



A **Tropical Birding** scheduled tour.

NORTHERN ECUADOR Birding with a Camera© (BwC) Tour

4th – 12th February 2024



Hummingbirds were a massive feature of this tour of Northwest Ecuador and the High Andes, with this sensational **Sword-billed Hummingbird** featuring near Quito on our first mornings' birding (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).

Guided by Sam Woods

Photos by the guide Sam Woods, and tour participants Jeff Coldwell, Phyllis Parks Moore & Dina Perry.

Sam's Flickr Album of Tour Photos:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/samwoodsbirding/albums/72177720314740568>

INTRODUCTION:

Ecuador has long been established as one of the most extraordinary countries in the world for birding. It has an enormous bird list (over 1600 species), and also “gets” birding and birders like few other countries, with a series of wonderful birding lodges, which are set up specifically with birding and bird photography in mind. A large part of the tour was spent in the exciting Choco Bioregion of the northwest (a region loaded with specialty bird species, many of which are hard to see or photograph elsewhere), the most accessible part of the country (and readily accessible from the capital Quito). In this region, many birding lodges have been established for a long time, and there is also a wealth of birding sites, many of which we visited and came equipped with excellent feeding stations, making this an idyllic destination for us “Birders with Cameras”. We not only recorded many bird species, we also managed to get plentiful photos of many of these during the tour, which was designed to visit some of the best sites for bird photography in a region that has so many birding sites jam packed close to each other. Due to their close proximity, we were able to be based at one lodge for much of the tour (i.e., five nights), **Tandayapa Bird Lodge**, not only a perfectly located, central location to visit for the myriad birding sites on offer but also one where the food itself stood out as a trip highlight. The healthy, traditional Andean soups from local recipes, freshly squeezed local tropical juices, and homemade deserts all being highlights of our stay there, along with the abundant birdlife, of course. As this was a **Birding with a Camera tour**, the itinerary different a little from a traditional birding one, and so we visited some extra sites not covered on those, (some of which were quite new, “hot off the press” sites), which offered additional chances to photograph some of what we were seeing too...



Photo Page Before: *Tanagers* were also a major feature at some sites, with this **Glistening-green Tanager** performing on a *Mashpi* morning when **Moss-backed, Flame-rumped, Flame-faced, Golden-naped, Golden, Rufous-throated, and Black-chinned Mountain Tanagers** were all also photographed too (*Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours*)!



Moss-backed Tanager, a specialty seen at Amagusa Reserve in Mashpi (*Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours*).

The tour started in Quito, from where we drove west to the nearby reserve of **Zuro Loma** on the first morning. This temperate cloud forest reserve is close to **Quito** and so made a perfect choice for our first stop, quickly giving us one of the birds of the tour – the impossibly long billed **Sword-billed Hummingbird** (*photo page 1*) – minutes are we started our birding! Other highlights there included **Sapphire-vented Puffleg** (*photo next page*) and **Buff-winged Starfrontlet**, and we also had a rubicund **Equatorial Antpitta** visit a feeding station. We stayed in the temperate zone for our next site of the first day, slightly higher **Yanacocha Reserve** (at around 11,150ft/3400m), where we took in new hummingbirds, like **Shining Sunbeam** and **Great Sapphirewing**, encountered a marauding mob of **Andean Guans** at their feeders and several times noted a brace of **Black-chested Mountain-Tanagers** waiting with intent close by. After lunch, we drove to **Tandayapa Bird Lodge** passing through the subtropical cloud forests of the **Old Nono-Mindo Road**, winding our way along the **Alambi Valley**, where one of the outstanding highlights of the tour occurred right on the morning of day one. We had been surveying this rushing mountain river for birds, and finally locked on to a pair of **White-capped Dippers** with bundles of moss clasped inside their bills, which were then observed at close quarters visiting their mossy nest located behind a waterfall,

making this one of the most popular birds of the entire tour. As if that was not enough, Dina found a pair of **Torrent Ducks** riding a torrent close by, which hauled themselves out on to a rock in the middle of the river! **Day two** opened on the doorstep of **Tandayapa Bird Lodge** watching birds like **Rufous Motmot** and **Toucan Barbet** right around the lodge, while birding in other parts of the **Tandayapa Valley** that day produced a popular pair of **Masked Trogons**, the endemic **Gorgeted Sunangel**, and a dizzy assortment of other hummingbirds, including **Violet-tailed Sylphs**, **Purple-throated Woodstars**, **Purple-bibbed Whitetips**, and **White-booted Racket-Tails**, on a list of hummingbirds for the day that exceeded **TWENTY HUMMINGBIRD SPECIES!**

The third day was spent much lower down (around 1150ft/350m), away from the cloud forest in and around **Rio Silanche Bird Sanctuary** in the lower foothills and lowlands, where birds like **Scarlet-breasted, Scarlet-thighed and Black-faced (Yellow-tufted) Dacnis**, the endemic **Orange-fronted Barbet** and the endemic **Dusky Pigeon**, **Blue-tailed and White-tailed Trogons**, **Yellow-throated Toucans**, **Northern Barred Woodcreeper**, and a displaying **Purple-throated Fruitcrow** were



all seen there, many of them from their canopy observation tower. From up there we also watched a low flying group of 11 **Chestnut-fronted Macaws** cruise overhead. On that afternoon, we visited a new site, **Sendero Fruitti Tour**, a fantastic new site that was perfect for this Birding with a Camera tour, as it got us extra birds for the tour, many of which were photographed at their superb feeders, like **Black-cheeked, Lineated, and Golden-olive**

Woodpeckers (photo page 8), blue-eyed *Yellow-rumped Caciques*, *Long-billed Starthroat*, (photo below), *Violet-bellied Hummingbird*, and the usually rarely seen *Bronzy Hermit*. Jeff and Sam also opted for a sort walk through potentially chigger-infested grass to a roosting *Spectacled Owl*, which was most unexpected indeed! By this part of the tour (the end of only day 3), we had already pushed past **THIRTY SPECIES OF HUMMINGBIRD FOR THE TOUR**.



Views like this of *Long-billed Starthroat* were a major reason why we added the new site of *Sendero Fruitti Tour* to this constantly evolving **Birding with a Camera©** tour itinerary (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).

Day four was something of a clean-up day, revisiting some areas around **Tandayapa** again although also visiting the Andean foothills at **Milpe Bird Sanctuary** and the **San Tadeo Birdwatching** for its photographic opportunities at the feeders. **Milpe** worked out nicely, with the hummingbird feeders attracting a steady stream of visitors like **White-necked Jacobin**, **White-whiskered Hermit**, **Green-crowned Brilliant**, and **Green Thorntail**, while those who decided to walk some of the local trails and road were rewarded with **Blue-tailed and Collared Trogons**, **Esmeraldas Antbird**, **Speckled Nightingale-Thrush**, and **Broad-billed Motmot**. Those who focused around the feeders got their deserts too, with **Choco Toucan** and **Collared Aracari**. **The fifth day** was one of the landmark days of the tour, as we visited the amazing **Amagusa Reserve** in the bird rich **Mashpi** area and followed this with a visit to a dark grotto, where a group of **Oilbirds** were seen resting by day and were photographed at close

range. This odd, striking, nocturnal, species was very popular among the group. What it lacks for in color it more than makes up for in oddity, it sits within its own monotypic bird family. At **Mashpi**, we needed to leave early **Tandayapa** early to take advantage of some early morning visitors to their corn feeder, which worked out well as we managed to see both **White-throated Quail-Dove** and the normally very difficult to see **Dark-backed Wood-Quail**, both of which would not have seen if we have arrived only a little later. The same probably also applied to the rare **Rufous-brown Solitaire** that showed up early to feast on thew available moths that had been attracted to the building lights overnight. Typically, these moths are all gone soon after dawn following an early morning burst of bird activity there. We also enjoyed seeing **Scaled Fruiteater** ([photo page 10](#)) and **Rose-faced Parrots** from their observation balcony wolfing down fruits at close range. The fruit feeders there are legendary and held some spectacular birds that day, like the astonishing **Glistening-green Tanager** ([photo page 2](#)), marvelous **Moss-backed Tanager** ([photo page 3](#)), blistering **Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager**, and phenomenal **Flame-faced Tanager**. Also in the same area we saw a male **Orange-breasted Fruiteater**, a group of **Yellow-collared Chlorophonias**, the endemic **Pacific Tuftedcheek**, a waterfall loving **Green-fronted Lancebill** ([photo page 9](#)) and the deep blue **Indigo Flowerpiercer**. We also had some very intimate, even emotional, experiences with the local hummingbirds, holding a flower in our hands, when we were visited by a series stunning hummingbirds, including endemics like **Velvet-purple Coronets**, **Violet-tailed Sylphs**, **Purple-bibbed Whitetips**, and **Empress Brilliants**, which perched on us, clasping our fingers so gently with their miniscule feet.



Shining Sunbeam was seen at two sites in the high Andes, Yanacocha on the first day and Tambo Condor on the last day (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).



The **Blue-gray Tanager** is an underrated, wonderfully common, *tanager* of the lowlands. This was taken at the brilliant *Sendero Fruitti Tour*, a site that we added to this tour for the first time this year (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).

The next day (**Day six**) was no less dramatic, birdwise, as we visited the famous **Refugio Paz de las Aves**, the infamous “antpitta farm”, where the feeding of normally shy antpittas at forest feeding stations was pioneered in 2006 that has since spread through Central and South America. With its reputation known to some of the group before arrival, they were, (of course), keen to see some of the reserve’s most famous residents, the antpittas, although we needed first to observe the dawn time displays of the **Andean Cock-of-the-rock**, one of the most iconic of all Andean birds, four bright scarlet males were in attendance. Nearby local guide Angel Paz showed us the rarely seen **Cloudforest Pygmy-Owl** sitting quietly in a cloud forest tree. We were then treated to a series of antpittas, as hoped. The first of them, **Yellow-breasted Antpitta** was straightforward though that was not the case for the most wanted species, **Giant Antpitta**, which made us wait for an hour before it relented and jumped on to a wonderful perch and posed for us at length! Our final antpitta there was a **Chestnut-crowned Antpitta** in one of the higher parts of this cloud forest reserve. However, antpittas were not the only highlights. This is a very special piece of subtropical cloud forest, where we also saw a threesome of **Golden-headed Quetzals**, had a pair of wonderful **Masked Trogons** at close range, and saw two roosting nightbirds, first a spectacular male **Lyre-tailed Nightjar** before a **Rufous-bellied Nighthawk** brought a close to our time at this very special place. That evening, we moved lodges, to **Guango Lodge**, where a single night was spent there.

The final day of the tour was a frantic one as we covered both **Guango Lodge** and the scenic, high Andean site of **Antisana Special Reserve**, adding plentiful species in the process. The blind and feeders at **Guango** produced species like **Collared Inca**, **Chestnut-breasted Coronet**, **Tourmaline Sunangel**, and **Long-tailed Sylph**, **Turquoise and Green Jays**, and **Mountain Cacique**. After that, we left **Guango** behind, heading straight for **Antisana** for one final flourish, which is just what we got! We were treated to both flight and perched views of a septet of **Andean Condors**, Ecuador's massive national bird that has the largest wingspan of any raptor (often exceeding 10 feet), while also up on high there we saw plenty of photogenic **Carunculated Caracaras**, yet another antpitta (**Tawny Antpitta** this time), and also got a pair of **Paramo Pipits**. One final stop came at **Tambo Condor** café, just outside of Antisana, where our very last birds were spectacular ones like the gargantuan, robin-sized, **Giant Hummingbird** (the largest of all the hummingbirds), the orange-burst, **Shining Sunbeam** (photo page 6), and long-tailed **Black-tailed Trainbearer**, a fitting finale to a truly incredible birding tour and country. It is no surprise that many birders return to Ecuador, time and again!



THREE woodpecker species all visited the same feeders at *Sendero Fruitti Tour*, much to the delight of the group and guide alike, as this was a last-minute, newly inserted, site on the tour! (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).

TOP TEN BIRDS OF THE TOUR:

(As voted for, jointly, as a group and guide)

- 1 **Sword-billed Hummingbird** (Zuro Loma)
- 2 **White-capped Dipper** (Alambi Valley, Old Nono-Mindo Road)
- 3 **Giant Antpitta** (Refugio Paz de las Aves)
- 4 **Andean Cock-of-the-rock** (Refugio Paz de las Aves)
- 5 **Glistening-green Tanager** (Reserva Amagusa, Mashpi)
- 6 **Velvet-purple Coronet** (Reserva Amagusa, Mashpi)
- 7= **Oilbird** (Cueva de los Tayos)
- 7= **Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager** (Reserva Amagusa, Mashpi)
- 9 **Violet-tailed Sylph** (Tandayapa Bird Lodge, Reserva Amagusa & Refugio Paz de las Aves)
- 10 **Crimson-rumped Toucanet** (Tandayapa Bird Lodge)



This obliging **Green-fronted Lancebill** was photographed next to a small waterfall near *Reserva Amagusa* in the *Mashpi* area. This species often nests near waterfalls (*Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours*).

Other species mentioned by the group in their *personal Top Tens*, which did not make it into the *group Top Ten*: Andean Condor, Rose-faced Parrot, Rainbow-bearded Thornbill, Lyre-tailed Nightjar, Masked and Collared Trogons, Golden-headed Quetzal, Collared Aracari, Rufous Motmot, Choco Toucan, Carunculated Caracara, Bronzy Hermit, Giant Hummingbird, Buff-tailed Coronet, Northern Barred Woodcreeper, Cinnamon Becard, Orange-breasted and Scaled Fruiteaters, Moss-backed Tanager, and Paramo Pipit. A special mention should also be made in this regard for **White-booted Racket-tail**, which swarmed the feeders at **Tandayapa Bird Lodge**, with many, fully racketed males present, which only made a few personal Top Ten lists and therefore, (perhaps for the very first time), it did not make the group Top Ten!



Other species or spectacular species that should be mentioned, which were not nominated by anybody included **Toucan Barbet**; a swathe of striking or beautiful, gem-like hummingbirds such as **Green-fronted Lancebill**, **Gorgeted Sunangel**, **Black-tailed Trainbearer**, **Empress Brilliant**, **Purple-bibbed Whitetip**, **Shining Sunbeam**, **White-bellied** and **Purple-throated Woodstars**; a day roosting **Spectacled Owl** (which only a few of the group opted to hike for); the rarely seen

Cloudforest Pygmy-Owl; **Blue-tailed** and **White-tailed Trogons**; **Black-cheeked** and **Lineated Woodpeckers**, (which were both seen at close quarters at *feeders*); confiding **Turquoise** and **Green Jays**; some low feeding **Yellow-browed Chlorophonias** (including an eye-catching male); displaying **Purple-throated Fruitcrows** (that unfortunately only Dianne was on the tower at the time to see); a beautiful male **White-winged Tanager**; some spectacular **Flame-faced Tanagers** at the *Mashpi* feeders; A stunning triplet of dacnises seen from the tower at *Silanche* (**Scarlet-breasted**, **Black-faced** and **Scarlet-thighed Dacnis**); and the very rare **Rufous-brown Solitaire**.

I think it is abundantly clear from all of the above, that we enjoyed many spectacular tropical bird species and built a large birdist that was littered with specialties of the Choco Bioregion and included some rarely seen species among them. Therefore, all-in-all, this was a very successful trip with the birds seen and of course with many of these highly desirable birds being photographed too, as evidence in the report below, which contains a number of photos from the guide, and a gallery of tour participant photos at the end too...

This **Scaled Fruiteater** was a popular bird on arrival at *Amagusa*, where it was literally the first bird seen!
(Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).



A series of *antpitta* feeding stations were visited on this Ecuador trip, (where this technique was pioneered back in 2005). This rusty **Equatorial Antpitta** was seen on our first morning at Zuro Loma (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours)!

TOUR SUMMARY:

Day 1 (of birding): 5th February 2024 – Zuro Loma, Yanacocha & the Old Nono-Mindo Road.

After arriving at our hotel in *Quito* the day before, the group were ready for their early departure on this morning to visit a series of excellent sites not far out of the Ecuadorian capital. The capital itself sits at a lofty 9350ft (2850m), though we ventured higher still on this first morning, visiting two *temperate* sites to the northwest of there. Firstly, we made a visit to one of the closest sites to *Quito*, *Zuro Loma*, which is also one of the country's premier birding and bird photography sites. Soon after arrival everyone could understand why, when the spectacular **Sword-billed Hummingbird** (*photo page 1*) made some headlining appearances at the feeders and specially plucked flowers. This was one of the first hummingbirds we saw, one of **48 different hummingbird species recorded in 7 days of birding** on the tour. And that was not the only spectacular hummingbird of the morning, with **Sapphire-vented Puffleg**, **Mountain Velvetbreast**, **Collared Inca** and **White-bellied Woodstar** all also coming in to the feeders with the mountain backdrop at *Zuro Loma*. Our first attempt at seeing and photographing one from that famously elusive antpitta family resulted in disappointment, with the regular *Chestnut-naped Antpitta* failing to show, however the second antpitta attempt went much better with a bright rufous **Equatorial Antpitta** (*photo above*) coming in after a wait and performing as we hoped!

Other notable birds that featured there were a pair of the scarce and gorgeous **Golden-crowned Tanager** picked up by *Dina*, the equally uncommon **Buff-breasted Mountain-Tanager**, as well as **Red-crested Cotinga**, and a brace of *brushfinches* and **flowerpiercers** that visited their feeders, **Yellow-breasted** and **Gray-browed Brushfinches**, and **White-sided Flowerpiercer** and the midnight-blue **Masked Flowerpiercer** (*photo below*).



Masked Flowerpiercers were conspicuous visitors at the *Zuro Loma* feeders on our first morning, (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours)!

The next stop was *Yanacocha Reserve*, run by a local NGO, the *Jocotoco Conservation Foundation*. Being a little higher than *Zuro Loma*, it brought us some new species, most notably **Shining Sunbeam** and **Great Sapphirewing** at the hummingbird feeders, and a mob of **Andean Guans** and a **Black-chested Mountain-Tanager** nearby. Whilst, on our walk, we also picked up **Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanager** and **Rainbow-bearded Thornbill**. A hot, three-course, lunch was then taken at the reserve. The drive towards *Tandayapa Bird Lodge* from there passed through verdant *Neotropical Cloud Forest*, with very little activity featuring along the famous *old Nono-Mindo Road*, until a scour of the *Alambi River* led us to a nice nesting pair of **White-capped Dippers** (*photo next page*), watched visiting their cascade-side nest with mouthfuls of moss. Then *Dina* upped the ante by finding a pair of **Torrent Ducks** an iconic Andean species.



There are two *dipper* species in South America. This one, the **White-capped Dipper** is confined to the north of the continent. This was one of a nesting pair seen visiting their nest with clumps of moss behind a small waterfall on the first afternoon (*Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours*)!

They quickly swam upstream before most of us could see them, though were thankfully found perched on some rugged riverside rocks a little later, when viewed through a window in the dense vegetation on the riverbank. After that we continued on to *Tandayapa Bird Lodge*, arriving just in time to squeeze in a few more hummingbird before dusk, which included the cartoonish **White-booted Racket-tail**, a favourite for *Kerry* from day one, which was never usurped from top position by all that was seen after in this megadiverse part of the world.

Day 2: 6th February 2024 – Tandayapa Bird Lodge & the Tandayapa Valley.

The day open right at the lodge, watching a procession of birds coming to the moth sheet that had attracted plentiful bugs overnight. The visitors included **Russet-crowned, Three-striped, and Canada Warblers**, a pair of **Rufous Motmots**, two **Toucan Barbets** (an endemic of this internationally important *Choco* region), **Uniform Antshrike**, **Golden-bellied and Ornate Flycatchers**, **Montane and Strong-billed Woodcreepers**, and **Streak-capped Treehunter**!

We visited a higher elevation reserve too, where more **Toucan Barbets** and a pair of **Tricolored Brushfinches** performed, and a series of amazing Andean *hummingbirds* featured, including regional specialties, like **Velvet-purple Coronet**, **Empress Brilliant**, **Brown Inca**, **Gorgeted Sunangel**, and the much-admired **Violet-tailed Sylph**. The decidedly uncommon **Rufous-gaped Hillstar** was also seen there. However, the hoped for *mountain-toucans* did not materialise! We returned to *Tandayapa* to both eat a good lunch and admire their own hummingbirds too, which included FIFTEEN different species on a day that featured **TWENTY DIFFERENT HUMMINGBIRD SPECIES** by the end from the two sites visited! Among the hummingbird horde at *Tandayapa* was the captivating, **White-booted Racket-tail**, bee-like **Purple-throated Woodstar**, the striking endemic **Purple-bibbed Whitetip**, and the glowing **Crowned Woodnymph**. In the afternoon, we took a walk in the lower *Tandayapa Valley*, where it was largely quiet although we did find a confiding pair of **Masked Trogons** (*photo below*) and watched a **Crested Quetzal** through the mountain mist visiting a fruiting tree.



Six representatives from the *trogon* family were seen, including this male **Masked Trogon** in the cloud forest within the *Tandayapa Valley* (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours)

Day 3: 7th February 2024 – Rio Silanche & Sendero Frutti Tour.

After a relatively quiet day in the *Subtropical Cloud Forests* the day before, things went up a notch on this day that was spent wholly in the *Pacific Lowlands*, some 90-minutes' drive downslope from the lodge. The significant change in altitude (from 5740ft/1750m at *Tandayapa* to around 1150ft/350m at *Rio Silanche*), brought with it an entirely new avifauna. We only spent a little time along the entrance road to the reserve, preferring to get to the canopy tower there relatively early, though did get a **Rufous-tailed Jacamar** along there, a triplet of **Yellow-throated Toucans**. Once on the observation tower within the *Mindo Cloudforest Foundation* reserve of *Rio Silanche*, we enjoyed some stellar sightings over two visits, with specialties like **Scarlet-breasted Dacnis**, **Dusky Pigeon**, **Choco Tyrannulet**, and **Orange-fronted Barbet** being seen, along with **Black-sided (Yellow-tufted) and Scarlet-thighed Dacnis**, **Hook-billed Kites**, displaying **Purple-throated Fruitcrows**, an unusually large local flock of eleven **Chestnut-fronted Macaws**, and both **Purple and Green Honeycreepers**. Down at ground level we took a walk in the forest just before lunch, which was predictably quieter, though did yield two more *trogons*, with first a **White-tailed Trogon**, then the endemic **Blue-tailed (Choco) Trogon**, from the very same spot (!), and we also saw the scarce **Northern Barred Woodcreeper** that appeared to be nesting in the area. We took our boxed lunch overlooking the hummingbird feeders, which were visited by endemics such as **White-whiskered Hermit** and **Purple-chested Hummingbird**, along with more regular visitors like **White-necked Jacobin** and **Green Thorntail**, as well as **Blue-chested Hummingbird** and **Stripe-throated Hermit**. On the way out from there, we added **Black-cheeked Woodpecker** and **Streak-headed Woodcreeper**.



Three species of woodpecker visited the *Frutti Tour* feeders, this **Black-cheeked Woodpecker**, plus **Golden-olive and Lineated Woodpeckers** too (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours)

The final stop of the day was the impressive, oddly named, *Frutti Tour*, a relatively new site run by the wonderful *Marcelo*, an energetic, enthusiastic owner and skilled local guide, who was quickly pointing out new birds left, right, and center at his bustling feeders. **Blue-gray Tanagers** (*photo page 7*) were the most numerous and accompanied by **White-lined Tanagers** (*photo page 18*) and **Flame-rumped Tanagers** (*photo page 19*), **Scarlet-rumped and Yellow-rumped Caciques**, **Ecuadorian Thrushes**, and even *three species of woodpeckers* plundered the feeders: **Black-cheeked Woodpecker** (*photo page before*), **Golden-olive Wwoopecer** (*photo page 8*), and **Lineated Woodpecker** (*photo next page*). There was even a celebrity visitor there, a rare **Baltimore Oriole**, a vagrant species in Ecuador that had been attracting local birders looking for a new country addition.



This **Long-billed Starthroat** was one of seven hummingbird species seen at the *Frutti Tour* feeders, along with **Bronzy Hermit** and **Violet-bellied Hummingbird** (*Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours*).

The *hummingbirds* also held our attention. They were frantic with activity, with many of the same species to *Silanche* among the EIGHT species present, which pushed us well beyond **30 HUMMINGBIRD SPECIES** for the tour in just three days! However, there were three very significant new additions, which we only saw at this one site, like **Long-billed Starthroat** (*photo above*), **Bronzy Hermit** and **Violet-bellied Hummingbird**. A walk was taken too, as Marcelo offered us the chance to see a roosting **Spectacled Owl**, which was found scowling within

a stand of tall bamboo. In the same area Jeff also photographed a singing **Striped Cuckoo**. Other additions there included yet another *woodpecker* (though not at feeders this time), **Olivaceous Piculet**, some perched **Bronze-winged Parrots**, and a **Central American Agouti** (a mammal) scampering around below the feeders. Nearing the end of the afternoon, after a busy stretch largely beside the feeders, we reluctantly bid Marcelo farewell and left for the 90-minute drive back to *Tandayapa*.



Lineated Woodpecker visited the fruit feeders at Frutti Tour (*Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours*).

Day 4: 8th February 2024 – Milpe, Mirador Rio Blanco, San Tadeo, and the Upper Tandayapa Valley.

One of the joys of this part of *Ecuador* is that it is stacked with so many excellent birding sites. Indeed, it is difficult to fit them all in within seven days of birding, with the continuing emergence of new and exciting birding areas, all easily accessed from *Tandayapa Bird Lodge*. For this reason, we visited three separate areas in one day to try and get some great birds and shots for the trip. We started out in the *Andean foothills*, at 3610ft/1100m within *Milpe Bird Sanctuary*, close to the town of *Los Bancos*, where we took lunch at the excellent *Mirador Rio Blanco* (where the *mango* and *ginger chickens* were favorites), then visited some feeders much higher up in the rainy *Subtropical Cloud Forest* at *San Tadeo*, before finishing with some birding near the ridgetop in the *Upper Tandayapa Valley*.



White-lined Tanager visited the feeders at *Frutti Tour* and *San Tadeo* (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).

Once at *Milpe*, an hours' drive from the lodge, we admired the melee of *hummingbirds* at the feeders, which included **White-whiskered Hermits**, **White-necked Jacobins**, **Green Thorntails**, **Purple-bibbed Whitetips**, and **Green-crowned Brilliants**. Nearby, our first pair of **Choco Warblers** were noted, and we achieved our best views of a pair of perched **Bronze-winged Parrots**. Some decided to remain there and shoot the *hummingbirds* at length, while others went for a search along the road for *toucans* (we were still missing *Choco Toucan*). We did not find the toucan along the road as hoped but did find some calling **Ochre-breasted Tanagers**, **Broad-billed Motmot**, **Ruddy Pigeon**, **Sooty-headed Tyrannulet**, **Plain-brown Woodcreeper**, **Bay-headed**, **Blue-naped** and **Swallow Tanagers**, a **Tropical Parula**, and a male **Olive-crowned Yellowthroat**. *Dianne* also spotted a **Short-tailed Hawk** passing overhead and was the only one of the tour. Oddly too, we also heard the hoots and a bill snap of the extremely rare *Banded Ground-Cuckoo* coming from a private property along the road there. Some excited noises from the treetops also drew us to a party of **Collared Aracaris**. After several attempts we also located some bright emerald-green calling **Yellow-collared Chlorophonias**. Then some took a walk along a forest trail, while others retired to the feeders.



The "Lemon-rumped" form of **Flame-rumped Tanager** featured at several feeder sites (*Sam Woods*)

The latter group were rewarded with a small group of **Choco Toucans** dropping in, while the forest hikers witnessed a male **Esmeraldas Antbird** (*Dina* even managed a record shot!), another **Broad-billed Motmot**, and a brace of trogons, with first a male **Collared Trogon** and then a male **Blue-tailed (Choco) Trogon**. A **Speckled Nightingale-Thrush**, a lone **Tawny-breasted Flycatcher**, and some **Gray-breasted Wood-Wrens** were also seen well in the foothill forest there. A belated sighting along the trail was a furtive pair of **Crested Guans**, which eventually showed well. We enjoyed fried yuca, and mango and ginger chicken dishes at the nearby *Mirador Rio Blanco* restaurant, where the initial clear weather afforded us impressive views of the rushing *Rio Blanco* way down below. With rain falling, we set off for our next destination, *San Tadeo Birdwatching* back in the cloud forest of the subtropics near the famous birding town of *Mindo*. The roof shielded us from the rain, and we watched as birds came in waves to the feeders, featuring a scarce endemic in the form of the spectacular orange and blue **Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager**, along with **Blue-winged Mountain**, **Flame-faced**, **Golden-naped**, **Golden**, **White-lined**, and **Flame-rumped Tanagers**. A female **Red-headed Barbet**, **Scrub Blackbird**, and **Dusky Chlorospingus** all also made appearances there. A late afternoon visit again to the *Upper Tandayapa Valley* in search of mountain-toucans was very quiet sadly, with little seen at all, so we retired to the lodge before an epic day on our horizon the next day...



The striking **Rose-faced Parrot**, among a long list of stunning specialties that featured in *Mashpi* (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).



Another handsome *Mashpi* “performer”, **Rufous-throated Tanager**, a *Choco* endemic bird species that regularly dropped in at the feeders there, (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).

Day 5: 9th February 2024 – Mashpi & Oilbirds.

This was one of the standout days of the tour, as we spent time in the lower subtropical cloud forests in the morning around *Mashpi* (mostly within *Amagusa Reserve*), and then visited a remote grotto for *Oilbirds* in the afternoon. We opted to leave the lodge early (05:00am) with a packed breakfast, in order to arrive at *Amagusa* while there would still be some early morning activity around their lights and grain feeders. We arrived to be greeted by the sight of a photographer excitedly shooting a female **Scaled Fruiteater** (*photo page 10*) foraging on some palm fruits right beside the balcony! The early start continued to pay off handsomely, with early morning visitors to the grain including a foursome of **Dark-backed Wood-Quails**, a solo **Black-striped Sparrow**, and a lone **White-throated Quail-Dove** too. A party of resplendent **Rose-faced Parrots** (*photo page 20*) wolfed down bananas there too. There were plentiful moths around the building that had been attracted to their lights overnight, and subsequently this attracted a horde of excited foraging birds, which included the very rare **Rufous-brown Solitaire** (which was amazingly seen twice that morning and later hear singing too). More than 20 species were seen from this spot, and included, **Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager** (*photo page 24*), **Barred**

and Cinnamon Becards, Pacific Tuftedcheek, Lineated and Scaly-throated Foliage-Gleaners, Streak-capped Treehunter, Bronze-olive Pygmy-Tyrant, Dusky-capped, Mouse-gray, Rusty-margined, and Ornate Flycatchers, Smoke-colored Pewee, Gray-breasted Wood and Bay Wrens, Choco Warbler, Brown-capped Vireo, and a male Zeledon's Antbird. Wedge-billed and Spotted Woodcreepers crept up the bamboo posts that held the ultraviolet light, while a pair of White-winged Tanagers and Tricolored Brushfinches, a Fawn-breasted Tanager, and a gorgeous male Orange-breasted Fruiteater sat in the trees very nearby. It was a veritable one stop blitz of local birds!



Flame-faced Tanagers joined Glistening-green, Flame-rumped, Golden-naped Tanagers at the feeders at Amagusa
(Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours)

We were then ushered up to the fruit feeders a few minutes' walk from there, where a stream of visitors came in, mostly comprising of colorful tanagers. Glistening-green Tanagers (*photo page 2*) stole the headlines there, though Flame-faced Tanager (*photo above*), Rufous-throated Tanager (*photo page 21*), and Golden-naped and Golden Tanagers all also visited too, and a small hyperactive group of Yellow-collared Chlorophonias dropped into the trees alongside, as did a female Golden-winged Manakin. Later some purple-pink blooms lured in a single Indigo Flowerpiercer, a very scarce local specialty. A walk along the road led us to a wonderful Green-fronted Lancebill perched by small waterfall, and only fleeting views of an elusive Black Solitaire. We also visited a second set of feeders, this time within the forest, where Moss-backed Tanagers, another attractive local specialty, entertained us, while in the trees around a pair of Toucan Barbets and a male Golden-collared

Honeycreeper threatened to come in though, did not follow up on their threat. Our final spell of birding at *Amagusa* focused on the hummingbirds, where **THIRTEEN HUMMINGBIRD SPECIES** featured. It was an emotional experience as we each took turns in holding sugar water coated flowers, which attracted a variety of spectacular hummingbird species to come in and perch on our hands, including **Velvet-purple Coronet** (*photo below*), **Empress Brilliant**, **Purple-bibbed Whitetip**, **Brown Inca**, and **Violet-tailed Sylph**! Then, we departed for a special treat, and visited an **Oilbird** grotto, where at least 9 of these strange birds were seen resting on within a narrow dark crevasse. **Southern Lapwing**, **Masked Tityra**, and **Masked Water-Tyrant** were all also seen in the area, before we returned to *Tandayapa Bird Lodge* for our fifth and final night. *Kerry* stayed up that night and was rewarded very late at night with an **Allen's Olingo**, which came to plunder the fruit from the tanager feeders.



Thirteen hummingbird species featured at *Amagusa Reserve*, including the stunning **Velvet-purple Coronet**
(*Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours*)



Another tanager specialty from Mashpi: **Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager** (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).

Day 6: 10th February 2024 – Paz de las Aves to Guango Lodge via Papallacta Pass.

Our last day on the *West Slope* of the Andes had finally come around, and what a final morning we had, before departing for the *eastern side of the mountains*. We had another early start, departing *Tandayapa Bird Lodge* at 05:00am with a bagel to eat enroute to the amazing *Paz de las Aves* reserve in *Mindo*. This place has also been variously known as the “*Antpitta Farm*” and “*Angel Paz*” after the owner, who put this place on the map all the way back in 2005. Indeed, *Angel* met us at our first stop there, a forest blind, overlooking the display site of another iconic South American bird, the **Andean Cock-of-the-rock** (from the *Cotinga* family). The intense scarlet males glowed in the shady forest understory as they displayed for presumably unseen females nearby. And that was just the start of an extraordinary morning that was so good it stretched into the early afternoon too. On the way to the blind, as dawn broke around us, we heard several antpittas calling in the forest, a precursor of some of what was to come. In between viewing the cotingas, we checked in on a threesome of Golden-headed Quetzals (including a golden-sheened male), visiting a fruiting tree nearby. Then, as we were fixing to leave this part of forest behind, *Angel* led us up a side trail to view a **Cloudforest Pygmy-Owl**, a very infrequently seen species. Not long after, *Angel* then showed us the first of his local antpittas (of which he has 5 species), a **Yellow-breasted Antpitta**, which appeared before *Angel* even had worms ready for it! It was barely an hour after dawn, and we were flying!

Then, the wheels came off, as we tried for one the most erratic of his antpittas, the much-wanted **Giant Antpitta** (*photo below*), the grandest of them all, and the rare species that put this place on the map all, those years ago. *Angel* and his brother, *Rodrigo* tried intensely to tempt one out of the forest but nearly after an hour of trying things were looking bleak. However, they encouraged us to persist and be patient, and they were proven right as this massive antpitta came bouncing memorably into view...





Photo Page Before: This **Giant Antpitta** made us wait for an hour before it showed at *Paz de las Aves*, where we had a fantastic morning, which also featured displaying scarlet male **Andean Cock-of-the-rocks**, a trio of **Golden-headed Quetzals** visiting a fruiting tree, a daytime **Cloudforest Pygmy-Owl**, **Yellow-breasted** and **Chestnut-crowned Antpittas**, a pair of **Masked Trogons**, and a male **Lyre-tailed Nightjar** and **Rufous-bellied Nightjar** both roosting in the open **Photo Left:** Male **Violet-tailed Sylph** (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours)

Then it was time for the traditional brunch made by the guide's wives of delicious *bolones* and *empanadas*, washed down with *Andean* coffee, while we shopped for *antpitta*-related souvenirs at the Paz's beautiful, bird-decorated restaurant. After breakfast, the brothers Paz worked hard to find two other *antpittas* (*Ochre-breasted Moustached*), although were found wanting, despite their best efforts. However, we watched the feeders while they did that, seeing **Velvet-purple Coronets** and **Violet-tailed Sylphs** (*photo left*). We gave up on that, and then went to visit their final *antpittas* station, where we arrived to see a **Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan**, finally, though it did not hang around unfortunately.

With rain now steadily falling and mist encompassing the cloud forest, we retreated to the car, only for the **Chestnut-crowned Antpitta** to show up as we did so! We quickly regrouped by the feeders and had repeated looks at arguably the handsomest *antpitta* of them all. We then made a toilet stop, which rapidly turned into a birding stop when a male **Masked Trogon** landed above us and a pair of **Crimson-rumped Toucanets** and an enormous **rhinoceros beetle** provided an ample supporting cast. The clock was already pushing 1pm at this stage, and we were clearly running a little late, though the *Paz* brothers were not done with us yet as they led us to first a male **Lyre-tailed Nightjar** (*photo below*) roosting in the open and then a **Rufous-bellied Nighthawk** doing the same to finish our final morning in the *West* in some style! Our arrival in the east, at *Papallacta Pass* was somewhat underwhelming after this, as heavy rain fell and we saw very little in our first high Andean foray, save for our first **Plumbeous Sierra-Finch** and a **Chestnut-winged Cinclodes** *Phyllis* saw from the welcome, warm shelter of the bus. We finally arrived at *Guango Lodge*, set within temperate cloud forest in the eastern Andes in the evening and retired to bed with hot water bottles at this chilly location.



Watching a roosting male **Lyre-tailed Nightjar** at *Paz de las Aves* , with its long tail flailing below it
(Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours)

Day 7 (of birding): 11th February 2024 – Guango Lodge to Quito via Antisana Ecological Reserve & Tambo Condor.

Our final days of birding had come and come all too quick. We had just one more days birding in the *High Andes* to see and photograph as much as we could, and so we made the very most of it, squeezing every drop out of the day. We started out right on the doorstep of *Guango Lodge*, visiting their forest blind just after dawn had risen. We were visited by around ten different bird species, with **Turquoise and Green Jays** arguably the most impressive of them, while the other visitors included **Mountain Cacique**, **Russet-crowned & Canada Warblers**, **Chestnut-capped and Gray-browed Brushfinches**, and **Mountain Wren**. This was followed by a hot breakfast at the lodge. After that, *Danielo* walked us to a forest feeding station for the *Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan*, where he raised a bunch of grapes for it to come. We gave it an hour and then we needed to leave, during which time it did *not* show up, much to *Danielo's* surprise. However, an **Andean Guan** (*photo next page*) did come to inspect the grapes, and a couple of **Blue-and-black Tanagers** were foraging in the treetops of the cool, temperate cloud forest nearby. Our final stint back at the lodge, after we had loaded the bags on the bus, was



to inspect their famous hummingbird feeders. They were oddly quiet for them. However, we did get to find the three species of regular hummingbirds there we had not yet seen, with **Chestnut-breasted Coronet** (*photo above*), the remarkable **Long-tailed Sylph**, and ever-present **Tourmaline Sunangel**. These are all species either confined to or mostly confined to the *east slope* of the Andes.

Our brief sojourn at *Guango* had come to an end and we drove off south to *Antisana Ecological Reserve* (two hours away), a high elevation site, where *paramo* grasslands dominate the landscape, which is above the timberline at some 13,120ft/4000m or so high. We started out by an old building being perched on by some **Stout-billed Cinclodes** and located a pair of well-named **Paramo Pipits** foraging in the grazed grasslands nearby, and a singing **Many-striped Canastero** on the opposite side of the road.



This **Andean Guan** was seen at *Guango Lodge* (*Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours*)

Once on the high, grassy plateau, we saw plentiful **Carunculated Caracaras** (*photo page 30*), prowling the paramo, some even coming close to the road. A couple of **Andean Ibis** were seen in flight only unfortunately, though **Andean Lapwings**, **Andean Gulls** dozens of **Black-winged Ground-Doves**, and several **Plain-capped Ground-Tyrants** were seen much better up there. **White-tailed Deer** also studded the high Andean landscape, while hints of the 18,874ft/5,753m-high *Antisana Volcano* was peeking out behind. Several **Variable Hawks** were frozen in the sky, hovering against the wind. With time against us. We pushed on to *Laguna de Mica*, walking to the lake edge, finding a singing **Tawny Antpitta** perched in a low bush on the way there. We noted **Andean Lapwing** walking the muddy fringes of the lagoon, **Yellow-billed Pintails** and **Andean Teals** dabbling just offshore, **Slate-colored Coots** resting on the muddy islands, while **Andean Ducks** slept and rested in some of the deeper waters. As we returned to the vehicle to start heading back out of the reserve, we found a female **Ecuadorian Hillstar** sitting on a nest under the eaves of a local park building.

After we had exited the reserve itself, we visited a viewing platform overlooking some cliffs on the edge of neighboring *Chakana Reseve*, where late drama was provided by an **Andean Condor** descending gracefully from the clouds and coming into land on the rocks on impressively broad wings (it has the largest wingspan of any raptor at some 10-12 feet/3-3.7m).

Our final birding stop of the tour came at *Tambo Condor* restaurant just down the road from there, which comes equipped with hummingbird feeders and a great view of the condor nesting and roosting cliffs. As we got there a couple of shapes glided in towards the rockfaces, a pair of **Black-chested Buzzard-Eagles** one of which had a rabbit clasped in its talons. In all, we counted seven **condors**, including three juveniles on the face too. *Tambo* provided our final blitz of birds for the tour, including some exciting final new additions. We had chosen this stop particularly for one large and impressive *hummingbird* species, the remarkable **Giant Hummingbird** that beats on slow wings due to its massive size, approaching that of an *American Robin*! Virtually as soon as we began looking for it, this very large hummingbird flew in right in front of us, and eventually some also got some photos of this flagship species of the high Andes after an impatient wait. The feeders were clearly being dominated by some marauding **Sparkling Violetears**, which were even managing to keep a **Shining Sunbeam** at bay, which is usually one of the most successfully aggressive hummingbirds in its own right! Zipping in between them on occasions was a male **Black-tailed Trainbearer** with its trademark long tail catching the wind behind it. **Black Flowerpiercer** feeding on some native red *fuchsias* alongside was the final new bird of the trip, which we soon left behind as we drove back to a hacienda style hotel near Quito airport for the final night of the tour and the final checklist of the tour. Some of the group had extensions to the *Ecuadorian Amazon* in their future, while others headed reluctantly home after a tour in a truly extraordinary country for birds.



Carunculated Caracaras featured on our final afternoons “blitz” of high Andean birds in *Antisana* (Sam Woods)

Some Final Images from the Tour by some of the Tour Participants (individually marked):



PHOTOS THIS PAGE & PAGE 32: *Andean Cock-of-the-rock*, a South American icon, *Refugio Paz de las Aves* (Jeff Coldwell)





PHOTOS PAGE 33: (TOP) **Crimson-rumped Toucanet**, Tandayapa Bird Lodge (Jeff Coldwell)

(BOTTOM) **Sword-billed Hummingbird**, Zuro Loma (Jeff Coldwell)



ABOVE: The astounding **Velvet-purple Coronet** at Reserva Amagusa (Phyllis Parks Moore).

PHOTOS NEXT PAGE: (TOP) **Tyrian Metaltail** at Zuro Loma (Phyllis Parks Moore).

(BOTTOM) **Sword-billed Hummingbird** from Zuro Loma (Phyllis Parks Moore).





Another stunning hummingbird from the tour: **Violet-tailed Sylph** a species that was seen at multiple locations, including **Tandayapa Bird Lodge**, **Birdwatcher's House**, **Reserva Amagusa**, and at **Refugio Paz de las Aves** (*Phyllis Parks Moore*).



(TOP) Tawny Antpitta, Antisana (Dina Perry)

(BOTTOM) Zeledon's Antbird, Reserva Amagusa (Dina Perry)



(TOP) Giant Hummingbird, Tambo Condor (Dina Perry)
(BOTTOM) Cinnamon Becard, Reserva Amagusa (Dina Perry)



(TOP) Indigo Flowerpiercer, Reserva Amagusa (Dina Perry)
(BOTTOM) Marble-faced Bristle-Tyrant, Reserva Amagusa (Dina Perry)

CHECKLIST:

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 changes published by Cornell in October 2023.*

(H) - INDICATES A SPECIES THAT WAS HEARD ONLY.

(GO) – INDICATES A SPECIES RECORDED BY THE GUIDE ONLY.

BIRDS IN **Red** ARE ENDEMIC TO THE CHOCO BIOREGION.

BIRDS**Tinamidae (Tinamous)**

Little Tinamou *Crypturellus soui* (H): Heard at Silanche and Fruitti Tour.

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

Torrent Duck *Merganetta armata*: Dina found a wonderful pair that gave prolonged looks in the Alambi Valley.

Yellow-billed Pintail *Anas georgica*: More than a dozen were seen on Laguna de Mica in Antisana.

Andean Teal *Anas andium*: Just a few were seen on the lake in Antisana.

Andean Duck *Oxyura ferruginea*: A handful was seen on Laguna de Mica at Antisana.

Cracidae (Guans, Chachalacas, Curassows)

Andean Guan *Penelope montagnii*: A group visited the feeders at Yanacocha and another was seen at Guango Lodge.

Crested Guan *Penelope purpurascens*: A couple were seen along a forest trail in Milpe.

Sickle-winged Guan *Chamaepetes goudotii*: Jeff saw this species at Tandayapa Bird Lodge.

Odontophoridae (New World Quail)

Dark-backed Wood-Quail *Odontophorus melanonotus*: A quartet was seen at the grain feeder at Amagusa Reserve.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*: Scattered sightings in urban areas throughout.

Pale-vented Pigeon *Patagioenas cayennensis*: A few were seen at Rio Silanche.

Band-tailed Pigeon *Patagioenas fasciata*: A few were seen on the journey between Yanacocha and Tandayapa.

Ruddy Pigeon *Patagioenas subvinacea*: A couple were seen feeding on the road at Milpe.

Dusky Pigeon *Patagioenas goodsoni*: 1 came in and perched by the observation tower at Rio Silanche.

Black-winged Ground Dove *Metriopelia melanoptera*: A few dozen birds were seen in flight at Antisana.

White-tipped Dove *Leptotila verreauxi*: Scattered sightings throughout, mostly flushing off the roads.

Pallid Dove *Leptotila pallida*: 1 was seen during the drive to Oilbird site.

White-throated Quail-Dove *Zentrygon frenata*: 1 was seen at Tandayapa Bird Lodge and another at the feeder at Mashpi.

Eared Dove *Zenaida auriculata*: A few were seen on the outskirts of Quito and also at Tambo Condor.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

Smooth-billed Ani *Crotophaga ani*: A few were seen around Silanche, Milpe and in the area near the Oilbirds.

Striped Cuckoo *Tapera naevia*: 1 was seen at Fruitti Tour while watching the Spectacled Owl there.

Banded Ground-Cuckoo *Neomorphus radiolus* (H): Amazingly this exceedingly rarely seen species was heard both hooting and bill clapping at Milpe.

Little Cuckoo *Coccyzina minuta*: 1 was seen briefly at Fruitti Tour.

Squirrel Cuckoo *Piaya cayana*: 1 was seen near the Oilbird site.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

Rufous-bellied Nighthawk *Lurocalis rufiventris*: A roosting bird was seen at Paz de las Aves.

Lyre-tailed Nightjar *Uropsalis lyra*: The regular, roosting male was seen at Paz de las Aves.

Oilbird (Steatornithidae)

Oilbird *Steatornis caripensis*: A special visit was made to see these strange nocturnal birds. 9 of them were seen near Chontal.

Apodidae (Swifts)

White-collared Swift *Streptoprocne zonaris*: 4 birds were seen flying above the tower at Silanche.

Gray-rumped Swift *Chaetura cinereiventris*: A couple were seen above the tower at Silanche.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

White-necked Jacobin *Florisuga Mellivora*: 1 was seen at Tandayapa Bird Lodge, though more numerous at Silanche, Frutti Tour & Milpe.

Bronzy Hermit *Glaucis aeneus*: This extremely scarce hummingbird visited the feeders a couple of times in Frutti Tour.

White-whiskered Hermit *Phaethornis yaruqui*: Regular at the feeders at Silanche, Frutti Tour & Milpe.

Tawny-bellied Hermit *Phaethornis symraptophorus*: Singles at feeders in both Tandayapa Bird Lodge & Paz de las Aves.

Stripe-throated Hermit *Phaethornis striigularis*: 1 was seen at the Rio Silanche feeders.

Green-fronted Lancebill *Doryfera ludovicae*: 1 was seen by a small waterfall, along the road by Amagusa Reserve.

White-throated Daggerbill (Wedge-billed Humm.) *Schistes albogularis*: Twice seen at Mashpi.

Sparkling Violetear *Colibri coruscans*: A feeder regular at Zuro Loma and Tambo Condor.

Brown Violetear *Colibri delphinae*: Singles were seen at Tandayapa Bird Lodge & Amagusa.

Purple-crowned Fairy *Heliophryx barroti*: Dianne and Sam got one at Silanche.

Black-throated (Green-breasted) Mango *Anthracothorax nigricollis iridescens*: 3-4 birds were visiting the Frutti feeders.

Gorgeted Sunangel *Helianthus strophianus*: A few at Birdwatcher's House, and another at Tandayapa Bird Lodge.

Tourmaline Sunangel *Helianthus exortis*: At least 3 birds were seen at Guango Lodge.

Green Thorntail *Discosura conversii*: Recorded at feeders at 3 sites (Silanche, Frutti Tour & Milpe).

Speckled Hummingbird *Adelomyia melanogenys*: 3 were at Birdwatcher's House and another at Paz de las Aves.

Long-tailed Sylph *Agelaiocercus kingii*: A single male and a single female were seen at Guango Lodge.

Violet-tailed Sylph *Agelaiocercus coelestis*: Seen at Tandayapa Bird Lodge, Amagusa and Paz de las Aves.

Ecuadorian Hillstar *Oreotrochilus Chimborazo*: A female was seen sitting on a nest in Antisana.

Black-tailed Trainbearer *Lesbia victoriae*: A single male came to the feeders at Tambo Condor.

Rainbow-bearded Thornbill *Chalcostigma herrani*: A male was seen foraging alongside the Inca Trail in Yanacocha.

Tyrian Metaltail *Metallura tyrianthina*: A few were at the feeders in Zuro Loma and Guango.

Sapphire-vented Puffleg *Eriocnemis luciani*: A few came in to the feeders in Zuro Loma.

Shining Sunbeam *Aglaeactis cupripennis*: This impressive, orange hummingbird was seen at Yanacocha and Tambo Condor.

Brown Inca *Coeligena wilsoni*: Seen at 4 feeder sites (e.g., Tandayapa, Amagusa, & Paz de las Aves).

Collared Inca *Coeligena torquata*: A real cracker, seen in Zuro Loma, Mindo and at Guango.

Buff-winged Starfrontlet *Coeligena lutetiae*: Several came to the feeders at Zuro Loma.

Mountain Velvetbreast *Lafresnaya lafresnayi*: At least 3 birds were seen in Zuro Loma.

Sword-billed Hummingbird *Ensifera ensifera*: 1 was photographed at Zuro Loma.

Great Sapphirewing *Pterophanes cyanopterus*: A male and a female came in to the feeders at Yanacocha.

Buff-tailed Coronet *Boissonneaua flavescens*: Conspicuous at the feeders in Tandayapa Bird Lodge, Mindo and Guango.

Chestnut-breasted Coronet *Boissonneaua matthewsii*: Just a few were seen at Guango Lodge.

Velvet-purple Coronet *Boissonneaua jardini*: A truly spectacular hummingbird seen at Tandayapa Bird Lodge, Birdwatcher's House, Amagusa, and Paz de las Aves. Having them come and perch on our hands in Amagusa was a very emotional and popular tour moment.

White-booted Racket-tail *Ocreatus underwoodii*: Wonderfully common at the Tandayapa Bird Lodge feeders (also seen at Amagusa and Paz de las Aves). Kerry's favourite bird.

Rufous-gaped (White-tailed) Hillstar *Urochroa bougueri*: Phyllis managed to photograph this scarce species in Birdwatcher's House.

Purple-bibbed Whitetip *Urosticte benjamini*: East at Tandayapa Bird Lodge and Amagusa on this tour.

Fawn-breasted Brilliant *Heliodoxa rubinoides*: Recorded at multiple feeders in the subtropics (e.g. Tandayapa, San Tadeo).

Green-crowned Brilliant *Heliodoxa jacula*: Recorded at Tandayapa, Silanche, Frutti, Milpe, Mirador & Amagusa.

Empress Brilliant *Heliodoxa imperatrix*: A large, impressive hummingbird seen in Mindo, and "on the hand" at Amagusa.

Giant Hummingbird *Patagona gigas*: This, the world's largest hummingbird, was observed at Tambo Condor.

Long-billed Starthroat *Heliomaster longirostris*: A magnificent bird was seen at the Frutti Tour feeders.

White-bellied Woodstar *Chaetocercus mulsant*: Several were seen at both Zuro Loma and Guango, including at least one adult male.

Purple-throated Woodstar *Philodice mitchellii*: A few erratic ones at Tandayapa Bird Lodge were the only ones seen.

Crowned (Green-crowned) Woodnymph *Thalurania colombica*: A gorgeous hummingbird, seen at Tandayapa, Silanche, Frutti Tour & Milpe.

Rufous-tailed Hummingbird *Amazilia tzacatl*: Common at the Tandayapa feeders; also seen at Silanche, Frutti Tour & at Paz de las Aves.

Andean Emerald *Uranomitra franciae*: Only recorded at Tandayapa Bird Lodge and Paz de las Aves.

Purple-chested Hummingbird *Polyerata rosenbergi*: At least 1 was seen at the feeders in Rio Silanche.

Blue-chested Hummingbird *Polyerata amabilis*: 1 or 2 were coming to the feeders in Silanche.

Violet-bellied Hummingbird *Chlorestes julie*: A singleton came in to the feeders at Frutti Tour a few times.

[Rallidae \(Rails, Gallinules, and Coots\)](#)

Slate-colored (Andean) Coot *Fulica ardesiaca*: A handful were seen on Laguna de Mica in Antisana.

[Charadriidae \(Plovers and Lapwings\)](#)

Southern Lapwing *Vanellus chilensis*: A single was seen along the Old Nono-Mindo Road and another at the Oilbird ranch.

Andean Lapwing *Vanellus resplendens*: Only about 6 birds were seen in Antisana.

[Laridae \(Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers\)](#)

Andean Gull *Chroicocephalus serranus*: A handful of these high Andean species were seen at Antisana.

[Phalacrocoracidae \(Cormorants and Shags\)](#)

Neotropic Cormorant *Nannopterum brasilianum*: A few were seen on the Rio Blanco from Mirador Rio Blanco.

[Ardeidae \(Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns\)](#)

Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*: Just a few sightings on this tour.

[Threskiornithidae \(Ibises and Spoonbills\)](#)

Andean Ibis *Theristicus branickii*: A pair was seen and photographed in flight in Antisana.

[Cathartidae \(New World Vultures\)](#)

Andean Condor *Vultur gryphus*: 7 birds were seen at Antisana, with at least 3 of them being juveniles. A highlight was seeing a beautiful adult bird coming in to roost on the towering cliffs at Chakana Reserve.

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus*: Regularly recorded (on at least 6 days).

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*: Recorded on at least 5 days of the tour at most sites except the highest elevation ones.

[Pandionidae \(Osprey\)](#)

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*: 1 was seen perched along the entrance road at Rio Silanche.

[Accipitridae \(Hawks, Eagles, and Kites\)](#)

Hook-billed Kite *Chondrohierax uncinatus*: 3 birds circled above the tower at Rio Silanche.

Swallow-tailed Kite *Elanoides forficatus*: Some particularly low ones were seen at Paz de las Aves.

Double-toothed Kite *Harpagus bidentatus*: 1 seen at Rio Silanche.

Sharp-shinned (Plain-breasted) Hawk *Accipiter striatus ventralis* (GO): Sam saw one pass overhead in the Upper Tandayapa Valley.

Barred Hawk *Morphnarchus princeps*: Calling birds were seen in flight in Mindo and at Amagusa.

Roadside Hawk *Rupornis magnirostris*: Recorded on 5 days of the tour (e.g., Silanche, Milpe).

Variable Hawk *Geranoaetus polyosoma*: Seen in flight and perched in Antisana, with at least 2 birds involved.

Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle *Geranoaetus melanoleucus*: A pair came in to land at tambo Condor. 1 was holding a rabbit.

Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus*: Seen on 3 occasions, including at Paz de las Aves.

Short-tailed Hawk *Buteo brachyurus*: Dianne pointed this one out at Milpe.

[Strigidae \(Owls\)](#)

Spectacled Owl *Pulsatrix perspicillata*: Jeff and Sam visited a roosting bird at Frutti Tour.

Cloud-forest Pygmy-Owl *Glaucidium nubicola*: This scarce owl was seen a short time after dawn at Paz de las Aves.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

Golden-headed Quetzal *Pharomachrus auriceps*: 3 visited a fruiting tree, including a male, at Paz de las Aves.

Crested Quetzal *Pharomachrus antisianus*: Poor views of a male in thick mist above Tandayapa Bird Lodge.

Blue-tailed (Chocó) Trogon *Trogon comptus*: A male was seen in both Rio Silanche and Milpe.

(Western) White-tailed Trogon *Trogon chionurus*: A single female was noted in Rio Silanche, where others were heard.

Collared Trogon *Trogon collaris*: A male was found during our forest walk in Milpe.

Masked Trogon *Trogon personatus*: Some wonderful views in the Tandayapa Valley and at Paz de las Aves.

Momotidae (Motmots)

Rufous Motmot *Baryphthengus martii*: The regular pair was seen at Tandayapa Bird Lodge.

Broad-billed Motmot *Electron platyrhynchum*: 1 or 2 birds were seen in Milpe Bird Sanctuary.

Bucconidae (Puffbirds)

White-whiskered Puffbird *Malacoptila panamensis* (H): A pair was heard calling at Rio Silanche.

Galbulidae (Jacamars)

Rufous-tailed Jacamar *Galbula ruficauda*: A single bird was seen along the road into Rio Silanche.

Capitonidae (New World Barbets)

Orange-fronted Barbet *Capito squamatus*: A pair was seen from the observation tower in Rio Silanche.

Red-headed Barbet *Eubucco bourcierii*: A female bird came in to the feeders at San Tadeo.

Semnornithidae (Toucan-Barbets)

Toucan Barbet *Semnornis ramphastinus*: 2-3 over a couple of days at Tandayapa Bird Lodge & a pair at Amagusa.

Ramphastidae (Toucans)

Crimson-rumped Toucanet *Aulacorhynchus haematopygus*: A pair at both Tandayapa Bird Lodge, and Paz de las Aves.

Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan *Andigena laminirostris*: 1 was seen at Paz de las Aves.

Collared (Pale-mandibled) Aracari *Pteroglossus torquatus erythropygius*: Several were seen at Milpe.

Yellow-throated Toucan *Ramphastos ambiguus*: A party of 3 were seen on the Silanche entrance road.

Choco Toucan *Ramphastos brevis*: 2 or 3 were seen by the parking lot at Milpe Bird Sanctuary.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

Olivaceous Piculet *Picumnus olivaceus*: 1 from the tower at Silanche, then another at Frutti Tour.

Black-cheeked Woodpecker *Melanerpes pucherani*: 1 on the entrance road to Silanche, and also came to the feeders at Frutti tour.

Powerful Woodpecker *Campephilus pollens* (H): Frustratingly, heard in Tandayapa and at Paz de las Aves.

Crimson-bellied Woodpecker *Campephilus haematogaster* (H): This extremely rare woodpecker was heard in Milpe.

Lineated Woodpecker *Dryocopus lineatus*: A wonderful female came to the fruit feeders at Frutti Tour.

Cinnamon Woodpecker *Celeus loricatus* (H): Heard on a couple of occasions in Rio Silanche.

Golden-olive Woodpecker *Colaptes rubiginosus*: 1 at Silanche and another at the feeders at Frutti Tour.

Crimson-mantled Woodpecker *Colaptes rivolii* (H): 1 was heard in the Tandayapa Valley.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

Laughing Falcon *Herpetotheres cachinnans* (H): Heard in the distance in Frutti Tour and Milpe.

Carunculated Caracara *Daptrius carunculatus*: Dozens were seen up in the high Andes at Antisana.

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius* (GO): Sam saw one on the way up to Papallacta Pass.

Psittacidae (New World and African Parrots)

Barred Parakeet *Bolborhynchus lineola* (H): Heard, typically flying high and out of sight, in the Upper Tandayapa Valley.

Rose-faced Parrot *Pyrilia pulchra*: This gorgeous, endemic, parrot was seen at close quarters at Amagusa Reserve.

Red-billed Parrot *Pionus sordidus*: Dina and Phyllis saw some at Tandayapa Bird Lodge.

Speckle-faced (White-capped) Parrot *Pionus tumultuosus seniloides*: A calling flock flew over in the Tandayapa Valley.

Blue-headed Parrot *Pionus menstruus*: One flew by at Silanche.

Bronze-winged Parrot *Pionus chalcopterus*: Pairs were seen perched in Frutti Tour and Milpe.

Maroon-tailed (Choco) Parakeet *Pyrrhura melanura pacifica* (GO): A couple of flyovers at Frutti Tour and Amagusa.

Chestnut-fronted Macaw *Ara severus*: An unusually large flock of 11 was seen flying low over the tower at Rio Silanche.

Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds)

Great Antshrike *Taraba major* (H): Heard at Silanche.

Uniform Antshrike *Thamnophilus unicolor*: A pair came in to the moth sheet at Tandayapa Bird Lodge.

Plain Antvireo *Dysithamnus mentalis* (H): A singleton was heard at Milpe.

Checker-throated Stipplethroat *Epinecrophyllos fulviventris* (GO) Sam saw one during walk in Rio Silanche.

Pacific Antwren *Myrmotherula pacifica* (H): In spite of much effort, only heard at Sendero Frutti Tour.

Slaty Antwren *Myrmotherula schisticolor* (GO): Sam saw a male briefly at Milpe.

Dot-winged Antwren *Microrhopias quixensis*: Dianne had one from the tower at Silanche.

Chestnut-backed Antbird *Poliocrania exsul* (H): A pair was heard at Milpe.

Esmeraldas Antbird *Sipia nigricauda*: A male was seen along a forest trail in Milpe.

Zeledon's (Immaculate) Antbird *Hafferia zeledoni*: A male came to the moth sheet at Amagusa.

Grallariidae (Antpittas)

Giant Antpitta *Grallaria gigantea*: It made us wait more than an hour, though eventually our patience was rewarded by great close ups at Paz de las Aves, the "Home of the Giant Antpitta".

Moustached Antpitta *Grallaria allenii* (H): Heard early in the morning at Paz de las Aves.

Scaled Antpitta *Grallaria guatemalensis* (H): Heard calling one afternoon in the Tandayapa Valley.

Chestnut-crowned Antpitta *Grallaria ruficapilla*: 1 came in to the feeder at Paz de las Aves, during a 3-antpitta morning!

Chestnut-naped Antpitta *Grallaria nuchalis* (H): Heard only distantly at Zuro Loma and Yanacocha.

Yellow-breasted Antpitta *Grallaria flavotincta*: The first of 3 antpittas seen at Paz de las Aves during a morning there.

Tawny Antpitta *Grallaria quitensis*: 2 different birds were seen at Antisana.

Slate-crowned Antpitta *Grallaricula nana* (H): A close calling bird was heard at Guango.

Rhinocryptidae (Tapaculos)

Ocellated Tapaculo *Acropternis orthonyx* (H): A distant bird was heard at Yanacocha.

Blackish (Unicolored) Tapaculo *Scytalopus latrans* (H): Heard only around Zuro Loma and Yanacocha.

Nariño Tapaculo *Scytalopus vicinior*: Phyllis, Dina and Sam saw one on a forest trail at Paz de las Aves.

Spillmann's Tapaculo *Scytalopus spillmanni* (H): Heard only (as usual) in the Upper Tandayapa Valley.

Formicariidae (Antthrushes)

Rufous-breasted Antthrush *Formicarius rufipectus*: Commonly heard in Tandayapa Bird Lodge and Paz de las Aves.

Furnariidae (Ovenbirds & Woodcreepers)

Plain-brown Woodcreeper *Dendrocincla fuliginosa*: 1 was seen in the foothills at Milpe.

Wedge-billed Woodcreeper *Glyphorhynchus spirurus*: A pair was seen by the lights early in the morning at Mashpi.

Northern Barred-Woodcreeper *Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae*: One seen at Rio Silanche appeared to be nesting.

Strong-billed Woodcreeper *Xiphocolaptes promeropirhynchus*: One came to the lights early in the morning, at Tandayapa Bird Lodge.

Black-striped Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus lachrymosus* (H): Heard from the tower at Silanche.

Spotted Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus erythropygius*: Seen twice (at Frutti and Amagusa).

Streak-headed Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*: Seen in the lowlands at Rio Silanche and Frutti Tour.

Montane Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes lacrymiger*: Seen 4 times on the tour (e.g., Tandayapa & Guango).

Pacific (Buffy) Tuftedcheek *Pseudocolaptes johnsoni*: 1 was seen at Amagusa.

Pacific Hornero *Furnarius cinnamomeus*: A couple were seen along the entrance road to Rio Silanche.

Chestnut-winged (Bar-winged) Cincloides *Cincloides albidiventris*: A few were seen at Antisana and another at Papallacta.

Stout-billed Cincloides *Cincloides excelsior*: A handful were found at Antisana.

Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaner *Anabacerthia variegaticeps*: 2 were seen by the lights at Amagusa.

Lineated Foliage-gleaner *Syndactyla subalaris*: Dina had one at Tandayapa, and we later caught up with it at Mashpi.

Streak-capped Treehunter *Thripadectes virgaticeps*: 1 came to the lodge lights at Tandayapa and 1 early am at Mashpi.

Western (Striped) Woodhaunter *Automolus virgatus* (H): Heard calling distantly at Rio Silanche.

Pearled Treerunner *Margarornis squamiger*: A couple were seen near Birdwatcher's House.

Andean Tit-Spinetail *Leptasthenura andicola*: 1 called then shot over us, at Antisana.

White-browed Spinetail *Hellmayrea gularis* (H): 1 was heard beside the feeders at Zuro Loma.

Many-striped Canastero *Asthenes flammulata*: 1 was scoped singing from some shrubs in the paramo at Antisana.

Red-faced Spinetail *Cranioleuca erythrops*: Seen in the Tandayapa Valley then again in Amagusa and Paz de las Aves.

Slaty Spinetail *Synallaxis brachyura*: Jeff and Sam saw this species at Sendero Frutti Tour.

Azara's Spinetail *Synallaxis azarae* (H): Heard at several locations but never came in.

Rufous Spinetail *Synallaxis unirufa*: 1 was seen along a trail above Guango Lodge.

Pipridae (Manakins)

Golden-winged Manakin *Masius chrysopterus*: A female showed up beside the feeders at Amagusa.

Velvety (Blue-crowned) Manakin *Lepidothrix velutina*: 1 was seen briefly at Silanche.

Cotingidae (Cotingas)

Orange-breasted Fruiteater *Pipreola jucunda*: A gorgeous male, then a female were seen at Mashpi.

Scaled Fruiteater *Ampelioides tschudii*: As we arrived at Amagusa we were greeted by the sight of another birder photographing a female of this species very closeby, where it also remained for us.

Red-crested Cotinga *Ampelion rubrocristatus*: 1 was seen just before leaving Zuro Loma on our first morning.

Andean Cock-of-the-rock *Rupicola peruvianus*: One of the highlights of the tour was a dawn time vigil with a handful of displaying males in the cloud forest at Paz de las Aves. An iconic species.

Purple-throated Fruitcrow *Querula purpurata*: Sam and Dianne enjoyed a displaying male from the tower at Rio Silanche.

Tityridae (Tityras and allies)

Masked Tityra *Tityra semifasciata*: One featured on the journey to see the **Oilbirds** near Chontal.

Barred Becard *Pachyramphus versicolor*: A pair was seen at Mashpi.

Cinnamon Becard *Pachyramphus cinnamomeus*: 1 was around the building lights early in the morning at Amagusa.

Oxyruncidae (Sharpbill, Royal Fly., & allies)

Tawny-breasted Flycatcher *Myiobius villosus*: 1 was seen at Milpe and then also early in the morning at Amagusa.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

Ochre-bellied Flycatcher *Mionectes oleaginous*: 1 was seen by Dianne and Sam from the tower at Silanche.

Slaty-capped Flycatcher *Leptopogon superciliaris*: 1 was seen at Silanche.

Marble-faced Bristle-Tyrant *Pogonotriccus ophthalmicus*: 3 separate birds were seen at Paz de las Aves.

Bronze-olive Pygmy-Tyrant *Pseudotriccus pelzelni*: Several were seen in Amagusa Reserve.

Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant *Lophotriccus pileatus* (H): Heard at several sites in the foothills and lowlands.

Common Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum cinereum*: Seen first in Silanche, then again around Milpe.

Cinnamon Flycatcher *Pyrrhomyias cinnamomeus*: 1 featured at Guango Lodge.

Ornate Flycatcher *Myiobius ornatus*: Seen by the moth sheet at Tandayapa, then in Milpe, Amagusa & at Angel Paz.

Southern Beardless-Tyrannulet *Camptostoma obsoletum*: Recorded at Rio Silanche and Milpe.

White-tailed Tyrannulet *Mecocerculus poecilocercus*: 1 was seen in Mindo and another at Paz de las Aves.

Sooty-headed Tyrannulet *Phyllomyias griseiceps*: 1 was seen along the road in Milpe.

Choco (Golden-faced) Tyrannulet *Zimmerius albigularis*: 1 from the tower at Rio Silanche, and another single at Milpe.

Mouse-gray (Bran-colored) Flycatcher *Myiophobus crypterythrus*: 1 appeared near the moth sheet at Amagusa.

Smoke-colored Pewee *Contopus fumigatus*: 1 was in the Tandayapa Valley, then others in Amagusa & Paz de las Aves.

Western Wood-Pewee *Contopus sordidulus*: Just 1 was seen along the road near Amagusa.

Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans*: This river-loving flycatcher was seen in the Alambi Valley.

Plain-capped (Páramo) Ground-Tyrant *Muscisaxicola alpinus*: A few were seen in the high Andes at Antisana.

Masked Water-Tyrant *Fluvicola nengeta*: Dina spotted a trio of these handsome flycatchers near Chontal.

Chestnut-bellied (Slaty-back.) Chat-Tyrant *Ochthoeca cinnamomeiventris*: 1 was seen in the Alambi Valley.

Rufous-breasted Chat-Tyrant *Ochthoeca rufipectoralis* (H): Heard at Guango.

Brown-backed Chat-Tyrant *Ochthoeca fumicolor*: A couple of these high Andean flycatchers were seen in Antisana.

Dusky-capped Flycatcher *Myiarchus tuberculifer*: 1 was present at Amagusa Reserve.

Rusty-margined Flycatcher *Myiozetetes cayanensis*: A few were seen around Silanche, Milpe and Amagusa.

Golden-bellied (-crowned) Flycatcher *Myiodynastes hemichrysus*: Seen at Tandayapa Bird Lodge and in Amagusa.

Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus*: Scattered sightings in the foothills and lowlands.

[Vireonidae \(Vireos and allies\)](#)

Black-billed Peppershrike *Cyclarhis nigrirostris* (H): Heard by the feeder at Amagusa.

Slaty-capped Shrike-Vireo *Vireolanius leucotis* (H): A very distant bird was heard at Milpe Gardens.

Lesser Greenlet *Pachysylvia decurtate*: Singles were seen at Silanche and Milpe.

Brown-capped Vireo *Vireo leucophrys*: 1 showed up by the balcony at Amagusa.

Chivi Vireo *Vireo chivi*: 1 was seen by the tower at Silanche.

[Corvidae \(Crows, Jays, and Magpies\)](#)

Turquoise Jay *Cyanolyca turcosa*: We had some excellent views of a group of them from the blind at Guango Lodge.

Green (Inca) Jay *Cyanocorax yncas yncas*: 3 came to the blind at Guango Lodge.

[Hirundinidae \(Swallows\)](#)

Blue-and-white Swallow *Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*: Seen best at Amagusa Reserve.

Brown-bellied Swallow *Orochelidon murina*: Seen during our first morning at Zuro Loma.

White-thighed Swallow *Atticora tibialis*: A couple were seen perched on some roadside wires at Silanche.

Southern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*: Seen at both Silanche and Milpe.

Gray-breasted Martin *Progne chalybea*: Several were seen at Silanche, perched on roadside wires.

[Poliophtilidae \(Gnatcatchers\)](#)

Tawny-faced Gnatwren *Microbates cinereiventris* (H): A single calling bird was recorded at Milpe.

[Troglodytidae \(Wrens\)](#)

Scaly-breasted (Southern Nightingale) Wren *Microcerculus marginatus* (H): Heard at both Silanche and Milpe.

House Wren *Troglodytes aedon*: Seen in Silanche and Milpe.

Mountain Wren *Troglodytes solstitialis*: 1 came into the blind at Guango Lodge.

Grass (Sedge) Wren *Cistothorus platensis* (H): Frustratingly only heard near Laguna de Mica in Antisana.

Plain-tailed Wren *Pheugopedius euophrys* (H): Heard around Zuro Loma and Guango.

Whiskered Wren *Pheugopedius mystacalis* (H): Heard along the road out of Mashpi.

Bay Wren *Cantorchilus nigricapillus*: We got some good looks at this often elusive wren early in the morning at Amagusa.

Rufous Wren *Cinnycerthia unirufa* (H): Heard beside the feeders at Zuro Loma.

Sharpe's (Sepia-brown) Wren *Cinnycerthia olivascens* (H): Heard calling distantly at Paz de las Aves.

Gray-breasted Wood-Wren *Henicorhina leucophrys*: A common, though often hard to see well, wren. However, it was seen well in both Milpe and Amagusa.

[Cinclidae \(Dippers\)](#)

White-capped Dipper *Cinclus leucocephalus*: One of the undoubted highlights of the tour was seeing a pair actively nest building, grabbing a beak full of moss, and visiting their mossy nest behind a waterfall. A magical sighting for the first day!

[Turdidae \(Thrushes and allies\)](#)

Andean Solitaire *Myadestes ralloides*: 1 was seen briefly at Amagusa.

Speckled (Spotted) Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus maculatus*: Some good looks at this beauty on a forest trail at Milpe.

Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus*: Seen at both Tandayapa Bird Lodge and Milpe.

Black Solitaire *Entomodestes coracinus*: 1 was seen very briefly at Amagusa, when most people were unfortunately unable to get on to it in the short time before it vanished.

Rufous-brown Solitaire *Cichlopsis leucogenys*: This very rare species was seen twice at Amagusa. A single bird was seen around the lodge lights early in the morning, and another singing bird was seen along the road nearby.

Ecuadorian Thrush *Turdus maculirostris*: This near endemic was seen at Tandayapa Bird Lodge, San Tadeo, and Sendero Frutti Tour.

Great Thrush *Turdus fuscater*: Seen at several high elevation sites (e.g., Antisana).

[Motacillidae \(Wagtails and Pipits\)](#)

Paramo Pipit *Anthus bogotensis*: A pair was seen foraging in the paramo at Antisana.

[Fringillidae \(Siskins and allies\)](#)

Yellow-collared Chlorophonia *Chlorophonia flavirostris*: Some good looks at this treetop dweller in Milpe & Amagusa.

Thick-billed Euphonia *Euphonia lanirostris*: Recorded on at least 4 days. Very regular at the Frutti Tour feeders.

Orange-bellied Euphonia *Euphonia xanthogaster*: Male came to the feeders at Frutti Tour, San Tadeo & Amagusa.

Passerellidae (Sparrows and allies)

Yellow-throated Chlorospingus (Bush-Tanager) *Chlorospingus flavigularis*: Seen in the foothills in Milpe and Amagusa.

Dusky Chlorospingus (Bush-Tanager) *Chlorospingus semifuscus*: Seen in Mindo and at the San Tadeo feeders.

Black-striped Sparrow *Arremonops conirostris*: 1 or 2 came to the grain feeder at Amagusa.

Gray-browed (Stripe-headed) Brushfinch *Arremon assimilis*: Singles were at the feeders at Zuro Loma & Guango.

Orange-billed Sparrow *Arremon aurantirostris*: 1 was seen at Sendero Frutti Tour and Milpe.

Chestnut-capped Brushfinch *Arremon brunneinucha*: A pair came into the blind at Guango.

Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis*: Recorded on at least 5 days of the tour at various highland sites.

Tricolored Brushfinch *Atlapetes tricolor crassus*: A pair was seen at Birdwatcher's House, and another pair at Amagusa.

This endemic subspecies is often touted as a potential split, and endemic species.

Pale-naped Brushfinch *Atlapetes pallidinucha*: A pair was seen briefly at Guango Lodge.

Yellow-breasted (Rufous-naped) Brushfinch *Atlapetes latinuchus*: Seen regularly at the feeders at Zuro Loma.

White-winged Brushfinch *Atlapetes leucopterus leucopterus*: A single was seen at Paz de las Aves.

Icteridae (Troupials and allies)

Scarlet-rumped Cacique *Cacicus uropygialis pacificus*: A few were seen from the tower at Silanche and at the feeders at Sendero Frutti Tour.

Yellow-rumped Cacique *Cacicus cela*: 1 or 2 birds came to the amazing feeders at Sendero Frutti Tour.

(Northern) Mountain Cacique *Cacicus chrysonotus leucoramphus*: A singleton came to the feeders at Frutti Tour.

Shiny Cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis*: A few were seen at Silanche and Sendero Frutti Tour.

Scrub Blackbird *Dives warczewiczi*: Seen around Silanche, Milpe and San Tadeo (at the feeders at the latter).

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

Olive-crowned Yellowthroat *Geothlypis semiflava*: A male was observed along the road at Milpe.

Tropical Parula *Setophaga pitayumi*: A few were seen at Tandayapa and Milpe.

Blackburnian Warbler *Setophaga fusca*: A few were seen in the cloud forest at Tandayapa Bird Lodge and Paz de las Aves.

Three-striped Warbler *Basileuterus tristriatus*: Seen beside the lodge at Tandayapa.

Black-crested Warbler *Myiothlypis nigrocristata* (GO): Sam saw a pair at Zuro Loma.

Buff-rumped Warbler *Myiothlypis fulvicauda* (H): Heard singing while walking in the forest at Milpe.

Choco (Golden-bellied) Warbler *Myiothlypis chlorophrys*: A couple were seen at Milpe and Amagusa.

Russet-crowned Warbler *Myiothlypis coronate*: Pairs were seen well at the blind in Guango & at the lodge at Tandayapa.

Canada Warbler *Cardellina canadensis*: 1 was seen beside Tandayapa Bird Lodge and at the blind at Guango.

Slate-throated Redstart (Whitestart) *Myioborus miniatus*: Recorded on at least 4 days (e.g., Tandayapa Valley).

Spectacled Redstart (Whitestart) *Myioborus melanocephalus*: Seen at Yanacocha on our first morning.

Cardinalidae (Grosbeaks and allies)

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra*: Came to the feeders at Tandayapa Bird Lodge; also seen at Milpe.

White-winged Tanager *Piranga leucoptera*: A pair was seen from the balcony at Amagusa.

Ochre-breasted Tanager *Chlorothraupis stolzmanni*: A vocal bird was encountered along the road at Milpe.

Thraupidae (Tanagers and allies)

White-shouldered Tanager *Loriotus luctuosus*: A pair showed up by the tower at Silanche.

Tawny-crested Tanager *Tachyphonus delatrii*: A few were seen from the canopy tower at Rio Silanche.

White-lined Tanager *Tachyphonus rufus*: Came to the feeders at Frutti Tour and San Tadeo.

Flame-rumped (Lemon-rumped) Tanager *Ramphocelus flammigerus icteronotus*: Recorded on 4 days of the tour.

Moss-backed Tanager *Bangsia edwardsi*: A single very confiding bird showed up at the Amagusa forest feeder.

Hooded Mountain-Tanager *Buthraupis montana* (GO): Sam saw a group of 3 birds at Guango Lodge.

Blue-capped Tanager *Sporathraupis cyanocephala*: A singleton was seen at Zuro Loma but not at the feeders.

Black-chested Mountain Tanager *Cnemathraupis eximia*: A pair was seen near the feeders at Yanacocha.

Scarlet-bellied Mountain Tanager *Anisognathus igniventris*: 2 came in to a feeder at Yanacocha.

Blue-winged Mountain Tanager *Anisognathus somptuosus*: Our best views came at feeders at San Tadeo & Paz de Aves.

Black-chinned Mountain Tanager *Anisognathus notabilis*: This striking endemic was seen at San Tadeo and Mashpi.

Buff-breasted Mountain Tanager *Dubusia taeniata*: A pair was seen at Zuro Loma.

Golden-crowned Tanager *Iridosornis rufivertex*: Dina pointed out a pair of these gorgeous tanagers at Zuro Loma.

Fawn-breasted Tanager *Pipraeidea melanonota*: This handsome tanager was seen at Amagusa.

Glistening-green Tanager *Chlorochrysa phoenicotis*: A really stunning Choco tanager; a few came to the feeders at Mashpi.

Blue-gray Tanager *Thraupis episcopus*: Particularly common at the Sendero Frutti Tour feeders.

Palm Tanager *Thraupis palmarum*: Scattered sightings in the lowlands and foothills.

Rufous-throated Tanager *Ixothraupis rufigula*: Some great looks at this unique tanager at Amagusa.

Golden-naped Tanager *Chalcothraupis ruficervix*: Recorded on 4 days of the tour (e.g., San Tadeo, Amagusa).

Black-capped Tanager *Stilpnia heinei*: Seen on a few occasions at the Tandayapa Bird Lodge feeders.

Blue-necked Tanager *Stilpnia cyanicollis*: Encountered at both Silanche and Milpe.

Blue-and-black Tanager *Tangara vassorii*: A couple were seen along a trail at Guango Lodge.

Beryl-spangled Tanager *Tangara nigroviridis*: A couple were found in a mixed flock near Mindo.

Bay-headed Tanager *Tangara gyrola*: 1 was seen at Silanche and then a pair showed up at Milpe.

Flame-faced Tanager *Tangara parzudakii*: A truly smashing tanager, which came to feeders at San Tadeo & Mashpi.

Golden Tanager *Tangara arthus*: Recorded on at least 4 days of the tour.

Silver-throated Tanager *Tangara icterocephala*: Just seen the once at Silanche.

Swallow Tanager *Tersina viridis*: A couple were seen at Milpe.

Black-faced (Yellow-tufted) Dacnis *Dacnis lineata aequatorialis*: A pair was seen from the tower at Rio Silanche.

Scarlet-thighed Dacnis *Dacnis venusta*: A pair were noted from the canopy tower at Silanche.

Scarlet-breasted Dacnis *Dacnis berlepschi*: Dianne and Sam saw a crippling red-and-blue male from the tower at Silanche.

Purple Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes caeruleus*: A male was seen from the tower at Silanche.

Green Honeycreeper *Chlorophanes spiza*: Regularly seen from the tower at Silanche.

Golden-collared Honeycreeper *Iridophanes pulcherrimus*: 1 male was seen beside the forest feeders at Amagusa.

Blue-backed Conebill *Conirostrum sitticolor*: 1 was seen at Zuro Loma and Yanacocha.

Capped Conebill *Conirostrum albifrons*: Some good, low views at Paz de las Aves.

Glossy Flowerpiercer *Diglossa lafresnayii*: A few were seen on our first day at Zuro Loma & Yanacocha.

Black Flowerpiercer *Diglossa humeralis*: One of the last new birds of the tour, at Tambo Condor.

White-sided Flowerpiercer *Diglossa albilatera*: Several were seen at both Zuro Loma & Birdwatcher's House.

Indigo Flowerpiercer *Diglossa indigotica*: One of these Mashpi specialties was seen very well in Amagusa Reserve.

Masked Flowerpiercer *Diglossa cyanea*: Seen best at the feeders at both Zuro Loma & Yanacocha.

Plumbeous Sierra Finch *Geospizopsis unicolor*: A dozen or more were seen in Antisana Special Reserve in the high Andes.

Saffron Finch *Sicalis flaveola*: 2 were seen beside the excellent feeders at Fruitti Tour.

Blue-black Grassquit *Volatinia jacarina*: Recorded on 2 days, at Fruitti Tour and near the Oilbird site.

Thick-billed (Lesser) Seed-Finch *Sporophila funeralis*: 1 was seen in the lowlands at Sendero Fruitti Tour.

Variable Seedeater *Sporophila corvina*: Recorded on 3 days (e.g., Silanche & Milpe).

Yellow-bellied Seedeater *Sporophila nigricollis*: 2 were seen at Silanche and another few were seen near the Oilbird site.

Bananaquit *Coereba flaveola*: Recorded at 4 sites: Fruitti Tour, Tandayapa Bird Lodge, Milpe and in Los Bancos.

Dull-colored Grassquit *Asemospiza obscura*: 1 was seen along the road in Milpe.

Buff-throated Saltator *Saltator maximus*: Recorded on 3 days over 5 sites.

Black-winged Saltator *Saltator atripennis*: 1 was seen in the Silanche area.

Slate-colored Grosbeak *Saltator grossus*: 1 was seen in Amagusa Reserve, where it is a scarce bird.

MAMMALS

Opossum species *Didelphis sp.*: 1 was seen during one of the journeys but could not be identified to species.

Western Dwarf Squirrel *Microsciurus mimulus*: 2 were seen in Amagusa Reserve in the Mashpi area.

Red-tailed Squirrel *Sciurus granatensis*: Regular at the Tandayapa Bird Lodge feeders; also at San Tadeo Birdwatching.

Central American Agouti *Dasyprocta punctata*: Visited the feeders at Tandayapa Bird Lodge and Fruitti Tour.

Tapeti (Brazilian Rabbit) *Sylvilagus brasiliensis*: This high Andean species was seen at Zuro Loma and another in Antisana.

White-tailed Deer *Odocoileus virginianus*: Many were seen in the paramo grasslands in Antisana.

Western Lowland Olingo *Bassaricyon medius*: 1 came in to the feeder on several nights at Tandayapa Bird Lodge.

OTHERS

Ecuadorian (Slender) Forest Racer *Dendrophidion graciliverpa*: 1 of these rarely seen serpents was seen at Fruitti Tour in the Northwest lowlands of Ecuador.

Blue Morpho species *Morpho species*: 1 fluttered along the road in Rio Silanche.

Owl Butterfly species *Caligo species*: Singles were seen in Silanche and Amagusa.

Rhinoceros Beetle species *Dynastinae sp.*: A wonderful specimen was photographed in Refugio Paz de las Aves.