

PANAMA & DARIEN

10 JANUARY – 2 FEBRUARY 2007

TOUR REPORT

LEADER: MATT DENTON

The 2007 tour to the narrow isthmus of Panama was one of the most successful Birdquests ever to this fascinating country so rich in tropical birds. Although an astonishing amount of human history has played out here, much of Panama remains undeveloped. Nearly half of the tour was spent in the eastern portion of the country, in the Darien National Park, the last great wilderness of Central America through which no road has ever been built. During our exploration of this unconquered rainforest we saw three of its great icons: Harpy Eagle, Rufous-vented Ground-Cuckoo and Puma! We were very fortunate to see a total of four individual Rufous-vented Ground-Cuckoos during this splendid tour, certainly our most extraordinary feat! Indeed, an aggressive pair of this rare and elusive species repeatedly charged up to us at an ant swarm with their bills clattering away. Our species total for the trip numbered 522 species including many range-restricted and threatened species, nine country endemics, 15 Darien endemics, nearly a dozen birds confined to the Costa Rica and Panama highlands Endemic Bird Area (this EBA is more extensively covered on our Costa Rica tour), and quite a few species largely ranging in Panama and hard-to-access parts of Colombia and north-western Ecuador. Some of the many memorable birds included Plumbeous Hawk, Great Green Macaw, Saffron-headed Parrot, Crimson-bellied Woodpecker, Black-crowned Antpitta, Black-tipped and Blue Cotingas and Black Oropendola. Our most unexpected encounter in the Darien forests occurred with a beautiful dark reddish Puma resting near the trail, yawning and showing us its teeth, an absolutely breathtaking and unique experience to stand face to face with this seldom-seen cat!

The tour began with one of the world's most diverse city parks, the forested Metropolitan Park in Panama City. Here we became acquainted with a good selection of Neotropical birds, from Rosy Thrush-Tanager and White-bellied Antbirds scratching away in the dry leaf litter to other understory birds such as noisy Red-crowned Ant-Tanagers, delicate Long-billed Gnatwrens, melodious Rufous-and-white Wrens and the odd little Southern Bentbill. A brilliant male Lance-tailed Manakin feeding at a fruiting tree kept the excitement going and busy canopy flocks held interesting canopy tyrannids such as Brown-capped and Yellow-crowned Tyrannulets and Forest Elaenia. By midmorning we broke away for the moist foothills of the Serranía de San Blas east of Panama City and our first lodge of the tour, Burbayar Lodge, located at the edge of the autonomous Kuna Yala's Nusagandi forest reserve. Here on the continental divide we had to contend with some rain and plenty of wind during our stay but still managed to see many specialty birds. On our first afternoon here the newly improved Llano - Cartí road took us to the moist Caribbean slope where we connected with our first flocks of multi-hued tanagers. Scarlet-thighed and Blue Dacnises, Green and Shining Honeycreepers,

and Golden-hooded Tanager all vied for our attention, and also a noisy party of Tawny-crested Tanagers came through, but best of all were our excellent scope views of a pair of Sulphur-rumped Tanagers, a handsome near-endemic. There were also large numbers of White-vented Euphonias adorning some roadside trees and upon returning to Burbayar Lodge we had a great view of the gorgeous Rufous-winged Tanager in the lodge garden!

We spent the next day and a half birding Burbayar's hill forest, home of the very localized Speckled (or Spiny-faced) Antshrike, a formidable target with whom we were afforded only a brief view on our final morning there. Just after sighting the antshrike we came upon our first swarm of hundreds of thousands of army ants rippling across the forest floor as they caught up the invertebrate fauna in a relentless wave of terror. In our wellington boots we had the perfect footwear for the occasion and the ants gave us no problem as we watched the ant following birds snapping up the meaty insect prey trying to escape the ants. There were large numbers of fancy Ocellated Antbirds easily seen as were the growling Bicoloured Antbirds, however our adrenalin soared when suddenly a large cuckoo jumped into sight and bolted up the trail - Rufous-vented Ground-Cuckoo! This was followed by the predatory Barred Forest-Falcon overlooking the chaos and giving incredible close-up views. Though we tried in vain to find the ground-cuckoo again, little did we know at the time that we had in fact begun our road in to the annals of ground-cuckoo hall-of-fame, for this would be only the first of several sightings, each one better than before! As would also be the case for the Black-crowned Antpitta, our first being seen here by only part of the group, but we would later get second helpings in the Darien. Though the forest was constantly wet and brief rain showers continually passed overhead, we had a bundle of other great sightings that included a pair of Yellow-eared Toucanet, a Plumbeous Hawk that gave us a most menacing stare, and shy forest passerines such as Spot-crowned Antvireo, Western Woodhaunter and Dull-mantled and Chestnut-backed Antbirds. Leaving Burbayar, we descended back to the Pan-American Highway and headed a short distance further east, where a stop in some drier woodland produced a lovely pair of Black Antshrikes, here at the westernmost limit of its range.

A second morning in Metropolitan Park featured the endemic Yellow-green Tyrannulet and iridescent jewels such as Violet-bellied Hummingbird and the diminutive Garden Emerald. There were Golden-fronted and Scrub Greenlets flitting through the greenery and songful Yellow-backed Orioles perching out for fine views, but we had a plane to catch, and before long we were enjoying a bird's eye view of Panama City as we quickly left behind such modernity, our heading east, towards the Darien jungle. After passing the expansive Tiura river delta, we swung south to a broad point jutting out into the blue-green Pacific known as Punta Patiño. This large private forest reserve now has a lodge perched on top of this prominent point and before long we descended to the grassy airstrip to meet our friendly crew led by the amicable Jefferson. After a bit of birding in the scrub forest near the shore, finding Straight-billed Woodcreeper, Panama Flycatcher and Prothonotary Warbler, we stepped aboard our seafaring craft for the relatively short journey along the coast and then up a narrow river to the Mogue indigenous village where we would spend the night. As it turned out, our crew had timed our transit perfectly with the tides but we weren't quite ready for what happened next. Only minutes after stepping off the boat on to the wide track that led to the village, we encountered one of our most sought-after targets, the Black Oropendola, several males of which were foraging and displaying very low in the subcanopy! Not to be outdone, there was also a host of male Purple-throated Fruitcrows mixed in with them, their throats flared out in excitement and making for a real spectacle. Turning around we were suddenly taken back to see that we were surrounded by a very large group of Embará children, their mothers and even a few elders, all of them with their skin painted and wearing only skirts of brilliantly coloured cloth, ready to escort us to the village to the beat of several drums and cheerful song and dance! This jubilant escort was a telling sign of nothing but good things to come, and the subsequent delicious lunch of cold beers and freshly caught fish was delicious. Indeed, we were very well taken care of during our mosquito-free stay here. That afternoon near the village we enjoyed excellent sightings of bickering Black-tailed Trogons, a

confiding Black-bellied Wren and a most unusually perched White-necked Puffbird a mere three feet off the ground.

Sleeping that evening was actually quite pleasant, the village surprisingly quiet and as dawn broke we prepared to hike to the distant ridge-top for Harpy Eagle, led by the smiling Reverend, our newly acquainted friend. Just as we set off we were very fortunate to find Humboldt's Sapphire but this soon became a distant memory as we kept pace with the slightly rotund but nimble footed Reverend. Giant cuipo trees on the forested hillsides became more prominent as we climbed up an old hunters' trail, and dripping in sweat and slightly winded we arrived in less than two hours at the old eagle nest. Standing at the base of the cuipo tree, we looked up as our friend the Reverend puckered his lips in the most piercing whistle imaginable. The young eagle had been hunting on its own for some time now, would it be present on this fine morning? At first nothing happened, and a shadow of doubt came and went, then Brian spotted a giant form wing overhead and we looked up and there it was - a pallid juvenile Harpy Eagle staring down at us! After enjoying nearly an hour with this incredible raptor we wished it happy hunting and began our walk to the village where we were once again greeted with a most welcome cold drink. We lunched and then returned by boat to Punta Patiño Lodge for showers and some enjoyable afternoon birding that included Blue-headed Parrots and Red-lobed Amazons, a bold Striped Cuckoo, and a migrant Sora rail, but best of all were the handsome Orange-crowned Orioles that showed so well for us.

The next morning as we waited for our flight to Cana we found a responsive male Jet Antbird as well as noisy Black-chested Jays and displaying Lance-tailed Manakins in the drier woodland. The adjacent shoreline made a perfect flight departure lounge with small numbers of migrant shorebirds and a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron that had caught a ridiculously long and feisty snake. Our twenty-seater plane arrived for the short jump to Cana, and not long after taking off we were able to see the tiny Mogue village as well as the forested Harpy Eagle ridge. Then we proceeded over more unbroken forest, admiring the steep slopes of the Pirre range before flying low over a swampy plain encircled by mountains, and eventually we touched down at the grassy airstrip of Cana. Here we would spend a week in a wilderness that would exceed all of our expectations! Shortly after arriving we admired the commanding view from the 'lodge' and dining hall and realized that the trees and shrubs around the well manicured clearing were dripping with birds! Nor did it take us long to find the perch of what would prove to be a regular right above our rooms, an immaculate, snowy white male Black-tipped Cotinga. A short walk in light woodland yielded our first Darien endemic, a pair of Dusky-backed Jacamar making sallies for insects and providing walk-away views. That afternoon, the nearby forest trails proved much too irresistible to put off any longer and soon we were getting our first taste of the riches of Cana. A Double-banded Greytail foraging quite low and in the open afforded us excellent, near-effortless views and a few paces later the alarm call of none other than a Black-crowned Antpitta had us frozen in our steps. Careful use of playback had this chunky terrestrial bird bounding across the trail and suddenly perched at head-height in a sapling next to the trail for eyeball to eyeball views! Further along we came upon a male Great Curassow as well as our second antpitta of the day, a Spectacled Antpitta hopping in the middle of the trail, and all this on our first afternoon!

Our first two days at Cana were spent birding the forest edge and getting to know the variety of forest trails, each one always yielding new surprises. Walking around the lodge clearing and airstrip, one easily saw all four of the resident macaw species, including the Great Green Macaw, here still a common sight. The forest edge contained many fruiting trees that almost always had several Crested Guans gorging themselves. There was also usually some interesting raptor soaring overhead, such as the Black-and-white Hawk-Eagle we had soaring low over our lunch table one afternoon. In dense thickets of second growth we found a small swarm of army ants this time attended by a half-dozen stunning Bare-crowned Antbirds all crowded around the same spot. Another thicket denizen, the ghost-like Fulvous-bellied Antpitta, required that we creep up a narrow stream full of roots and vines to find it perched up on a thick branch broadcasting its mournful song. Further afield, a frenzied

tanager flock contained our first pair of Viridian Dacnis whilst nearby in the forest understorey we found the unobtrusive Black-billed Flycatcher for excellent scope views. More high-octane birding was provided by a responsive Crimson-bellied Woodpecker who flew in to perch quite low in the understorey only to be attacked by the much more common Crimson-crested Woodpecker, the two of them nearly grappling each other, with the Crimson-bellied spreading its wings in defiance, truly amazing! Plenty of mixed flocks kept us busy with the likes of White-fronted Nunbird, Slate-throated Gnatcatcher and a bird featured at the top of several people's target list, the rather dull-coloured but enigmatic Broad-billed Sapayoa, perhaps representing a separate avian family. One afternoon a pygmy-owl imitation brought in a great selection of mobbing birds that included Grey Elaenia, Stripe-throated Wren and Purple Honeycreeper. In fact, our list of Cana avian treasure goes on and on from these action-packed days featuring Semiplumbeous Hawk, Grey-cheeked Nunlet, Slaty-winged and Buff-throated Foliage-gleaners, White-thighed Swallow, Dagua Thrush, Lemon-spectacled Tanager, and Golden-collared and Golden-headed Manakins, all making for many memorable sightings. In addition to plenty of time on the trails, we also enjoyed great birding from the lodge porch watching the Darien bird life go by, everything from Barred Puffbirds to Cinnamon Woodpeckers, Swallow Tanagers and gaudy macaws.

After this first taste of Cana lowland birding we started our trek up the slopes of Cerro Pirre to look for the exciting birds only found at higher elevations. Soon after starting up the hill we finally saw a singing Thrush-like Schiffornis at minimum focus range and we stepped around the three-toed tracks of Baird's Tapirs. Higher still we started finding our first canopy flocks, the falling bomb calls of the odd Sharpbill filling the air, allowing us to pinpoint its location and thus obtain great views. Eventually we reached our mountain camp where we did some late afternoon birding, scoring excellent views of the melodious Sooty-headed Wren in the bamboo around camp. A pair of Crimson-bellied Woodpeckers perched quite low was absolutely superb and from the camp's lookout we enjoyed a handsome male Northern Violaceous Trogon, the distant mountains of neighbouring Colombia providing a scenic backdrop. After an early dinner we went to sleep, anxious about what the next day might have in store.

We rose nice and early and started walking just before daybreak in order to arrive early to the Cerro Pirre cloudforest. Our efforts were rewarded promptly with a responsive pair of Pirre Warblers flitting in the short-statured trees upon our arrival, making for an excellent start to the day. The beautiful songs of Varied Solitaires drifted through the moss-festooned forests near the mountain top, and soon we saw a few of these wonderful songsters in a fruiting tree. The ubiquitous Pirre Bush-Tanagers were a common sight, as were several Green-naped Tanager visiting fruiting trees and allowing for detailed scrutiny along side both Silver-throated and Speckled Tanagers. A small group of Violet-throated Toucanets paused long enough for us to admire them through the scope and a bit of bushwhacking allowed us to intercept a mixed flock accompanied by yet another Pirre endemic, the aptly-named Beautiful Treerunner! Our work was not yet over however, and we continued to sort through the many Greenish Pufflegs feeding at the bright red *Cephaelis* flowers or 'hot-lips' until we eventually found a couple of Rufous-cheeked (or Pirre) Hummingbirds as well. Later a Choco Tapaculo put in an appearance and upon returning to our camp that afternoon there were a surprising number of birds to be seen. Semi-tame Chestnut-capped Brush-Finches and Slaty-backed Nightingale-Thrushes hopped around the camp kitchen whilst Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant, Plain Antvireos and Dot-winged Antwrens flitted around the camp radio, its grainy speaker humming to the sound of rhythmic cumbia music. A stridently calling Flammulated Attila was seen through the scope, odd-looking White-headed Wrens scolded us overhead and we found a very obliging Tawny-throated Leaf-tosser. As the day came to an end, some of us couldn't resist going back up the trail where we managed to find a Great Green Macaw messily feeding in a fruiting palm overhead.

Our second morning on Cerro Pirre started with a trailside Bicoloured Hawk perched a few feet off the ground and vocalizing. This surprise was followed by a long game of hide-and-seek with a Rufous-breasted Antthrush resulting in great views of one walking around the forest floor like a small

rail. A busy mixed canopy flock held an acrobatic Rufous-rumped Antwren and we were again entertained by young, pot-bellied Spider Monkeys raining broken branches down on us like mischievous teenagers. After a coffee in camp we then started our descent back to Cana, finding a small party of curious Brown-hooded Parrots in the subcanopy not long after setting off. We then came upon a pair of obliging Wing-banded Antbirds on the track which got us exploring what else might be around when suddenly a group of Saffron-headed Parrots exploded out of the trees in a blur of noise and motion. This disappointing encounter was followed by sheer bliss when we found probably the same family group, providing us all with marvellous scope views and even photographs! Our emotions continued to soar when not long after, we heard heavy footsteps near the trail and an elongated bird walked up to the trail to take a look at us. There in our binoculars stood a Rufous-vented Ground-Cuckoo and deciding that it had seen our kind before it darted across the trail and disappeared (in case you lost count that would be number two). As luck would have it we then came upon a large ant swarm allowing us more views of Ocellated and Bicoloured Antbirds as well as a new one for us, Immaculate Antbird, whilst overhead the calls of the endemic Stripe-cheeked Woodpecker immediately diverted our attention and provided great looks in the scope. As usual there was one more trick left in the bag and a very responsive Great Jacamar perched incredibly close polished off what had been another excellent day. We had one more full day left at Cana that we started off by spotlighting a pre-dawn Choco Screech-Owl as well as a surprised and wide-eyed Western Night Monkey on its way to roost. The Boca de Cupe trail continued to delight us with its canopy flocks and the many parties of understory birds. There were deafening Red-throated Caracaras, a tiny Black-capped Pygmy-Tyrant and a large family party of resting Marbled Wood-Quails. Our final afternoon was spent at the old mine attempting to lure in the loquacious Yellow-browed Shrike-Vireo and instead succeeding in our best looks to date at Scarlet-browed Tanager. Just as we were about to re-emerge in the Cana clearing, a large reddish-brown mass of muscle and fur jumped away from the trail and then stopped; our binoculars instantly went up and we found ourselves eye to eye with a Puma! Whispering in disbelief, we watched as it laid down to rest, facing us in plain sight, licking its fur, yawning and generally unconcerned with our presence.

On our last morning in Darien we had time for one last foray into the forest, this time with the realization that we might be watched by a certain feline, but nevertheless finding both Ruddy Foliage-gleaner and Southern Nightingale-Wren. As we waited on our plane we continued to rack up new birds from the clearing with Pied Puffbird, Scaled Pigeon and Cinereous Becard all making appearances. The plane brought in a large group of newcomers, making us feel very lucky to have been the only group at the lodge for the entire week, but the time had finally come for us to say goodbye to this unforgettable wilderness...

Upon our return from the Darien we spent a night in the opulent Gamboa Resort and the following morning transferred nice and early to our base at the Canopy Tower, an old radar tower converted to a birder's lodge in a stroke of genius. Although we had originally intended to begin the trip here, availability at Cana dictated a slightly different order to the itinerary. As the name suggests, the birding from the roof is fabulous, and easily achievable for anyone suffering from vertigo. We arrived just before things really started hopping and it didn't take long before Pete spotted the signature bird of the lodge, two male Blue Cotingas! Gaudy Keel-billed and Chestnut-mandibled Toucans added a riot of colour to the scene and both Mealy and Red-lored Amazons squawked their way across the morning glow. The normally impossible to see Green Shrike-Vireo delivered its relentless song from eye-level foliage, perching up as close and as visible as possibly imaginable to the disbelief of everyone present. All of this against a backdrop of a huge ship chugging its way along the Panama Canal amidst gently rolling hills clad in thick tropical forest. Walking down the narrow entrance road, we met birds that by now were like old friends, but we also found new ones, such as handsome male Red-capped and Blue-crowned Manakins.

The rest of the afternoon, as well as a good part of the next day, was spent along the famous Pipeline Road, penetrating deep into the heart of Soberanía National Park. On our first visit to this most

famous of Central Panama's birding hotspots, we found what most birders only ever get to dream of, Rufous-vented Ground-Cuckoo, and this time a pair! We had been told of the general area by a guide who had shown them to a group of uninterested non-birders (sacrilege!) earlier in the day but it was now approaching five o'clock and the army-ant swarm the ground-cuckoos had been following had likely moved on. Nevertheless we had a look around and before long we found a narrow trail that led to a perfect open area, the forest floor lacking any understorey plants. A burst of tape brought two ground-cuckoos running towards us quite rapidly, but we held our ground and they pulled up at the last moment nearly at our feet! They proceeded to fluff out their breast feathers and tried their best to look very menacing. Then they began to slowly stalk their way around us, their necks outstretched as they regularly let off a rapid cacophony of bill snaps sounding like automatic weaponry! Other memorable highlights from the splendid Pipeline Road included a Black-breasted Puffbird seen impaling a katydid, a responsive Speckled Mourner at its lek, and a group of garrulous Song Wrens. At the home of a bird-loving resident of Gamboa we watched in amazement as scores of Red-legged Honeycreepers crowded around her nectar feeder. There was also a little marsh near Gamboa that provided a pleasant break from forest birding, and here we admired Wattled Jacanas trotting over the floating vegetation, and a handsome adult Rufescent Tiger-Heron. Closer to Panama City we visited the Summit Ponds and the semihumid forest surrounding them. A roosting Boat-billed Heron provided frame-filling scope views, a Lesser Kiskadee regularly sallied out from a dead snag, whilst lazy turtles sat happy together on logs sticking out of the tranquil water. In the woods we watched a Rosy Thrush-Tanager tossing leaf litter, a Pale-eyed Pygmy-Tyrant was drawn out of a busy mixed flock, and a roosting trio of Spectacled Owls was nothing less than spectacular. We were also shown a fabulous Great Potoo perfectly camouflaged high on its arboreal day roost. A visit to Panama Bay, one of the premier wintering areas for North American shorebirds, had us all lining up our scopes scanning through throngs of waders. Among thousands of Laughing Gulls, scores of Short-billed Dowitchers and several other more common species, we were pleased to find several handsome Marbled Godwits. Nearby we found a stand of Erythrina trees attracting several range-restricted Sapphire-throated Hummingbirds to their nectar. We even had some spare time to visit the Panama Canal's Miraflores Locks where we were able to watch one of the large cargo ships go through and a visit to the Canal Museum gave us a better understanding of the canal's history.

The time had come for our flight to David, a city that lies at the mouth of a vast mangrove-covered estuary, and upon arrival we used up the remaining bits of daylight to bird the scrubby surroundings of the airport. It didn't take long before we found our main quarry here, a male of the endemic Veraguas Mango (recently split from Green-breasted), and we also added Northern Jacana, Mouse-coloured Tyrannulet and Streaked Saltator. The following morning we set out early for Cerro Colorado, and as we began our ascent, the leader announced that we would not stop until we reached the desired habitat. No sooner had the words left his mouth than the car instantly lurched to a stop, its motor dead and smoking, unbelievable but true. Despite the frustration of a broken-down vehicle, we managed to see some good birds in the interim that we waited for a local taxi to take us up the horrible road. We eventually made it to the desired habitat finding good weather and were rewarded by a group of the endemic Yellow-green Finch and a displaying male Glow-throated Hummingbird, also an endemic. A few others found only in the highlands of Costa Rica and western Panama, such as Prong-billed Barbet, Black-cheeked Warbler and Spangle-cheeked Tanager all made for a great day. For the descent our driver made it up the mountain with a brand new vehicle saving us from being thrown about in the back of our hired 4wd taxi. The next day we headed for the Continental Divide along the Fortuna Road, first descending along the Caribbean slope to bird the rich foothills of Bocas del Toro province. Many good birds were added to our ever growing bird list, and too name just a few there were scope views of perched Sulphur-winged Parakeets, both Rufous-winged and Smoky-brown Woodpeckers, and point-blank looks at Emerald Tanagers. We also found a pair of the endemic and highly localized race of Yellow-throated Bush-Tanager. Returning to the continental divide we found White-bellied Mountain-gem, Golden-bellied Flycatcher and Sooty-capped Bush-Tanager, but our birding was cut short by constant fog and rain forcing us to return to the sunny Pacific lowlands. Here a section of shady gallery forest offered a respite from the heat and

we enjoyed point-blank looks at a fancy male Veraguas Mango. We then headed to the little town of Boquete where in a local park we found Torrent Tyrannulet and Louisiana Waterthrush and a flowering roadside Eucalyptus that was attracting hoards of thirsty hummers. In the span of just thirty minutes we watched numerous Snowy-bellied Hummingbirds as well as Brown Violetear, Magenta-throated Woodstar, White-tailed Emerald, and Scintillant Hummingbirds feeding from the copious flowers. Our last morning out of David we drove to the little town of Volcan where we saw a good selection of grassland birds that included Pale-breasted Spinetail, Ruddy-breasted Seedeater, Eastern Meadowlark and a migrant Merlin hunting low over the fields. Not finding our main quarry we relocated to a secondary site where we immediately heard our quarry, a Chiriqui (split from Masked) Yellowthroat singing a long ways off. Eventually we found a path down to its habitat and bagged good views through the scope along with a pair of Lesser Elaenias. We still had time to visit a lovely garden with a nice selection of hummers on their feeders. Violet Sabrewing was the dominant one, and there also good numbers of Magnificent Hummingbird, Green Violetear and a single Stripe-tailed Hummingbird, but it was the endemic White-throated Mountain-gem that stole the show.

After flying back to Panama City we continued our exploration of the hilly areas east of the city with a visit to the cool heights of Cerro Azul and Cerro Jefe. Our major focus was the stunted, wind-swept ridge-top forest which upon our arrival looked fairly grim in all of the heavy fog. After a fair bit of walking we went a short distance into a narrow forest trail where we found a female Violet-capped Hummingbird visiting the *Cephaelis* plants, but very few were actually flowering and no males were present. We persevered in the fog, and just when it finally cleared one of our first birds was the range-restricted Tacarcuna Bush-Tanager, a pair of which responded brilliantly to tape and even allowed us all scope views. Coming down from the windswept mountain top we lunched at the lovely garden of one of the local residents where we enjoyed a constant parade of Red-footed Plumeteers and Blue-chested Hummingbirds at the feeders and numerous tanagers including a pair of Rufous-winged Tanager. Later in the afternoon the bird activity died down under the hot sun, with our best find being a Broad-headed Rain Frog, possibly representing a range extension. We then returned to Panama City late in the afternoon, the tour now winding down, with a visit to one of the coastal birding hotspots at low tide providing one last spectacle. We searched for less common species amongst the thousands of wintering Western Sandpipers whilst a Tricoloured Heron still with its white breeding head plume foraged closer to shore and a Peregrine Falcon was spotted perched on the ledge of a beachside condo. The next morning we all said goodbye to each other having shared three weeks of adventurous excitement on a very memorable tour.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

Species which were heard but not seen are indicated by the symbol (H).

Species which were not personally recorded by the leaders are indicated by the symbol (NL).

TINAMIDAE

Great Tinamou *Tinamus major*: Heard at various times from mature rainforest with a leader-only sighting Pipeline Road. Tinamou eggs are among the most beautiful in the bird world; always being unicolored from pink (Little Tinamou) to turquoise blue (Great Tinamou) and having a characteristic porcelain-like gloss. When hatched, the young are precocial, and resemble small adults with undeveloped feathers.

Little Tinamou *Crypturellus soui* (H): A common voice from Cana.

Chocó Tinamou *Crypturellus kerriae* (H): This range-restricted species was surprisingly quiet this year and was only once heard distantly. The Chocó Tinamou is confined to parts of the Darien lowlands and Darien highlands Endemic Bird Areas (BirdLife's EBAs 023 and 024, respectively). Below I am simply referring to species restricted to one or both of these two EBAs as 'Darien endemics'.

PELECANIDAE

Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis*: Seen in great numbers from the Pacific shoreline.

PHALACROCORACIDAE

Neotropic Cormorant (Olivaceous Cormorant) *Phalacrocorax brasilianus*: Very numerous along the coast but birds were always too distant to see their brilliant blue eyes, the most salient feature of this species.

ANHINGIDAE

Anhinga *Anhinga anhinga*: A couple of sightings of this fish-eating snake bird.

FREGATIDAE

Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens*: Soaring birds were always a welcome sight and were seen regularly.

ARDEIDAE

Rufescent Tiger-Heron *Tigrisoma lineatum*: Great looks at one bird impressively posed with its neck fully extended at the Ammo Dump ponds.

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*: A couple of sightings during our time spent east of Panama City.

Great Egret *Casmerodius albus*: Regular sightings.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*: Good numbers were seen in coastal areas.

Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea*: Common from Panama Viejo.

Tricoloured Heron *Egretta tricolor*: All sightings from Panama Bay with one in particular providing an excellent performance on our last afternoon. Formerly placed in the monotypic genus *Hydranassa* or 'Queen of the water', its 2.5 foot by 2.5 foot frame weighs in at only 13 ounces, making it one of the most elegant of the wading birds.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*: This invasive species was seen regularly.

Striated Heron *Butorides striatus*: One sighting from the Canal Area (note that I'm using the 'Canal Area' as a more general term for all areas birded between Metropolitan Park and Pipeline Road).

Green Heron *Butorides virescens*: Two birds seen at the Summit ponds.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron *Nyctanassa violacea*: One sighting from central Panama.

Boat-billed Heron *Cochlearius cochlearius*: Nice scope views of a bird at Summit Ponds and a second was spotlighted one evening, here of the dark *panamensis* form. Formerly placed in its own family, the Cochleariidae, but recent DNA work has shown that it is related to the tiger-herons. Little is known of the behaviour and life history of this crepuscular and nocturnal species.

THRESKIORNITHIDAE

White Ibis *Eudocimus albus*: Numerous on the coastal mud flats and within the Mogue River estuary.

CICONIIDAE

Wood Stork *Mycteria americana*: A couple of birds were seen in marshy areas along the Pan-American highway.

ANATIDAE

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna autumnalis*: A flock of about 15 birds in flight made a nice surprise one morning in Gamboa as we made our way to Pipeline Road.

CATHARTINAE

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus*: Particularly numerous around towns and cities. Late 20th century genetic studies suggested that New World vultures are modified storks and don't belong with the raptors, thus they are sometimes placed as a subfamily of the Ciconiidae, an example of convergently evolution. However, the relationship with storks has recently been questioned and remains to be resolved.

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*: Common and widespread. Studies indicate that this species often uses its keen sense of smell to locate carrion.

King Vulture *Sarcoramphus papa*: First seen at Burbayar followed by several sightings of soaring birds at Cana.

ACCIPITRIDAE

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*: Eight individuals seen in all, shared between the Bayano reservoir, Mogue, Punta Patiño and Panama Viejo.

Grey-headed Kite *Leptodon cayanensis*: Our first was seen perched near the highway during the return journey from Burbayar. The second bird was seen brilliantly soaring over semi-humid forest of the Canal Area, its boldly patterned wings very distinctive.

American Swallow-tailed Kite *Elanoides forficatus*: One of the most elegant raptors in the world and seen soaring on several occasions. Note that most birds breeding in Central and North America spend the non-breeding season in South America.

White-tailed Kite *Elanus leucurus*: A single perched bird was scoped in open country near the Bayano reservoir. A recent colonizer, the first Panamanian records dating back to 1967.

Double-toothed Kite *Harpagus bidentatus*: A distant perched bird was scoped at Cana, and our second a soaring bird near Canopy Tower.

Bicoloured Hawk *Accipiter bicolor*: First heard vocalizing the morning of our first ascent of Cerro Pirre and a juvenile was seen perched in the understorey on our second morning above camp. Note that, when here and below referring to 'Cerro Pirre', we're really talking about one of the peaks of the Serranía de Pirre which lies northwest of Cana, and not of the 'Cerro Pirre' shown on the maps, which lies at the northern end of the range.

Barred Hawk (Black-chested Hawk) *Leucopternis princeps*: A leader-only glimpse through the trees on Cerro Pirre.

Plumbeous Hawk *Leucopternis plumbea*: This easily overlooked sit-and-wait predator, classified as Near-threatened, was seen surprisingly well at Burbayar Lodge.

Semiplumbeous Hawk *Leucopternis semiplumbea*: Excellent scope views of a perched bird in the subcanopy at Cana.

- White Hawk *Leucopternis albicollis*: Fine views of this handsome raptor from our rest-stop in the clearing below Harpy hill at Mogue.
- Mangrove Black-Hawk *Buteogallus subtilis*: This handsome raptor showed well near Punta Patiño.
- Great Black-Hawk *Buteogallus urubitinga*: Good views of a perched bird from the Mogue area.
- Roadside Hawk *Buteo magnirostris*: Great scope looks at this raptor from the David airport.
- Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus*: A perched bird wintering at Punta Patiño was seen well.
- Short-tailed Hawk *Buteo brachyurus*: One individual, of the pale morph, was seen in flight from the roof of the Canopy Tower.
- Zone-tailed Hawk *Buteo albonotatus*: Good views of this Turkey Vulture mimic from the David area.
- Harpy Eagle *Harpia harpyja*: Our sighting of this *very large* eagle was an all around memorable experience. The pallid juvenile we saw was estimated by the local Embará to have about 18 months and its massive talons certainly looked lethal!
- Black-and-white Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus melanoleucus*: We enjoyed excellent looks at this small eagle soaring over the Cana clearing, generally a rare and somewhat local bird in Panama.
- Black Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus tyrannus*: A couple of sightings from Cana.
- Ornate Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus ornatus* (H): One individual was heard above the slopes of Cerro Pirre.

FALCONIDAE

- Red-throated Caracara *Ibycter americanus*: Once found they gave us a memorable performance, their raucous calls nearly deafening, but then they wouldn't leave us alone, following us along the Boca de Cupe trail. They mostly feed on wasp and bee larvae by tearing into some of those amazing paper nests we observed. Still common here, this species has sadly disappeared from most of its former range in Central America over the last few decades, for unknown reasons, though human hunting is probably to blame. Note that the old genus name *Ibycter* has recently been resurrected for this species, based largely on syringeal evidence (the syrinx is the set of muscles forming a bird's vocal cords; I'm sure this species' syrinx must be pretty distinct to be able to produce so many decibels!).
- Northern Crested Caracara *Polyborus cheriway* : One bird was seen in the David lowlands.
- Yellow-headed Caracara *Milvago chimachima*: This scavenger was seen on several occasions in the open habitats that it frequents, and the two at Costa del Este on our last afternoon were fun to watch. Another open-country raptor that's on the increase (and which only invaded nearby Costa Rica in 1973), but is still absent from largely forested areas (s.a. the vicinity of Cana).
- Laughing Falcon *Herpetotheres cachinnans* (H): A distant heard-only one morning from Cana.
- Barred Forest-Falcon *Micrastur ruficollis*: Superb close-ups of a single bird perched over the army-ant swarm at Burbayar Lodge.
- Slaty-backed Forest-Falcon *Micrastur mirandollei* (H): A distant heard only from the Canopy Tower.
- Collared Forest-Falcon *Micrastur semitorquatus* (H): Heard-only records from Metropolitan Park, Cana and Canopy Tower were always too distant to pin down
- American Kestrel *Falco sparverius*: A single bird was seen at the exact same spot on both of our visits to Cerro Azul.
- Merlin *Falco columbarius*: A splendid view in nice light of a bird in flight over the airstrip at Volcan.
- Bat Falcon *Falco ruficularis*: A pair was seen well at what was probably a regular perch near the village of Mogue. This fierce little predator is able to take hummingbirds, and in fact I photographed one in Tambopata holding a male White-necked Jacobin in its talons (which it promptly ate).
- Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*: Good views of a wintering resident, and from the looks of it a very fat and happy bird. A brand-new condominium overlooking one of the richest mudflats in the Americas, from which to pick out one of the thousands of shorebirds it would like to sample...not a bad life!

CRACIDAE

Grey-headed Chachalaca *Ortalis cinereiceps*: Small numbers of this cracid of forest edge and secondary growth were seen at Cana and again in the David area.

Crested Guan *Penelope purpurascens*: An impressive arboreal cracid, with a very healthy population at Cana/Cerro Pirre. Penelope is the name of the wife of Ulysses, King of Ithaca, but why this name was bestowed on this genus of Neotropical guans is unknown.

Great Curassow *Crax rubra*: The male seen by some of us on the mine trail one afternoon was never refound.

ODONTOPHORIDAE

Marbled Wood-Quail *Odontophorus gujanensis*: Superb close-ups of a family group at Cana who didn't seem too concerned with us. Also the typical dusk chorus was heard from our 'lodge' most evenings.

Black-eared Wood-Quail *Odontophorus melanotis* (H): A group was heard at Burbayar but playback failed to get a response from them.

Black-breasted Wood-Quail *Odontophorus leucolaemus* (H): A distant heard-only from forest above Volcan.

RALLIDAE

White-throated Crake *Laterallus albigularis*: A single bird was seen by Pete and I poking its head out of the grass at the marsh of Punta Patiño.

Grey-necked Wood-Rail *Aramides cajanea*: One bird at Punta Patiño was followed by an even better sighting on the Boca de Cupe trail.

Sora *Porzana carolina*: This uncommon migrant rail made a surprise appearance at the Punta Patiño marsh.

Purple Gallinule (American P G) *Porphyryla martinica*: A couple of birds were seen at the David marsh.

Common Moorhen (C Gallinule) *Gallinula chloropus*: Two individuals observed at the mouth of the Chagres River near Gamboa.

CHARADRIIDAE

Southern Lapwing *Vanellus chilensis*: A fairly common species at Costa del Este but spotlighting two on the Volcan airstrip before dawn was hilarious and a first for me. A species that is spreading in Central America, and there are several recent records from Costa Rica and even one from Mexico.

Grey Plover (Black-bellied Plover) *Pluvialis squatarola*: Abundant in Panama Bay.

Wilson's Plover *Charadrius wilsonia*: Four birds were scoped up at Punta Patiño.

Semipalmated Plover *Charadrius semipalmatus*: A half dozen birds were seen on the mudflat of Punta Patiño.

RECURVIROSTRIDAE

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus*: A handsome gathering at Costa del Este.

JACANIDAE

Wattled Jacana *Jacana jacana*: Many nice views of both adults and immatures. Panamanian birds belong to the melanistic (no chestnut in adults) race *hypomelaena*, which is only found here and in adjacent Colombia. The Jacanidae are one of the few bird families where most species exhibit sexual role reversal, with males incubating the eggs and females being polyandrous. The only exception in the family is the monogamous Lesser Jacana *Microparra capensis*.

Northern Jacana *Jacana spinosa*: Several individuals were seen at the David marsh. The specific name comes from the sharp spur most jacanas have on the carpal joint of the wing, and which adults use to threaten anyone approaching their young. The ranges of this and the previous species meet in Eastern Chiriqui and Veraguas states.

SCOLOPACIDAE

Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca*: With singles sighted during earlier shorebirding efforts, we saw good numbers on our last afternoon at Costa del Este.

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*: About five birds were seen in the same area, allowing for nice side-by-side comparisons.

Solitary Sandpiper *Tringa solitaria*: A single bird was seen in the drying marsh of the old Gamboa road.

Willet *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*: Numerous in Panama Bay.

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularia*: Our biggest numbers recorded on our first visit to Costa del Este and later observed regularly throughout.

Marbled Godwit *Limosa fedoa*: Fairly good scope studies in Panama Bay, with about 40 birds counted at Punta del Este.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*: Small numbers in Panama Bay.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*: A small group of these beach-combers was seen at Punta Patiño.

Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla*: Several were seen together with the following species at Panama Viejo.

Western Sandpiper *Calidris mauri*: The thousands in Panama Bay made for a true wildlife spectacle.

Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla*: Small numbers were seen in Panama Bay on our last afternoon.

Short-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus griseus*: Hundreds were seen in Panama Bay from Panama Viejo. The generic name is derived from old Greek: *limne* = marsh, *dromos* = running, inhabiting.

LARIDAE

Laughing Gull *Larus atricilla*: Thousands seen along Panama Bay. By far, the most numerous wintering gull in Panama.

Franklin's Gull *Larus pipixcan*: Good comparisons between this species and the previous at Panama Bay.

Gull-billed Tern *Sterna nilotica*: A few were seen during our boat journey to Mogue and around 20 birds were later seen in Panama Bay.

Royal Tern *Sterna maxima*: Large numbers seen in Panama Bay.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*: At least fifty birds were seen on the mudflats at Panama Viejo. Apparently named after the town of Sandwich in Kent.

COLUMBIDAE

Rock Pigeon (Feral P) *Columba livia*: Common in urban environments. Panama birds are at best only marginally feral, and don't occur away from humans.

Pale-vented Pigeon *Columba cayennensis*: Regular sightings in central Panama. This species is conspicuous in its absence in Cana, a small open area in an ocean of forest, from which quite a few open country species are absent.

Scaled Pigeon *Columba speciosa*: Good looks at a bird scoped up from the Cana porch and a second was seen in flight from the Canopy Tower.

Band-tailed Pigeon *Columba fasciata*: One group of several birds rocketed overhead on gusty Cerro Colorado.

Short-billed Pigeon *Columba nigrirostris* (H): A couple of heard-only records from Burbayar.

Ruddy Pigeon *Columba subvinacea*: Excellent scope studies (including the red iris) in Darien, where heard on a near-daily basis.

- Plumbeous Pigeon *Columba plumbea*: Several birds were scoped (including the pale iris) from the Pirre camp. This species was first discovered here by Paul Coopmans, until then not known from Central America, during his scouting trip there in 1992. Apparently they were previously passed off by others as Short-billed Pigeon (*C. nigrirostris*), from which it clearly differs both vocally and morphologically.
- Ruddy Ground-Dove *Columbina talpacoti*: Small numbers of this open country dove were seen in central and western Panama.
- Blue Ground-Dove *Claravis pretiosa*: Four birds observed at Mogue and Punta Patiño.
- White-tipped Dove *Leptotila verreauxi*: Frequently encountered throughout. The bird is named after Jules Pierre Verreaux (1808-1873), a French collector, naturalist and natural history dealer, who also has (among others) an eagle, a coua and a turaco bearing his name.
- Grey-chested Dove *Leptotila cassini*: A more retiring relative of the previous, seen a few times and heard more frequently.
- Russet-crowned Quail-Dove *Geotrygon goldmani*: Although a bird approached us surprisingly close, most of us just got a quick view of this shy Darien endemic retreating up the slope on Cerro Pirre.

PSITTACIDAE

- Brown-throated Parakeet *Aratinga pertinax*: Excellent scope looks from the David lowlands. *Pertinax* is Latin for 'tenacious, obstinate'.
- Sulphur-winged Parakeet *Pyrrhura hoffmanni*: Very good scope views of several perched birds from the Fortuna Road on the Caribbean slope. A range-restricted species confined to the so-called 'Costa Rica and Panama highlands' EBA (EBA 020). Below I am referring to other such species as 'CR/P highland endemics.'
- Chestnut-fronted Macaw *Ara severa*: The smallest macaw found at Cana, present in good numbers around the airstrip. Like Red-and-green and Blue-and-yellow Macaws, this South American species doesn't penetrate any further into Central America than Darien or (a bit farther west) the upper Bayano Valley.
- Great Green Macaw *Ara ambigua*: One of the most impressive macaw species, we had good views of both perched and flying birds. Populations of this flagship species have been severely reduced or extinct in other parts of its Central and South American range (given 'Endangered' status by Birdlife, this species remains numerous at Cana and on the slopes of Cerro Pirre (where it ranges all the way to the top, unlike the next two species), and Darien is currently the species' stronghold.
- Red-and-green Macaw *Ara chloroptera*: Equally impressive! We saw numerous birds very well in flight. Also sometimes called the Green-winged Macaw.
- Blue-and-yellow Macaw *Ara ararauna*: Superb scope views of perched birds and we even were able to watch some pairs allopreening. Sadly, the thrilling sight and sound of macaws will become a thing of the past if deforestation in the Americas continues. One of Brian's favourites.
- Orange-chinned Parakeet (Tovi P) *Brotogeris jugularis*: Especially numerous around the Cana clearing.
- Blue-fronted Parrotlet *Touit dilectissima*: Small numbers were seen in flight at Cerro Azul.
- Brown-hooded Parrot *Pionopsitta haematotis*: Superb scope studies of several curious birds in the lower forest canopy of Cerro Pirre.
- Saffron-headed Parrot *Pionopsitta pyralia*: This striking parrot provided yet another electrifying moment during the tour. We had great scope views of several individuals of this species, classified as Vulnerable due to the declining trend in its population.
- Blue-headed Parrot *Pionus menstruus*: The most numerous parrot on the trip, frequently admired in the scope.
- Red-lored Amazon (Yellow-cheeked A, R-I Parrot) *Amazona autumnalis*: Small numbers in the Canal Area but most numerous in David where we watched over 50 heading to their roosts and had great scope views.

Mealy Amazon (M Parrot) *Amazona farinosa*: The noisiest in the genus, small numbers were seen at Cana and the Canal Area.

CUCULIDAE

Squirrel Cuckoo *Piaya cayana*: Seen frequently throughout the trip.

Little Cuckoo *Piaya minuta*: A few of these second growth skulkers were seen around the Cana clearing and Boca de Cupe trail.

Striped Cuckoo *Tapera naevia*: One was seen singing its heart out from atop a tree in the Mogue village and later at Punta Patiño we surprised a bird when it jumped onto a perch.

Pheasant Cuckoo *Dromococcyx phasianellus* (H): Heard distantly at Metropolitan Park. Probably one of the few species on the trip of which particular territorial birds in regularly birded areas may have become indifferent to tape playback in the Canal Area.

Rufous-vented Ground-Cuckoo *Neomorphus geoffroyi*: We saw a total of four individuals: one at Burbayar, one on Cerro Pirre, and finally a pair on Pipeline Road. Any of those sightings would have been acceptable, and the fact our views just kept improving exponentially would have been long odds by anyone's book but as they say 'the bookies don't make odds, the punters do!' The grand finale on Pipeline Road with both those birds puffing out their chests was something we will never forget!

Greater Ani *Crotophaga major*: Good looks in the scope at this species from Punta Patiño and the Canal Area.

Smooth-billed Ani *Crotophaga ani*: Parties were found in the Canal Area, but this species was particularly conspicuous around the clearing at Cana. The generic name has been derived from the Greek words *kroton*, a tick, and *phagos*, 'eater'. In parts of South America, both this and the next species are called 'garrapateros' (tickers) or 'vacamuchachos' (cowboys) for their supposed habit of eating ticks off cattle. Although I have never seen them eat ticks, I have observed groups sifting through refuse piles for scraps of meat.

Groove-billed Ani *Crotophaga sulcirostris*: Small numbers in the Pacific lowlands. Over most of its range this is a bird of dryer areas.

STRIGIDAE

Chocó Screech-Owl *Otus centralis*: After several attempts most of us got a look at this one at Cana.

Tropical Screech-Owl *Otus choliba* (H): A bird was heard calling in the distance at Mogue.

Crested Owl *Lophotrix cristata* (H): One very distantly calling bird at Cana was inaccessible.

Spectacled Owl *Pulsatrix perspicillata*: Excellent studies of a roosting pair with young of this powerful predator from the Canal Area.

Central American Pygmy-Owl *Glaucidium griseiceps* (H): Overall this species was quiet and unresponsive this year at several locations including the Darien where only one bird was heard and proved impossible to find in the thick canopy.

Mottled Owl *Ciccaba virgata*: A responsive bird at Cana proved very difficult to see, only giving us one look in the spotlight as it hovered in flight searching for a new perch. Another was heard near Canopy Tower.

CAPRIMULGIDAE

Common Pauraque *Nyctidromus albicollis*: A few in the Canal Area provided our best views during our owling venture there, and also heard/seen daily around the 'lodge' at Cana.

NYCTIBIIDAE

Great Potoo *Nyctibius grandis*: Superb views of a perched bird on its roost at the base of Semaforo Hill and one of Gina's favourites.

Common Potoo (Grey Potoo) *Nyctibius griseus* (H): Two heard-only record at Cana and Volcan, unfortunately each one as dawn approached and too late to capitalize on.

APODIDAE

- Chestnut-collared Swift *Cypseloides rutilus*: At least two of these long-tailed swifts were seen flying low over the Llano-Cartí road in Nusagandi, where there are few records of this species, though it would be expected to occur here.
- White-collared Swift *Streptoprocne zonaris*: This impressive swift was seen in good numbers in the Darien at Punta Patiño and Cana and later in the west on the slopes of Cerro Colorado.
- Short-tailed Swift *Chaetura brachyura*: Small numbers were seen at Punta Patiño.
- Band-rumped Swift *Chaetura spinicauda*: Numerous in Central Panama and at Cana.
- Grey-rumped Swift *Chaetura cinereiventris*: A few were seen in the Bocas del Toro foothills.
- Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift *Panyptila cayennensis*: A couple of birds in flight directly over our heads at Punta Patiño were seen quite well.

TROCHILIDAE

- Band-tailed Barbthroat *Threnetes ruckeri*: This understory hummingbird approached us curiously at Cana for excellent close-ups. The first in a very nice set of 36 species of hummingbirds encountered on the tour, all of which were seen well by all! Read the hummingbird family account in Volume 5 of the *Handbook of the Birds of the World* (from here onward abbreviated as HBW) for an excellent summary of hummingbird biology.
- Green Hermit *Phaethornis guy*: Regular sightings. Here the race *coruscus*, in which there is a strong sexual difference in tail length, the males having shorter central tail feathers than the females.
- Long-billed Hermit (Western Long-tailed Hermit) *Phaethornis longirostris*: A regular visitor to Burbayar's feeders and small numbers were seen in the Canal Area and at Cana. For more details on the new hermit taxonomy, see the excellent hummingbird chapter in HBW 5.
- Stripe-throated Hermit *Phaethornis striigularis*: Scattered sightings of this tiny hermit.
- Tooth-billed Hummingbird *Androdon aequatorialis*: Another curious inspector who paused in flight to take a look at us and we at it! A species pretty much restricted to the Darien highlands (024) and Chocó (041) Endemic Bird Areas.
- Violet Sabrewing *Campylopterus hemileucurus*: Our first bird was seen during our break-down birding below Cerro Colorado and we later enjoyed excellent close-ups of both sexes at the set of feeders near Volcan.
- Scaly-breasted Hummingbird *Phaeochroa cuvierii*: Several birds were seen in the Canal Area and as well as at Punta Patiño.
- White-necked Jacobin *Florisuga mellivora*: Numerous sightings of this smart hummer.
- Brown Violetear *Colibri delphinae*: One of the hummingbirds seen feeding on the flowering Eucalyptus near Boquete.
- Green Violetear *Colibri thalassinus*: Lekking birds were seen on the lower slopes of Cerro Colorado giving their monotonous call and it was also a numerous bird at the feeders near Volcan.
- Veraguas Mango *Anthracothorax veraguensis*: After seeing one bird at the David airport from a distance, we were later treated to superb close-ups of a male foraging in some dry woodland near David. One of the true Panama endemics.
- Black-throated Mango *Anthracothorax nigricollis*: A leader-only sighting on the Boca de Cupe trail.
- Green Thorntail *Discosura conversii*: Two females were seen with the flock of mobbing birds we called up on the mine trail.
- Garden Emerald *Chlorostilbon assimilis*: Singles recorded at the Bayano reservoir and Metropolitan park of this nearly restricted-range species found only in Costa Rica and Panama.
- Violet-crowned Woodnymph (Blue-c W) *Thalurania colombica*: Good numbers were seen on the feeders at Burbayar. Here the race *venusta*, the range of which is separated by the next species from the nominate birds found in northern Colombia.
- Green-crowned Woodnymph *Thalurania fannyi*: Regular sightings (mostly males) in Darien.
- Violet-bellied Hummingbird *Damophila julie*: Excellent scope views from Metropolitan Park and also seen well feeding at the *Hamelia* shrubs at Cana.

- Sapphire-throated Hummingbird *Lepidopyga coeruleogularis*: At least a few males seen well feeding at flowering trees near Panama Bay. A species only ranging in Panama and Caribbean Colombia, mainly in coastal areas.
- Humboldt's Sapphire *Hylocharis humboldtii*: A good find at Mogue, where it has been recorded once before, being well within the range of this species. The scarcity of records of this restricted-range species is most likely due to so few birders visiting the lowland portion of the Darien. Now considered a separate species from Blue-headed Sapphire *H. grayi* (a bird of foothills and drier inter-Andean valleys) by the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU).
- Violet-capped Hummingbird *Goldmania violiceps*: Good views of a female at *Cephaelis* flowers on Cerro Azul/Jefe. A restricted-range Darien endemic, here (like the Stripe-cheeked Woodpecker and the Tacarcuna Bush-Tanager) reaching the western limit of its range. Described by E. W. Nelson in 1911 and named after one of the great American mammalogists, Edward Alphonso Goldman 1873-1946 who described over 300 new forms of mammals and negotiated the first treaty between Mexico and the United States to protect migrating birds and game mammals.
- Rufous-cheeked Hummingbird (Pirre H) *Goethalsia bella*: Good views of this restricted-range Darien highlands endemic (only found on the Serranía de Pirre and the nearby Cerro Sapo) species at the hot-lips plants above our Pirre camp. Currently classified as Near-threatened, the proposed Darien link of the Pan-American highway would likely be detrimental to this species. This monotypic genus was named after George Washington Goethals, US chief engineer during the Canal construction.
- Blue-chested Hummingbird *Amazilia amabilis*: Regular sightings, with a very smart male coming to the feeders at the Canopy Tower.
- Snowy-bellied Hummingbird (Snowy-breasted H) *Amazilia edward*: First seen at Canopy Tower, here of the rufous-tailed nominate race followed by numerous individuals at the Eucalyptus tree near Boquete, here of the blue-black tailed *niveoventer*. HBW places this restricted-range species (only found in Panama and Pacific Costa Rica) and several other species in the genus *Saucerottia*, and uses the unfortunate name 'Snowy-breasted Hummingbird' for this species.
- Rufous-tailed Hummingbird *Amazilia tzacatl*: Small numbers throughout. Tzacatl was a warrior in Aztec mythology. One of about half a dozen species maintained in the narrowed-down genus *Amazilia* in HBW 5.
- Stripe-tailed Hummingbird *Eupherusa eximia*: Good views of a female visiting the garden feeders near Volcan.
- White-tailed Emerald *Elvira chionura*: One of the many visitants to the copious flowers of the legendary Boquete eucalypt. A restricted-range species found only in Costa Rican and Panama.
- White-vented Plumeleteer *Chalybura buffonii*: Regular sightings on the Boca de Cupe trail at Cana, here of the race *micans*.
- Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer (Red-footed P) *Chalybura urochrysis*: Numerous on the feeders we visited in the Bocas del Toro foothills as well as Cerro Azul.
- White-bellied Mountain-gem *Lampornis hemileucus*: One seen well at the Fortuna Smithsonian station. Another CR/P highlands endemic.
- White-throated Mountain-gem *Lampornis castaneiventris*: This Panama endemic showed very well in the lovely garden near Volcan. Volume 5 of HBW lump both Grey-tailed Mountain-gem *L. cinereicauda* of Costa Rica and the following species in *L. castaneiventris* with the name Variable Mountain-gem used for the enlarged species. A study of contact zones between the different forms is sorely needed.
- Purple-throated Mountain-gem *Lampornis calolaema*: A half-dozen of this CR/P highlands endemic were seen at Cerro Colorado.
- Magnificent Hummingbird *Eugenes fulgens*: Both sexes were seen visiting the feeders near Volcan.
- Green-crowned Brilliant *Heliodoxa jacula*: A female remained a leader-only bird at Cerro Colorado.

- Greenish Puffleg *Haplophaedia aureliae*: The most frequently encountered high-elevation hummer on Cerro Pirre, here of the race *caucensis* (named after Colombia's Cauca river/valley).
- Purple-crowned Fairy *Heliostyris barroti*: A handful of sightings from around Cana including one birds with the mobbing flock on the mine trail. This predominantly insectivorous hummer is known as a nectar-robber due to its habit of piercing the base of flowers with its short bill.
- Magenta-throated Woodstar *Calliphlox bryantae*: A male of this CR/P endemic species made a couple of visits to the flowering eucalypt near Boquete.
- Glow-throated Hummingbird *Selasphorus ardens*: Historically, we have only ever seen female *Selasphorus* on Cerro Colorado. Female Glow-throated are nearly impossible to distinguish from female Scintillant Hummingbirds unless in the hand, so it was great to see a diagnostic male so well this tour. Incidentally this was also the same spot where I saw a male for the first time in 1999. An endemic species to Panama classified as Vulnerable.
- Scintillant Hummingbird *Selasphorus scintilla*: A female plumaged bird was seen visiting the flowering Eucalypt near Boquete. This restricted-range species is a CR/P endemic.

TROGONIDAE

- Western White-tailed Trogon *Trogon chionurus*: Our first was a male, perched at eye-level and seen from Inaki's pick-up truck during our traverse of Nusagandi. A couple of birds were also seen at Cana and Pipeline Road.
- Northern Violaceous Trogon *Trogon caligatus*: Frequent sightings of this trogon, both in the Canal Area and in Darien.
- Collared Trogon *Trogon collaris*: A male of the race *puella* was seen in the Bocas del Toro foothills and a male and female of the smaller subspecies *extimus* were seen at higher elevations on Cerro Pirre.
- Black-throated Trogon *Trogon rufus*: A regularly heard understorey trogon, and we had good views of both sexes.
- Black-tailed Trogon *Trogon melanurus*: Repeated good views of this handsome trogon from Punta Patiño and Mogue, here of the race *macroura*.
- Slaty-tailed Trogon *Trogon massena*: Small numbers in the Canal Area and a pair was seen well just before we encountered the afternoon ant swarm descending Cerro Pirre. Birds here belong to the race *hoffmanni*, named (as is the Sulphur-winged Parakeet) after Carl Hoffmann, one of the major 19th century naturalists in Costa Rica, who died at a young age when fighting William Walker in Nicaragua in 1856.
- Golden-headed Quetzal *Pharomachrus auriceps* (H): Heard distantly at upper elevations in Darien.

MOMOTIDAE

- Tody Motmot *Hylomanes momotula*: We had two of these uncommon birds, but only briefly, on the way up the Pirre Trail.
- Blue-crowned Motmot *Momotus momota* (H): Heard-only records from Pipeline Road and humid forest above David.
- Rufous Motmot *Baryphthengus martii*: Frequently heard (particularly in dawn chorus) in the Canal Area and at Cana, with several birds showing at each locale. This species is not monotypic, birds here belong to the race *semirufus*. It differs in voice and plumage from nominate birds found east of the Andes in South America, which have no rackets and may be a separate species.
- Broad-billed Motmot *Electron platyrhynchum*: Superb scope views at Burbayar and also seen well in the Canal Area.

CERYLIDAE

- Ringed Kingfisher *Ceryle torquata*: A bird seen at Mogue our only record.

Green Kingfisher *Chloroceryle americana*: A couple of sightings from Mogue as well as the Canal Area.

Amazon Kingfisher *Chloroceryle amazona*: A single bird in flight at Summit Ponds our only sighting.

BUCCONIDAE

Barred Puffbird *Bucco radiatus*: Our first was seen near Mogue followed by better looks at our second from around Cana.

White-necked Puffbird *Notharchus hyperrhynchus*: The lowest I have ever seen this forest canopy bird perched and especially strange since it was perched in a slender coffee bush! Note that this widespread form is now considered a separate species from Guianan Puffbird *N. macrorhynchus*. Birds here belong to the nominate race.

Black-breasted Puffbird *Notharchus pectoralis*: Our patience with this species was rewarded with fine scope views of a bird with a huge katydid in its bill on Pipeline Road.

Pied Puffbird *Notharchus tectus*: We heard it only once at Cana before we finally located two individuals who showed brilliantly from the airstrip as we waited for the plane.

White-whiskered Puffbird *Malacoptila panamensis*: Several encounters from trails near Cana and also seen very well on Pipeline Road.

Grey-cheeked Nunlet *Nonnula ruficapilla*: Multiple stunning looks from around Cana.

White-fronted Nunbird *Monasa morphoeus*: A family group on the mine trail was seen very well. The only nunbird in Central America, here of the distinct race *pallescens*.

GALBULIDAE

Dusky-backed Jacamar *Brachygalba salmoni*: A smart Darien speciality, studied well in the scope and one of my personal favourites. This one is restricted to the Darien lowlands (023) and Nechí lowlands (037) Endemic Bird Areas.

Great Jacamar *Jacamerops aureus*: Near meltdown close-ups of this one on Cerro Pirre. This was the flagship species in the efforts to create Darien National Park.

CAPITONIDAE

Spot-crowned Barbet *Capito maculicoronatus*: The northernmost species of the genus, seen repeatedly in Darien, here of the race *rubrilateralis*, with red flank patches.

Red-headed Barbet *Eubucco bourcierii*: Good views of both a male and female of the Darien race *anomalous* on Cerro Pirre.

Prong-billed Barbet *Semnornis frantzii*: Good views of this CR/P highland endemic from Cerro Colorado.

RAMPHASTIDAE

Blue-throated Toucanet *Aulacorhynchus caeruleogularis*: A leader-only sighting of this CR/P highland endemic form.

Violet-throated Toucanet *Aulacorhynchus cognatus*: We enjoyed scope views of several birds at upper elevations on Cerro Pirre.

Collared Aracari *Pteroglossus torquatus*: Scattered sightings with some seen well in the scope.

Yellow-eared Toucanet *Selenidera spectabilis*: Seen very well at Burbayar with additional sightings coming from Cerro Pirre and even from the camp itself.

Keel-billed Toucan *Ramphastos sulfuratus*: This spectacular, rainbow-colour billed toucan was seen frequently and its frog-like croaks were heard daily.

Chestnut-mandibled Toucan *Ramphastos swainsonii*: The voice of this humid-forest species is that of a yelper.

PICIDAE

Olivaceous Piculet *Picumnus olivaceus*: Near daily sightings around Cana during our stay, a delightful little bird!

- Black-cheeked Woodpecker *Melanerpes pucherani*: Multiple encounters. Most memorable was a pair nesting in a tree in the Cana clearing.
- Red-crowned Woodpecker *Melanerpes rubricapillus*: A common bird in central Panama, and a few were also found at the Bayano reservoir and Mogue.
- Smoky-brown Woodpecker *Veniliornis fumigatus*: A single bird was scoped from the Caribbean foothills of Bocas del Toro.
- Red-rumped Woodpecker *Veniliornis kirkii*: A bird up on Cerro Pirre really had us going when we mistook it for one of its cousins.
- Rufous-winged Woodpecker *Piculus simplex*: Good views of a bird that perched out nicely for us in response to playback during our Caribbean slope birding in the Fortuna area.
- Stripe-cheeked Woodpecker *Piculus collopterus*: An attractive restricted-range Darien endemic, and for now a true country endemic, a female of which was scoped on the slopes of Cerro Pirre.
- Cinnamon Woodpecker *Celeus loricatus*: Seen and heard regularly at Cana.
- Lineated Woodpecker *Dryocopus lineatus*: Several good sightings from the Canal Area and in Darien. A relative of the Pileated Woodpecker of North America.
- Crimson-bellied Woodpecker *Campephilus haematogaster*: One of the other species with which we had incredible luck. In addition to watching one individual in life-and-death combat with a Crimson-crested WP, we later had excellent close-ups of a pair perched together at eye-level in the Pirre camp! A rather widespread woodpecker but usually never easy, Cana/Cerro Pirre normally being one of the easier places to see it. Here the race *splendens* (Panama to western Ecuador), sometimes considered a separate species, the Splendid Woodpecker.
- Crimson-crested Woodpecker *Campephilus melanoleucos*: Repeated sightings of this big woodpecker, here of the dark-billed race *malherbii*.

FURNARIIDAE

FURNARIINAE

- Pale-breasted Spinetail *Synallaxis albescens*: Great close-ups of a bird that perched up for us in the Volcan area. A species that is expanding its range along the Pacific coast with deforestation.
- Slaty Spinetail *Synallaxis brachyura*: An abundant inhabitant of the brushy edge growth around Cana. Members of this genus are typically skulkers of rank undergrowth, shrubby areas or forest understorey.
- Red-faced Spinetail *Cranioleuca erythrops*: One was seen well on Cerro Colorado. Unlike *Synallaxis* spinetails, members of this genus are typically arboreal, often favouring vine tangles in mid-storey and subcanopy.
- Double-banded Greytail *Xenerpestes minlosi*: Another surprise was how easily we came across this species this year at Cana. A bird that is usually heard more often than seen.
- Beautiful Treerunner *Margarornis bellulus*: Fine views of this Darien endemic, classified as Near-threatened, and first spotted by Pete in the flock on Cerro Pirre.
- Western Woodhaunter (Western Striped Woodhaunter) *Hyloctistes virgatus*: One showed at Burbayar, but our best views were of a confidently foraging bird in a mixed understorey flock at Cana.
- Lineated Foliage-gleaner *Syndactyla subalaris*: A common forest bird near the top of Cerro Pirre.
- Slaty-winged Foliage-gleaner *Philydor fuscipennis*: A handsome furnariid and a regular member of mixed flocks around Cana.
- Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner *Automolus ochrolaemus*: A widespread species, but showing considerable variation in both voice and plumage. In Darien the race *pallidigularis* was regularly seen, with one bird showing well in response to playback.
- Ruddy Foliage-gleaner *Automolus rubiginosus*: One bird was seen well at Cana, here of the dark race *saturatus*.
- Plain Xenops *Xenops minutus*: This entertaining bird was regular with mixed flocks near Cana.

- Streaked Xenops *Xenops rutilans*: One was seen from the clearing at Cana, here belonging to the distinctive Darien race *incomptus*.
- Tawny-throated Leaf-tosser *Sclerurus mexicanus*: One bird was seen briefly at the stream below our Pirre camp and what was probably a second bird showed extremely well closer to camp.
- Scaly-throated Leaf-tosser *Sclerurus guatemalensis* (H): Despite lots of fishing at Cana, we never got a nibble, and when we finally did on Pipeline Road, the bird vanished.

DENDROCOLAPTINAE

- Plain-brown Woodcreeper *Dendrocincla fuliginosa*: Repeated good views of the race *ridgwayi*, including birds accompanying army ant swarms.
- Olivaceous Woodcreeper *Sittasomus griseicapillus* (H): A few heard-only records from Burbayar and Cana.
- Long-tailed Woodcreeper *Deconychura longicauda*: A few birds were seen very well at Cana. Here the *dariensis* race of the distinct *typica* subspecies group, in all probability a different species from cis-Andean (= South Am. east of the Andes) birds.
- Wedge-billed Woodcreeper *Glyphorhynchus spirurus*: Surprisingly this tiny woodcreeper was seen only once at Burbayar and Willie Mazu.
- Northern Barred-Woodcreeper *Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae*: Two birds showed nicely, each time at ant swarms.
- Straight-billed Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus picus*: Great views in the scrubby forest at Punta Patiño, here of the race *extimus*.
- Cocoa Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus susurrans*: One of the more frequently encountered woodcreepers, particularly conspicuous by voice.
- Black-striped Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus lachrymosus*: One of the most distinctive species in the family and seen well on a number of occasions.
- Spotted Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus erythropygius*: This fairly large woodcreeper was seen at all of the upper elevational sites we visited except Cerro Colorado.
- Streak-headed Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*: Oddly this woodcreeper of forest edge and second growth was seen only once on the tour, at Cana.
- Red-billed Scythebill *Campylorhamphus trochilirostris*: We were not able to get a response out of this one at Cana, and a couple of birds remained as glimpses.
- Brown-billed Scythebill *Campylorhamphus pusillus*: A leader-only sighting of a bird that was part of a quickly disappearing flock on the slopes of Cerro Pirre.

THAMNOPHILIDAE

- Fasciated Antshrike *Cymbilaimus lineatus*: Multiple sightings of this sub-canopy antshrike. The name antshrike stems from the incorrect assumption made by early taxonomists who associated the strong, hooked bill of these sub-oscine birds with the shrikes.
- Great Antshrike *Taraba major*: Not very responsive this year, with our only sightings two flying slowly across the trail in response to playback.
- Barred Antshrike *Thamnophilus doliatus*: A pair seen well in second growth near Gamboa on the first day of the tour.
- Black Antshrike *Thamnophilus nigriceps*: Excellent views of a pair near the Bayano reservoir, here at the western limit of the species' range. This one is restricted to the Darien lowlands (023) and Nechí lowlands (037) Endemic Bird Areas.
- Western Slaty-Antshrike *Thamnophilus atrinucha*: A common denizen of humid forest understorey, seen/heard in appropriate habitat throughout.
- Speckled Antshrike (Spiny-faced A) *Xenornis setifrons*: We put lots of effort in to this one but did not get much of a response, only briefly seeing a single male at Burbayar. A very localized Darien endemic, seemingly preferring the wettest areas in its range (it is absent from e.g. the slopes of Cerro Pirre).
- Russet Antshrike *Thamnistes anabatinus*: The only canopy antshrike in Central America. Two were seen during our exploration of Cana and again on Cerro Pirre.

- Plain Antvireo *Dysithamnus mentalis*: Good looks at a pair from our Cerro Pirre camp kitchen.
- Spot-crowned Antvireo *Dysithamnus puncticeps*: Good views of a pair at Burbayar. Also heard at Cana.
- Moustached Antwren *Myrmotherula ignota*: A single bird was with a mixed flock encountered upon our return from Cerro Pirre but was not seen well, and other vocalizing individuals were unresponsive. Ridgely & Greenfield (2001) treated *ignota* as a separate species ("Griscom's Antwren") from Pygmy Antwren *Myrmotherula brachyura*. A recent paper, however, demonstrated that *ignota* should be treated as a separate species from *M. brachyura*, and also provided rationale for merging Short-billed Antwren *M. obscura* with *M. ignota* (which has priority). "Moustached Antwren" was coined for the enlarged species. Thus, *Myrmotherula obscura* ("Short-billed Antwren") is considered conspecific with, and a subspecies of, *M. ignota*.
- Pacific Antwren *Myrmotherula pacifica*: Numerous around the Cana clearing and airstrip.
- Checker-throated Antwren *Myrmotherula fulviventris*: Frequent sightings in mixed understorey flocks.
- White-flanked Antwren *Myrmotherula axillaris*: Likewise a common member of mixed understorey flocks. Here the race *albigula*, more than one species likely being involved.
- Slaty Antwren *Myrmotherula schisticolor*: Replacing the previous two species at higher elevations, this one was seen very well at our Cerro Pirre camp, here the race *albigula*.
- Rufous-winged Antwren *Herpsilochmus rufimarginatus*: This canopy species was eventually seen quite well at Cana, here of the race *exiguus*.
- Dot-winged Antwren *Microrhopias quixensis*: A fairly common bird in the lowland forests of central Panama and Darien.
- Rufous-rumped Antwren *Terenura callinota*: A single bird was seen with a busy canopy flock on the slopes of Cerro Pirre.
- Dusky Antbird *Cercomacra tyrannina*: We saw both sexes of this common antbird of second growth and dense vegetation.
- Jet Antbird *Cercomacra nigricans*: Good looks at a male in the scrub of Punta Patiño.
- Bare-crowned Antbird *Gymnocichla nudiceps*: What a stunner! With its electric blue crown and jet black plumage, the male is certainly one of the most desirable birds in the family. We also saw a few females.
- White-bellied Antbird *Myrmeciza longipes*: A handsome antbird seen well at Metropolitan Park, here of the race *panamensis*.
- Chestnut-backed Antbird *Myrmeciza exsul*: Seen well at Burbayar and in Darien. A pair of the nominate race was seen in Central Panama (no spots on wing coverts), and *cassini* in Darien (clear white spots on wing coverts).
- Dull-mantled Antbird *Myrmeciza laemosticta*: Excellent views of this moisture-loving middle elevation species from Burbayar.
- Immaculate Antbird *Myrmeciza immaculata*: A pair was seen with the ant swarms on the lower part of the Pirre trail, here belonging to the race *berlepschi*. Like quite a few other species or subspecies, this one is named after Karl von Berlepsch (1850-1950), German ornithologist and collector specializing in the Neotropics.
- Spotted Antbird *Hylophylax naevioides*: A member of the 'faithful trio', this endearing army-ant swarm follower was seen on the Pirre trail and near Cana.
- Wing-banded Antbird *Myrmornis torquata*: A single bird seen near the Pirre trail was followed by a pair perching up for us very nicely on a liana vine on our return hike to Cana. The only regularly 'leaf-tossing' antbird, and certainly one of the oddest members of the family, here of the race *stictoptera*.
- Bicoloured Antbird *Gymnopithys leucaspis*: An obligate ant swarm following species, or 'professional', seen in greatest numbers at Burbayar.

Ocellated Antbird *Phaenostictus mcleannani*: After the ground-cuckoo, this professional army-ant follower is king. Often birds will actually roost near army-ant bivouacs in order to be ready for the action the following day! Showed beautifully at the big ant swarm at Burbayar where there were over 20 individuals, and lower numbers were seen at the swarms along the lower Pirre trail and on Pipeline Road. Named after James McLeannan, who in the mid-nineteenth century was stationmaster at Lion Hill on the Panama Railroad (now submerged under Gatun Lake). He collected many birds in the area (Harpy Eagles were not uncommon at the time) and sent them back to leading American and British ornithologists. From these specimens a number of new species were described, chiefly by George Lawrence (who has a thrush and a warbler named after him) and Osbert Salvin (the one honoured in the name of a curassow).

FORMICARIIDAE

Black-faced Antthrush *Formicarius analis*: Seen quite well near Cana, here of the race *panamensis*.

Rufous-breasted Antthrush *Formicarius rufipectus*: Good views of this handsome species walking around us above the Pirre mountain camp.

Black-crowned Antpitta *Pittasoma michleri*: Arguably Central America's best antpitta, seen well by all of us on our first afternoon at Cana, here of the race *michleri*. Possibly more closely related to the gnateaters (*Conopophaga* sp.) than to other antpitta genera. The first bird we encountered was seen only by Pete and I at Burbayar.

Spectacled Antpitta (Streak-chested A) *Hylopezus perspicillatus*: Very quiet through most of the tour, nevertheless we all had great (and effortless) views of two birds on the trail at Cana.

Fulvous-bellied Antpitta (Thicket A) *Hylopezus dives*: A fairly common voice in dense second growth at Cana. It took a bit of work, but eventually we all got fantastic views of this skulker.

RHINOCRYPTIDAE

Chocó Tapaculo *Scytalopus chocoensis*: Not at all vocal during our visit, and just one bird was seen briefly above the Pirre camp. A species found only in the Darien highlands and Chocó EBAs.

Silvery-fronted Tapaculo *Scytalopus argentifrons* (H): Heard but unresponsive on Cerro Colorado.

TYRANNIDAE

Sooty-headed Tyrannulet *Phyllomyias griseiceps*: Heard regularly from the forest canopy and one was seen high in the canopy at Cana.

Paltry Tyrannulet (Mistletoe T) *Zimmerius vilissimus*: A few were seen, with one in the taller forest of Cerro Azul especially memorable, and many others were heard.

Brown-capped Tyrannulet *Ornithion brunneicapillum*: Seen very well through the scope at Metropolitan Park, and heard frequently in humid forest canopy throughout.

Southern Beardless-Tyrannulet *Camptostoma obsoletum*: Regularly heard in central Panama, and a singing bird was seen at Metropolitan Park, here of the *flaviventer* race.

Mouse-coloured Tyrannulet *Phaeomyias murina*: Good views of a bird at the David airport, here of the disjunct race *eremonoma*.

Yellow-crowned Tyrannulet *Tyrannulus elatus*: A pair showed well on the Old Gamboa road, and the 'free beer!' call was heard repeatedly in the Canal Area and at Cana.

Forest Elaenia *Myiopagis gaimardii*: A couple of birds were seen in the Canal Area with our best views from near the Canopy Tower.

Grey Elaenia *Myiopagis caniceps*: A really great view of a single bird perched quite low with the mobbing flock on the mine trail.

Greenish Elaenia *Myiopagis viridicata*: One leader-only sighting from the Canal Area.

Yellow-bellied Elaenia *Elaenia flavogaster*: Frequently seen and especially numerous around the Cana clearing, here of the *pallididorsalis* subspecies, an endemic taxon to Panama.

- Lesser Elaenia *Elaenia chiriquensis*: A pair was seen at our yellowthroat spot near Volcan in western Panama.
- Mountain Elaenia *Elaenia frantzii*: One individual was scoped on Cerro Colorado.
- Torrent Tyrannulet *Serpophaga cinerea*: Nice looks at this riverine flycatcher from the Boquete area.
- Olive-striped Flycatcher *Mionectes olivaceus*: A couple of foraging birds were seen on Pirre and at Burbayar, however males of this species had not yet started singing on their loosely formed leks. Here the race *hederaceus*. Unlike most other flycatchers, male Olive-stripeded are (like manakins and hummingbirds) completely liberated from parental duties; the fruit they feed on is easily found and gathered by females alone, and one hypothesis argues that heavy nest predation in some tropical frugivores/nectarivores has selected for females to drive males away from nest sites.
- Ochre-bellied Flycatcher *Mionectes oleagineus*: Good views of a few birds around Cana. Similar to the previous species, this is also a lekking frugivorous flycatcher.
- Slaty-capped Flycatcher *Leptopogon superciljaris*: Small numbers were seen in Darien, here of the race *transandinus*.
- Yellow Tyrannulet *Capsiempis flaveola*: A single bird responded well to tape in the Canal Area, here of the race *semiflava*.
- Yellow-green Tyrannulet *Phylloscartes flavovirens*: Good looks at a responsive bird in Metropolitan Park. So far still known as a Panama endemic, but it occurs in Darien very near the Colombian border, and probably occurs on the Colombian side of the Pirre massif as well (where very few ornithologists have gone before).
- Bronze-olive Pygmy-Tyrant *Pseudotriccus pelzelni*: High on Cerro Pirre we came across this shy understorey flycatcher who gave some of us a look at it and then vanished.
- Black-capped Pygmy-Tyrant *Myiornis atricapillus*: Stunning looks at this tiny creature. Together with the closely related Short-tailed Pygmy-Tyrant *M. ecaudatus* (with which it used to be lumped), the smallest passerine.
- Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant *Lophotriccus pileatus*: Nice close-ups of an individual foraging in the camp kitchen on Cerro Pirre.
- Pale-eyed Pygmy-Tyrant *Atalotriccus pilaris*: A smart little flycatcher of drier woodland, seen very nicely in the Canal Area.
- Southern Bentbill *Oncostoma olivaceum*: This distinctive sounding bird was heard regularly and seen well in the Canal Area and at Cana.
- Common Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum cinereum*: Common in second-growth in the Canal Area and around Cana. A typical garden bird in the humid Neotropics.
- Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum nigriceps*: Our only sighting of this canopy flycatcher was a view through the scope of its backside at Mogue.
- Brownish Twistwing (B Flycatcher) *Cnipodectes subbrunneus*: Good views of this oddly-behaving flycatcher at Cana. This species makes metallic sounds with their stiffened, modified outer primaries.
- Eye-ringed Flatbill *Rhynchocyclus brevirostris*: One showed well along the trail above the Pirre mountain camp.
- Olivaceous Flatbill *Rhynchocyclus olivaceus*: Heard in humid forest throughout the tour and seen well on Pipeline Road.
- Yellow-olive Flycatcher (Y-o Flatbill) *Tolmomyias sulphurens*: A bird of drier forests, seen in Metropolitan Park. More than one species is certainly involved with our birds belonging to the race *flavoolivaceus*. Note that all members of this genus were referred to as Flatbills in the new Ecuador and Venezuela field guides.
- Yellow-margined Flycatcher (Y-m Flatbill) *Tolmomyias flavotectus*: Regular encounters with this typical canopy flock member.
- White-throated Spadebill *Platyrinchus mystaceus* (H): A bird heard on Cerro Pirre did not show any interest to playback.
- Golden-crowned Spadebill *Platyrinchus coronatus*: This shy, understorey flycatcher was seen brilliantly through the scope on the lower slopes of Cerro Pirre.

Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher *Terenotriccus erythrurus*: We had really great views of this agile, rapid flycatcher below Canopy Tower.

Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher *Myiobius sulphureipygius*: One at Burbayar, and regularly seen in understory flocks at Cana, here of the race *aureatus*.

Black-tailed Flycatcher *Myiobius atricaudus*: A leader-only sighting of a bird that vanished into thick second-growth at Cana.

Black-billed Flycatcher *Aphanotriccus audax*: Superb scope views of this rare bird. Classified as Near-threatened, this is one of the three species restricted to both the Darien lowlands (023) and Nechí lowlands (037) Endemic Bird Areas.

Common Tufted-Flycatcher *Mitrephanes phaeocercus*: Nice close-ups of this endearing montane flycatcher at the Continental Divide of the Fortuna highway.

Olive-sided Flycatcher *Contopus cooperi*: This species is mostly a transient migrant through Panama and a rare winter resident, we had good views of one at Cana.

Tropical Pewee *Contopus cinereus*: One was scoped up at Panama Viejo, and another one was seen on Cerro Azul/Jefe.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher *Empidonax flaviventris*: The repetitive call of this wintering migrant flycatcher was immediately recognizable after hearing the call notes of the following species during the previous weeks.

Acadian Flycatcher *Empidonax virescens*: Numerous by voice (with a few birds seen) and one of the most common North American visitors.

Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans*: This water-loving flycatcher was seen from the small park near Boquete and again near Volcan.

Long-tailed Tyrant *Colonia colonus*: Numerous sightings of this attractive flycatcher in Darien.

Flammulated Attila *Attila flammulatus*: Good scope views of this fierce-looking flycatcher from Cerro Pirre, and heard on numerous other occasions. Note that also Attila's brother (killed by Attila himself) has been made eternal in a bird name, namely in the African genus *Bleda* (bristlebills).

Speckled Mourner *Laniocera rufescens*: Superb views of a responsive bird at what you might call a lek, several males are usually always present in that particular patch of forest along Pipeline Road.

Rufous Mourner *Rhytipterna holerythra* (H): Heard only along Pipeline Road and in Darien. May be a mimic of the larger Rufous Piha.

Western Sirystes *Sirystes albogriseus*: Very quiet this tour, we finally found a vocalizing bird getting good scope views of it on the lower slopes of Cerro Pirre.

Dusky-capped Flycatcher *Myiarchus tuberculifer*: Frequently heard and seen, this resident, nesting flycatcher is one of the most widely distributed in the family.

Panama Flycatcher *Myiarchus panamensis*: Good views of several birds at Punta Patiño, here of the nominate race.

Great Crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus crinitus*: Good scope views of this migrant flycatcher, very common by voice around the Mogue village.

Lesser Kiskadee *Philohydor lictor*: Nice looks at this water-loving flycatcher at both Punta Patiño and Summit Ponds. Formerly placed in the genus *Pitangus*, but recently the new, monotypic genus *Philohydor* was erected for this bird, based on its different syrinx and its cup-shaped nest, the latter very different from the Great Kiskadee's large globular nest with a side entrance.

Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus*: Regular in the Canal Area and in the west but conspicuously absent in the second growth of Cana which is surrounded by unbroken rainforest.

Boat-billed Flycatcher *Megarynchus pitangua*: A great sighting of two birds at Panama Viejo.

Rusty-margined Flycatcher *Myiozetetes cayanensis*: Daily sightings around the Cana 'lodge', and good comparisons between this and the next species at Punta Patiño.

Social Flycatcher *Myiozetetes similis*: Small numbers were seen at Punta Patiño, in the Canal Area and in the west. Conspicuously absent at Cana.

Grey-capped Flycatcher *Myiozetetes granadensis*: First spotted by Brian at Cana and later seen in small numbers around the Cana clearing and airstrip.

White-ringed Flycatcher *Conopias albobittata*: Good views of this forest canopy flycatcher at Cana and on the slopes of Cerro Pirre.

Golden-bellied Flycatcher *Myiodynastes hemichrysus*: Nice close-ups of a pair from the Fortuna area.

Streaked Flycatcher *Myiodynastes maculatus*: Regularly seen around the Cana clearing and good studies from Cerro Azul.

Piratic Flycatcher *Legatus leucophaeus*: This vociferous species is named for its habit of commandeering the recently constructed nest of another hapless bird.

Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus*: Frequent sightings of this effective insect predator.

Fork-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus savana*: Scattered sightings in more open country in central and western Panama.

Cinereous Becard *Pachyramphus rufus*: A vocalizing female was seen at Cana on our last morning.

Cinnamon Becard *Pachyramphus cinnamomeus*: Fairly common in Cana.

White-winged Becard *Pachyramphus polychopterus* (H): One individual was heard near David.

One-coloured Becard *Pachyramphus homochrous*: A few at Cana.

Masked Tityra *Tityra semifasciata*: This cavity nesting species was seen regularly near Cana.

COTINGIDAE

Rufous Piha *Lipaugus unirufus*: Especially common by voice on the slopes of Cerro Pirre, where several birds were seen. Here the nominate race.

Blue Cotinga *Cotinga nattererii*: Stunning views of two males from the Canopy Tower, seemingly the best place in the country to see this unreal species. Female were seen at Mogue and Punta Patiño. A member of one of the most splendid Neotropical genera, this species ranging from Panama into northwestern Ecuador.

Black-tipped Cotinga (White C) *Carpodectes hopkei*: Near daily sightings of this otherworldly species from around Cana, possibly of the same individual. Named for Gustav Hopke, a German ornithologist who collected birds along the Dagua and Putumayo Rivers in southern Colombia.

Purple-throated Fruitcrow *Querula purpurata*: Regularly encountered in humid lowland forest, with good views of excited males flaring their purple throats.

Three-wattled Bellbird *Procnias tricarunculata* (H): Heard-only from the Continental Divide in the Fortuna area.

PIPRIDAE

Thrush-like Mourner (T-I Schiffornis) *Schiffornis turdinus*: An unmistakable forest sound in Darien, though it took quite a few attempts before we finally had superb close-ups. We encountered the race *panamensis*, more than one species probably being involved. Morphological and genetic data indicate that *Schiffornis* does not belong in the Pipridae but rather forms a group with the Tityras and Becards. A recent author placed the aforementioned group in the Cotingidae, but confirmation of this placement requires further study.

Golden-collared Manakin *Manacus vitellinus*: Good views of displaying males at Cana.

White-ruffed Manakin *Corapipo altera*: Numerous on the slopes of Cerro Pirre and small numbers were also seen on Cerro Azul.

Lance-tailed Manakin *Chiroxiphia lanceolata*: Heard often in the Canal Area and Punta Patiño and seen well at Metropolitan Park.

Blue-crowned Manakin *Pipra coronata*: Small numbers were heard at Burbayar and in the Darien, with our best view that of a male in the scope at Canopy Tower.

Golden-headed Manakin *Pipra erythrocephala*: A very smart bird, common in Darien, with nice views of both foraging and displaying males at a lek.

Red-capped Manakin *Pipra mentalis*: Replacing the previous in central Panama, where it was seen on the Canopy Tower road and heard at Cerro Azul.

SAPAYOIDAE

Sapayoa (Broad-billed S) *Sapayoa aenigma*: A species high on everyone's target list and seen extremely well on two different mornings in Darien. Several genetic studies have shown that Sapayoa belongs with Old World sub-oscines, and most recently two different genetic studies published last year both showed that *Sapayoa* is embedded within the Old World's Broadbills (Eurylaimidae), with one of the authors proposing that the Eurylaimidae be split into two families in order to retain family level rank for Sapayoidae. Currently placed in its own family, the Sapayoidae, by the South American Checklist Committee of the AOU who have a proposal pending to place *Sapayoa* in the Eurylaimidae. Watch this space!

OXYRUNCIDAE

Sharpbill *Oxyruncus cristatus*: A few were seen well on the slopes of Cerro Pirre, where their weird descending call was one of the characteristic bird sounds. For the time being *Oxyruncus* remains in its own monotypic family until its undecided relationships are resolved.

HIRUNDINIDAE

Grey-breasted Martin *Progne chalybea*: Small numbers around Mogue, Punta Patiño and in the Canal Area.

Mangrove Swallow *Tachycineta albilinea*: Small numbers in the Canal Area and only at Mogue did we see it near mangroves.

Blue-and-white Swallow *Notiochelidon cyanoleuca*: Seen at middle-elevations in the west.

White-thighed Swallow *Neochelidon tibialis*: A great find at Cana, we had long lasting views of 6 birds one afternoon, a few of them even foraging over the airstrip.

Southern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*: Regularly seen throughout.

Bank Swallow (Sand Martin) *Riparia riparia*: Nice views from the hot roadside of the David lowlands, a rare winter resident in this part of Panama.

CORVIDAE

Black-chested Jay *Cyanocorax affinis*: Numerous in the Darien lowlands.

Azure-hooded Jay *Cyanolyca cucullata* (H): Heard from the Continental Divide in the Fortuna area.

TROGLODYTIDAE

White-headed Wren *Campylorhynchus albobrunneus*: Small numbers in Darien, including a pair as high as the Pirre mountain camp.

Band-backed Wren *Campylorhynchus zonatus* (H): A heard-only record from the Fortuna area.

Sooty-headed Wren *Thryothorus spadix*: This restricted-range species showed very well on Cerro Pirre.

Black-bellied Wren *Thryothorus fasciatoventris*: We saw this skulker very well at Mogue, and it is also a common inhabitant of tangled second growth at Cana.

Bay Wren *Thryothorus nigricapillus*: Heard in central Panama (the *castaneus* subspecies group) and seen at Cana (where of the *nigricapillus* subspecies group). The latter differ quite conspicuously in the dense barring below.

Stripe-throated Wren *Thryothorus leucopogon*: A bird was seen at Burbayar and again at Cana on the mine trail, where one was caught up in the excitement of that mobbing flock.

Stripe-breasted Wren *Thryothorus thoracicus* (H): Heard on the Fortuna road in the Bocas del Toro foothills.

Rufous-breasted Wren *Thryothorus rutilus*: Common in drier forests in the Canal Area and seen on the old Gamboa road and at Metropolitan Park.

- Rufous-and-white Wren *Thryothorus rufalbus*: This good-looking wren was seen well, but most memorable was the lovely melancholic song.
- Buff-breasted Wren *Thryothorus leucotis*: Good views at Mogue.
- Plain Wren *Thryothorus modestus* (H): A few were heard.
- House Wren *Troglodytes aedon*: Several sightings.
- Ochraceous Wren *Troglodytes ochraceus*: Our only sighting from Cerro Colorado (*ligea*), and heard regularly near the top of Cerro Pirre (*festinus*). This species is currently known only from Costa Rica to Eastern Panama (restricted to the Costa Rica and Panama highlands and Darien highlands EBAs) but probably also occurs across the border in Colombia where it would be an addition to the South America list.
- White-breasted Wood-Wren *Henicorhina leucosticta*: This is the lowland counterpart of the following species, regularly heard and seen in Darien (of the restricted *dariensis* taxon) up to just below the Pirre camp. At the Canopy Tower the birds we saw belong to the *pittieri* subspecies. Expect there to be various splits to current *Henicorhina* species in the future. A recent molecular study suggested splitting *H. leucosticta* into at least three taxa: a Central American *protheleuca* group (to which our birds belong to); a Chocó *inornata* group; and an Amazonian *leucosticta* group. In addition, a second author suggested that taxa within the Central American *protheleuca* group warrant species status. Keep watching this space!
- Grey-breasted Wood-Wren *Henicorhina leucophrys*: The highland wood-wren. More than one species is likely involved, the birds we saw belonging to the nominate race.
- Southern Nightingale Wren (Scaly-breasted W) *Microcerculus marginatus*: Seen quite nicely in full refrain through the scope.
- Song Wren *Cyphorhinus phaeocephalus*: Good views of a small family group along Pipeline Road. Another pair was heard at Burbayar.

POLIOPTILIDAE

- Tawny-faced Gnatwren *Microbates cinereiventris*: A pretty inhabitant of humid foothills, seen well in understorey flocks at Cana and Burbayar.
- Long-billed Gnatwren *Ramphocaenus melanurus*: This vine-tangle skulker was seen fairly easily this tour at several sites across the country (except the west).
- Tropical Gnatcatcher *Polioptila plumbea*: Regular sightings in central Panama, here the race *superciliaris*, in which males have the white extending up over the cheeks and face to above the eyes.
- Slate-throated Gnatcatcher *Polioptila schistaceigula*: We had one good sighting of this Darien speciality at Cana.

TURDIDAE

- Varied Solitaire *Myadestes coloratus*: A lovely Darien endemic, seen well near the top of Cerro Pirre, where the beautiful songs of this species were the most memorable sound.
- Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus aurantiirostris*: Two were seen near Boquete, with the second really posing nicely for us.
- Slaty-backed Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus fuscater*: Seen well at the Pirre mountain camp, here of the handsome race *mirabilis*, endemic to the Serranía de Pirre.
- Grey-cheeked Thrush *Catharus minimus*: A thrush scoped hopping on the lower Pirre trail proved to be this migrant species, a rare winter resident in Panama.
- Mountain Thrush *Turdus plebejus*: Regularly encountered on Cerro Colorado and the Fortuna area.
- Pale-vented Thrush *Turdus obsoletus* (H): One heard on Cerro Pirre.
- Clay-coloured Thrush (C-c Robin) *Turdus grayi*: Seen frequently in western and central Panama. Costa Rica's sentiment for its national bird originates from this species' far-carrying song heard throughout the country just before the coming rainy season.
- Dagua Thrush *Turdus daguae*: Superb close-ups at Cana.

MIMIDAE

Tropical Mockingbird *Mimus gilvus*: A handful of sightings from the Canal Area. This species seems to have been introduced from Colombia into Panama. It is now fairly common in some residential and cleared areas, and has now spread into Costa Rica.

PTILOGONATIDAE

Black-and-Yellow Silky-Flycatcher (B&Y Phainoptila) *Phainoptila melanoxantha*: One bird was glimpsed by the leader with the finch flock on Cerro Colorado.

VIREONIDAE

Yellow-throated Vireo *Vireo flavifrons*: Several good sightings of this migrant from the Darien and Canal Area.

Brown-capped Vireo *Vireo leucophrys*: One individual was seen brilliantly as we watched the hummers near Volcan.

Philadelphia Vireo *Vireo philadelphicus*: This migrant was a good find in the Caribbean foothills of Bocas del Toro at Willie Mazu.

Yellow-green Vireo *Vireo flavoviridis*: A few. A breeding bird in Panama (with full numbers likely not having arrived yet) and a relative of the Red-eyed Vireo *V. olivaceus*, which mainly occurs in Panama as a transient (we were too early for this one).

Scrub Greenlet *Hylophilus flavipes*: Great looks at several birds in the Canal Area. Tawny-crowned Greenlet *Hylophilus ochraceiceps*: With some patience we finally all had good looks at a few birds at Cana, here the race *bulunensis*.

Golden-fronted Greenlet *Hylophilus aurantiifrons*: Small numbers in central Panama, largely replacing the next species in drier forest and woodland (though with a fair amount of overlap, e.g. we found both species at Metropolitan Park).

Lesser Greenlet *Hylophilus decurtatus*: Numerous and widespread.

Green Shrike-Vireo *Vireolanius pulchellus*: Stunning eyeball-to-eyeball views from the Canopy Tower, in fact the best place I know for getting good looks at this treetop species. Also regularly heard and seen elsewhere in the Canal Area.

Yellow-browed Shrike-Vireo *Vireolanius eximius*: This one replaces the previous species in Darien, and alas, there are no canopy towers here ... The monotonous song was heard on a number of occasions, but only one bird was glimpsed by me with a flock.

PARULIDAE

Golden-winged Warbler *Vermivora chrysoptera*: Four sightings of this superb little boreal migrant. Apparently this species is slowly being replaced on its breeding grounds by Blue-winged Warbler *V. pinus*.

Tennessee Warbler *Vermivora peregrina*: One of the most frequently encountered wintering warblers. Note that *peregrinus* is Latin for 'wanderer'. This species breeds mainly in Alaska and Canada, and was described from a migrant specimen collected in Tennessee!

Tropical Parula *Parula pitiayumi*: A few encounters in Darien, and one was also seen in the Bocas del Toro foothills.

Yellow Warbler *Dendroica petechia*: Frequent sightings of wintering birds, which belong to the northern *aestiva* group, and also several encounters with resident birds of the race *aequatorialis*.

Chestnut-sided Warbler *Dendroica pensylvanica*: A few. This wintering warbler seems much more numerous in Costa Rica.

Magnolia Warbler *Dendroica magnolia*: A good find below Canopy Tower, a rather uncommon winter resident.

Black-throated Green Warbler *Dendroica virens*: A couple of sightings of this very attractive winter resident.

Blackburnian Warbler *Dendroica fusca*: A few at higher elevations.

- Bay-breasted Warbler *Dendroica castanea*: Another common wintering warbler, all of them still in their grotty non-breeding plumage.
- Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia*: Nice studies in the neighbourhood of Cerro Azul/Jefe. This handsome warbler is placed in its own genus, and its foraging behaviour is certainly different from all other parulids.
- American Redstart *Setophaga ruticilla*: One female was seen on the lower part of the Pirre trail and a second on Cerro Azul/Jefe.
- Prothonotary Warbler *Protonotaria citrea*: A little stunner, seen repeatedly at Punta Patiño and Summit Ponds, all of which were likely wintering.
- Northern Waterthrush *Seiurus noveboracensis*: Small numbers in central Panama.
- Louisiana Waterthrush *Seiurus motacilla*: A couple of birds were heard and glimpsed in the Boquete area.
- Chiriqui Yellowthroat *Geothlypis chiriquensis*: It took some work but eventually we nailed this one, getting good scope views. The new Ecuador field guide considers this disjunct, restricted-range form as a species separate from Masked Yellowthroat *G. aequinoctialis*.
- Grey-crowned Yellowthroat *Geothlypis poliocephala*: A few birds perched up for good views in the Volcan area.
- Wilson's Warbler *Wilsonia pusilla*: Two sightings from Fortuna and Volcan.
- Slate-throated Redstart (S-t Whitestart) *Myioborus miniatus*: Seen on Cerro Pirre and again in western Panama.
- Chestnut-capped Warbler *Basileuterus culicivorus*: Excellent views in the second-growth below Cerro Colorado as we waited for our newly hired bush-taxi.
- Black-cheeked Warbler *Basileuterus melanogenys*: A few of this CR/P endemic were seen very well on Cerro Colorado.
- Pirre Warbler *Basileuterus ignotus*: We were treated to good views of this very restricted-range Darien endemic. Indeed, its range is estimated to only total c. 72 km² and thus its classification as Vulnerable.
- Three-striped Warbler *Basileuterus tristriatus*: A couple were seen at upper elevations of the Fortuna road.
- Buff-rumped Warbler *Basileuterus fulvicauda*: Heard regularly near streams but none ever really gave us a good look.

COEREBIDAE

- Bananaquit *Coereba flaveola*: Regular encounters.

THRAUPIDAE

- White-eared Conebill *Conirostrum leucogenys*: A single bird was seen by me at Cana but immediately flew away when we tried to get on it.
- Plain-coloured Tanager *Tangara inornata*: Small numbers were encountered in central Panama and at Cana. The dullest in the genus, but nonetheless very pretty when seen at close range. Of all the Neotropical bird genera, *Tangara* is the most diverse with 51 species, the majority of which are found at middle elevations along the eastern slope of the Andes.
- Emerald Tanager *Tangara florida*: This superb foothill species showed extremely well at Willie Mazu. The scientific name bears no reference to the American state of the same name. *Florida* is Latin for 'flowery, blooming' and refers to the gaudy plumage of this species. The name of Florida state is derived from the Spanish *Pascua florida* or Easter, the time of year when the Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de León discovered the area in 1513.
- Silver-throated Tanager *Tangara icterocephala*: We found several birds near the Pirre mountain camp as well as Cerro Colorado and the Fortuna road.
- Speckled Tanager *Tangara guttata*: Another foothill species, found in small numbers on the slopes of Cerro Pirre and Cerro Azul.
- Bay-headed Tanager *Tangara gyrola*: A few present on Cerro Pirre with our best views at the Cerro Azul residence.

Rufous-winged Tanager *Tangara lavinia*: A hard to come by foothill tanager (though it reaches sea level in some parts of its range), seen very well at Burbayar and again on Cerro Azul.

Golden-hooded Tanager *Tangara larvata*: Numerous and widespread in lowlands and lower foothills. 'Larvatus' is Latin for masked.

Spangle-cheeked Tanager *Tangara dowii*: We enjoyed fantastic close-ups of this CR/P highland endemic at Cerro Colorado.

Green-naped Tanager *Tangara fucosa*: We saw good numbers feeding at the fruiting melastomes during our two days near the top of Cerro Pirre. A Darien endemic and close relative of the previous, and in fact one would have to split a lot of the Andean *Tangara* tanagers if using the same criteria!

Scarlet-thighed Dacnis *Dacnis venusta*: Repeated sightings of males at Burbayar and Cerro Azul.

Blue Dacnis *Dacnis cayana*: Many good views, here of the rather deep blue race *ultramarina*.

Viridian Dacnis *Dacnis viguieri*: After most of us got a pretty quick scope view of a pair on our first day at Cana we followed up with leisurely scope views for all of a pair of this restricted-range Darien endemic classified as Near-threatened on our last afternoon. The male I had later may have been a fifth individual!

Green Honeycreeper *Chlorophanes spiza*: Small numbers seen throughout the trip.

Shining Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes lucidus*: Excellent views of several birds at Burbayar and a female was seen in Gamboa.

Purple Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes caeruleus*: Good looks at several birds on the mine trail of Cana.

Red-legged Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes cyaneus*: The sight of all those males crowded around that nectar feeder was one of the great tour spectacles!

Blue-grey Tanager *Thraupis episcopus*: Numerous and widespread in secondary areas. The scientific name is derived from the 'episcopal blue' plumage.

Palm Tanager *Thraupis palmarum*: Another one that was found throughout the country, and we had daily views at Cana.

Blue-and-gold Tanager *Bangsia arcaei*: A leader-only sighting from the Fortuna area that failed to respond to playback.

Carmioli's Tanager *Chlorothraupis carmioli*: Strangely scarce this tour, heard at Nusagandi and Fortuna and one bird was seen by Pete and I on Cerro Azul/Jefe.

Lemon-spectacled Tanager (L-browed T) *Chlorothraupis olivacea*: A close relative of the previous, replacing it in Darien where it granted many good views.

Grey-headed Tanager *Eucometis penicillata*: Like some antbirds, this understory tanager has a penchant for following army-ants to forage on the larger, fleeing insects. We only managed poor views of two birds on Pipeline Road.

Sulphur-rumped Tanager *Heterospingus rubrifrons*: Excellent scope views from both Burbayar and Cerro Azul. A near-endemic and close relative of the next species, but with both sexes resembling the Scarlet-browed Tanager's female.

Scarlet-browed Tanager *Heterospingus xanthopygius*: This one performed well this year, allowing for good views of both sexes.

White-shouldered Tanager *Tachyphonus luctuosus*: Birds of the race *panamensis* were regularly encountered in both central and eastern Panama.

Tawny-crested Tanager *Tachyphonus delatrii*: A fast moving group of this species was seen near Burbayar.

Red-crowned Ant-Tanager *Habia rubica*: This species seems to have multiplied at Metropolitan Park in recent years, here of the race *vinacea* (birds sounding quite different from those in e.g. Amazonian Ecuador and Peru).

Red-throated Ant-Tanager *Habia fuscicauda*: Several good views at both sexes of the race *willisi*. This species replaces the previous species in more humid areas, but is conspicuously absent at Cana, where none of the two ant-tanager species is found. Interestingly the Red-throated Ant-Tanager is not known to occur anywhere in far eastern Panama, though it re-appears on the Caribbean coast of northern Colombia (*erythrolaema*).

- Highland Hepatic-Tanager *Piranga lutea*: This species was found in good numbers at Cerro Azul/Jefe, and a few were also seen in the Fortuna area. Note that recent genetic research indicates that the genus *Piranga* doesn't really belong with the tanagers, and that it is more closely allied to cardinals.
- Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra*: Quite a few observations of this wintering tanager.
- Flame-coloured Tanager (Stripe-backed T) *Piranga bidentata*: A handsome tanager seen well at several montane sites in the west.
- Crimson-backed Tanager *Ramphocelus dimidiatus*: A colourful species that has - of all places - been introduced into Tahiti (by slaves from Panama?).
- Cherrie's Tanager *Ramphocelus costaricensis*: A leader-only sighting from the Volcan area.
- Passerini's Tanager *Ramphocelus passerinii*: Small numbers were seen in the Bocas del Toro foothills.
- Lemon-rumped Tanager (Yellow-rumped Tanager) *Ramphocelus icteronotus*: Replacing the former in central (Caribbean slope and lowlands where we didn't go) and eastern Panama, where we found it to be numerous around the Cana clearing and airstrip.
- Rosy Thrush-Tanager (Rose-breasted T-T) *Rhodinocichla rosea*: We had great luck with this secretive understory denizen, scoring great looks at this melodious songster in the Canal Area.
- Dusky-faced Tanager *Mitrospingus cassinii*: An understory tanager going around in roving flocks, seen well in the stream valley at Cana. It was also seen near Burbayar.
- Common Bush-Tanager *Chlorospingus ophthalmicus*: Common on Cerro Colorado and the Fortuna Road, here of the race *novicius*.
- Tacarcuna Bush-Tanager *Chlorospingus tacarcunae*: Superb scope views of this Darien endemic on Cerro Jefe.
- Pirre Bush-Tanager *Chlorospingus inornatus*: This Darien endemic was numerous on the higher slopes of Cerro Pirre.
- Sooty-capped Bush-Tanager *Chlorospingus pileatus*: A species of higher elevations that we had nice views of in the Fortuna area.
- Yellow-throated Bush-Tanager *Chlorospingus flavigularis*: Good views of the isolated race *hypophaeus* (possibly representing a distinct species) in the Bocas del Toro foothills.
- Yellow-backed Tanager *Hemithraupis flavicollis*: A single male from Cana.
- Black-and-yellow Tanager *Chrysothlypis chrysomelas*: Many good views in mountainous areas throughout the country. Another species found in both the Costa Rica and Panama highland and Darien highland EBAs. We encountered both races.
- Swallow-Tanager *Tersina viridis*: Daily views around the Cana clearing. This gaudy bird was formerly placed in its own family, the Tersinidae.

CARDINALIDAE

- Streaked Saltator *Saltator striatipectus*: One bird was observed at the David airport.
- Buff-throated Saltator *Saltator maximus*: Seen regularly throughout the country.
- Slate-coloured Grosbeak *Pitylus grossus*: Great scope views at Canopy Tower and a pair seen from Burbayar.
- Yellow-green Grosbeak *Caryothraustes canadensis* (H): Very scarce this tour and our only encounter a distant unresponsive group on Cerro Pirre.
- Rose-breasted Grosbeak *Pheucticus ludovicianus*: A few in western Panama.
- Blue-black Grosbeak *Cyanocompsa cyanooides*: Heard much more often than seen, but we did obtain great views of a male on the steep trail down to the Pirre mountain camp creek.

EMBERIZIDAE

- Yellow-green Finch *Pselliophorus luteoviridis*: Good response and eventually by morning's end we had seen a half-dozen of this Panama endemic.
- Yellow-throated Brush-Finch *Atlapetes gutturalis*: This species was found along the in the Fortuna and Boquete areas where it favours brushy edge growth. Similarly, this species also favours coffee plantations.

- Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch *Buarremon brunneinuchus*: Many good looks at the race *frontalis* on Cerro Pirre, where this species was common above the mountain camp.
- Orange-billed Sparrow *Arremon aurantirostris*: Several sightings at Cana where we came across the race *strictocollaris*.
- Black-striped Sparrow *Arremonops conirostris*: Small numbers were found around the Cana airstrip, and a few were heard/seen elsewhere.
- Blue-black Grassquit *Volatinia jacarina*: Scattered sightings.
- Variable Seedeater *Sporophila corvina*: Birds of the race *hicksii* were regularly seen in both central Panama and Darien, being especially numerous around the Cana clearing and airstrip. The very different race *corvina* (with males being all black except for a white wing speculum) was found in the Bocas del Toro foothills.
- Ruddy-breasted Seedeater *Sporophila minuta*: Another nice find in the tall grass of the Volcan area.
- Yellow-faced Grassquit *Tiaris olivacea*: Several birds were seen at Burbayar on the Fortuna road and Cerro Azul/Jefe.
- Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis*: Numerous in the west around Volcan.

ICTERIDAE

- Eastern Meadowlark *Sturnella magna*: Four of this species made a lovely sight near Volcan. Panamanian birds, of the rather small and dark race *subulata*, may rather belong with 'Lilian's Meadowlark' (*S. lilianae*) though more study is needed.
- Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus*: Numerous in open country, this species has undergone a population explosion in response to man-made environments.
- Shiny Cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis*: Regular sightings in the Cana clearing.
- Giant Cowbird *Scaphidura oryzivora*: Another one that was seen frequently, particularly at Cana. A brood parasite on oropendolas.
- Orchard Oriole *Icterus spurius*: A few were seen at Panama Viejo.
- Yellow-backed Oriole *Icterus chrysater*: Excellent views at Metropolitan Park.
- Orange-crowned Oriole *Icterus auricapillus*: Our leisurely views of two males made a very enjoyable addition to our afternoon birding at Punta Patiño.
- Yellow-tailed Oriole *Icterus mesomelas*: This one showed well at Cana. Here the race *carrikeri*, lacking the white in the wings seen on birds in Ecuador. This subspecies is named after M. A. Carriker, who co-authored "Birds of the Santa Marta Region of Colombia" (1922).
- Baltimore Oriole *Icterus galbula*: Scattered sightings.
- Yellow-billed Cacique *Amblycercus holosericeus*: A vocal but hard-to-see skulker of dense thickets, showing brilliantly at Cana. The nest being a cup rather than a pendant basket as in the *Cacicus* species and in oropendolas, it is only distantly related to both of the latter (which was recently confirmed by DNA-sequence data).
- Scarlet-rumped Cacique *Cacicus microrhynchus*: Small numbers were found at Burbayar and the Canal area.
- Yellow-rumped Cacique *Cacicus cela*: Small numbers from the Darien and the Canal Area, here the race *vitellinus*.
- Crested Oropendola *Psarocolius decumanus*: Great views of a displaying male at Cana.
- Chestnut-headed Oropendola *Psarocolius wagleri*: Scattered sightings in central Panama and Darien. Often placed in the monotypic genus *Zarhynchus*.
- Black Oropendola *Psarocolius guatimozinus*: Another very memorable sighting that was a story in itself. Our third and final species restricted to both the Darien lowlands (023) and Nechí lowlands (037) Endemic Bird Areas.

FRINGILLIDAE

FRINGILLINAE

- Yellow-bellied Siskin *Carduelis xanthogaster*: Good views of both sexes from the Boquete area.
- Lesser Goldfinch *Carduelis psaltria*: Fairly common on the lower slopes of Cerro Colorado and the Boquete area.

EUPHONIINAE

Yellow-collared Chlorophonia *Chlorophonia flavirostris* (H): A single bird was frustratingly heard at Burbayar but was impossible to find. Recent genetic research indicates that chlorophonias and euphonias don't belong with the tanagers, but rather with cardueline finches.

Golden-browed Chlorophonia *Chlorophonia callophrys* (H): Heard on Cerro Colorado and a repeat of the performance we got from the previous species.

Yellow-crowned Euphonia *Euphonia luteicapilla*: A handsome lunch-hour bird at the Cerro Azul residence.

Thick-billed Euphonia *Euphonia laniirostris*: The most frequently seen euphonia in central Panama.

Fulvous-vented Euphonia *Euphonia fulvicrissa*: A male was seen nicely during our lunch-hour at Cerro Azul.

Tawny-capped Euphonia *Euphonia anae*: Good views from Burbayar and again from the Fortuna road.

White-vented Euphonia *Euphonia minuta*: A really amazing sight to see so many of this species adorning those introduced pines along the Llano-Cartí road of Nusagandi. They appeared to be preparing to roost.

Orange-bellied Euphonia *Euphonia xanthogaster*: Several sightings from the slopes of Cerro Pirre and the Boca trail.

PASSERIDAE

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*: This Old World species was seen at nearly the eleventh hour in Panama City to everyone's relief!

MAMMALS

Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth (B-t S) *Bradypus variegatus*: Although the five or so individuals we saw between Burbayar and the Canal Area were great, we will never forget our "perezoso de tres dedos" friends from the Canopy Tower!

Western Night Monkey (Colombian or Lemurine N M) *Aotus lemurinus*: A nice pre-dawn surprise during our owling efforts at Cana.

Geoffroy's Tamarin (Red-crested Bare-face T, Red-naped T) *Saguinus geoffroyi*: Several sightings of this near-endemic from Burbayar and the Canal Area.

White-faced Capuchin *Cebus capucinus*: A quite large group gorging on figs was great entertainment on Pipeline Road.

Mantled Howler (M H Monkey) *Alouatta palliata*: Repeated observations of this impressive monkey, and the legendary 'howling' was a characteristic forest sound.

Brown-headed Spider Monkey (Colombian S M) *Ateles fusciceps*: Numerous and entertaining encounters on the upper slopes of Cerro Pirre, several times getting very annoyed with our presence, anxiously shaking branches etc. This form is sometimes lumped in Central American Spider Monkey *A. geoffroyi*.

Variiegated Squirrel *Sciurus variegatoides*: Some good looks at several from Burbayar, Cerro Azul and the Canal Area.

Red-tailed Squirrel (Tropical Red Squirrel) *Sciurus granatensis*: A few.

Western Pygmy-Squirrel *Microsciurus mimulus*: We had a quick look at this species at Burbayar, and I'm glad you all were able to clinch the identification (remember the ear spots?)!

Central American Agouti *Dasyprocta punctata*: About half a dozen sightings.

Grey Fox *Urocyon cinereoargenteus*: An evening visitor to the clearing at Cana.

White-nosed Coati *Nasua narica*: Lots of these from the Canal Area.

Puma (Cougar or Mountain Lion) *Puma concolor*: We were extremely lucky to see this seldom-seen cat while on foot at Cana in daylight. Practically all of the eight jaguars I have seen in my life were spotted from a boat with only one seen while walking trails. My fellow guides in Manu only ever saw Pumas by spotlighting them at night from a boat.

Collared Peccary *Tayassu tajacu*: Good views of a small group on the trail at Cana.

[Baird's Tapir *Tapirus bairdii*: Footprints were found in Darien].

AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES

Broad-headed Rain Frog *Eleutherodactylus megacephalus*: Our sighting at Cerro Azul likely represents a range-extension for this species.

Meso-American Slider *Trachemys scripta*

Striped Basilisk *Basiliscus vittatus*

Green Iguana *Iguana iguana*

Vine Snake *Oxybelis platurus*

TOP TEN LIST

- 1st Harpy Eagle
Rufous-vented Ground Cuckoo
- 3rd Black Oropendola
- 4th Puma
- 5th Saffron-headed Parrot
- 6th Black-crowned Antpitta
Plumbeous Hawk
- 8th Viridian Dacnis
- 9th Glow-throated Hummingbird
Blue Cotinga