



A **Tropical Birding** SET DEPARTURE tour

Ecuador: The Andes Introtour

Main tour: 17th – 24th January 2021

High Andes Extension: 24th – 27th January 2021



This tour introduced people to the spellbinding bird diversity of the Andes of tropical Ecuador. *Tanagers* featured very heavily (over 50 species). We birded in the endemic-rich *Choco* bioregion of Northwest Ecuador, where specialties like this sparkling **Glistening-green Tanager** at *Mashpi* were very popular (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).

Main tour guided by Sam Woods, High Andes Extension by Jose Illanes

Thanks to participants **Debbie Howell, Bradley Sale and Jeffrey Zupan** for providing photos for this report.

Birds in the photos within this report are denoted in **RED**, and individual photographers are also indicated.

INTRODUCTION:

This *Andes Introtour* did what it set out to do; show people the wonder and extraordinary diversity of tropical birds, in the mountains of Ecuador. Two chains of the Andes run like a vertical spine through this small South American country, with a deep valley in between, dividing up some of the birds, so that some occur only on either the western or eastern slopes. The entire main tour was based on the outward, western slope of the Andes, within various types of cloudforest. Each of these (“temperate”, “subtropical” and “foothill”), forests are defined by small altitudinal changes that is represented by markedly varied birding opportunities within them. This 8-day main tour visited the most famous and accessible bird region in the country, the northwest, just west of the country’s capital, *Quito*. In this famous *Choco* bioregion, a series of diverse reserves were visited by staying at a central location, *Tandayapa Bird Lodge* for five straight nights, this bioregion comes with its own special set of birds. Thus, while introducing the group to many widespread, classic tropical species and families, a selection of these were from this discrete group of *Choco* specialties (i.e., found only in *Northwest* Ecuador and neighboring *Western* Colombia). After the main tour, a few days were spent in a higher area of the Andes, just over on the eastern side of the mountains. This latter extension mixed temperate forest birding with open country, paramo grassland birding above that, and was joined by all, when a further **40+ species were added**, including the massive Andean Condor, robin-sized **Giant Hummingbird**, a torrent-dwelling **Torrent Duck** that shared the rushing Andean river with a pair of bouncing **White-capped Dippers**, a very showy **Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan**, the well-camouflaged **Andean Potoo** roosting in plain sight, a pair of **Rufous-bellied Seedsnipes** found by taking a short drive up the highest point of the tour, and a specialist tanager, called **Giant Conebill**, which resides only in patches of *polylepis* trees above the timberline, and behaves in the fashion of a *nuthatch*. The latter was virtually the last bird of the tour.



TOP BIRD OF THE TOUR was the extremely worthy **Sword-billed Hummingbird**, this one was taken at *Guango Lodge*, on the *High Andes Extension* (*Bradley Sale*).

Hummingbirds are an integral part of any tour in the American tropics, or “*Neotropics*”, (this is where the highest species numbers are). We got more than a tiny taste of this during this tour, notching up **45 hummingbird species**, (a third of Ecuador’s total list), in just 8 days birding. Some of the most spectacular species not already mentioned, from this group were the gorgeous **Velvet-purple Coronet**, the feisty **Shining Sunbeam** (photo page 5), the outlandish **Sword-billed Hummingbird** (photo page 2), **Black-tailed Trainbearer** and **Booted Racket-tail**, and striking **Sparkling Violetear** and **Violet-tailed Sylph**. *Tanagers* were also a striking feature on this tour, with **more than 50 tanagers seen**, and seeming to hold every single conceivable color between them. *Tanagers* were observed at a series of feeders or found within the exciting feeding flocks that pervade the forests of the Andes. Among the tanager highlights were **Scarlet-bellied and Black-chested Mountain-Tanagers** on our first birding day, and **Buff-breasted Mountain-Tanager** on our final day. In between, we got other arresting species, like **Glistening-green, Moss-backed, Flame-faced, Grass-green, Blue-necked, Emerald, Gray-and-gold, Scarlet-browed, Rufous-throated, Blue-and-yellow, and Black-chinned and Blue-winged Mountain-Tanagers**, as well as the stunning **Yellow-tufted form** of **Black-faced Dacnis** and **Indigo Flowerpiercer**, which are both also from the same bird family.



This male **Golden-headed Quetzal** sat for a long, long time at Paz de las Aves, much to the delight of everyone in the group, many of whom made good use of their cameras here! (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).

Other standouts moments were provided by a male **Orange-breasted Fruiteater** gorging on fruits by the feeders at *Mashpi*, a daytime **White-throated Screech-Owl**, a night time **Lyre-tailed Nightjar** (a shockingly shaped night bird with an immensely long tail), Andean Lapwings foraging in pastureland in the highlands, a **Tawny Antpitta** that hopped out below a feeder full of tanagers at *Yanacocha*, an amazingly co-operative **Golden-headed Quetzal** (above, thanks Angel) at Paz

de las Aves, which simply refused to budge from his open perch in a fruiting tree, no matter how many of us were in a photo frenzy! Among the other popular birds, within the group, were a dapper penguin-suited **Black Solitaire** that say for an age for repeated scope looks and ream of photos, a scarlet-hooded male **Red-headed Barbet** (*photo below*) over lunch at *Tandayapa Bird Lodge*, and a hip-wiggling **Ochre-breasted Antpitta** (nicknamed “*Shakira*” for good reason!) in *Mindo*, a **Barred Puffbird** that just sat above us on a wire as if we were not there, a cute **Ornate Flycatcher** that was hunting bugs by the lodge at dawn at *Tandayapa*, **Toucan Barbets**, which felt like they were easier than ever before, being encountered regularly at three feeders, and could accurately be perceived as emblematic of this particular *Andes Introtour*, the always cute and colorful **Cinnamon Flycatcher** that *Debbie* found early on, a raucous mob of **Russet-backed Oropendolas** that conspicuously took over the feeders at *Tandayapa* (it is scarce in western cloudforests, but common in the Amazonian lowlands), and then proceeded to give their odd call nearby, a fruit-chomping pair of **Choco Toucans** at an active set of feeders that saved a rainy afternoon, where an **Orange-billed Sparrow** also memorably hopped around below the trays of fruit! **A three antpitta morning** (including the endemic **Yellow-breasted and Moustached Antpittas**) at *Paz de las Aves Reserve*, courtesy of *Angel*, was nothing to be scoffed at either, (even when with this bird “master” who is known for his “way” with antpittas in particular.



Male **Red-headed Barbets** are so incredibly bright that people often think the photos are not real! However, this photo, and the bird were very real at *Tandayapa Bird Lodge*, where two different males came in during one lunchtime (*Debbie Howell*).

The northwest of Ecuador is not known for its conspicuous mammals, (the Amazonian lowlands of the east is the place for them in Ecuador, generally), but we did not do bad on this front either, having a **Kinkajou** at the fruit table one night, and then a mother and kit **Tayra** when taking our final lunch, also at *Tandayapa Bird Lodge*, which was rightly commended by group and guide alike! In reality, the tour was wetter than we had expected, the rainy season having come with a vengeance this year, in this typically wet, tropical region. However, this early part of the wet season is a great time for birds, and in spite of heavier rains in January this year, I think you can tell from the text, we had some great luck, some truly great spotters among us (thanks *Bradley, Debbie, Bob, Jeffrey, and John* for all your combined efforts that contributed to this admirable trip list), and some very, very nice birds! Combined with this was excellent company, with the group clicking from the get-go (making this a joy to be part of for both guides), which included our ever attentive, experienced bird driver, *Dario* who contributed every day, including clearing a small tree that unexpectedly fell on the road! We also could not pass over *Luis's* contribution, in *Tandayapa Bird Lodge*. While we enjoyed the birds, *he* prepared the excellent food as a wonderful compliment to that; all of the group openly commented on the quality of this, from local cuisine like quinoa soups, to his take on barbecue ribs and ceviche, everything kept our taste buds well-oiled too. Let's just say, this was an enjoyable trip, at a time when many of us needed it, having been recently barred from travel for some time. We ALL made the most of it and took in every sight and sound of nature in Northwest Ecuador with relish!



Much of our time was spent in different types of Andean cloudforest, where hummingbird diversity reaches its zenith in Ecuador. **FORTY-FIVE** species of these Andean gems were recorded on the tour, including this co-operative **Shining Sunbeam** on our first morning in *Yanacocha*. Standout *Choco* specialties like *Velvet-purple Coronet*, *Purple-bibbed Whitetip*, *Violet-tailed Sylph*, *Gorgeted Sunangel*, and *Empress Brilliant* were seen, along with the ever-popular *Booted Racket-tail* (*Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours*).

There was a very, very long list of candidates for top ten birds of the trip, which is absolutely normal in this region, which is one of the most diverse on Earth, but these were final bird decuple...

Top Ten Birds of the Trip (as voted for by the participants and guides combined):

- 1 - **Sword-billed Hummingbird** (*Seen best at Guango Lodge, High Andes Extension*).
- 2 - **Sparkling Violetear** (*Seen best at Antisana, High Andes Extension Antisana*)
- 3 - **Golden-headed Quetzal** (*Paz de las Aves*)
- 4 - **Andean Potoo** (*Guango Lodge, High Andes Extension*)
- 5 - **Lyre-tailed Nightjar** (*Tandayapa Valley*)
- 6 - **White-throated Screech-Owl** (*Yanacocha*)
- 7 - **Torrent Duck** (*Guango Lodge, High Andes Extension*)
- 8 - **Glistening-green Tanager** (*Amagusa Reserve, Mashpi*)
- 9= - **Toucan-Barbet** (*Tandayapa Bird Lodge, Mashpi, Paz de las Aves*) – photo below
- 9= - **Shining Sunbeam** (*Yanacocha, Antisana*)



Toucan Barbets were seen extremely well at the feeders at *Tandayapa Bird Lodge, Mashpi* and *Paz de las Aves* (*Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours*).

DAILY SUMMARY:

Day 1 (of birding): 18th January - [Yanacocha Reserve to Tandayapa Bird Lodge](#).



Andean Guans greeted our arrival in the cloudforests of Yanacocha on the first morning, where they were the most conspicuous visitor to the fruit feeders, shared with *tanagers* and *brushfinches* (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).

Following a cooked breakfast in Quito, the group left as light was rising over Ecuador's capital. Our destination was a temperate area of cloudforest above the capital. The 90-minute drive there was uneventful, save for a stop to admire a look down on the city, which was largely covered by clouds capping it like a mountain top. Here and there volcanos peaked above the city hidden below, and the clouds hiding it overhead. We were headed to a reserve property of the local Ecuadorian NGO, the Fundacion Jocotoco, which has a string of excellent reserves through Ecuador. Knowing that the on-site fruit feeders were often best first thing, we went straight there, and were immediately greeted by a mob of **Andean Guans** (*photo above*) waiting for the offering of the first bananas of the day.

The foundation staff soon arrived, and gave them their desired meal, which not only put this turkey-sized birds into frenzy, but also quickly attracted the attention of the local tanagers, with first a little group of brutish **Black-chested Mountain-Tanagers** (*photo next page*) coming in, and then followed by visits from **Yellow-breasted Brushfinches**, the spectacular, **Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanager** (*photo page 9*), and even a **Gray-browed Brushfinch** creeping around furtively below.

While we were enjoying the first of many avian onslaughts provided by feeders on this tour of the Andes of northwest Ecuador, a **Tawny Antpitta** hopped out of the brush and fed in thrush-like manner beside us. With all the tanager-antpittaguan action, we had barely paid attention to the hanging hummingbird feeders, which were attended by burnt orange Shining Sunbeams (photo page 2), **Buff-winged Starfrontlets**, and also a pair of local “nectar parasites”, **Glossy and Masked Flowerpiercers**. Once the activity slowed a little at the feeders, we set off along the Inca Trail in the reserve, a high elevation, but largely flat trail that allows easy access to the forest, which is peppered with red-barked *Polylepis* trees, known to the highest growing tree in the World, and native to the South American Andes. Our first attempts at seeing some temperate species not possible elsewhere on the main tour, met with only partial success; a couple of **Rufous Antpittas** hopped out, but quickly back inside the forest, during two occasions on the morning, leaving only some with views of this rusty ground-dweller. **Glossy Flowerpiercers** featured regularly along the trail, but not much else aside from a couple of **Variable Hawks** gliding past overhead, until we reached the in-forest hummingbird feeders, at our turn around point on the trail.



Black-chested Mountain-Tanagers fed alongside **Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanagers** in Yanacocha Reserve, our first stop of the main tour (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).

These had some stellar residents in attendance, including **Sapphire-vented and Golden-breasted Pufflegs**, more **Buff-winged Starfrontlets**, hulking **Great Sapphirewings**, and tiny **Tyrian Metaltails**. However, these all paled in comparison to the real star of this avian show, **Sword-billed Hummingbird**, the owner of the longest bill (relative to body size), of any bird. To say we marvelled at this ridiculous natural “concoction”, would be an understatement. This species always leaves a mark! Near the terminus of the trail, we went inside the mossy forest and located a calling **White-throated Screech-Owl**. On the way back along the same trail the late morning mist moved in, carpeting much of the forest from view, however we did see the odd bird, including **Superciliaried Hemispingus** and **Turquoise Jay** (photo page 10). After enjoying having the entire reserve to ourselves, we took a cooked lunch at the reserve restaurant, where no other people aside the foundation’s cooks were present.



The gorgeous, **Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanager** was encountered at Yanacocha Reserve (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).

Finally, after admiring some final views of the **Shining Sunbeams** around the restaurant, we set off for our next destination, *Tandayapa Bird Lodge*, which was our base for the next 5 nights. Passing through agricultural fields at the top end of the road, we stopped for an **Andean Lapwing** in a pasture and a pair of **Burrowing Owls** on the ground a little further on. Further along the way we passed by temperate, native scrub high up, which yielded **White-tailed Tyrannulet**, the handsome **Cinnamon Flycatcher** was spotted by *Deborah*, and two resident Andean warbler species, the spritely **Spectacled Redstart (Whitestart)**, and the beautiful, **Black-crested Warbler** were also soon in the area. As we continued towards *Tandayapa*, we continually dropped in altitude, as we moved out of the temperate zone and into another level of cloudforest in the subtropical zone, defined by their elevation. Our entry into this new zone of plants and birds was indicated by the sudden appearance of silvery cecropia trees, which only grow in this part of the Andes from the subtropical zone down. We drove on a dirt road that ran alongside a rushing Andean waterway, the *Rio Alambi*, which did yield a **Torrent Duck** that quickly dove into a torrent for cover on the first sight of us, leaving most to get this later on the *High Andes Extension* after this main tour. The other, more expected, inhabitant of the river, played a little hard to get, but was found foraging on the edge of a local trout farm, where this pair of **White-capped Dippers** delighted the group, before taking off and returning to its more normal setting, on rocks within the river. Whilst we had managed to move below the clouds and mist of higher up, this ended up being replaced by rain, and so we headed towards the lodge, with little stopping us before our late afternoon arrival at the lodge, where were to be the only guests in our entire time there (five nights). After our first taste of the lodge's talented local chef, *Luis*, with his tasty and healthy version of quinoa soup (a traditional meal in Ecuador), we retired to bed, eager for the next day's, very different, birding, and in need of a well-earned rest.



A highlight from the first morning, in the highland cloudforests at Yanacocha Reserve: **Turquoise Jay** (Bradley Sale).



"Volcanic" views on the way to **Yanacocha** from Ecuador's capital Quito (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours)



Over 50 species of tanager were recorded on this tour, and **Golden Tanager** was one of the most abundant.

This was photographed at a bird-packed fruit-feeder over lunch and breakfast at *Tandayapa Bird Lodge* (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).

Day 2: 19th January - **Tandayapa Bird Lodge and the Tandayapa Valley.**

On this day, the birds at *Tandayapa Bird Lodge* itself and the *Tandayapa Valley* were the priority, and so we made stops higher and lower down the valley from the lodging too. With dawn imminent, we set off into the forest in the half light and visited a nearby forest blind, where a light and moth sheet can attract birds in the early morning. A pair of tail-dipping **Zeledon's Antbirds** hopped on and off mossy logs beneath the sheet, Three-striped and **Russet-crowned Warblers** excitedly bounded around a little higher up, and a **Streak-capped Treehunter** was seen picking moths directly off the sheet. After this short bout of deep forest birding, we return to the lodge for a scheduled 7:00am breakfast, although many did not sit down for breakfast for some time later, as the frantic morning bird activity immediately around the lodge was overwhelmingly distractive. *Hummingbirds* were buzzing around the feeders located on the balcony, but we decided to leave them for lunch time, instead focusing on birds on the other side of the lodge (visible from the restaurant), where a few scattered bananas had created avian mayhem! Three **Rufous Motmots** came and went, **Toucan Barbets**, a colorful red-white-and-blue *Choco* specialty, regularly visited the feeders, along with a constant stream of ever-rotating tanagers. Ten tanagers species were noted on this day at the feeders, including **Flame-rumped**, **Black-capped**, **Flame-faced**, **Blue-winged Mountain**, **Golden-naped** (photo next page) and **Golden Tanagers** (photo above), and were joined at times by **Black-winged Saltator**, **Ecuadorian Thrush**, and bullish **Crimson-rumped Toucanets** (photo page 13), which would often send the other birds scattering in their wake.



Golden-naped Tanager was one of TEN species visiting the *Tandayapa Bird Lodge* feeders on this day, along with *Toucan Barbets*, *Rufous Motmots*, and *Crimson-rumped Toucanets* (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).

After our delayed cooked breakfast at the lodge, we drove up to even wetter cloudforest higher up in the *Tandayapa Valley*. On the way up the *Tandayapa Valley* we pulled the van over to admire the scarce **White-rumped Hawk** perched in the roadside forest. Birding a deathly quiet side road, the birding was slow at first but picked up when an **Ocellated Tapaculo** (*photo page 14*) posed in position for so long, we even managed photos and scope views, not a regular performance by this notoriously furtive species. This was one of the best birds of the trip, let alone the morning. However, another much-wanted species, the **Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan** also put in an appearance, lingering in lenses and the scope for long enough for people to soak up the myriad colors on display on this bird, including scarlet, blue, its yellow plates and more! These two birds alone made the short trip upslope pay off, but sadly, flocks were largely quiet, with frustratingly little activity in general. We returned to *Tandayapa Bird Lodge* for lunch, racking up 14 hummingbird species in 14 minutes just prior to lunch. The feeders were being visited by hundreds of individuals at that time, with the full list being **White-necked Jacobin**, **Rufous-tailed Hummingbird**, **Buff-tailed Coronet**, **Andean and Western Emeralds**, **Crowned Woodnymph**, **Green-crowned and Fawn-breasted Brilliants**, the tiny **Purple-throated Woodstar**, drab **Brown Violetear**, the unbelievably cute **Booted Racket-tail**, and specialties like **Brown Inca**, **Violet-tailed Sylph**, and **Purple-bibbed Whitetip**. The fruit feeders and activity around the lodge were such that it was again hard to fit a meal in around the obvious photo opps on constant display.

We added a few species to the lodge list over lunch, including a smashing male **Red-headed Barbet**, **Silver-throated Tanager**, **Orange-bellied Euphonia**, and **Swainson's Thrush**. A pack of **Russet-backed Oropendolas**, a scarce species in these western humid cloudforests, but characteristic and conspicuous in the Amazonian lowlands of the east. We were also "serenaded" by their bizarre liquid, plopping sounds. A mammal also popped in and cleaned up the fruit pieces that had fallen on the ground, when a **Central American Agouti** quietly crept in below.



Crimson-rumped Toucanet was a regular feeder bird on the tour, and offered up frequent photographic opportunities, like this one in the subtropical cloudforest at *Tandayapa Bird Lodge* (*Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours*).

In the late afternoon we birded some cloudforest close to the village of *Tandayapa*, where rain thwarted our plans, confining us to the van at times, and little bird activity of evidence in general. However, a flash of scarlet led us to a striking male **Andean Cock-of-the-rock** that was seen on several memorable occasions. The tour's only **Metallic-green Tanager** of the tour was also located that afternoon, but was difficult to view, high up in the trees. Weather in the tropics and the Andes of Ecuador is notoriously changeable, heavy rain turning into sunshine in minutes and vice versa, making the guide's life tough in terms of short-term decision-making. At one point with rain lashing down, it looked like we were going to have to cancel our dusk time plan to look for a local nightbird, but once we drove back down towards the village, the clouds parted, even if sun was still evasive. The scheduled plan was back on, and so we drove down to the bottom of the *Tandayapa Valley* and waited for darkness to fall. Shortly before full dark, our dramatic target species flew out from the canopy revealing its impressive long tail. Minutes went by, and then it flew back and landed, allowing us to train the Swarovski scope on it for some time. *Sam* virtually had to manhandle everyone back into the van, following long scope views and plentiful photos of the **Lyre-tailed Nightjar**, in order to leave with this extraordinary bird still in view, and dinner beckoning! We retired happy, in readiness for an early start and some very different birding at lower elevations on the next day...



Bradley quickly locked on to this calling **Ocellated Tapaculo** in the Tandayapa Valley, a great early find on the tour. Amazingly, it stayed there, for all to see it repeatedly from various angles (Bradley Sale).

Day 3: 20th January - **Rio Silanche and the Upper Tandayapa Valley.**

This day was in sharp contrast, bird-wise, to the day before. On the day before, in the *Tandayapa* area, we were in wet, subtropical cloudforest (1750-2300m/5740-7545ft), while on this day we descended to 500m/1640ft, by making a 90-minute drive from the lodge for this day trip. Our final destination was the [Mindo Cloudforest Foundation](#) reserve of *Rio Silanche*, a parcel of lowland forest saved from the rampant clearance of land for oil palm and agricultural purposes at these elevations in northwest Ecuador. However, much of morning's birding was done along the entrance road to the reserve, as the patches of remaining habitat along the road can be very birdy indeed and are not to be missed. Birding this elevation for the first time, we were quickly racking up new trip birds, left, right and center, with the scarce **Scarlet-browed Tanager**, the commoner, **Blue-necked Tanager**, **Squirrel Cuckoo**, **Hook-billed Kite**, **Roadside Hawk**, **Blue-faced and Bronze-winged Parrots** all being early highlights along the road. We also quickly added three toucan species to the trip list, with **Choco Toucan**, **Yellow-throated Toucan** and some **Collared Aracaris** of the endemic *Pale-mandibled form* (sometimes regarded as an Ecuadorian endemic species), foraging on cecropia fruits nearby. A **Lineated Woodpecker** also punctuated our journey to the reserve itself. After crossing the *Silanche River*, we entered the small, forested reserve. We were soon seeing a pair of **Purple-throated Fruitcrows**, some treetop **Black-faced Dacnises** – *photo next page* – (of the western form "**Yellow-tufted Dacnis**", which may become a separate species if some people get their way!), and our second **Bat Falcon** of the day. Rain had been an almost ever-present the day before, and our change in elevation did not seem to have stopped that.

However, it was largely in bursts, so we made forays out of the van in between these. Before lunch we opted to go up the canopy tower, as we could mutterings from canopy birds from down below and hoped this would give a window into their world. This paid off quickly when one of the reserve's scarcest birds, **Slate-throated Gnatcatcher** (*photo page 16 by Debbie Howell*), gave some good views from the tower as it foraged actively in the treetops.



The beautiful, Choco, form of **Black-faced Dacnis** (sometimes split off as "**Yellow-tufted Dacnis**"), at Mindo Cloudforest Foundation's *Silanche Bird Sanctuary*, (Debbie Howell).

While up there, a **Choco Tyrannulet** also perched out in the open, **Bay-headed Tanager** and **Green Honeycreeper** foraged in the canopy, as did some **Choco and Yellow-throated Toucans**, excitably feeding in a nearby fruiting tree. A second **Purple-crowned Fairy** of the day also flitted around the upper canopy just above our eye level. A pair of **Black-cheeked Woodpeckers** emerged onto the spine of a native palm, and some **Bronze-winged Parrots** used the same perch too. We also had another regional specialty, **Blue-tailed (Choco) Trogon**, toy with us as it sang consistently from just below us. Eventually, we gave in and went down to see if we could locate it from ground level but were briefly side-tracked with a **Purple-chested Hummingbird** feeding in some bright yellow blooms at the base of the tower. After some manoeuvring, we managed to get a male *trogon* in the 'scope for long looks. We moved back to the van to take an early lunch but were quickly distracted when a flock of note came dashing by. The action was frenetic, and so not all got every bird in their midst, but some of the best ones found in the mix were a pair of **Rufous-winged Tanagers**, and **Tawny-crested and Dusky-faced Tanagers** moving through the undergrowth below. Rain became heavy at that time, and the flock seemed to have moved quickly on, so we took refuge with lunch in the reserve parking lot. After lunch, we attempted to bird more in the reserve with a trail walk, but quickly turned back with another significant onset of rain, and so decided to head back toward "home" instead.

We stopped along the entrance road, once the rain had eased, to see some low flying swifts, some of which were **Gray-rumped Swifts** with the odd **Band-rumped Swift** too, a distinction we would have found extremely difficult to make if they had been flying overhead, when the rumps would have remained unseen. A **Gray-lined Hawk** also flew in and landed, now considered a separate species from the *Gray Hawk* of southern USA and northern Central America. A low flying **Swallow-tailed Kite** caused a stir among the trip, and **Yellow-bellied Seedeaters** were also new for us on the way out of *Silanche*.

With our early departure from *Silanche*, (prompted by rain), we decided to drop in on the higher cloudforests of the *Upper Tandayapa Valley* and try and fill in some gaps there instead. Unfortunately, the rain was not much better there either, but we did get some results, with a local specialty species, the rather drab **Dusky Chlorospingus**, which has a name more impressive than its appearance in all honesty! The main result was getting some looks at the local higher living hummingbirds in this subtropical cloudforest as a set of yellow flowers attracted one after another of these; first **Gorgeted Sunangel** (another Choco bioregion specialty), **Collared Inca**, and a popular **Tawny-bellied Hermit**. We returned to *Tandayapa Bird Lodge* with a revised plan to combine higher (i.e., *subtropical*) and lower (*foothill*) cloudforests the next day, which had some flexibility built into it.

Day 4: 21st January - Upper Tandayapa Valley and Milpe Bird Sanctuary.

We started out at dawn, admiring **Ornate and Golden-crowned Flycatchers**, **Scaly-throated Foliage-Gleaner**, and **Marble-faced Bristle-Tyrant** around the lodge at *Tandayapa*, before we set off for higher forests. The rain had continued on and off through the night, which was not unusual in this wet *Choco* bioregion, in this season (i.e., the start, or drier, part of the wet season, a good time to visit). However, it was only when we started driving up the *Tandayapa Valley*, following a cooked breakfast, that we realised the rains must have been heavier than normal at this time. As we drove up, our way was blocked by a small tree that had fallen down during the night and had way too many branches and attached roots for us to deal with. This was the proverbial spanner in the works, and so we had to about turn, and take an alternative route to the *Upper Tandayapa Valley*, where we hoped to have our final session there. Our nerves were heightened further when we were blocked again by a much smaller tree.



Even though this was unexpected at this time of year, our fantastically amiable driver, *Dario*, soon set to work on it with a machete he had buried unknown to us, in the bus. Dario worked hard and finished off the job, thus clearing our way into the upper cloudforests as planned. After having battled to get there, we were a little disappointed not to have better action up there, with a co-operative **Striped Treehunter** and **Yellow-bellied Chat-Tyrant** being new, and repeats of **Gorgeted Sunangel**, **Collared Inca** and **Dusky Chlorospingus**, but not much else. By late morning, with rain present on and off, we were ready to abandon our post, and head downhill to the *Milpe Bird Sanctuary* in the *foothills* of the Andes (c.1100m/3610ft), where a lunch had been arranged for us right inside the reserve, alongside their hyperactive hummingbird feeders. Locally sourced fish was on the menu, but was delayed, as the reserve feeders alongside quickly distracted us from our hunger. The hummingbird feeders were alive with birds, like **White-necked Jacobin**, **Crowned Woodnymph**, **Green-crowned Brilliant**, **Andean Emerald**, and, crucially, our first **White-whiskered Hermits** and spike-tailed **Green Thorntails** too. The fruit feeders, to the side of these, were no less impressive either, with activity constant through a rain-dominated afternoon. A hodgepodge of local tanagers was attending the fruit feeders, including **Silver-throated**, **Blue-gray**, **Palm**, and **Golden Tanagers**, but best of all several **Dusky-faced Tanagers** (*photo below*). This beady-eyed bird is not, now, considered a true tanager, now occupying a small, recently created family, called the *Mitrospingid Tanagers*. Also, the striking, **Orange-billed Sparrow** hopped out from the forest, into the open below the feeders, and was rightly popular. However, it is fair to say that the real stars of these feeders did not arrive until later, when a rain stop beside them, forced us into watching first the arrival of a pair of **Collared (Pale-mandibled) Aracaris** (*photo next page*), and then a pair of arguably more impressive **Choco Toucans** (*photo page 19*) wolfing down bananas right in front of us.



The odd **Dusky-faced Tanager**, at Mindo Cloudforest Foundation's *Milpe Bird Sanctuary*, is not really a true tanager after all. Recent genetic studies led to the creation of a new, 4-species family, the *Mitrospingid Tanagers*, which includes this species (*Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours*).



The interesting “Pale-mandibled” form of **Collared Aracari** is endemic to Northwest Ecuador and sometimes considered a separate species. It was one of 2 toucan species that came into the feeders on this day at Milpe (*Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours*).

At various points when the rain eased, we made a short hike to visit the lek of the local *Club-winged Manakin*. These manakins are normally very active at this time of year and this time of day, but (perhaps due to unusually persistent and heavier rains than usual), no sight nor sound was made of these dancing songbirds. While we waited, a **Spotted Nightingale-Thrush** popped out on to the trail a couple of times, when *Bradley* and *Bob* got views of this handsome, green, black, and yellow thrush. However, those in the group that lingered longest were rewarded by a late afternoon flock that held **Ochre-breasted Tanager**, **Rufous-rumped Antwren**, **Golden-bellied (Choco) Warbler**, and several **Russet Antshrikes**. With light failing, and after a final visit to the reserve’s gift shop, we were ready to return to *Tandayapa Bird Lodge*, where a **Kinkajou** (a sinuous native local mammal), dropped on to the fruit feeders by our dinner table while we were eating to round off the day nicely. Even later that evening, some, like *Bradley* and *Bob*, could not resist filming the **bats** coming to the hummingbird feeders by night, and they even managed some great slow-motion videos with their handheld smart phones!



The **Choco Toucan** is endemic to the Choco bioregion shared between Northwest Ecuador and Western Colombia. This bird was one of a pair that dropped, dramatically, on to the feeders at the *Milpe Bird Sanctuary* during a rain break there (*Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours*).

Day 5: 22nd January – **Mashpi (including Amagusa Reserve).**

By now on the tour, we had visited cloudforest in the *subtropics (Tandayapa)* and the *foothills (Milpe)*, so we had covered the main elevation zones. However, one location arguably stands above them all, in terms of spectacular endemic birds in this area, *Mashpi*. Guide and group were excited about this, as some unique feeders offered up some very special birds that do not visit feeders elsewhere in Ecuador, while the nearby cloudforest holds a special selection of bird species too. The only catch was the longish drive to get there, around 90 minutes. However, as soon as we arrived the birds came quickly. Early success came with a **Uniform Treehunter**, our third *treehunter* of the tour, soon followed by some fly over **Rose-faced Parrots**, which sadly did not stop for more views. Not long after, the familiar local face of reserve owner and talented local guide, *Sergio*, greeted us along the forested road, and he was soon aiding us on seeing a heady assortment of local specialties. Perhaps the rarest bird of the entire tour was found a short time later, when *Bradley* located a singing **Choco Vireo** for all to see. While not a “looker”, unlike many of the other avian starlets of the day, it made up for this in status. This species was only first described (from Colombia) in 1996. It was thought to be a country endemic, before later being found in far Northwest Ecuador. It was only discovered at *Mashpi*, the furthest south this endangered species has ever been found, in 2010. While genuinely scarce, it gets seen at this site more than any other, as the other locales are much more remote and less visited. We also added **Bronze-olive Pygmy-Tyrant** as we walked on, and a hummingbird found by one of the group, proved to be none other than the local **Choco Daggerbill**, a recent split from the now defunct “*Wedge-billed Hummingbird*”. This species almost never visits feeders, and so was a good find in the midst of dense cloudforest.



Tanagers swamped the various active feeders visited on this tour, including this **Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager**, photographed at the wonderful *Amagusa Reserve in the Mashpi area*, which held **14 different tanager species**, including *Glistening-green*, *Moss-backed*, *Flame-faced*, and *Rufous-throated*, Tanagers (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).

Soon after, *Sergio* picked up on one of the most beautiful and rare songsters in the area, **Rufous-brown Solitaire**, and after following in his hurried footsteps, we had it lined up in the 'scope. We had seen just one of the real local solitaire species (a group within the thrush family), and the first one was the *rarest* of them all, go figure that! Sergio had been gently trying to usher us towards his nearby feeders, but without an *Indigo Flowerpiercer* or *Orange-breasted Fruiteater* to show for our road walk, Sam was reticent to give up on them just yet. However, *Sergio*, as he should have done, won this inter-guide battle, and we were soon inside his wonderful property at the edge of the cloudforest. Within minutes proof of being in the right place was provided when a pair of **Black-chinned Mountain-Tanagers** - *photo above* - (one of many dazzling endemic species from this site on this day), dropped on to the feeders, and was soon after accompanied by another local "crippler", **Glistening-green Tanager**, while other visitors to the two sets of feeders there included **Golden**, **Flame-faced**, **Flame-rumped (Lemon-rumped) Tanagers**, and more **Toucan Barbets**. Two other standout tanagers also showed up, the ever so tame **Rufous-throated Tanagers**, which landed on a handheld banana, and the stocky, well-named **Moss-backed Tanager** (*photo next page*), two further Choco specialties, up close and personal! In between bouts at the gripping feeders on site, we picked up other birds around the property, like **Tricolored (Choco) Brushfinch** for some, (a local subspecies that is a potential future split), a vermilion-red, **White-winged Tanager** found by *Jeffrey*, a wonderfully co-operative **Scaled Fruiteater**, and a **Cinnamon Becard** for all. **Beryl-spangled Tanager** also appeared for a moment in the surrounding trees too.



Moss-backed Tanager was a speciality at Amagusa Reserve, which posed just a few feet away (Bradley Sale).

While the most conspicuous activity at *Reserva Amagusa* is at the fruit-laden feeders, it also has some excellent hummingbird feeders, and we were quickly focused on them too, and two special hummingbirds came in regularly, **Empress Brilliant**, and the stunning **Velvet-purple Coronet** (photo page 26), a species that was much desired by *Bob* and *Jeffrey* at least within the group. During this half morning spell, we had been haunted by the calls of two local specialty species, *Indigo Flowerpiercer* and *Orange-breasted Fruiteater* during our walk, and near the feeders, but were still to actually see one. We lingered around the feeders, not only to enjoy the top rate bird photography, but also in the hope that the fruiteater would visit a fruiting tree in prime condition close to there. However, as the morning waned, we decided to try again along the forested roadside for these species, but then suddenly turned back around as the hoped-for **Orange-breasted Fruiteater** (photo page 24), appeared in the hoped-for fruiting tree, where we were able to watch two different gaudy males eagerly wolfing down fruits. It was magical end to our time there, and most of us set off up the road to try and plug some gaps on our likely bird list for the day. *Bob* had other ideas though and decided to spend some personal time with the **Velvet-purple Coronets**, while the rest of us moved on, indicating he would soon join us. He caught up with us, at the very moment we were watching our first new bird since leaving him, a, incredibly co-operative **Buffy (Pacific) Tuftedcheek** (photo page 24), another local specialty. A perfectly timed entrance if ever there was one; *Bob* walked straight into this bird! The next “bird event” was even better, when one of the group spotted a thrush feeding low next to the road, which turned out, oddly, to be an **Andean Solitaire** (our second Solitaire of the day), a thrush which typically does not feed near ground level, like other thrushes. After we all had looks of it, it took off and up towards a tree, where *Sergio* keenly kept his eye on it. This led his optics to a fruiting tree, where he announced another, much rarer thrush: “**Black Solitaire**”! (Photo next page). This sharp, pied denizen of the *Choco* cloudforests has a reputation for being both timid and uncooperative.

This led *Sam* into a panic setting up the 'scope as quick as he could. He needn't have hurried; amazingly this notoriously skittish thrush remained there for ten minutes or so and was photographed by all who tried. This was the guide's first 3 solitaire day, tough because two of them are rare and (supposedly) shy. Our last stanza with *Sergio*, before we bid him farewell, was to finally track down a calling **Indigo Flowerpiercer**, a rare and local species that really put *Mashpi* on the birding map, when it was found there just over a decade ago. A singing *Tropical Parula* was also a boon in this area, finally giving us good looks after only fleeting sightings previously, much to the joy of *Jeffrey* in particular.



Black Solitaire is ordinarily shy and difficult to see, but not this individual that *Sergio* spotted at *Mashpi*, where it is one of the local specialties. It sat in 'scope and cameras for about 5-10 minutes! (*Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours*).

By the time *Sergio* left us we were ready to go directly to a particular piece of forest and take our boxed lunch in the field. We arrived at a beautiful stretch of unbroken forest, and Sam went for a pitstop, only to overhear *Bradley* discussing a bird on an overhead power cable. We had stopped at this very spot precisely for a species that was known to do this, and so it proved to be our next "target bird", **Barred Puffbird**! It was nice to have this handsome avian character in bag, even before our trusty driver, *Dario*, had got our lunch out. During lunch, another avian interruption was provided when Sam spotted a couple of **Gray-and-gold Tanagers** quietly sitting in a bus-side tree. After lunch, with our time limited due to the 90-minute drive needed to return to *Tandayapa*, we birded as much of the forested road downhill (and there is a lot of it in this wonderful location), as we could, quickly chancing upon a flock with some very high tanagers among them, including the scarce **Emerald Tanager** that *Bradley* described perfectly on finding it, as a "Golden Tanager, *but green!*" Unfortunately, the flock was high, and in troublesome light, and, on top of that, were on the move, so only a few of the group got to see the **Emerald Tanager** (and other **Gray-and-gold Tanagers** alongside it), before the flock left us for another location, in an instant. We continued down the road, sometimes by car, other times on foot, which led us to roadside pair or **Purple-throated Fruitcrows**, silently resting by a river, and a **White-tailed Trogon** that allowed the *Swarovski* spotting scope to be trained on it for a time. After a dry spell, we finally hit a flock, just before fixin' to leave, and this time it was low down and in better light.

We quickly racked up **Russet Antshrike**, the confusingly similar **Buff-fronted Foliage-gleaner**, **Red-faced Spinetail**, **Dot-winged Antwren**, **Golden-bellied (Choco) Warbler**, **Bay-headed** and **Ochre-breasted Tanagers**, another male **Red-headed Barbet**, and arguably the best of all, prolonged looks at several **Orange-fronted Barbets**, another handsome *Choco* specialty. One of the flock leaders, **Slaty-capped Shrike-Vireo** also, atypically, perched out in the open relatively low down, for all and sundry to see. **Crimson-rumped Toucanets** also joined the barbets in a fruiting *cecropia* tree after the main thrust of the feeding flock had moved on, and the toucan was beginning to feel like an emblematic bird for this particular tour, as they seemed to be everywhere, a nice “problem” to have.

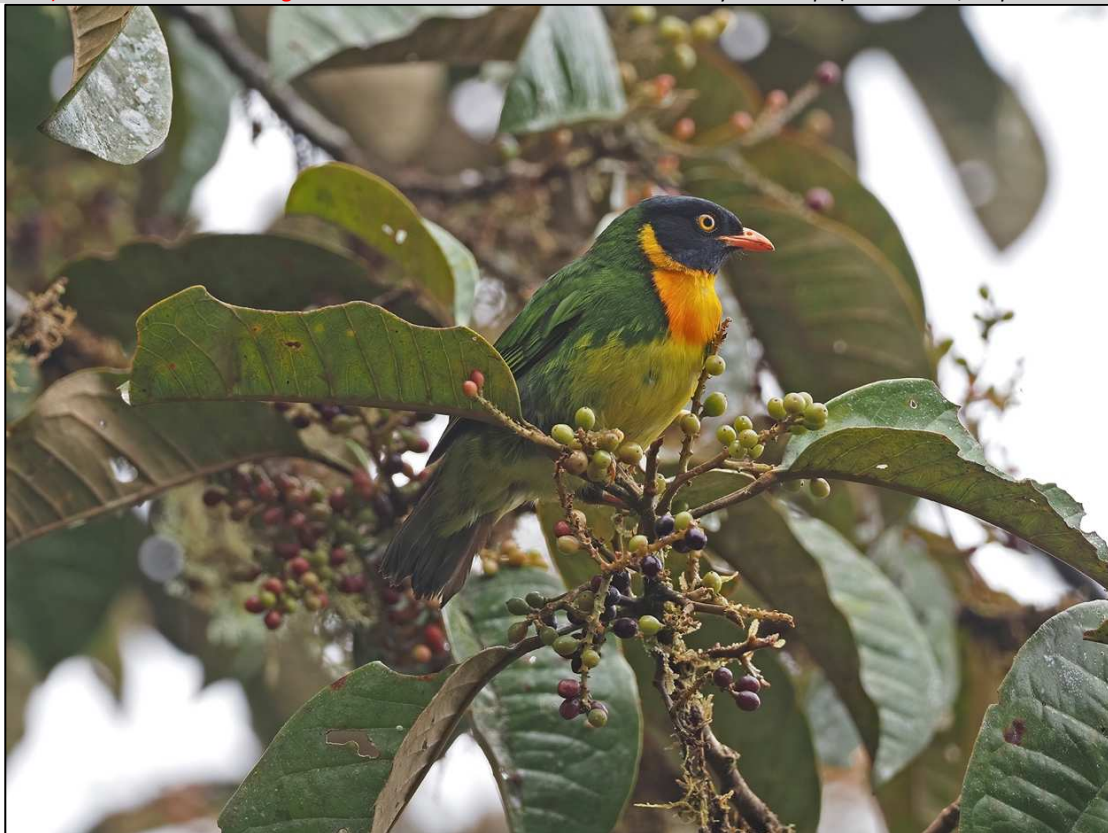
With time now off the essence, with our journey back in mind, we turned about and headed back towards *Tandayapa* in the bus, making one more stop before leaving. This also proved fortuitous, when shortly after arriving at this spot, a **Broad-billed Motmot** was located, and was (rightly) a very popular tropical bird with this group. Also, we not only located the sound of the retiring **Esmeraldas Antbird**, another regional endemic, but also all got to see, following a concerted effort. The final new bird of the day was a boisterous and vocal pair of **Whiskered Wrens**, another skulking species which was also seen by all in the end. This time, we headed back to the lodge in earnest, extremely happy with a very fortuitous day, where rain had been relatively rare for once!



The wonderful, endemic-rich, subtropical cloudforest at *Mashpi* (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).



Buffy (Pacific) Tuftedcheek and Orange-breasted Fruiteater from a memorable day at Mashpi (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).



Day 6: 23rd January – Paz de las Aves and Tandayapa Bird Lodge; to Quito via Calacali.



This Ochre-breasted Antpitta came in to feed on worms in the cloudforest at Paz de las Aves. This individual is known to local guide Angel, as “Shakira” (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).

This was the last day of the main tour, and Sam’s last time with the group as guide, as *Jose Illanes* took over for the final leg, on the **High Andes Extension**. So, it was fitting and appreciated we had such a magnificent finale, at the three sites visited on this day. We set off from *Tandayapa Bird Lodge* under cover of darkness, pre-dawn, to arrive at *Refugio Paz de las Aves* early, in time for the post-dawn displays of **Andean Cock-of-the-rock**, eating our breakfast bagels on the hour’s drive there. We arrived a bit earlier than expected and a pair of **Lyre-tailed Nightjars** were seen from the van in the wee hours, and once we were all out of the vehicle, a **Rufous-bellied Nighthawk** glided over. We made our way to the blind and were soon joined by local guide/conservationist, *Angel Paz*, who runs the property with some of his large family. The *cock-of-the-rock*s came in, as expected, but were unusually shy, and remained behind leaves with only pieces of their red plumage revealed for most of the time. This was unusual, and Angel had warned us when he arrived that they had been atypically shy of late (in the last week only), following recent rains. We all got views, but we were also grateful, we had all seen a gorgeous red, black and silver male earlier on the trip, near *Tandayapa* village. A male **Masked Trogon** called nearby and was seen by only a few people before it retreated from view. While Angel worked away at finding and calling in his local birds, we found a **Lineated Foliage-gleaner** in the area. Angel returned to us and we followed him uphill to another very specific site, where he tried to call in an antpitta at a forest feeding station. In order to keep us amused, he first showed us a perched, **Red-billed Parrot**, which we ‘scoped for some time, before Angel beckoned us over. This resulted in our first antpitta of the day, the scarce, shy and local, **Yellow-breasted Antpitta**, another specialty of this *Choco* biological region that is extremely difficult to see away from this very site.

Once the *antpitta* had taken its share of worms (and vanished into the forest once more), we took a quick rest stop by some feeders that held **Flame-faced Tanager**, **White-winged Brushfinch** (which *Jeffrey* managed to photograph), **Toucan Barbet**, and a series of tanagers we were by now familiar with from other feeder sites.



The spectacular **Velvet-purple Coronet** is only found locally within wet cloudforests in this *Choco* bioregion (*Debbie Howell*).

We set off through one of Angel's fruit orchards, where he grows blackberries for the local juice market, and stumbled into our first male Golden-headed Quetzal of the morning. The same area held a brief **Scaled Fruiteater** on the way back out too. A short walk later we at the start of a steep forest trail. Thankfully, we only needed to move inside this trail for 100 yards or so, where we needed to wait, impatiently, for another antpitta or two. The two we were in hope of were the small, arboreal, *Ochre-breasted Antpitta*, and the much larger, more strictly terrestrial, *Moustached Antpitta*. Angel whistled and waited, nothing. Angel moved around the forest out of sight while we waited, nothing. In the meantime, a **Narino Tapaculo**, began to call just below us, and so this was the perfect distraction we needed. With judicious use of playback (permitted for this species by *Angel*), this dweller of the forest shadows came in for some good close binocular views. Not long after a movement was noted near the ground, and soon after the local **Ochre-breasted Antpitta** (*photo page before*), hopped out on to an open branch, and then dropped down for the worms that Angel had laid out for it. As it perched it shifted its body from side-to-side, a characteristic behavioural trait of these small *Grallaricula* antpittas, and one that prompted Angel to name this habituated individual as "*Shakira*", after the hip-wiggling Colombia and global pop star.

Angel returned and delighted to see it had come in after all, and not long after the brute also appeared, in the form of the local **Moustached Antpitta** (photo below), affectionately known to Angel as “Susanita”. Two antpittas within minutes in the same patch of forest is something also unlikely to be encountered outside of this unique reserve. Our last antpitta attempt of the morning did not work so well, all hearing, but not seeing a **Chestnut-crowned Antpitta**, which remained firmly downhill, and out of reach, from where we were stood. At this higher elevation spot, some got views of a male **Green-and-black Fruiteater**, some **Beryl-spangled Tanagers**, and a **Crimson-mantled Woodpecker**. It was by now nearing 10:30am, and so our breakfast/brunch by Angel’s family was on the agenda, although we stopped on the short drive there for some wintering **Broad-winged Hawks**, a pair of far-off **Plate-billed Mountain-Toucans**, and, best of all a gorgeous **Golden-headed Quetzal**. The *quetzal* was located by Angel in a fruiting tree he knew of, and with fruit hanging about it, it had no desire to move, making for marvellous photo opportunities, which were well taken advantage of all with cameras.



This **Moustached Antpitta** made us wait a while, but was worth the wait, at Paz de las Aves (Sam Woods/Tropical Birding Tours).

After some wonderful local food of “*bolones*” (a ball of plantain stuffed with chicken and cheese), cheese empanadas, washed down with tea and coffee, we shopped in the small gift shop for t-shirts, caps, mugs and trinkets made by the Paz family that featured some of the special birds we had seen, like the *antpittas*, *cock-of-the-rock*, and **Toucan Barbet**. Some feeders were on view post-breakfast, where the standout birds were a few more **Velvet-purple Coronets**, and a tiny **Speckled Hummingbird** being bullied away from the feeders by some of the other hummingbird species present.

Reluctantly, with time moving on way too fast, we drove the 45 minutes back to *Tandayapa Bird Lodge* to pack up, have an excellent ceviche (seafood) lunch, take some final photos and observations at the active fruit and hummingbird feeders, and then set off back for Ecuador's capital *Quito*. In between packing and eating, we quickly got distracted by the action at the feeders viewable from the restaurant, before during and after lunch. *Bob* commented that he simply could not bear taking another **Crimson-rumped Toucanet** shot, clearly jaded from too many views and photo opps of this species, at multiple sites! The only new bird seemed to be rusty lone female, **White-lined Tanager**, foraging alongside species that by now were familiar to us, like **Toucan Barbet**, **Golden-naped**, **Golden** and **Golden-naped Tanagers**, **Orange-bellied** and **Thick-billed Euphonias**, and **Red-tailed Squirrel**.

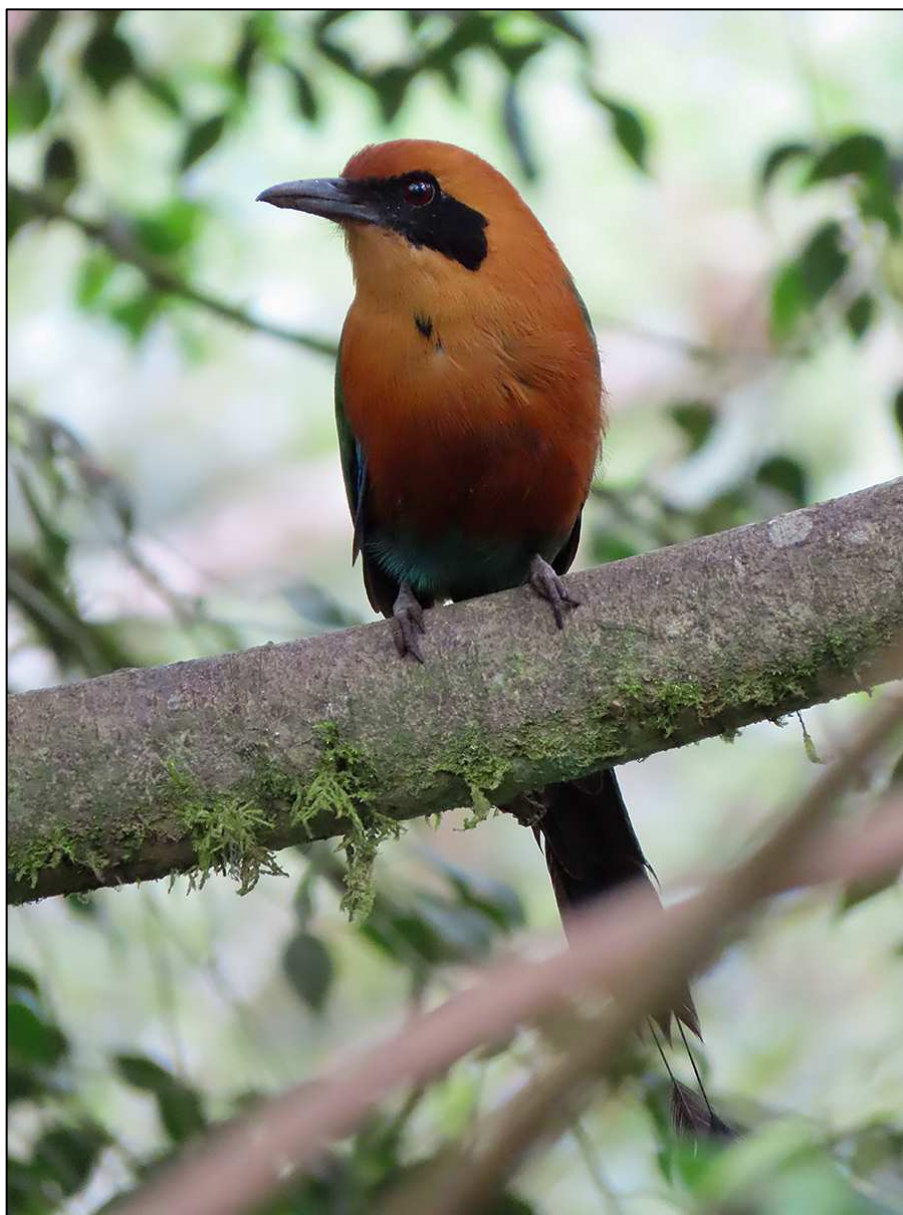


This **Tayra**, a predatory local mammal, scared all the *tanagers* away from the feeders during our final lunch in *Tandayapa Bird Lodge*, and provided a fitting finale to a fantastic stay there, full of action at their feeders, accompanied by excellent food and staff service (*Bradley Sale*)

However, the best was saved for last. As we were finishing our wonderful final meal from *Luis*, the feeders went ominously quiet, and then suddenly a large native mammal, a **Tayra** (*photo above*), slinked down the tree and dropped on to the fruit, completely visible to us all through the window, mere meters away. This adult was also joined by a smaller, young **Tayra** too, as we gasped and outwardly pondered our good fortune.

We started the drive back to *Quito*, and the airport (on the east of the city and close to *Antisana* for the next day's birding), after lunch, but made a birding stop for a short time to break up the two-hour journey. The site we visited was in the *Interandean Valley* (also where the capital is located), which divides the two north-south chains of the Andes. The native habitat in this area is largely *thorn scrub*, a low diversity, much drier, habitat compared to where we'd been in the Andean forests, but one which offered up new birds all the same, with the significant habitat change. In our brief time there, we came upon eight new species for the tour, in this unremarkable area of agricultural land and buildings bordered by thorn scrub.

First to turn up was a male **Golden-rumped Euphonia**, followed by **Sparkling Violetear**, **Band-tailed Seed eater**, a **Tropical Mockingbird** pointed out by Deborah, several glowing **Vermilion Flycatchers**, small parties of twittering **Hooded Siskins**, an **American Kestrel** or two, and a pulchritudinous **Blue-and-yellow Tanager**. However, these were all overshadowed by a certain hummingbird perched on an overhead power cable, which was none other than the dramatic **Black-tailed Trainbearer**, a male no less, with its extremely long tail sweeping behind it. The bird remained there for some time, allowing extended scope views and multiple photo attempts. Like the *Tayra* finale before this at *Tandayapa*, this was also a fantastic ending to our brief birding period near the town of *Calacali*. This town sits almost slap bang on the equator, illustrated well by the roadside *Mitad del Mundo* ("Middle of the World") monument we stopped off at a short time later for obligatory selfies and so on! *Sam* dropped everyone off at a nice hacienda-style hotel near the airport, so they were ready for the very different **High Andes Extension** to start the next day, when they were accompanied by another Tropical Birding guide, the exceedingly experienced *Jose Illanes*...



Debbie took aim at *Tandayapa Bird Lodge*, where this was one of three different **Rufous Motmots** scoffing down fruit by the restaurant window (Debbie Howell)



Two more images from Tandayapa Bird Lodge, **Ornate Flycatcher** and a feeder-full of **Booted Racket-tails** (Sam Woods and Bradley Sale)





Two shots from the cloudforests at Mashpi, **Purple-throated Fruitcrow** (Debbie Howell) and **Flame-faced Tanager** (Sam Woods)





"Trogon watchers". The group ogles a *White-tailed Trogon* in the cloudforests of **Mashpi** (Bradley Sale)



Sparking Violetear was one of the most popular of the 45 hummingbirds seen, by virtue of views like this on the *extension* (Debbie Howell)

The HIGH ANDES EXTENSION

(2 birding days)

Guided by **Jose Illanes**. *High Andes Extension report by Jose*



Ecuador's national bird, the massive **Andean Condor**, is an endangered species in the country but was surprisingly easy on this tour, with multiple views at *Antisana*, including over lunch! (*Jose Illanes/Tropical Birding Tours*)

Day 7: 24th January - Antisana to Guango Lodge.

Jose picked up the group from their comfortable hacienda style hotel on the eastern side of Quito (i.e., near the airport), in order to head out to the Andean highlands further east of the city. The first stop was just before the gate into *Antisana National Park*, where some brief roadside birding in highland scrub produced a highlight reel comprising three new flycatchers - **Tufted Tit-Tyrant**, **Brown-backed Chat-Tyrant** and **White-crested Elaenia** – plus **Black Flowerpiercer**, **Tyrian Metaltail**, **Yellow-breasted Brushfinch** and **Spectacled Redstart (Whitestart)**. After entering the reserve, we pulled in at a local viewpoint, where multiple birds-of-prey passed by in quick succession: **Andean Condors** (*photo above*) were the big headline (Ecuador's massive national bird featured multiple times through the day, including during lunch at a local café); **Caruncuated Caracara**, **Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle**, **Variable Hawk**, and the rare and unpredictable **Cinereous Harrier** all ghosted along this same, raptor-rich, ridgeline.



Along with one of the World's largest birds-of-prey (*Andean Condor*), we saw also the thrush-sized **Giant Hummingbird**, the World's largest hummingbird, on the first day of the *High Andes Extension* (Bradley Sale).

Plain-colored Seedeater was much less celebrated there! Next, we drove up to a higher spot, where paramo grasslands sprawled all around us, surrounding an attractive long-abandoned farmhouse, where a female **Ecuadorian Hillstar** lingered on a perch for some time. Both **Chestnut-winged** and **Stout-billed Cinclodes**, and **Plumbeous Sierra-Finch** hopped around on the grass nearby. We continued driving upwards, keeping our walking to short jaunts from the vehicle at this fantastic high Andean site, noting a White-tailed Deer in the paramo on the way up to the plateau, which provided yet more good birds. It was there that we got killer looks at ground-foraging **Carunculated Caracaras**, as well as **Andean Gulls** and **Andean Lapwings**, and made a brief stop for a **Black-winged Ground-Dove** that *Bradley*, at least, caught sight of. However, the hoped for *Black-faced (Andean) Ibis* was conspicuous in its *absence*, and so we pushed on towards a local high Andean lake, picking up more condors on the way. To get proper looks at the waterbirds on the lake, we took a stroll on to a paramo trail and used the scope to pick out **Andean (Ruddy) Duck**, **Andean Teal**, **Slate-colored (Andean) Coot**, and the handsome **Silvery Grebe**. The walk to and from the lake also produced shrubby species, like **Andean Tit-Spinetail** and **Many-striped Canastero**. After reconnecting with our vehicle, and trusty driver *Dario*, we began the drive to lunch, being only too happy to be side-tracked by a flock of a dozen **Black-faced (Andean) Ibis** that flew in dramatically and landed by the road, just in the nick of time! Our final stop in the *Antisana* area was for lunch, and more bird photos, at a local café, *Tambo Condor*, named after its most famous resident, which was also seen again there too.

The camera-wielders in the group were content with the local *hummingbirds* at the feeders and in the flower-laden garden, a pair of **Giant Hummingbirds** (*photo above*), multiple orange **Shining Sunbeams**, spectacularly adorned **Black-tailed Trainbearers**, and sparkling, **Sparkling Violetears** all featured memorably over lunchtime.

It was then on to *Guango Lodge*, a lower birding locale, where we stayed the night next to temperate cloudforest and a raging Andean river. Lab technicians had been arranged to give Covid tests on site to minimize disturbance to birding itinerary, which were duly done, and results e-mailed (needed by the US government for the flights back to the USA in the following days). Each side of this necessary medical distraction were avian ones, notably yet more hummingbirds, with yet more new ones for the group, pushing the trip's total hummingbird species list to beyond 40 species! Hummingbird highlights included a sextuplet of newbies, **Long-tailed Sylph**, **Mountain Velvetbreast**, **Tourmaline Sunangel**, **Gorgeted and White-bellied Woodstars**, and **Chestnut-breasted Coronet**, as well as much welcomed, upgraded, looks at **Collared Incas**, and **Sword-billed Hummingbirds**. **Buff-winged Starfrontlet** also showed up there too before darkness drew in.



Bonus Bird: This **Andean Potoo** had been around *Guango Lodge*, on and off, in recent (largely, *birders-less*) months. However, the lodge staff proclaimed it was no longer present. Undeterred, Jose checked its favoured stretch of forest and found it hiding in plain sight! This is a rare species almost never recorded on this tour (*Jose Illanes/Tropical Birding Tours*).

Day 8: 25th January -

Guango Lodge,
Papallacta to Quito.

After a rare day on this year's tour without rain the day before, on our final day of birding, the climate returned to type, with more rain today. However, in spite of the rain, we, and the birds were active, making the most of our final day in Ecuador's epic Andes, home to some of the highest bird diversity on the planet. The rain had us initially delaying our local walk near *Guango Lodge*, and so we did what you do in these prohibitive periods, watch the dizzy variety of *hummingbirds* on the doorstep of the lodge. The species were the same as the day before, but they were no less spectacular for it! As the rain lessened, we set off on foot and checked the nearby river, where one of the tour highlights was an orange-breasted female **Torrent Duck** battling the rushing torrent with ease! **White-capped Dippers** hopped from rock to rock nearby too. Jose surveyed a particular stretch of trees for scarce and unpredictable bird and came up with the roosting **Andean Potoo** that has sporadically been present there! A great High Andes Extension bird. A trail was taken to and from a nearby bridge in the hope of finding one of the well-known local feeding flocks. The flock did not really appear in full force, but **Hooded Mountain-Tanager**, (**Northern**) **Mountain Cacique**, and both **Green (Inca)** and **Turquoise Jays** were found during this forest-side walk. On returning to the lodge, we



readied to leave *Guango Lodge*, with a boxed lunch, to take in various parts of the highlands around *Papallacta*, before driving on back to Quito in the afternoon. However, shortly before departure, Jose checked the nearby trail for signs of a flock, and quickly retraced his footsteps to alert the group, it had arrived in force...**Gray-hooded Bush-Tanager**, **Buff-breasted Mountain-Tanager**, **Capped Conebill**, **Pearled Treerunner**, **Streaked Tuftedcheek**, **Rufous-breasted Flycatcher**, **White-banded Tyrannulet**, **Rufous Wren**, and **Pale-naped Brushfinch** were all swiftly gleaned from this flock. As if that was not enough, the *Guango* finale was a fantastic **Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan** that gave a spectacular and much appreciated response!

By mid-morning, we were ready leave and bid a reluctant farewell to *Guango*. Next up, was a steep mountain road that allowed us to drive into stunted elfin forest at the treeline. This is where we got to grips with **Black-chested Mountain-Tanager**, **Red-crested Cotinga**, **Viridian Metaltail**, and a very showy **White-chinned Thistletail**. *Bradley* also managed to connect with a typically retiring **Paramo Tapaculo** in the area too.



The highest bird on this tour: We made a short drive up high in the Andes to get this Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe near Papallacta Pass, which is not always so co-operative! (Jose Illanes/Tropical Birding Tours).

After taking our field lunch on this quiet, forested backroad, we headed up higher, on the route back to *Quito*, stopping above *Papallacta Pass* for the highest point of the tour. The reason for this short drive up to higher points shuffled off the road as we drove up, a pair of **Rufous-bellied Seedsnipes**. Jose quickly jumped out to keep track of them, as they can quickly melt into their preferred surroundings of flower-rich beds of cushion moss. Jose kept an eye on them, and soon all others had their eyes on them too, for lengthy look. With that done, we drove back down the road making stops for **Andean Tit-Spinetail**, **Blue-mantled Thornbill** (another new hummingbird), another **Many-striped Canastero** and another Tawny Antpitta before reaching the pass again. However, instead of heading back to *Quito* on the multiple lane highway, we took the old road for a while first, dropping in at a patch of *polylepis* forest. This is the exclusive home of the **Giant Conebill**, a nuthatch-like high Andean tanager that is restricted to these highland forest trees that grow at higher elevations than all others. It took its merry time to show up, but show up it did, a single bird, which was our cue to leave, providing a wonderful “final” bird of the tour. We got back into our comfortable airport hotel at 5pm, with plenty of time for final meal and to look back at what had been an excellent tour of the best sites of Northwest Ecuador coupled with several stellar days in the high Andes, which added nearly 50 more species to the trip list in just two full days! Thankfully, all who joined the main tour, also joined the extension, making everyone who started the tour ending it too with the very same joyful recollections!

CHECKLISTS:**BIRDS**

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 August 2019. (There were no updates in 2020).*

EXT - INDICATES A SPECIES ONLY SEEN ON THE EXTENSION (HIGH ANDES EXTENSION).

H - INDICATES A SPECIES THAT WAS HEARD ONLY.

GO - INDICATES A SPECIES RECORDED BY THE GUIDE ONLY.

CHOC – INDICATES A SPECIES THAT IS ENDEMIC TO THE *CHOCO* BIOREGION, VISITED ON THE MAIN TOUR.

TINAMOUS

H Little Tinamou

DUCKS, GEESE, & WATERFOWL

Torrent Duck

EXT Andean Teal

EXT Andean Ruddy Duck

CRACIDS

Andean Guan

Crested Guan

NEW WORLD QUAIL

H/CHOC Dark-backed Wood-Quail

GREBES

EXT Silvery Grebe

PIGEONS AND DOVES

Rock Pigeon

Pale-vented Pigeon

Band-tailed Pigeon

Ruddy Pigeon

EXT Black-winged Ground-Dove

White-tipped Dove

CHOC Pallid Dove

H White-throated Quail-Dove

Eared Dove

CUCKOOS

Smooth-billed Ani

Squirrel Cuckoo

TINAMIDAE

Crypturellus soui

ANATIDAE

Merganetta armata

Anas andium andium

Oxyura ferruginea

CRACIDAE

Penelope montagnii

Penelope purpurascens

ODONTOPHORIDAE

Odontophorus melanonotus

PODICIPEDIDAE

Podiceps occipitalis

COLUMBIDAE

Columba livia

Patagioenas cayennensis

Patagioenas fasciata

Patagioenas subvinacea

Metriopelia melanoptera

Leptotila verreauxi

Leptotila pallida

Zentrygon frenata

Zenaida auriculata

CUCULIDAE

Crotophaga ani

Piaya cayana

NIGHTJARS AND ALLIES

Rufous-bellied Nighthawk

Lyre-tailed Nightjar

POTOOS**EXT Andean Potoo**SWIFTS

Chestnut-collared Swift

White-collared Swift

Band-rumped Swift

Gray-rumped Swift

HUMMINGBIRDS

White-necked Jacobin

CHOC White-whiskered Hermit

Tawny-bellied Hermit

CHOC Choco Daggerbill

Brown Violetear

EXT Lesser Violetear

Sparkling Violetear

Purple-crowned Fairy

CHOC Gorgeted Sunangel**EXT Tourmaline Sunangel**

Green Thorntail

Speckled Hummingbird

Long-tailed Sylph

CHOC Violet-tailed Sylph**EXT Ecuadorian Hillstar**

Black-tailed Trainbearer

EXT Blue-mantled Thornbill

Tyrian Metaltail

EXT Viridian Metaltail

Sapphire-vented Puffleg

Golden-breasted Puffleg

Shining Sunbeam

CHOC Brown Inca

Collared Inca

Buff-winged Starfrontlet

EXT Mountain Velvetbreast

Sword-billed Hummingbird

Great Sapphirewing

Buff-tailed Coronet

CAPRIMULGIDAE*Lurocalis rufiventris**Uropsalis lyra*NYCTIBIIDAE***Nyctibius maculosus***APODIDAE*Streptoprocne rutila**Streptoprocne zonaris**Chaetura spinicaudus**Chaetura cinereiventris*TROCHILIDAE*Florisuga mellivora****Phaethornis yaruqui****Phaethornis syrmatorphorus****Schistes albogularis****Colibri delphinae****Colibri cyanotus****Colibri coruscans**Heliothryx barroti****Heliangelus strophianus******Heliangelus exortis****Discosura conversii**Adelomyia melanogenys**Agelaiocercus kingii****Agelaiocercus coelestis******Oreotrochilus chimborazo****Lesbia victoriae****Chalcostigma stanleyi****Metallura tyrianthina****Metallura williami****Eriocnemis luciani**Eriocnemis mosquera**Aglaeactis cupripennis****Coeligena wilsoni****Coeligena torquata**Coeligena lutetiae****Lafresnaya lafresnayi****Ensifera ensifera**Pterophanes cyanopterus**Boissonneaua flavescens*

EXT	Chestnut-breasted Coronet	<i>Boissonneaua matthewsii</i>
CHOC	Velvet-purple Coronet	<i>Boissonneaua jardini</i>
	Booted Racket-tail	<i>Ocreatus underwoodii</i>
CHOC	Purple-bibbed Whitetip	<i>Urosticte benjamini</i>
	Fawn-breasted Brilliant	<i>Heliodoxa rubinoides</i>
	Green-crowned Brilliant	<i>Heliodoxa jacula</i>
CHOC	Empress Brilliant	<i>Heliodoxa imperatrix</i>
EXT	Giant Hummingbird	<i>Patagona gigas</i>
EXT	White-bellied Woodstar	<i>Chaetocercus mulsant</i>
EXT	Gorgeted Woodstar	<i>Chaetocercus heliodor</i>
	Purple-throated Woodstar	<i>Calliphlox mitchellii</i>
	Western Emerald	<i>Chlorostilbon melanorhynchus</i>
	Crowned (Green-crowned) Woodnymph	<i>Thalurania colombica</i>
	Andean Emerald	<i>Amazilia franciae</i>
	Blue-chested Hummingbird	<i>Amazilia amabilis</i>
CHOC	Purple-chested Hummingbird	<i>Amazilia rosenbergi</i>
	Rufous-tailed Hummingbird	<i>Amazilia tzacatl</i>
	Violet-bellied Hummingbird	<i>Damophila julie</i>
	RAILS, GALLINULES, AND COOTS	RALLIDAE
EXT	Slate-colored (Andean) Coot	<i>Fulica ardesiaca</i>
	PLOVERS AND LAPWINGS	CHARADRIIDAE
	Andean Lapwing	<i>Vanellus resplendens</i>
	SEEDSNIPES	THINOCORIDAE
EXT	Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe	<i>Attagis gayi latreillii</i>
	SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES	SCOLOPACIDAE
EXT	Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularius</i>
	GULLS, TERNS AND SKIMMERS	LARIDAE
EXT	Andean Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus serranus</i>
	HERONS, EGRETS, AND BITTERNS	ARDEIDAE
	Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
	IBIS AND SPOONBILLS	THRESKIORNITHIDAE
EXT	Black-faced (Andean) Ibis	<i>Theristicus melanopis branickii</i>
	NEW WORLD VULTURES	CATHARTIDAE
	Black Vulture	<i>Coragyps atratus</i>
	Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura jota</i>
EXT	Andean Condor	<i>Vultur gryphus</i>
	HAWKS, EAGLES, AND KITES	ACCIPITRIDAE
	Hook-billed Kite	<i>Chondrohierax uncinatus</i>
	Swallow-tailed Kite	<i>Elanoides forficatus</i>
EXT	Cinereous Harrier	<i>Circus cinereus</i>

H	Barred Hawk	<i>Morphnarchus princeps</i>
	Roadside Hawk	<i>Rupornis magnirostris</i>
	White-rumped Hawk	<i>Parabuteo leucorrhous</i>
	Variable Hawk	<i>Geranoaetus polyosoma</i>
EXT	Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle	<i>Geranoaetus melanoleucus</i>
	Gray-lined Hawk	<i>Buteo nitidus</i>
	Broad-winged Hawk	<i>Buteo platypterus</i>
	<u>OWLS</u>	STRIGIDAE
	White-throated Screech-Owl	<i>Megascops albogularis</i>
	Burrowing Owl	<i>Athene cunicularia</i>
	<u>TROGONS</u>	TROGONIDAE
	Golden-headed Quetzal	<i>Pharomachrus auriceps</i>
CHOC	Blue-tailed (Chocó) Trogon	<i>Trogon comptus</i>
	(Western) White-tailed Trogon	<i>Trogon chionurus</i>
	Masked Trogon	<i>Trogon personatus</i>
	<u>MOTMOTS</u>	MOMOTIDAE
	Rufous Motmot	<i>Baryphthengus martii</i>
	Broad-billed Motmot	<i>Electron platyrhynchum</i>
	<u>KINGFISHERS</u>	ALCEDINIDAE
GO	Ringed Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle torquata</i>
	<u>PUFFBIRDS</u>	BUCCONIDAE
	Barred Puffbird	<i>Nystalus radiatus</i>
	<u>NEW WORLD BARBETS</u>	CAPITONIDAE
CHOC	Orange-fronted Barbet	<i>Capito squamatus</i>
	Red-headed Barbet	<i>Eubucco bourcierii</i>
	<u>TOUCAN-BARBETS</u>	SEMNORNITHIDAE
CHOC	Toucan Barbet	<i>Semnornis ramphastinus</i>
	<u>TOUCANS</u>	RAMPHASTIDAE
	Crimson-rumped Toucanet	<i>Aulacorhynchus haematopygus</i>
EXT	Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan	<i>Andigena hypoglaucha</i>
CHOC	Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan	<i>Andigena laminirostris</i>
CHOC	Collared (Pale-mandibled) Aracari	<i>Pteroglossus torquatus erythropygius</i>
	Yellow-throated (Chestnut-mandibled) Toucan	<i>Ramphastos ambiguus swainsonii</i>
CHOC	Choco Toucan	<i>Ramphastos brevis</i>
	<u>WOODPECKERS</u>	PICIDAE
	Black-cheeked Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes pucherani</i>
H	Golden-olive Woodpecker	<i>Colaptes rubiginosus</i>
	Crimson-mantled Woodpecker	<i>Colaptes rivolii</i>
	Lineated Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus lineatus</i>

FALCONS AND CARACARAS

H Barred Forest-Falcon

EXT **Carunculated Caracara**

American Kestrel

Bat Falcon

NEW WORLD AND AFRICAN PARROTS**CHOC** **Rose-faced Parrot**

Red-billed Parrot

H Speckle-faced (White-capped) Parrot

Blue-headed Parrot

Bronze-winged Parrot

Red-lored Parrot (Amazon)

Maroon-tailed Parakeet

TYPICAL ANTIBIRDS

Rufous-rumped Antwren

GO/H Uniform Antshrike

Russet Antshrike (Tawny)

Pacific Antwren

Dot-winged Antwren

Streak-headed (Long-tailed) Antbird

H Dusky Antbird

H Chestnut-backed Antbird

CHOC **Esmeraldas Antbird**

Zeledon's (Immaculate) Antbird

ANTPITTAS**CHOC** **Moustached Antpitta**

H Scaled Antpitta

H Plain-backed Antpitta

H Chestnut-crowned Antpitta

H Chestnut-naped Antpitta

CHOC **Yellow-breasted Antpitta**

Rufous Antpitta

Tawny Antpitta

Ochre-breasted Antpitta

TAPACULOS

Ocellated Tapaculo

H Ash-colored Tapaculo

H Blackish (Unicolored) Tapaculo

CHOC **Nariño Tapaculo**

H Spillmann's Tapaculo

FALCONIDAE*Micrastur ruficollis****Phalcoboenus carunculatus****Falco sparverius**Falco ruficularis*Psittacidae***Pyrilia pulchra****Pionus sordidus**Pionus tumultuosus seniloides**Pionus menstruus**Pionus chalcopterus**Amazona autumnalis**Pyrrhura melanura pacifica*THAMNOPHILIDAE*Euchrepomis callinota**Thamnophilus unicolor**Thamnistes anabatinus**Myrmotherula pacifica**Microrhopias quixensis**Drymophila striaticeps**Cercomacroides tyrannina**Poliocrania exsul****Sipia nigricauda****Hafferia zeledoni*GRALLARIIDAE***Grallaria alleni****Grallaria guatemalensis**Grallaria haplonota**Grallaria ruficapilla**Grallaria nuchalis****Grallaria flavotincta****Grallaria rufula**Grallaria quitensis**Grallarica flavirostris*RHINOCRYPTIDAE*Acropternis orthonyx**Myornis senilis**Scytalopus latrans****Scytalopus vicinior****Scytalopus spillmanni*

EXT Paramo Tapaculo**ANTHRUSHES****H** Rufous-breasted Antthrush**OVENBIRDS AND WOODCREEPERS**

Wedge-billed Woodcreeper

H Strong-billed Woodcreeper**H** Black-striped Woodcreeper

Spotted Woodcreeper

Streak-headed Woodcreeper

Montane Woodcreeper

CHOC **Buffy (Pacific) Tuftedcheek**

Streaked Tuftedcheek

GO Rusty-winged Barbtail**EXT Chestnut-winged (Bar-winged) Cinclodes****EXT Stout-billed Cinclodes**

Buff-fronted Foliage-gleaner

Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaner

Lineated Foliage-gleaner

CHOC **Uniform Treehunter**

Striped Treehunter

Streak-capped Treehunter

Spotted Barbtail

Pearled Treerunner

EXT Andean Tit-Spinetail

White-browed Spinetail

EXT Many-striped Canastero**EXT White-chinned Thistletail**

Red-faced Spinetail

H Rufous Spinetail**H** Slaty Spinetail**TYRANT FLYCATCHERS**

White-tailed Tyrannulet

EXT White-banded Tyrannulet**EXT White-throated Tyrannulet****EXT Tufted Tit-Tyrant****H** Yellow-crowned Tyrannulet

Yellow-bellied Elaenia

EXT White-crested Elaenia

Sierran Elaenia

Streak-necked Flycatcher

Scytalopus opacus**FORMICARIIDAE***Formicarius rufipectus***FURNARIIDAE***Glyphorhynchus spirurus**Xiphocolaptes promeropirhynchus**Xiphorhynchus lachrymosus**Xiphorhynchus erythropygius**Lepidocolaptes souleyetii**Lepidocolaptes lacrymiger****Pseudocolaptes lawrencii johnsoni****Pseudocolaptes boissonneautii**Premnornis guttuliger****Cinclodes albidiventris******Cinclodes excelsior****Philydor rufum**Anabacerthia variegaticeps**Syndactyla subalaris****Thripadectes ignobilis****Thripadectes holostictus**Thripadectes virgaticeps**Premnoplex brunnescens**Margarornis squamiger****Leptasthenura andicola****Hellmayrea gularis****Asthenes flammulata******Asthenes fuliginosa****Cranioleuca erythrops**Synallaxis unirufa**Synallaxis brachyura***TYRANNIDAE***Mecocerculus poecilocercus****Mecocerculus stictopterus******Mecocerculus leucophrys******Anairetes parulus****Tyrannulus elatus**Elaenia flavogaster****Elaenia albiceps****Elaenia pallatangae**Mionectes striaticollis*

H Slaty-capped Flycatcher
 EXT **Rufous-breasted Flycatcher**
 Marble-faced Bristle-Tyrant
 H Sooty-headed Tyrannulet
 EXT **Tawny-rumped Tyrannulet**
 CHOC **Choco Tyrannulet**
 Ornate Flycatcher
 Bronze-olive Pygmy-Tyrant
 H Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant
 Common Tody-Flycatcher
 Cinnamon Flycatcher
 Flavescent Flycatcher
 Smoke-colored Pewee
 Black Phoebe
 Vermilion Flycatcher
 Masked Water-Tyrant
 Yellow-bellied Chat-Tyrant
 Rufous-breasted Chat-Tyrant
 EXT **Brown-backed Chat-Tyrant**
 Dusky-capped Flycatcher
 Rusty-margined Flycatcher
 Social Flycatcher
 Golden-crowned Flycatcher
 Tropical Kingbird
[COTINGAS](#)
 Green-and-black Fruiteater
 CHOC **Orange-breasted Fruiteater**
 Scaled Fruiteater
 Red-crested Cotinga
 Andean Cock-of-the-rock
 Olivaceous Piha
 Purple-throated Fruitcrow
[MANAKINS](#)
 Golden-winged Manakin
[TITYRAS AND ALLIES](#)
 Masked Tityra
 Cinnamon Becard
[VIREOS AND ALLIES](#)
 H Black-billed Peppershrike
 Slaty-capped Shrike-Vireo

Leptopogon superciliaris
Leptopogon rufipectus
Phylloscartes ophthalmicus
Phyllomyias griseiceps
Phyllomyias uropygialis
Zimmerius albigularis
Myiotriccus ornatus
Pseudotriccus pelzelni
Lophotriccus pileatus
Todirostrum cinereum
Pyrrhomyias cinnamomeus
Myiophobus flavicans
Contopus fumigatus
Sayornis nigricans
Pyrocephalus rubinus
Fluvicola nengeta
Ochthoeca diadema
Ochthoeca rufipectoralis
Ochthoeca fumicolor
Myiarchus tuberculifer
Myiozetetes cayanensis
Myiozetetes similis
Myiodynastes chrysocephalus
Tyrannus melancholicus
[COTINGIDAE](#)
Pipreola riefferii
Pipreola jucunda
Ampelioides tschudii
Ampelion rubrocristatus
Rupicola peruvianus
Snowornis cryptolophus
Querula purpurata
[PIPRIDAE](#)
Masius chrysopterus
[TITYRIDAE](#)
Tityra semifasciata
Pachyramphus cinnamomeus
[VIREONIDAE](#)
Cyclarhis nigristrois
Vireolanius leucotis

	Lesser Greenlet	<i>Pachysylvia decurtata</i>
CHOC	Choco Vireo	<i>Vireo masteri</i>
	Brown-capped Vireo	<i>Vireo leucophrys</i>
	<u>CROWS JAYS AND MAGPIES</u>	<u>CORVIDAE</u>
	Turquoise Jay	<i>Cyanolyca turcosa</i>
EXT	Green (Inca) Jay	<i>Cyanocorax yncas yncas</i>
	<u>SWALLOWS</u>	<u>HIRUNDINIDAE</u>
	Blue-and-white Swallow	<i>Pygochelidon cyanoleuca</i>
	Brown-bellied Swallow	<i>Orochelidon murina</i>
	Southern Rough-winged Swallow	<i>Stelgidopteryx ruficollis</i>
	Gray-breasted Martin	<i>Progne chalybea</i>
	<u>WRENS</u>	<u>TROGLODYTIDAE</u>
H	Scaly-breasted (Southern Nightingale) Wren	<i>Microcerculus marginatus</i>
H	House Wren	<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>
EXT	Mountain Wren	<i>Troglodytes solstitialis</i>
EXT	Sedge (Grass) Wren	<i>Cistothorus platensis aequatorialis</i>
H	Plain-tailed Wren	<i>Pheugopedius euophrys</i>
	Whiskered Wren	<i>Pheugopedius mystacalis</i>
	Bay Wren	<i>Cantorchilus nigricapillus</i>
	Rufous Wren	<i>Cinnycerthia unirufa</i>
	Gray-breasted Wood-Wren	<i>Henicorhina leucophrys</i>
	<u>GNATCATCHERS</u>	<u>POLIOPTILIDAE</u>
	Slate-throated Gnatcatcher	<i>Polioptila schistaceigula</i>
	<u>DIPPERS</u>	<u>CINCLIDAE</u>
	White-capped Dipper	<i>Cinclus leucocephalus</i>
	<u>THRUSHES AND ALLIES</u>	<u>TURDIDAE</u>
	Andean Solitaire	<i>Myadestes ralloides</i>
	Spotted Nightingale-Thrush	<i>Catharus dryas</i>
	Swainson's Thrush	<i>Catharus ustulatus</i>
CHOC	Black Solitaire	<i>Entomodestes coracinus</i>
	Rufous-brown Solitaire	<i>Cichlopsis leucogenys</i>
	Ecuadorian Thrush	<i>Turdus maculirostris</i>
	Great Thrush	<i>Turdus fuscater</i>
	Glossy-black Thrush	<i>Turdus serranus</i>
	<u>MOCKINGBIRDS AND THRASHERS</u>	<u>MIMIDAE</u>
	Tropical Mockingbird	<i>Mimus gilvus</i>
	<u>OLD WORLD SPARROWS</u>	<u>PASSERIDAE</u>
H	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
	<u>WAGTAILS AND PIPITS</u>	<u>MOTACILLIDAE</u>
H/EXT	Paramo Pipit	<i>Anthus bogotensis</i>

FINCHES, EUPHONIAS AND ALLIES

Thick-billed Euphonia
 Golden-rumped Euphonia
 Orange-bellied Euphonia
 Hooded Siskin

NEW WORLD SPARROWS

Yellow-throated Chlorospingus (Bush-Tanager)

CHOC Dusky Chlorospingus (Bush-Tanager)

GO/H Black-striped Sparrow
 Gray-browed (Stripe-headed) Brushfinch
 Orange-billed Sparrow
 Chestnut-capped Brushfinch
 Rufous-collared Sparrow
 Tricolored Brushfinch

EXT Pale-naped Brushfinch

Yellow-breasted (Rufous-naped) Brushfinch
 White-winged Brushfinch

TROUPIALS AND ALLIES

Scrub Blackbird

H Scarlet-rumped Cacique

EXT (Northern) Mountain Cacique

Russet-backed Oropendola

NEW WORLD WARBLERS

Tropical Parula
 Blackburnian Warbler
 Three-striped Warbler
 Black-crested Warbler

H Buff-rumped Warbler

CHOC Golden-bellied (Chocó) Warbler

Russet-crowned Warbler

EXT Canada Warbler

Slate-throated Redstart (Whitestart)
 Spectacled Redstart (Whitestart)

MITROSPINGID TANAGERS

Dusky-faced Tanager

CARDINALS AND ALLIES

Summer Tanager
 White-winged Tanager

CHOC Ochre-breasted Tanager

FRINGILLIDAE

Euphonia laniirostris
Euphonia cyanocephala
Euphonia xanthogaster
Spinus magellanicus

PASSERELLIDAE

Chlorospingus flavigularis

Chlorospingus semifuscus

Arremonops conirostris

Arremon assimilis

Arremon aurantirostris

Arremon brunneinucha

Zonotrichia capensis

Atlapetes tricolor

Atlapetes pallidinucha

Atlapetes latinuchus

Atlapetes leucopterus leucopterus

ICTERIDAE

Dives waczewiczi

Cacicus uropygialis pacificus

Cacicus chrysonotus leucoramphus

Psarocolius angustifrons

PARULIDAE

Setophaga pitayumi

Setophaga fusca

Basileuterus tristriatus

Myiothlypis nigrocristata

Myiothlypis fulvicauda

Myiothlypis chrysogaster chlorophrys

Myiothlypis coronata

Cardellina canadensis

Myioborus miniatus

Myioborus melanocephalus

MITROSPINGIDAE

Mitrospingus cassinii

CARDINALIDAE

Piranga rubra

Piranga leucoptera

Chlorothraupis stolzmanni

Golden Grosbeak

TANAGERS AND ALLIES

Superciliaried Hemispingus

EXT Gray-hooded Bush Tanager

White-shouldered Tanager

Tawny-crested Tanager

White-lined Tanager

Flame-rumped (Lemon-rumped) Tanager

CHOC Moss-backed Tanager

Hooded Mountain-Tanager

Black-chested Mountain-Tanager

Grass-green Tanager

Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanager

Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager

CHOC Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager**EXT Buff-breasted Mountain-Tanager**

Blue-and-yellow Tanager

CHOC Glistening-green Tanager

Blue-gray Tanager

Palm Tanager

Blue-capped Tanager

Golden-naped Tanager

Black-capped Tanager

Gray-and-gold Tanager

Blue-necked Tanager

CHOC Rufous-throated Tanager**EXT Blue-and-black Tanager**

Beryl-spangled Tanager

Metallic-green Tanager

Rufous-winged Tanager

Bay-headed Tanager

Flame-faced Tanager

Golden Tanager

Emerald Tanager

Silver-throated Tanager

Black-faced (Yellow-tufted) Dacnis

Green Honeycreeper

Golden-collared Honeycreeper

CHOC Scarlet-browed Tanager

Cinereous Conebill

*Pheucticus chrysogaster***THRAUPIDAE***Hemispingus superciliaris****Cnemoscopus rubrirostris****Tachyphonus luctuosus**Tachyphonus delatrii**Tachyphonus rufus**Ramphocelus flammigerus icteronotus****Bangsia edwardsi****Buthraupis montana**Cnemathraupis eximia**Chlorornis riefferii**Anisognathus igniventris**Anisognathus somptuosus****Anisognathus notabilis******Dubusia taeniata****Pipraeidea bonariensis****Chlorochrysa phoenicotis****Thraupis episcopus**Thraupis palmarum**Thraupis cyanocephala**Tangara ruficervix**Tangara heinei**Tangara palmeri**Tangara cyanicollis****Tangara rufigula******Tangara vassorii****Tangara nigroviridis**Tangara labradorides**Tangara lavinia**Tangara gyrola**Tangara parzudakii**Tangara arthus**Tangara florida**Tangara icterocephala**Dacnis lineata aequatorialis**Chlorophanes spiza**Iridophanes pulcherrimus****Heterospingus xanthopygius****Conirostrum cinereum*

	Capped Conebill	<i>Conirostrum albifrons</i>
EXT	Giant Conebill	<i>Oreomanes fraseri</i>
	Glossy Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossa lafresnayii</i>
	Black Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossa humeralis</i>
	White-sided Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossa albilatera</i>
CHOC	Indigo Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossa indigotica</i>
	Masked Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossa cyanea</i>
	Plushcap	<i>Catamblyrhynchus diadema</i>
GO/EXT	Black-backed Bush Tanager	<i>Urothraupis stolzmanni</i>
EXT	Plumbeous Sierra-Finch	<i>Phrygilus unicolor</i>
	Blue-black Grassquit	<i>Volatinia jacarina</i>
	Thick-billed (Lesser) Seed-Finch	<i>Sporophila funerea</i>
	Variable Seedeater	<i>Sporophila corvina</i>
	Yellow-bellied Seedeater	<i>Sporophila nigricollis</i>
	Band-tailed Seedeater	<i>Catamenia analis</i>
EXT	Plain-colored Seedeater	<i>Catamenia inornata</i>
	Bananaquit	<i>Coereba flaveola</i>
	Buff-throated Saltator	<i>Saltator maximus</i>
	Black-winged Saltator	<i>Saltator atripennis</i>

MAMMALS

	Common Opossum	
	Red-tailed Squirrel	<i>Sciurus granatensis</i>
	Central American Agouti	<i>Dasyprocta punctata</i>
	Tapeti (Brazilian Rabbit)	<i>Sylvilagus brasiliensis</i>
	Tayra	<i>Eira barbara</i>
	Kinkajou	<i>Potos flavus</i>
EXT	White-tailed Deer	<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>