



The Yellow Grosbeak of the orange race aurantiacus is a real stunner (Mark Van Beirs)

EL TRIUNFO, MEXICO

7 – 16 MARCH 2016



We had fantastic looks at the magnificent Horned Guan, the Bird of the Trip (Mark Van Beirs)

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The fabulous, almost mythical Horned Guan was the obvious Bird of the Trip of our delightful 10 day walk through the Biosphere Reserve of El Triunfo which is situated in the Sierra Madre de Chiapas, in the extreme south of Mexico. We obtained multiple close up sightings of this truly magnificent creature, as it showed off its exceptional red horn and staring white eyes. El Triunfo is the largest remaining wilderness area in Mexico. It was established in 1990 and covers c120,000 hectares (288,000 acres) and forms part of Endemic Bird Area 018 (the North Central American highlands), as defined by BirdLife International. It consists of a mixture of humid montane and lower montane semi deciduous forest, cloud forest dominated by evergreen oaks, pine-oak forest, cypress forest and on the lower slopes tropical deciduous forest and oak scrub. Other gamebirds that really showed well were White-bellied Chachalaca, Highland Guan and a covey of delightfully tame Singing Quail. The second most important bird of the tour, because of its very restricted range, was the subtly-hued Cabanis's (or Azure-rumped) Tanager, which readily showed in fair numbers on the Pacific slope. We encountered a superb selection of high quality, colourful hummingbirds like Rufous Sabrewing, Violet Sabrewing, Emerald-chinned Hummingbird, Black-crested Coquette, Green-throated Mountaingem, Sparkling-tailed Woodstar, Slender Sheartail and the glistening Wine-throated Hummingbird. Motmots featured high on everyone's wish list so the wonderful scope views of Tody, Blue-throated, Blue-diademed and Turquoise-browed Motmots will not quickly be forgotten. Warblers were a very obvious component of the El Triunfo avifauna and included marvels like Crescent-chested, Fan-tailed, Rufous-capped and Golden-browed next to many migrant species from northern climes. Other birds that made our stay at El Triunfo really memorable included Black Hawk-Eagle, White Hawk, White-faced Quail-Dove, Fulvous and Mottled Owls, Resplendent Quetzal, Ruddy Foliage-gleaner, Tawny-throated Leaf-tosser, Paltry Tyrannulet, Northern Bentbill, Stub-tailed Spadebill, White-throated, Belted and Northern Royal Flycatchers, Long-tailed Manakin, Black-throated and Unicoloured Jays, Grey Silky-flycatcher, Black-capped Swallow, Giant and Rufous-browed Wrens, Brown-backed Solitaire, Ruddy-capped and Spotted Nightingale-Thrushes, Hooded

Grosbeak, Blue-crowned Chlorophonia, Spot-breasted Oriole, Prevost's and White-eared Ground Sparrows, Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer, Flame-coloured Tanager, Yellow Grosbeak (of the orange race *aurantiacus*) and Red-breasted Chat. Non feathered critters like Cacomistle (Southern Ringtail), Kinkajou, White-nosed Coati, Central American Spider Monkey, Godman's Pit Viper and the exquisite Brown Basilisk were also very much appreciated. We walked c50 kilometres through beautiful forests escorted by charming, knowledgeable guide Amy, stayed in a nice bunkhouse for four nights and camped for another three nights at lovely sites on the Pacific slope.



Nutting's Flycatcher and Greenish Elaenia got the Tyrant Flycatcher list started (Mark Van Beirs)

We met on a hot Monday morning at Tuxtla Gutierrez airport from where we headed for the famous Canyon del Sumidero. A first stop in the lower dry woodland gave us all too brief looks at a colourful Red-breasted Chat, while Canivet's Emerald, Plain-capped Starthroat, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Nutting's Flycatcher, Banded Wren, White-lored Gnatcatcher, Streak-backed Oriole and lots of Indigo Buntings got the list going. Another stop in bamboo-cloaked shrubby woodland provided us with a cracking, well-behaved Belted Flycatcher. Here we also noted Barred Antshrike, Least and Ash-throated Flycatchers, Warbling Vireo, Blue-grey Gnatcatcher and Blue-winged, Magnolia and Black-and-white Warblers. At the highest viewpoint we admired the fantastic scenery of the up to a 1,000 meter deep canyon and waited for things to happen in a patch of tiny red-flowering bushes where several hummingbirds were very active. Best of all was the tiny, gorgeous male Slender Sheartail that moved about like a large insect and rarely seemed to pause. Azure-crowned Hummingbirds were also about and a male Blue Bunting and another Belted Flycatcher held us company. The nearby fig trees were visited by Masked Tityras, Yellow-throated Euphonias and Yellow-winged Tanagers and we added Social Flycatcher, Great Kiskadee, Tropical and Couch's Kingbirds and Swainson's and Clay-coloured Thrushes to the tally. Overhead we noted lots of Black and a few Turkey Vultures and a dark morph Short-tailed Hawk. While munching our packed lunch Ivory-billed Woodcreeper, Greenish Elaenia, Grey Catbird, Yellow-throated Vireo, Green Jay, Black-throated Green Warbler and Western Tanager provided entertainment.

In early afternoon we left the delights of the Sumidero Canyon and drove via Tuxtla Gutierrez, the capital and largest city of the state (c600.000 inhabitants) into the wilds of Chiapas to the small town of Jaltenango. A short stop along a narrow river produced a nice selection of widespread species like Neotropic Cormorant, Wood Stork, Spotted Sandpiper, Inca Dove, Common and Ruddy Ground Doves, White-tipped and White-winged Doves, Groove-billed Ani, Green and Amazon Kingfishers, Velasquez's Woodpecker, Northern Crested Caracara, Black Phoebe, Western Kingbird, Cave Swallow, Tennessee and Nashville Warblers,

Common Yellowthroat, Blue-grey Tanager, White-collared Seedeater, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Greyish Saltator. We scoped a perched Ridgway's Rough-winged Swallow and found several lovely Blue Grosbeaks in breeding plumage. In an area of meadows and short grassland we found Great, Snowy and Western Cattle Egrets, Northern Jacana, a heard only Ruddy Crake, American Kestrel, Vermilion, Fork-tailed and Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, Tropical Mockingbird, hundreds of Barn Swallows, flocks of Dickcissels, Eastern Meadowlark, Baltimore and many Orchard Orioles and Red-winged Blackbird. At dusk we noted several Lesser Nighthawks overhead and soon rolled into the little town of Jaltenango where a fair was being held and revellers continued into the early hours!



A male Blue Grosbeak and a wing-lifting Ochre-bellied Flycatcher showed well (Mark Van Beirs)

After a hearty breakfast we boarded an open truck which took us along a rough track to the coffee plantations of Finca Prusia. We stopped several times in shrubby fields, at woodland edges and in the pine-oak zone. We were fortunate enough to pick up a pair of Prevost's Ground Sparrows rather quickly and obtained excellent scope views of this localized speciality. Black-capped Swallows showed regularly at their breeding road cuts, but not very well. We managed to scope both White-crowned and Red-lored Parrots and found several beautifully showy Ochre-bellied Flycatchers in a fruiting tree. Warblers were very accommodating and we had great looks at Nashville, American Yellow, Yellow-throated, Rufous-capped, Wilson's and Grace's Warblers. Other interesting species included Plain Chachalaca, Common Black Hawk, Grey Hawk (we even saw them mating), Red-tailed Hawk (a dark morph with nesting material), Red-billed Pigeon, White-collared and Vaux's Swifts, Berylline Hummingbird, Blue-diademed Motmot, Acorn, Velasquez's, Golden-olive and Lineated Woodpeckers, Olivaceous Woodcreeper, a very tame Greenish Elaenia, Dusky-capped, Brown-crested and Yellow-bellied Flycatchers, Rufous-browed Peppershrike, Plumbeous Vireo, Grey-breasted Martin, Plain Wren, Wood Thrush, Scrub Euphonia, American Redstart, Yellow-breasted Chat, Melodious Blackbird, Red-legged Honeycreeper, Black-headed Siskin, a party of noisy Black-headed Saltators and a pair of cracking Painted Buntings.

Around noon we started the 12 kilometre walk up to the El Triunfo camp. Mules and horses carried our main luggage and we first made our way along a well-laid out trail through coffee plantations. These soon changed into evergreen forest where enormous Sweet Gums stood out and in late afternoon we entered the cloud forest, where large oaks (*Quercus*) were adorned with bromeliads, lichens, orchids and mosses. Mexico has 160 species of oaks (more than any other country) of which 109 are endemic, while the sweet gum is the same species that embellishes some of our European gardens (*Liquidambar styraciflua*). The highlight of our walk was the fabulous Horned Guan. We first heard the low humming call and then Liko, our Mr fix-it located this magical bird as it sat quietly high in the canopy. We had fantastic looks at this most

desired bird of the tour. The light could have been a bit better (it was rather gloomy), but we all saw the bizarre red horn, the startling white eyes, the heavy white bill and the black and white plumage. Golden, much cherished moments! We saw the bird only 50m away from where we had observed the guan two years ago, when it became bird number 10,000 for the Birdquest lifelist. We also scoped several tiny, singing Emerald-chinned Hummingbirds sitting unobtrusively over the trail. Other goodies on our walk included Green Violetear, Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaner, Brown-capped Vireo, Grey-breasted Wood Wren, Brown-backed Solitaire, Golden-browed and Golden-crowned Warblers, Slate-throated Whitestart, Chestnut-capped Brush Finch and Common Bush Tanager. We heard Highland Guan regularly and also listened to the distinctive call of a Green Shrike-Vireo in the distance. In late afternoon we arrived at the famous El Triunfo clearing and found the facilities very much improved since our last visit. In the late evening I heard a scratching sound at my window and discovered a Vaux's Swift that had been attracted by the light. I caught it and kept it till the morning when everyone had a good look at this tiny swift. The broad head (for binocular vision), the tiny bill and the long, narrow wings were quite remarkable.



A tiny male Emerald-chinned Hummingbird; the famous clearing of El Triunfo (Mark Van Beirs)

The magnificent Biosphere Reserve of El Triunfo covers 120,000 hectares in the Sierra Madre de Chiapas. The Reserve features no fewer than ten different vegetation types, including humid tropical evergreen forest, tropical deciduous forest and pine-oak forest, but its unique cloud forest is by far the most appealing and threatened. Some of the evergreen trees here reach an amazing 90m above the forest floor and are covered in trailing vines, gigantic ferns, carpets of mosses, magnificent bromeliads, smelly arum lilies and luxuriant orchids. Amidst the often mist-enshrouded mountains are giant tree ferns, towering Mexican alders, wild fuschias, several species of oaks and wild avocado and mulberry trees. On our first morning at the El Triunfo clearing we were, sadly, greeted by dense mist. While sipping our coffee outside the kitchen building we could just about discern a few birds when the wind blew holes in the mist. A couple of Hammond's Flycatchers showed well and a lost White-throated Flycatcher could be studied in depth. A couple of Silky Flycatchers appeared in a fruiting perlita tree, as did a Hairy Woodpecker, but the mist didn't allow for good looks. After a filling breakfast we hit the Palo Gordo trail. Conditions in the forest were barely better than outside, but we did find a number of nice species. Several White-faced Quail-Doves were feeding on fallen avocado fruits and allowed pretty good views. We encountered a couple of Green-throated Mountaingems and managed very pleasing scope studies. We heard several Resplendent Quetzals and eventually had fine, but brief looks at a young male. A treefall was the obvious territory of a pair of very smart Northern Tufted Flycatchers. Several Black-throated Jays were raiding caterpillar tents high in the canopy, but the views were pretty terrible. We also observed a female Rose-throated Becard, Rufous-browed Wren (fair looks), Grey-breasted Wood Wren, Black Thrush, Blue-crowned Chlorophonia and Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer in the gloomy mist. A male Elegant Euphonia appeared just as it became a bit clearer and we also heard a Spotted Woodcreeper. During the midday break Red-tailed Hawk and Band-tailed Pigeon were seen around the clearing during short periods of better weather. In the afternoon we walked along the Finca Prusia trail and

found it very gloomy. Luckily we located a stretch where birds were very active and had a great time observing the antics of well-behaved species like Tawny-throated Leafhopper (fantastic studies), Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush, Spotted Nightingale-Thrush, Golden-browed Warbler, Slate-throated Whitestart and several Chestnut-capped Brush Finches. We flushed a couple of Highland Guans and located two Horned Guans eating berries very high in a forest giant. A Spot-crowned Woodcreeper and Deppe's Squirrel were other nice additions. We tried a bit of owling, but the weather didn't cooperate at all, so we had to postpone our nightbirding efforts till more benign climatic circumstances.



Spotted Nightingale-Thrush and Slate-throated Whitestart behaved impeccably (Mark Van Beirs)

The following morning we found the first hour at the clearing fairly productive, although it was still rather misty. We heard the tantalizing hooting calls of a Fulvous Owl emanate from a steep slope just as it was getting light. A flock of wheeling White-collared Swifts showed, a smart male Violet Sabrewing was feeding in a hibiscus shrub, a flock of eight Barred Parakeets shot over, a male Blue-crowned Chlorophonia perched up and a male Yellow Grosbeak of the distinctive orange race *aurantiacus* could be admired. A Green Heron was flushed along the stream and the rubbish tip produced Wood Thrush, Ovenbird, Louisiana Waterthrush and Flame-coloured Tanager. We also heard the distinctive barking of a distant Barred Forest Falcon. The mist came and went and allowed for some fairly pleasing observations. After breakfast we returned to the Finca Prusia trail and slowly ambled along picking up goodies like Blue-throated Motmot, Emerald Toucanet, Spotted Woodcreeper, a party of Black-throated Jays, a well-performing Rufous-browed Wren and Worm-eating and Crescent-chested Warblers. Mark T walked by himself and found Crested Guan, Horned Guan, lots of White-faced Quail-Doves, Ruddy Quail-Dove and Collared Trogon along the Palo Gordo trail. During the midday break a male American Kestrel terrorized the clearing and then the heavens opened and it kept raining cats and dogs for the rest of the day. We used the kitchen/dining building as a hide to observe the activity at the rubbish tip while it poured down. In between the heavier showers we obtained fantastic views of foraging Swainson's Thrushes, attractive Wood Thrushes and a terrific Spotted Nightingale-Thrush. While having dinner a cute Slate-throated Whitestart entered the kitchen building and started to roost on a piece of wire under the roof while we were chatting away. Great fun. An after dinner short stroll around the clearing gave us two Gray Four-eyed Opossums.

An hour before dawn we were standing in a strategic spot amongst impressive, epiphyte-laden trees and soon we heard the unique vocalisations of a pair of Fulvous Owls. It didn't take too long to get excellent looks at this fantastic creature as it observed us rather angrily from an open bough. What a splendid start of the day! Stars were bright in the sky and dawn heralded a beautifully sunny day. The top of Cerro El Triunfo became visible for the first time in days and we were surrounded by lots of birdsong. We stood around the clearing for several hours enjoying the bird extravaganza as the sun lit up the forest edge. Hooded Grosbeaks were sunning themselves in a distant canopy and Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercers were doing their thing in Hibiscus and Wigandia bushes giving us good looks at their bizarrely-shaped bills. A Plumbeous Vireo of the distinctive race *notius* looked for all the world like a Cassin's Vireo. We also observed Broad-winged Hawk, Squirrel Cuckoo, Chestnut-coloured Swift, Hairy Woodpecker (of the dull race

sanctorum), Barred Forest Falcon, Spotted Woodcreeper, a trio of Unicoloured Jays, lots of Townsend's Warblers and a Bronzed Cowbird. A nearby, splendid flowerbank was the territory of an adorable male Wine-throated Hummingbird, which regularly allowed us to admire his pink gorget as he flew bumblebee-like from one patch of flowers to the next. At the edge of the clearing we heard the piercing notes of Singing Quail and after a bit of a vocal duel we had fantastic looks at three of these gorgeous critters only metres away. Delightful moments! Along the Finca Prusia trail we were lucky enough to find a pair of Horned Guans quietly feeding in an open tree allowing for magnificent observations. We stayed with these avian gems for more than 40 minutes while studying the intricate pattern of their plumage, their intense white eyes and curiously baffling, plastic-like red horn. Glorious moments! This was why we had travelled here for! We also managed to get some decent views of Highland Guan and heard Ruddy Foliage-gleaner and Grey-collared Becard. In the afternoon the mist came in again and ruined the birding for the rest of the day. We did walk the Costa trail in gloomy conditions and saw Mountain Trogon and White-throated Thrush.



The views of the unique Horned Guan were out of this world (Mark Van Beirs)



Cerro El Triunfo (Tom Fiore) and a hibiscus flower raiding Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer (Mark Van Beirs)

On our final morning at the clearing we didn't see anything new, but did obtain better views of a male Hooded Grosbeak. Then it was time to pack and soon we were on our way up along the Costa trail to the continental divide. Male and female Highland Guan gave splendid views and a Ruddy Foliage-gleaner performed well. After a couple of hours we reached the ridge and from there on it was down all the way to our camp at Cañada Honda, situated at an altitude of c1350m. Our camping crew and the pack horses with our luggage, tents and food soon overtook us. While enjoying the spectacular view at the first mirador a Cabanis's (or Azure-rumped) Tanager showed, much higher than where it is usually seen. A Blue-throated Motmot was scoped as it was sunning itself in a bromelia infested tree and a subtly-plumaged Paltry Tyrannulet was feeding on mistletoe berries in a dense bush. A Godman's Pit Viper was snoozing next to the trail and was well appreciated. We spent a delightful 20 minutes at a flowering Inga tree where a female Black Coquette, a female Sparkling-tailed Woodstar, a Rufous Sabrewing and an Emerald-chinned Hummingbird foraged. We found a fruiting bush holding more than ten glistening-green Blue-crowned Chlorophonias and an unexpected male Black-throated Blue Warbler. When we arrived at our well-laid out camp we were welcomed by a gorgeous male Sparkling-tailed Woodstar. After settling in and getting organised we admired a White-eared Ground Sparrow while sipping hibiscus juice. We then took a walk on the nearby trail where we found a fruiting fig tree with at least ten Cabanis's Tanagers. We studied these restricted range specialities in detail and also found Berylline Hummingbird, Stub-tailed Spadebill, Long-tailed Manakin (for some) and Rufous-and-white Wren. A couple of sleek Central American Spider Monkeys were quietly feeding in a dense evergreen tree. We had an early dinner which was interrupted by a young male White-winged Tanager and a heard Thicket Tinamou. As it was getting dark a Mottled Owl started calling. He kept his distance, but on our night walk we found a Kinkajou and heard the weird calls of a Cacomistle.



Lovely El Triunfo scenery (Tom Fiore)



An inquisitive Singing Quail and a glistening male Blue-crowned Chlorophonia (Mark Van Beirs)

We had breakfast as dawn was breaking and then explored a higher part of the Cañada Honda. As the sun was hitting the trees birds started to flit about. We saw several more Cabanis's Tanagers and scoped two groups of Central American Spider Monkeys. After packing up we strolled down along a nice trail to our campsite at Limonar, a mere 5 km away. A pair of delightful Fan-tailed Warblers did their thing next to the trail and we had great looks at a calling Rufous Sabrewing. A male Black-crested Coquette appeared all too briefly in a flowering tree. Several Long-tailed Manakins gave good views and we kept hearing them all along the walk. Other species seen included Black Hawk-Eagle, Blue-headed Vireo and very handsome White-winged Tanagers. We also encountered a couple of curious White-nosed Coatis in fruiting trees. In the early afternoon we arrived at the lovely campground of Limonar, situated at an altitude of just over a 1,000m, where we got organised and relaxed for a while in the heat of the day. The tents were well spaced out in the shade of some big trees and a shower was very welcome. In the afternoon a nearby viewpoint gave us Crested Guan (for some) and a MacGillivray's Warbler. We much enjoyed the fantastic looks at a perfectly performing, singing Rufous Sabrewing only metres away. Several Thicket Tinamous were calling fairly close on our walk in late afternoon, but we were not able to tease them within view. Two attractive Blue-diademed Motmots were found attending an army ant swarm. After dinner we walked around the area for a while and soon had a pair of Mottled Owls vocalising above our heads in a tall, very dense tree. We saw one bird briefly in flight, but that was it. Our outing was saved by a superb observation of a Cacomistle in a fruiting tree above Carlos's tent. This noisy raccoon relative showed brilliantly and we could easily discern the furry, ringed tail and the sharp snout. A great end of a splendid day!



The cozy Cañada Honda camp; a circling Black Hawk-Eagle (Mark Van Beirs)



The restricted range Cabanis's Tanager (Mark Van Beirs); Tody Motmot can be quite skulky (Tom Fiore)

As we had a long 11km walk ahead, we started at 6.30 and slowly made our way down through oak dominated evergreen forest, dry woodland and finally coffee plantations with many shade trees. We scoped a couple of distant Crested Guans at a viewpoint and found a brooding female Highland Guan on her nest just above the trail. It proved an excellent walk for birds of prey as we had great looks at several King Vultures, an impressive Black Hawk-Eagle and four different White Hawks (of the extremely white race *ghiesbreghti*). A unexpected Blue-throated Sapphire (or Goldentail) visited small white flowers along the trail. Although they were not vocal we found two Tody Motmots in their shady haunts and obtained great scope looks of this dainty, much-wanted critter. Blue-diademed Motmots were decidedly common and we had several fantastic encounters with Turquoise-browed Motmots. The Live Oaks were brimming with migrant warblers, 90 % of which were Tennessee Warblers. An ant swarm was attended by a Blue-diademed Motmot, a cracking Ruddy Woodcreeper, no fewer than six very well-behaved, alluring Fan-tailed Warblers and both Red-crowned and Red-throated Ant Tanagers. We also obtained great looks at the tiny, often hard to see well Stub-tailed Spadebill. Other additions on our walk were Bat Falcon, Collared Aracari, Orange-fronted Parakeet, Northern Beardless Tyrannulet, Yellow-olive Flatbill, Eye-ringed Flatbill, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Northern Royal Flycatcher, Tropical Pewee, Lesser Greenlet and Long-billed Gnatwren. Upon arrival at the campsite of Paval, we enjoyed some fruit and juice and birded the clearing. A not too distant tree held eight Crested Guans and we observed White-fronted Amazon and a quietly tapping Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. At dusk a Pauraque flitted about and later we heard a distant Crested Owl. During the night we could hear the voices of Collared Forest Falcon, Black-and-white Owl and Mottled Owl from tents.



Fan-tailed Warblers performed beautifully at an ant swarm; our camp at Paval (Mark Van Beirs)



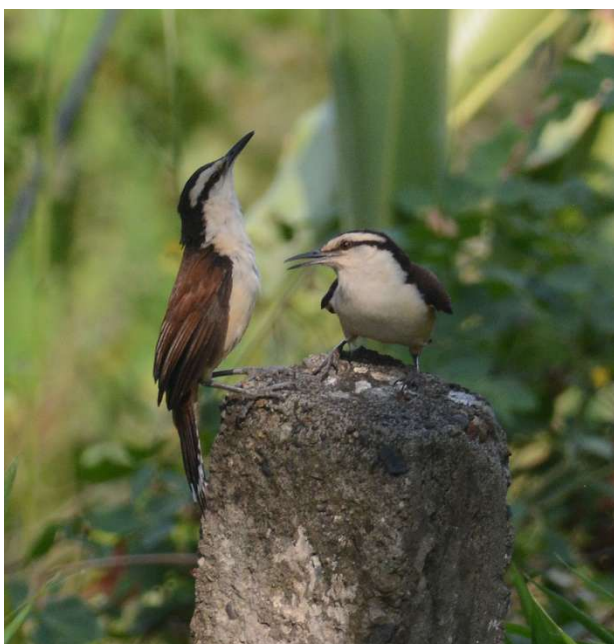
This cracking Brown Basilisk was sunning itself in a streambed (Mark Van Beirs)

During our al fresco breakfast we were entertained by gaudy Altamira and Spot-breasted Orioles. We stayed around the camp clearing in the early morning watching goodies like White-bellied Chachalaca, Piratic and Sulphur-bellied Flycatchers and Yellow-green Vireo. After packing up for the last time we walked to the nearby creek and adjoining open area where Long-billed Starthroat, Green-breasted Mango, Ringed Kingfisher, Northern Waterthrush and White-collared Seedeater were seen. An impressive Brown Basilisk lizard adorned with a fabulous crest was sunning itself on a rock in the river. The final kilometre of our El Triunfo walk took us through open woodland and a disused meadow where a cute Northern Bentbill, Boat-billed Flycatcher, Yellow-billed Cacique and a pair of endearing Prevost's Ground Sparrows were noted. When we reached the beginning of the road we found our transport waiting for us. It took us to the nearby village where we had to wait a bit for our minibus. Meanwhile several Orange-chinned Parakeets showed quite well. After a nice lunch we drove along the smooth highway to the town of Tapachula, on the border with Guatemala. From the bus we could observe dozens of migrating Turkey Vultures and Swainson's Hawks. We checked into a very nice hotel where the facilities were much appreciated. We said goodbye to sharp-eyed, good humoured and ever enthusiastic Amy and to the local Mr fix- it and his charming cooking crew. A bout of birding in the gardens allowed good looks at a pair of mating Ferruginous Pygmy Owls, Cinnamon Hummingbird, White-throated Magpie-Jay, several pairs of imposing Giant Wrens and a large Black Spiny-tailed Lizard. After a tasty final dinner and several yummy margaritas we took a short walk in the gardens and our tape of Pacific Screech Owl only attracted a very interested Mottled Owl. We gave it another try in the hour before dawn, but only managed to lure in Mottled Owl again. Had he taken care of the resident Pacific Screech Owls? Very likely...



White-bellied Chachalaca and Mottled Owl were found in the Tapachula hotel gardens (Mark Van Beirs)

On our final walk in the gardens we had a very enjoyable time observing the White-bellied Chachalacas in detail, while listening to their ebullient dawn chorus. The showy Giant Wrens gave another tremendous performance. We scoped a female Gartered Trogon and a bunch of feisty Orange-chinned Parakeets. The final new bird for the tour was a colourful Mexican Cacique that roamed the gardens. And then it was time for the long journey home with memories of magnificent Horned Guans living in the lost world of some remote cloud forest. Many thanks to Mark T and Gavin for helping to carry the scope on the long walks.



Vocal Giant Wrens and gaudy White-throated Magpie Jays also lived there (Mark Van Beirs)



The adorable Rufous Sabrewing allowed lengthy scope studies (Mark Van Beirs)

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

The species names and taxonomy used in the report mostly follows Gill, F & D Donsker (Eds). **IOC World Bird Names**. This list is updated several times annually and is available at <http://www.worldbirdnames.org>.

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

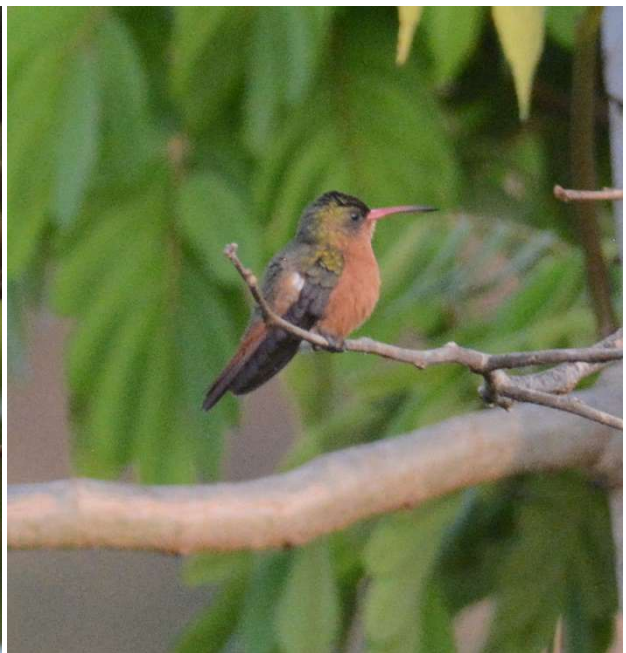
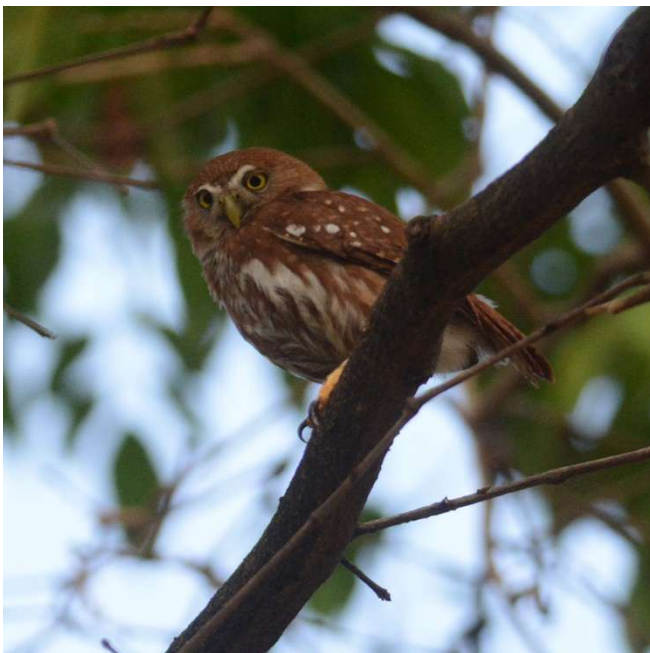
Species which were only recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (LO).

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

Species marked with the diamond symbol (◊) are either endemic to the country or local region or considered 'special' birds for some other reason (e.g. it is only seen on one or two Birdquest tours; it is difficult to see across all or most of its range; the local form is endemic or restricted-range and may in future be treated as a full species).

Conservation threat categories and information are taken from *Threatened Birds of the World*, BirdLife International's magnificent book on the sad status of the rarest 10% of the world's avifauna, and updates on the BirdLife website: <http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/home>

Thicket Tinamou ♦ *Crypturellus cinnamomeus* (H) Regularly heard on the Pacific slope.
Plain Chachalaca ♦ *Ortalis vetula* Several showed near Jaltenango.
White-bellied Chachalaca ♦ *Ortalis leucogastra* Splendid looks in the Tapachula hotel gardens.
Crested Guan *Penelope purpurascens* Splendid studies in the Paval area.
Highland Guan ♦ *Penelopina nigra* Often heard and regularly observed. Quite shy!
Horned Guan ♦ *Oreophasis derbianus* Regular sightings of this fantastic species!
Singing Quail ♦ *Dactylortyx thoracicus* Terrific views of a covey near the El Triunfo camp.
Wood Stork *Mycteria americana* A couple were seen near Jaltenango.
Green Heron *Butorides virescens* One was flushed along the stream at the El Triunfo clearing.
Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* A few in the Jaltenango area.
Great Egret (American G E) *Ardea [alba] egretta* Seen in agricultural areas on both slopes.
Snowy Egret *Egretta thula* A few were noted in streams near Jaltenango.
Neotropic Cormorant *Phalacrocorax brasilianus* Several sightings near Jaltenango.
Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura* Common away from the El Triunfo cloud forest.
Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus* Very common away from the reserve.
King Vulture *Sarcoramphus papa* Seven observations on the Pacific slope.
Black Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus tyrannus* Three sightings of this impressive raptor.
Common Black Hawk *Buteogallus anthracinus* Three encounters in the foothills.
Roadside Hawk *Rupornis magnirostris* A single observation on the Pacific slope.
White Hawk *Pseudastur albicollis* Six encounters with this very smart raptor (*ghiesbreghtii*).
Grey Hawk *Buteo plagiatus* Regular sightings.
Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus* Several encounters with this northern migrant.
Short-tailed Hawk *Buteo brachyurus* Four observations with dark morph individuals.
Swainson's Hawk *Buteo swainsoni* Some near bushfires and others on migration.
Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis* A few encounters.
Ruddy Crake *Laterallus ruber* (H) We heard the trill near Jaltenango.
Northern Jacana *Jacana spinosa* A single bird was seen near Jaltenango.
Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius* One was noted along a stream near Jaltenango.
Rock Dove (introduced) *Columba livia*



Ferruginous Pygmy Owl ; Cinnamon Hummingbird (Mark Van Beirs)

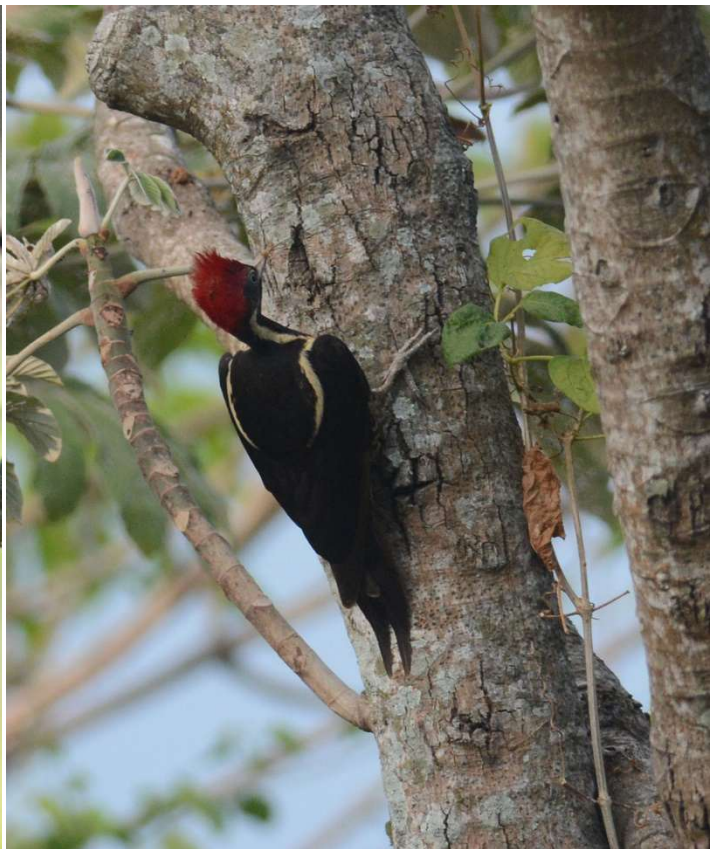
Band-tailed Pigeon *Patagioenas fasciata* Small numbers were found in the highlands.
 Red-billed Pigeon *Patagioenas flavirostris* Common in the dry woodland on the Pacific slope.
 Inca Dove *Columbina inca* Small numbers were seen in agricultural areas and villages.
 Common Ground Dove *Columbina passerina* A single bird was observed near Jaltenango.
 Ruddy Ground Dove *Columbina talpacoti* Common in the lowlands on both slopes.
 Ruddy Quail-Dove *Geotrygon montana* Several nice sightings in the cloud forest.
 White-tipped Dove *Leptotila verreauxi* Often heard and regularly encountered.
 White-faced Quail-Dove ♦ *Zentrygon albifacies* Quite common in the cloud forest with fallen fruit.
 White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica* Small numbers in the lowlands.
 Groove-billed Ani *Crotophaga sulcirostris* Parties in the lowlands.
 Squirrel Cuckoo *Piaya cayana* Regular encounters.
 Fulvous Owl ♦ *Strix fulvescens* One of the gems of the cloud forest. Good, but rather brief looks.
 Mottled Owl *Strix virgata* Easy to see in the Tapachula hotel garden, where no other owls were heard.
 Black-and-white Owl *Strix nigrolineata* (H) We heard one at night at the Paval campsite.
 Ferruginous Pygmy Owl *Glaucidium brasilianum* Four great observations. A mating pair at Tapachula.
 Lesser Nighthawk *Chordeiles acutipennis* A few at dusk near Jaltenango.
 Pauraque (Common P) *Nyctidromus albicollis* One showed quite well at the Paval campsite.
 Chestnut-collared Swift *Streptoprocne rutila* Small numbers were seen overhead at El Triunfo.
 White-collared Swift *Streptoprocne zonaris* Regular flocks overhead.
 Vaux's Swift *Chaetura vauxi* Regular in the lowlands. Also one caught at night at the bunkhouse.
 Rufous Sabrewing ♦ *Campylopterus rufus* Splendid looks at several in the Limonar area.
 Violet Sabrewing ♦ *Campylopterus hemileucurus* A male showed well at the clearing.
 Green-breasted Mango *Anthracothonax prevostii* One was seen near the Paval campsite.
 Green Violetear *Colibri thalassinus* Scope views of a calling bird on our way up to the clearing.
 Emerald-chinned Hummingbird ♦ *Abeillia abeillei* Many excellent sightings of singing or feeding birds.
 Black-crested Coquette ♦ *Lophornis helenae* Good looks at a female and brief looks at a male.
 Canivet's Emerald ♦ *Chlorostilbon canivetii* Regular in the Sumidero Canyon.
 Blue-throated Sapphire (B-t Goldentail) *Hylocharis eliciae* A male showed well on the walk to Paval.



Blue-diademed Motmot (Mark Van Beirs); a bromeliad-laden tree in the cloud forest (Gavin Stewart)

Cinnamon Hummingbird *Amazilia rutila* A few in the Pacific lowlands.
 Azure-crowned Hummingbird ♦ *Amazilia cyanocephala* Seen well in the Sumidero Canyon.
 Berylline Hummingbird ♦ *Amazilia beryllina* Regular observations. Remember the rufous wing patch.
 Green-throated Mountaingem ♦ *Lampornis viridipallens* Regular in the El Triunfo cloud forest.
 Plain-capped Starthroat ♦ *Heliomaster constantii* Good looks at one in the Sumidero Canyon.

Long-billed Starthroat *Helimaster longirostris* Two showed well near our Paval camp site.
 Sparkling-tailed Woodstar ◇ *Tilmatura dupontii* Male and female allowed terrific looks.
 Slender Sheartail ◇ *Doricha enicura* This lovely species showed well in the Sumidero Canyon.
 Ruby-throated Hummingbird *Archilochus colubris* Regular sightings in the lowlands.
 Wine-throated Hummingbird ◇ *Atthis ellioti* Cracking views of a male in a flower bank at the clearing.
 Resplendent Quetzal ◇ *Pharomachrus mocinno* Regularly heard and a few seen in the cloud forest.
 Gartered Trogon *Trogon caligatus* Regularly heard and a female seen well on the Pacific slope.
 Mountain Trogon ◇ *Trogon mexicanus* Good looks at a male near the continental divide.
 Collared Trogon *Trogon collaris* Regular observations.
 Green Kingfisher *Chloroceryle americana* Three were seen along streams near Jaltenango.
 Amazon Kingfisher *Chloroceryle amazona* We saw one along the stream at Paval.
 Ringed Kingfisher *Megaceryle torquata* Two were noted in the Pacific lowlands.
 Tody Motmot ◇ *Hylomanes momotula* Excellent views of two on our walk to Paval. Not vocal at all!
 Blue-throated Motmot ◇ *Aspatha gularis* Nice scope looks in the cloud forest.
 Blue-diademed Motmot *Momotus coeruliceps* 20+ observations of this gorgeous bird.
 Turquoise-browed Motmot *Eumomota superciliosa* Marvellous encounters with this jewel.
 Emerald Toucanet *Aulacorhynchus prasinus* Regularly recorded along our route.
 Collared Aracari *Pteroglossus torquatus* A few were noted in the Pacific lowlands.
 Acorn Woodpecker *Melanerpes formicivorus* A few observations of this colonial species.
 Velasquez's Woodpecker *Melanerpes santacruzi* Common in the lowlands and foothills.
 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker *Sphyrapicus varius* One was quietly tapping a tree at Paval.



Hairy and Lineated Woodpecker (Mark Van Beirs)

Hairy Woodpecker *Picoides villosus* Four nice observations of the race *sanctorum*.
 Golden-olive Woodpecker *Colaptes rubiginosus* Several excellent encounters.
 Lineated Woodpecker *Dryocopus lineatus* Three observations of this well-known bird.
 Pale-billed Woodpecker *Campephilus guatemalensis* (H) The distinctive double knock was heard.
 Northern Crested Caracara *Caracara cheriway* Four observations in the lowlands.
 Barred Forest Falcon *Micrastur ruficollis* Pretty good looks at one at the clearing. More often heard.

Collared Forest Falcon *Micrastur semitorquatus* One showed briefly at Paval.
 American Kestrel *Falco sparverius* Regular. A male was frequenting the El Triunfo clearing.
 Aplomado Falcon *Falco femoralis* (NL) One was seen from the minibus on the first day of the tour.
 Bat Falcon *Falco ruficularis* One was seen on our walk to Paval.
 Barred Parakeet *Bolborhynchus lineola* A flock of eight flew swiftly across the El Triunfo clearing.
 Orange-chinned Parakeet *Brotogeris jugularis* Regular observations in the Pacific lowlands.
 White-crowned Parrot *Pionus senilis* Nice views of several near Finca Prusia.
 White-fronted Amazon *Amazona albifrons* Great looks in the Pacific lowlands.
 Red-lored Amazon *Amazona autumnalis* Scope views near Jaltenango.
 Orange-fronted Parakeet ◇ *Eupsittula canicularis* Regular in the Pacific lowlands.
 Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaner *Anabacerthia variegaticeps* Regular observations in the cloud forest.
 Ruddy Foliage-gleaner *Automolus rubiginosus* Perfect views, eventually, at the continental divide.
 Tawny-throated Leaf-tosser *Sclerurus mexicanus* Fantastic looks at a foraging bird in the cloud forest.
 Ruddy Woodcreeper *Dendrocincla homochroa* One performed very well at an army ant swarm.
 Olivaceous Woodcreeper *Sittasomus griseicapillus* Several nice encounters.
 Ivory-billed Woodcreeper ◇ *Xiphorhynchus flavigaster* Repeated good looks.
 Spotted Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus erythropygius* Regular and vocal.
 Spot-crowned Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes affinis* Several nice observations in the cloud forest.
 Barred Antshrike *Thamnophilus doliatus* We recorded this widespread species in the lowlands.
 Greenish Elaenia *Myiopagis viridicata* A few sightings in the lowlands.
 Northern Beardless Tyrannulet *Camptostoma imberbe* We had an observation on the Pacific slope.



Paltry Tyrannulet; Northern Tufted Flycatcher (Mark Van Beirs)

Paltry Tyrannulet *Zimmerius vilissimus* Regularly heard and seen very well on three occasions.
 Ochre-bellied Flycatcher *Mionectes oleaginosus* Three were feeding together near Jaltenango.
 Northern Bentbill ◇ *Oncostoma cinereigulare* Marvellous views of this little tike near Paval.
 Eye-ringed Flatbill *Rhynchocyclus brevirostris* One showed briefly above Paval.
 Yellow-olive Flatbill *Tolmomyias sulphurescens* A handful of sightings of this wellknown bird.
 Stub-tailed Spadebill ◇ *Platyrinchus cancrominus* Several encounters with this unobtrusive species.
 Belted Flycatcher ◇ *Xenotriccus callizonus* Cracking views of two in the Sumidero Canyon.
 Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans* A few sightings near streams.
 Northern Tufted Flycatcher (Tufted F) *Mitrephanes phaeocercus* Lovely encounters at treefalls.
 Olive-sided Flycatcher *Contopus cooperi* A single encounter on the Pacific slope.
 Tropical Pewee *Contopus cinereus* A few showed in the Paval area.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher *Empidonax flaviventris* Three sightings in the lowlands.
 White-throated Flycatcher *Empidonax albigularis* A single lost bird was found at the bunkhouse.
 Least Flycatcher *Empidonax minimus* The more common empid in the lowlands.



Hammond's and Social Flycatcher (Mark Van Beirs)

Hammond's Flycatcher *Empidonax hammondii* The regular empid in the highland clearings.
 Yellowish Flycatcher *Empidonax flavescens* Several nice sightings in the cloud forest.
 Vermilion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus* Two were seen near Jaltenango.
 Piratic Flycatcher *Legatus leucophaeus* A single appeared at the Paval campsite.
 Social Flycatcher *Myiozetetes similis* Common and vocal in the lowlands.
 Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus* Small numbers were noted in the lowlands.
 Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher *Myiodynastes luteiventris* One showed nicely at Paval.
 Boat-billed Flycatcher *Megarynchus pitangua* A few were seen and heard in the lowlands.
 Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus* Common in the lowlands.
 Couch's Kingbird ♦ *Tyrannus couchii* Nice looks at two in the Sumidero. Quite a different voice!
 Western Kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis* A few in the lowlands and foothills.
 Scissor-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus forficatus* One was seen near Jaltenango.
 Fork-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus savana* We scoped this one near Jaltenango.
 Dusky-capped Flycatcher *Myiarchus tuberculifer* We recorded several in the foothills and lowlands.
 Ash-throated Flycatcher *Myiarchus cinerascens* One showed well in the Sumidero Canyon.
 Nutting's Flycatcher ♦ *Myiarchus nuttingi* Great looks at one in the Sumidero Canyon.
 Brown-crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus tyrannulus* A few in the lowlands.
 Bright-rumped Attila *Attila spadiceus* (H) We heard several on the Pacific slope.
 Long-tailed Manakin *Chiroxiphia linearis* Excellent views in the woodland on the Pacific slope.
 Northern Royal Flycatcher *Onychorhynchus mexicanus* A single bird showed well above Paval.
 Masked Tityra *Tityra semifasciata* Regular in the lowlands and foothills.



Long-tailed Manakin; Warbling Vireo (Mark Van Beirs)

Grey-collared Becard ♦ *Pachyramphus major* (H) We heard its distinctive call a couple of times.
 Rose-throated Becard *Pachyramphus aglaiae* A few encounters.
 Rufous-browed Peppershrike *Cyclarhis gujanensis* Regularly recorded in the lowlands.
 Chestnut-sided Shrike-Vireo ♦ *Vireolanius melitophrys* (H) We heard one at Cañada Honda.
 Green Shrike-Vireo ♦ *Vireolanius pulchellus* (H) We heard one in the distance on our walk up.
 White-eyed Vireo *Vireo griseus* (H) We heard a couple in the Sumidero Canyon.
 Yellow-throated Vireo *Vireo flavifrons* Two sightings of this beauty in the lowlands.
 Plumbeous Vireo *Vireo plumbeus* The distinctive, confusing race *notus* showed well at El Triunfo.
 Blue-headed Vireo *Vireo solitarius* A few sightings on the Pacific slope.
 Warbling Vireo *Vireo gilvus* Regular encounters.
 Brown-capped Vireo *Vireo leucophrys* Small numbers were seen in the foothills.
 Yellow-green Vireo *Vireo flavoviridis* Several showed nicely in the Paval area.
 Lesser Greenlet *Hylophilus decurtatus* Two were found near Paval.
 Black-throated Jay ♦ *Cyanolyca pumilo* Several excellent encounters in the cloud forest.
 Green Jay *Cyanocorax luxuosus* Several sightings on the lower slopes.
 White-throated Magpie-Jay *Calocitta formosa* Lovely encounters in the Pacific lowlands.
 Unicolored Jay ♦ *Aphelocoma unicolor* Three showed quite well at the El Triunfo clearing.
 Grey Silky-flycatcher ♦ *Ptiliogonys cinereus* A few observations around the clearing.
 Grey-breasted Martin *Progne chalybea* A few near Jaltenango.
 Black-capped Swallow ♦ *Notiochelidon pileata* This speciality was best seen near Finca Prusia.
 Northern Rough-winged Swallow ♦ (Ridgway's R-w S) *Stelgidopteryx [serripennis] ridgwayi* A few.
 Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* Common in the Jaltenango area.
 Cave Swallow *Petrochelidon fulva* A single bird was noted near Jaltenango.
 Giant Wren ♦ *Campylorhynchus chiapensis* Several pairs inhabited the garden of our Tupachula hotel.
 Spot-breasted Wren ♦ *Pheugopedius maculipectus* Several were recorded on the Pacific slope.
 Banded Wren *Thryophilus pleurostictus* Heard and seen in the Sumidero Canyon.
 Rufous-and-white Wren *Thryophilus rufalbus* Excellent views on the Pacific slope. A remarkable song!
 Plain Wren *Cantorchilus modestus* Regular encounters.
 Rufous-browed Wren ♦ *Troglodytes rufociliatus* This cloud forest special was seen in detail.
 White-breasted Wood Wren *Henicorhina leucosticta* A few were noted on the Pacific slope.
 Grey-breasted Wood Wren *Henicorhina leucophrys* Quite common in the cloud forest.
 Long-billed Gnatwren *Ramphocaenus melanurus* One showed well near Paval.
 Blue-grey Gnatcatcher *Poliophtila caerulea* Singles were seen on both slopes.

White-lored Gnatcatcher ◇ *Polioptila albiloris* A few appeared in the dry woodland of the Sumidero.
 Grey Catbird *Dumetella carolinensis* A single bird was seen near Jaltenango.
 Tropical Mockingbird *Mimus gilvus* A few were seen on our way to Jaltenango.
 Brown-backed Solitaire ◇ *Myadestes occidentalis* Common and vocal in the cloud forest.
 Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus aurantirostris* (H) We heard it near Cañada Honda.



Ruddy-capped Nightingale Thrush; Swainson's Thrush (Mark Van Beirs)

Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus frantzii* Splendid looks in the cloud forest.
 Spotted Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus dryas* Many fantastic views of this beauty.
 Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus* One of the more common migrants.
 Wood Thrush *Hylocichla mustelina* Some cracking views of this attractive migrant.
 Black Thrush ◇ *Turdus infuscatus* Small numbers were recorded in the cloud forest.
 Clay-colored Thrush *Turdus grayi* Common, modestly-clad and regularly heard.
 White-throated Thrush *Turdus assimilis* Small numbers were found on the Pacific slope.
 House Sparrow (introduced) *Passer domesticus* Several were at Tuxtla and at Tapachula.
 Hooded Grosbeak ◇ *Hesperiphona abeillei* Fair views of this speciality in the clearing.
 Black-headed Siskin *Spinus notatus* Several very nice observations on our way to Finca Prusia.
 Scrub Euphonia *Euphonia affinis* Regular in the lowlands.
 Yellow-throated Euphonia *Euphonia hirundinacea* Several showed well in the Sumidero Canyon.



Wood Thrush; male Elegant Euphonia (Mark Van Beirs)

Elegant Euphonia *Euphonia elegantissima* Regular observations of this gorgeous species.
 Blue-crowned Chlorophonia *Chlorophonia occipitalis* Many terrific sightings. A real cracker!
 Ovenbird *Seiurus aurocapilla* A couple of sightings of this ground dwelling migrant.
 Worm-eating Warbler *Helmitheros vermivorum* Two of these migrants showed well.
 Louisiana Waterthrush *Parkesia motacilla* Regularly heard along highland streams.
 Northern Waterthrush *Parkesia noveboracensis* One was seen near Paval.
 Blue-winged Warbler *Vermivora cyanoptera* A couple of these attractive migrants were found.
 Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia* Regular and so very cute.
 Crescent-chested Warbler ◊ *Oreothlypis superciliosa* A few showed well in the cloud forest.
 Tennessee Warbler *Leiothlypis peregrina* Very common in the woodland on the Pacific slope.
 Nashville Warbler *Leiothlypis ruficapilla* Just a handful of observations.
 MacGillivray's Warbler *Geothlypis tolmiei* Good looks at one near our Limonar camp site.
 Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas* A few appeared in brushy meadows near Jaltenango.
 American Redstart *Setophaga ruticilla* A handful of encounters.
 Magnolia Warbler *Setophaga magnolia* Small numbers were seen on both slopes.
 American Yellow Warbler *Setophaga aestiva* A few were seen on both slopes.
 Black-throated Blue Warbler *Setophaga caerulescens* A terrific male appeared near Cañada Honda.
 Audubon's Warbler *Setophaga auduboni* One was found in the oak woodland on the Pacific slope.
 Yellow-throated Warbler *Setophaga dominica* A single bird showed well in a palm in Jaltenango.
 Grace's Warbler *Setophaga graciae* Good looks at two in the pines near Finca Prusia.



Townsend's Warbler; Bronzed Cowbird (Mark Van Beirs)

Townsend's Warbler *Setophaga townsendi* Regular in the cloud forest.
 Black-throated Green Warbler *Setophaga virens* Fairly common all along our route.
 Fan-tailed Warbler ◊ *Basileuterus lachrymosus* Several splendid encounters at army ant swarms.
 Rufous-capped Warbler ◊ *Basileuterus rufifrons* Nice sightings on both slopes.
 Golden-browed Warbler ◊ *Basileuterus belli* Regular encounters with this spectacular bird.
 Golden-crowned Warbler *Basileuterus culicivorus* This widespread species was regularly recorded.
 Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla* Common and attractive.
 Slate-throated Whitestart *Myioborus miniatus* A regular species in the forests of El Triunfo.
 Yellow-breasted Chat *Icteria virens* Three observations in brushy areas.
 Eastern Meadowlark *Sturnella magna* Two were walking about in a meadow near Jaltenango.
 Yellow-billed Cacique *Amblycercus holosericeus* Nice looks near the Paval camp site.

Mexican Cacique ◇ (Yellow-winged C) *Cassiculus melanicterus* A single bird was seen at Tapachula.
 Altamira Oriole ◇ *Icterus gularis* Regular in the Pacific lowlands.
 Streak-backed Oriole ◇ *Icterus pustulatus* Several showed on the first day.
 Baltimore Oriole *Icterus galbula* Regular in the lowlands on both slopes.
 Spot-breasted Oriole ◇ *Icterus pectoralis* Good looks at several in the Paval camp site.
 Orchard Oriole *Icterus spurius* Regular observations of this migrant in the lowlands.
 Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus* Common in the marshes near Jaltenango.
 Bronzed Cowbird *Molothrus aeneus* One at the clearing and many near Tapachula.
 Melodious Blackbird *Dives dives* Common and very vocal.
 Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus* Extremely common in open areas.
 Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis* Just a few in the El Triunfo clearing. Quite secretive!
 Prevost's Ground Sparrow ◇ *Melospiza biarcuata* Cracking looks on both slopes. A speciality!
 White-eared Ground Sparrow ◇ *Melospiza leucotis* Marvellous studies at the Cañada Honda camp.
 Olive Sparrow ◇ *Arremonops rufivirgatus* (H) The high pitched notes were heard in the Sumidero.
 Chestnut-capped Brush Finch *Arremon brunneinucha* Regular and showy along the cloud forest trails.
 White-naped Brush Finch *Atlapetes albinucha* (H) We heard it at clearings in the cloud forest.
 Common Bush Tanager *Chlorospingus flavopectus* Regular in fruiting trees and bushes.
 Blue-grey Tanager *Thraupis episcopus* A few in the lowlands.
 Yellow-winged Tanager ◇ *Thraupis abbas* Regular in the lowlands on both slopes.



The old name for Cabanis's Tanager is Azure-rumped Tanager; Western Tanager (Mark Van Beirs)

Cabanis's Tanager ◇ (Azure-rumped T) *Tangara cabanisi* Many splendid sightings of this special bird.
 Red-legged Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes cyaneus* Quite common and highly attractive.
 Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer ◇ *Diglossa baritula* Four encounters with this near endemic.
 Blue-black Grassquit *Volatinia jacarina* A few in the lowlands.
 White-collared Seedeater *Sporophila torqueola* Small numbers were noted on both slopes.
 Flame-colored Tanager ◇ *Piranga bidentata* Several nice encounters in the clearing.
 Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra* A handful of encounters with this migrant.
 Western Tanager *Piranga ludoviciana* A common and attractive migrant.
 White-winged Tanager *Piranga leucoptera* Several very nice observations. A beauty!

Red-crowned Ant Tanager *Habia rubica* Regular near ant swarms on the Pacific slope.
Red-throated Ant Tanager *Habia fuscicauda* A few encounters at ant swarms.
Yellow Grosbeak ◊ *Pheucticus chrysopheplus* Cracking close up views with the race *aurantiacus*.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak *Pheucticus ludovicianus* Regular in the lowlands.
Red-breasted Chat ◊ *Granatellus venustus* A male showed quite well in the Sumidero Canyon.
Dickcissel *Spiza americana* Several flocks showed at dusk near Jaltenango.
Black-headed Saltator *Saltator atriceps* This vocal and social species was obvious on both slopes.
Greyish Saltator *Saltator coerulescens* A few encounters.
Blue Bunting *Passerina parellina* A male was foraging at the Woodstar spot in the Sumidero.
Blue Grosbeak *Passerina caerulea* Regular and showy in meadows near Finca Prusia.
Indigo Bunting *Passerina cyanea* A common migrant. Most birds were still modestly attired.
Painted Bunting *Passerina ciris* A few of this crackers were seen on both slopes.



Black-headed Saltator; Yellow Grosbeak (Mark Van Beirs)



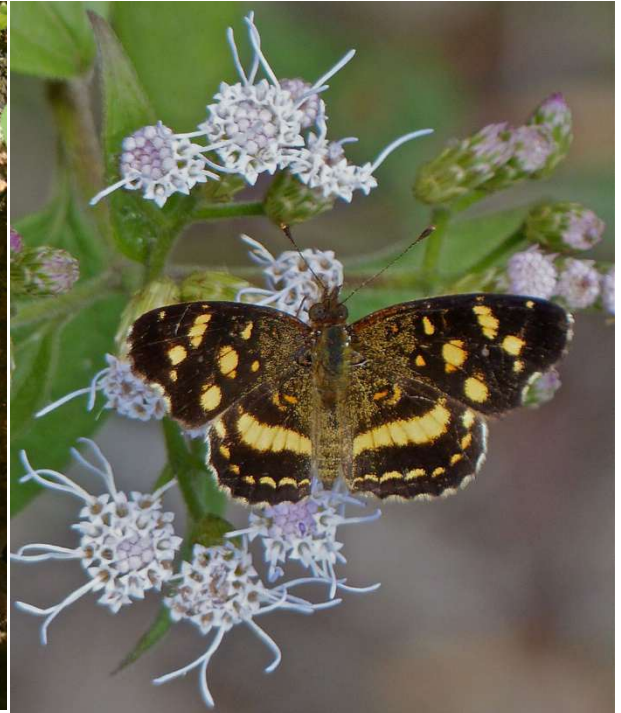
An inquisitive White-nosed Coati (Mark Van Beirs)

MAMMALS

Gray Four-eyed Opossum *Philander opossum* Two were seen at night around the clearing.
 Mexican Grey Squirrel *Sciurus aureogaster* Regular encounters on the Pacific slope.
 Deppe's Squirrel *Sciurus deppei* Fairly common in most wooded habitats.
 Cacomistle (Southern Ringtail) *Bassariscus sumichrasti* Nicely seen in a fruiting tree at Limonar.
 Kinkajou *Potos flavus* Good looks at one feeding in a fruiting tree at Cañada Honda.
 White-nosed Coati *Nasua narica* Several encounters with this endearing creature.
 Central American Spider Monkey *Ateles geoffroyi* Several were seen at Cañada Honda.

REPTILES

Godman's Pit Viper *Cerrophidion godmani* One was seen near Cañada Honda.
 Brown Basilisk *Basiliscus vittatus* Two of these smart lizards were observed in the Pacific lowlands.
 Black Spiny-tailed Iguana (Black Ctenosaurus) *Ctenosaura similis* A single was seen at Tapachula.
 Green Spiny Lizard *Sceloporus internasalis* This very smart lizard was seen near Limonar.



Deppe's Squirrel (Mark Van Beirs); Black Crescent Phyciodes ptolyca (Tom Fiore)



The group; White Witch Moth Thysania Agrippina with a wingspan of c25 cm! (Mark Van Beirs)