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Author: Irusta, Jorge B.

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First record of Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus* in Brazil

by Jorge B. Irusta 

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SUMMARY.—On 18 April 2022, a Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus* was photographed in the municipality of Ceará-Mirim, Rio Grande do Norte, north-east Brazil, the first record in Brazil and the southernmost on the Atlantic coast of South America.

Three subspecies of Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus* are recognised: *C. v. ternominatus* resident in the Caribbean; the primarily resident *C. v. peruvianus* on the Pacific coast of Ecuador, Peru and northern Chile; and the nominate subspecies, which has both migratory and resident populations, the latter in the south of its range. *C. v. vociferus* breeds mostly in the interior of North America, from south-east Alaska and southern Canada to the West Indies and northern Mexico, wintering from southern British Columbia to northern South America and on the Pacific coast to Chile, where it joins *C. v. peruvianus* (Paulson 2005, O'Brien *et al.* 2006, Jackson & Jackson 2020).

Given that many shorebird species are migratory, the occurrence of vagrants outside their normal distribution is not uncommon. That a relatively common species like Killdeer, which undertakes long-distance migrations between North America and western South America, has a history of transatlantic vagrancy, and is observed reasonably frequently in northern Colombia and Venezuela, it is perhaps surprising that the species has not been recorded previously in Brazil (Jackson & Jackson 2020, Pacheco *et al.* 2021).

On 18 April 2022, during a regular survey as part of Natal's Metropolitan Landfill Avian Monitoring Program, in the municipality of Ceará-Mirim, Rio Grande do Norte, north-east Brazil (cf. Fig. 1), I photographed an adult Killdeer at the edge of a new and unused landfill pit partially flooded with rainwater, at 05°43'00"S, 35°22'57.6"W. The bird was alone, appeared to be healthy, and was observed from 08.10 until 10.15 h, during which time it was photographed at a range of c.40–50 m (Fig. 2). The survey, which was conducted by a trained ornithologist once per week for six hours, lasted from the creation of the landfill in 2004 until the end of 2023.

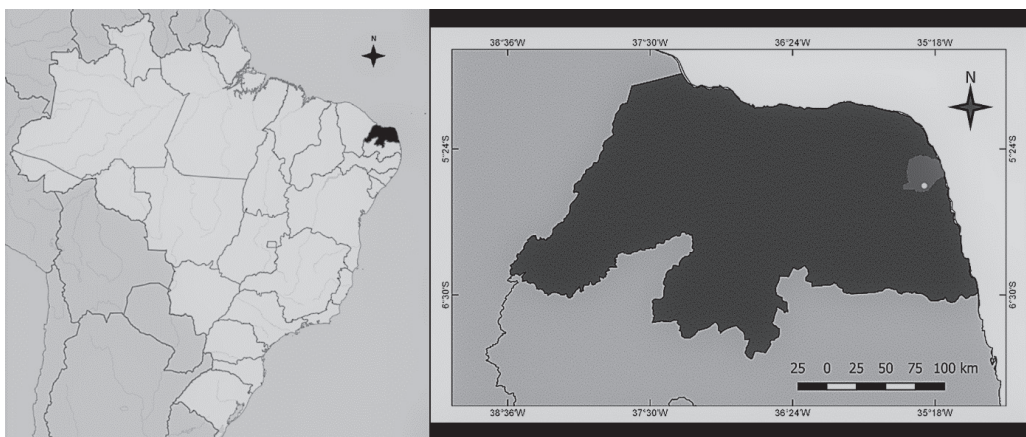


Figure 1. Location of the state of Rio Grande do Norte in north-east Brazil and the municipality of Ceará-Mirim therein; the white dot indicates the site where the Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus* was recorded.



Figure 2. Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus*, municipality of Ceará-Mirim, Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil, 18 April 2022 (Jorge B. Irusta)

In addition to the state checklist for Rio Grande do Norte (Sagot-Martin *et al.* 2020) and the references mentioned above, I have also found no suggestion that Killdeer has occurred in Brazil in the citizen science websites, eBird (<https://ebird.org>; as of 18 March 2024), Xeno-canto (<https://xeno-canto.org>; 20 October 2023), Wikiaves (<https://www.wikiaves.com.br>; 20 October 2023) and iNaturalist (<https://www.inaturalist.org>; 18 March 2024). Mine therefore is the first record in Brazil and the southernmost on the Atlantic coast of South America. The closest geographical report of the species is in French Guiana, c.2,300 km to north-west, an undocumented (i.e. hypothetical) record in 2009 (Claessens 2017).

Killdeer is a reasonably regular vagrant to Europe, mainly in late autumn and winter (November–April), with two breeding records (both in the Azores, in 2010 and 2011), and most records in the British Isles (61 up to 2022), but others north to the Faeroes Islands and Iceland, south to Spain, and east to Hungary and Romania (Wiersma *et al.* 2016, Mitchell 2017, Holt & the Rarities Committee 2022).

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Address: Behavioural Biology Laboratory, Dept. of Physiology and Behavior, Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte, Av. Sen. Salgado Filho 3000, Lagoa Nova, Natal, CEP 59064-741, Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil, e-mail: jb.irusta@gmail.com