

Guatemalan Flicker Recognized as a Distinct Species: New Conservation Focus for Central American Highlands

*The International Ornithological Congress (IOC) has officially recognized the Guatemalan Flicker (*Colaptes mexicanoides*) as a unique species.*

ANTIGUA GUATEMALA, SACATEPEQUEZ, GUATEMALA, October 21, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In the latest update to its World Bird List, the International Ornithological Congress (IOC) has officially classified the Guatemalan Flicker (*Colaptes mexicanoides*) as a distinct species. Previously grouped with the more widespread Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*), the Guatemalan Flicker

stands out due to its unique genetic profile, differences in plumage, and distinct vocalizations. [Birdwatching Guatemala](#), a leading Guatemalan birding Tour Operator, has long observed these distinctions, confirming the findings of recent scientific studies.



Recognizing the Guatemalan Flicker is vital to understanding Central America's biodiversity and marks a crucial step in protecting key habitats."

Benedicto Grijalva

The taxonomic split, initially proposed by del Hoyo and Collar in 2014, has now been fully substantiated by genetic research conducted by Manthey et al. (2017) and a comprehensive review by Chesser et al. in 2024. According to experts, the Guatemalan Flicker's unique adaptations to highland habitats above 1,500 meters emphasize its vulnerability to environmental changes.

Recognizing the Guatemalan Flicker as a distinct species is

a monumental step forward in understanding Central America's unique biodiversity, said Maynor Ovando, Senior Birding Tour Guide of Birdwatching Guatemala. This decision validates years of local observations and underscores the urgent need to protect these highland habitats



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from environmental threats.

Conservation Implications:

The official recognition of **Colaptes mexicanoides** draws attention to the unique highland ecosystems of Central America. Conservationists now call for targeted measures to protect these specialized habitats facing deforestation and human encroachment threats. Birdwatching Guatemala, known for its expert-led [birdwatching tours in Guatemala](#), is actively promoting awareness and sustainable ecotourism in these regions to protect the country's diverse birdlife.



Guatemalan Flicker (*Colaptes mexicanoides*)

Call to Action:

Birdwatchers and conservationists are encouraged to focus their efforts on the Guatemalan highlands, ensuring the long-term survival of this newly identified species. For more details on taxonomic updates, visit the [IOC World Bird List](<https://www.worldbirdnames.org/new/updates/proposed-splits/>).

About Birdwatching Guatemala:

Birdwatching Guatemala is a premier [Guatemala Birding Tour Operator](#) dedicated to exploring and preserving Guatemala's rich birdlife. Through expertly guided birdwatching tours in Guatemala, we connect enthusiasts with the region's unique avian species while promoting sustainable conservation practices. For more information, visit: <https://www.birdwatchingguatemala.com>

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