

## *Turdus albicollis* (White-necked Thrush)

Family: Turdidae (Thrushes)

Order: Passeriformes (Perching Birds)

Class: Aves (Birds)



**Fig. 1.** White-necked thrush, *Turdus albicollis*.

[<https://octaviosalles.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/sabia-coleira.jpg>, downloaded 9 March 2017]

**TRAITS.** *Turdus albicollis* or white-necked thrush, better known as sabiá-coleira in South America, is a songbird and is usually within the range of 20.5-26cm in length with a weight within the range of 40-77g. The legs are pinkish-brownish and the upper parts of the bird, the head, back and tail are dark brown (Wikipedia, 2017). The chest and belly are pale brown, with a white line on the neck (Hilty, 2003), and a distinctive gold/yellow colour at the sides. The dark brown/blackish eyes are surrounded by a thin yellow ring, and the beak is also yellow (Fig. 1). Juveniles tend to be similarly coloured but duller, in addition to having orange and brown spotting on the upper and lower parts of the body respectively. Males and females are similar (Clement et al., 2000).

**DISTRIBUTION.** This bird is found across most of South America south to Argentina (Fig. 2), and in Trinidad and Tobago (Timm, 2010).

**HABITAT AND ACTIVITY.** White-necked thrushes are found in tropical and subtropical zones, in low-lying, non-mountainous covered areas such as rainforests, woodlands and dense, tangled, ground level undergrowth (Clement et al., 2000). This species mainly feeds during the morning and is considered diurnal, but they are more likely to be heard rather than seen due to their shy nature. Their nests are found at a height of about 1-9m in low to mid-level trees and bushes. These birds have a sedentary lifestyle and are usually solitary in nature. They can however be found in groups but usually don't feed in groups. The estimated lifespan of this species is around 11 years (Snow and Lill, 1973).

**FOOD AND FEEDING.** Feeding takes place during the early morning and throughout the day; they are never out at night. This species of birds are omnivores, meaning that they eat both small animals as well as fruits from shrubs and trees. The majority of its feeding takes place on ground level where these birds feed on small invertebrates and insects (Ryan, 2012). Many a time they are also found following army ants. If they are not feeding on small invertebrates and insects, they are feeding on fruits, seeds and berries which has dropped from or are still on trees (Fig. 3). Higher level feeding can also take place but these birds prefer low level feeding in dense undergrowth or ground level (Clement et al., 2000).

**REPRODUCTION.** After mating, 2-3 eggs are laid and these eggs are greenish blue in colour with reddish brown spots over them. The eggs are incubated by the female parent alone and takes approximately 12-13 days to hatch (Beauty of Birds, 2011). Their breeding season in Trinidad and Tobago is usually from November to August but in other countries, they can be from March to June (Snow and Snow, 1963). After hatching, both parents feed the young.

**BEHAVIOUR.** *Turdus albicollis* are usually inconspicuous and are usually heard from afar, and are glimpsed rather than seen well. In Trinidad and Tobago and in Venezuela when seen, they emerge during early bright mornings to feed on the ground at quiet roadsides, cleared forest areas and in pastures. During the non-breeding season they are seen more often, mostly alone or in pairs. This however does not mean they aren't seen in larger numbers, in some cases they are found in small groups of 4-6 (Clement et al, 2000). The regular sound of this species resembles "too-ee-oo", in addition, it also giving sounds made by typical thrushes such as "yup" and "cluck" (Beauty of Birds, 2011).

**APPLIED ECOLOGY.** This species is listed as Least Concern because it has a very large range and does not reach levels at which they can be considered vulnerable (IUCN, 2016). There are no major threats to the species in Trinidad however in the Amazonian rainforests numbers are declining. On the other hand, the fact that they are mostly heard and not seen contributes to the fact that humans may not have much contact with them therefore their numbers won't be affected significantly in areas outside the Amazonian rainforests.

**REFERENCES**

- Beauty of Birds. (2011). White-necked Thrush, *Turdus albicollis*.  
<https://www.beautyofbirds.com/whiteneckedthrushes.html>.
- Clement, P., Hathway, R., Byers, C. and Wilczur, J. (2000). Helm Identification Guides: Thrushes. A&C Black Publishers Ltd. London.
- Hilty, S.L. (2003). Birds of Venezuela. Princeton University Press.
- IUCN. (2016). *Turdus albicollis*. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.  
<http://www.iucnredlist.org/details/summary/22708942/>.
- Ryan, J.L. (2012). White-Necked Thrush. Asa Wright Nature Centre Trinidad W.I.  
<http://asawright.org/2012/05/white-necked-thrush-turdus-albicollis/>.
- Snow, D.W. and Lill, A. (1973). Longevity records for some Neotropical land birds. *The Condor* **76**:262-267.
- Snow, D.W. and Snow, B.K. (1963). Breeding and the Annual Cycle in Three Trinidad Thrushes. *The Wilson Bulletin* **75**: 27-41
- Timm, C.D. (2010). *Turdus albicollis*. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology: Neotropical Birds.  
[http://neotropical.birds.cornell.edu/portal/species/overview?p\\_p\\_spp=552876](http://neotropical.birds.cornell.edu/portal/species/overview?p_p_spp=552876).
- Wikipedia (2017). White-necked Thrush. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White-necked\\_thrush](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White-necked_thrush).

Author: Addesh Manchoon

Posted online: 2017



**Fig. 2.** White-necked thrush geographic distribution, by country.

[<http://www.oiseaux.net/maps/white-necked.thrush.html>, downloaded 9 March 2017]



**Fig 3.** White-necked thrush feeding on berries.

[<http://picsr.com/photos/dariolins/page173?nsid=21896808@N04>, downloaded 9 March 2017]

For educational use only - copyright of images remains with original source