A Tropical Birding SET DEPARTURE tour

Ecuador: The Andes Introtour
& High Andes Extension

Main tour: 9 – 15 December 2013
Extension: 16 – 18 December 2013

Andean Cock-of-the-rock deservedly won the BIRD-OF-THE-TOUR competition with views like this at the best display site in the country.

Guided by Sam Woods
(Assisted by Tandayapa Bird Lodge volunteer George Lin at Mashpi & Silanche)

The birds that are highlighted in red within the text are the species that have photos within this trip report.

Thanks to Pablo Cervantes for use of the photo above (the same individual we saw on tour).

All other photos by Sam Woods/Tropical Birding
Introduction:

This tour is one of my favorite tours that I am privileged to lead; Ecuador has become my home now, and we visit some of the birdiest areas in the region; from the endemic-rich Tandayapa region in the northwest to the scenic high Andean paramos of the east on the extension, which come complete with dramatic views of volcanoes as well as a discreet set of high altitude birds like Andean Condor, Giant Conebill, and Ecuadorian Hillstar.

This tour provided a great overview of the region by dipping into different elevations during the main tour in the endemic-rich Choco region of northwest Ecuador: We began in the TEMPERATE ZONE at the Jocotoco Conservation Foundation reserve of Yanacocha (3400m/11,150ft), where Sword-billed Hummingbird and a pair of Rufous Antpittas were the highlight. From there we traveled down the infamous Old Nono-Mindo Road, dropping into the SUBTROPICAL ZONE as we did so, and picking up Torrent Duck and White-capped Dipper in the process. Our following day was spent entirely in the Tandayapa Valley, at both the upper elevations of the valley, and around Tandayapa Bird Lodge (1750m/5740ft), both also within the subtropics. The lodge is world famous among birders and nature photographers for hummingbirds in particular, and we feasted on a wonderful variety of these there, totaling SIXTEEN species, including such stunners as the comical Booted Racket-tail and the beautiful Violet-tailed Sylph. The lodge blind provided some great sightings too, with a visiting Scaled Antpitta, and a pair of White-throated Quail-Doves that mated on a branch at eye-level just feet away. Our time lower down in the FOOTHILL ZONE was split between two areas: the Mindo Cloudforest Foundation (MCF) Reserve of Milpe (1100m/3610ft), and the relatively new site of Mashpi. At Milpe we saw the magnificent displays of several male Club-winged Manakins, as well as three toucan species. Mashpi (1300m/4265ft) is one of the premier sites in the region, in terms of endemics of this Choco region, and it did not disappoint with Glistening-green and Moss-backed Tanagers, Indigo Flowerpiercer, and the ultra-gorgeous Orange-breasted Fruiteater, a clear contender for bird of the trip. Our next stop was another vital MCF sanctuary, Rio Silanche (350m/1150ft), which provided a good insight into the LOWER FOOTHILLS, where the bird fauna reflects both foothill and lowland elements. In a head-spinning day there we amassed around 130 species including the rare and
stunning Scarlet-breasted Dacnis; Barred Puffbird; Gray-and-gold and Rufous-winged Tanagers; and a surprise sighting of Plain-breasted Ground-Dove; not a looker, but a rare and very recent colonizer, and one of the first records for this well-visited site. The main tour ended with time back up in the SUBTROPICAL ZONE at the small private reserve of Paz de Aves near the birding town of Mindo, where the local farmer-turned-bird-guide helped to lure in 3 different species of antpitta (2 Ochre-breasted Antpittas, 3 Moustached Antpittas, and 2 Yellow-breasted Antpittas, page before); while the Andean Cock-of-the-rock display there was scintillating and put it in hot contention as one of the birds of the trip. We also enjoyed further stunning hummingbirds there, most notably the breathtaking Velvet-purple Coronet, as well as a day roosting male Lyre-tailed Nightjar, complete with its long, train-like, tail.

Our group of four was halved for the High Andes Extension, as two departed home for Christmas, while Jim and Kris stayed on for a vastly different experience from the main tour. While the sites on the main tour are largely forest areas, the extension visited two high Andean sites (3800-4300m/12,465-14,110ft), above the treeline, where the dominant habitat is open grassland, known as paramo. This made for the easiest birding of the tour, due to a combination of open country birding, and some abundant high elevation species. The extension, as usual, produced some of the true standout birds of the entire tour, including Ecuador’s massive national bird, Andean Condor; along with a gorgeous, purple-helmeted male Ecuadorian Hillstar; lots of Carunculated Caracaras (photo above), on the plateau at Antisana; the Andean version of the nuthatch, Giant Conebill in the haunting polylepis woods near Papallacta Pass; an adorable family of Torrent Ducks surfing the rapids along the Guango River; and the Ptarmigan-like Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe on a cold, foggy morning at Papallacta. We stayed at the famed Guango Lodge (2600m/8530ft) where we got another
final hit of hummingbirds to add to all the other high Andean avian treasures on the tour, as their feeders yielded a heady ten species, some of which were unique to the extension.

We had covered altitudes from as low as 350m/1150ft (Rio Silanche), to up to 4300m/14,100ft (Papallacta), and amassed a trip list of 380 species in just 8 days birding; (for both the main tour and extension combined). This included a good mix of hummingbirds (45 species), and species from the tanager family (60+ species) in particular, and also included over 30 Choco regional endemics being seen too, (e.g. Toucan Barbet, Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan, Violet-tailed Sylph, Orange-breasted Fruiteater, Glistening-green Tanager, Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager).

A special THANK YOU also to Tandayapa volunteer, George Lin, who proved both great company, and a great asset, on our day trips to Mashpi and Silanche. Thanks George!

Tour Summary:

10 December: Yanacocha

This was to be our only day on the main tour within the temperate zone, with the morning being spent within the temperate forest reserve of Yanacocha, before we drove our way down to Tandayapa Bird Lodge along the Old Nono-Mindo Road, dropping into the Subtropical zone as we did so. Aside from a stop to admire the capital city of Quito below, and the volcano-dotted skyline behind, we did not stop until a Streak-throated Bush-Tyrant hopped onto a roadside post just before the reserve. Once inside the reserve we braced at the crisp morning air up at 3400m/11,150ft, and began by admiring a passing group of Black-chested Mountain-Tanagers picked out by Ann. Walking the “Inca Trail” proceedings were quite tranquil and quiet until our first Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanager emerged into the top of the tree, urging appreciative gasps all round. Further along the trail a quick bit of playback lured in the robust Powerful Woodpecker who flapped in noisily and landed onto a large mossy trunk next to us. After a slow walk of one and a half miles we reached the reserve’s centerpiece, a circle of bustling humminbird feeders, which stole our attention for some time. The common hummingbird there, which was not to be seen again on the tour after this morning, was the
striking **Buff-winged Starfrontlet**, while **Sapphire-vented and Golden-breasted Pufflegs, Great Sapphirewing**, and **Tyrian Metaltail** were also regular visitors. However, these birds were quickly overshadowed every time one of the local **Sword-billed Hummingbirds** dropped in, *(photo page before)*. Sporting the longest bill of any bird *(relative to body size)*, it is a true living cartoon. We were pulled away from the hummingbird show briefly when a pair of **Rufous Antpittas***(photo below)*, hopped into view for all of us to gawk at.

**After a picnic lunch on site, we were back in the van and heading down to the lower altitudes of the Tandayapa Valley, a famed birding area within the **Mindo y Estribaciones Occidentales del Volcan Pichincha Important Bird Area**. (Before we got there we picked up an **Andean Lapwing** in a ploughed field-**photo next page**). This meant we switched from the temperate zone to the subtropics, which comes with a markedly different environment and birdlife. The change in plant life indicated we had arrived in the subtropics when we started to see a profusion of *cecropia* trees. We followed the Rio Alambi, a narrow, though rushing, mountain river at the base of the valley. We had barely reached the valley bottom, when we hit our first flock that held a bright rust **Rufous-chested Tanager** within it. Excitement was heightened a little later when a male **Torrent Duck** was chanced upon, although it soon fled downriver. This road also played host to a pair of co-operative **Slaty-backed Chat-Tyrants**, a riparian flycatcher species. Another major target fell soon after as we worked our way down this forest-fringed road, when we spotted a **White-capped Dipper** bobbing on a rock mid-river. We continued our journey towards Tandayapa, winding our way through this steep-sided valley until we reached a particular spot where we alighted from the vehicle, set up the ‘scope, and waited. All too soon, the ugly squeals of displaying **Andean Cock-of-the-rocks** reached our ears, and soon after the ‘scope was trained on the bright red body of a male cock across the other side of the valley. The views were distant, though the bird is so bright and spectacular it was much appreciated all the same, especially knowing we were to be visiting another, closer lek site later. There was just one more stop to make en-route to
Tandayapa, when we checked some rocks for an unusual shape among them, which proved to be the regular female Lyre-tailed Nightjar which often roosts at this particular road cut, (photo below).

Once we reached Tandayapa, there was precious little time left to bird, though having promised everyone a quick ten lifers at the hummingbird feeders, I still had some work to do. The hummingbird activity was frantic, and we quickly added Purple-throated Woodstar, Brown Inca, Andean and Western Emeralds, Violet-tailed Sylph, Buff-tailed Coronet, Booted Racket-tail, Green and Brown Violet-ears, Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, Fawn-breasted, Green and Empress Brilliants, and Purple-bibbed Whitetip, to the list, thankfully comfortably exceeding the promised total by several species, to finish the day. At night we took in our first of many delicious Andean soups, something that Ecuador, and Tandayapa Bird Lodge, is rightly known for.
11 December: Tandayapa Valley

We started the day with a dawn visit to Tandayapa Bird Lodge’s hide/blind, and then spent time both in the Upper Tandayapa Valley (which boasts some species not found in the lower subtropics around the lodge), with time at the lodge itself. As dawn broke we walked through the forest for ten minutes to reach the blind, where a compost heap and a nightlight serve to attract birds which feed on the organic waste from the lodge and the insects that are attracted to the light during the night.

The first to arrive to pick bugs off the light and the surrounding trees, was a pair of Strong-billed Woodcreeper, which came to within ten feet of us gathered quietly in the blind. This pair was almost constant companions over a half hour or so, when the activity was at its post-dawn peak. Soon after the resident pair of Zeledon’s Antbirds (formerly Immaculate Antbird), arrived and spent some time hopping around foraging below the woodcreepers perched above. Then the bird we had most been hoping for turned up: Scaled Antpitta. We were lucky on this day, as it arrived when dawn was well and truly up and the light was great. Furthermore, it stayed around for some time, giving us superb looks at this difficult bird. A spritely pair of Russet-crowned Warblers turned up too, feasting on the moths that were still left from the night; and finally, a young female Masked Trogon dropped in for a time too, comically picking up one of the biggest moths remaining which barely seemed edible, even for a bird of its size!

After activity quieted down, we headed back to the lodge for breakfast, although a delay was forced on us when a pair of Beautiful Jays showed up. They were far from easy, although after straining our necks this way and that, we finally all got eyes on this scarce Choco endemic. After breakfast at the lodge, and picking up a pair of White-winged Brush-finches at the fruit feeder, we boarded the bus and headed up to the Upper Tandayapa Valley, some 8km/5mi further uphill. Our time in the upper valley was desperately slow at times, perhaps due to the hot dry sunny morning that Andean birds seem to loathe so much, although being in among both an endemic hotspot, and one of the great diversity regions on Earth meant there was still plenty to see. Highlight of the morning was surely the pair of Plate-billed Mountain-Toucans that foraged in a fruiting tree for some time; an endemic, and real looker, with its bill displaying so many colors it appears to be daubed in various shades of make-up! A small passing flock was largely shielded from us although did hold a superb Crimson-mantled Woodpecker, one of the lookers in this group, with deep red upperparts and rich yellow underparts. The same flock also held understorey birds, including the beautiful Plushcap, which foraged within a thick stand of chusquea bamboo. Other additions during our time up there included Turquoise Jay, the endemic, though unspectacular, Dusky Chlorospingus (formerly Bush-Tanager), Cinnamon Flycatcher, and Danielle particularly enjoyed her first Blackburnian Warbler, a wintering species from North America that occurs in good numbers in the valley at this time of year. However, one of the highlights uphill was another hummingbird, the gorgeous Gorgeted Sunangel, another endemic to this Choco region. We also spent further time at Tandayapa Bird Lodge, where highlights included a nesting Crimson-rumped Toucanet peering out of its nest hole; a cracking male Red-headed Barbet feeding on cecropia fruits; and Golden and Golden-naped Tanagers foraging on the same fruits too.
On this day we descended to the lower elevations of the foothill zone at the Mindo Cloudforest Foundation sanctuary of Milpe. I had promised the group a lively day, although things looked fairly bleak on arrival with low cloud and rain causing very limited visibility. Thankfully though, as the morning moved on so did the fog, and we were free to bird again. Milpe’s flagship bird is surely the Club-winged Manakin, a lek of which they have on their land. We spent quite some time watching the males displaying, making strange mechanical beeping noises with the high speed rubbing of their wings together. This was voted for, rather unsurprisingly, as the bird of the day. Another manakin also made an appearance at its display site, a golden-horned male Golden-winged Manakin, which sadly, despite our patient wait refused to actually display in our presence. Much of the birds that day came from slowly walking the easy trails on site within two small neighboring reserves, and chancing upon a passing flock, which happened several times. The flocks held a bewildering array of confusing brown species from the ovenbird family, such as Brown-billed Scythebill, Spotted and Wedge-billed Woodcreepers, and Scaly-throated, Lineated and Buff-fronted Foliage-gleaners, as well as more colorful fare such as Golden-bellied (Choco) Warbler, Collared Trogon, and Broad-billed Motmot. One of the tougher birds seen was outside the flocks, with the ground-dwelling endemic Esmeraldas Antbird, although it was typically furtive and only one person got a decent look. At various points in the day we found ourselves following a pair of spritely Buff-rumped
Warblers along the trail; and we also had long, long looks at a gorgeous male Guayaquil Woodpecker, named after the southwestern Ecuadorian city of the same name.

At lunchtime we took a break (after picking up a Laughing Falcon en-route), and had lunch at the Mirador Rio Blanco, a great restaurant in the nearby Andean town of Los Bancos, which not only came complete with signature dishes like mango and ginger chicken, but also a set of lively fruit feeders, which constantly distracted us from our feed, as Silver-throated and Flame-faced Tanagers, Thick-billed and Orange-bellied Euphonias, and even a greedy Collared (Pale-mandibled) Aracari came in, (photos, page before). We also had some great eye level looks at Swallow-tailed Kites that flew over the Rio Blanco and were clearly visible from the scenic lookout behind the restaurant. It turned out to be a great day for toucans in general with 4 different species seen, including brilliant looks at both Choco and Black-mandibled (Chestnut-mandibled) Toucans. A late afternoon drive along a road lined with forest patches provided further avian highlights with much-desired, perched views of Bronze-winged Parrots, and two much appreciated open country species: Pale-legged (Pacific) Hornero, and a displaying pair of Masked Water-Tyrants, which displayed while loud, heavy dance music emanated from the farmhouse behind!

13 December: Mashpi

Friday the 13th bodes badly for some, but not for us on this day, as we ventured to another foothill site, which has come to prominence in recent years due to the diversity of scarce Choco species there. It may have taken a longish drive (1hr45mins) to get there, but once we picked up one of the local specialties, Moss-backed Tanager, en-route, we were up and running, and we never looked back, as a great morning unfolded. Soon after arrival we heard the high-pitched notes of a calling Indigo Flowerpiercer, another rare species that the site is a stronghold for, and it did not take long before it too was added to our list. We had barely started and we had two major avian targets in the bag; they were quickly followed by one of the avian greats in this region: Toucan Barbet, a pair of which performed for some time and even waited for some low cloud to lift and shows us all its true colors. Surfing through the passing flocks in the area, we managed to pick up many not only endemic birds, but stunning-looking species too, like Glistening-green Tanager, Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager, and the clear bird of the day; several male Orange-breasted Fruiteaters, (photo above). Other flock followers included Brown-billed Scythebill, Buffy (Pacific) Tuftedcheek, and Flame-faced and Ochre-breasted Tanagers. Other notable sightings included a male Wedge-billed Hummingbird for Sam, Jim and Ann, many Violet-tailed Sylphs in the forest, and a soaring pair of...
calling **Barred Hawks** overhead. On the way back to our comfortable “basecamp”, Tandayapa Bird Lodge, we were stopped in our tracks by a tree that was lit up by a flock of fifteen aquamarine **Swallow Tanagers** in its branches.

Once back at Tandayapa, several of us took a walk to the blind again in the late afternoon and were entertained by a pair of **White-throated Quail-Doves**, which displayed and mated on an open, eye-level branch in front of us. Other Tandayapa birds included a dusky male **Uniform Antshrike** hanging out by the hummingbird feeders, and a pair of gaudy **Red-headed Barbets**. We retired to bed early in readiness for the longest day trip, to the [Mindo Cloudforest Foundation](https://mindocof.org) sanctuary of **Rio Silanche**... 

**14 December: Rio Silanche**

For this guide anyway, this is my single favorite day of the tour. You may ask why, but put simply, lots and lots of birds every time, and often a very different set each time. The site was the lowest altitude site visited on the tour, as we pushed on down below the foothill sites we had previously visited into the lower foothills. Visiting Silanche provides a mix of emotions, as it all too evident here that some 98% forest cover has been lost in this **Choco** region, a major international environmental concern, as we passed fields of cattle and plantations of oil palms. However, the remaining forest patches still provide truly awesome days of birding, not only yielding high species numbers (we totaled nearly 130 species for the day), but holding some very local endemic birds too. And it was just such a specialty that kick started our morning. Bumping into another local-based guide on site, Dusan, we quickly began working together to sift through a flock that turned up soon after. Incredibly, one of the first birds of the morning also was one of the scarcest of the day, a superb “Union Jack” red-and-blue male **Scarlet-breasted Dacnis**, which shared a tree with male **Scarlet-thighed and Black-faced (Yellow-tufted) Dacnises** too! A pair of handsome **Cinnamon Woodpeckers** was also pulled out of the flock too, while the rather dowdy endemic **Dusky Pigeon** was also seen there. After this color explosion, we slowly made our way along the 7km/4½mi entrance road to the Silanche reserve. While the road may not be long, it still took us a considerable time getting there, as even the open areas and remaining patches of trees are very birdy places. Soon after taking off we were stopped again, picking up **Olivaceous Piculet** (a tiny, tiny woodpecker) and **Yellow-tailed Oriole** in the process; while another stop produced a rare sighting this far south of **Plain-breasted Ground-Dove** thanks to a tip off from another guide, Dusan, moving along the road ahead of us, (Krista also put us onto a male **Guira Tanager** there too). We kept trying to make headway along the road, only for new birds to stop us in our tracks. Another stake-out stop led us to a super, and popular **Barred Puffbird** “wolf-whistling” from the roadside, where we also inadvertently disturbed a **Common Pauraque** off its nest, located precariously on the road verge. The same stop also led us to another scarce species, the nomadic **Crimson-breasted Finch**, not often found at this site. Once we crossed the Silanche River and entered the Mindo Cloudforest Foundation sanctuary, a vital part of a forest corridor in the region, we spent long periods perched atop their canopy tour waiting for birds to come to us; *and they did*. One minute a pair of **Rufous-winged Tanagers** popped into a near fruiting **cecropia**; another time a family party of four impish **Slate-throated Gnatcatchers** passed by, stopping in the nearest tree to us; a pair of **Gray-and-gold Tanagers** spent some time in our company; **Green...**
Honeycreepers and Collared (Pale-mandibled) Aracaris were frequent visitors to the trees surrounding the tower; another time a female (Western) White-tailed Trogon dropped by and landed within full, fantastic view of us; a Black-mandibled (Chestnut-mandibled) Toucan stopped by and preened at leisure closeby; while on several occasions Hook-billed Kites passed very low overhead. Down at ground level, Guayaquil Woodpecker made its second appearance of the tour; several Purple-chested Hummingbirds visited the red blooms in the parking lot; and a “hissing” White-whiskered Puffbird was added to the list too. The day seemed to pass by in a heartbeat, with seemingly few action less moments, and birds constantly being added to the list; it was a day to remember indeed. We returned to Tandayapa tired but exhilarated, with everyone in the group fully understanding why I had talked up the site so much the day before.

*Next up was the infamous “Antpitta Farm” of Paz de Aves...*

15 December: *Paz de Aves*

On this day we were back in the subtropics, although experiencing markedly different birding from our recent ventures to this elevation. This time we visited a small private reserve, Paz de Aves, close to the birding town of Mindo. The place leapt to birding fame in 2005, when the local farmer, Angel, managed to habituate the rare Giant Antpitta, and he has since expanded the birding possibilities on his property by setting up hummingbird feeders, and managing to tame three more species of antpitta. However, the antpittas were not our first target on site. Although we had to leave very early (4:45am) from Tandayapa, to ensure an essential dawn arrival, no one was complaining when we reached a forest blind and watched on as at least five male Andean Cock-of-the-rocks displayed at close range, creating a din in terms of noise, but an undeniable spectacle in terms of color. This was instantly into contention for a lofty position on the top ten birds of the trip list from that moment on. The birds performed at length, and close. The same area also yielded the only Sickle-winged Guan of the tour, and a sleeping Rufous-bellied Nighthawk hiding in a tree. Once the raucous cock-of-the-rock show had quieted down, with the forest now bathed in sunshine at full light, we took a short drive to a narrow Andean stream. Positioning ourselves on one side, we were soon eyeballing a pair of expectant Yellow-breasted Antpittas that appeared before the farmer-turned guide had even had a chance to lay down the specially excavated worms for them. The antpittas hopped on to the open riverside rocks, grabbed the
worms at haste, and then slipped back into the forest once more. Then, we paused to admire a male Lyre-tailed Nightjar, a cryptic species with a long train-like tail, which was roosting in the open on that day, (a pair had been seen in the spotlight on arrival, although good clear, daytime scope views of the male overshadowed that earlier sighting). Another short drive followed to another part of the Paz family property, where we paused at the trailhead to admire the myriad of colorful hummingbirds visiting his small set of feeders, which included a newbie in the form of the glittering Velvet-purple Coronet and Empress Brilliant, (photo page before), two of the most spectacular hummingbirds in the region. Then we descended the steep forest trail, being thankful for some well thought out ropes and steps making the descent relatively easy. Here we were targeting yet more antpittas, with three further species possible. On this day though the Giant was absent, but we were more than compensated for with three separate Moustached Antpittas and a pair of hip-wigging Ochre-breasted Antpittas, (photo right). Some fruiting trees also held a pair of Toucan Barbets, Crimson-rumped Toucanet, and the scarce Pale-eyed Thrush, while we waited on the antpittas to perform. After having a traditional brunch of fresh bolones and empanadas at the Paz family’s café on site, we hit the road again, back to Tandayapa Bird Lodge to pack up and get one final hummingbird hit. En-route we stopped along the Old Nono-Mindo Road for a cute Rufous-crowned Tody-Flycatcher, and were relieved to add the special Grass-green Tanager before lunch stopped play. After further time with Red-headed Barbet, Black-capped Tanager and the usual hummingbird horde, it was time to return to Ecuador’s capital, where we enjoyed a farewell dinner and a lively discussion over the top ten birds of the trip...

I guess you can measure the allure and success of this trip by the fact that Ann was already planning to come back early next year, this time keen to share Ecuador’s amazing avian treasures with her husband who unfortunately could not make this tour. Danielle, from Belgium, was left in little doubt that Ecuador, being on the “bird continent” of South America, is certainly gifted with some of the most colorful birds on the planet. For an artist like Krista I am sure she had seen enough to inspire a future painting or two, while Jim as a geologist and birder, got a kick out of not only the birds but the dramatic volcanic landscapes too, particularly on the High Andes Extension. I hope to see you all on the road again soon, whether it be in High Island (TX) or Magee Marsh (OH) during the whirlwind spring migration in North America, or somewhere more tropical!
TOP TEN BIRDS OF THE MAIN TOUR:

1. ANDEAN COCK-OF-THE-COCK  Paz de Aves
2. BOOTED RACKET-TAIL  Tandayapa Bird Lodge
3. CLUB-WINGED MANAKIN  Milpe
3. VIOLET-TAILED SYLPH  Tandayapa Bird Lodge
5. BARRED PUFFBIRD  Rio Silanche
6. WHITE-THROATED QUAIL-DOVE  Tandayapa Bird Lodge (mating)
6. MOUSTACHED ANTPITTA  Paz de Aves
8. LYRE-TAILED NIGHTJAR  Paz de Aves (male roosting)
8. SQUIRREL CUCKOO  Mirador Rio Blanco (near Milpe)
10. OCHRE-BREASTED ANTPITTA  Paz de Aves

High Andes Extension

16 – 18 December 2013

We had enjoyed the luxury of a small group on the main tour (just 4 people), but this lessened for the extension to just two, as Ann and Danielle had to head back home for Christmas and work commitments. Jim and Kris stayed on for the extra two-days birding provided on the extension, and we added over 50 new species in the process. The first day involved a visit to the dry, flatter high paramo grasslands inside...
Antisana National Park, before we moved to Guango Lodge, a known hummingbird Mecca on the east side of the Andes, for the night. The next day we split our time between the areas around Papallacta and at our temporary base, Guango Lodge. We enjoyed some superb highlights, many of which could be argued were some of the sightings of the entire tour; from perched Andean Condors, a striking male Ecuadorian Hillstar, lots of Carunculated Caracaras, and a troop of Black-faced Ibis at Antisana; to Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe and Giant Conebill at Papallacta; to Sword-billed Hummingbird, Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan, and an entertaining family of Torrent Ducks at Guango.

16 December: Antisana to Guango Lodge

On this day we left our now familiar hotel in Quito’s tourist district of Mariscal, but on this occasion we headed east, rather than west, as we had done before. As we passed through the town of Pintag, near the base of the Antisana park, a flash of yellow streaked in front of the van, and we quickly pulled over. Soon after we were enjoying great views of a calling male Golden-bellied (Southern Yellow) Grosbeak by the busy roadside, while the morning’s school buses passed us by, (photo below). Another avian distraction was provided by our first hummingbird with the extremely long tail was rightly popular with Jim and Kris, so spectacular it is. As we moved inside the national park we were flanked to the left by large rugged cliffs, often the home for nesting/roosting Andean Condors, Ecuador's endangered national bird, which has its stronghold in this park. However, first we made a stop by some roadside hummingbird feeders that attracted the grandest of them all, the gigantic Giant Hummingbird. While watching this hummingbird buzzing around, and a single Black-billed Shrike-Tyrant foraging on the ground, we noticed some huge black-and-white shapes on the rocks, and so worked our way down the road to where a mirador/lookout allowed us fantastic views of a pair of Andean Condors preening (photo page 18), and resting on the cliffs. Then, suddenly, they took to the air with barely a flap, which upset one of the local Black-chested Buzzard-Eagles, which we had not yet seen until it launched a dramatic aerial attack on one of the condors, although this bird was dwarfed and seriously out of its league against the giants of the Andean skies. Other stops along the road, yielded more key species, and included another new hummingbird, the burnt orange Shining Sunbeam, and several brief female Ecuadorian Hillstars that merely left us wanting more. As we ascended the
road we added **Stout-billed Cinclodes, Plumbeous Sierra-Finch, Plain-capped (Paramo) Ground-Tyrant**, and **Paramo Pipit**.

Once we reached the high plateau, we enjoyed the dramatic view of the rugged **Volcan Antisana** bursting its way through the cloud, which was attempting to block the 5704m/18,714ft-high peak. Down on the ground, the regular “carpet” of one hundred or so **Carunculated Caracaras**, *(photo page 3)*, were seen patrolling the *paramo* grasslands for prey. As usual, this raptor provided many photo opps as they foraged close to the road, as did the flocks of **Andean Gulls** feeding at ground level there too, *(photo right)*. A little more intense scanning was needed though to find the grass-colored **Black-faced Ibis**, a group of seven of which were eventually found *(photo, page 13)*. Then we proceeded on to **Laguna de Mica**, a highland lake (3900m/12,800ft) that held a number of new waterbirds for us. The weather at this point, as it so often can do in the High Andes, turned for the worse with light rain and strong winds making scope work challenging. So we sheltered in the lee of the van, and quickly worked our way through the ducks out on the lake, which included **(Andean) Ruddy Duck, Andean Teal**, and some very distant **Yellow-billed Pintail**, along with some striking **Silvery Grebes**. On the lakeshore a **Chestnut-winged (Bar-winged) Cinclodes** was typically tame as it hopped around within just a few feet of us. This was our furthest point in the park, and so we ate our packed lunch in the comfort of the van, out of the chilling wind outside, and soon after headed back out of the park in the direction of Guango Lodge. Still smarting from only getting brief, unsatisfactory, looks of dull female **Ecuadorian Hillstars**, we decided to park up by a large patch of orange chuquiragua flowers on our way out, to see if we could locate a male. After a female came in with its head daubed with orange pollen from a recent feeding bout, Jim noticed a gleaming white breast atop one of the plants; finally, a purple-hooded male!

We then pointed our vehicle east and headed up first to the high pass at **Papallacta**, where we were greeted with good weather, and so opted to spend a little time birding there first before descending over the the side of the pass to Guango. We parked up alongside a narrow strip of *polylepis* woodland just down from the pass, where the very first bird in the area was the scarce **Giant Conebill** picked up within...
minutes perched high in these distinctive high Andean trees. The same location also held a close-perched **Viridian Metaltail**, (photo below), which posed for photos extremely close to us. The same road also yielded a pair of confiding **Many-striped Canasteros**, a **White-chinned Thistletail**, and another hummingbird confined to the high elevations, **Blue-mantled Thornbill**. Our final stop of the afternoon was where we were to stay, the tiny Andean lodge of Guango, set beside a rushing mountain river and dotted with hummingbird feeders. The feeders provided some of our final birds of the day: we were greeted by a **Chestnut-breasted Coronet** as we arrived, and added **Tourmaline Sunangel**, **Mountain Velvetbreast**, and the spectacular **Long-tailed Sylph** at their feeders later. Hearing news of a family of **Torrent Ducks** along the river closeby, Jim and I could not resist wandering down there, where we found the pied male, orange-and-blue female, and two fluffy chicks present on arrival at the spot, which provided rich entertainment and were unsurprisingly picked as one of the highlights of the extension, (photo next page). For Jim and I, the day closed with a fortuitous encounter with a tame **Chestnut-crowned Antpitta**, which was hopping along the trail ahead of us for a while as we walked back to the lodge. It had been a marvelous day, with most birds co-operating superbly, and many key birds seen, and it was only day one of the extension.
17 December: Papallacta and Guango Lodge to Quito

Our original plan on this day had been to dash straight up to the pass at Papallacta, in order to attempt to see the seedsnipe there (one of the highest elevation birds in Ecuador), before the morning clouds rolled in and scuppered our chances of finding one in the reduced visibility. However, hearing there was a reliable Chestnut-crowned Antpitta coming to feed on worms right by the lodge in the mornings, and with Kris having not been on the walk where we had seen it the day before, we stayed at the lodge for this. Unfortunately, the bird did not show up, and we left nervously, wondering whether this schedule change would have a knock-on effect for the seedsnipe. However, just after we turned on to the highway to head up to the pass, we were shocked to see a Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan fly low across the road in front of the van and perch in some roadside trees. We quickly hurried out and enjoyed views of this scarcity, and figured this was ample compensation for the antpitta no-show! When we reached Papallacta Pass, a glance up at the antennas a few hundred meters higher, (where the seedsnipe occurs), revealed low cloud blocking much of the area, and so we took our time climbing the road, and birded on the way up, hoping for a miraculous clear spell to emerge. We used this time well, braving the chilly, windy conditions, which led to our first Andean Tit-Spinetail, and several bold Tawny Antpittas feeding on the open paramo. With little left to look for, we decided to continue up the road in spite of the frankly horrible weather. This seemed a little futile, as visibility was restricted to only ten meters or so. However, our belligerence paid off when we spotted a couple of Rufous-bellied Seedsnipes scurrying off the road as we arrived, which lingered on the roadside to give us great looks from the warmth of the car. All our main targets in the bag, we chose to leave the higher areas of the pass, where the weather was predictably at its worst, and head down to the village of Papallacta, and bird a road near there, which seemed to be within a pocket of better weather. This proved successful when we hit several small flocks
which held a handful of new species like **Tufted and Agile Tit-Tyrants; Superciliaried Hemispingus** (voted as the most ridiculous bird name of the tour); a party of tame **Blue-backed Conebills**, a pair of **Buff-breasted Mountain-Tanagers**, a pair of super-confiding **Pearled Treeunners** (photo page 36); as well as further **Viridian Metaltails** and **Shining Sunbeams**, and a low-flying juvenile **Andean Condor**. The final birding session of the tour was spent around **Guango**, where we joyed at a visit to the feeders by a **Sword-billed Hummingbird** (unusually scarce on this visit); took in several “tuxedo” wearing male **Collared Incas**; and got late additions like **Gray-hooded Bush-Tanager** and **Rufous-breasted Chat-Tyrant**. It had been a great couple of days in the east that combined well with our time in the west, where we had seen both spectacular high Andean birds like **condors, ibis, hillstars, and seedsnipe**; and a treasure trove of endemics in the west such as **Toucan Barbet, Beautiful Jay, Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan** (one of SIX toucans seen), **Black-chinned Mountain-Tanagers, Glistening-green Tanager, Orange-breasted Fruiteater, Violet-tailed Sylph, Velvet-purple Coronet, Scarlet-breasted Dacnis**, as well as daytime **Lyre-tailed Nightjars**, displaying **Club-winged Manakins**, 6 antpittas, and, the magnificent **Andean Cock-of-the-rock**

**TOP FIVE BIRDS OF THE HIGH ANDES EXTENSION:**

1. **RUFIOUS-BELLIED SEEDSNIPE** Papallacta
2. **TORRENT DUCK** Guango Lodge
3. **PEARLED TREERUNNER** Papallacta
4. **ANDEAN CONDOR** Antisana
5. **ECUADORIAN HILLSTAR** Antisana
5. **CARUNCULATED CARACARA** Antisana
BIRD LIST:

The taxonomy of the bird list follows: Clements, James F., White, Anthony W., and Fitzpatrick, John W. The Clements Checklist of Birds of the World. Cornell, 2007. This list is up to date with the major changes published by Cornell up until 2013.

Choco Endemics are indicated in RED and with END.

EXT indicates the species was only recorded on the High Andes Extension.

H indicates a species that was HEARD only.

GO indicates a species recorded by the GUIDE ONLY.

The SITES each species were recorded at are denoted at the right hand side, with the sites abbreviated as follows:

Ant - Antisana
Guang - Guango Lodge
Man - Many sites
Mash - Mashpi
Mil - Milpe
Mrb - Mirador Rio Blanco
Onm - Old Nono-Mindo Road
Pap - Papallacta area
Paz - Paz de Aves
Quito - Quito
Rs - Rio Silanche
TBL - Tandayapa Bird Lodge
UTV - Upper Tandayapa Valley
Yan - Yanacocha

Tinamous: Tinamidae

H Tawny-breasted Tinamou Nothocercus Julius YAN
H Little Tinamou Crypturellus soui RS

Ducks, Geese, and Swans: Anatidae

Torrent Duck Merganetta armata ONM, GUAN
EXT Yellow-billed Pintail Anas georgica ANT
EXT Andean Teal Anas flavirostris andium ANT
EXT (Andean) Ruddy Duck  Oxyura jamaicensis andina  ANT

GUANS, CHACHALACAS, CURRASOWS: CRACIDAE
Sickle-winged Guan  Chamaepetes goudotii  PAZ

GREBES: PODICIPIDAE
EXT Silvery Grebe  Podiceps occipitalis  ANT

CORMORANTS AND SHAGS: PHALACROCORACIDAE
Neotropic Cormorant  Phalacrocorax brasilianus  MRB

HERONS, EGrets, AND BITTerns: ARDEIDAE
Snowy Egret  Egretta thula  MRB
Cattle Egret  Bubulcus ibis  MIL, RS

IBIS AND SPOONBILLS: THRESKIORNITHIDAE
EXT Black-faced Ibis  Theristicus melanopis  ANT

NEW WORLD VULTURES: CATHARTIDAE
Black Vulture  Coragyps atratus  MANY
Turkey Vulture  Cathartes aura  MANY
EXT Andean Condor  Vultur gryphus  ANT, PAP

HAWKS, EAGLES, AND KITES: ACCIPITRIDAE
Hook-billed Kite  Chondrohierax uncinasus  RS
Swallow-tailed Kite  Elanoides forficatus  MRB, MASH
Sharp-shinned (Plain-breasted) Hawk  Accipiter striatus ventralis  RS
Barred Hawk  Morphnarchus princeps  MASH
Roadside Hawk  Rupornis magnirostris  UTV, MIL, RS
EXT Variable Hawk  Geranaeetus polysoma  ANT
EXT Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle  Geranaeetus melanoleucus  ANT
Broad-winged Hawk  Buteo platypterus  UTV, MIL
RAILS, GALLINULES, AND COOTS: RALLIDAE

H White-throated Crake Laterallus albigularis MIL
EXT Slate-colored (Andean) Coot Fulica ardesiaca ANT

PLOVERS AND LAPWINGS: CHARADRIIDAE

Andean Lapwing Vanellus resplendens YAN

SANDPIPERS: SCOLOPACIDAE

EXT Spotted Sandpiper Calidris macularis GUAN

SEEDSNIPES: THINOCORIDAE

EXT Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe Attagis gayi PAP

GULLS, Terns, AND SKIMMERS: LARIDAE

EXT Andean Gull Chroicocephalus serranus ANT, PAP

PIGEONS AND DOVES: COLUMBIDAE

Rock Pigeon Columba livia MANY
Band-tailed Pigeon Patagioenas fasciata ONM
Plumbeous Pigeon Patagioenas plumbea UTV, PAZ
Ruddy Pigeon Patagioenas subvinacea MIL, RS

END Dusky Pigeon Patagioenas goodsoni RS
Eared Dove Zenaida auriculata QUITO
EXT Black-winged Ground-Dove Metriopelia melanoptera ANT
White-tipped Dove Leptotila verreauxi TBL, UTV

END (H) Pallid Dove Leptotila pallida MIL, RS
White-throated Quail-Dove Geotrygon frenata TBL

CUCKOOS: CUCULIDAE

Squirrel Cuckoo Playa coyana MRB, RS
Smooth-billed Ani Crotophaga ani MIL, RS
### NIGHTJARS: CAPRIMULGIDAE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Location(s)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rufous-bellied Nighthawk</td>
<td>Lurocalis rufiventris</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lyre-tailed Nightjar</td>
<td>Uropsalis lyra</td>
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### POTOOS: NYCTIBIIDAE

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Common Potoo</td>
<td>Nyctibius griseus</td>
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### SWIFTS: APODIDAE

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<tr>
<td>Chestnut-collared Swift</td>
<td>Streptoprocne rutila</td>
<td>TBL</td>
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<tr>
<td>White-collared Swift</td>
<td>Streptoprocne zonaris</td>
<td>MRB, TBL, RS, PAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gray-rumped Swift</td>
<td>Chaetura cinereiventris</td>
<td>MIL, RS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift</td>
<td>Panyptila cayennensis</td>
<td>RS</td>
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### HUMMINGBIRDS: TROCHILIDAE

#### END

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<th>Species</th>
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<td>White-whiskered Hermit</td>
<td>Phaethornis yaruqui</td>
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<td>White-tipped Sicklebill</td>
<td>Eutoxeres aquila</td>
<td>RS</td>
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<tr>
<td>White-necked Jacobin</td>
<td>Florisuga mellivora</td>
<td>TBL, MIL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brown Violetear</td>
<td>Colibri delphinae</td>
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<tr>
<td>Green Violetear</td>
<td>Colibri thalassinus</td>
<td>TBL, PAZ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sparkling Violetear</td>
<td>Colibri coruscans</td>
<td>TBL, ANT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Green Thorntail</td>
<td>Discosura conversii</td>
<td>MIL, MRB</td>
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<tr>
<td>Western Emerald</td>
<td>Chlorostilbon melanorhynchus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crowned (Green-crowned) Woodnymph</td>
<td>Thalurania colombica</td>
<td>MIL, RS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andean Emerald</td>
<td>Amazilia franciae</td>
<td>TBL, MIL, PAZ</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purple-chested Hummingbird</td>
<td>Amazilia rosenbergi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rufous-tailed Hummingbird</td>
<td>Amazilia tzacatl</td>
<td>TBL, MIL, RS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speckled Hummingbird</td>
<td>Adelomyia melanogenys</td>
<td>ONM, PAZ, GUAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fawn-breasted Brilliant</td>
<td>Heliodoxa rubinoides</td>
<td>TBL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Green-crowned Brilliant</td>
<td>Heliodoxa jacula</td>
<td>TBL, MIL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Species Name</td>
<td>Species Code</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>End</td>
<td>Empress Brilliant</td>
<td>Heliodoxa imperatrix</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Buff-tailed Coronet</td>
<td>Boissonneaua flavescens</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chestnut-breasted Coronet</td>
<td>Boissonneaua matthewsii</td>
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<td>End</td>
<td>Velvet-purple Coronet</td>
<td>Boissonneaua jardini</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ext</td>
<td>Shining Sunbeam</td>
<td>Aglaeactis cupripennis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ext</td>
<td>Ecuadorian Hillstar</td>
<td>Oreotrochilus chimbora</td>
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<td>Ext</td>
<td>Mountain Velvetbreast</td>
<td>Lafresnoya lafresnayi</td>
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<td>End</td>
<td>Brown Inca</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Collared Inca</td>
<td>Coeligena torquata</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Buff-winged Starfrontlet</td>
<td>Coeligena lutetiae</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sword-billed Hummingbird</td>
<td>Ensifera ensifera</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Great Sapphirewing</td>
<td>Pterophanes cyanopterus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ext</td>
<td>Giant Hummingbird</td>
<td>Patagona gigas</td>
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<tr>
<td>End</td>
<td>Gorgeted Sunangel</td>
<td>Heliangelus strophianus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ext</td>
<td>Tourmaline Sunangel</td>
<td>Heliangelus exortis</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sapphire-vented Puffleg</td>
<td>Eriocnemis luciani</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Golden-breasted Puffleg</td>
<td>Eriocnemis mosquera</td>
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<td>End</td>
<td>Purple-bibbed Whitetip</td>
<td>Urosticte benjami</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Booted Racket-tail</td>
<td>Ocraetus underwoodii</td>
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<td>Ext</td>
<td>Black-tailed Trainbearer</td>
<td>Lesbia victoriae</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ext</td>
<td>Purple-backed Thornbill</td>
<td>Ramphomicron microrhynchum</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tyrian Metaltail</td>
<td>Metallura tyrianthina</td>
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<td>Ext</td>
<td>Viridian Metaltail</td>
<td>Metallura williami</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ext</td>
<td>Blue-mantled Thornbill</td>
<td>Chalcostigma stanleyi</td>
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<td>Ext</td>
<td>Long-tailed Sylph</td>
<td>Aglaiocercus kingi</td>
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<td><strong>Violet-tailed Sylph</strong></td>
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<td>Aglaiocercus coelestis</td>
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*www.tropicalbirding.com*  +1-409-515-0514  info@tropicalbirding.com
<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>Wedge-billed Hummingbird</td>
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<td>Purple-throated Woodstar</td>
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<tr>
<td>EXT White-bellied Woodstar</td>
<td>Chaetocercus mulsant</td>
<td>GUAN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Little Woodstar</td>
<td>Chaetocercus bombus</td>
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**TROGONS: TROGONIDAE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>H</th>
<th>Golden-headed Quetzal</th>
<th>Pharomachrus auriceps</th>
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<tr>
<td>GO</td>
<td>Blue-tailed (Choco) Trogon</td>
<td>Trogon comptus</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Western) White-tailed Trogon</td>
<td>Trogon chionurus</td>
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<td>Collared Trogon</td>
<td>Trogon collaris</td>
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<tr>
<td>Masked Trogon</td>
<td>Trogon personatus</td>
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**MOTMOTS: MOMOTIDAE**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rufous Motmot</th>
<th>Baryphthengus martii</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broad-billed Motmot</td>
<td>Electron platyrhynchum</td>
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**KINGFISHERS: ALCEDINIDAE**

| Ringed Kingfisher                          | Megaceryle torquatus | ONM      |

**PUFFBIRDS: BUCCONIDAE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barred Puffbird</th>
<th>Nystalus radiatus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White-whiskered Puffbird</td>
<td>Malacoptila panamensis</td>
<td>RS</td>
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**NEW WORLD BARBETS: CAPITONIDAE**

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<tr>
<th>END/H</th>
<th>Orange-fronted Barbet</th>
<th>Capito squamatus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Red-headed Barbet</td>
<td>Eubucco bourcierii</td>
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**TOUCAN-BARBETS: SEMNORNITHIDAE**

| END   | Toucan Barbet                        | Semnornis ramphastinus | MASH, PAZ |

**TOUCANS: RAMPHASTIDAE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crimson-rumped Toucanet</th>
<th>Aulacorhynchus haematopygus</th>
<th>TBL, MIL, PAZ</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXT Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan</td>
<td>Andigena hypoglauca</td>
<td>GUAN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan**
*Andigena laminirostris*  
*UTV*

**Collared (Pale-mandibled) Aracari**
*Pteroglossus torquatus erythropygius*  
*MIL, MRB, RS*

**Black-mandibled (Chestnut-mand.) Toucan**
*Ramphastos swainsonii*  
*MIL, RS*

**Chocó Toucan**
*Ramphastos brevis*  
*MIL, RS*

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**WOODPECKERS: PICIDAE**

- **Olivaceous Piculet**  
  *Picumnus olivaceus*  
  *RS*

- **Black-cheeked Woodpecker**  
  *Melanerpes pucherani*  
  *RS*

- **Red-rumped Woodpecker**  
  *Veniliornis kirkii*  
  *RS*

- **Golden-olive Woodpecker**  
  *Colaptes rubiginosus*  
  *MASH, RS*

- **Crimson-mantled Woodpecker**  
  *Colaptes rivolii*  
  *UTV*

- **Cinnamon Woodpecker**  
  *Celeus loricatus*  
  *RS*

- **Lineated Woodpecker**  
  *Dryocopus lineatus*  
  *RS*

- **Powerful Woodpecker**  
  *Campephilus pollens*  
  *YAN*

- **Guayaquil Woodpecker**
  *Campephilus gayaquilensis*  
  *MIL, RS*

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**FALCONS AND CARACARAS: FALCONIDAE**

- **Carunculated Caracara**
  *Phalcoboenus carunculatus*  
  *ANT*

- **Laughing Falcon**
  *Herpetotheres cachinnans*  
  *MIL*

- **American Kestrel**
  *Falco sparverius*  
  *QUITO, ANT*

---

**PARROTS: PSITTACIDAE**

- **Maroon-tailed Parakeet**
  *Pyrrhura melanura pacifica*  
  *RS*

- **Pacific Parrotlet**
  *Forpus coelestis*  
  *RS*

**Rose-faced Parrot**
*Pyrilia pulchra*  
*MASH*

- **Blue-headed Parrot**
  *Pionus menstruus*  
  *RS*

- **Red-billed Parrot**
  *Pionus sordidus*  
  *UTV*

- **Speckle-faced (White-capped) Parrot**
  *Pionus tumultuosus seniloides*  
  *YAN*

- **Bronze-winged Parrot**
  *Pionus chalcopterus*  
  *MIL, RS*
H Scaly-naped Parrot (Amazon)  

**TYPICAL ANTBIRDS: THAMNOPHILIDAE**

H Great Antshrike  
Black-crowned (Western Slaty-) Antshrike  
Uniform Antshrike  
H Checker-throated Antwren  
H Moustached (Griscom’s) Antwren  
Pacific Antwren  
Slaty Antwren  
Dot-winged Antwren  
H Chestnut-backed Antbird  

**END** Esmeraldas Antbird  
Zeledon’s (Immaculate) Antbird  

**ANTPITTAS: GRALLARIIDAE**

H Undulated Antpitta  
H Chestnut-naped Antpitta  

**END** Moustached Antpitta  
Scaled Antpitta  
H Chestnut-crowned Antpitta  

**EXT** Chestnut-crowned Antpitta  
H Chestnut-naped Antpitta  

**END** Yellow-breasted Antpitta  
Rufous Antpitta  
EXT Tawny Antpitta  
Ochre-breasted Antpitta  

**TAPACULOS: RHINOCRYPTIDAE**

H Blackish (Unicolored) Tapaculo  

**END/H** Nariño Tapaculo  

**Tropical Birding Trip Report**

**Ecuador: The Andes Introtour December 2013**
Tropical Birding Trip Report

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- **H** Spillmann’s Tapaculo *Scytalopus spillmanni* UTV
- **EXT/H** Paramo Tapaculo *Scytalopus opacus* PAP
- **H** Ocellated Tapaculo *Acropternis orthonyx* YAN, UTV

**ANTTHRUSHES: FORMICARIIDAE**

- **H** Black-headed Antthrush *Formicarius nigricapillus* RS
- **H** Rufous-breasted Antthrush *Formicarius rufpectus* TBL, PAZ

**OVENBIRDS AND WOODCREEPERS: FURNARIIDAE**

Plain-brown Woodcreeper *Dendrocincla fuliginosa* RS
Wedge-billed Woodcreeper *Glyphorynchus spirurus* MIL, MASH
Strong-billed Woodcreeper *Xiphocolaptes promeropirhynchus* TBL, MIL
Black-striped Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus lachrymosus* RS
Spotted Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus erythropygius* MIL, RS
Brown-billed Scythebill *Campylorhamphus pusillus* MIL, MASH
- **H** Red-billed Scythebill *Campylorhamphus trochilirostris* RS
Montane Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes lacrymiger* TBL, UTV
Plain Xenops *Xenops minutus* RS

**END** **Buffy (Pacific) Tuftedcheek** *Pseudocolaptes lawrencii johnsoni* MASH
Streaked Tuftedcheek *Pseudocolaptes boissonneautii* YAN, UTV
Rusty-winged Barbtail *Premnornis guttuligera* UTV
Pale-legged (Pacific) Hornero *Furnarius leucopus cinnamomeus*

**EXT** Stout-billed Cinclodes *Cinclodes excelsior* ANT
**EXT** Chestnut-winged (Bar-winged) Cinclodes *Cinclodes albidiventris* ANT, PAP
Buff-fronted Foliage-gleaner *Philydor rufum* MIL
Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaner *Anabacerthia variegaticeps* MIL
Lineated Foliage-gleaner *Syndactyla subalaris* MIL, MASH, PAZ
- **H** Striped (Western) Woodhaunter *Hylactistes subulatus assimilis* RS
Striped Treehunter  
Thripadectes holostictus  
UTV

Streak-capped Treehunter  
Thripadectes virgaticeps  
TBL

Spotted Barbtail  
Premnoplex brunnescens  
TBL

Pearled Treerunner  
Margarornis squamiger  
UTV, PAP

Andean Tit-Spinetail  
Leptasthenura andicola  
PAP

White-chinned Thistletail  
Asthenes fuliginosa  
PAP

Many-striped Canastero  
Asthenes flammulata  
PAP

Streak-backed Canastero  
Asthenes wyatti  
ANT

Red-faced Spinetail  
Cranioleuca erythrops  
MASH

Azara’s Spinetail  
Synallaxis azarae  
YAN, UTV

Rufous Spinetail  
Synallaxis unirufa  
UTV

Slaty Spinetail  
Synallaxis brachyura  
PAZ

**TYRANT FLYCATCHERS: TYRANNIDAE**

Brown-capped Tyrannulet  
Ornithion brunneicapillus  
RS

White-tailed Tyrannulet  
Mecocerculus poecilocercus  
ONM, UTV

White-banded Tyrannulet  
Mecocerculus stictopterus  
YAN, GUAN

White-throated Tyrannulet  
Mecocerculus leucophrys  
YAN, PAP

Rufous-winged Tyrannulet  
Mecocerculus calopterus  
MIL

Tufted Tit-Tyrant  
Anairetes parulus  
PAP

Agile Tit-Tyrant  
Anairetes agilis  
PAP

Gray Elaenia  
Myiopagis caniceps  
RS

Greenish Elaenia  
Myiopagis viridicata  
RS

Yellow-bellied Elaenia  
Elaenia flavogaster  
MIL

Sierran Elaenia  
Elaenia pallatangae  
UTV

Streak-necked Flycatcher  
Mionectes striaticollis  
TBL, PAZ

Slaty-capped Flycatcher  
Leptopogon superciliaris  
MIL
Marble-faced Bristle-Tyrant  
Sooty-headed Tyrannulet  
**EXT/GO** Black-capped Tyrannulet  
Ashy-headed Tyrannulet  
**END** **Chocó (Golden-faced) Tyrannulet**  
Ornate Flycatcher  
Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant  
Rufous-crowned Tody-Flycatcher  
Common Tody-Flycatcher  
Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher  
Yellow-margined Flycatcher (Flatbill)  
Cinnamon Flycatcher  
Tawny-breasted Flycatcher  
Smoke-colored Pewee  
Western Wood-Pewee  
Acadian Flycatcher  
Black Phoebe  
**EXT** Plain-capped (Páramo) Ground-Tyrant  
**EXT** Black-billed Shrike-Tyrant  
Streak-throated Bush-Tyrant  
Smoky Bush-Tyrant  
Masked Water-Tyrant  
**H** Crowned Chat-Tyrant  
Slaty-backed Chat-Tyrant  
**EXT** Rufous-breasted Chat-Tyrant  
Brown-backed Chat-Tyrant  

*Pogonotriccus ophthalmicus*  
*Phyllomyias griseiceps*  
*Phyllomyias nigrocapillus*  
*Phyllomyias cinereiceps*  
*Zimmerius (chrysops) albigularis*  
*Myiobius villosus*  
*Lophotriccus pileatus*  
*Poecilotriccus ruficeps*  
*Todirostrum cinereum*  
*Todirostrum nigriceps*  
*Tolmomyias assimilis flavotectus*  
*Pyrrhomyias cinnamomeus*  
*Myiobius villosus*  
*Contopus fumigatus*  
*Contopus sordidulus*  
*Empidonax virescens*  
*Sayornis nigricans*  
*Muscisaxicola alpinus*  
*Agriornis montanus*  
*Myiotheretes striaticollis*  
*Myiotheretes fumigatus*  
*Fluvicola nengeta*  
*Ochthoeca frontalis*  
*Ochthoeca cinnamomeiventris*  
*Ochthoeca rufipectoralis*  
*Ochthoeca fumicolor*
Bright-rumped Attila  
Attila spadiceus  
RS

Dusky-capped Flycatcher  
Myiarchus tuberculifer  
MIL, RS

Rusty-margined Flycatcher  
Myiozetetes cayanensis  
RS

Social Flycatcher  
Myiozetetes similis  
RS

Golden-crowned Flycatcher  
Myiodynastes chrysocephalus  
TBL, PAZ

Streaked Flycatcher  
Myiodynastes maculatus  
MIL

Snowy-throated Kingbird  
Tyrannus niveigularis  
MIL

Tropical Kingbird  
Tyrannus melancholicus  
ONM, MIL, RS

**COTINGAS: COTINGIDAE**

H  Green-and-black Fruiteater  
Pipreola riefferii  
UTV

H  Barred Fruiteater  
Pipreola arcuata  
YAN

**END Orange-breasted Fruiteater**  
Pipreola jucunda  
MASH

H  Scaled Fruiteater  
Ampelioioides tschudii  
PAZ

Red-crested Cotinga  
Ampelion rubrocristatus  
YAN, PAP

Andean Cock-of-the-rock  
Rupicola peruviana  
ONM, TBL, PAZ

**MANAKINS: PIPRIDAE**

Golden-winged Manakin  
Masius chrysopterus  
MIL

**END Club-winged Manakin**  
Machaeropetrum deliciosus  
MIL

White-bearded Manakin  
Manacus manacus  
RS

**TITYRAS AND ALLIES: TITYRIDAE**

GO  Masked Tityra  
Tityra semifasciata  
RS

Northern (Thrush-like) Schiffniss  
Schiffornis rosenbergi  
RS

Barred Becard  
Pachyramphus versicolor  
UTV

Cinnamon Becard  
Pachyramphus cinnamomeus  
MIL, RS

White-winged Becard (northwest)  
Pachyramphus polychopterus dorsalis  
MASH

One-colored Becard  
Pachyramphus homochrous  
MIL, RS
**VIREOS: VIREONIDAE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Location(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brown-capped Vireo</td>
<td><em>Vireo leucophrys</em></td>
<td>TBL, UTV, MASH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red-eyed Vireo</td>
<td><em>Vireo olivaceus</em></td>
<td>MIL, RS, PAZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesser Greenlet</td>
<td><em>Hylophilus decurtatus</em></td>
<td>RS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slaty-capped Shrike-Vireo</td>
<td><em>Vireolanus leucotis</em></td>
<td>MIL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CROWS, JAYS AND MAGPIES: CORVIDAE**

- **Turquoise Jay**
  - *Cyanolyca turcosa*
  - Location: UTV

**END**

- **Beautiful Jay**
  - *Cyanolyca pulchra*
  - Location: TBL

**SWALLOWS: HIRUNDINIDAE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Location(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blue-and-white Swallow</td>
<td><em>Pygochelidon cyanoleuca</em></td>
<td>MANY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown-bellied Swallow</td>
<td><em>Orochelidon murina</em></td>
<td>YAN, QUITO, ANT, PAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White-thighed Swallow</td>
<td><em>Atticora tibialis</em></td>
<td>RS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Rough-winged Swallow</td>
<td><em>Stelgidopteryx ruficollis</em></td>
<td>MIL, RS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gray-breasted Martin</td>
<td><em>Progne chalybea</em></td>
<td>RS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WRENS: TROGLODYTIDAE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Location(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scaly-breasted (Southern Nightingale) Wren</td>
<td><em>Microcerculus marginatus</em></td>
<td>MIL, RS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Wren</td>
<td><em>Troglodytes aedon</em></td>
<td>MIL, RS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Wren</td>
<td><em>Troglodytes solstitialis</em></td>
<td>GUAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sedge (Grass) Wren</td>
<td><em>Cistothorus platensis aequatorialis</em></td>
<td>YAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plain-tailed Wren</td>
<td><em>Pheugopedius euaphrys</em></td>
<td>GUAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bay Wren</td>
<td><em>Cantorchilus nigricapillus</em></td>
<td>RS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rufous Wren</td>
<td><em>Cinnycerthia unirufa</em></td>
<td>YAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharpe’s (Sepia-brown) Wren</td>
<td><em>Cinnycerthia olivascens</em></td>
<td>UTV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gray-breasted Wood-Wren</td>
<td><em>Henicorhina leucocephrys</em></td>
<td>UTV, MIL, GUAN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DIPPERS: CINCLIDAE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Location(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White-capped Dipper</td>
<td><em>Cinclus leucocephalus</em></td>
<td>ONM, GUAN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## GNATCATCHERS: POLIOPTILIDAE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slate-throated Gnatcatcher</td>
<td><em>Polioptila schistaceigula</em></td>
<td>RS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## THRUSHES AND ALLIES: TURDIDAE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andean Solitaire</td>
<td><em>Myadestes ralloides</em></td>
<td>UTV, MASH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotted Nightingale-Thrush</td>
<td><em>Catharus dryas</em></td>
<td>MIL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swainson’s Thrush</td>
<td><em>Catharus ustulatus</em></td>
<td>TBL, MIL, MASH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pale-eyed Thrush</td>
<td><em>Turdus leucops</em></td>
<td>PAZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuadorian Thrush</td>
<td><em>Turdus maculirostris</em></td>
<td>TBL, MIL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Thrush</td>
<td><em>Turdus fuscater</em></td>
<td>YAN, QUITO, GUAN, ANT, PAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossy-black Thrush</td>
<td><em>Turdus serranus</em></td>
<td>UTV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## WAGTAILS AND PIPITS: MOTACILLIDAE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paramo Pipit</td>
<td><em>Anthus bogotensis</em></td>
<td>ANT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## NEW WORLD WARBLERS: PARULIDAE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tropical Parula</td>
<td><em>Setophaga pitiayumi</em></td>
<td>MASH, RS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackburnian Warbler</td>
<td><em>Setophaga fusca</em></td>
<td>TBL, UTV, GUAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olive-crowned Yellowthroat</td>
<td><em>Geothlypis semiflava</em></td>
<td>MASH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada Warbler</td>
<td><em>Cardellina canadensis</em></td>
<td>TBL, GUAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slate-throated Redstart (Whitestart)</td>
<td><em>Myioborus miniatus</em></td>
<td>MANY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spectacled Redstart (Whitestart)</td>
<td><em>Myioborus melanocephalus</em></td>
<td>YAN, UTV, GUAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden-bellied (Chocó) Warbler</td>
<td><em>Myiothlypis chrysogaster chlorophrys</em></td>
<td>MIL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black-crested Warbler</td>
<td><em>Myiothlypis nigrocristatus</em></td>
<td>YAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russet-crowned Warbler</td>
<td><em>Myiothlypis coronatus</em></td>
<td>TBL, ONM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three-striped Warbler</td>
<td><em>Basileuterus tristriatus</em></td>
<td>TBL, MASH, PAZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buff-rumped Warbler</td>
<td><em>Myiothlypis fullicauda</em></td>
<td>MIL, MASH, RS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TANAGERS AND ALLIES: THRAUPIDAE

EXT  Superçiliariied Hemispingus  Hemispingus supercilioris  PAP
GO  Black-eared (Western) Hemispingus  Hemispingus melanotis ochraceus  UTV
EXT  Gray-hooded Bush Tanager  Cnemoscopus rubrirostris  GUAN
Rufous-chested Tanager  Thlypopsis ornata  ONM
White-shouldered Tanager  Tachyphonus luctuosus  RS
White-lined Tanager  Tachyphonus rufus  MIL
Flame-rumped (Lemon-rumped) Tanager  Ramphocelus flammigerus icteronotus  TBL, MIL, RS
Blue-gray Tanager  Thraupis episcopus  TBL, MIL, RS
Palm Tanager  Thraupis palmarum  MIL, MASH, RS
Blue-capped Tanager  Thraupis cyanocephala  UTV
Hooded Mountain-Tanager  Buthraupis montana  YAN
Black-chested Mountain-Tanager  Buthraupis eximia  YAN
Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanager  Anisognathus igniventris  YAN
Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager  Anisognathus somptuosus  ONM, UTV
END  Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager  Anisognathus notabilis  MASH
Grass-green Tanager  Chlorornis riefferi  UTV
EXT  Buff-breasted Mountain-Tanager  Dubusia taeniata  PAP
END  Glistening-green Tanager  Chlorochrysa phoenicotis  MASH
Golden-naped Tanager  Tangara ruficervix  TBL, MIND
Black-capped Tanager  Tangara heinei  TBL, PAZ
END  Gray-and-gold Tanager  Tangara palmeri  RS
Golden-hooded Tanager  Tangara larvata  RS
Blue-necked Tanager  Tangara cyanicollis  RS
Blue-and-black Tanager  Tangara vassorii  UTV, GUAN
Beryl-spangled Tanager  Tangara nigroviridis  UTV
Rufous-winged Tanager  

Bay-headed Tanager  

Flame-faced Tanager  

Golden Tanager  

Silver-throated Tanager  

Swallow Tanager  

Black-faced (Yellow-tufted) Dacnis  

Scarlet-thighed Dacnis  

**END Scarlet-breasted Dacnis**  

Purple Honeycreeper  

Green Honeycreeper  

Guira Tanager  

Cinereous Conebill  

**EXT** Blue-backed Conebill  

Capped Conebill  

**EXT** Giant Conebill  

Glossy Flowerpiercer  

Black Flowerpiercer  

White-sided Flowerpiercer  

**END Indigo Flowerpiercer**  

Masked Flowerpiercer  

Plushcap  

**EXT** Plumbeous Sierra-Finch  

Blue-black Grassquit  

Variable Seedeater  

Black-and-white Seedeater
### BUNTINGS AND NEW WORLD SPARRROWS: EMBERIZIDAE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GO</th>
<th>Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch</th>
<th>Arremon brunneinucha</th>
<th>TBL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Orange-billed Sparrow</td>
<td>Arremon aurantirostris</td>
<td>MIL, MRB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Gray-browed (Stripe-headed) Brush-Finch</td>
<td>Arremon assimlis</td>
<td>YAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Black-striped Sparrow</td>
<td>Arremon conirostris</td>
<td>MIL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tricolored Brush-Finch</td>
<td>Atlapetes tricolor</td>
<td>TBL, PAZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yellow-breasted (Rufous-naped) Brush-Finch</td>
<td>Atlapetes latineuchus</td>
<td>YAN, ANT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>White-winged Brush-Finch</td>
<td>Atlapetes leucopterus</td>
<td>TBL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rufous-collared Sparrow</td>
<td>Zonotrichia capensis</td>
<td>MANY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dusky Chlorospingus (Bush-Tanager)</td>
<td>Chlorospingus semifuscus</td>
<td>UTV, MASH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yellow-throated Chlorospingus (Bush-Tanager)</td>
<td>Chlorospingus flavigularis</td>
<td>MIL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### GROSBEAKS AND ALLIES: CARDINALIDAE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>END</th>
<th>Summer Tanager</th>
<th>Piranga rubra</th>
<th>TBL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXT</td>
<td>Ochre-breasted Tanager</td>
<td>Chlorothraupis stolzmanni</td>
<td>MIL, MASH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXT</td>
<td>Golden-bellied (Southern Yellow) Grosbeak</td>
<td>Pheucticus chrysogaster</td>
<td>ANT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rose-breasted Grosbeak</td>
<td>Pheucticus ludovicianus</td>
<td>TBL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blue-black Grosbeak</td>
<td>Cyanocompsa cyanoides</td>
<td>RS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TROUPIALS AND ALLIES: ICTERIDAE

Scrub Blackbird  
*Dives warszewiczi*  
MASH

Shiny Cowbird  
*Molothrus bonariensis*  
RS

Yellow-tailed Oriole  
*Icterus mesomelas*  
RS

**EXT**  
(Northern) Mountain Cacique  
*Cacicus chrysonotus leucoramphus*  
GUAN

Scarlet-rumped Cacique  
*Cacicus uropygialis pacificus*  
RS

SISKINS AND ALLIES: FRINGILLIDAE

Thick-billed Euphonia  
*Euphonia laniirostris*  
TBL, MRB

Orange-bellied Euphonia  
*Euphonia xanthogaster*  
MRB, RS

**H**  
Yellow-collared Chlorophonia  
*Chlorophonia flavirostris*  
MIL

Hooded Siskin  
*Spinus magellanicus*  
ANT

MAMMALS:

Red-tailed Squirrel  
*Sciurus granatensis*  
TBL, MASH, RS

Tayra  
*Eira barbara*  
UTV

**EXT**  
White-tailed Deer  
*Odocoileus virginianus*  
ANT