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## Second Record of *Polistes goeldii* (Hymenoptera: Vespidae) Wasps on Trinidad

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## Second Record of *Polistes goeldii* (Hymenoptera: Vespidae) Wasps on Trinidad

On 15 March, 2014, Selwyn Gomes, Kamal Mahabir and I were watching birds at the far end of Lalaja Road. Lalaja Road is accessed via the Arima Valley but ends in the Guanapo Valley. While scanning the branches of a small tree, I saw a small wasp nest which was different from any that I had seen previously. The nest was hanging from a small branch, open to the weather. There were at least 12 cells on a long spindly open-hanging comb, with no nest covering. The nest was attended by two adults. Their predominant colour was a brilliant metallic dark blue. I took some pictures (Fig. 1) and later emailed them to Christopher Starr. He identified the wasp as *Polistes goeldii*, and noted that this was only the second record for Trinidad for this species.

Starr and Hook (2006) reported their find in similar terms: "In September 2004 we found an active colony of this...species at Caura Village, Trinidad...hanging from a highly eccentric petiole, attached to a fence wire...a little over one meter from the ground." Starr's paper

showed only 19 other known sites of these wasps in all of Central and South America, from Nicaragua to Peru and Brazil. Starr's nest had 22 cells, also with two wasps in attendance.

About a week later, Chris Starr and Rakesh Bhukal were able to relocate the nest. Starr noted that the nest was about eight meters from the ground, in contrast to the other, which was only about one meter up. They were both out in the open, with no covering above them. Due to the shape of the nest, only a small surface was exposed to rain from above and run-off will be rapid.

### REFERENCE

Starr, C.K. and Hook, A.W. 2006. *Polistes goeldii* (Hymenoptera: Vespidae) is a Widespread but Rare Social Wasp. *Journal of Hymenoptera Research*, Vol. 15(1), pp. 177-180.

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Fig. 1. *Polistes goeldii* nest, Lalaja Road, March 2014.