Anthracothorax nigricollis (Black-throated Mango)

Family: Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)
Order: Trochiliformes (Hummingbirds)
Class: Aves (Birds)

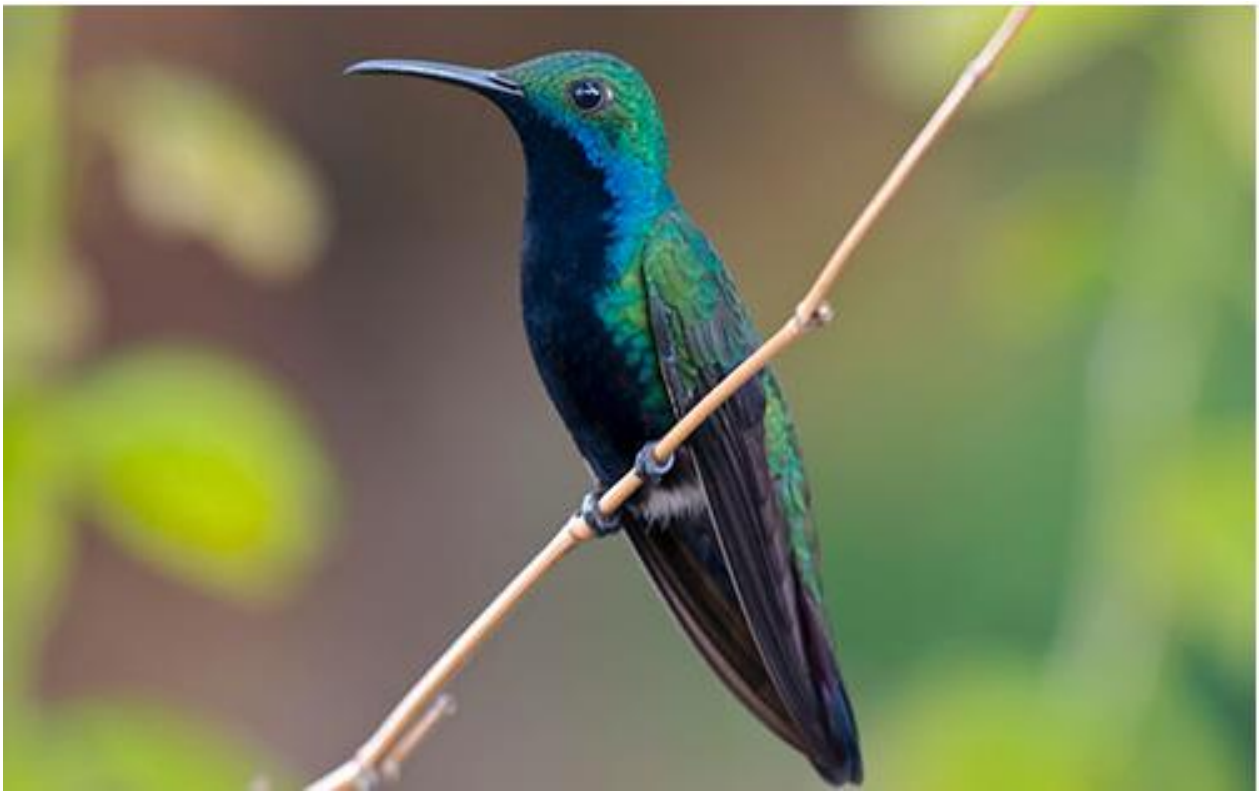

Fig.1 Black-throated mango, *Anthracothorax nigricollis.*

[http://neotropical.birds.cornell.edu/portal/species/overview?p_p_spp=238971, downloaded 1 March 2017]

TRAITS. The male *Anthracothorax nigricollis* possesses a dark stripe along its throat and breast with green on its sides, a blue stripe is seen bordering the black, the head is apple-green which then gets darker around the eyes (Fig. 1). The back is apple green which gets golden around the lower half. A black bill and wings, tail feathers are square and black centrally with wine-red feathers surrounding them. Females have a black mask and bottle-green head, a white spot behind the eye, the underbelly is white with a broad black stripe. The top half is a glossy bottle-green, with black feathers on the wings (Kenefick et al., 2016). The voice is sharp and quick (Hilty and Brown, 1986). The height is 10cm), the bill is black and slightly curved downward, 23mm long (Hilty, 2002).

DISTRIBUTION. Found in South America, up to 1750m, usually below 1000m (Fig. 2), excluding the Pacific coast. It is found in west Panama to Bolivia, north-east Argentina to southern Brazil as well as in Trinidad and Tobago (Hilty and Brown, 1986; IUCN, 2016).

HABITAT AND ACTIVITY. This species is found in open areas such as at the edge of forests, woodlands that are open and urban areas (Ascanio et al., 2017). It is resident in Trinidad but numbers are less in Tobago, tends to migrate to the mainland in September-December, it favours suburban gardens and is seen at the edge of mangroves and at the edge of hills (Kenefick et al., 2016). Commonly found around flowering plants and is able to obtain nectar at different elevations by hovering (Gwynne and Ridgely, 1992).

FOOD AND FEEDING. Feeds on flowering plants with vitamin-rich nectar such as *Palicourea crocea* (Fig. 3) (Mendonça and Anjos, 2006). Feeds in the open and consumes insects that fly, tends to feed alone or in groups (Gwynne and Ridgely, 1992).

POPULATION ECOLOGY. It is fairly common in Trinidad from December-July but eventually becomes scarce in the months August-November, this therefore labels it as migratory (Hayes et al., 2002). Dominant but not very aggressive or territorial as compared to other species of hummingbirds, males tend to sing alone (Hilty, 2002).

REPRODUCTION. The peak season of reproduction is September-December. Nests are built using materials such as saliva, plant fibres, cobwebs and lichens (2-3 mm wide). The two fibres observed were the 6-7 mm hair tufts of the seeds from the *Emilia sonchifolio,* a 0.5 m tall weed and the hairs of the seeds from the family *Poaceae*. The females harvest these materials. Eggs are laid after sunrise and a maximum of two eggs are laid, approximately three days apart from each other. A sample of 28 nests had 50% reproductive success. Hatching occurs during the morning to mid-day. Eggs are incubated and the incubation period begins as soon as the eggs are laid. After hatching, chicks opened their eyes after eight days (approximately) and its wing feathers are seen in about 23 days (Hayes et al., 2002).

BEHAVIOUR. Predator to small flying insects and tends to hover around flowering plants, and is capable of flying backwards (Gwynne and Ridgely, 1992). Males sing alone in sparsely distributed trees and this is act is not for the purpose of seeking a mate (Hilty, 2002). Females do not inhabit nests before laying and nests are sometimes reused. When a potential nesting location is discovered the female is seen standing in an upright position where she flaps her wings while swaying (Hayes et al., 2002). Voice is high pitched and short sounds can be heard (Kenefick et al., 2016).

APPLIED ECOLOGY. This species is not considered to be vulnerable due to its vast range, its population size is larger than that of a reduced population size criteria and therefore it is labelled as Least Concern, in addition to this, no threats are identified for this species (IUCN, 2016). Eggs are sometimes lost to predators (Hayes et al., 2002).

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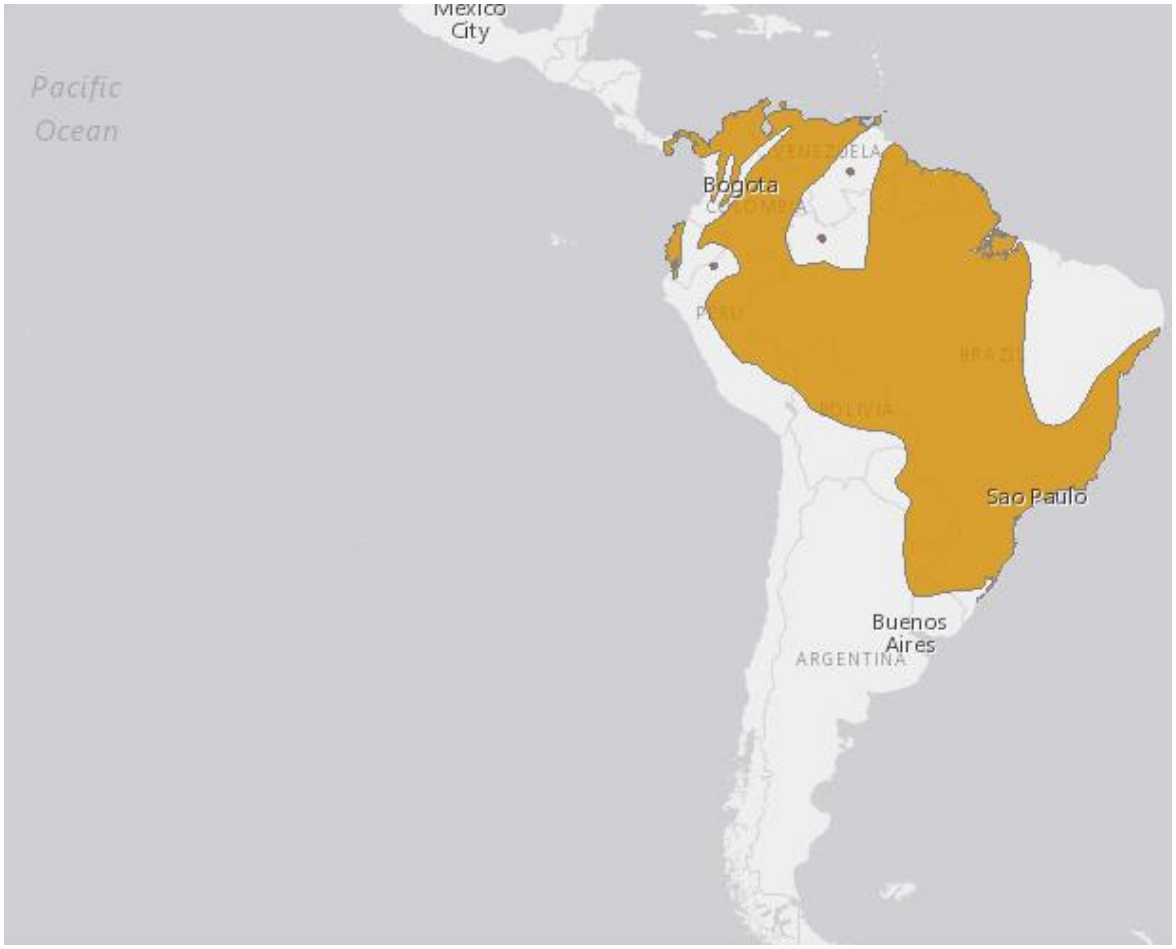

Fig. 2. Distribution of black-throated mango.

[http://maps.iucnredlist.org/map.html?id=22687130, downloaded on 1 March 2017]

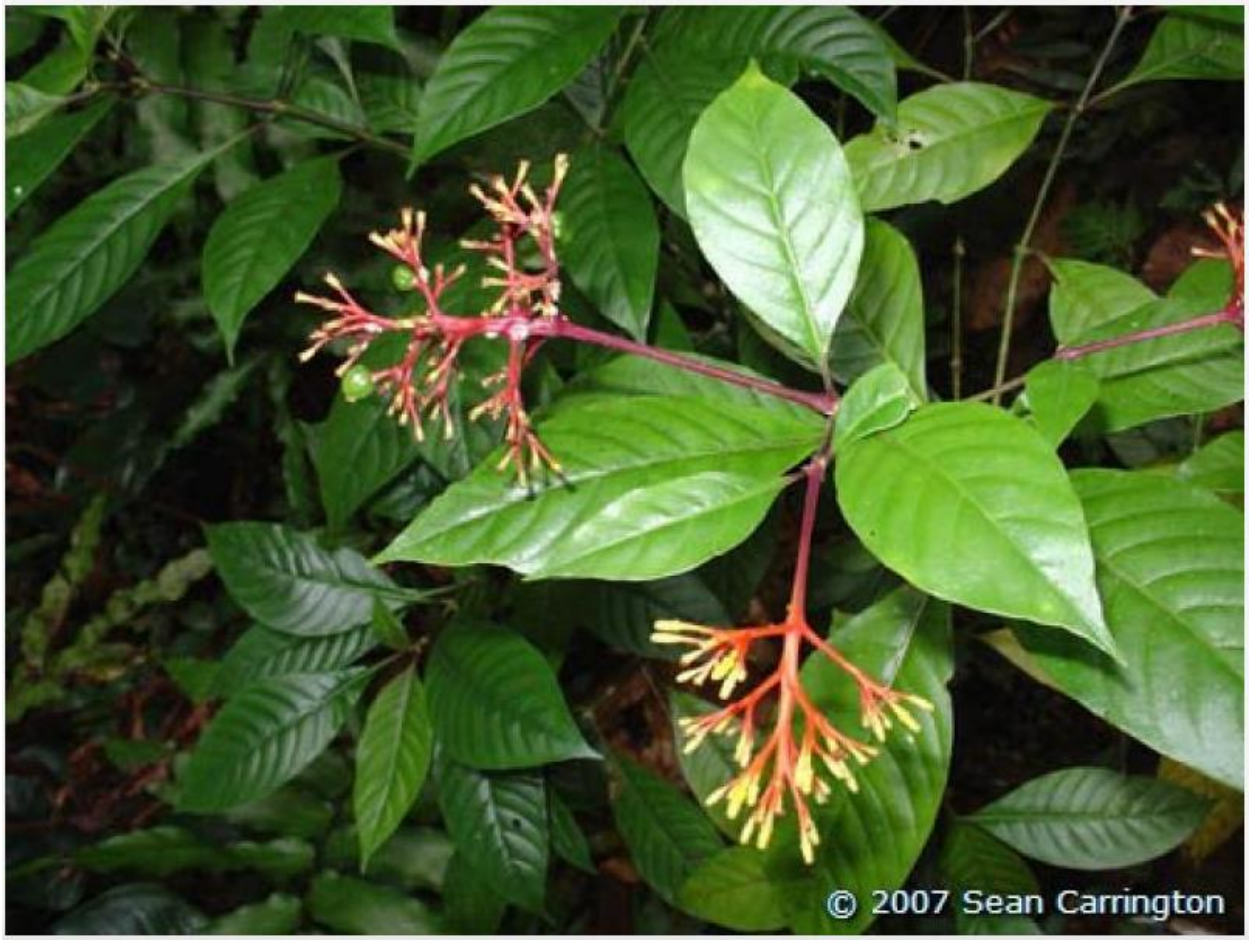

Fig. 3. *Palicourea crocea*, provides vitamin-rich nectar for *Anthracothorax nigricollis.*

[http://ecflora.cavehill.uwi.edu/image_detail.php?sn=Palicourea+crocea, downloaded 1 March 2017]