A Tropical Birding CUSTOM tour

ECUADOR: The Andes Introtour

6th – 13th August 2016

and

High Andes Extension

13th – 15th August 2016

Tour Leader: Jose Illanes

Andean Cock-of-the-rock was the hands down winner of the BIRD-OF-THE-TOUR, and with views like this it was easy to see why!

All of the photos in this report were taken on this tour by Jose Illanes/Tropical Birding.
INTRODUCTION

This tour has felt like a home from home for me, as I have now led this tour so many times in the last 13 years. It also remains a firm favorite of mine; as it is set up so that almost the entire tour is based at one comfortable lodge (Tandaypa Bird Lodge). The central location of the lodge allowed us to dip into a variety of varied forest habitats in the Andes, all with their own discrete selections of birds. This makes it a very diverse tour, relative to the amount of time spent in the field.

We started off, not far from Ecuador’s capital Quito, at the wonderful Yanacocha Reserve. It proved to be a bumper start with Aplomado Falcon, and Hooded, Black-chested and Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanagers, Andean Guan, Barred Fruiteater the bizarre Sword-billed Hummingbird, Purple-backed Thornbill, and Golden-breasted and Sapphire-vented Pufflegs all seen during our single morning there. From there we dropped in altitude as we drove along the Old Nono-Mindo road towards Tandayapa Bird Lodge, picking up Plain-tailed Wren, Crimson-mantled Woodpecker, Blue-backed Conebill, the rare and erratic Blue Seedeater, and Sickle-winged Guan along the way. We spent some time right at our base, Tandayapa Bird Lodge, the next day chalking up 14 species of among the hundreds of hummingbirds at their feeders, including the cute Booted-Racket-tail, Empress Brilliant, Andean Emerald, Purple-bibbed Whitetip, the funky looking Violet-tailed Sylph and the bumble-bee like Purple-throated Woodstar. At the forest blind on the property, we also admired Zeledon’s Antbird, Spotted Barbtaill, Tricolored and Chestnut-capped Brushfinches, and a White-throated Quail-Dove. The lodge fruit feeders were also active at the time, with Crimson-rumped Toucanet, White-winged Brushfinch and Red-headed Barbet all visiting. We also spent some time at the upper end of the Tandayapa Valley, where a different species mix occurs, and found the must-see Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan, in addition to Grass-green Tanager, Gorgeted Sunangel, and the striking Pearled Treerunner. The shock find was not a bird though, but a cat, as a Margay, was seen standing alongside the road! We also searched the lower end of the valley too, where highlights included Flame-faced Tanager and Golden-headed Quetzal, in addition to a male Lyre-tailed Nightjar at dusk.

One of our day trips took us much lower down to the Rio Silanche area, which was as birdy as ever, with Masked Water-Tyrant, Pacific Antwren, Pacific Parrotlet, Bronze-winged Parrot, Purple-chested Hummingbird, White-tailed and Choco Trogons, Olivaceous Piculet, Orange-fronted Barbet, Little Cuckoo, Tawny-crested, Scarlet-browed, and Golden-hooded Tanagers, Yellow-tufted Dacnis and White-bearded Manakin all featuring. We also got nice views of a roadside White-throated Crake, which was unusual. Another lower altitude site than the lodge, Milpe, was also visited that is located within the Andean foothills. This special site led us to see Collared Aracari, Choco Toucan, Rufous Motmot, Flame-faced, Blue-necked, Silver-throated, Golden, and Rufous-throated Tanagers, and a Pallid Dove coming to the fruit feeders. The forest trails there also produced some regional specialties like Choco Trogon, Choco Warbler and Ochre-breasted Tanager. Our rarest sighting of the day was the subdued Fulvous-breasted Flatbill, a rarely seen species in this area. The hummingbird mix is very different here than the other sites we had visited, and gave us Crowned Woodnymph, White-whiskered Hermit and Green Thorntail as new species for the trip.
Although this tour is not especially focused on seeing the regional endemics, we always see plenty of them, as we visit a number of key sites for them on the itinerary. Not least among these is Mashpi, a site, which seems to burst with scarce endemic species, many of which are also extremely attractive ones too, making a must visit site. Among the many highlights in this cloudforest area were Orange-breasted and Scaled Fruiteaters, Black Solitaire, Uniform Treehunter, Club-winged and Golden winged Manakins, Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager, and Glistening-green, Rufous-throated and Moss-backed Tanagers.

On our last day in the Northwest of Ecuador, we visited Refugio Paz de Aves another very special site, famed for two main avian aspects; it is home to one of the best Andean Cock-of-the-rock leks in the country, and it is also where the local farmers have learnt to lure in and feed a number of normally difficult forest birds. We saw half a dozen scarlet male Andean Cock-of-the-rocks dancing at dawn, and also saw the feeding of birds like Dark-backed Wood-Quail, and Yellow-breasted, Ochre-breasted and Moustached Antpittas. Away from the feeding stations, the birding was also good, and yielded Golden-headed Quetzal, Metallic-green Tanager, Wedge-billed Hummingbird and a roosting Lyre-tailed Nightjar while we waited for one of the antpittas. The
site, like so many in this extremely rich birding area, also possesses fruit feeders, which attracted **Toucan Barbet**, **Crimson-rumped Toucanet** and **Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager** during our visit, while the on site hummer feeders produced **Empress Brilliant**, **Brown Inca** and some glowing **Velvet-purple Coronets**. Later the same day we visited **Calacalí**, a dry country site on the way to Quito, where our short birding session led us to see some final new birds of the main tour, like **Band-tailed Sierra-Finch**, **Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle**, **Black-tailed Trainbearer**, **Ash-breasted Sierra-Finch**, **Tufted-Tit-Tyrant**, **Spot-billed Ground-Tyrant**, and our main target, the scarce **White-tailed Shrike-Tyrant**.

Unfortunately for some participants, the trip ended there, as they could not be part of the short High Andes Extension, covering the most scenic sites of the entire tour. So, after a final night altogether in Quito, the extension group traveled up to **Antisana National Park** where we saw the **Ecuadorian Hillstar**, **Carunculated Caracara**, **Black-faced Ibis**, **Andean Gull**, **Andean Lapwing**, and **Silvery Grebe** gave us such a nice look. However, arguably the star bird of the morning was Ecuador’s enormous national bird, the Andean Condor, 4 of which were found resting on their regular cliffs. We also enjoyed a lunch in a café just outside the park, where a few feeders attracted **Shining Sunbeam** and **Giant Hummingbird**. Our next stop was **Guango Lodge**, another in a long list of top notch hummingbird sites in the country, and where the feeders drew in **Collared Inca**, **Long-tailed Sylph**, **Buff-winged Starfrontlet**, **Sword-billed Hummingbird**, **White-bellied Woodstar** and **Tourmaline Sunangel** during our visit. The surrounding property was very productive with **Masked Trogon**, **Turquoise Jay**, **Lacrimose Mountain-Tanager**, **Slaty Brushfinch** and **Chestnut-crowned Antpitta** all making an appearance. We also
birded at Cayambe-Coca National Park, near Papallacta town, where we saw Masked and Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanagers, Black-backed Bush-Founder and Viridian Metaltail. Unfortunately, the pass at Papallacta had some serious weather issues, limiting our time there, but we did still manage to find Red-rumped Bush-Tyrant, Many-striped Canastero, Andean Tit-Spinetail and Red-crested Cotinga during our time there. However, and not for the first time on this fortunate tour, an animal other than a bird was the highlight, as encountered a mother and cub Spectacled Bear on the last day of the tour, for a fantastic finale to the tour!

TOUR SUMMARY

DAY ONE – of birding - (7th August): YANACOCHA

After an early morning meeting with the group at their Quito hotel we were quickly on board our bus heading up into the mountains close to Quito, to the Yanacocha reserve. Not far outside the city, we stopped along the road, and found Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanager, Black Flowerpiercer, Yellow-breasted Bushfinch, a soaring Variable Hawk, Streaked-throated Bush-Tyrant and also got nice views of an Aplomado Falcon in flight.

Once we arrived at the reserve, we checked the nearby hummingbird feeders that held Golden-breasted and Sapphire-vented Pufflegs, Buff-winged Starfrontlet, Shining Sunbeam, Great Sapphirewing, Tyrian Metaltail, and the incredible Sword-billed Hummingbird. Later on, we hiked along a flat mountain trail that led us to encounter Hooded and Black-chested Mountain-Tanagers, Smoky Bush-Tyrant, White-throated and White-banded Tyrannulets, Spectacled Whitestart, Blue-backed and Cinereous Conebills, and Rufous Wren in a single feeding flock. Barred Fruiteater, as usual, gave us a hard time, but eventually we got good looks. Two other good trailside finds were a foraging Andean Guan, and the stunning Purple-backed Thornbill, an erratic hummingbird species at this site.

After a morning in the reserve, and a simple hot lunch taken within the reserve, we headed towards our lodge, via the Old Nono-Mindo Road. The road passes through both farmlands, but then enters into densely forested hillsides. This journey, which took most of the afternoon, due to regular birding stops along the way, was very productive as usual. The journey saw us drop gradually in altitude, moving out of the higher elevation temperate zone, and into the more humid subtropics. This change in elevation, climate, and vegetation naturally brought a change in the birds too, with most of the species in the afternoon being entirely different from those seen during the morning. This journey produced Burrowing Owl and Brown-backed Chat-Tyrant near the reserve, and further down the road we found Sickle-winged Guan, Mountain Velvetbreast, Black-crested and Russet-crowned Warblers, Plain-tailed Wren, Golden-bellied (Southern Yellow) Grosbeak, Pearled Treerunner, Rufous-breasted Chat-Tyrant, Golden-crowned and Cinnamon Flycatchers, White-crested Elaenia, White-tailed Tyrannulet, the extremely colorful Crimson-mantled Woodpecker in a passing flock, White-sided Flowerpiercer, and a female of the rare Blue Seedeater. We eventually rolled into Tandayapa Bird Lodge, right at dusk, after a long, but very bird-filled day, covering two different biogeographical zones, the temperate and subtropical zones.
DAY TWO (8th August): **TANDAYAPA VALLEY**

On this day we entirely stayed within the subtropical zone, as we explored this further, by birding right on the grounds of **Tandayapa Bird Lodge**, but also other parts of the Tandayapa Valley too. We started the day at the lodge, by visiting a forest blind at dawn, where birds come in close to pick off insects attracted to a night light. Observations from the blind included **Zeledon’s Antbird**, **Russet-crowned and Three-striped Warblers**, **Chestnut-capped and Tricolored Brushfinches**, a noisy **Golden-crowned Flycatcher**, and a couple **White-throated Quail-Dove (photo below)** were watched chasing each other around the forest floor. After a short time in the forest blind, we backtracked the ten-minute walk to the lodge and had a breakfast while enjoying birds right around the restaurant, at the fruit feeders; like **Golden Tanager**, **Orange-bellied Euphonia**, **White-winged Brushfinch**, **Buff-throated Saltator** and **Crimson-rumped Toucanet**.

After breakfast, and once the early morning flurry of bird activity at the lodge itself had naturally slowed, we went to the upper part of the Tandayapa Valley (to a maximum of 2300m/7550ft). The reason for driving up to the upper section of the valley was that this relatively small rise in elevation would bring us into wetter cloudforest habitat for some species not possible right at the lodge. Before reaching the top end of the valley we had a **Toucan Barbet** sitting alongside a **Red-headed Barbet**, for a quick burst of tropical color; they were presumably both attracted to some fruit in the area. The key species for this short trip was seen almost immediately on arrival at the top, where a small group of **Plate-billed Mountain-Toucans** was found. The Andes is famed for its exciting mixed feeding flocks of birds of many species and individuals, and we were quick to enjoy the dizzy excitement of one of these which held **Streaked-necked and Flavescent Flycatchers**, **Pearled Treerunner**, **Capped Conebill**, **Streaked Tuftedcheek**, and **Flame-faced and Grass-green Tanagers**. The most surprisingly sighting of the morning though was a 30-second view of a local wild cat, a **Margay** on the roadside. We slowly walked the road, birding the forested verges, and added birds like **Beryl-spangled and Blue-capped Tanagers**, **Collared Inca**, **Gorgeted Sunangel**, and **Green-and-black Fruiteater** to our quickly expanding bird list.
After lunch back at the lodge, we concentrated on the world famous lodge hummingbird feeders, and saw at least 14 different species in; like **Buff-tailed coronet**, **Rufous-tailed Hummingbird**, **Green-crowned and Fawn-breasted Brilliants**, **Andean Emerald**, **Brown Inca**, **White-necked Jacobin**, **Violet-tailed Sylph**, **Purple-throated Woodstar**, **Purple-bibbed Whitetip**, **Green, Sparkling and Brown Violetears**, and that most popular species of all, the wonderful **Booted Racket-tail**. Later on, we did some birding just below the lodge along the road (a short drive away), where we were fortunate to see **Golden-naped Tanager**, **Black-winged Saltator**, **White-collared and Chestnut-collared Swifts**, **Smoky-brown and Lineated Woodpeckers** (the latter a very unusual sighting at this elevation). Just before dusk, we were able to call in a beautiful male **Golden-headed Quetzal** that gave nice views. We finished our day by seeing the bizarre looking male **Lyre-tailed Nightjar**, which was very popular amongst the group.

**Choco Toucan** is a regional endemic, seen at both Silanche and Milpe on this tour.
DAY THREE (9th August): **SILANCHE BIRD SANCTUARY**

On this day, we needed to start very early, as we made our longest day trip from the lodge (a 90-minute drive each way). The long journey though is soon forgotten, when the traditional deluge of new species begins at this very birdy site, which is located lower than all of the others visited on this trip, and therefore held many new species additions. Our first stop yielded **Silver-throated, Blue-gray, Palm, Bay-headed, Blue-necked and Golden-hooded Tanagers, Yellow-throated Chlorospingus and Yellow-tufted Dacnis** all feeding in a fruiting *Melastoma*. The road into the this small forest sanctuary, is a combination of forest patches and farm fields. One of these fields was full of corn, which attracted **Maroon-tailed Parakeet, and Bronze-winged and Blue-headed Parrots**. Further along the same road we encountered a lively feeding flock with **Dusky-faced and Tawny-crested Tanagers, Cinnamon Becard, Great Antshrike, Red-rumped and Golden-olive Woodpeckers, Wedge-billed, Plain-brown and Streaked-headed Woodcreepers, Scarlet-rumped Cacique, Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant and Streaked Xenops** all within it! The roadside birding en-route to the reserve can be excellent, with plentiful birdlife, and this 7-km stretch of road also brought us the endemic **Choco Toucan, Collared (Pale-mandibled) Aracari, Masked Tityra, Pacific Antwren, Little Cuckoo, Thick-billed Seedfinch** and **Pacific Parrotlet**.
It took us the entire morning to reach the sanctuary, and so once we arrived we took our packed lunch on site. After lunch, we began birding this unusually rich forest patch, which held more regional endemics, like Dusky Pigeon and Chocó Trogon, as well as a White-tailed Trogon beside the small parking area. We did not need to go anywhere on arrival, as a passing feeding flock was waiting for us on arrival, and held Scarlet-browed Tanager, Masked Tityra, Purple-throated Fruitcrow, Blue Dacnis, Green Honeycreeper, Olivaceous Piculet, Choco Tyrannulet, White-vented and Thick-billed Euphonias, Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher, and a nice pair of response Orange-fronted Barbets, the latter another specialty of the area. A later walk in the reserve led us to a White-bearded Manakin at a traditional lek site. In the late afternoon, we left the reserve, stopping for yet more birds along the entrance road, like Striped Cuckoo, Sooty-headed Tyrannulet and Yellow-tailed Oriole, before we rolled back into Tandayapa Bird Lodge in the evening.

Collared (Pale-mandibled) Aracari was seen well at Milpe!

DAY FOUR (10th August): MILPE

On this day we visited two sister reserves in the foothills of the Andes – the Milpe Bird Sanctuary and Milpe Gardens, which are both managed by an Ecuadorian NGO, the Mindo Cloud Forest Foundation. These sites were an hour’s drive from the lodge, and involved a drop in altitude to around 1100m/3600ft, and so was
intermediate to where we had been at Silanche and Tandayapa, and as such offered some birds common to several sites, but also plenty of new species too. First of all, we birded the garden and parking lot in the Milpe Bird Sanctuary, where there are some nice feeders, which brought in Rufous Motmot, Orange-billed Sparrow, Collared (Pale-mandibled) Aracari, Ecuadorian Thrush, Pallid Dove, and Blue-necked, Golden, Lemon-rumped, and Rufous-throated Tanagers during our time there. Nearby, we also checked on the reserve’s hummingbird feeders that produced new species for our trip, such as White-necked Jacobin, Green-crowned Brilliant, Crowned Woodnymph, Green Thorntail and White-whiskered Hermit. After a little time with no further activity around the garden, we made a short trip onto a forest trail, where we managed to see some nice birds, mostly associated with mixed feeding flocks, like Bay Wren, Red-faced Spinetail, Scaly-throated, Buff-fronted and Lineated Foliage-Gleaners, Golden-bellied (Chocó) Warbler, Gray-breasted Wood-Wren, Slaty-capped Flycatcher, a very unexpected Fulvous-breasted Flatbill, Greenish Elaenia, Ochre-breasted Tanager, Spotted Woodcreeper, Russet Antshrike, Plain Xenops, Slaty and Rufous-rumped Antwrens, and One-colored Becard. Away from the feeding flocks were equally impressive finds, like Choco Trogon, Snowy-throated Kingbird, Choco Toucan and Broad-billed Motmot. For lunch, we visited the birder-friendly restaurant of Mirador Rio Blanco, where bird feeders distracted us over lunch, although all contained birds we had seen before, but were nonetheless appreciated all the same, at this close range. After our wonderful meal there, we drove and birded our way back towards our Tandayapa lodge, by way of the San Tadeo Road that passes through beautiful cloudforest. The afternoon was largely quiet, but we did still find the subdued endemic Dusky Chlorospingus, and also Scale Fruit eater, Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager, Brown Inca and the brightly-colored Beryl-spangled Tanager, before returning to our lodge right around dusk.

DAY FIVE (11th August): MASHPI

Along with Silanche, this site offered the longest of our day trips, with another 90-minute drive required to get to this remote spot. Mashpi is relatively recently discovered, and offers up not only many regionally endemic specialties, but many stunning looking birds in their own right. We begun our exploration of this rich area by visiting the small private reserve of Amagusa, which is famed for its productive fruit and hummingbird feeders, which attract a number of the specialty birds of the area.

As the owner laid down bananas for the birds, many species waited impatiently nearby, like Orange-bellied Euphonia, Golden, Golden-naped, Lemon-rumped, Flame-faced, Moss-backed, Rufous-throated, and Glistening-green Tanagers, and Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager. Some of these (Moss-backed, Glistening-green, Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager) are specialties that are most reliable at this site, often being very difficult away from there. We not only saw this birds, but saw them very well, as they posed for photos at the feeders, time and again. The small set of hummingbird feeders on site was no less impressive, bringing in other regional specialties like Empress Brilliant, Purple-bibbed Whitetip, Violet-tailed Sylph and the always popular Velvet-purple Coronet.

Away from this reserve, we birded within the forest patches along the road that gave us Orange-breasted and Scaled Fruiteaters Uniform Antshrike, Bronze-olive Pygmy-Tyrant, Black-striped Sparrow, Rose-
faced Parrot, Strong-billed Woodcreeper, Tricolored Brushfinch, Sepia-brown Wren, Yellow-bellied Siskin and the secretive Uniform Treehunter. Golden-winged and Club-winged Manakins fed in a fructifying tree, and were also joined by both Andean and Black Solitaires. After some long days in the field, we agreed to return to the lodge well before dusk, so that people could spend some further time relaxing around the hummingbird feeders there.

Scaled Fruiteater was seen, as well as Orange-breasted Fruiteater in our day at Mashpi

DAY SIX (12th August): PAZ DE AVES & CALACALI to QUITO

On our final birding morning of the main tour we visited one of the areas most special, and famous, sites: Paz de Aves. The site is famed as the owners of the land, feed a number of rare forest birds there, many of which are rarely seen away from there. However, before we were to see some of them, we started out with a dawn visit to a forest blind that overlooks one of the best lek sites in the country for Andean Cock-of-the-rocks, and watched on as up to 6 different males came in to display for unseen females. The same spot yielded one of those rare forest birds that the site is famed for - a family group of Dark-backed Wood-
Quail came in to feed on food laid out for them very close by. There are several hummingbird feeders on site; a visit to the lower ones brought us further views of both Purple-throated Woodstar and Booted Racket-tail, as well as the much scarcer Wedge-billed Hummingbird. Our next stop on this busy schedule of birds was to see one of the regular Yellow-breasted Antpittas, a pair of which were seen along a forested creek, as usual. Following this showing of a one ordinarily difficult bird (away from this site that is!), we moved on to another, hiking up a short, but steep, forest trail. On the way up to a designated spot, we lucked into both Metallic-green Tanager and Golden-headed Quetzal, before we had a wonderful view of what we were primarily climbing for, a superb Rufous-breasted Antthrush.

After all this excitement we drive to another area of forest, where we descended part of a forest trail and found two other difficult forest birds, at another feeding site; this time we go to see both Moustached and Ochre-breasted Antpittas. By now it was brunch time, a traditional pattern during a visit to this site, where the owners wives prepared excellent local food of empanadas and bolones accompanied by coffee. While we waited and ate our brunch, we also watched the nearby fruit feeders, which gave us looks at Crimson-rumped Toucanet, Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager, and Golden, Golden-naped and Flame-faced Tanagers, and a super Toucan Barbet just a few meters away couple feet away. The hummingbird feeders
alongside held **Fawn-breasted** and **Empress Brilliant**, **Brown Inca**, **Purple-bibbed Whitetip**, **Speckled Hummingbird**, **Violet-tailed Sylph** and more glowing **Velvet Coronets**.

After this landmark morning of the tour, we finally had to say our goodbyes to this bird rich part of the country, and drive back towards Quito. As we drove back eastwards, the habitat changed sharply from wet forest to dry, semi-arid open country, in the vicinity of **Calacali**, where we made the final short birding stop of the tour, finding **Ash-breasted and Band-tailed Sierra-Finches**, **Black-tailed Trainbearer**, **Tufted Tit-Tyrant**, **Band-tailed Seedeater**, **Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle**, and a bright red male **Vermilion Flycatcher**. However, two of the rarest finds, were also some of the dullest – **White-tailed Shrike-Tyrant** and **Spot-billed Ground-Tyrant** both turning up during this short visit. Finally, we arrived back in Quito for the last night of the main tour. As the hotel for the last night of the tour was near the airport, we also had a short stop for migrants at a local airport pond, where we finished the tour with an assortment of boreal migrants and local highland birds, like **Pied-billed Grebe**, **Baird’s Sandpiper**, **Andean Gull**, **Yellow-billed Pintail**, **Lesser and Greater Yellowlegs** and a soaring **Harris’s Hawk**.
The main tour ended with crippling looks at a **Toucan Barbet**

### High Andes Extension

**13th – 15th August 2016**

**DAY ONE (13th August):** **ANTISANA NP and GUANGO LODGE**

Leaving Quito shortly after dawn, we rose up to **Antisana National Park**, a place we were visiting for the birds, of course, but that also offered some great landscapes for us too – the best of the entire tour. Before we entered the park itself we saw **Blue-and-yellow Tanager**, **Brown-backed Chat-tyrant**, **Golden-bellied (Southern Yellow) Grosbeak**, **Plain-colored Seedeater**, and **Cinereous Conebill**. Continuing higher we, stopped off at a Condor viewpoint, where as hoped, from the platform, we could see an **Andean Condor** sat on the opposite cliff. This has the largest wingspan of any raptor in the world, and also happens to be Ecuador’s national bird too. Moving further along the road, we stopped off at a section of **Chuquiragua**
bushes, which revealed their main pollinator in attendance, Ecuadorian Hillstar, as well as Hooded Siskin, Andean Tit-Spinetail, Black-winged Ground-Dove and Streak-backed Canastero in the same area.

After these various stops we continued in the same vein, driving ever higher up the road, where the habitat changed sharply to open, windswept, paramo grasslands, similar to moorland. Up at these highest spots, we found Plumbeous Sierra-Finch, Chestnut-winged and Stout-billed Cinclodes, Andean Lapwing, Carunculated Caracara and a few of the threatened Black-faced Ibis. However, the visit will probably be as much remembered for the scenery as the birds, as we were treated to clear weather, affording good views of the nearby volcanoes of Antisana and Cotopaxi. It is traditional on such a birding trip to also stop off at the Mica Lake too, which offered up some high Andean waterbirds, and we quickly racked up Andean Teal, (Andean) Ruddy Duck, Slate-colored (Andean) Coot and some cute Silvery Grebes very close to the lake edge. On the way out of the park, in order to visit a local café for lunch, we spotted a couple of flying Aplomado Falcons in front of the bus. Once we arrived at the restaurant, we enjoyed the World’s largest hummingbird species - Giant Hummingbird – in addition to Black-tailed Trainbearer, Tyrian Metaltail and Shining Sunbeam.

This Silvery Grebe was seen at Antisana, where we also enjoyed good views of the nearby volcano

After lunch, we departed for Guango Lodge, hoping to stop off at Papallacta Pass along the way. However, the weather at the pass was so poor, we continued straight on to the lodge, hoping for better weather lower
down. On arrival at the lodge, we still had plentiful daylight remaining to enjoy the amazing hummingbird feeders, which were attracting Long-tailed Sylph, Collared Inca, Speckled Hummingbird, Chestnut-breasted and Buff-tailed Coronets, Tyrian Metaltaill, Tourmaline Sunangel, and the tiny White-bellied Woodstar. Also nearby the Lodge we were able to see Turquoise Jay and (Northern) Mountain-Cacique foraging in the trees.

DAY TWO (14th August): GUANGO LODGE and PAPALLACTA

This was the final birding day of the tour, and it started out with a walk on the property at Guango, taking a trail that ran along the riverside. As is typical in many Andean sites, it seemed very quiet at first, but then a feeding flock came through and changed everything! By the end of the walk we had seen Masked Trogon, (photo below), Turquoise Jay, Hooded and Lacrimose Mountain-Tanagers, Blue-and-black Tanager, Mountain Wren, Pearled Treerunner, Blue-backed Conebill, the tricky Dusky Piha, Rufous-breasted Chat-Tyrant, White-banded Tyrannulet, Gray-headed Bush-Tanager and and Slaty Brushfinch! We also added Chestnut-crowned Antpitta by the parking lot, which was coming to a designated feeding area.
After this we took a drive to an area near Papallacta town, and birded a road that leads into Cayambe-Coca National Park. It was another productive walk, with Brown-backed Chat-Tyrant, and Viridian Metaltail, before we found a feeding flock and hit the “motherload”. This bird party held the key target for us there, Masked Mountain-Tanager, as well as Black-backed Bush-Tanager, Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanager, and Golden-crowned Tanager. After this, we journeyed up to nearby Papallacta Pass, and continued further up to nearly 14,000ft elevation, where we didn’t spend much time, due to some people feeling the altitude a little too much (soon resolved when we drove down a little. This did however, get us one of the toughest birds for this area; Red-rumped Bush-Tyrant. Other, more expected, birds there included Variable Hawk, Blue-mantled Thornbill, Many-striped Canastero, and White-chinned Thistletail. Not for the first time on this tour, a mammal took the headlines again, when an exciting short stop in the paramo led us to find a pair of Spectacled Bears, (photo below), involving a mother and cub. Tow of our last birds of the tour were a Red-crested Cotinga, just below the pass, and then a couple of soaring Andean Condors. Somewhat fitting to end an Ecuador tour with its impressive national bird, as we drove back to the capital Quito for one final night.

We ended with 388 bird species being recorded, 346 of which were seen. The vote for top birds of the trip was difficult to define, with a wide range of choices adopted among the group. The clear winner was Andean Cock-of-the-rock followed by a series of hotly contested choices, including Golden-naped, Flame-faced and Glistening-green and Beryl-spangled Tanager, Masked Mountain-Tanager, Broad-billed Motmot, Toucan Barbet, Black Solitaire, Lyre-tailed Nightjar, Great Sapphirewing, Sword-billed Hummingbird, Yellow-throated Toucan and Andean Condor.
It is not often you get the chance to see a **Wedge-billed Hummingbird** this well (Paz de Aves on the main tour)

**Bird List**

All of the species that I’m mentioning here are basically that most of the participant saw on the trip which are in bold, species with **H** are heard only and **GO** guide only. The taxonomy of the list follows:


**TINAMOUS**
- Tawny-breasted Tinamou
- Little Tinamou

**TINAMIDAE**
- *Nothocercus julius* **H**
- *Crypturellus soui* **G**

**DUCKS, GEESE, & WATERFOWL**
- Yellow-billed Pintail

**ANATIDAE**
- *Anas georgica*
Andean Teal  
(Andean) Ruddy Duck  
**CRACIDS**  
Andean Guan  
Wattled Guan  
Sickle-winged Guan  
**NEW WORLD QUAIL**  
Dark-backed Wood-Quail  
**GREBES**  
Pied-billed Grebe  
Silvery Grebe  
**HERONS, EGRETS, AND BITTERNERS**  
Cattle Egret  
Striated Heron  
**IBIS AND SPOONBILLS**  
Black-faced (Andean) Ibis  
**NEW WORLD VULTURES**  
Black Vulture  
Turkey Vulture  
Andean Condor  
**HAWKS, EAGLES, AND KITES**  
Hook-billed Kite  
Sharp-shinned (Plain-breasted) Hawk  
Barred Hawk  
Roadside Hawk  
Harris's Hawk  
Variable Hawk  
Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle  
**RAILS, GALLINULES, AND COOTS**  
White-throated Crake  
Slate-colored (Andean) Coot  
**PLOVERS AND LAPWINGS**  
Andean Lapwing  
**SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES**  
Baird's Sandpiper  
Spotted Sandpiper  
Greater Yellowlegs  
Lesser Yellowlegs  
**GULLS, TERNS AND SKIMMERS**  
Andean Gull  
**PIGEONS AND DOVES**  
Rock Pigeon  
Pale-vented Pigeon  
Band-tailed Pigeon  
Plumbeous Pigeon  
Ruddy Pigeon  
Dusky Pigeon  
Common Ground-Dove  
Black-winged Ground-Dove  
White-tipped Dove  
Pallid Dove

Anas andium andium  
Oxyura jamaicensis andina  
**CRACIDAE**  
Penelope montagnii  
Aburria aburri  
Chamaepetes goudotii  
**ODONTOPHORIDAE**  
Odontophorus melanotomus  
**GORMS, EGRETS, AND BITTERNERS**  
Podiceps occipitalis  
**ARDEIDAE**  
Bubulcus ibis  
Butorides striata  
**THRESKIORNITHIDAE**  
Theristicus melanopis branickii  
**CATHARTIDAE**  
Coragyps atratus  
Cathartes aura jota  
Vultur gryphus  
**ACCIPITRIDAE**  
Chondrohierax uncinnatus  
Accipiter striatus ventralis  
Morphnarchus princeps  
Rupornis magnirostris  
Parabuteo unicinctus  
Geranoaetus poliosoma  
Geranoaetus melanoleucus  
**RALLIDAE**  
Laterallus albigularis  
Fulica ardesiaca  
**CHARADRIIDAE**  
Vanellus resplendens  
**SCOLOPACIDAE**  
Calidris bairdii  
Actitis macularius  
Tringa melanoleuca  
Tringa flavipes  
**LARIDAE**  
Chroicocephalus serranus  
**COLUMBIDAE**  
Columba livia  
Patagioenas cayennensis  
Patagioenas fasciata  
Patagioenas plumbea  
Patagioenas subvinacea  
Patagioenas goodsoni  
Columbina passerina  
Metriopelia melanoptera  
Leptotila verreauxi  
Leptotila pallida
### Tropical Birding Trip Report

**ECUADOR: The Andes Introtour August 2016**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>White-throated Quail-Dove</th>
<th>Zentrygon frenata</th>
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<td>Eared Dove</td>
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<td>Colombian (Rufescent) Screech-Owl</td>
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<td><strong>NIGHTJARS AND ALLIES</strong></td>
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<td>Rufous-bellied Nighthawk</td>
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<td>Chestnut-collared Swift</td>
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<td>Sword-billed Hummingbird</td>
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<td>Great Sapphirewing</td>
<td>Pterophanes cyanopterus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buff-tailed Coronet</td>
<td>Boissonneauea flavescens</td>
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</table>
Chestnut-breasted Coronet
Velvet-purple Coronet
Booted Racket-tail
White-tailed Hillstar
Purple-bibbed Whitetip
Fawn-breasted Brilliant
Green-crowned Brilliant
Empress Brilliant
Giant Hummingbird
White-bellied Woodstar
Little Woodstar
Purple-throated Woodstar
Crowned (Green-crowned) Woodnymph
Andean Emerald
Purple-chested Hummingbird
Rufous-tailed Hummingbird
Violet-bellied Hummingbird

**TROGONS**
Golden-headed Quetzal
Blue-tailed (Chocó) Trogon
(Western) White-tailed Trogon
Collared Trogon
Masked Trogon

**MOTMOTS**
Rufous Motmot
Broad-billed Motmot

**KINGFISHERS**
Green Kingfisher

**PUFFBIRDS**
Barred Puffbird

**JACAMARS**
Rufous-tailed Jacamar

**NEW WORLD BARBETS**
Orange-fronted Barbet
Red-headed Barbet

**TOUCAN-BARBETS**
Toucan Barbet

**TOUCANS**
Crimson-rumped Toucanet
Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan
Collared (Pale-mandibled) Aracari
Yellow-throated (Chestnut-mandibled)
Toucan
Choco Toucan

**WOODPECKERS**
Olivaceous Piculet
Black-cheeked Woodpecker
Smoky-brown Woodpecker
Red-rumped Woodpecker
Golden-olive Woodpecker
Crimson-mantled Woodpecker

**BOISSONNEAUA**
Boissonneaua matthewsii
Boissonneaua jardini

**OCREATUS**
Ocreatus underwoodii

**UROCHROA**
Urochroa bougueri bougueri

**UROSTICTE**
Urosticte benjamini

**HELIDOXA**
Heliodoxa rubinoides
Heliodoxa jacula
Heliodoxa imperatrix

**PATAGONA**
Patagona gigas

**CHAELOCERCUS**
Chaelocercus mulsant
Chaelocercus bombus

**CALLIPHLOX**
Calliphlox mitchelli
Thalurania colombica

**AMAZILIA**
Amazilia franciae
Amazilia rosenbergi
Amazilia tzacatl

**THALURANIA**
Damophila julie

**TROGONIDAE**
Pharomachrus auriceps
Trogon comptus
Trogon chionurus
Trogon collaris
Trogon personatus

**MOMOTIDAE**
Baryphthengus martii
Electron platyrhynchum

**ALCEDINIDAE**
Chloroceryle americana

**BUCCONIDAE**
Nystalus radiatus

**GALBULIDAE**
Galbula ruficauda

**CAPITONIDAE**
Capito squamatus
Eubucco bourcierii

**SEMNORNITHIDAE**
Semnornis ramphastinus

**RAMPHASTIDAE**
Aulacorhynchus haematopygus
Andigena lamirostris
Pteroglossus torquatus erythropygius
Ramphastos ambiguus swainsonii
Ramphastos brevis

**PICIDAE**
Picumnus olivaceus
Melanerpes pucherani
Picoides fumigatus
Veniliornis kirkii
Colaptes rubiginosus
Colaptes rivolii
Cinnamon Woodpecker  
Lineated Woodpecker  

**FALCONS AND CARACARAS**  
Carunculated Caracara  
American Kestrel  
Aplomado Falcon  

**NEW WORLD AND AFRICAN PARROTS**  
Rose-faced Parrot  
Red-billed Parrot  
Blue-headed Parrot  
Bronze-winged Parrot  
Pacific Parrotlet  
Maroon-tailed Parakeet  
Red-masked Parakeet  

**TYPICAL ANTBIRDS**  
Rufous-rumped Antwren  
Great Antshrike  
Black-crowned (Western Slaty-) Antshrike  
Uniform Antshrike  
Russet Antshrike  
Checker-throated Antwren  
Pacific Antwren  
Slaty Antwren  
Dot-winged Antwren  
Streak-headed (Long-tailed) Antbird  
Chestnut-backed Antbird  
Esmeraldas Antbird  
Zeledon's (Immaculate) Antbird  

**ANTPITTS**  
Moustached Antpitta  
Scaled Antpitta  
Chestnut-crowned Antpitta  
Yellow-breasted Antpitta  
Rufous Antpitta  
Tawny Antpitta  
Ochre-breasted Antpitta  

**TAPACULOS**  
Ocellated Tapaculo  
Ash-colored Tapaculo  
Blackish (Unicolored) Tapaculo  
Naríño Tapaculo  
Spillmann's Tapaculo  

**ANTTHRUSHE**S  
Black-headed Anthrash  
Rufous-breasted Anthrash  

**OVENBIRDS AND WOODCREEPERS**  
Plain-brown Woodcreep  
Wedge-billed Woodcreep  
Strong-billed Woodcreep  
Black-striped Woodcreep  
Spotted Woodcreep  

**FALCONIDAE**  
*Celeus loricatus*  
*Dryocopus lineatus*  

**Psittacidae**  
*Pyrilia pulchra*  
*Pionus sordidus*  
*Pionus menstruus*  
*Pionus chalcopterus*  
*Forpus coelestis*  
*Pyrrhura melanura pacifica*  
*Psittacara erythrogenys*  

**THAMNOPHILIDAE**  
*Euchrepropis callinota*  
*Thamnophilus atrinucha*  
*Thamnophilus unicolor*  
*Thamnites anabatinus*  

**THAMNOPHILIDAE**  
*Grallaria alleni*  
*Grallaria guatimalensis*  
*Grallaria ruficapilla*  
*Grallaria flavotincta*  
*Grallaria rufula*  
*Grallaria quitensis*  

**RHINOCRYPTIDAE**  
*Acropternis orthonyx*  
*Myornis senilis*  
*Scytalopus latrans*  
*Scytalopus vicinior*  
*Scytalopus spillmanni*  

**FORMICARIIDAE**  
*Formicarius nigricapillus*  
*Formicarius rufipictus*  

**FURNARIIDAE**  
*Dendrocincla fuliginosa*  
*Glyphorynchus spirurus*  
*Xiphocolaptes promeropirhynchus*  
*Xiphorhynchus lachrymosus*  
*Xiphorhynchus erythropygii*
Streak-headed Woodcreeper
Montane Woodcreeper
Plain Xenops
Streaked Xenops
Streaked Tuftedcheek
Pale-legged (Pacific) Hornero
Chestnut-winged (Bar-winged) Cinclodes
Stout-billed Cinclodes
Buff-fronted Foliage-gleaner
Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaner
Lineated Foliage-gleaner
Uniform Treehunter
Striped Treehunter
Streak-capped Treehunter
Striped (Western) Woodhaunter
Spotted Barbtail
Pearled Treerunner
Andean Tit-Spinetail
White-browed Spinetail
Many-striped Canastero
Streak-backed Canastero
White-chinned Thistletail
Red-faced Spinetail
Azara's Spinetail
Slaty Spinetail

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS

Tyrannidae

Common Tody-Flycatcher
www.tropicalbirding.com +1-409-515-9110 info@tropicalbirding.com
Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher  
Fulvous-breasted Flatbill  
White-throated Spadebill  
Cinnamon Flycatcher  
Tawny-breasted Flycatcher  
Flavescent Flycatcher  
Smoke-colored Pewee  
Black Phoebe  
Vermilion Flycatcher  
Spot-billed Ground-Tyrant  
Plain-capped (Páramo) Ground-Tyrant  
Black-billed Shrike-Tyrant  
White-tailed Shrike-Tyrant  
Streak-throated Bush-Tyrant  
Smoky Bush-Tyrant  
Red-rumped Bush-Tyrant  
Masked Water-Tyrant  
Yellow-bellied Chat-Tyrant  
Slaty-backed Chat-Tyrant  
Rufous-breasted Chat-Tyrant  
Brown-backed Chat-Tyrant  
Dusky-capped Flycatcher  
Boat-billed Flycatcher  
Rusty-margined Flycatcher  
Social Flycatcher  
Golden-crowned Flycatcher  
Streaked Flycatcher  
Piratic Flycatcher  
Snowy-throated Kingbird  
Tropical Kingbird

COTINGAS  
GREEN-AND-BLACK FRUITEATER  
BARRED FRUITEATER  
ORANGE-BREASTED FRUITEATER  
SCALED FRUITEATER  
RED-CRESTED COTINGA  
ANDEAN COCK-OF-THE-ROCK  
PURPLE-THROATED FRUITCROW  
DUSKY PIHA  
MANAKINS  
GOLDEN-WINGED MANAKIN  
WHITE-BEARED MANAKIN  
CLUB-WINGED MANAKIN

TITYRAS AND ALLIES  
MASKED TITYRA  
BARRED BECARD  
CINNAMON BECARD  
WHITE-WINGED BECARD  
ONE-COLORED BECARD

VIREOS AND ALLIES  
SLATY-CAPPED SHRIKE-VIREO
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<th>Scientific Name</th>
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<td><strong>CROWS JAYS AND MAGPIES</strong></td>
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<td>Cyanolyca pulchra</td>
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<td>Turquoise Jay</td>
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<td>Thlypopsis ornata</td>
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<td>Tachyphonus luctuosus</td>
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Tawny-crested Tanager  
White-lined Tanager  
Flame-rumped (Lemon-rumped) Tanager  
Moss-backed Tanager  
Hooded Mountain-Tanager  
Masked Mountain-Tanager  
Black-chested Mountain-Tanager  
Grass-green Tanager  
Lacrimeose Mountain-Tanager  
Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanager  
Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager  
Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager  
Buff-breasted Mountain-Tanager  
Golden-crowned Tanager  
Fawn-breasted Tanager  
Blue-and-yellow Tanager  
Glistening-green Tanager  
Blue-gray Tanager  
Palm Tanager  
Blue-capped Tanager  
Golden-naped Tanager  
Black-capped Tanager  
Golden-hooded Tanager  
Blue-necked Tanager  
Rufous-throated Tanager  
Blue-and-black Tanager  
Beryl-spangled Tanager  
Metallic-green Tanager  
Bay-headed Tanager  
Flame-faced Tanager  
Golden Tanager  
Silver-throated Tanager  
Swallow Tanager  
Black-faced (Yellow-tufted) Dacnis  
Blue Dacnis  
Green Honeycreeper  
Golden-collared Honeycreeper  
Scarlet-browed Tanager  
Cinereous Conebill  
Blue-backed Conebill  
Capped Conebill  
Glossy Flowerpiercer  
Black Flowerpiercer  
White-sided Flowerpiercer  
Masked Flowerpiercer  
Black-backed Bush Tanager  
Plumbeous Sierra-Finch  
Ash-breasted Sierra-Finch  
Band-tailed Sierra-Finch  
Grassland Yellow-Finch  
Blue-black Grassquit  

Tachyphonus delatrii  
Tachyphonus rufus  
Rhamphocelus flammigerus icteronotus  
Bangsia edwardsi  
Buthraupis montana  
Buthraupis wetmorei  
Cnemathraupis eximia  
Chlorornis riefferii  
Anisognathus lacrymosus  
Anisognathus igniventris  
Anisognathus somptuosus  
Anisognathus notabilis  
Dubusia taeniata  
Iridosornis rufivertex  
Pipraeidea melanonota  
Pipraeidea bonariensis  
Chlorochrysa phoenicotis  
Thraupis episiscopus  
Thraupis palmarum  
Thraupis cyanoccephala  
Tangara ruficervix  
Tangara heinei  
Tangara larvata  
Tangara cyanicollis  
Tangara rufigula  
Tangara vassorii  
Tangara nigrovirdis  
Tangara labradorides  
Tangara gyrola  
Tangara parzudakii  
Tangara arthus  
Tangara icterocephala  
Tersina viridis  
Dacnis lineata aequatorialis  
Dacnis cayana  
Chlorophanes spiza  
Iridophanes pulcherrimus  
Heterospingus xanthopygius  
Conirostrum cinereum  
Conirostrum sitticolor  
Conirostrum albifrons  
Diglossa lafresnayii  
Diglossa humeralis  
Diglossa albilatera  
Diglossa cyanea  
Urothraupis stolzmannii  
Phrygilus unicolor  
Phrygilus plebejus  
Phrygilus alaudinus  
Sicalis luteola  
Volatinia jacarina
Thick-billed (Lesser) Seed-Finch  
Sporophila funerea
Variable Seedeeater  
Sporophila corvina
Yellow-bellied Seedeeater  
Sporophila nigricolis
Band-tailed Seedeeater  
Catamenia analis
Plain-colored Seedeeater  
Catamenia inornata
Bananaquit  
Coereba flaveola
Yellow-faced Grassquit  
Tiaris olivaceus
Dull-colored Grassquit  
Tiaris obscurus
Dusky-faced Tanager  
Mitrospingus cassini
Buff-throated Saltator  
Saltator maximus
Black-winged Saltator  
Saltator atripennis
Slate-colored Grosbeak  
Saltator grossus

BUNTINGS AND NEW WORLD SPARROWS

Yellow-throated Chlorospingus  
Chlorospingus flavigularis
Dusky Chlorospingus  
Chlorospingus semifuscus
Black-striped Sparrow  
Arremonops conirostris
Gray-browed (Stripe-headed) Brushfinch  
Arremon assimilis
Orange-billed Sparrow  
Arremon aurantirostris
Cheestnut-capped Brushfinch  
Arremon brunneinucha
Rufous-collared Sparrow  
Zonotrichia capensis
Tricolor Brushfinch  
Atlapetes tricolor
Slaty Brushfinch  
Atlapetes schistaceus
Yellow-breasted (Rufous-naped) Brushfinch  
Atlapetes latinuchus
White-winged Brushfinch  
Atlapetes leucopterus leucopterus

CARDINALS AND ALLIES

White-winged Tanager  
Piranga leucoptera
Ochre-breasted Tanager  
Chlorothraupis stolzmanni
Golden Grosbeak  
Pheucticus chrysogaster
Blue Seedeater  
Amaurospiza concolor

TROUPIALS AND ALLIES

Scrub Blackbird  
Dives warczewiczii
Shiny Cowbird  
Molothrus bonariensis
Yellow-tailed Oriole  
Icterus mesomelas
Scarlet-rumped Cacique  
Cacicus uropygialis pacificus
(Northern) Mountain Cacique  
Cacicus chrysonotus leucoramphus

FINCHES, EUPHONIAS AND ALLIES

Thick-billed Euphonia  
Euphonia lanirostris
Golden-rumped Euphonia  
Euphonia cyanoccephala
White-vented Euphonia  
Euphonia minuta
Orange-bellied Euphonia  
Euphonia xanthogaster
Yellow-bellied Siskin  
Spinus xanthogastrus
Hooded Siskin  
Spinus magellanicus

MAMMALS

Western Dwarf Squirrel  
Microsciurus mimulus
Red-tailed Squirrel  
Sciurus granatensis
Central American Agouti  
Dasyprocta punctata
Tapeti (Brazilian Rabbit)  
Sylvilagus brasiliensis
Culpeo (Culpeo Fox)  
Lycalopex culpaeus
Margay  
Leopardus wiedii
Another photo of the BIRD OF THE TOUR: **Andean Cock-of-the-rock**, seen so well at Paz de Aves on the last birding day of the main tour.