THE FIRST BLACK-AND-CHESTNUT EAGLE (SPIZAETUS ISIDORI) NEST DISCOVERED IN ARGENTINA REVEALS POTENTIAL HUMAN–PREDATOR CONFLICTS

RODRIGO ARÁOZ
Instituto de Ecología Regional (IER), Universidad Nacional de Tucumán, Yerba Buena (4107), Tucumán, Argentina
and
Centro de Investigaciones y Transferencia de Jujuy (CIT) (Universidad Nacional de Jujuy, Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas de Argentina (CONICET)). Avda. Bolivia 1711, San Salvador de Jujuy, Jujuy (4600), Argentina

JUAN MANUEL GRANDE1 AND CARMEN LÓPEZ
Centro para el Estudio y Conservación de las Aves Rapaces en Argentina, Facultad de Ciencias Exactas y Naturales, Universidad Nacional de La Pampa, Avda. Uruguay 151, Santa Rosa (6300), La Pampa, Argentina
and
Instituto de las Ciencias de la Tierra y Ambientales de La Pampa (INCIATAP), Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas de Argentina (CONICET), Avda. Uruguay 151, Santa Rosa (6300), La Pampa, Argentina

JOAQUÍN CEREGHETTI
Facultad de Ciencias Exactas y Naturales, Universidad Nacional de La Pampa, Avda. Uruguay 151, Santa Rosa (6300), La Pampa, Argentina

FÉLIX HERNÁN VARGAS
The Peregrine Fund, 5668 West Flying Hawk Lane, Boise, ID 83709 U.S.A.

Key Words: Black-and-chestnut Eagle; Spizaetus isidori; domestic fowl; Gallus gallus; Guan; Penelope spp.; human–predator conflict; intraguild predation.

Raptors play a key role as top-down modulators in the ecosystem (Duffy 2002). Larger eagles and owls can have important effects on mesopredator populations through intraguild predation, as well as through competition for resources (Sergio and Hiraldo 2008). In addition, these larger predators are often perceived as dangerous for domestic animals and game species, and are therefore frequently persecuted in the context of conflict with humans (Thirgood et al. 2005). Identifying potential conflicts is therefore critical in order to prevent them and to design conservation measures to solve them.

The Black-and-chestnut Eagle (Spizaetus isidori) is a large eagle that inhabits subtropical or tropical montane cloud forests of the Andes slopes up to 3000 masl. Throughout its range, this species occupies relatively narrow habitats from northwestern Venezuela and northeastern Colombia extending through the center of Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia to northwestern Argentina (Ferguson-Loes and Christie 2005).

The species, internationally categorized as Endangered (BirdLife International 2016), is one of the least known Neotropical raptors throughout its entire range (Valdez and Osborn 2004). In Argentina, the southern limit of its distribution, the species was described in 1954 in Jujuy Province when a pair of adults was shot, apparently close to a nest (Olrog 1956). A juvenile was shot in 1958 in northern Tucumán (Esteban 1960). For nearly 30 yr following this, the species was not recorded in the country and was considered regionally extirpated (Olrog 1985). However, in 1987, the species was observed again and since the mid-1990s, there have been scattered but regular sightings across the Yungas of Argentina, suggesting the species might be more common than previously thought (Chébez et al. 2008). The relatively large area in which the species has been recorded, as well as the sightings of some juveniles, strongly suggested the presence of a breeding population (Chébez et al. 2008). However, no nesting attempts were documented for the species in Argentina, other than the vague data from the 1950s (Olrog 1956).

On 17 February 2014, in an area of montane cloud forest in the Yungas (Dr. Manuel Belgrano County, Jujuy,