

WESTERN VENEZUELA

4 – 18/24 FEBRUARY 2012

TOUR REPORT

LEADER: EUSTACE BARNES

GROUP MEMBERS: BILL PORTEOUS, ANGELINE HAMBERG, STEVE HAMBERG and PETER MARSH

A stunning Grey-naped Antpitta, sat watching us from just a few feet away deep within a moss clad thicket in remote Tachira and a large family group of Venezuelan Wood-Quails scurrying around our feet in Henri Pittier National Park were just two of the highlights of our recent Western Venezuela tour. One cannot exaggerate the scale of the landscape or the density of birdlife in the Llanos with literally thousands of Herons, Ibises and Waterfowl. Our extraordinary boat trip at Hato El Cedral produced eight Agami Herons, a Zigzag Heron that sat and looked at us for what seemed an eternity and close up studies of Yellow-knobbed Curassow and a displaying Sunbittern made for an unforgettable experience. Watching a large Green Anaconda crushing a turtle the following morning added to an outstanding finish. We recorded 548 species of birds during the tour. We travelling through the cloud forest sites of the Coastal and Andean Cordilleras from Caracas to Tachira, the arid deserts in the state of Falcon, the coastal mangroves and marshes at Tucacas and Lake Maracaibo, as well as the stunning mountain scenery and paramos in the Sierra Nevada National Park to the magnificent spectacle of the Llanos we experienced one of the most diverse tours of any in South America. Venezuela has received a lot of bad press owing to the anachronistic policies of its eccentric government but it remains a beautiful country in which travel is a pleasure and which happens to be an exceptionally bird rich part of South America packed with endemics. We also saw quite a number of other interesting species including Northern Screamer, Orinoco Goose, Pinnated Bittern, Sharp-tailed Ibis, Rusty-flanked Crake, Plain-flanked Rail, Rusty-faced and Yellow-shouldered Parrots, Foothill Screech Owl, Pygmy Palm Swift, Bearded Helmetcrest, Lazuline Sabrewing, Citron-throated Toucan, Schwartz's Antthrush, Undulated and Scallop-breasted Antpittas, Yellow-bellied Chat-Tyrant, Barred, Green and Black, Handsome and Golden-breasted Fruiteaters, Andean Cock-of-the-Rock, Mérida Wren, Vermilion Cardinal, Tocuyo Sparrow and Rosy Thrush Tanager to mention but a few. We also had the pleasure of seeing two Giant Anteaters, a Brazilian Porcupine and an Orinocan Crocodile.

Meeting in the Ole Caribe Hotel we made our plans for the following and duly made for Colonia Tovar, a somewhat bizarre German colony cut into precipitous hillsides. This delightfully eccentric settlement is located in the coastal cordilleras and surprisingly close to some excellent areas of subtropical and temperate forest with a dense bamboo understorey. This area does provide an

excellent introduction to the birds of the region and our experience was to be no exception. Our first bird was the endemic Caracas Tapaculo which performed very well in a bamboo thicket by the main road followed very quickly by the rather pretty Black-throated Spinetail which is also an endemic. Quickly moving on we were treated to good views of Tyrrian Metaltail and Long-tailed Sylph together with a male Rufous-shafted Woodstar. Walking a trail nearby we found a few pairs of Ochre-breasted Brush-finches, a number of Glossy-black Thrushes, several fabulously named Oleaginous Hemispinguses, Blue-capped and Beryl-spangled Tanagers. We also saw Collared Trogon, Montane Foliage-gleaner and a number of Montane Woodcreepers plus a few Marble-faced Bristle-tyrants and a Flavescent Flycatcher but despite spending much time only glimpsed a couple of Golden-breasted Fruiteaters high in the canopy of fruiting trees along the road. After a splendid and much deserved lunch we descended the southern flank of the Coastal Cordillera to Pie del Cerro to explore an area of agricultural lands and patches of dry woodland. We were treated to a totally different mix of open country species starting with Black-faced Tanager and Lesser Goldfinches followed by Oriole Blackbirds and a good number of Tropical Mockingbirds, a few Green-rumped Parrotlets, Spectacled and Pale-breasted Thrushes, Golden-rumped and Trinidad Euphonia and a male Ultramarine Grosbeak. A field of rotting tomatoes was full of Blue-grey, White-lined and Silver-beaked Tanagers along with a couple of Squirrel Cuckoos, Scaled Doves, Lesser Goldfinches, Yellow-bellied seedeaters and Blue-black Grassquit. A flowering Erythrina (Coral tree) held Copper-rumped Hummingbirds and a number of sparkling Violetears along with a few crested Oropendolas. We then headed to Maracay seeing Bare-faced Ibises, a pair of Chestnut-fronted Macaws and good numbers of Orange-winged Amazons going to roost somewhere in the city.

Arriving at Rancho Grande we were immediately pitched into the frantic flurry of a mixed flock picking out Crested Spinetail, Venezuelan Bristle-Tyrant and a couple of Rufous-lore Tyrannulets amongst the mass of commoner species including Golden, Speckled and Bay-headed Tanagers. We also heard Black-faced and Short-tailed Antthrushes along with several Plain-backed Antpittas, none of which were interested in our endeavours with recordings of their enticing songs. Walking the road we saw a small flock of Lilac-tailed Parrotlets and a number of the endemic Blood-eared Parakeets, while a stunning White Hawk perched for us to admire. A little later on we saw a Black Hawk-Eagle soaring overhead while below the endemic Groove-billed Toucanet was noted along with several pairs of Smoky-brown Woodpeckers, several Cinnamon Flycatchers, Smoke-coloured Pewee, Chestnut-crowned Becard, Blackburnian and Golden-crowned Warblers and an American Redstart. Our otherwise pleasant morning was unpleasantly punctuated by the shrill tones of a bureaucrat from the National parks authority. We were sharply informed that a permit was needed to visit Rancho Grande and that this could only be obtained in person from the park headquarters some distance away. Needless to say we declined the invitation and stuck to the road. It did seem odd that a permit should be required to visit what is a dilapidated building with no facilities and perhaps even more odd that time should be devoted to informing tourists of this while so much rubbish is being dumped in the park.

In the afternoon we descended to the Cumboto road to bird an area of dry woodland where we were treated to great views of the uncommon Black-backed Antshrike but rather less exciting views of the Northern White-fringed Antwren. We also saw Plain Thornbird, Barred Antshrike, Golden-fronted and Scrub Greenlets, Slate-headed Tody Flycatcher, Orange-crowned Oriole, Two-banded Puffbird, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, Scaled Piculet, Streak-headed and Straight-billed Woodcreepers, Rufous-breasted and Buff-breasted Wrens together with a small flock of White-cheeked Conebills. On departure we decided to return to Rancho Grande but not before Steve found a stunning adult Fasciated Tiger Heron right by the road. A little higher up we saw a small troop of Wedge-capped Capuchins to add to our earlier sightings of a pretty little Red-tailed squirrel for the mammal list. Our tireless pursuit of ever more birdlife gave us unforgettable views of a superb male Handsome

Fruiteater in the late afternoon along with some noisy Rufous-vented Chachalacas and the song of a somewhat distant Pavonine Cuckoo before we returned to our lodgings.

The following morning we climbed up through the coastal cordillera along the Choroní Road to the pass arriving well before dawn. It was not long before we heard and subsequently glimpsed a Foothill Screech Owl followed by a couple of displaying Band-tailed Guans. The dawn chorus was somewhat muted but we quickly located a singing Scallop-breasted Antpitta and after some work we saw a male. A spectacular start to what was to be a fantastic day. In no time we then called in a Schwartz's Antthrush which sang in front of us for what seemed an age but eventually we had to move on, leaving the Antthrush to its territorial duties in search of other species. These included numerous Groove-billed Toucanets, a pair of Collared Trogons, a Strong-billed Woodcreeper and after a little effort a pair of Golden-breasted Fruiteaters. We then returned to the pass finding the endemic Rufous-cheeked Tanager on the way. Several small flocks held numerous Beryl-spangled and Speckled Tanagers along with Olive-striped Flycatcher, Inca Jay, several Ochre-breasted Brush-Finches and a number of Grey-breasted Wood-wrens. A fruiting tree also held a family of Red Howler Monkeys they shared with several Toucanets and more Fruiteaters. It was time to move on and we slowly descended through the humid forest stopping at suitable spots. It was already heard to be a highlight of the day but as we worked our way through the forest it became progressively more so. We had spectacular sightings of Plain-backed Antpitta feeding in a gully, a pair of Venezuelan Antwrens and another male Handsome Fruiteater. Shortly before lunch we heard the quiet contact notes of woodquail and slowly several birds came into view by the road and before long we were able to see a point blank range up to nine birds feeding in the leaf litter by the road; truly a magnificent highlight on a day hard to repeat. We were then forced to re-cross the pass and descend to the drier southern slope to escape the incoming fog. In the limited time available to us we found a pair of Stripe-breasted Spinetails, a smart Sooty-capped Hermit, numerous White-vented Plumbeaters, a Violet-headed hummingbird and a pair of endemic Fulvous-headed Tanagers before rain stopped play.

Our final morning in Henri Pittier started at dawn on the Choroní road with a very obliging Foothill Screech Owl and a Band-winged Nightjar along with a pair of Band-tailed Guans and several Golden-breasted Fruiteaters. We then found a nice mixed flock with Streaked Tuftedcheek, Montane Foliage Gleaner and a couple of Olive-backed Woodcreepers. A little lower and we were again working through a number of flocks adding Purple Honeycreeper and Golden Olive Woodpecker and seeing more Rufous-cheeked Tanagers and another stunning male Handsome Fruiteater. After finding a male Venezuelan Antwren for Bill and a Slaty Antwren it was time to say goodbye to this superb area and head west to Morrocoy and the sprawling inconvenience of Tucacas. Circumnavigating the aforementioned horror we made for the mangroves in the Morrocoy National Park and, having selected a suitable spot we were soon treated to point blank views of a pair of Plain-flanked Rails, a very localised endemic that fully warrants threatened status. Also present in the vicinity were good numbers of Tricoloured Herons, White-cheeked Pintails and American Flamingos while overhead the scavenging Magnificent Frigatebirds patrolled the skies. We then headed to the vine-clad woodlands of a nearby hill where we saw a pair of White-bellied Antbirds, Northern White-fringed Antwren, Pale-tipped Tyrannulet, a couple of superb male Lance-tailed Manakins, Tropical Gnatcatcher and the delightful Rufous and White Wren. The famous Chichiriviche lagoons were thronging with birdlife. Along with thousands of flamingos we also saw Bare-faced and Glossy Ibises together with the spectacular Scarlet Ibis, Black-crowned and Yellow-crowned Night Herons, Great Blue and Cocoi Herons, an Osprey, numerous Bare-eyed Pigeons, Gull-billed terns and hundreds of

wintering Blue-winged Teal. It was late and we then headed south to our lodgings at our delightful Posada out in the sticks.

The following morning we birded the environs of the posada finding numerous pairs of Caribbean Horneros, Black-crested Antshrike, four Red and green Macaws, a Laughing Falcon and a Merlin. We then headed to an area of rough pasture with shade trees and palm stands at the base of a limestone ridge. We watched several magnificent Horned Screemers, a single Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, Vaux's Swifts, Rusty-margined Flycatcher, White-eared Conebill, Yellow and Orange-crowned Orioles and several Oriole Blackbirds in this lovely area. We were also very fortunate in seeing an adult Bicoloured Hawk hunting which is always a great bird to see. Later we drove west through the inviting desert habitats of Falcon to Coro, the colonial capital of the state.

Stopping in the desert we reeled in Slender-billed Inezia, Fuscous Flycatcher, Pearly-vented Tody-tyrant, Northern Scrub Flycatcher and a single White-whiskered Spinetail. We then continued on our way to an area of drier desertic vegetation where we saw Harris's Hawk, Buffy Hummingbird, more Slender-billed Inezias, the lovely little Maracaibo Tody-Flycatcher, several Vermilion Cardinals, and a good number of Yellow-shouldered Amazons coming in to roost. So ended another bird filled day.

The next morning we climbed higher into the Sierra San Luis to find a pair of smart 'Maracaibo' Antshrikes (a distinctive race of Black-crested Antshrike). As we continued, although it was very windy we found the handsome Orinoco Saltator, a pair of Bicoloured Wrens and a very smart Rufous-tailed Jacamar. A small gulley held a sheltering mixed flock that gave us more great views of White-whiskered Spinetail, Slender-billed Inezias and a pair of Vermillion Cardinals. We then headed south to Sanare in the Andean foothills stopping at a number of ponds and marshes on the way where we continued to enjoy the continuous procession of new birds. We found Red-billed Emerald at our first stop in the desert which was a most welcome surprise. A little further on we saw a Capped Heron and an Anhinga. On subsequent stops we picked up Common Gallinule, a single Caribbean Coot and several American Purple Gallinules along with three Least Grebes, a pair of Pied-billed Grebes and about ten Masked Ducks; the latter giving superb views. At one stop Peter spotted a spectacular pair of King Vultures perched in a dead tree and later we saw Pearl Kite, Grey Hawk and a pair of Great Black Hawks with young. It was time to get a move on and we trundled off along the pretty country roads towards Barquisimeto and Sanare arriving time for a pleasant rest from the days driving at yet another beautiful Posada and their fine cuisine.

Another early start and we headed for Yacambú National parks where we enjoyed the fresh climate of the cloud forests after the dry dusty deserts of Falcon. Dawn chorus was non-existent and we only managed to find a single Yellow-billed Toucanet and a singing Lined Quail Dove before we descended to Laguna el Blanquito where the birdlife was rather more prolific. After strategic positioning we all saw up to four Rusty-flanked Crakes and Caribbean Coot along with the bizarre Hoatzin. A large and noisy mixed flock at the lake edge produced Black-capped and Black-headed Tanagers along with our first Saffron-headed Tanager, Yellow-legged and Black-hooded Thrushes, Violet-fronted Brilliant, Booted Racket-tail and a good number of near arctic warblers including Black and white and a superb Golden-winged Warbler. During our lunch break we were treated to fantastic views of both Blood-eared and Rose-crowned Parakeets in the flowering Erythrina trees allowing side by side comparison of two endemics. In the late afternoon climbed back up to the ridge to see if activity had picked up. It was still very quiet but with persistence found several pairs of Masked Trogons, a pair of Golden-breasted Fruiteaters, a pair of Band-tailed Guans and a number of Andean Toucanets feeding in a large fruiting fig together with their close cousin; the Yellow-billed Toucanet.

The following morning, descending to a peaceful valley below Sanare we began our exploration with several Tocuyo Sparrows and a single Green-tailed Emerald. While birding we were treated to the somewhat unmelodious cacophony of the resident Rufous-vented Chachalacas, complimenting the equally discordant rattling chatter of Tawny-crowned Pygmy Tyrants and Crested Spinetails. A little lower we found a stunning male Rosy Thrush-Tanager that performed beyond all expectations; another candidate for bird of the trip. We also saw Black-faced Grassquit and Lesser Goldfinch along with Barred Antshrike and several Crested and Pale-breasted Spinetails. It was time to move on and so began our marathon journey to La Bravera above La Azulita way to the south in the state of Merida. We broke our journey at a thoroughly delightful spot to see a good number of Pygmy Swifts cruising around. Our next port of call and final birding site of the day was in the Upper tropics along the north facing flank of the Andes. Walking through the coffee and cacao plantations we found both Black-mandibled and Citron-throated Toucans in good numbers, enjoying great views of both species. We also saw Orange-chinned Parakeet, a distant pair of Saffron-headed Parrots, Scarlet-fronted Parakeets, Violet-crowned Woodnymph, Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, Yellow-crowned and Golden-faced Tyrannulets, a single Black-crowned Tityra, several Swallow Tanagers, a single Magpie Tanager and large numbers of the lovely Crimson-backed Tanager. Just before it was time to move on we also saw a Black-chested Jay and after watching this lovely species it really was time to head on to La Bravera some distance from La Azulita; a magnificent Estancia high in the Andes not far from Merida. It was beginning to feel like a tour of fantastic places to stay! They just happened to be close to great birding areas and to be getting better with each succeeding site.

We began our exploration of this fabulous area at the hummingbird feeders where we saw Orange-throated Sunangel, Collared Inca, Buff-tailed Coronet, Long-tailed Sylph and a single Golden-tailed Starfrontlet. Not far from the lodge we saw a very cooperative Merida Tapaculo and a number of Moustached Brush-finches and Mountain Wrens before we descended a short way to the more humid sub-tropics where we quickly found the uncommon Chestnut-bellied Thrush, several Green and Black Fruiteaters and both Yellow-billed and Andean Toucanets as well as a large flock of Rose-crowned Parakeets. The morning ended when the clouds closed in and it began to rain. However, we were all happy with what had indeed been excellent, but the afternoon was to be even better. We descended further to the lower sub-tropics and immediately found a stunning male Golden-winged Manakin along with a Blue-naped Chlorophonia, several Cinereous Becards, a very skulking Grey-throated Warbler, and another Chestnut-bellied Thrush in a fruiting tree with a number of Toucanets. Throughout the day we had seen a number of large mixed flocks with numerous tanagers, furnariids and tyrannids including the pretty little Variegated Bristle-Tyrant, allowing us to continue enjoying seemingly endless stream of new birds for the trip. We then retired to our delightful accommodations for a pleasant rest in preparation for the following day's exertions.

Leaving early we descended to the Maracaibo basin for our boat trip into the Catatumbo National parks. As we cruised along the tree-lined Cano we saw Cocoli and Green Herons, numerous Black-collared Hawks, Greater Ani, Collared Aracari and a few Yellow-rumped Caciques. Crossing lake we were treated to a roost of Laughing Gulls, Gull-billed and Common Terns and quite extraordinarily an adult Elegant Tern which was new species for Venezuela. As we nearer the shore we entered a vast marshy inlet where we saw six horned Screamers and about twenty Northern Screamers; a big target for the entire group. There were also good number of Yellow-hooded Blackbirds, Purple Gallinules and several Large-billed Terns. In marsh also teemed with Yellow-chinned Spinetails and Donacobius. We then returned to Puerto Concha and headed for the Andes crossing the llanos de Zulia en route. A brief stop at a roadside wetland produced Roseate Spoonbill, Rufescent Tiger Heron, Wood Stork and hundreds of Black-bellied whistling Ducks. A superb Russet-throated Puffbird sat and eyed us as we ate our excellent packed lunch. A pleasant drive-up through the Andes brought us to yet another outstanding Posada located just beneath our next birding area.

Arriving at dawn in the Paramos de Batallon y La Negra National parks we worked our way down through the magnificent cloud forests until the mists rolled in. We enjoyed good flock activity and found several excellent mixed species flocks with Pearled Treerunners, Black-capped and White-banded Tyrannulets, Mountain Wren, White-fronted Redstart, Black-crested Warbler, Superciliated and Grey-capped Hemispingi, Blue-and-black Tanager and Slaty Brush-Finch. We found several pairs of somewhat well fed Barred Fruiteaters and a couple of Green and Black Fruiteaters together with a number of Andean Toucanets. We also found Mountain Velvetbreast, and the endemic Golden-tailed Starfrontlet at a flowering tree lower while during the course of the morning we also sought out Bluish, Masked and Glossy Flowerpiercers and not only finding them but also another pair of Chestnut-bellied Thrushes. On hearing a Grey-naped Antpitta and after locating a suitable spot we waited in the misty gloom a while until the bird suddenly bounced into view and sat right in front of us giving the most spectacular views of what is usually a very secretive bird. This would be amongst your leader's top birds of the trip. A little lower in a dense stand of bamboo there was a pair of Ocellated Tapaculos and in no time we had reasonable views of this stunning denizen of high Andean forests. We then retraced our steps to the Posada seeing a Red-crested Cotinga and an immature Black and Chestnut Eagle on the way. In the gardens after a short search we found the endemic Merida Flowerpiercer to complete another magnificent days birding.

The following day we again visited the lower elevation forests on the Queniquea road where we saw a number of new species including Rufous Spinetail, Yellow-bellied Chat-Tyrant, Russet-crowned and Citrine Warblers and a large group of Black-collared Jays. The mixed flocks again held Barred and Green and Black Fruiteaters giving us great views of these and many other species we had become familiar with over the preceding days. As we worked our way through the Paramos de Batallon y La Negra National park we were treated to the sight of twenty Rusty-faced Parrots at our lunch stop at a stunning high pass. We then continued on our way to Merida; our base for birding the Pico Humboldt trail in the higher reaches of the Sierra Nevada National park. The Pico Humboldt trail passes through primary temperate forest with extensive patches of Chusquea bamboo. We were greeted almost immediately by a large noisy group of White-capped Parrots feeding in the fruiting trees at the beginning of the trail. As we worked our way up the trail we devoted a good deal of time to seeing Chestnut-crowned and Slate-crowned Antpittas that were calling all around us. We managed reasonable views of both species and a couple of us saw two separate Undulated Antpittas on the trail. We also saw a Lined Quail-Dove and several Longuemare's Sunangels. However, we only heard, very distantly, a single Golden-headed Quetzal. The forest birding throughout the trip had been very quiet with cloudless bright sunny days and no time lost to rain. It was a La Nina year and after last years disastrous El Nino rains it had not rained for weeks and the sites were all very dry. Nevertheless we were seeing nearly all the species. In the evening back at the gardens of our hacienda-like hotel a Tropical Screech-Owl performed superbly well while the Rufous Nightjars called away on the hillside above us. .

Next morning, we said our goodbyes to Bill and started birding in a nearby garden looking at hummers in the Erythras. We saw a couple of Lazuline Sabrewings and a dozen steely-vented Hummingbirds along with several Violetears. Hummingbirds congregate in these trees when it is very dry and so it was a treat to see the otherwise elusive Sabrewing. We then headed up into the high Andes above Mérida. The highest mountain in Venezuela, Pico Bolivar (4,981m) loomed in the distance as we climbed up to the paramo at Pico El Aguila. Along a small side road we walked through the bizarre Frailejones (*Espeletia* sp); although none were in flower and the ground was bone dry. We saw several pairs of Bar-winged Cinclodes, numerous Andean Tit-Spinetails, and a lovely pair of Ochre browed Thistletails, several Streak-backed Canasteros and Brown-backed Chat-Tyrants. A little lower we had cracking views of a pair of Merida Wrens a number of Plumbeous Sierra-

Finches and Plain-coloured Seedeaters. There were no flowers of any sort and finding the Bearded Helmetcrest was going to be a challenge. However, not to be deterred we did enjoy point blank views of a superb Bearded Helmetcrest shortly after dawn at our dry season stake out. Also present were many of the supporting cast of paramo specialities and a cracking Black-chested Buzzard Eagle along with dozens of Brown-bellied Swallows. A little lower down the Santo Domingo valley we found a beautiful pair of Torrent Ducks with two young and we were able to watch this spectacular swimmer perform some incredible feats of endurance in the rushing torrents. We also found four Streak-throated Bush-Tyrants, Torrent Tyrannulet, Black Phoebe, several White-capped Dippers and a pair of Azara's Spinetails. A brief stop at Lago Mucubaji gave us Merida Teal (Split from Andean Teal by Restall et al) before we retired to the delightful Hotel Los Frailies high on the paramos.

A cloudless sunny start set us on our way along the San Isidro track; a service route through magnificent subtropical forests. A number of mixed flocks gave us Red-headed Barbet, Highland Hepatic tanager, Blue-naped Chlorophonia, Golden-rumped Euphonia and a good number of Tangara species. We clambered down to the, now well known, Cock-of-the-rock lek and were treated to one of the most impressive avian spectacles in South America. We guessed that about a dozen gaudy males, attended by a number of apparently unimpressed females, displayed frantically for their attentions. It was certainly a highlight for Peter and even the more travel worn amongst us could not but help be impressed. We also saw several Lined Quail Doves and a single Highland Tinamou walking along the track during the day as well as numerous Band-tailed Guans. It may well prove to be the only day when more tinamous were seen than heard. That is, since we heard none. As well as a single Red-tailed squirrel the colony of Greater Spear-nosed Bats in the tunnel provided added distractions.

The following day we descended to the foothills to bird an area of shade coffee plantations and dry deciduous woodlands. We started with a pleasant stroll along the Rio Barragán we saw a good number of new birds including a stunning Grey-headed Kite, a flock of Blue-headed Parrots wheeling overhead, both Rufous-breasted and White-bearded Hermits, a family group of Many-banded Aracaris, Ochre-bellied Flycatcher, Black-crowned Tityra, a large roving group of Violaceous Jays, several nest building pairs of noisy Stripe-backed Wrens and our only Black-billed Thrushes of the tour. Alas there were no Pale-headed Jacamars but as the day was heating up it was time to move on and we then left the Andes and drove out into the Llanos with its extensive grasslands, marshes, and dry scrubby woodlands. The Llanos is quite justifiably famous for the magnificent spectacle of birdlife in the dry season and in that respect it can rival anywhere on the planet for sheer numbers and diversity of wetland species. Indeed it is hard to exaggerate the scale of concentrated birdlife present at this time. As we began to enter the lower Llanos proper south of Ciudad de Nutrias we saw large congregations of White-faced and Black-bellied Whistling Ducks, White, Scarlet, Bare-faced and Sharp-tailed Ibises, Maguari Stork, Jabiru, Black Skimmer, Plain-breasted Ground-Dove, Grey Kingbird, White-bearded Flycatcher and a good number of migrating Barn Swallows. On arrival at Hato El Cedral we began birding immediately along the entrance track adding Orinoco Goose to our rapidly growing list. Once installed in our air conditioned rooms we again headed out across the marshes on our safari style vehicle with Barabarito, our local guide. In no time we were watching numerous pairs of Orinoco Geese with their goslings, large numbers of Blue-winged and Brazilian Teal, several Pinnated Bittern, Buff-necked Ibis, Double-striped Thick-knee, Pied Plover, Least, Pectoral and Stilt Sandpipers and a few South American Snipe. Of the other species we found several pairs of Scarlet Macaw, a breeding pair of Great Horned Owls with young, Burrowing Owls, dozens of Yellow-chinned Spinetails, Red-capped Cardinal, Saffron Finch, Orange-fronted Yellow-Finch, Yellow-browed and Grassland Sparrow together with literally hundreds of Yellow-hooded and Oriole Blackbirds. At dusk we returned to our lodgings along with hundreds of birds determined to roost with us.

Our first morning at Hato El Cedral was spent walking through dry deciduous gallery woodlands. As we walked we came across a pair of Crimson-crested Woodpeckers and a Southern Tamandua and a Brazilian Porcupine resting in a tree. There was also a pair of the uncommon Venezuelan Flycatchers and a lovely female Cream-coloured Woodpecker. We also saw a roosting Great Potoo, several Sunbitterns which we were able to watch delivering their ethereal song. Along a narrow stream we found a good number of Boat-billed Herons, Yellow-crowned night Herons and a number of hoatzins. In the woodlands we all managed to catch up with Pale-eyed Pygmy Tyrant and get great looks at this somewhat drab looking tyrannid. It had taunted us on a number of occasions earlier in the tour. The lodge area was rather quiet but it gave us Spot-breasted Woodpecker, Northern Waterthrush and large numbers of birds coming to drink including Yellow Oriole and Venezuelan Troupial.

In the afternoon we headed off along the Matiyure river on our stunning boat trip. Our route took us through the rich wetlands and along a narrow river lined with dense gallery woodland. The wetlands were alive with thousands of Whistling Ducks and incredible numbers of Jacanas. Apart from this spectacle we found now fewer than eight Agami Herons and were able to watch several as they hunted in the shadowy forests with the rapier like bill. We also saw several pairs of Yellow-knobbed Curassow, a Sungrebe going to roost in a tree, several Sunbitterns, one of which displayed its amazing wing pattern to us. As we plied along the narrow channel we came across a couple of American Pygmy Kingfishers and a single male Amazonian Black Tyrant. As the afternoon began to draw to a close we saw a bird bouncing along the waters edge like an antpitta and we had found our final target species; the mythical Zig-zag Heron. We were able to watch it down to a few feet until we decided to leave it in peace and headed back through the marshes to our lodge. At dusk as we drove the track to our lodge we found Lesser and Nacunda Nighthawks and innumerable Band-tailed Nighthawks.

The following morning we visited another area of woodland finding a number of new species including numerous White-tailed Goldthroats and Little Cuckoo. Along the waters edge by the track we found our much mentioned Anaconda and a good deal of time was spent watching this top predator and it us somewhat unnervingly. Steve had only just said, 'you know, I would really like to see an Anaconda' and there it was. After enjoying the unending spectacle of Skimmers, terns and waders as well as the Duck, Ibis, Herons and Egrets we headed back to our rooms. In the afternoon we again headed out across the plains adding nothing new but seeing six Crab-eating Foxes and another Giant Anteater, providing a fitting end to a splendid trip.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

Species which were only heard are indicated by the symbol (H).

Species not recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (NL).

Species recorded only by the leader are indicated by the symbol (LO).

Subspecies names are given where known and/or appropriate, either in a comment or in parentheses.

TINAMIDAE

Highland Tinamou *Nothocercus bonapartei*: One heard on the Choroní road and one seen along the San Isidro track slowly crossing the track.

Little Tinamou *Crypturellus soui* (H): We heard this widespread species in Yacambu NP. Tinamous are polygamous, with the smaller males incubating the eggs and taking care of the young.

Brown Tinamou *Crypturellus obsoletus* (H): A few heard in Yacambú NP.

PODICIPEDIDAE

Least Grebe *Tachybaptus dominicus*: Seen south of Coro, at Yacambu NP and in the Llanos.

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps*: A pair seen south of Coro.

PELECANIDAE

Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis*: Small numbers seen along the coast.

PHALACROCORACIDAE

Neotropic Cormorant (Olivaceous C) *Phalacrocorax brasilianus*: A common species seen in largest numbers in the Llanos, with some counts of over 500 birds a day.

ANHINGIDAE

Anhinga (Darter) *Anhinga anhinga*: A common waterbird on Lago Maracaibo and in the Llanos.

FREGATIDAE

Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens*: Common along the coast.

ANHIMIDAE

Horned Screamer *Anhima cornuta*: Four seen at Cerro La Misión and six on Lago Maracaibo. One also seen at Hato El Cedral was a surprise.

Northern Screamer *Chauna chavaria*: Up to fifteen birds seen in the Ciénagas de Catatumbo National parks. It is endemic to northern Venezuela and Colombia and considered 'Near-Threatened' by BirdLife International.

ANATIDAE

Fulvous Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna bicolor*: We saw two pairs at Hato El Cedral. The least numerous Whistling-duck in Venezuela because of the heavy use of pesticides on new rice schemes in the region.

White-faced Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna viduata*: Very numerous in the Llanos with several hundred seen each day.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna autumnalis*: Abundant in the Llanos de Zulia and at Hato Cedral.

Orinoco Goose *Neochen jubata*: Fairly common at Hato El Cedral, which holds a population of about 150 pairs. This species has disappeared across much of its former range leaving the Llanos as its stronghold. It is considered 'Near-Threatened' by BirdLife International.

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata*: A few seen near Hato El Cedral.

Torrent Duck *Merganetta armata*: a family party of four seen in the lower Santo Domingo Valley.

Merida Teal *Anas altipetens*: Small numbers seen on Lago Mucubaji in the Andes. It should be noted that this species is often lumped in Andean Teal *Anas andium*.
White-cheeked Pintail *Anas bahamensis*: Up to 15 seen at Tucacas.
Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors*: Common at Morrocoy National parks in the Llanos de Zulia and at Hato Cedral.
Brazilian Teal (B Duck) *Amazonetta brasiliensis*: Reasonable numbers found in the Llanos.
Masked Duck *Oxyura dominica*: We found up to a dozen on a number of ponds in Falcon on our way to Sanare. This species has recently been placed in its own genus: *Nomonyx*.

PHOENICOPTERIDAE

American Flamingo (Caribbean Flamingo) *Phoenicopterus ruber*: Several thousand along the Chichiriviche causeway and a few more at Tucacas. The world population of this New World form stands at 80,000-90,000 birds distributed between four colonies; Mexico, Cuba, the Bahamas and Bonaire (Netherlands Antilles), the Venezuelan birds being from Bonaire.

ARDEIDAE

Pinnated Bittern *Botaurus pinnatus*: About a dozen seen at Hato El Cedral. This species is an austral migrant, disappearing entirely from the Llanos by mid April.
Zigzag Heron *Zebriulus undulatus*: One very smart immature bird at Hato El Cedral gave protracted spectacular views down to a few meters.
Rufescent Tiger-Heron *Tigrisoma lineatum*: One near El Fria in the Llanos de Zulia and numerous in the Llanos.
Fasciated Tiger-Heron *Tigrisoma fasciata*: One superb adult seen along the Chumboto road on the coastal flank of the cordillera.
Cocoi Heron (White-necked H) *Ardea cocoi*: A common species especially in the Llanos.
Great Blue Heron *Ardea Herodias*: Several seen at Chichiriviche and a couple near Hato El Cedral. This is a northern migrant to Venezuela.
Great Egret *Ardea alba*: Common throughout but the largest numbers in the Llanos, previously placed in the monotypic genus *Casmerodius*.
Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*: Good numbers in the Llanos. *Thula* is an Araucano (Chilean) Indian name for the Black-necked Swan erroneously given to the Snowy Egret.
Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea*: Fairly common at Morrocoy NP and a few at Hato El Cedral.
Reddish Egret *Egretta rufescens*: Five in the Morrocoy NP. It is considered as 'Near Threatened' by BirdLife International.
Tricoloured Heron (Louisiana H) *Egretta tricolor*: Good numbers seen on the coast.
Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*: Very common and widespread. Arriving from the Old World around the 1870s the first Venezuela birds were recorded in 1943!
Striated Heron *Butorides striatus*: Common in the Llanos.
Green Heron *Butorides virescens*: One in the Ciénagas de Catatumbo National Park.
Agami Heron (Chestnut-bellied Heron) *Agamia agami*: Eight seen at Hato El Cedral. Probably the most beautiful heron.
Whistling Heron *Syrigma sibilatrix*: A smart heron, seen in first at Cerro La Mission and thereafter small numbers at Hato El Cedral.
Capped Heron *Pilherodius pileatus*: One seen south of Coro and a few others in the Llanos. Another beautiful heron species.
Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*: A few along the Chichiriviche causeway and numerous in the Llanos.
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron *Nyctanassa violacea*: Several seen along the Chichiriviche causeway and others at Hato El Cedral.

Boat-billed Heron *Cochlearius cochlearius*: Several seen at Hato El Cedral. It was placed in its own family; Cochleariidae.

THRESKIORNITHIDAE

Buff-necked Ibis *Theristicus caudatus*: Very common in the Llanos.

Sharp-tailed Ibis *Cercibis oxycerca*: Several pairs seen in the Llanos where this uncommon and rather localised species is easily seen.

Green Ibis *Mesembrinibis cayennensis*: Common in the Llanos.

Bare-faced Ibis (Whispering Ibis) *Phimosus infuscatus*: Common in Morrocoy NP. Abundant in the Llanos de Zulia and at Hato El Cedral.

White Ibis *Eudocimus albus*: A few in the Llanos. Often associated with the following species.

Scarlet Ibis *Eudocimus ruber*: Fantastic sightings of this shockingly bright red species at along the Chichiriviche causeway and in the Llanos. A truly spectacular bird!

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*: Common near Chichiriviche and in the Llanos.

Roseate Spoonbill *Ajaia ajaja*: Seen near Chichiriviche, the Llanos de Zulia and at Hato El Cedral.

CICONIIDAE

Wood Stork (American Wood-Ibis) *Mycteria americana*: Seen in the Llanos de Zulia and at Hato El Cedral.

Maguari Stork *Euxenura maguari*: Up to fifteen in the Llanos. The numbers of this species are declining rapidly. There are thought to have been declines of 90-100% in some places over the last ten years.

Jabiru *Jabiru mycteria*: This species was seen in small numbers in the lower Llanos.

CATHARTIDAE

King Vulture *Sarcoramphus papa*: A pair found near Coro by Peter. We then watched them at length in the scope.

Black Vulture (American B V) *Coragyps atratus*: Numerous and widespread.

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*: The common open country vulture.

Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture (Savanna Vulture) *Cathartes burrovianus*: One at Cerro La Mission, several during the Puerto Concha boat ride and small numbers in the Llanos.

PANDIONIDAE

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*: Seen at scattered localities throughout.

ACCIPITRIDAE

Grey-headed Kite *Leptodon cayanensis*: One seen along the Rio Barragan which we enjoyed great scope views of.

Hook-billed Kite *Chondrohierax uncinatus*: A single female along the Azulita road.

Swallow-tailed Kite (American S-t K) *Elanoides forficatus*: A small number seen at various sites. The most graceful bird of prey and certainly your leaders favourite.

Pearl Kite *Gampsonyx swainsonii*: One seen along the road south of Coro. Steve saw another from the hotel at La Guaira

Snail Kite *Rostrhamus sociabilis*: Several seen on our Puerto Concha boat ride. Small numbers were also noted near Hato El Cedral. This species and Limpkin are both scarce at Hato Cedral as the water levels are not appropriate for their primary food; apple snails (*Pomacea sp.*).

Plumbeous Kite *Ictinia plumbea*: A few seen at widely scattered localities.

Crane Hawk *Geranospiza caerulescens*: Several seen from Coro to the Llanos. The Crane Hawk recalls the Afrotropical *Gymnogene*, but is smaller and more lightly built but with relatively longer legs.

Bicoloured Hawk *Accipiter bicolor*: One hunting in open country near Cerro La Mission.
 Plain-breasted Hawk *Accipiter ventralis*: One seen in Tachira.
 White Hawk *Leucopternis albicollis*: A single perched bird was scoped at Rancho Grande.
 Savanna Hawk *Buteogallus meridionalis*: Common in drier and open habitats.
 Common Black-Hawk *Buteogallus anthracinus*: A few seen on the coast.
 Great Black-Hawk *Buteogallus urubitinga*: several pairs at Hato El Cedral. One at Cerro La Misión and a pair south of Coro.
 Harris's Hawk (Bay-winged H) *Parabuteo unicinctus*: A few seen near La Negrita and others in the Llanos. Two species likely involved: Harris's Hawk *P. harrisi* (the form concerned) and Bay-winged Hawk *P.unicinctus*.
 Black-collared Hawk *Busarellus nigricollis*: Seen on the Puerto Concha boat ride and more at Hato El Cedral.
 Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle (B-c Eagle, B-c Eagle-Buzzard) *Geranoaetus melanoleucus*: Two seen in the paramos of Pico Aguila.
 Grey Hawk *Buteo nitidus*: This attractive raptor was seen on a few occasions.
 Roadside Hawk *Buteo magnirostris*: A very common raptor. Note that a recent genetic study advocates the resurrection of the genus *Rupornis* for this species.
 Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus*: Seven sightings. The only *Buteo* regularly wintering in Venezuela.
 Short-tailed Hawk *Buteo brachyurus*: A couple of pale morph birds and a single black phase bird.
 White-tailed Hawk *Buteo albicaudatus*: Small numbers of this large and handsome *Buteo* were seen.
 Black-and-chestnut Eagle *Oroaetus isidorei* : An immature bird seen in Tachira.
 Black Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus tyrannus*: One calling bird seen at Rancho Grande.

FALCONIDAE

Northern Crested-Caracara (Crested C) *Caracara cheriway*: Commonly seen.
 Yellow-headed Caracara *Milvago chimachima*: Commonly seen.
 Barred Forest-Falcon *Micrastur ruficollis*: One bird heard at the pass on the Choroní road.
 Laughing Falcon (L Hawk) *Herpetotheres cachinnans*: One seen near Tucacas and another in Zulia.
 American Kestrel *Falco sparverius*: Regularly seen.
 Merlin *Falco columbarius*: This wintering species was seen near Tucacas.
 Bat Falcon *Falco ruficularis*: Two seen near Rio Frio road.
 Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*: One adult cruising around wetlands near Hato El Cedral.

CRACIDAE

Rufous-vented Chachalaca *Ortalis ruficauda*: A common cracid seen and heard at numerous localities.
 Band-tailed Guan *Penelope argyrotis*: Seen at La Cumbre on the Choroní road, in Yacambu NP and at San Isidro.
 Andean Guan *Penelope montagnii*: The elevational replacement of the previous species at higher elevations in the Andes. We found them at sites near La Grita and along the Pico Humboldt trail.
 Yellow-knobbed Curassow *Crax daubentoni*: We had stunning views of a male and several females at Hato El Cedral. This cracid is also endemic to Venezuela and Northeastern Colombia and is considered 'Near-Threatened' by BirdLife International

ODONTOPHORIDAE

Crested Bobwhite *Colinus cristatus*: Our first covey was seen near La Vitoria and many more in the Llanos.

Venezuelan Wood-Quail *Odontophorus columbianus*: We enjoyed spectacular views of this rather uncommon and secretive endemic. A covey of up to nine birds was watched at length feeding in deep leaf litter along the Choroni road. It is unusual enough to see wood-quail but to see them like this was a highlight. It is considered 'Near-Threatened' by BirdLife International.

RALLIDAE

Rusty-flanked Crake *Laterallus levraudi*: We saw a total of four birds at Laguna El Blanquito in Yacambú National Park. This little-known crake is endemic to Venezuela. It is considered 'Endangered' by BirdLife International.

Plain-flanked Rail *Rallus wetmorei*: Superb looks at a very responsive pair in the Tucacas mangroves. In spite of locally being quite common, this rail's range is very small and the species has been categorized as Endangered by BirdLife International, with a population estimated between 250 and 1000 individuals. It has been suggested that this species is better regarded as a race of Clapper Rail *R. Longirostris*.

Grey-necked Wood-Rail *Aramides cajanea*: Common at Hato El Cedral, here of the nominate race. *Aramides* means 'resembling a limpkin' (*Aramus*).

Purple Gallinule (American P G) *Porphyryla martinica*: A few seen on our Puerto Concha boat ride Named after the island of Martinique in the West Indies.

Common Gallinule (Moorhen, C Moorhen) *Gallinula chloropus*: Commonly seen. Note that the SACC (South American Classification Committee) has recently decided that the New World races should be considered a separate species: Common Gallinule *Gallinula galeata*, based mainly on vocal differences. The Old World races would retain the name Common Moorhen.

Caribbean Coot *Fulica caribaea*: Several seen on ponds south of Coro and eight seen at the El Blanquito Lagoon in Yacambú National parks. It is considered as 'Near-Threatened' by BirdLife International.

HELIORNITHIDAE

Sungrebe *Heliornis fulica*: A single bird seen rather poorly on our boat trip at Hato El Cedral.

EURYPYGIDAE

Sunbittern *Eurypyga helias*: Quite a number seen in the Llanos. A bird with no living close relatives, and of a still uncertain taxonomic position. Studies indicate a distant relationship with the Kagu (*Rhynochetos jubatus*). This is based on morphological and behavioural characteristics, as well as egg-white protein studies.

ARAMIDAE

Limpkin *Aramus guarauna*: Small numbers on the Puerto Concha boat ride and in the Llanos.

BURHINIDAE

Double-striped Thick-knee *Burhinus bistriatus*: Several pairs seen at Hato El Cedral. One bird seen incubating along one of the tracks.

CHARADRIIDAE

Southern Lapwing *Vanellus chilensis*: This widespread species was numerous in the Llanos and several seen near La Grita.

Pied Plover (P Lapwing) *Hoploxypterus cayanus*: a few seen in the Llanos.

Semipalmated Plover *Charadrius semipalmatus*: Two seen at Hato El Cedral.

Collared Plover *Charadrius collaris*: One seen at Hato El Cedral.

RECURVIROSTRIDAE

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus*: Large numbers seen in the Llanos and also near Chichiriviche.

JACANIDAE

Wattled Jacana *Jacana jacana*: Abundant in the Llanos, with thousands seen gathered on the wetlands. Fairly common elsewhere.

SCOLOPACIDAE

Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca*: A few near Chichiriviche and in the Llanos.

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*: A few seen throughout.

Solitary Sandpiper *Tringa solitaria*: Scattered sightings.

Willet *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*: One seen along the coast.

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularia*: A few throughout.

Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla*: Large flocks at Hato El Cedral.

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*: A flock of fifteen at Hato El Cedral.

Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus*: 300 seen at Hato El Cedral.

South American Snipe (Paraguayan S) *Gallinago paraguaiiae*: A few at Hato El Cedral.

LARIDAE

Laughing Gull *Larus atricilla*: Good numbers on Lake Maracaibo.

Gull-billed Tern *Sterna nilotica*: Several on our Puerto Concha boat trip and up to 45 at Hato El Cedral.

Royal Tern *Sterna maxima*: One seen along the coast.

Elegant Tern *Sterna elegans*: One seen with terns and gulls on our Puerto Concha boat trip. This is a new species for Venezuela. It was watched down to just a few meters on its roost site with large numbers of Laughing Gulls and Common terns.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*: Common on Lake Maracaibo.

Yellow-billed Tern (Amazon Tern) *Sterna supercilii*: Small numbers in the Llanos.

Large-billed Tern *Phaetusa simplex*: Up to six on Lake Maracaibo and several hundred in the Llanos.

Black Skimmer *Rynchops nigra*: Common in the Llanos, with at least 500 birds present at Hato El Cedral.

COLUMBIDAE

Rock Pigeon (Rock Dove, Feral Pigeon) *Columba livia*: Common synanthropic often occurring with a substantial degree of semi-domestication in rural areas of South America. .

Band-tailed Pigeon *Columba fasciata*: small numbers seen in Tachira. Note that recent research has shown that the genus *Columba* is paraphyletic, with New World taxa being more closely related to *Streptopelia* than to Old World *Columba* pigeons. New World forms are now placed in the genus *Patagioenas* and The South American Classification Committee (SACC) and the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) recently adopted this change.

Bare-eyed Pigeon *Columba corensis*: We saw good numbers of this dry-country pigeon near Coro.

Pale-vented Pigeon *Columba cayennensis*: Commonly seen. The form concerned is the race *andersoni*.

Ruddy Pigeon *Columba subvinacea*: Seen along the Choroní road and above La Azulita. The race here is *zuliae*.

Eared Dove *Zenaida auriculata*: Common. Note that Venezuelan races show rusty tail tips.

Scaled Dove *Scardafella squammata*: Common in drier country throughout, but especially numerous in the Llanos.

Common Ground-Dove (Scaly G-D) *Columbina passerina*: Only a few, in the arid habitats of the northwest.

Plain-breasted Ground-Dove *Columbina minuta*: Good numbers in the Llanos.

Ruddy Ground-Dove *Columbina talpacoti*: Common in the llanos, with a handful of sightings elsewhere.

Blue Ground-Dove *Claravis pretiosa*: Several heard at Hato El Cedral.

White-tipped Dove *Leptotila verreauxi*: Regularly heard and seen.

Lined Quail-Dove *Geotrygon linearis*: We saw a couple in Yacambu NP and another on the Pico Humboldt trail. The best view was of an adult walking along the track at San Isidro.

PSITTACIDAE

Scarlet Macaw *Ara macao*: Small numbers seen at Hato El Cedral. A spectacular species.

Red-and-green Macaw *Ara chloroptera*: Great views of this huge macaw near Cerro La Misión.

Chestnut-fronted Macaw *Ara severa*: A common species seen throughout including the suburbs of Maracay.

Scarlet-fronted Parakeet *Aratinga wagleri*: Seen at several sites throughout.

Brown-throated Parakeet *Aratinga pertinax*: A common species. The race concerned is *venezuelae*.

Blood-eared Parakeet (Red-eared P) *Pyrrhura hoematotis*: Seen at a good many sites including Yacambu NP.

Rose-crowned Parakeet (Rose-headed P) *Pyrrhura rhocephala*: first seen at Yacambu in association with the previous species. We had great views of this smart parakeet.

Green-rumped Parrotlet *Forpus passerinus*: Common in drier areas.

Orange-chinned Parakeet (Tovi P) *Brotoyeris jugularis*: Seen at numerous sites in drier areas with some great scope views.

Lilac-tailed Parrotlet *Touit batavica*: A small flock of six seen at Rancho Grande.

Saffron-headed Parrot *Pionopsitta pyrilia*: Two rather distant birds seen along the Rio Frio road.

Rusty-faced Parrot *Hapalopsittaca amazonina*: We saw a flock of twenty along the Quenique road.

Blue-headed Parrot *Pionus menstruus*: A flock of two birds seen along the Rio Barragan.

Red-billed Parrot *Pionus sordidus*: Seen in several localities.

White-capped Parrot *Pionus seniloides*: We saw up to fifteen birds along the Pico Humboldt trail.

Bronze-winged Parrot *Pionus chalcopterus*: Several seen along the Rio Frio road.

Yellow-shouldered Parrot (Y-s Amazon) *Amazona barbadensis*: A prime target in the deserts south of Coro. We enjoyed some great views of this rare species. Another erroneous toponym, as this species, restricted to Venezuela and Bonaire (formerly also Aruba), doesn't occur anywhere near Barbados.

Yellow-crowned Parrot (Y-c Amazon) *Amazona ochrocephala*: Small numbers seen throughout.

Orange-winged Parrot (O-w Amazon) *Amazona amazonica*: Small numbers of this species seen on the Puerto Concha boat ride and near Chichiriviche.

Scaly-naped Parrot (S-n Amazon) *Amazona mercenaria* (H): Heard only in the fog at Colonia Tovar.

Mealy Parrot (M Amazon) *Amazona farinosa* (NL): Seen by Bill and heard by your leader on our Puerto Concha boat ride.

CUCULIDAE

Squirrel Cuckoo *Piaya cayana*: Seen throughout.

Greater Ani *Crotophaga major*: Up 40 birds counted on our Puerto Concha boat ride. We saw a few in the Llanos where it is only seasonal.

Smooth-billed Ani *Crotophaga ani*: The commonest ani.

Groove-billed Ani *Crotophaga sulcirostris*: Mainly a dry-country species that we saw in the arid north-west.

Striped Cuckoo (American S C) *Tapera naevia* (H): Heard at several sites.

Pavonine Cuckoo *Dromococcyx pavoninus* (H): Heard along the lower Occumare road.

OPISTHOCOMIDAE

Hoatzin *Opisthocomus hoazin*: Seen at Laguna Blanquito in Yacambu NP and in the Llanos. One of few birds feeds exclusively on a diet of leaves.

STRIGIDAE

Foothill Screech-Owl *Otus noronhai*: Great looks at a bird on the Choroní road. Note that the AOU has now placed all New World *Otus* (except Flammulated Owl *O. flammulatus*) in the genus *Megascops*, following recent analyses of genetic and vocal characters.

Tropical Screech-Owl *Otus choliba*: Great views of this species in the gardens of our hotel near Mérida.

Great Horned Owl *Bubo virginianus*: A pair with young at Hato El Cedral.

Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl *Glaucidium brasilianum* (H): Heard at a few sites

Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia*: Several pairs seen at Hato El Cedral.

Mottled Owl *Strix virgata* (LO): Seen by leader only flopping around one of lights hunting for moths.

NYCTIBIIDAE

Great Potoo *Nyctibius grandis*: A superb roosting bird seen in gallery forest at Hato El Cedral.

CAPRIMULGIDAE

Lesser Nighthawk *Chordeiles acutipennis*: Several seen at Hato El Cedral at dusk.

Band-tailed Nighthawk *Nyctiprogne leucopyga*: Good numbers seen at Hato El Cedral.

Nacunda Nighthawk *Podager nacunda*: One seen at Hato El Cedral.

Pauraque (Common P) *Nyctidromus albicollis* (H): Only heard once very distantly. Usually commonly heard and seen.

Rufous Nightjar *Caprimulgus rufus* (H): Heard in Henri Pittier NP and near our hotel in Merida and Sanare.

Band-winged Nightjar *Caprimulgus longirostris*: Reasonable views of one bird along the Choroní road.

APODIDAE

White-collared Swift *Streptoprocne zonaris*: Seen at numerous localities.

Vaux's Swift *Chaetura vauxi*: Small numbers were observed near Cerro La Misión.

Grey-rumped Swift *Chaetura cinereiventris*: Fairly common over the foothills at the western base of the Andes.

Short-tailed Swift *Chaetura brachyura*: This species was common during our Puerto Concha boat trip.

White-tipped Swift *Aeronautes montivagus*: Excellent views of this species at San Isidro.

Pygmy Palm-Swift (P Swift) *Tachornis furcata*: Up to ten seen along the along the western base of the Andes. A near-endemic!!

Neotropical Palm-Swift (Fork-tailed Palm-Swift) *Tachornis squamata* (LO): One seen on the way to Hato El Cedral.

TROCHILIDAE

Rufous-breasted Hermit *Glaucous hirsuta*: One superb bird watched along the Rio Barragan road.

White-bearded Hermit *Phaethornis hispidus*: Brief looks one bird near the Rio Barragán bridge.

Pale-bellied Hermit *Phaethornis anthophilus*: One seen along the Occumare road.

Sooty-capped Hermit *Phaethornis augusti*: Scattered sightings.

Grey-chinned Hermit *Phaethornis griseogularis*: One seen above La Azulita.

Lazuline Sabrewing *Campylopterus falcatus*: Two birds seen feeding in a large Erythrina tree near our hotel in Merida.

Green Violetear *Colibri thalassinus*: Seen at La Azulita and Colonia Tovar.

Sparkling Violetear *Colibri coruscans*: This common species was seen at Colonia Tovar and other subtropical sites.

Black-throated Mango *Anthracothorax nigricollis*: One or two seen.

Blue-tailed Emerald *Chlorostilbon mellisugus*: Regularly seen.

Red-billed Emerald *Chlorostilbon gibsoni*: One male seen south of Coro. An infrequently seen and somewhat nomadic species in the arid north west.

Green-tailed Emerald *Chlorostilbon alicae*: Good looks at one in the Sanare area. It is endemic to northern Venezuela.

Violet-crowned Woodnymph *Thalurania colombica*: Several seen along the Rio Frio Valley.

Buffy Hummingbird *Leucippus fallax*: Several seen in deserts south of Coro.

Glittering-throated Emerald *Amazilia fimbriata*: Scattered sightings.

Steely-vented Hummingbird *Amazilia saucerrottei*: A good number seen in the Erythrina tree with Lazuline sabrewings and violetears near Merida.

Copper-rumped Hummingbird *Amazilia tobaci*: Commonly seen in drier habitats.

Rufous-tailed Hummingbird *Amazilia tzacatl*: A small number seen in the lowlands and foothills on the west side of the Andes.

White-vented Plumeleteer *Chalybura buffonii*: Several seen throughout.

Speckled Hummingbird *Adelomyia melanogenys*: Seen at San Isidro.

Violet-fronted Brilliant *Heliodoxa leadbeateri*: A male seen in Yacambu NP.

Mountain Velvetbreast *Lafresnaya lafresnayi*: Several seen in the temperate forests near La Grita.

Bronzy Inca *Coeligena coeligena*: Great close-up views in Yacambu NP.

Collared Inca *Coeligena torquata*: fantastic views of this lovely hummer of the race *conradii*.

Golden-tailed Starfrontlet *Coeligena eos*: One female seen on the feeders at La Bravera.

Sword-billed hummingbird *Ensifera ensifera*: One bird seen very briefly by a couple of us along the Queniquea road.

Buff-tailed Coronet *Boissonneaua flavescens*: Common on the feeders at La Bravera.

Orange-throated Sunangel *Heliangelus mavors*: Good numbers of this attractive near-endemic were found at high elevations in the Andes.

Longuemare's Sunangel *Heliangelus clarisse*: Several seen along the Pico Humboldt trail.

Booted Racket-tail *Ocreatus underwoodii*: Small numbers of this fine little hummingbird were found in the Andes.

Tyrian Metaltail *Metallura tyrianthina*: Fairly common at higher elevations in the Andes.

Bearded Helmetcrest *Oxygogon guerini*: We made a great effort to get to grips with this species and had great looks at a female in a small garden feeding on some of the only flowers in the area. This hummingbird is hard to find at this time of year, but common during the rainy season.

Long-tailed Sylph *Agelaiocercus kingi*: A lovely hummer, and one we saw at a number of locations. We saw two races *margarethae* in the Coastal Cordillera and *caudatus* in the Andes. Named after Rear Admiral Philip Parker King (1791-1856), British marine surveyor, collector and traveller in the American tropics.

Rufous-shafted Woodstar *Chaetocercus jourdani*: A lovely male showed well at Colonia Tovar. It is endemic to Colombia, Venezuela and Trinidad.

TROGONIDAE

White-tipped Quetzal *Pharomachrus fulgidus* (H): We only managed to hear this species at Rancho Grande despite spending much time looking for it.

Golden-headed Quetzal *Pharomachrus auriceps* (H): Again only heard rather distantly along the Pico Humboldt trail.

Collared Trogon *Trogon collaris*: common at Colonia Tovar and in Henri Pittier NP.

Masked Trogon *Trogon personatus*: Fairly common in the Andes, where it replaces the previous species at higher elevations.

CERYLIDAE

Ringed Kingfisher *Megaceryle torquata*: This huge kingfisher was commonly seen in the Llanos.

Amazon Kingfisher *Chloroceryle amazona*: A few in the Llanos.

Green Kingfisher *Chloroceryle americana*: A small number in the Llanos.

American Pygmy Kingfisher (P K) *Chloroceryle aenea*: Two seen on our boat trip at Hato El Cedral. .

GALBULIDAE

Rufous-tailed Jacamar *Galbula ruficauda*: Seen at numerous sites.

BUCCONIDAE

White-necked Puffbird *Notharchus macrorhynchos*(NL): One seen along the lower Occumare road in Henri Pittier NP.

Two-banded Puffbird *Hypnelus bicinctus*: We saw several at Henri Pittier NP.

Russet-throated Puffbird *Hypnelus ruficollis*: We heard this species at many localities and had great views of an adult in Zulia.

RAMPHASTIDAE

CAPITONINAE

Red-headed Barbet *Eubucco bourcierii*: We saw a pair at San Isidro.

RAMPHASTINAE

Andean Toucanet *Aulacorhynchus albivitta*: Seen at several localities. The multiple split of Emerald Toucanet *A. prasinus* into seven different species (including this one) is still controversial.

Groove-billed Toucanet *Aulacorhynchus sulcatus*: Seen in the Coastal Cordillera, including several at Rancho Grande.

Yellow-billed Toucanet *Aulacorhynchus calorhynchus*: Several seen at Yacambu NP.

Black-billed Mountain Toucan *Andigena nigrirostris*(H): One of these was heard along the lower Queniquea road.

Collared Aracari *Pteroglossus torquatus*: Two of these colourful creatures showed well on the Puerto Concha boat ride.

Many-banded Aracari *Pteroglossus pluricinctus*: Excellent views of seven birds at Rio Barragán.

Citron-throated Toucan *Ramphastos citreolaemus*: Good views of this toucan along the Rio Frio road. Note that Hilty regards this near-endemic toucan as a distinct species, but it is regarded as a race of Channel-billed Toucan *R. vitellinus* in most other reference works.

Black-mandibled Toucan *Ramphastos ambiguus*: Good views of small numbers of this impressive species along the Rio Frio road in the western foothills of the Andes.

PICIDAE

Scaled Piculet *Picumnus squamulatus*: This tiny woodpecker was seen at several sites.

Spot-breasted Woodpecker *Chrysoptilus punctigula*: Several of this smart woodpecker seen at Hato El Cedral.

Golden-olive Woodpecker *Piculus rubiginosus*: Seen at several sites in the Andes of the race *meridensis*.
 Cream-coloured Woodpecker *Celeus flavus*: One superb female seen at Hato El Cedral.
 Lineated Woodpecker *Dryocopus lineatus*: seen at Tucacas and elsewhere throughout the trip.
 Red-crowned Woodpecker *Melanerpes rubricapillus*: Commonly seen.
 Smoky-brown Woodpecker *Veniliornis fumigatus*: Seen and heard at numerous cloud forest sites. .
 Crimson-crested Woodpecker *Campephilus melanoleucos*: A pair at Hato El Cedral.

FURNARIIDAE

Chestnut-winged Cinclodes *Cinclodes albidiventris*: Small numbers of this terrestrial furnariid found high in the Andes near Los Frailes. The SACC has accepted the three way split of Bar-winged Cinclodes *C. fuscus*.
 Caribbean Hornero *Furnarius longirostris*: Very common at our Posada near Tucacas and others seen and heard near Cerro La Misión.
 Andean Tit-Spintail *Leptasthenura andicola*: Common on the paramos on the slopes of Pico Aguila.
 Azara's Spintail *Synallaxis azarae*: This widespread species was seen at Puente La Piedras and elsewhere.
 Pale-breasted Spintail *Synallaxis albescens*: Common throughout in drier areas.
 Stripe-breasted Spintail *Synallaxis cinnamomea*: We had great views of this skulker in Henri Pittier NP.
 Rufous Spintail *Synallaxis unirufa*: Fairly common along the Quenique road.
 Black-throated Spintail *Synallaxis castanea*: Several pairs seen near Colonia Tovar. Endemic to the coastal cordilleras.
 White-whiskered Spintail *Synallaxis candei*: One of the most handsome spintails, this desert speciality gave superb views near Coro.
 Yellow-chinned Spintail (Y-throated S) *Certhiaxis cinnamomea*: Abundant in the Llanos and on our Puerto Concha boat ride.
 Crested Spintail *Cranioleuca subcristata*: Commonly seen and heard in Henri Pittier NP, Yacambu NP and along the Azulita road.
 Rusty-backed Spintail *Cranioleuca vulpina*: Several pairs in the gallery forest at Hato El Cedral.
 Ochre-browed Thistletail *Schizoeaca coryi*: Superb looks at several in the paramo at Pico Aguila. This Venezuelan endemic is the northernmost species in a widespread genus of high Andean furnariids.
 Streak-backed Canastero *Asthenes wyatti*: Several pairs seen at Pico Aguila, here of the endemic race *mucuchiesi*.
 Plain Thornbird (Northern T) *Phacellodomus inornatus*: This very drab furnarid was seen in the Llanos and near Cerro La Misión.
 Streaked Tuftedcheek *Pseudocolaptes boissonneautii*: We saw this smart furnarid along the La Azulita road.
 Pearled Treerunner *Margarornis squamiger*: Frequently seen species in mixed flocks. Guttulated Foliage-gleaner *Syndactyla guttulata* (H): Unfortunately only heard at Rancho Grande.
 Montane Foliage-gleaner *Anabacerthia striaticollis*: seen in many mixed flocks throughout the Andes.
 Buff-fronted Foliage-gleaner *Philydor rufus*: A few seen at Rancho Grande.
 Plain Xenops *Xenops minutus*: One seen in Henri Pittier NP.
 Streaked Xenops *Xenops rutilans*: A couple seen Yacambú NP.

DENDROCOLAPTIDAE

Plain-brown Woodcreeper *Dendrocincla fuliginosa*: One seen along the San Isidro track.
 Olivaceous Woodcreeper *Sittasomus griseicapillus*: a few seen in Henri Pittier NP.

Strong-billed Woodcreeper *Xiphocolaptes promeropyrhynchus*: One seen very well in Henri Pittier NP.

Straight-billed Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus picus*: Seen throughout in small numbers.

Cocoa Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus susurrans* (H): One bird heard very distantly at Tucacas.

Olive-backed Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus triangularis*: A couple of birds of the race *hylodromus* were observed along the La Azulita road and in the Yacambú National parks.

Streak-headed Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*: Seen in drier habitats throughout.

Montane Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes lacrymiger*: Two races of this smaller woodcreeper were encountered, the endemic *lafresnayi* in the Coastal Cordillera and the nominate subspecies in the Andes.

THAMNOPHILIDAE

Black-crested Antshrike *Sakesphorus canadensis*: Seen at several sites. Recent genetic data suggest that the genus *Sakesphorus* may be better placed within *Thamnophilus*, given the structural similarity of their songs.

Maracaibo Antshrike *Sakesphorus pulchellus*: A pair showed well near Coro. Not formally split it seems quite likely it will be. Song and plumage differences clearly seem to indicate that two species must be involved, as suggested in HBW 8.

Black-backed Antshrike *Sakesphorus melanonotus*: A pair showed very well along the Chumboto road.

Barred Antshrike *Thamnophilus doliatus*: seen throughout. The taxonomy of the Barred Antshrike complex is in need of study and possible revision, more than one species possibly being involved.

Plain Antwren *Dysithamnus mentalis*: A couple seen in Yacambu NP.

Slaty Antwren *Myrmotherula schisticolor*: Several pairs seen along the Choroni road.

Venezuelan Antwren *Dysithamnus tucuyensis*: Good looks at a pair along the Choroni road.

Rufous-winged Antwren *Herpsilochmus rufimarginatus*: Good looks at a bird near Tucacas.

Northern White-fringed Antwren *Formicivora intermedia*: Very common in open and drier habitats throughout.

Rufous-rumped Antwren *Terenura callinota*: Seen very poorly and heard along the San Isidro track.

Jet Antbird *Cercomacra nigricans* (H): Heard only at Hato El Cedral.

White-bellied Antbird *Myrmeciza longipes*: A pair seen very well near Tucacas.

Immaculate Antbird *Myrmeciza immaculata* (H): We only heard this species along the San Isidro track.

FORMICARIIDAE

Black-faced Antthrush *Formicarius analis* (H): Heard along the Occumare and Choroni roads in Henri Pittier NP.

Schwartz's Antthrush (Scalloped A) *Chamaeza turdina*: Spectacular views of this lovely looking Antthrush in Henri Pittier NP.

Short-tailed Antthrush *Chamaeza campanisona* (H): A heard in Henri Pittier NP and Yacambu NP.

Undulated Antpitta *Grallaria undulata*: Two seen along the Pico Humboldt Trail.

Plain-backed Antpitta *Grallaria haplonota* : We had great views of one bird along the Choroni road.

Chestnut-crowned Antpitta *Grallaria ruficapilla*: Reasonable looks at one bird along the Pico Humboldt trail in the Andes.

Grey-naped Antpitta *Grallaria griseonucha*: Not at all vocal this year! However, of the two we heard we had spectacular views of it in a dense mossy clad thicket.

Rusty-breasted Antpitta *Grallaricula ferrugineipectus*(H): Heard only at San Isidro where quite a number were heard.

Slate-crowned Antpitta *Grallaricula nana* : Several seen somewhat briefly along the Pico Humboldt trail.
Scallop-breasted Antpitta *Grallaricula loricata* : After a great effort we scored good looks at a male along the Choroní road.

RHINOCRYPTIDAE

Mérida Tapaculo *Scytalopus meridanus*: Common by voice in higher-elevation forests in the Andes. We had great views of a couple.
Caracas Tapaculo *Scytalopus caracae*: The first bird of the tour seen spectacularly well near Colonia Tovar.
Ocellated Tapaculo *Acropternis orthonyx*: A pair seen near La Grita.

TYRANNIDAE

Black-capped Tyrannulet *Phyllomyias nigrocapillus*: A few seen in northern Táchira of the distinctive race *aureus*, endemic to the Mérida Andes (separated from the Andean chain further south by the low-lying 'Táchira gap'). It seems likely that more than one species may be involved.
Golden-faced Tyrannulet *Zimmerius chrysops*: Very common throughout.
Venezuelan Tyrannulet *Zimmerius improbus*: We saw this in several places
Southern Beardless-Tyrannulet *Camptostoma obsoletum*: Small numbers were heard/seen in drier areas.
Mouse-coloured Tyrannulet *Phaeomyias murina*: Small numbers seen in arid scrub in the northwest, here of the race *incompta*.
Yellow-crowned Tyrannulet *Tyrannulus elatus*: Several nice scope studies of this small canopy dweller along the Rio Frio road.
Forest Elaenia *Myiopagis gaimardii*: Seen along the Rio Barragan of the race *bogotensis* were found at lower elevations.
Yellow-bellied Elaenia *Elaenia flavogaster*: Regular sightings of this widespread species.
Mountain Elaenia *Elaenia frantzii*: A few seen near la Azulita and Merida.
Northern Scrub-Flycatcher *Sublegatus arenarum*: A few sightings seen in the arid habitats of the northwest, of the race *glaber*.
Amazonian Scrub Flycatcher *Sublegatus obscurior*: Several seen at Hato El Cedral.
White-banded Tyrannulet *Mecocerculus stictopterus*: Fairly common in mixed flocks in temperate forest in Tachira.
White-throated Tyrannulet *Mecocerculus leucophrys*: Commonly seen at higher elevations. We saw the races *gularis* (Andes) and *palliditergum* (endemic to the Coastal Cordillera).
Torrent Tyrannulet *Serpophaga cinerea*: Good views of this torrent specialist on a couple of occasions.
Pale-tipped Inezia (P-t Tyrannulet, Northern P-t T) *Inezia caudata*: We saw this species at several sites near Tucacas and in Hato El Cedral's gallery woodland.
Slender-billed Inezia (S-b Tyrannulet) *Inezia tenuirostris*: Common in arid scrub near Coro, with several birds showing very well.
Tawny-crowned Pygmy-Tyrant *Euscarthmus meloryphus*: Common in scrub below Sanare. .
Olive-striped Flycatcher *Mionectes olivaceus*: A fairly common flycatcher in the Andes. We saw the race *meridae*. Birds in this genus are unusual in being frugivorous rather than insectivorous flycatchers and have lek systems.
Ochre-bellied Flycatcher *Mionectes oleaginous*: One seen along the Rio Barragan.
Slaty-capped Flycatcher *Leptopogon superciliaris*: Seen at most mid-elevation forest sites.
Rufous-lored Tyrannulet *Phylloscartes flaviventris*: Excellent looks at a pair at Rancho Grande.

Variegated Bristle-Tyrant *Pogonotriccus poecilotis*: Good views of a few in mixed flocks along the Azulita road.

Marble-faced Bristle-Tyrant *Pogonotriccus ophthalmicus*: Common in Henri Pittier NP

Venezuelan Bristle-Tyrant *Pogonotriccus venezuelanus*: Several pairs seen in mixed flocks along both Occumare and Choroni roads.

Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant *Lophotriccus pileatus*: One seen and many heard in Yacambu NP and heard at San Isidro.

Pale-eyed Pygmy-Tyrant *Lophotriccus pilaris*: We eventually all saw this rather drab little tyrannid at Hato El Cedral.

Pearly-vented Tody-Tyrant *Hemitriccus margaritaceiventer*: Very good views in the dry northwest, here of the race *impiger*. More than one species may be involved.

Slate-headed Tody-Flycatcher *Poecilotriccus sylvia*: We saw this species at many sites throughout.

Common Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum cinereum*: Frequent encounters, and especially numerous at Hato El Cedral.

Maracaibo Tody-Flycatcher (Short-tailed T-F) *Todirostrum viridanum*: Two birds showed beautifully in desert scrub near Coro.

Yellow-olive Flatbill (Y-o Flycatcher) *Tolmomyias sulphurescens*: Several seen of the race *exortivus*.

Ochre-lore'd Flatbill (O-I Flycatcher) *Tolmomyias flaviventris*: Many sightings, but our best views were at Rancho Grande.

Flavescent Flycatcher *Myiophobus flavicans*: Several birds seen along the Queniquea road of the race *venezuelanus*.

Cinnamon Flycatcher *Pyrrhomyias cinnamomea*: Small numbers of this lovely flycatcher.

Tropical Pewee *Contopus cinereus*: A few seen near San Isidro.

Smoke-coloured Pewee *Contopus fumigatus*: Several sightings of this distinctive species.

Olive-sided Flycatcher *Contopus cooperi*: One seen at San Isidro.

Fuscous Flycatcher *Cnemotriccus fuscatus*: We saw this somewhat enigmatic species at Hato El Cedral.

Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans*: Very common.

Vermilion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus*: Seen in open habitats throughout. Its Venezuelan name is "Atrapamoscas Sangre de Toro" (Bull's Blood Flycatcher).

Brown-backed Chat-Tyrant *Ochthoeca fumicolor*: Fairly common in the paramo at Pico Aguila. A very distinctive race is involved and may well deserve specific status.

Yellow-bellied Chat-Tyrant *Ochthoeca diadema*: Two seen along the Queniquea road.

Streak-throated Bush-Tyrant *Myiotheretes striaticollis*: Several seen in the Santo Domingo valley.

Cliff Flycatcher *Hirundinea ferruginea*: A pair seen at the quarry along the San Isidro track.

Amazonian Black-Tyrant *Knipolegus poecilocercus*: Great looks at a male on our Hato El Cedral boat ride.

Cattle Tyrant *Machetornis rixosus*: Common in open country.

Pied Water-Tyrant *Fluvicola pica*: Again very common at Hato EL Cedral.

White-headed Marsh-Tyrant *Arundinicola leucocephala*: Only three seen this year.

Bright-rumped Attila *Attila spadiceus* (H): We heard the distinctive song of this bird on our Puerto Concha boat ride.

Dusky-capped Flycatcher *Myiarchus tuberculifer*: A few seen in mid-elevation forests of the race *pallidus*.

Short-crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus ferox*: A couple seen in the Llanos.

Venezuelan Flycatcher *Myiarchus venezuelensis*: A pair of this uncommon and difficult to identify species seen at Hato El Cedral.

Brown-crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus tyrannulus*: A few seen at sites throughout.

Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus*: Common.

Lesser Kiskadee *Philohydor lictor*: Fairly common near water.

Boat-billed Flycatcher *Megarynchus pitangua*: Seen at numerous localities.
 White-bearded Flycatcher *Phelpsia inornata*: A number of pairs seen at Hato El Cedral
 Social Flycatcher *Myiozetetes similis*: Common and widespread at lower elevations.
 Rusty-margined Flycatcher *Myiozetetes cayanensis*: Fairly common.
 Streaked Flycatcher *Myiodynastes maculatus*: A few.
 Golden-crowned Flycatcher *Myiodynastes chrysocephalus*: Several pairs seen in cloud forest locations.
 Piratic Flycatcher *Legatus leucophaeus*: We saw this species in the Rio Frio Valley and at Rio Barragán.
 Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus*: Numerous throughout.
 Grey Kingbird *Tyrannus dominicensis*: We saw a good many in the Llanos.
 Fork-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus savana*: Good numbers of this species roosting at Hato El Cedral.
 Barred Becard *Pachyramphus versicolor*: A male seen at La Azulita.
 White-winged Becard *Pachyramphus polychopterus*: A single male seen at Hato El Cedral.
 Black-and-white Becard *Pachyramphus albogriseus*: Several seen at Colonia Tovar.
 Cinereous Becard *Pachyramphus rufus*: Good views of a pair at La Azulita.
 Chestnut-crowned Becard *Pachyramphus castaneus*: Seen at scattered sites throughout.
 Cinnamon Becard *Pachyramphus cinnamomeus*: We saw this one in the Maracaibo basin where it replaces the previous species.
 Black-crowned Tityra *Tityra inquisitor*: Several seen.

COTINGIDAE

Red-crested Cotinga *Ampelion rubrocristatus*: One seen along the Queniquea road.
 Barred Fruiteater *Pipreola arcuata*: A quite astonishing number seen along the Queniquea road.
 Green-and-black Fruiteater *Pipreola riefferii*: Again seen on numerous occasions in Tachira and also la Azulita.
 Golden-breasted Fruiteater *Pipreola aureopectus*: several heard at Colonia Tovar and several seen in both Henri Pittier and Yacambu National Parks.
 Handsome Fruiteater *Pipreola formosa*: This very smart endemic was seen along both the Occumare and Choroní roads.
 Red-ruffed Fruitcrow *Pyroderus scutatus* (H): Heard only at San Isidro.
 Andean Cock-of-the-Rock *Rupicola peruviana*: Spectacular views of up to a dozen males and four or five females along the San Isidro track.

PIPRIDAE

Golden-winged Manakin *Masius chrysopterus*: A superb male watched at length on the lower La Azulita road.
 Lance-tailed Manakin *Chiroxiphia lanceolata*: A couple of birds showed well along the antenna road near Tucacas.
 Wire-tailed Manakin *Pipra filicauda* (H): A single bird heard at Hato El Cedral.
 White-crowned Manakin *Dixiphia pipra* (H): Heard in Yacambu NP.

VIREONIDAE

Rufous-browed Peppershrike *Cyclarhis gujanensis*: Commonly seen and heard.
 Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus*: Commonly recorded.
 Brown-capped Vireo *Vireo leucophrys*: Regular sightings of this montane species, both in the Coastal Cordillera and in the Andes.
 Scrub Greenlet *Hylophilus flavipes*: Several sightings in the dry country of the northwest.
 Golden-fronted Greenlet *Hylophilus aurantiifrons*: Quite a number seen in drier woodlands.

CORVIDAE

Black-collared Jay *Cyanolyca armillata*: Fantastic views of this pretty species in Northern Táchira.

Violaceous Jay *Cyanocorax violaceus*: A large family group showed well along the Rio Barragan...

Black-chested Jay *Cyanocorax affinis*: One seen along the Rio Frio Valley.

Inca Jay *Cyanocorax yncas*: Regular sightings of this stunning jay at mid-elevations.

HIRUNDINIDAE

White-winged Swallow *Tachycineta albiventer*: Numerous in the Llanos, where nest boxes have been put up for it. Several of the birds had been painted red providing some confusion as to what was skimming across the open waters.

Brown-chested Martin *Progne tapera*: Several pairs at Hato El Cedral.

Grey-breasted Martin *Progne chalybea*: Commonly seen.

Brown-bellied Swallow *Notiochelidon murina*: Up to 150 seen below the Pico Aguila paramos. .

Blue-and-white Swallow *Notiochelidon cyanoleuca*: Very common.

Southern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*: Frequent observations at lower and middle elevations.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*: Common in the Llanos where a migrant.

INCERTAE SEDIS

Black-capped Donacobius *Donacobius atricapilla*: Seen on our Puerto Concha boat ride and in the Llanos. Originally placed in Mimidae, this species was moved to the Troglodytidae in the mid-eighties. Recent genetic data however reveal that it doesn't belong in either of these families, but is a member of the Old World Sylvioidea group. The SACC has removed it from the Troglodytidae and regards it as Incertae Sedis. Aleixo & Pacheco (2006) proposed that *Donacobius* be elevated to family rank, Donacobiidae, which seems to make a lot of sense.

TROGLODYTIDAE

Bicoloured Wren *Campylorhynchus griseus*: Seen near Coro and in the Llanos.

Stripe-backed Wren *Campylorhynchus nuchalis*: Repeated good views of this pretty species.

Mérida Wren (Paramo W) *Cistothorus meridae*: We had great views of this Venezuelan endemic in the paramo at Pico Aguila.

Whiskered Wren *Thryothorus mystacalis*: We saw this species in the Coastal Cordillera.

Rufous-breasted Wren *Thryothorus rutilus*: Several excellent views of birds of the nominate race along the Cumboto road.

Buff-breasted Wren *Thryothorus leucotis*: Several seen but many more heard throughout.

Rufous-and-white Wren *Thryothorus rufalbus*: Good views of this beautiful wren along the antenna road near Tucacas.

House Wren *Troglodytes aedon*: Numerous and widespread.

Mountain Wren *Troglodytes solstitialis*: Common at La Bravera.

Grey-breasted Wood-Wren *Henicorhina leucophrys*: Seen at numerous localities. Seemingly not so shy in Venezuela.

Southern Nightingale-Wren (Scaly-breasted W) *Microcerculus marginatus* (H): This widespread species was heard at several sites including Rancho Grande.

CINCLIDAE

White-capped Dipper *Cinclus leucocephalus*: Fantastic views of a pair hiding in a crevice behind a waterfall. Also seen near Mérida and along the Santo Domingo River. .

POLIOPTILIDAE

Long-billed Gnatwren *Ramphocaenus melanurus*: A few seen along the San Isidro track of the race *trinitatis*.

Tropical Gnatcatcher *Polioptila plumbea*: Common in open and arid habitats of the race *plumbiceps*.
Tropical Gnatcatchers display a very complex pattern of geographic variation in both plumage and vocalizations.

TURDIDAE

Andean Solitaire *Myadestes ralloides*: Several birds seen of what is often a rather shy species.

Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus aurantiirostris*: One was seen in a bamboo thicket at Colonia Tovar.

Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus*: Several individuals seen in Yacambu NP.

Yellow-legged Thrush *Platycichla flavipes*: A good number of this pretty thrush seen and heard throughout.

Great Thrush *Turdus fuscater*: Common at higher elevations in the Andes.

Glossy-black Thrush *Turdus serranus*: Commonly seen of the race *atrosericeus*.

Black-hooded Thrush *Turdus olivater*: Several birds seen from Yacambu NP to San Isidro track.

Chestnut-bellied Thrush *Turdus fulviventris*: Seen at La Azulita, along the Pico Humboldt track and in Tachira.

Bare-eyed Thrush (B-e Robin, Yellow-eyed T) *Turdus nudigenis*: Common seen at fruiting trees.

Pale-breasted Thrush *Turdus leucomelas*: again very widespread.

Black-billed Thrush *Turdus ignobilis*: A couple showed well along the Rio Barragan.

Cocoa Thrush *Turdus fumigatus*: One showed well in a fruiting tree along the Rio Frio road.

White-necked Thrush *Turdus albicollis*: Several seen at Rancho Grande.

MIMIDAE

Tropical Mockingbird *Mimus gilvus*: A common species of open country habitats.

MOTACILLIDAE

Yellowish Pipit *Anthus lutescens*: Quite a number seen at Hato El Cedral.

Paramo Pipit *Anthus bogotensis*: Several seen at Pico Aguila, here of the endemic race *meridae*.

PARULIDAE

Golden-winged Warbler *Vermivora chrysoptera*: One was seen at Laguna Blanquito in Yacambu NP.
It is considered as 'Near-Threatened' by BirdLife International.

Tennessee Warbler *Vermivora peregrina*: A few seen at sites throughout. *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*: Commonly seen, mainly at middle elevations. Recent genetic research reveals that the genera *Parula* and *Dendroica* may better be merged. The scientific epithet is a Guarani (Paraguay) Indian name, meaning 'little yellow chest' for this species.

Yellow Warbler *Dendroica aestiva*: Small numbers seen in drier woodland in the northwest.

Blackburnian Warbler *Dendroica fusca*: The commonest wintering warbler in montane habitats.

Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia*: Two seen creeping about with mixed flocks. .

American Redstart *Setophaga ruticilla*: A common winterer.

Prothonotary Warbler *Protonotaria citrea*: A stunning male seen at Hato El Cedral. *Protonotarius* is Latin for a Byzantine court notary, later a prothonotary or Vatican registrar who wore golden yellow robes.

Northern Waterthrush *Seiurus noveboracensis*: A couple seen in the Llanos.

Slate-throated Whitestart (S-t Redstart) *Myioborus miniatus*: A few seen at widely scattered sites. Two races observed; *pallidiventris* in the Coastal Cordillera and in the Andes of Lara and *ballux* in the Andes of Mérida.

White-fronted Whitestart (W-f Redstart) *Myioborus albifrons*: Quite common along the queniquea road. It is considered as 'Near-Threatened' by BirdLife International.

Black-crested Warbler *Basileuterus nigrocristatus*: Fairly common in the temperate forests of northern Táchira.

Citrine Warbler *Basileuterus luteoviridis*: One was seen along the queniquea road.

Three-striped Warbler *Basileuterus tristriatus*: Commonly seen at middle elevations, both in the Coastal Cordillera and in the Andes.

Golden-crowned Warbler *Basileuterus culicivorus*: Several observations of this widespread species from the Coastal cordillera to the Andes.

Grey-throated Warbler *Basileuterus cinereicollis*: Very poor views by a couple of us of a very vocal individual. It is considered as 'Near-Threatened' by BirdLife International.

Russet-crowned Warbler *Basileuterus coronatus*: We saw the race *regulus* in northern Táchira and along the Pico Humboldt trail.

THRAUPIDAE

Bananaquit *Coereba flaveola*: Very numerous.

White-eared Conebill *Conirostrum leucogenys*: We saw this range restricted species at quite a number of sites.

Capped Conebill *Conirostrum albifrons*: A pair seen in a mixed flock near Colonia Tovar.

Magpie Tanager *Cissopis leveriana*: We saw a number of pairs near La Azulita.

Common Bush-Tanager *Chlorospingus ophthalmicus*: This species was common in the Coastal Cordillera, at Yacambú NP and along the Pico Humboldt trail.

Superciliaried Hemispingus *Hemispingus superciliaris*: We saw a few in mixed flocks in the forests of northern Táchira, here of the race *chrysophrys*.

Oleaginous Hemispingus *Hemispingus frontalis*: A good number at Henri Pittier NP and above La Azulita.

Grey-capped Hemispingus *Hemispingus reyi*: This endemic was common in Tachira and along the Pico Humboldt trail. It is considered as 'Near-Threatened' by BirdLife International.

Fulvous-headed Tanager *Thlypopsis fulviceps*: Good views of several birds in Henri Pittier and Yacambu NP.

Rosy Thrush-Tanager (Rose-breasted T-T) *Rhodinocichla rosea*: Superb views of this lovely species in dense scrub below Sanare. It perched in the open for us to admire its unusual plumage colouration.

White-lined Tanager *Tachyphonus rufus*: Commonly seen. The scientific species name obviously refers to the colouration of the female.

Highland Hepatic-Tanager (Tooth-billed T) *Piranga lutea*: Several pairs. There is strong genetic evidence that this genus belongs in the Cardinalidae.

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra*: A few seen in the lower foothills.

Scarlet Tanager *Piranga olivacea*: One seen along the San Isidro track.

White-winged Tanager *Piranga leucoptera*: A couple were seen in La Azulita and another in Yacambú NP.

Silver-beaked Tanager *Ramphocelus carbo*: Commonly seen.

Crimson-backed Tanager *Ramphocelus dimidiatus*: Very numerous in the western foothills where it replaces the previous species.

Blue-grey Tanager *Thraupis episcopus*: Numerous and widespread at lower and middle elevations.

Glaucous Tanager *Thraupis glaucocolpa*: Several seen at Hato El Cedral.

Palm Tanager *Thraupis palmarum*: Commonly seen.

Blue-capped Tanager *Thraupis cyanocephala*: Common in the upper elevation forests throughout our tour.

Lacrimose Mountain-Tanager *Anisognathus lacrymosus*: Many good views of this species in the Andes.

Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager *Anisognathus somptuosus*: Seen in the Coastal Cordillera.

Fawn-breasted Tanager *Pipraeidea melanonota*: Seen in the Andes at several sites.

Golden-rumped Euphonia *Euphonia cyanocephala*: Seen near La Vitoria and along the San Isidro track. One of the prettiest euphonias.

Thick-billed Euphonia *Euphonia laniirostris*: Common along the Rio Barragan.

Orange-bellied Euphonia *Euphonia xanthogaster*: Commonly seen in the Coastal Cordillera where we saw the form *exsul*.

Trinidad Euphonia *Euphonia trinitatis*: Seen and heard throughout the trip. This species may well be conspecific with Purple-throated Euphonia *E.chlorotica* as it sounds identical to that species.

Blue-naped Chlorophonia *Chlorophonia cyanea*: Several pairs of this stunning species noted.

Golden Tanager *Tangara arthus*: A common species seen on numerous occasions.

Saffron-crowned Tanager *Tangara xanthocephala*: Good numbers of this beauty were found in mixed flocks in Yacambu NP.

Rufous-cheeked Tanager *Tangara rufigenis*: Up to ten birds seen along the Choroni road.

Beryl-spangled Tanager *Tangara nigroviridis*: Another lovely species we saw a numerous locations.

Blue-and-black Tanager *Tangara vassorii*: Commonly seen in Tachira.

Black-capped Tanager *Tangara heinei*: A few seen in Yacambu NP.

Black-headed Tanager *Tangara cyanoptera*: Good views of several in Yacambu NP.

Burnished-buff Tanager *Tangara cayana*: Small numbers seen throughout.

Blue-necked Tanager *Tangara cyanicollis*: Seen throughout of the race *hannahiae*.

Speckled Tanager *Tangara guttata*: A common tanager of in the Coastal Cordillera and the Andes.

Bay-headed Tanager *Tangara gyrola*: Another common tanager. The birds on the Coastal Cordillera belong to the race *toddi*

Blue Dacnis *Dacnis cayana*: We saw a few birds at widely scattered sites.

Green Honeycreeper *Chlorophanes spiza*: Several seen in Henri Pittier NP.

Purple Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes caeruleus*: Common.

Red-legged Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes cyaneus*: Several pairs seen at sites throughout.

Bluish Flowerpiercer *Diglossopsis caerulescens*: A few seen in tachira in mixed flocks. Flower piercers are nectar thieves. They pierce the flowers at their base without performing any pollination duties.

Masked Flowerpiercer *Diglossopsis cyanea*: A few seen in the Andes, here of the nominate race.

Mérida Flowerpiercer *Diglossa gloriosa*: We saw several in the garden of our posada near La Grita and others near Los Frailes.

White-sided Flowerpiercer *Diglossa albilatera*: A few seen of the nominate race in the Andes.

Glossy Flowerpiercer *Diglossa lafresnayi*: Seen along the queniquea road.

Swallow Tanager *Tersina viridis*: Several pairs seen at scattered sites throughout. Formerly placed in its own family, the Tersinidae.

CARDINALIDAE

Greyish Saltator *Saltator coerulescens*: Seen at several sites.

Buff-throated Saltator *Saltator maximus*: Commonly recorded throughout.

Streaked Saltator *Saltator striatipectus*: Very few seen.

Orinocan Saltator *Saltator orenocensis*: Great looks near la Negrita and others at Hato ElCedral.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak *Pheucticus ludovicianus*: A single bird seen in the scrub below Sanare.

- Ultramarine Grosbeak *Cyanocompsa cyanea*: Excellent views of males and females in the dry scrub of the Sanare area.
- Red-capped Cardinal *Paroaria gularis*: Abundant at Hato El Cedral. Recent genetic data indicate that this genus may belong in the tanager family.
- Vermilion Cardinal *Cardinalis phoenicius*: A stunning speciality of arid habitats. We saw several pairs near Coro and a clear trip favourite although it failed to make the top ten.

EMBERIZIDAE

- Blue-black Grassquit *Volatinia jacarina*: Seen throughout in small numbers. Recent genetic data suggest that *Volatinia*, *Phrygilus* and *Sicalis* belong in *Thraupidae* with the tanagers.
- Black-faced Grassquit *Tiaris bicolor*: Regular observations in the dry northwest.
- Lesser Seed-Finch *Oryzoborus angolensis*: A few seen, with one fine male along the Rio Frio road.
- Grey Seedeater *Sporophila intermedia*: Seen throughout in small numbers.
- Yellow-bellied Seedeater *Sporophila nigricollis*: Common throughout.
- Ruddy-breasted Seedeater *Sporophila minuta*: Seen in Zulia and the Llanos.
- Plain-coloured Seedeater *Catamenia inornata*: A few seen in the in paramos.
- Plumbeous Sierra-Finch *Phrygilus unicolor*: Fairly common in the paramo at Pico Aguila.
- Slaty Finch *Haplospiza rustica*: One seen and several heard along the queniquea road.
- Saffron Finch *Sicalis flaveola*: Common throughout the lowlands especially in the llanos.
- Orange-fronted Yellow-Finch *Sicalis columbiana*: Very common at Hato El Cedral.
- Grey Pileated-Finch (Pileated F) *Coryphospingus pileatus*: We saw a few birds in woodland at Hato El Cedral.
- Moustached Brush-Finch *Atlapetes albofrenatus*: Great views of this attractive species at La Bravera.
- Ochre-breasted Brush-Finch *Atlapetes semirufus*: we saw this attractive endemic in the coastal cordillera at Colonia Tovar and in Henri Pitter NP.
- Slaty Brush-Finch *Atlapetes schistaceus*: Common in the Andes, here of the race *castaneifrons*.
- Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch *Buarremon brunneinuchus*: We saw several in Tachira of the race *frontalis*.
- Tocuyo Sparrow *Arremonops tocuyensis*: Again, great looks as several pairs below Sanare. This near-endemic replaces the Black-striped Sparrow in a small area of more arid habitats.
- Grassland Sparrow *Ammodramus humeralis*: A couple seen at Hato El Cedral.
- Yellow-browed Sparrow *Ammodramus aurifrons*: Common in the Llanos
- Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis*: Very common at higher elevations

ICTERIDAE

- Yellow-hooded Blackbird *Agelaius icterocephalus*: This stunning species was seen in large numbers at Chichiriviche, on the Puerto Concha boat ride and in the Llanos.
- Red-breasted Blackbird *Sturnella militaris*: This pretty icterids was conspicuous and common in the Llanos.
- Carib Grackle *Quiscalus lugubris*: Abundant, even quite high up in the Andes.
- Shiny Cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis*: Scattered encounters. This is a brood parasite and parasitizes a wide variety of species.
- Giant Cowbird *Molothrus oryzivora*: A few observations of this cacique and oropendola brood parasite.
- Venezuelan Troupial (T, Common T) *Icterus icterus*: Venezuela's national bird was found near Coro and at Hato El Cedral. A stunning looking species.
- Yellow-backed Oriole *Icterus chrysater*: A few were seen at middle elevations in the Andes.
- Yellow Oriole *Icterus nigrogularis*: A common oriole in the Llanos.
- Orange-crowned Oriole *Icterus auricapillus*: Several pairs of this somewhat local species seen from La Vitoria to Rio Barragan.

Oriole Blackbird *Gymnomystax mexicanus*: Numerous in the Llanos with a few seen elsewhere.

Yellow-rumped Cacique *Cacicus cela*: A species first seen on the Puerto Concha boat ride and thereafter at Hato El Cedral.

Crested Oropendola *Psarocolius decumanus*: The most frequently encountered oropendola.

Russet-backed Oropendola *Psarocolius angustifrons*: Seen at numerous sites throughout from the Coastal Cordillera to the Andes. It seems likely that this species is comprised of a number of distinct species.

FRINGILLIDAE

Andean Siskin *Carduelis spinescens* (NL): A flock of twenty or so almost certainly seen by Angeline near our Bearded Helmetcrest stake out.

Yellow-bellied Siskin *Carduelis xanthogastra*: A small flock seen at San Isidro tunnel.

Lesser Goldfinch (Dark-backed G) *Carduelis psaltria*: Small numbers seen throughout...

PASSERIDAE

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*: This recent immigrant was noted in Coro.

MAMMALS

Common Opossum (Black-eared O, Southern O) *Didelphis marsupialis*: One seen at Posada Dona Rosa in Merida.

Giant Anteater *Myrmecophaga tridactyla*: Two seen at Hato El Cedral.

Tamandua *Tamandua tetradactyla*: One seen resting in a tree near our lodgings at Hato El Cedral.

Greater Spear-nosed Bat *Phyllostomus hastatus*: Seen in the San Isidro tunnel.

Wedge-capped Capuchin Monkey *Cebus olivaceus*: Several troops seen in Henri Pittier and at Yacambú National parks

Red Howler Monkey (R H) *Alouatta seniculus*: Frequently heard and seen.

Crab-eating Fox (Common Zorro) *Dusicyon thous*: Fairly common at Hato El Cedral.

White-tailed Deer *Odocoileus virginianus*: Common at Hato El Cedral.

Red-tailed Squirrel (Tropical Red S) *Sciurus granatensis*: Regular sightings.

Capybara *Hydrochaeris hydrochaeris*: Abundant at Hato El Cedral.

Central American Agouti *Dasyprocta punctata*: One was seen at Rancho Grande.

Brazilian Porcupine *Coendou prehensilis*: One seen resting in a tree near the lodge at Hato El Cedral.

REPTILES

Spectacled Caiman *Caiman crocodilus*: Very common in the Llanos.

Orinocan Crocodile *Crocodylus intermedius*: Good views of this endangered species at Hato El Cedral.

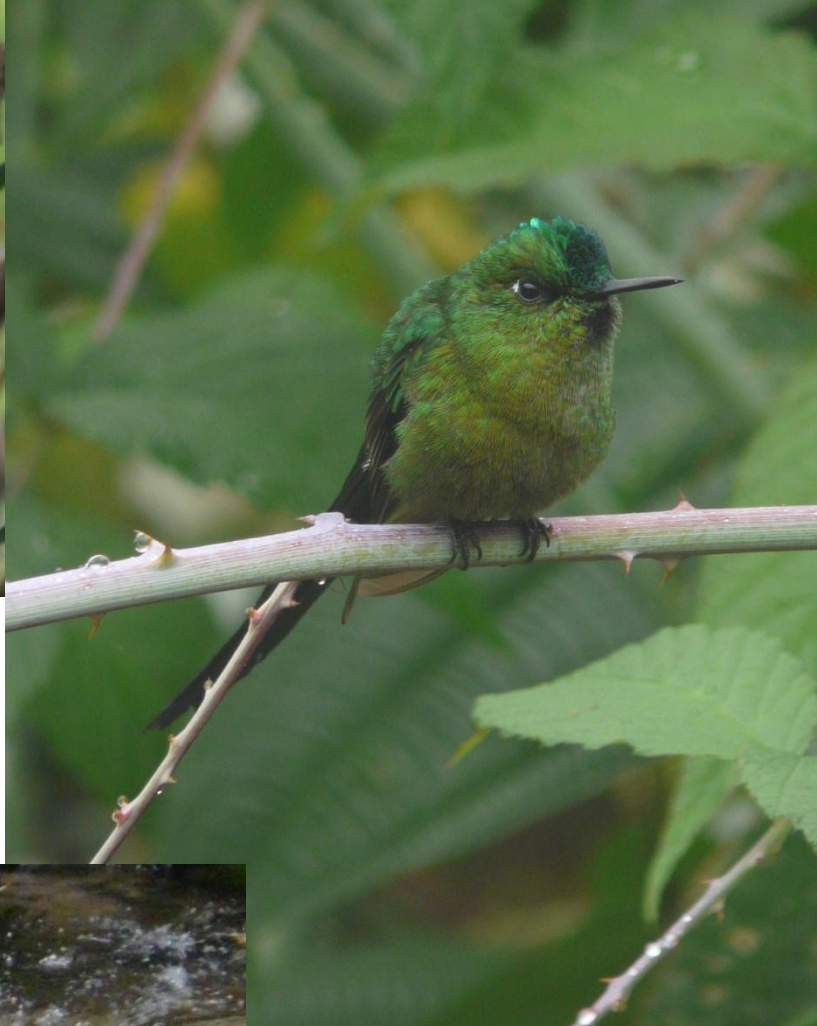
Green Anaconda *Eunectes murinus*: A huge individual (4m or more) was seen along the marsh edge at Hato El Cedral. A fantastic find.

Llanos Pond Turtle *Podocnemis vogli*: The common terrapin in the Llanos.

Green Iguana *Iguana iguana*: Common at Hato El Cedral.

'Bird of the trip' as voted for by the group.

- 1st Grey-naped Antpitta 35
- 2nd Venezuelan Wood-quail 27
- 3rd Zigzag Heron 20
- 4th Agami Heron 17
- 5th Bearded Helmetcrest 16
- 6th Scallop-breasted Antpitta 15
- 7th Sunbittern 14
- 8th Schwartz's Antthrush 13
- 9th Orange-throated Sunangel 12
- 10th Handsome Fruiteater 10



The endemic Black-throated Spinetail (above) and the more widespread Long-tailed sylph (right) can be found at Colonia Tovar.



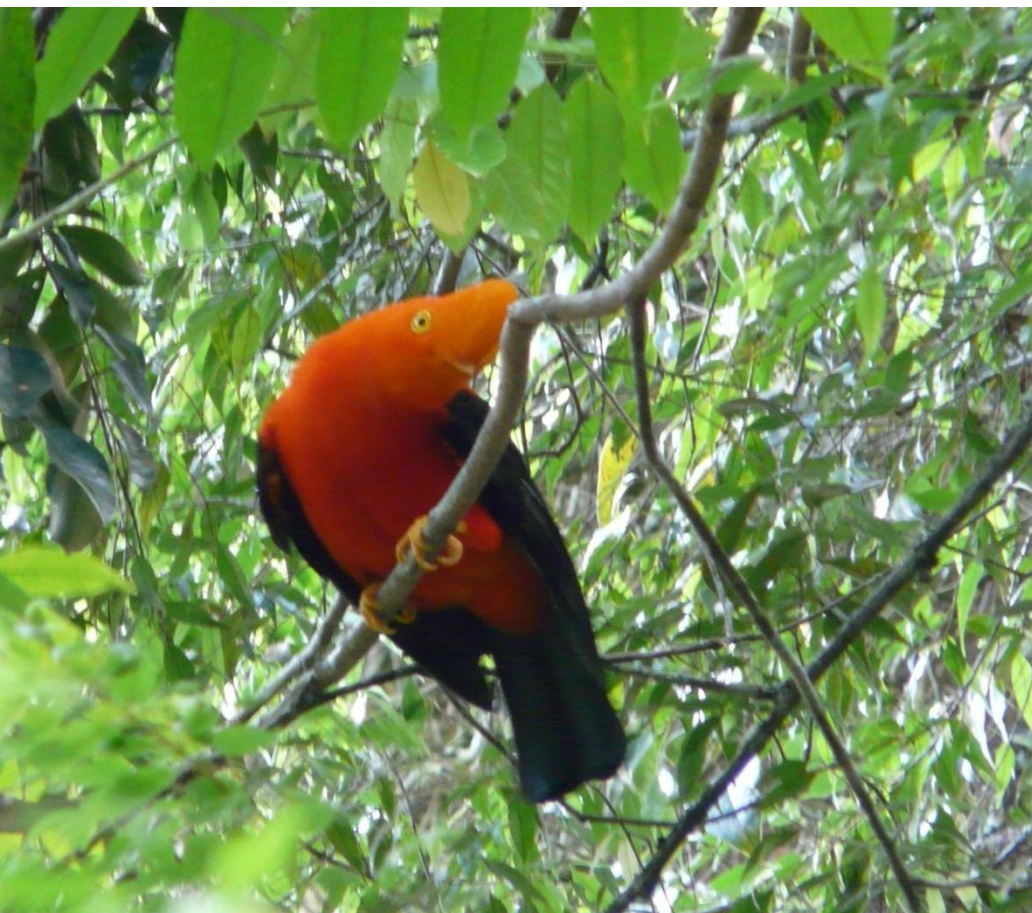
Fasciated tiger heron left

Masked Trogon is common in Yacambu NP.





Orange-throated Sunzel (above) is a spectacular endemic found around Merida. Andean cock-of-the-Rock (lower left) maybe seen at San Isidro and the buff-tailed coronet (lower right) at La Bravera.





The endemic Ochre-browed Thistletail (above) is quite common on the paramos.



Pinnated Bittern (Above)
is easily seen at Hato El
Cedral.



Double-striped Thick-knee (above left and Cream-coloured woodpecker (above right).

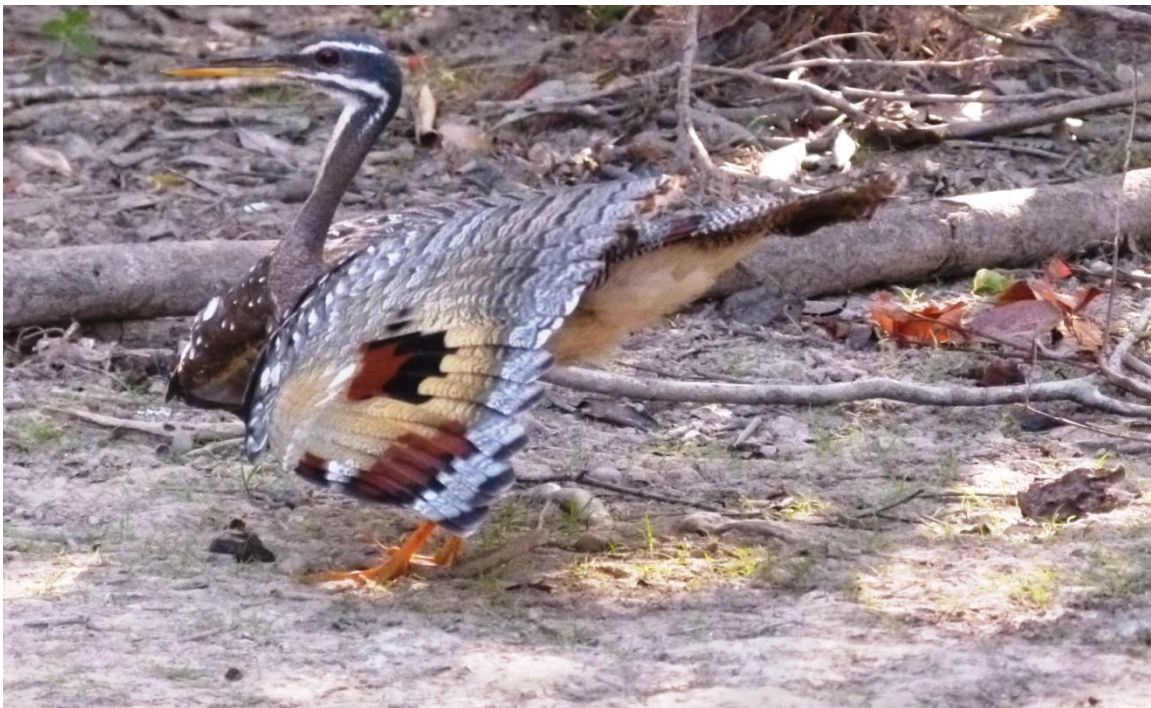


Great Horned Owl (above left) and Horned screamer (above right) at Hato El Cedral.





Green Anaconda crushing a huge turtle.



Sunbittern in threat display (Peter Marsh).



Agami Heron (Peter Marsh, above left) Scarlet macaw (above right) and Scarlet Ibises abound on the marshes.