

Tuesday, December 16, 2008 11:00 AM
From: "Mark Patterson" <mpatterson@plos.org>
To: cinclodes@yahoo.com

Dear Mike

In light of the press release that you sent to us, and the ensuing correspondence, we revisited the content of your article in order to consider whether and how this work should be presented to the media. As a result, some concerns have come to light about the accepted version of your article, and we have discussed these amongst the professional editors at PLoS and with the Academic Editor who handled your article, Sean Rands.

We regret very much that these issues have emerged so late in the day, but hope that you appreciate that we need to be as thorough as possible when concerns do arise.

Our chief concerns are as follows:

- 1) the work is being presented too strongly as evidence for the existence of the ivory-billed woodpecker
- 2) the fieldwork and evidence has not been reviewed in sufficient detail (some of this information was added after assessment by the reviewers)
- 3) discussion of previous published evidence regarding this bird is not balanced, and does not refer to uncertainties that have been expressed in subsequent literature.

Given the substantive nature of our concerns, we will not be able to proceed with publication of the current article. Instead, we intend to have the article assessed by at least one further expert, focusing in particular on the fieldwork and potential verification of the identity of the bird. If this reviewer supports publication, we will invite further revision of the article, as appropriate.

Once again, we apologize for reversing our decision to publish this work, and although we would understand if you prefer to withdraw the article, we hope that you will consider having your work assessed further with PLoS ONE before a publication decision is reached.

Sincerely,

Mark Patterson