although it is hard to imagine that habitat loss is a significantly less important factor relating to nesting failure). In regions of continental South America where the shiny cowbird is native, brood parasitism threatens some vulnerable species already affected by habitat loss, for example the critically endangered pale-headed brushfinch (see [Atlapetes pallidiceps in IUCN Red List of Threatened Species](#)) (Oppel *et al.* 2004) and the endangered Forbes' blackbird (see [Curaeus forbesi in IUCN Red List of Threatened Species](#)) (Studer and Vielliard, 1988).

Host species whose health and abundance are threatened significantly by *M. bonariensis* are not necessarily important for the sustainment of cowbird populations (meaning their decline will not affect abundance of *M. bonariensis*). Conversely, a large wide-ranging continental species that is minimally affected as a whole by cowbirds may play an important role in sustaining populations of *M. bonariensis* (which provide "reservoirs" for the sustainment and subsequent spread of the species) (Oppel *et al.* 2004). For a full list of victims and hosts please see: [Lowther, 2004. Lists of Victims and Hosts of the Parasitic Cowbirds \(Molothrus\)](#).



Management Info

Smith (1999) suggested cowbird control to be justified if the parasitism level exceeds 60% over 2 years, however, small isolated bird populations facing multiple threats may be non self-sustaining at levels as low as 20%. Factors influencing the intensity of cowbird parasitism include the type of microhabitat nests are built in (including the level of nest concealment and the structural diversity of vegetation); forest bird nests in cleared areas may be more vulnerable to cowbird parasitism. A study of the endangered pale-headed brushfinch (*Atlapetes pallidiceps*) in Ecuador, however, revealed land use to be a major factor determining the impact of cowbird parasitism. In cattle-grazed areas breeding rates of the brushfinch were two times greater than in ungrazed areas due to a decrease in cowbirds numbers (correlated with a decrease in bird diversity and abundance in the grazed areas) (Oppel *et al.* 2004).

On the other hand, *M. bonariensis* is associated with dry open habitats (rather than moist forest habitats) and its range expansion (in Chile and the West Indies) may have been facilitated by the conversion of forested areas to early successional habitats (as well as the lack of native brood parasites in the case of some West Indian islands case) (Marín 2000; Post and Wiley, 1977, Cruz *et al.* 1995).

Physical: Most removal programmes in North America rely on large cage-traps for cowbird control. Selective shooting has also been applied to remove cowbirds, but has yielded mixed results. While site-specific shooting may be an effective complementary tool to support landscape-scale management, shooting alone may not always be sufficient to significantly reduce cowbird parasitism rates (Eckrich *et al.* 1999., Whitfield, 2000., in Oppel *et al.* 2004).

Another effective option is to monitor host nests during the breeding season, constantly removing cowbird eggs and chicks. Host eggs must be clearly distinguishable from cowbird eggs. When nest monitoring is required the host nests should not be approached while either parent close to the nest, and damage to the surrounding vegetation should be kept to a minimum to avoid creating gaps to the nest and encouraging predation. While this method is intrusive and requires a considerable level of skill, nest manipulation is efficient and cost-effective, especially in areas where trapping is impractical (Schmidt and Schaefer, 2003; Oppel *et al.* 2004).

Integrated management: Cowbird control has to be maintained for an infinitely long time, as cowbird populations at a regional level are not affected by most removal programmes. Despite often leading to reduced parasitism rates, cowbird removal has only occasionally triggered an evident increase in the target host population, and it has been suggested that habitat quality or quantity might be more limiting than cowbird parasitism rates alone (Oppel *et al.* 2004).

Principal source: Friedmann, 1929. Subgenus *Molothrus*: *Molothrus bonariensis*. In Springfield, C.C. Thomas (ed). *The Cowbirds: a Study in the Biology of Social Parasitism*.

Schmidt and Schaefer, 2003 *Pale-headed Brushfinch Recovery Project in Southwestern Ecuador 2002-2003*.

Compiler: National Biological Information Infrastructure (NBII) & IUCN/SSC Invasive Species Specialist Group (ISSG)

Review: Myriam E. Mermoz, Departamento de Ecología, Genética y Evolución Facultad de Ciencias Exactas y Naturales. Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina

Publication date: 2005-07-03

ALIEN RANGE

[1] ARGENTINA

[1] BARBADOS

[1] CHILE

[1] CURACAO

[1] HISPANIOLA

[1] MARTINIQUE

[2] PERU

[1] SAINT LUCIA

[2] BAHAMAS

[1] BRAZIL

[1] CUBA

[1] GREATER ANTILLES

[1] JAMAICA

[1] MEXICO

[1] PUERTO RICO

[9] UNITED STATES

Red List assessed species 22: CR = 1; EN = 6; VU = 5; NT = 1; LC = 9;

Agelaius assimilis LC	Agelaius humeralis LC
Agelaius xanthomus EN	Asthenes luizae NT
Atlapetes pallidiceps EN	Curaeus forbesi EN
Dendroica ptyophila LC	Dives atrovioleaceus LC
Ferminia cerverai EN	Icterus northropi CR
Loxia megaplaga EN	Nesopsar nigerrimus EN
Poospiza cinerea VU	Sturnella defilippii VU
Sturnella magna LC	Teretistris fernandinae LC
Teretistris fornsi LC	Turdus lherminieri VU
Vireo altiloquus LC	Vireo gundlachii LC
Xanthopsar flavus VU	Xolmis dominicanus VU

BIBLIOGRAPHY

57 references found for *Molothrus bonariensis*

Management information

Cossios E. Daniel, 2010. Vertebrados naturalizados en el Perú: historia y estado del conocimiento (Naturalised vertebrates in Peru: history and state of knowledge) *Rev. peru. biol.* 17(2): 179 - 189 (Agosto 2010)

Summary: Available from: <http://sisbib.unmsm.edu.pe/BVrevistas/biologia/v17n2/pdf/a07v17n2.pdf> [Accessed 23 February 2011]

Lopez-Ortiz, R., Ventosa-Febles, E.A., Reitsma, L.R., Hengstenberg, D., and Deluca, W. 2002. Increasing nest success in the yellow-shouldered blackbird *Agelaius xanthomus* in southwest Puerto Rico. *Biological Conservation*. 108 (2): 259-263.

Summary: Information about the artificial nest programme and parasitism rates for the yellow-shouldered blackbird in Puerto Rico. North American Bird Information Web Site. Undated. Observations of Shiny Cowbird in the United States of America.

Summary: Information on distribution in North America.

Oppel, S., Schaefer, H.M., Schmidt, V. and Scroder, B. 2004. Cowbird Parasitism of Pale-headed Brush-finch *Atlapetes pallidiceps*: Implications for Conservation and Management, *Bird Conservation International* 14: 63 - 75.

Summary: An overview of management strategies and habitat restoration in Yunguilla Reserve in Ecuador.

Schmidt, V. and Schaefer, H.M. 2003. *Pale-headed Brushfinch Recovery Project in Southwestern Ecuador 2002-2003 (Final Report)*.

Summary: An overview of the management strategies employed in Yuguilla Reserve in Ecuador.

Woodworth, B.L. 1999. Modeling Population Dynamics of a Songbird Exposed to Parasitism and Predation and Evaluating Management Options. *Conservation Biology*. 13 (1): 67-76.

Summary: A study that documents parasitism including the shiny cowbird.

General information

Baltz, M. E. 1995. First records of the Shiny Cowbird (*Molothrus bonariensis*) in the Bahama Archipelago. *The Auk*. 112 (4): 1039.

Summary: Distribution information was obtained from article.

Baltz, M. E. and D. E. Burhans. 1998. Rejection of artificial parasite eggs by gray kingbirds in the Bahamas (Abstract). *Condor* 100: 566-568.

[BFL \(Birds in Forested Landscapes\)](#). Undated. [Brood Parasite: Bronzed Cowbird \(*Molothrus aeneus*\)](#). [Cornell Lab of Ornithology](#).

Summary: Available from: <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/bfl/speciesaccts/brzcow.html> [Accessed 21 January 2005]

Catherine Levy, Jamaica.

Summary: Information about the observations of the shiny cowbird in Jamaica.

Cavalcanti, R.B. and Pimentel, T.M. 1988. Shiny cowbird parasitism in central Brazil, *Condor* 90:40-43. (Abstract)

Cavalcanti, R.B., and Pimentel, T.M. 1988. Shiny cowbird parasitism in central Brazil. *Condor*. 90 (1): 40-43.

Summary: Information about the parasitism of the shiny cowbird in Brasilia, central Brazil.

[Centres of Plant Diversity and Endemism \(CPD\)](#). Undated. [South America: Centres of Plant Diversity and Endemism: VIII. Southern Cone](#)

Summary: Available from: <http://www.nmnh.si.edu/botany/projects/cpd/sa/sa-viii.htm> [Accessed 12 February 2005]



GLOBAL INVASIVE SPECIES DATABASE

FULL ACCOUNT FOR: *Molothrus bonariensis*

[CONABIO. 2008. Sistema de información sobre especies invasoras en México. Especies invasoras - Aves. Comisión Nacional para el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad. Fecha de acceso.](#)

Summary: English:

The species list sheet for the Mexican information system on invasive species currently provides information related to Scientific names, family, group and common names, as well as habitat, status of invasion in Mexico, pathways of introduction and links to other specialised websites. Some of the higher risk species already have a direct link to the alert page. It is important to notice that these lists are constantly being updated, please refer to the main page (<http://www.conabio.gob.mx/invasoras/index.php/Portada>), under the section Novedades for information on updates.

Invasive species - birds is available from: http://www.conabio.gob.mx/invasoras/index.php/Especies_invasoras_-_Aves [Accessed 30 July 2008]

Spanish:

La lista de especies del Sistema de información sobre especies invasoras de México cuenta actualmente con información acerca de nombre científico, familia, grupo y nombre común, así como el hábitat, estado de la invasión en México, rutas de introducción y ligas a otros sitios especializados. Algunas de las especies de mayor riesgo ya tienen una liga directa a la página de alertas. Es importante resaltar que estas listas se encuentran en constante proceso de actualización, por favor consulte la portada (<http://www.conabio.gob.mx/invasoras/index.php/Portada>), en la sección novedades, para conocer los cambios.

Especies invasoras - Aves is available from: http://www.conabio.gob.mx/invasoras/index.php/Especies_invasoras_-_Aves [Accessed 30 July 2008]

[Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. 2003. All about Birds: Shiny cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis* Order PASSERIFORMES - Family ICTERIDAE Brown-headed Cowbird \(*Molothrus ater*\). \[http://www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/BirdGuide/Shiny_Cowbird.html\]\(http://www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/BirdGuide/Shiny_Cowbird.html\)](#)

Summary: Available from: http://www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/BirdGuide/Shiny_Cowbird_dtl.html [Accessed 4 February 2008]

Cruz, A. 1989. The decline of an adaptation in the absence of a presumed selection pressure. *Evolution*. 43 (1): 55-62.

Summary: Information about the parasitism of the shiny cowbird on the introduced village weaver in Hispaniola.

Cruz, A., and Andrews, R.W. 1989. Observations on the breeding biology of passerines in a seasonally flooded savanna in Venezuela. *Wilson Bulletin*. 101 (1): 62-76.

Summary: Information about the breeding habits of the shiny cowbird in Venezuela.

Cruz, A. and Andrews, R.W. 1997. The breeding biology of the pied water-tyrant and its interactions with the shiny cowbird in Venezuela, *J. Field Ornithol.* 68:91-97. (Abstract)

Cruz, A., Manolis, T.H., and Andrews, R.W. 1995. History of shiny cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis* brood parasitism in Trinidad and Tobago. *Ibis*. 137 (3): 317-321.

Summary: Information about the hosts of the shiny cowbird in Trinidad and Tobago.

Debrot, A.O. and Prins, T.K. 1992. First record and establishment of the shiny cowbird in Curacao, *Caribbean J. Sci.* 28:104-105. (Abstract)

Fraga, R.M. 1985. Host-parasite interactions between chalk-browed mockingbirds and shiny cowbirds, *Ornithol. Monog.* 36:829-844. (Abstract)

Friedmann, H. 1929. Subgenus *Molothrus*: *Molothrus bonariensis*. In Springfield, C.C. Thomas (ed). *The Cowbirds: a Study in the Biology of Social Parasitism*.

Summary: Gives the historical native range of the eight *M. bonariensis* subspecies, as well as some general behavioural information.

Fulton, J.T. 1990. The shiny cowbird (*Molothrus bonariensis*) reaches Alabama, *Alabama Birdlife* 37:1-3. (Abstract)

Grzybowski, J.A. and Fazio III, V. W. 1991. Shiny cowbird reaches Oklahoma. *American Birds* 45:50-52. (Abstract)

Hutcheson, W.H. 1990. Shiny cowbird collected in South Carolina: first North American specimen, *Wilson Bull.* 102:561. (Abstract)

Isacch, J. P. 2002. Nectarivorous Feeding by Shiny Cowbirds: a Complex Feeding Innovation. *Wilson s Bulletin*. 114 (3): 412-414.

Summary: A species account of cowbird feeding on nectar. Also obtained distribution information.

[ITIS \(Integrated Taxonomic Information System\), 2005. Online Database *Molothrus bonariensis*](#)

Summary: An online database that provides taxonomic information, common names, synonyms and geographical jurisdiction of a species. In addition links are provided to retrieve biological records and collection information from the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) Data Portal and bioscience articles from BioOne journals.

Available from:

http://www.cbif.gc.ca/pls/itisca/taxastep?king=every&p_action=containing&taxa=Molothrus+bonariensis&p_format=&p_ifx=plgt&p_lang= [Accessed March 2005]

Kattan, G.H. 1996. Growth and provisioning of shiny cowbird and house wren host nestlings. *Journal of Field Ornithology*. 67 (3): 434-441.

Summary: Information about the parasitism rates of *M. bonariensis* on the house wren in Colombia.

Kluza, D.A. 1998. First record of shiny cowbird (*Molothrus bonariensis*) in Yucatan, Mexico. *Wilson Bulletin*. 110 (3): 429.

Summary: Information on impacts and distribution of species.

Lovette, I.J., Bermingham, E. and Ricklefs, R.E. 1999. Mitochondrial DNA Phylogeography and the Conservation of Endangered Lesser Antillean Icterus Orioles, *Conservation Biology* 13(5): 1088 - 1096.

[Lowther, P.E. 2004. Lists of Victims and Hosts of the Parasitic Cowbirds \(*Molothrus*\), *Host Lists*. The Field Museum: Chicago.](#)

Summary: From here you may access the host lists for all of the five known taxonomic groups of parasitic birds, members of the genus *Molothrus* (parasitic cowbirds). The introduction gives an interesting but brief look into the dynamics that contribute to the reproductive success of brood parasites and the resistance of host species to brood parasites. Available from:

http://fm1.fieldmuseum.org/aa/staff_page.cgi?staff=lowther&id=417 [Accessed 20 January 2005]

Marin, M. 2000. The Shiny Cowbird (*Molothrus bonariensis*) in Chile: Introduction or Dispersion? Its Hosts and Parasitic Trends, *Ornitología Neotropical* 11 285 - 296.

Summary: A detailed analysis of the literature documenting the occurrence and spread of *M. bonariensis* into Chile. Provides much evidence supporting the hypothesis that human introductions facilitated the establishment of *M. bonariensis* in Chile.

- Mason, P. 1986. Brood parasitism in a host generalist the shiny cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis* I. The quality of different species as hosts. *Auk*. 103 (1): 52-60
- Mason, P. 1986. Brood parasitism in a host generalist the shiny cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis* I. The quality of different species as hosts. *Auk*. 103 (1): 52-60
- Summary:** Information about the hosts of the shiny cowbird.
- Mason, P., and Rothstein, S.I. 1986. Coevolution and avian brood parasitism cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis* eggs show evolutionary response to host discrimination. *Evolution*. 40 (6): 1207-1214.
- Summary:** Information about the shiny cowbird in Uruguay.
- Mermoz, M.E. and Rebores, J.C. 1994. Brood Parasitism of the Shiny Cowbird, *Molothrus bonariensis*, on the Brown-and-yellow Marshbird, *Pseudoleistes virescens*, *The Condor* 96: 716 - 721.
- Summary:** Observational and experimental evidence aimed at determining the host value of the brown-and-yellow marshbird, in terms of its ability to incubate the eggs and raise the fledglings of *M. bonariensis*.
- Mermoz, M.E. and Rebores, J.C. 1999. Egg-laying Behaviour by Shiny Cowbirds Parasitizing Brown-and-yellow Marshbirds, *Animal Behaviour* 58: 873-882.
- Mermoz, M.E., and Rebores, J.C. 2003. Reproductive success of Shiny Cowbird (*Molothrus bonariensis*) parasitizing the larger Brown-and-Yellow Marshbird (*Pseudoleistes virescens*) in Argentina. *The Auk*. 120 (4): 1128-1139.
- Summary:** Distribution and Reproductive information about species.
[Accessed 04 October 2004]
- [Nair, R. 2002. Behavioural Ecology Research Group. Brain Plasticity and Memory in Birds, ASAB \(The Association for the Study of Animal Behaviour\) Meeting.](#)
- Summary:** Outlines the findings of some interesting studies on the neurological characteristics unique to parasitic cowbirds.
Available from: <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~kgroup/memory.html> [Accessed 21 January 2005]
- Oppel, S., Schaefer, H.M., and Schmidt, V. 2003. Description of the nest, eggs, and breeding behavior of the endangered Pale-Headed Brush-Finch (*Atlapetes pallidiceps*) in Ecuador. *Wilson Bulletin*. 115 (4): 360-366.
- Summary:** Information on distribution of species.
- Papandrea, B. 2000. *Intelligence Climate Guide to South America*. WSI/INTELLICAST.
- Paredes, M., Weir, E., and Gil, K. 2001. Reproduction of the bird *Mimus gilvus* (Passeriformes: Mimidae) in Maracaibo, Venezuela. *Revista de Biología Tropical*. 49 (3-4): 1143-1146.
- Summary:** Information about the parasitism rates of *M. bonariensis* on the tropical mockingbird in Venezuela.
- Pereira, L.E., Suzuki, A., Moraes Coimbra, T.L., Pereira de Souza, R., and Bocato Chamelet, E.L. 2001. Ilheus arbovirus in wild birds (*Sporophila caerulea* and *Molothrus bonariensis*). *Revista de Saude Publica*. 35 (2): 119-123.
- Summary:** Information about the presence of the Ilheus virus in *M. bonariensis* in Brazil.
- Picman, J. and Honza, M. 2002. Are House Wren *Troglodytes aedon* eggs unusually strong? Test of the predicted effect of intraspecific egg destruction. *Ibis*. 144: e57-e66.
- Summary:** A study researching species parasitism on the House Wren. Distribution and general information were taken from this paper.
- Post, W. 1993. First specimen of the shiny cowbird, *Molothrus bonariensis* (Aves: Emberizidae) in North Carolina. *Brimleyana*. 0 (19): 205-208.
- Summary:** Information about the first specimen of the shiny cowbird collected in North Carolina, USA.
- Post, W., Cruz, A. and McNair, D.B. 1993. The North American invasion pattern of the shiny cowbird. *Journal of Field Ornithology*. 64 (1): 32-41.
- Summary:** Detailed report on the distribution and invasive patterns of species in North America
- Post, W., Nakamura, T.K., and Cruz, A. 1993. Patterns of shiny cowbird parasitism in St. Lucia, West Indies, Southwestern Puerto Rico. *Condor*. 92 (2): 461-469.
- Summary:** Information about the shiny cowbird in St Lucia and Martinique.
- Prather, J.W., and Cruz, A. 2002. Distribution, abundance, and breeding biology of potential cowbird hosts on Sanibel Island, Florida. *Florida Field Naturalist*. 30 (2): 21-35.
- Summary:** A study of potential cowbird hosts on Sanibel Island, Florida.
- Robert, M., and Sorci, G. 1999. Rapid increase of host defence against brood parasites in a recently parasitized area: The case of village weavers in Hispaniola. *Proceedings of the Royal Society of London - Series B: Biological Sciences*. 266 (1422): 941-946.
- Summary:** A study on the relationship between the shiny cowbird and its host, the village weaver, in Hispaniola.
- Sackmann, P., and Rebores, J.C. 2003. A Comparative Study of Shiny Cowbird Parasitism of Two Large Hosts, the Chalk-Browed Mockingbird and the Rufous-Bellied Thrush. *The Condor*. 105: 728-736.
- Summary:** A study documenting reproductive habits of species.
- Salvador, S.A. 1984. Study of parasitism in raising shiny cowbirds *Molothrus bonariensis* and chalk-browed mockingbirds *Mimus saturninus* in Villa Maria, Cordoba, Argentine. *Hornero*. 12 (3): 141-149.
- Summary:** Information about the parasitism of the shiny cowbird on the chalk-browed mockingbird in Argentina.
- Smith, P. W. Undated. Shiny Cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis*. Florida s Breeding Bird Atlas.
- Sorenson M.D. and Payne R.B. 2001. A Single Ancient Origin of Brood Parasitism in African Finches: Implications for Host-parasite Coevolution, *Evolution Int J Org Evolution* 55(12): 2550 - 2567.
- Studer, A., and Vielliard, J. 1988. First etho-ecological data on the Brazilian Icterid *Curaeus forbesi* Sclater 1886 Aves Passeriformes. *Revue Suisse de Zoologie*. 95 (4): 1063-1078.
- Summary:** Information about the parasitism of the shiny cowbird on the endangered Forbes blackbird.
- Sykes, P.W., and Post, W. 2002. First specimen and evidence of breeding by the shiny cowbird in Georgia. *Oriole*. 66 (3-4): 45-51.
- Summary:** A short communication documenting the species identification in the state of Georgia.
- [USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. 2000. Shiny cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis*. Patuxent Bird Identification InfoCenter.](#)
- Summary:** Brief information on the identification and description of species along with photographs.
Available from: <http://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/Infocenter/i4961id.html>[Accessed 04 October 2004]



GLOBAL INVASIVE SPECIES DATABASE

FULL ACCOUNT FOR: *Molothrus bonariensis*

Webster, S.J., and Lefebvre, L. 2001. Problem solving and neophobia in a columbiform-passeriform assemblage in Barbados. *Animal Behaviour*. 62 (1): 23-32.

Summary: A study on opportunistic avian species in Barbados, including *M. bonariensis*.

Woodworth, B.L. 1997. Brood parasitism, nest predation, and season-long reproductive success of a tropical island endemic. *Condor*. 99 (3): 605-621.

Summary: Information about the shiny cowbird and its effects on the Puerto Rican vireo in Puerto Rico.