



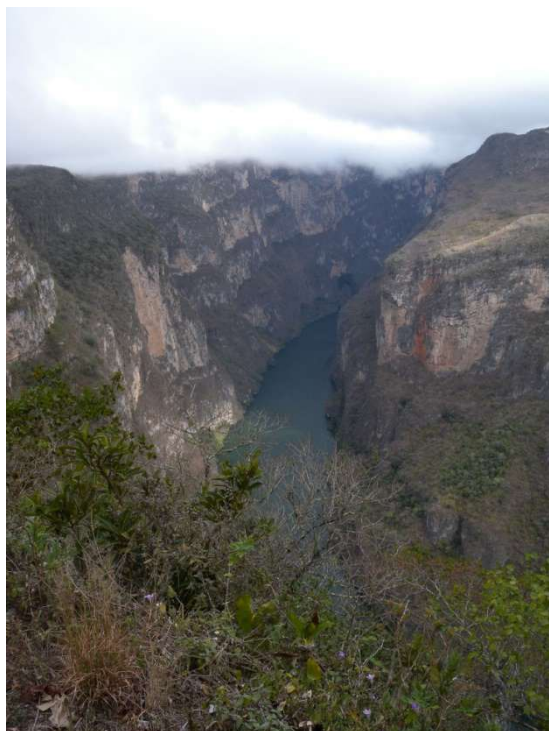
The fabulous Horned Guan showed very well in its cloud forest haunts (tour participant Peter Hills)

SOUTHERN MEXICO

3 – 22 APRIL 2016

LEADER: MARK VAN BEIRS

Our tenth Southern Mexico tour was much improved by the addition of the marvellous venue of El Triunfo, one of the best preserved forests of the country. We assembled a mouth-watering list of endemics and specialties on our wanderings through the varied habitats of this scenic, much maligned country. Our travels took us from the forests of the deep southern state of Chiapas, through the coastal habitats, pine-oak forests and dry inter-montane valleys of Oaxaca, via the limestone hills of Veracruz to the high altitude pine forests and marshes near Mexico City. The Bird of the Trip was without a doubt the striking Horned Guan that showed so very, very well at El Triunfo, but the uniquely coloured Pink-headed Warbler, the cracking Bumblebee Hummingbird, the magnificent Fulvous Owl and the exquisite Orange-breasted and Rose-bellied Buntings were also very much appreciated. Other interesting species that showed well included White-bellied Chachalaca, Highland Guan, Pink-footed and Galapagos Shearwaters, Black Storm Petrel, Boat-billed Heron, Blue-footed Booby, Swainson's Hawk (impressive migration), Brown Noddy, Pomarine Jaeger, White-faced Quail-Dove, Pheasant Cuckoo, Bearded and Pacific Screech Owls, Emerald-chinned and Oaxaca Hummingbirds, Slender Sheartail, Resplendent Quetzal, Citreoline Trogon, Russet-crowned Motmot, Strickland's and Pale-billed Woodpeckers, Rufous-breasted Spinetail, Mayan Antthrush, Belted, Pileated and Buff-breasted Flycatchers, Grey-collared Becard, Chestnut-sided and Green Shrike-Vireos, Golden Vireo, Black-throated and Dwarf Jays, Grey Silky-flycatcher, Giant, Boucard's, Sumichrast's, Nava's and Rufous-browed Wrens, Ocellated Thrasher, Blue and Blue-and-white Mockingbirds, Brown-backed and Slate-colored Solitaires, Black-headed and Russet Nightingale Thrushes, the special Olive Warbler, Crescent-chested, Golden-browed and Red Warblers, Black-poll and Hooded Yellowthroats, Spot-breasted and Bar-winged Orioles, Sierra Madre, Bridled, Striped and Cinnamon-tailed Sparrows, Prevost's Ground Sparrow and Cabanis's Tanager. Mammals were not very obvious, but our encounter with a Baird's Tapir at El Triunfo will remain with us forever and the Spinner and Pantropical Spotted Dolphins enlivened our exciting boat trip off Puerto Angel.



The impressive Canyon del Sumidero (Mark Van Beirs); Emerald Toucanet (tour participant Peter Hills)

The tour started upon arrival at the airport of Tuxtla Gutierrez, the capital of Chiapas, Mexico's southernmost state. We were welcomed by the smiling faces of local guides Jorge and Amy and soon we were on our way to the nearby, mighty Canyon del Sumidero. We made several stops in the different vegetation zones of this splendid reserve. First we headed to the highest viewpoint, where a patch of bushes covered in tiny red flowers usually holds one or two rare Slender Sheartails. We were not disappointed and soon obtained cracking views of both male and female of this delightful, tiny and very localized hummingbird. A male Barred Antshrike, Olive Sparrow, Yellow-winged Tanager and a male Blue Bunting were foraging in the same area. We had a look at the 1,000m high cliffs of the spectacular canyon and the green, meandering Grijalva river deep down. We walked the road for a while and noted some bird of prey movement as Western Osprey, several Sharp-shinned Hawks and Cooper's, Broad-winged and Short-tailed Hawks were all seen overhead. The evergreen forest with its patches of bamboo held a good variety of species and provided a great introduction to the avian riches of Southern Mexico. The highlight was the cute Belted Flycatcher, an unobtrusive and rare denizen of this part of Mexico and Guatemala. We also observed Plain Chachalaca, White-tipped Dove, Squirrel Cuckoo, Gartered Trogon, Emerald Toucanet, Yellow-olive Flatbill, Social and Dusky-capped Flycatchers, Rufous-browed Peppershrike, Green Jay, Banded and Plain Wrens, Yellow-throated Euphonia, Streak-backed Oriole and Yellow Grosbeak. Northern migrants were represented by Least Flycatcher, White-eyed and Blue-headed Vireos, Magnolia, Black-and-white and gorgeous Black-throated Green Warblers and Summer and Western Tanagers. Flowering bushes attracted Canivet's Emerald and Buff-bellied, Berylline and Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. A tall, red flowering tree was visited by Tennessee and Nashville Warblers, a pair of delightful Bar-winged Orioles and several beautiful male Indigo Buntings. Lower down, in the dry woodland we found White-lored Gnatcatcher, but the much wanted Red-breasted Chat remained a heard only, alas. A Mexican Grey Squirrel made a brief appearance. After a scrumptious picnic we spent most of the afternoon driving south to small town of Jaltenango. An extended stop in an open marshy area produced a variety of widespread species including Black-bellied Whistling Duck, Great and Snowy Egrets, Little Blue Heron, Neotropic Cormorant, White-tailed Kite, Roadside Hawk, Purple Gallinule, Inca Dove, Ruddy Ground Dove, White-winged Dove, Groove-billed Ani, Northern Crested Caracara, American Kestrel, Great Kiskadee, Western Kingbird, Brown-crested Flycatcher, Tree, Barn, American Cliff and Cave Swallows, Tropical Mockingbird, Clay-colored Thrush, Eastern Meadowlark, Altamira, Baltimore and Orchard Orioles, Bronzed and Brown-headed Cowbirds, Great-tailed Grackle, Blue-grey Tanager, White-collared Seedeater and a male Varied Bunting. Several male Vermilion Flycatchers were seen displaying and a couple of Couch's Kingbirds were identified. Parties of elegant Scissor-tailed and Fork-tailed Flycatchers foraged over the bushes and scores of Red-winged Blackbirds were singing and cavorting in the reeds. Several distant flocks of migrating Dickcissels showed and we also heard the distinctive calls of Northern Bobwhite.



A male Red-winged Blackbird; White-winged Dove (tour participant Peter Hills)

Next morning a refurbished cattle truck took us to the trailhead at the coffee plantation of Finca Prusia, at the edge of the El Triunfo reserve. Several stops in rough meadows, disused fields and forest edge gave us

goodies like Long-tailed Manakin, a male Grey-collared Becard, lots of gaudy White-throated Magpie-Jays, a few uncooperative Black-capped Swallows, some localized Prevost's Ground Sparrows and an attractive White-eared Ground Sparrow next to more widespread species like Wood Stork, King Vulture (an immature), Red-billed Pigeon, an angry-looking Ferruginous Pygmy Owl, Vaux's and Chimney Swifts, Azure-crowned Hummingbird, Collared Aracari, Acorn, Velasquez's and Lineated Woodpeckers, White-crowned Parrot, Red-lore Amazon, Green Parakeet, Ivory-billed Woodcreeper, Northern Bentbill, Black Phoebe, Greater Pewee, Olive-sided, Yellow-bellied and Sulphur-bellied Flycatchers, Warbling Vireo, Lesser Greenlet, Grey-breasted Martin, Southern House Wren, Swainson's Thrush, Lesser Goldfinch, Black-headed Siskin, Scrub Euphonia, Common Yellowthroat, American Redstart, MacGillivray's, Rufous-capped and Wilson's Warblers, Melodious Blackbird, Red-legged Honeycreeper, Blue-black Grassquit, White-winged Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and noisy Black-headed Saltators. Higher up, in the pine-oak forest we watched Great Black and Red-tailed Hawks, a showy Grace's Warbler and a flighty American Dipper. We had lunch at the start of the trail, while our luggage was being packed on the horses and mules. The c11,5 kilometres long walk took us along a well laid trail through coffee plantations, magnificent evergreen forest adorned with enormous sweetgums and finally through lush montane forest dominated by oaks and pines. The whistling of Highland Guans and the jangling song of Brown-backed Solitaires escorted us all the way. We scoped several tiny singing male Emerald-chinned Hummingbirds, obtained pretty good views of a Blue-throated Motmot and added Hairy Woodpecker, Barred Forest Falcon, Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaner, Olivaceous, Spotted and Spot-crowned Woodcreepers, Paltry Tyrannulet, Ochre-bellied Flycatcher, Rose-throated Becard, Elegant Euphonia, Blue-crowned Chlorophonia, Golden-browed Warbler, Slate-throated Whitestart and Common Bush Tanager to the tally. We heard the distinctive songs of Horned Guan, White-faced Quail-Dove and Pheasant Cuckoo but seeing these jewels would have to wait for another day. In late afternoon we reached the famous clearing where we were welcomed by Chestnut-collared Swifts and some Unicolored Jays. We settled in the bunk house that provided much better accommodation than expected. The double rooms were very clean and the hot showers were very much appreciated. The highlight of the day was the fine Baird's (or Central American) Tapir that appeared at the artificial salt lick after dinner. We were able to admire this fantastic animal at close range. Awesome moments!



The elegant Grey Silky-flycatcher and a Townsend's Warbler (tour participant Peter Hills)

Our first full day at El Triunfo started with a predawn walk in the nearby forest. We heard the barking calls of a Fulvous Owl, but couldn't entice it into view and listened to the screams of a distant Cacomistle (Southern Ring-tailed Cat). At dawn we were standing in the clearing watching the forest come alive. Band-tailed Pigeons and White-collared Swifts flew overhead and a fruiting 'perlita' tree attracted scores of elegant Grey Silky-flycatchers, Rufous-collared Sparrow, Flame-colored Tanager and the gorgeous *aurantiacus* race of Yellow Grosbeak. A female Resplendent Quetzal showed all too briefly and Hammond's Flycatcher, Hermit and Black Thrushes, attractive Crescent-chested and Townsend's Warblers and a White-naped Brush Finch were found at the forest edge. A retiring White-faced Quail-Dove visited the compost heap and a male

American Kestrel overlooked the clearing from his high perch. There were very few flowers about so the hummingbirds had mostly disappeared to more productive areas. After a filling breakfast we spent most of the morning along a wide trail through the montane forest. The absolute highlight was a magnificent Horned Guan that allowed spectacular views in a bromeliad-laden forest giant. We managed lengthy, cracking scope studies of this truly splendid species, which is sometimes called the “unicorn” of the bird world! A party of wary Black-throated Jays played hide and seek in the canopy. Other interesting species that enlivened our walk included Collared Trogon, Grey-breasted Mountain Wren, Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush, Chestnut-capped Brush Finch, Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer, Eye-ringed Flatbill and Deppe’s Squirrel. Three adult King Vultures soared over the clearing after lunch and in the afternoon, along another trail, we obtained incredible looks at an impressive Fulvous Owl on its daytime roost. A real jaw-dropper! Green-throated Mountaingem, Mountain Trogon and Northern Tufted and Yellowish Flycatchers were also noted. A fair sized Godman’s Pit Viper made Jorge jump, but luckily this beautifully-marked snake allowed itself to be admired at the edge of the trail.



The fantastic Horned Guan that made the trip (Mark Van Beirs)

Several male Resplendent Quetzals displaying and showing off their magnificent plumage at the edge of the clearing started another fabulous day at El Triunfo. A male Hooded Grosbeak was scoped and a few Cedar Waxwings flitted past. After breakfast, part of the group, guided by Jorge and Amy, hiked to the famous Cañada Honda area, about 8 kilometres away. First they trekked up through the montane forest, then made their way over the Continental Divide and walked down the Pacific slope through evergreen forest till they

reached Cañada Honda, a deep valley adorned with many fig trees where the rare and little-known Cabanis's (or Azure-rumped) Tanager lives. They obtained good looks at this rare, subtly-coloured and very localized species. White-eared Hummingbird, Blue-throated Sapphire, Ruddy Foliage-gleaner, Tawny-throated Leaf-tosser, Eastern Wood Pewee, Rufous-and-white Wren, Chestnut-sided Shrike-Vireo, Brown-capped Vireo and Worm-eating, Hermit, Black-throated Blue and Golden-crowned Warblers were other nice additions to the list. They also heard a party of Central American Spider Monkeys. The other half of the group stayed in the clearing area and concentrated on getting better views of the El Triunfo specialities. A Singing Quail was glimpsed and White-breasted Hawk and White-faced Quail-Dove showed well.



This shy White-faced Quail-Dove visited the compost heap at the El Triunfo clearing (tour participant Peter Hills)

A predawn walk in the forest surrounding the clearing gave some of us smashing looks at several Collared Peccaries, but the wanted Cacomistles remained heard only. The flowering hibiscus at the clearing attracted a male Violet Sabrewing and a Spotted Nightingale-Thrush visited the compost heap. After breakfast the horses and mules were packed by the muleteros and we reluctantly said goodbye to this magical spot as we started to walk down to Finca Prusia. Along the trail a pale morph Collared Forest Falcon, a fairly well-behaved Rufous-browed Wren, a distant Ornate Hawk-Eagle and a Streak-headed Woodcreeper were noted. A Tody Motmot was seen by two lucky people, but best of all was the brilliant Pheasant Cuckoo that gave very nice views to all of us! We boarded the truck at the trailhead and drove back to the town of Jaltenango where the bus was waiting for us. The journey to bustling Tuxtla Gutierrez was quite uneventful. At the hotel we warmly thanked Jorge and Amy.

Early next morning found us in the karst habitat of the El Ocote Reserve in the humid lowlands on the Caribbean slope. The reserve protects extended stretches of forest covering jagged and rolling limestone hills, deep sinkholes and rushing streams. It didn't take too long to find the main speciality of the area: the dashing Nava's Wren. This spritely species has a tiny range covering easternmost Veracruz, western Chiapas and eastern Oaxaca. It offered superb views as it perched out in the open watching us unconcernedly. Magical moments! Overhead we noted a lone Swainson's Hawk and flowering bushes attracted Stripe-throated Hermit and White-bellied Emerald. We also found a nest of the latter species. Fruiting trees were visited by Grey Catbird, Golden-hooded Tanager, Black-faced Grosbeak and Buff-throated Saltator. A male Blue-black Grosbeak was singing away and a gaudy Green Shrike-Vireo was lured

into view. Other goodies here included Greenish Elaenia, Yellow-green Vireo, Brown Jay, Spot-breasted Wren, Tropical Parula, Montezuma Oropendola, Bananaquit, Rusty Sparrow and Red-throated Ant Tanager. White-bellied Wren and Slate-colored Solitaire were heard only. In the afternoon we drove to the lovely town of San Cristobal de las Casas.

Early next morning, escorted by two local experts we visited a stretch of humid pine-oak forest adorned with a dense layer of undergrowth. Several highly appealing, ever so smart Pink-headed Warblers soon allowed marvellous views as they foraged in the low bushes. This localized gem of a bird really showed at length and its amazing, unusual colours were very much appreciated. A male Garnet-throated Hummingbird showed briefly. Later we visited the Botanical Gardens of Moxviquil where flowering bushes gave us cracking looks at Rufous-tailed, White-eared and Rivoli's Hummingbirds, a couple of Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercers and a neat Baltimore Oriole. The neighbouring patch of pine forest and the open brushy area held Steller's Jay, Band-backed Wren, Wood and Rufous-collared Thrushes, Yellow-eyed Junco and some showy Spotted Towhees. Later we birded a quiet stretch of forest edge not far from town where we observed White-throated Swift, Northern Flicker (race *mexicanoides*), Hutton's Vireo, Violet-green Swallow, perky American Bushtits, an all too brief Blue-and-white Mockingbird and Audubon's Warbler. Black-capped Swallows showed well and a Rufous-browed Wren was incredibly obliging. At dusk we were listening to the quiet hoots of a Bearded Screech Owl on a nearby forested hill and soon enjoyed terrific eye-ball to eye-ball looks at this adorable speciality.



The stunning Pink-headed Warbler and the adorable Rufous-browed Wren were some of the highlights at San Cristobal (tour participant Peter Hills)

Our last hours in the San Cristobal area were spent getting excellent scope looks at a near endemic Blue-and-white Mockingbird and a female Eastern Bluebird was a nice bonus. After breakfast we boarded the minibus and drove via Tuxtla Gutierrez (with its recently arrived Eurasian Collared Doves) to the town of Arriaga, situated in the foothills on the Pacific slope. The dry woodland proved very birdy as we soon connected with several high quality species like Citreoline Trogon, Russet-capped Motmot, Orange-fronted Parakeet, Northern Beardless Tyrannulet, Sclater's Wren (a split from Rufous-naped Wren), American Yellow Warbler and Stripe-headed Sparrow. We witnessed some impressive migration involving thousands of Turkey Vultures and hundreds of Swainson's Hawks on their return from their wintering grounds in northern Argentina. Ferruginous Pygmy Owls were being mobbed by Green-fronted Hummingbird and Plain-capped Starthroat, but best of all were the fabulous, mega-attractive, endemic Rose-bellied (or Rosita's) Buntings and the strikingly beautiful, endemic Orange-breasted Buntings. A Lesser Ground Cuckoo emitted its wailing calls from the scrubby woodland, but didn't want to budge.

The following day started before dawn with a well-behaved, endearing Pacific Screech Owl observing us from a bare tree in a scrubby area near the coastal village of Puerto Arista. A Pauraque flitted about as the

sun was waking up. We then birded the meadows, pastures and scrubby woodland where several spectacular, endemic Giant Wrens showed off. It took a bit longer to locate the near-endemic, quite vocal White-bellied Chachalacas. Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, Mourning Dove, Cinnamon Hummingbird, Mexican Cacique, Spot-breasted Oriole and Painted Bunting appeared in front of our binoculars while the nearby mudflats produced a great selection of waterbirds and waders like American White Ibis, Roseate Spoonbill, a white morph Reddish Egret, Tricolored Heron, Magnificent Frigatebird, Black-necked Stilt, American Avocet, Grey Plover, Willet, Spotted, Semipalmated, Least and Pectoral Sandpipers, Black Skimmer and Laughing Gull. An area of mangrove beyond the village held several bizarre Boat-billed Herons, Green Heron, Anhinga, a Common Black Hawk and Northern Waterthrush. The locally grown mangoes tasted deliciously and in the afternoon we drove along the Pacific side of the Isthmus to the town of Tehuantepec, observing Blue-winged Teal and Northern Jacana on the journey.



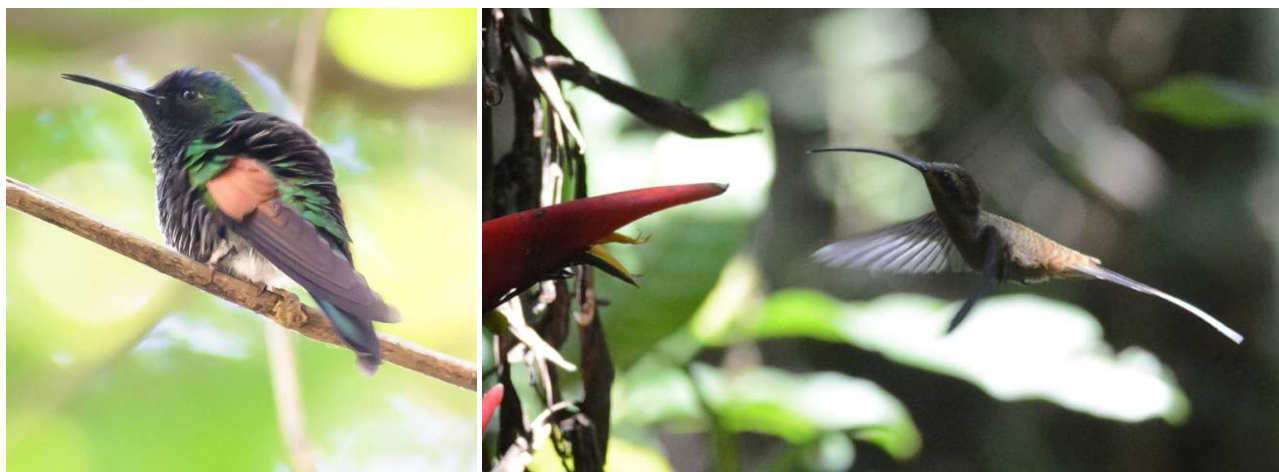
A splendid Boat-billed Heron and a charming Pacific Screech Owl (tour participant Peter Hills)

Before dawn, we were already exploring the scrubby woodland near town. A Lesser Nighthawk fluttered about and a singing Cinnamon-tailed (Sumichrast's) Sparrow was scoped in the early morning light. This subtly-plumaged endemic performed beautifully as did Doubleday's Hummingbird, male and female Beautiful Sheartail, Ash-throated Flycatcher and Sclater's Wren. After a filling breakfast we travelled northwest along the coast to the little town of Puerto Angel. The journey was enlivened by West Mexican Chachalaca and White-tailed and Grey Hawks. A long stop at some disused shrimp lagoons gave us lots of Northern Shoveler, Black-necked Grebe, Brown Pelican, Semipalmated and Collared Plovers, Short-billed Dowitcher, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Wilson's Phalarope, Gull-billed Tern and Mangrove Swallow. The scenic nearby coast held a large flock of Laughing Gulls and Caspian, Royal and Black Terns. Magnificent Frigatebirds and Brown and Blue-footed Boobies were roosting on an impressive offshore stack. A Peregrine showed off its aerial prowess by catching a Black Tern and a foraging Brown Noddy was a first for this tour. A mid-afternoon stop in a patch of dry woodland added Thick-billed Kingbird to our list and in the final hour of the day we arrived at our cosy hotel in the seaside town of Puerto Angel. While checking Peter's photos after dinner, we discovered that we had overlooked an Elegant Tern in the large flock of terns and Laughing Gulls. The sound of the waves easily took us into the arms of Morpheus later that evening.



Brown Pelicans were a regular sight along the Pacific coast (tour participant Peter Hills)

The following morning we boarded a small boat that took us c10 nautical miles offshore. The ocean was a bit rougher than usual, which made viewing a bit more difficult. It started with a fairly large pod of Spinner Dolphins (200+) quite close inshore, showing off some of their acrobatic jumping prowess. As Antonio, the boatman, took us further offshore we started to see more seabirds and in the course of the morning we managed to get pretty good looks at a single Least and fair numbers of Black Storm Petrels, a dozen or so Pink-footed Shearwaters, a couple of Galapagos Shearwaters, good numbers of Brown Boobies (race *brewsteri*), Red and Red-necked Phalaropes, a few rather distant Sabine's Gulls in breeding plumage, Laughing and Franklin's Gulls, Black Terns and a cracking adult Pomarine Jaeger in breeding attire. We also encountered a mixed pod of Bottlenose and Pantropical Spotted Dolphins and counted no fewer than nine Green Turtles loafing at the surface. Upon returning at the hotel, we observed a Golden-cheeked Woodpecker and in the afternoon we made a first exploration of the foothills of the nearby Sierra de Miahuatlan. A male Oaxaca Hummingbird showed briefly, Wagler's Toucanets were barking away, a Grey-crowned Woodpecker performed, we heard Happy Wren, had great looks at two very nice Audubon's Orioles of the *dickya* race and admired a gorgeous male Varied Bunting.



Above Puerto Angel we found Oaxaca Hummingbird (tour participant Peter Hills) and Mexican Hermit (Mark Van Beirs)

The road from Puerto Angel to the town of Oaxaca winds its way through wooded mountains and with several extended stops took most of the day. We first birded in the low foothills where a Golden-cheeked Woodpecker offered brief looks and where a striking Pale-billed Woodpecker allowed perfect views. Birds were everywhere in the secondary growth and other new endemic species included Happy Wren (good looks), several striking Golden Vireos and a lovely Rufous-backed Thrush. A Tropical Pewee and a nice male Blue Bunting also showed. Higher up in the sierra, where pines started to appear, we kept watch at a patch of flowering heliconias where, in due time, we obtained very nice views of a male Oaxaca (or Blue-capped) Hummingbird. The white tail, rufous wing patches and blue cap of this endemic could easily be discerned. The fine-looking flowers were also visited by a Mexican Hermit, whose long decurved bill was very obvious. We heard a Black Hawk Eagle from within the forest and observed a Bright-rumped (or Flammulated) Attila eating fruit. Higher up still we connected with a stunning Chestnut-sided Shrike-Vireo, definitely one of the best looking birds of Mexico! In late afternoon we entered the lively town of Oaxaca, which is situated on a dry inter-montane plateau.

The nearby village of Teotitlan is famous for its traditional rugs, which are still woven on hand-operated looms, but the attraction for us was the surrounding scrubby woodland, where early in the morning we observed a great selection of specialties. West Mexican Chachalacas advertised their territories with raucous choruses from exposed bushes. Flycatchers were very active and new species for the trip included Cassin's Kingbird and Nutting's and Great Crested Flycatchers. Modestly-clad Dusky Hummingbirds and smart Black-vented Orioles visited flowering trees and Blue and Northern Mockingbirds were singing from the tops of bushes. White-throated Towhees were decidedly common and these birds full of character attracted our attention by their vigorous scratching in the dry soil. Lumbering Boucard's Wrens were hanging about the organpipe cacti and very smart-looking Bridled Sparrows won a place in our hearts. Eventually we also found a pair of subtle Oaxaca Sparrows feeding under some shrubs. Other goodies included Woodhouse's Scrub Jay, Bewick's Wren, Curve-billed Thrasher, Hepatic Tanager and Black-headed Grosbeak. The pond situated at the edge of the village was quite dry but still held a good assortment of birds like Ruddy Duck, Least Grebe (30+), a surprise dark morph Reddish Egret far away from its coastal mudflat habitat, American Coot, Killdeer, Solitary and Spotted Sandpipers, a single Baird's Sandpiper, Buff-bellied Pipit and Lesser Goldfinch. In the afternoon we visited the archaeological site of Yagul, a famous Zapotec complex of the Middle to Late Preclassic (1250-1521 AD). The many organpipe cacti (*Pachycereus pringlei*) are the favourite habitat of the localized Grey-breasted Woodpecker, which soon showed well as it perched in the open. A male Beautiful Sheartail visited the bright flowers of the abundant prickly pear cacti, while Mourning Dove, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Pileated Flycatcher, House Finch and Chipping Sparrow provided more entertainment.



The out-of-this-world Red Warbler and the Turkey Vulture mimic Zone-tailed Hawk (tour participant Peter Hills)

Very early in the morning of the following day, we were already winding our way up the sierra to the pine forests of Cerro San Felipe. Soon after arriving we heard the rhythmic song of a Mexican Whip-poor-will, but it took quite a while to get decent views of this nightbird. At dawn we started walking through the humid pine-oak forest. It was rather quiet throughout the day, but persistence paid off as we gradually added special birds to the tally. A cute Mountain Pygmy Owl was being mobbed by Olive Warblers and Mexican Chickadees high in the canopy and a mixed party of Dwarf Jays and Grey-barred Wrens were quietly making their way through the crowns of some giant oaks. Fabulous Red Warblers showed very well at close range and a stunning Chestnut-sided Shrike-Vireo sat up for perfect scope looks. A Mexican Chickadee was admired while it was collecting nesting material on the ground. We also found Zone-tailed Hawk, Northern Raven, Brown-throated House Wren, Brown Creeper, Russet Nightingale-Thrush, American Robin and a secretive Rufous-capped Brush Finch on our wanderings through these beautiful forests.



The Ocellated Thrasher that performed so very well at Monte Alban (tour participant Peter Hills)

On our last morning in the Oaxaca area, we started before dawn at the edge of some scrubby woodland where a Buff-collared Nightjar soon gave rather good views. We then spent some lovely time at the celebrated archaeological site of Monte Alban, a renowned World Heritage Site that protects the capital of Zapotec culture. While admiring the well-preserved buildings we birded the edges of the adjoining scrubland and added American Dusky Flycatcher, Ocellated Thrasher (fantastic studies of a singing bird), Orange-crowned Warbler and Lark Sparrow to our total. Rock and Canyon Wrens obliged on the old buildings and offered great views, while we obtained more looks at Blue Mockingbird and Boucard's and Bewick's Wrens. After this enjoyable visit we left the Oaxaca valley and crossed the Sierra de Aloapaneca and the Sierra Juarez (both with 3,000m high passes) on our way down to the town of Tuxtepec in the Caribbean lowlands. In late afternoon we stopped for a while in the lower reaches of the Valle Nacional and scoped Scaled Pigeon, Olive-throated Parakeet and Eastern Kingbird.



Colourful inhabitants of Valle Nacional: Painted Bunting and Bumblebee Hummingbird (tour participant Peter Hills)

On our full day in the Valle Nacional we first explored the lower slopes where evergreen forest covers the hills. We heard the distinctive hoots of a Central American Pygmy Owl in the distance and found Keel-billed Toucan, Smoky-brown Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Elaenia, Piratic, Streaked and Boat-billed Flycatchers, a smart male Kentucky Warbler, Rusty Sparrow, Painted Bunting, Yellow-tailed Oriole and Golden-hooded Tanager. Best of all was the pair of very obliging Rufous-breasted Spinetails. The higher reaches gave us a fantastic male Bumblebee Hummingbird that showed extremely well in the scope. A Ruddy Foliage-gleaner behaved perfectly and a male Grey-collared Becard foraged closeby. Azure-hooded and Unicolored Jays flitted through the trees and Slate-colored Solitaires obliged. Several thrushes were feeding under a fruiting tree at the edge of the road and this allowed us to study Black-headed Nightingale-Thrush, Wood Thrush, Swainson's Thrush, White-throated Thrush and Clay-colored Thrush in detail as they hopped about in the open. The roads in Mexico are marred by the presence of 'topes' (sleeping policemen, speed bumps) and today we counted no fewer than 134 of these bone-jarring menaces!

Another morning visit to the lower slopes of Valle Nacional added a handful of new birds for the tour: Crested Guan, Short-billed Pigeon, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, the striking Crimson-collared Tanager and Variable Seedeater. We heard a Mayan (Mexican) Anthrush call rather far below us on a steep slope, but some strategic positioning and a measure of luck allowed us to get decent looks (for most) of this mega-skulker. We also obtained good views of a White-bellied Emerald and admired some nice display of six interacting Keel-billed Toucans. In the afternoon we travelled into the state of Veracruz to the unlovely town of Cordoba. A short visit to a marshy depression added American White Pelican, White-faced Ibis and a Laughing Falcon to our list.

The limestone hills near the village of Amatlan are one of the few accessible areas where the unusual Sumichrast's (or Slender-billed) Wren can be found. The rainy, gloomy weather had made the fairly steep trail very slippery, so we very carefully made our way up through the derelict coffee plantations to the limestone outcrops this endemic favours. We had to wait respectfully till the little devil deigned to show itself, but in the end everyone had great looks at this rock-hopping, long-billed endemic. Thicket Tinamous were uttering their mournful calls all around us and Curve-winged (Wedge-tailed) Sabrewing and Long-billed Starthroat flitted about. Gartered Trogons were decidedly common and we also noted Blue-diademed Motmot and Ruby-crowned Kinglet. Roberto, our agent, had volunteered to drive us into the traffic nightmare of Mexico City and assisted by his charming wife Lupita we drove past Mount Orizaba, the highest mountain in Mexico at 5,636 metres. We soon left the humid lowlands and entered the dry montane altiplano near the city of Puebla. Not much later we could observe the 5,426 m high Popocatepetl which had become quite active recently again. In late afternoon we entered the huge bowl of Mexico City where an astounding 20+ million people live and work.



The localized Black-polled Yellowthroat and Ruddy Duck were found at the Almoloya marshes (tour participant Peter Hills)

The high altitude open pine forests of the La Cima area are the main stronghold of one of Mexico's rarest birds, the Sierra Madre Sparrow. Not long after dawn we were observing this subtle endemic as it was singing on top of a grass stem in a patch of dense bunch grass. We heard Long-tailed Wood Partridges call from a nearby slope and observed Northern Flicker (Red-shafted race), a pair of gorgeous Buff-breasted Flycatchers (at a nest), male and female of very smart Western Bluebirds, Red Crossbill, Pine Siskin, Yellow-eyed Junco and lots of pot-bellied Striped Sparrows. Nearby, we explored a stretch of mixed pine-evergreen forest where a cracking male Strickland's Woodpecker was the highlight, next to Pygmy Nuthatch, Red Warbler, Lincoln's Sparrow, Spotted Towhee (green-backed form) and Rufous-capped Brush Finch. In the afternoon we visited the Almoloya marshes, whose reedbeds, muddy edges and stretches of open water were a haven for marsh and waterbirds. Our main target was the very localized Black-polled Yellowthroat. Luckily, it didn't take too long before everybody had great looks at this minute, endemic reedbed inhabitant. The whole area was very birdy as we observed Gadwall, Mexican Duck, lots of Ruddy Duck, Pied-billed Grebe, Clark's Grebe, White-faced Ibis, Black-crowned Night Heron, Common Gallinule, lovely American Avocets in breeding plumage, Long-billed Dowitcher (a party in breeding attire), Loggerhead Shrike, Horned Lark, Marsh Wren, Common Starling, Song and Savannah Sparrows. Red-winged (Bicolored) Blackbirds displayed from the reed tops, parties of Yellow-headed Blackbirds assembled in the reeds and a rather large black watervole foraged in a ditch.

On the last morning of the tour we visited the Botanical Gardens of the Universidad Autonoma de Mexico (UNAM). It was overcast and it rained as we entered the well-laid out displays of yuccas, agaves and cacti, but birds were active and we soon observed a displaying Cooper's Hawk, a showy Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Broad-billed and Rivoli's Hummingbirds, Olive Warbler, a vagrant Blackpoll Warbler, Rufous-

crowned Sparrow, Canyon Towhee and a striking pair of Northern Cardinals. A Rock Squirrel was playing hide and seek under the crumbling lava. The much wanted, endemic Hooded Yellowthroat showed well, eventually, and the final new bird of the tour was found as we left the Botanical Gardens: a cracking male Black-backed (or Abeille's) Oriole was feeding in the abundant blue flowers of a Jacaranda tree.



The very localized Nava's Wren posed like a real model (tour participant Peter Hills)



This imposing Fulvous Owl was yet another highlight of our stay at El Triunfo (tour participant Peter Hills)

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) We heard its calls in the Sumidero and at Amatlan.

Black-bellied Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna autumnalis* Regular encounters.

Gadwall *Anas strepera* A pair was noted at the Almoloya marshes.

Mexican Duck ◊ *Anas diazi* Regular observations at the Almoloya marshes.



Blue-winged Teal were regularly encountered (tour participant Peter Hills)

Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors* The most regularly encountered duck.

Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata* We saw this familiar species at three venues.

Green-winged Teal *Anas carolinensis* (NL) A pair was seen by Chris at the Tuxtepec wetland.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis* Good numbers were found at Teotitlan and at the Almoloya marshes.

Plain Chachalaca ◊ *Ortalis vetula* This highly vocal species was regularly recorded.

West Mexican Chachalaca ◊ *Ortalis poliocephala* Several nice observations.

White-bellied Chachalaca ◊ *Ortalis leucogastra* Great looks, eventually, at Puerto Arista.

Crested Guan *Penelope purpurascens* Brief looks at Valle Nacional.

Highland Guan ◊ (Black Penelopina) *Penelopina nigra* Fairly common at El Triunfo, but always quite shy.

Horned Guan ◊ *Oreophaps derbianus* Fantastic sightings of this extraordinary bird at El Triunfo.

Long-tailed Wood Partridge ◊ *Dendrortyx macroura* (H) We heard the distinctive call at La Cima.

Northern Bobwhite *Colinus virginianus* (H) We heard it in the meadows at Puerto Arista.

Singing Quail ◊ *Dactylortyx thoracicus* Heard and glimpsed at El Triunfo.

Least Storm Petrel ◊ *Oceanodroma microsoma* A single bird showed well on our pelagic off Puerto Angel.

Black Storm Petrel ◊ *Oceanodroma melania* Regular very nice encounters from the boat off Puerto Angel.

Pink-footed Shearwater *Ardenna creatopus* Some great sightings off Puerto Angel.

Galapagos Shearwater ◊ *Puffinus subalaris* Two birds performed very well off Puerto Angel.

Least Grebe *Tachybaptus dominicus* 30+ birds were at the Teotitlan pond.

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps* Very common at the Almoloya marshes.
Black-necked Grebe (Eared G) *Podiceps nigricollis* Two were found at the ponds south of Puerto Angel.
Clark's Grebe *Aechmophorus clarkii* We scoped six birds in breeding attire at the Almoloya marshes.
Wood Stork *Mycteria americana* A few in the Pacific lowlands.
American White Ibis *Eudocimus albus* Several encounters.



White-faced Ibis and Brown Booby (Mark Van Beirs)

White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi* Regular near Tuxtepec and at Almoloya.
Roseate Spoonbill *Platalea ajaja* Just a few observations.
Boat-billed Heron *Cochlearius cochlearius* Great looks at several in the Puerto Arista mangroves.
Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* Two showed well at the Almoloya marshes.
Green Heron *Butorides virescens* A handful of observations only.
Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* Regular in the lowlands.
Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias* Two encounters with this widespread species.
Great Egret (American G E) *Ardea [alba] egretta* Small numbers were noted all along our route.
Reddish Egret *Egretta rufescens* A white morph at Puerto Arista and, surprisingly, a dark morph at Teotitlan!
Tricolored Heron (Louisiana H) *Egretta tricolor* A few were seen in the Pacific lowlands.
Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea* Two immature birds were seen.
Snowy Egret *Egretta thula* Regular observations.
American White Pelican *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos* A single bird was scoped at the Tuxtepec wetland.
Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis* Regular in the Puerto Angel area.
Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens* Common at the stack south of Puerto Angel.
Blue-footed Booby *Sula nebouxii* 20 were roosting and flying about at the stack south of Puerto Angel.
Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster* Great looks at the distinctive race "*brewsteri*" off Puerto Angel.
Neotropic Cormorant (Olivaceous C) *Phalacrocorax brasilianus* Regular encounters.
Anhinga *Anhinga anhinga* Three sightings of the snakebird at Puerto Arista.
Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura* Seen almost every day of the tour.
Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture (Savanna V) *Cathartes burrovianus* A single was seen at Puerto Arista.
Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus* Very common all along our route, but not at El Triunfo.
King Vulture *Sarcoramphus papa* Four observations of this huge species at El Triunfo.
Western Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* Two observations of this widespread piscivore.
White-tailed Kite *Elanus leucurus* Five sightings of this very elegant species.
Black Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus tyrannus* (H) We heard its distinctive call in the Puerto Angel foothills.
Ornate Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus ornatus* A single bird was glimpsed and heard at El Triunfo.
Sharp-shinned Hawk *Accipiter striatus* Four birds were passing through at the Sumidero Canyon.
White-breasted Hawk ♦ *Accipiter chionogaster* A single bird was seen at the El Triunfo clearing.
Cooper's Hawk *Accipiter cooperii* Four sightings of this northern migrant.

Common Black Hawk *Buteogallus anthracinus* Two encounters with this widespread bird of prey.

Great Black Hawk *Buteogallus urubitinga* A single bird was noted on our way to El Triunfo.

Roadside Hawk *Rupornis magnirostris* Regularly observed.

White-tailed Hawk *Geranoaetus albicaudatus* Two were seen near Tehuantepec.

Grey Hawk *Buteo plagiatus* Regular observations.

Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus* This northern migrant was regularly seen.

Short-tailed Hawk *Buteo brachyurus* Small numbers of both morphs were seen.

Swainson's Hawk *Buteo swainsoni* We witnessed some impressive passage in the Arriaga foothills.

Zone-tailed Hawk *Buteo albonotatus* A single showed very well above Oaxaca.

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis* Regular encounters.

Purple Gallinule *Porphyrio martinicus* A single bird was seen on our drive to El Triunfo.

Common Gallinule (Laughing G) *Gallinula galeata* Common at the Almoleya marshes.

American Coot *Fulica americana* Several encounters.

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus* A handful of sightings.



American Avocet (tour participant Peter Hills); the group before the hike at El Triunfo (Mark Van Beirs)

American Avocet *Recurvirostra americana* Cracking breeding plumaged birds at Almoleya.

Grey Plover (Black-bellied P) *Pluvialis squatarola* A few at Puerto Arista.

Semipalmated Plover *Charadrius semipalmatus* Only seen near Puerto Angel.

Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus* A pair with downy young at Almoleya.

Collared Plover *Charadrius collaris* A single bird was scoped at the shrimp pond near Puerto Angel.

Northern Jacana *Jacana spinosa* Seen near Puerto Angel and near Tuxtepec.

Short-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus griseus* Four were seen near Puerto Angel.

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus* A party in breeding plumage was at Almoleya.

Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca* A single sighting near Puerto Angel.

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* A few observations only.

Solitary Sandpiper *Tringa solitaria* Nice looks at the Teotitlan pond.

Willet (Western W) *Tringa [semipalmata] inornata* Three observations on the Pacific coast.

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius* Several observations of this widespread species. One in summer.

Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla* Just two on the Puerto Arista mudflats.

Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla* Several parties were seen.

Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii* Scope views of a single bird at the Teotitlan pond.

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos* A single at Puerto Arista and two at Almoleya.

Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus tricolor* A few in the distance near Puerto Angel.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus* A single showed well at sea off Puerto Angel.

Red Phalarope (Grey P) *Phalaropus fulicarius* Ten or so were seen on the Puerto Angel pelagic.

Brown Noddy *Anous stolidus* A single bird was foraging along the shore near Puerto Angel. New for the tour!

Black Skimmer *Rynchops niger* Several were noted at Puerto Arista.

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini* c20 in breeding plumage were seen on our Puerto Angel pelagic, but never close.

Laughing Gull *Leucophaeus atricilla* Common in the Puerto Angel area.

Franklin's Gull *Leucophaeus pipixcan* A few were passing through at Puerto Angel.

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica* Two were seen near Puerto Angel.

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* c10 showed well in the mixed flock on the beach near Puerto Angel.

Royal Tern *Thalasseus maximus* Regular in the Puerto Angel area.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* A few in the Puerto Angel beach flock.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger* Regular in the Puerto Angel area. Only a few were in summer plumage.

Pomarine Skua (P Jaeger) *Stercorarius pomarinus* Cracking views of an immaculate adult off Puerto Angel.

Parasitic Jaeger (Arctic Skua) *Stercorarius parasiticus* A young bird was seen off Puerto Angel.

Rock Dove (introduced) (R Pigeon, introduced) *Columba livia*

Scaled Pigeon *Patagioenas speciosa* We scoped one in Valle Nacional.

Band-tailed Pigeon *Patagioenas fasciata* Small numbers were noted at El Triunfo.

Red-billed Pigeon *Patagioenas flavirostris* A few were seen in the southern lowlands.

Short-billed Pigeon *Patagioenas nigrirostris* A couple of sightings in Valle Nacional.

Eurasian Collared Dove (introduced) *Streptopelia decaocto* Regular sighting of this spreading species.

Inca Dove *Columbina inca* Common and attractive.

Common Ground Dove *Columbina passerina* A handful of observations.

Ruddy Ground Dove *Columbina talpacoti* Quite common all along our route.

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

White-faced Quail-Dove ♦ *Zentrygon albifacies* Several superb sightings at El Triunfo. Lovely!

Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura* A handful of observations north of the Isthmus.

White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica* Common in drier areas.

Groove-billed Ani *Crotophaga sulcirostris* Regular in the lowlands.

Striped Cuckoo *Tapera naevia* (H) We heard it on our way to El Triunfo.

Pheasant Cuckoo *Dromococcyx phasianellus* Good looks at this beauty on our walk out of El Triunfo.

Lesser Ground Cuckoo ♦ *Morococcyx erythropygus* (H) We heard one in the Arriaga foothills.

Squirrel Cuckoo *Piaya cayana* Regular observations of this well-known species.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus americanus* A migrant showed surprisingly very well at Amatlan.

Pacific Screech Owl ♦ *Megascops cooperi* Great eye-ball to eye-ball looks predawn at Puerto Arista.



Bearded Screech Owl and Ferruginous Pygmy Owl (tour participant Peter Hills)

Bearded Screech Owl ♦ *Megascops barbarus* Cracking views at this specialty near San Cristobal.

Fulvous Owl ♦ *Strix fulvescens* Fantastic views of this marvelous critter at El Triunfo.

Mountain Pygmy Owl ♦ *Glaucidium gnoma* Great scope views at Cerro San Felipe near Oaxaca.
Central American Pygmy Owl ♦ *Glaucidium griseiceps* (H) We heard several at Valle Nacional.
Ferruginous Pygmy Owl *Glaucidium brasilianum* Eight observations of this ever angry looking owl.
Lesser Nighthawk *Chordeiles acutipennis* A few were seen near Tehuantepec.
Pauraque *Nyctidromus albicollis* A couple of nice observations in the lowlands.
Buff-collared Nightjar ♦ *Antrostomus ridgwayi* A male showed well at the edge of Oaxaca town.
Mexican Whip-poor-will ♦ *Antrostomus arizonae* Good looks, eventually, at Cerro San Felipe.
Chestnut-collared Swift *Streptoprocne rutila* Regular observations at El Triunfo.
White-collared Swift *Streptoprocne zonaris* Many sightings of this large swift along our route.
Vaux's Swift *Chaetura vauxi* Small numbers escorted us on the tour.
Chimney Swift *Chaetura pelagica* A few were identified on our way to El Triunfo.
White-throated Swift *Aeronautes saxatalis* Great looks at several near San Cristobal.
Mexican Hermit ♦ *Phaethornis mexicanus* One performed well at a heliconia flower above Puerto Angel.
Stripe-throated Hermit *Phaethornis striigularis* Two were seen at the Nava's Wren spot.
Curve-winged Sabrewing ♦ (Wedge-tailed S) *Campylopterus curvipennis* Good looks at one at Amatlan.
Rufous Sabrewing ♦ *Campylopterus rufus* (H) One was heard on the walk to the Pacific side at El Triunfo.
Violet Sabrewing *Campylopterus hemileucurus* A splendid male was feeding in a hibiscus at El Triunfo.



The tiny Emerald-chinned Hummingbird and a well-behaved White-bellied Emerald (tour participant Peter Hills)

Emerald-chinned Hummingbird ♦ *Abeillia abeillei* Several excellent observations at El Triunfo.
Canivet's Emerald (Fork-tailed E) *Chlorostilbon canivetii* A handful of sightings south of the Isthmus.
Oaxaca Hummingbird ♦ (Blue-capped H) *Eupherusa cyanophrys* A male showed well near Puerto Angel.
Dusky Hummingbird ♦ *Cynanthus sordidus* A few were noted in the Oaxaca area.
Broad-billed Hummingbird *Cynanthus latirostris* Regular in the Mexico City Botanical Gardens.
Doubleday's Hummingbird ♦ *Cynanthus doubledayi* Fairly common on the Pacific coast.
Blue-throated Sapphire (B-t Emerald) *Hylocharis eliciae* A single bird was found at El Triunfo.
Cinnamon Hummingbird ♦ *Amazilia rutila* Three sightings in the Pacific lowlands.
Buff-bellied Hummingbird ♦ *Amazilia yucatanensis* Two were seen in the Sumidero Canyon.
Rufous-tailed Hummingbird *Amazilia tzacatl* A single bird showed at the Nava's Wren site.
White-bellied Emerald ♦ *Amazilia candida* Several nice sightings. Nest-building was seen at El Ocote.
Azure-crowned Hummingbird ♦ *Amazilia cyanocephala* A single was observed on our way to El Triunfo.
Green-fronted Hummingbird ♦ *Amazilia viridifrons* One was noted in the Arriaga foothills.
Berylline Hummingbird ♦ *Amazilia beryllina* Regular encounters.
Green-throated Mountaingem ♦ *Lampornis viridipallens* A handful of sightings at El Triunfo.
White-eared Hummingbird ♦ *Basilinna leucotis* Several lovely observations in the highlands.

Garnet-throated Hummingbird ♦ *Lamprolaima rhami* Brief looks at a male near San Cristobal.
Rivoli's Hummingbird ♦ *Eugenes fulgens* Great sightings at San Cristobal and in Mexico City.
Plain-capped Starthroat ♦ *Helimaster constantii* Good looks at a male in the Arriaga foothills.
Long-billed Starthroat *Helimaster longirostris* A male showed very well at Amatlan.
Slender Sheartail ♦ *Doricha enicura* Male and female allowed excellent looks at El Sumidero.
Beautiful Sheartail ♦ (B Hummingbird) *Calothorax pulcher* Great views at Tehuantepec and near Oaxaca.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird *Archilochus colubris* Four observations of females.
Bumblebee Hummingbird ♦ *Atthis heloisa* Terrific scope studies of a stupendous male at Valle Nacional.
Resplendent Quetzal ♦ *Pharomachrus mocinno* Displaying males gave a breath-taking show at El Triunfo.



Citreoline Trogon and Russet-crowned Motmot (tour participant Peter Hills)

Citreoline Trogon ♦ *Trogon citreolus* Splendid observations of this endemic on the Pacific coast.
Gartered Trogon (Northern Violaceous T) *Trogon caligatus* Regular sightings.
Elegant Trogon *Trogon elegans* (H) We heard it near Oaxaca.
Mountain Trogon ♦ *Trogon mexicanus* A handful of encounters in the highlands.
Collared Trogon *Trogon collaris* Regularly recorded in foothill and highland forest.
Amazon Kingfisher *Chloroceryle amazona* (NL) One was noted at one of the rivers near Tuxtepec.
Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon* A single was seen at Puerto Arista.
Tody Motmot ♦ *Hylomanes momotula* Seen and heard by some on the walk out of El Triunfo.
Blue-throated Motmot ♦ *Aspatha gularis* Good looks at El Triunfo. Also heard near San Cristobal.
Russet-crowned Motmot ♦ *Momotus mexicanus* Several excellent observations on the Pacific slope.
Blue-diademed Motmot ♦ *Momotus lessonii* Finally seen at Amatlan after a number of heard only records.
Wagler's Toucanet ♦ *Aulacorhynchus wagleri* Good looks at this endemic above Puerto Angel.
Emerald Toucanet ♦ *Aulacorhynchus prasinus* Regular at El Triunfo and elsewhere in the highlands.
Collared Aracari *Pteroglossus torquatus* Several nice encounters.
Keel-billed Toucan (Rainbow-billed T) *Ramphastos sulfuratus* Some spectacular display in Valle Nacional.
Acorn Woodpecker *Melanerpes formicivorus* A few sightings in the highlands.

Golden-cheeked Woodpecker ◇ *Melanerpes chrysogenys* Three sightings in Puerto Angel.

Grey-breasted Woodpecker ◇ *Melanerpes hypopolius* Great looks at this endemic on the cacti at Yagul.

Velasquez's Woodpecker ◇ *Melanerpes santacruzi* Many encounters.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker *Sphyrapicus varius* Nice looks at one in Valle Nacional.

Ladder-backed Woodpecker *Picoides scalaris* Good looks at Yagul and in Mexico City.

Hairy Woodpecker *Picoides villosus* Several of the race *sanctorum* showed at El Triunfo.

Strickland's Woodpecker ◇ *Picoides stricklandi* Excellent views of a male at La Cima.

Smoky-brown Woodpecker *Picoides fumigatus* A single was seen in Valle Nacional.

Golden-olive Woodpecker *Colaptes rubiginosus* Regularly recorded.

Grey-crowned Woodpecker ◇ *Colaptes auricularis* One was seen in the Puerto Angel foothills.

Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus* Several nice observations of races '*mexicanus*' and '*mexicanoides*'.

Lineated Woodpecker *Dryocopus lineatus* Four great sightings of this impressive species.

Pale-billed Woodpecker *Campephilus guatemalensis* A male allowed great looks above Puerto Angel.

Northern Crested Caracara (Northern C) *Caracara cheriway* Many observations.

Laughing Falcon *Herpetotheres cachinnans* Heard at Puerto Arista and seen near Tuxtepec.

Barred Forest Falcon *Micrastur ruficollis* Heard and seen at El Triunfo.

Collared Forest Falcon *Micrastur semitorquatus* Good looks at one at El Triunfo.

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius* Regular observations of this attractive raptor.



Peregrine and American Kestrel (tour participant Peter Hills)

Peregrine Falcon (Peregrine) *Falco peregrinus* Three sightings. We witnessed a spectacular hunt.

White-crowned Parrot ◇ *Pionus senilis* Several encounters.

Red-lored Amazon (R-I Parrot) *Amazona autumnalis* Nice scope looks on our way to El Triunfo.

Olive-throated Parakeet ◇ *Eupsittula nana* Scope views in Valle Nacional.

Orange-fronted Parakeet ◇ *Eupsittula canicularis* Good looks in the Isthmus area.

Green Parakeet ◇ *Psittacara holochlorus* Several good looks in the Tuxtla area and below El Triunfo.

Rufous-breasted Spinetail ◇ *Synallaxis erythrothorax* A pair showed extremely well in Valle Nacional.

Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaner *Anabacerthia variegaticeps* Regular observations in the highlands.

Ruddy Foliage-gleaner *Automolus rubiginosus* Glimpses at El Triunfo and perfect looks at Valle Nacional.

Tawny-throated Leaf-tosser *Sclerurus mexicanus* A single sighting at El Triunfo.

Olivaceous Woodcreeper *Sittasomus griseicapillus* A couple of satisfactory observations.

Ivory-billed Woodcreeper ◇ *Xiphorhynchus flavigaster* Several perfect observations.

Spotted Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus erythropygius* A few sightings in the highland forests.

Streak-headed Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes souleyetii* A single bird in the lowlands of El Triunfo.

Spot-crowned Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes affinis* Several were seen in the highland forests.

Barred Antshrike *Thamnophilus doliatus* A male showed at El Sumidero and a female below El Triunfo.

Mayan Antthrush ♦ (Mexican A) *Formicarius moniliger* Nice looks at Valle Nacional.
Greenish Elaenia *Myiopagis viridicata* Regular sightings of this unobtrusive species.
Yellow-bellied Elaenia *Elaenia flavogaster* A single bird at Valle Nacional.
Northern Beardless Tyrannulet *Camptostoma imberbe* Four nice observations of this little tike.
Paltry Tyrannulet ♦ *Zimmerius vilissimus* Several showed well at El Triunfo.
Ochre-bellied Flycatcher *Mionectes oleagineus* Great looks at one on our way up to El Triunfo.
Northern Bentbill ♦ *Oncostoma cinereigulare* A single bird performed quite well on the way up to El Triunfo.
Eye-ringed Flatbill *Rhynchocyclus brevirostris* One was observed at El Triunfo.
Yellow-olive Flatbill (Y-o Flycatcher) *Tolmomyias sulphurescens* Two observations of this widespread bird.
Belted Flycatcher ♦ *Xenotriccus callizonus* Good views of one at the Sumidero Canyon.
Pileated Flycatcher ♦ *Xenotriccus mexicanus* One played hide and seek at Yagul.
Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans* Three observations near water.
Northern Tufted Flycatcher *Mitrephanes phaeocercus* Regular great looks at El Triunfo.
Olive-sided Flycatcher *Contopus cooperi* Three observations in the highlands.
Greater Pewee *Contopus pertinax* Quite common in the highlands.
Eastern Wood Pewee (E Pewee) *Contopus virens* A few were identified.
Tropical Pewee *Contopus cinereus* Nice looks at one in the foothills above Puerto Angel.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher *Empidonax flaviventris* One showed well on our way to El Triunfo.
Least Flycatcher *Empidonax minimus* Regular sightings.
Hammond's Flycatcher *Empidonax hammondii* Several performed well in the highland glades.
American Dusky Flycatcher *Empidonax oberholseri* Good looks at Monte Alban.
Yellowish Flycatcher ♦ *Empidonax flavescens* Scope studies at El Triunfo.
Buff-breasted Flycatcher ♦ *Empidonax fulvifrons* A nest and attending parents were admired at La Cima.
Vermilion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus* Many great encounters. Fabulous display.
Piratic Flycatcher *Legatus leucophaeus* A few were seen at Valle Nacional.
Social Flycatcher *Myiozetetes similis* Quite common in the lowlands.
Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus* Regular, but by no means common.
Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher *Myiodynastes luteiventris* Just a few were seen.
Streaked Flycatcher *Myiodynastes maculatus* A pair was found at Valle Nacional.
Boat-billed Flycatcher *Megarynchus pitangua* A few encounters, also at the nest.
Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus* Common and vocal.
Couch's Kingbird ♦ *Tyrannus couchii* Several were seen at our stop near Jaltenango.



The Monte Alban archaeological site is great for birding (Mark Van Beirs)

Cassin's Kingbird *Tyrannus vociferans* Regular sightings in the Oaxaca area.

Thick-billed Kingbird ♦ *Tyrannus crassirostris* We saw this species near Puerto Angel and near Oaxaca.

Western Kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis* A few were seen near Jaltenango.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus forficatus* Regular encounters with this elegant migrant.

Fork-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus savana* A few near Jaltenango and in the Isthmus.

Eastern Kingbird *Tyrannus tyrannus* Two were seen in Valle Nacional.

Dusky-capped Flycatcher *Myiarchus tuberculifer* Regular sightings.

Ash-throated Flycatcher *Myiarchus cinerascens* Good looks at a single bird near Tehuantepec.

Nutting's Flycatcher ♦ *Myiarchus nuttingi* Several sightings in the state of Oaxaca.

Great Crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus crinitus* A single bird was identified at Teotitlan.

Brown-crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus tyrannulus* Regular observations.

Bright-rumped Attila (Flammulated A) *Attila [spadiceus] flammulatus* Two were seen near Puerto Angel.

Long-tailed Manakin ♦ *Chiroxiphia linearis* Two young males were seen on our way to El Triunfo.

Masked Tityra *Tityra semifasciata* Several were found in the foothills above Puerto Angel.

Grey-collared Becard ♦ *Pachyramphus major* Two nice sightings of this rarely seen species.

Rose-throated Becard *Pachyramphus aglaiae* Several showed well. A nest was found at El Triunfo.

Loggerhead Shrike *Lanius ludovicianus* This declining species was scoped at Almoloya.

Rufous-browed Peppershrike *Cyclarhis gujanensis* A few observations of this widespread species.

Chestnut-sided Shrike-Vireo ♦ *Vireolanius melitophrys* Superb views of this very attractive species.

Green Shrike-Vireo ♦ *Vireolanius pulchellus* Excellent looks at this canopy inhabitant at El Ocote.

White-eyed Vireo *Vireo griseus* A single bird was seen at the Sumidero Canyon.

Dwarf Vireo ♦ *Vireo nelsoni* (H) We heard it in the distance at Monte Alban.

Blue-headed Vireo *Vireo solitarius* Regular encounters.

Hutton's Vireo *Vireo huttoni* Several observations in pine-oak forest.

Golden Vireo ♦ *Vireo hypochryseus* Great looks in the Puerto Angel - Oaxaca area.

Warbling Vireo *Vireo gilvus* Fairly common.

Brown-capped Vireo *Vireo leucophrys* A few encounters in the highlands.

Yellow-green Vireo *Vireo flavoviridis* Regularly recorded.

Lesser Greenlet *Hylophilus decurtatus* A single sighting on our way to El Triunfo.

Azure-hooded Jay ♦ *Cyanolyca cucullata* A couple were briefly seen in Valle Nacional.

Black-throated Jay ♦ *Cyanolyca pumilo* Several nice encounters with parties at El Triunfo.

Dwarf Jay ♦ *Cyanolyca nanus* Good looks at several in the montane forests of Cerro San Felipe.

Green Jay *Cyanocorax luxuosus* These smart birds were regularly seen and heard.

Brown Jay *Psilorhinus morio* Fairly common and vociferous in the Caribbean lowlands.



White-throated Magpie-Jay (tour participant Peter Hills)

White-throated Magpie-Jay ♦ *Calocitta formosa* Common and obvious in the Pacific lowlands.
Steller's Jay *Cyanocitta stelleri* A handful of sightings in montane forest.
Unicolored Jay ♦ *Aphelocoma unicolor* We saw it at El Triunfo and in Valle Nacional.
Woodhouse's Scrub Jay ♦ *Aphelocoma woodhouseii* A single bird was seen in the Teotitlan scrub.
Northern Raven (Common R) *Corvus corax* A single sighting at Cerro San Felipe.
Cedar Waxwing *Bombycilla cedrorum* A few were noted at El Triunfo.
Grey Silky-flycatcher ♦ (G Silky) *Ptiliogonys cinereus* Common and so very attractive at El Triunfo.



Mexican Chickadee and Giant Wren (tour participant Peter Hills)

Mexican Chickadee ♦ *Poecile sclateri* Several were seen at Cerro San Felipe.
Horned Lark (Shore L) *Eremophila alpestris* A single bird was scoped at the Almoloya marshes.
Tree Swallow *Tachycineta bicolor* Several migrating parties were noted.
Mangrove Swallow *Tachycineta albilinea* Two were foraging over disused shrimp ponds near Puerto Angel.
Violet-green Swallow *Tachycineta thalassina* Fairly common in the highlands.
Grey-breasted Martin *Progne chalybea* Regularly encountered.
Black-capped Swallow ♦ *Notiochelidon pileata* Some nice looks in the highlands south of the Isthmus.
Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis* Fairly common.
Northern Rough-winged Swallow ♦ (Ridgway's R-w S) *Stelgidopteryx [serripennis] ridgwayi* Regular.
Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* A common migrant.
American Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota* Several encounters.
Cave Swallow *Petrochelidon fulva* Two sightings of small parties.
American Bushtit *Psaltirparus minimus* Several observations of these lovely critters.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet *Regulus calendula* A couple of sightings on the final days of the tour.
Band-backed Wren *Campylorhynchus zonatus* A few sightings of this noisy species.
Grey-barred Wren ♦ *Campylorhynchus megalopterus* We only saw it at Cerro San Felipe, with Dwarf Jays.
Giant Wren ♦ *Campylorhynchus chiapensis* Great close up looks in the Puerto Arista area.
Sclater's Wren ♦ *Campylorhynchus humilis* Regular encounters on the Pacific coast.
Boucard's Wren ♦ *Campylorhynchus jocosus* Several observations in the Oaxaca valley.
Rock Wren *Salpinctes obsoletus* Cracking looks at Monte Alban.
Canyon Wren *Catherpes mexicanus* So very obliging at Monte Alban. Heard at several other venues.
Sumichrast's Wren ♦ (Slender-billed W) *Hylorchilus sumichrasti* Good looks in the Amatlan karst.
Nava's Wren ♦ *Hylorchilus navai* Fantastic studies of a singing bird at El Ocote.
Marsh Wren *Cistothorus palustris* Brief looks in the cattails of the Almoloya marshes.
Bewick's Wren *Thryomanes bewickii* Regular in the Oaxaca area.
Happy Wren ♦ *Pheugopedius felix* Nice views near Puerto Angel.
Spot-breasted Wren *Pheugopedius maculipectus* Commonly recorded in Chiapas and Valle Nacional.
Banded Wren ♦ *Thryophilus pleurostictus* A few sightings in Chiapas.
Rufous-and-white Wren *Thryophilus rufalbus* Good looks for the hikers to the Pacific slope at El Triunfo.
Plain Wren ♦ *Cantorchilus modestus* Several observations in southern Chiapas.
House Wren (Northern H W) *Troglodytes [aeson] aeson* Regular.
House Wren (Brown-throated H W) *Troglodytes [aeson] brunneicollis* A few records in highland forests.

House Wren (Southern H W) *Troglodytes [aedon] musculus* Several sightings south of the Isthmus.

Rufous-browed Wren ◇ *Troglodytes rufociliatus* Glimpsed at El Triunfo and seen well near San Cristobal.

White-bellied Wren ◇ *Uropsila leucogastra* (H) We heard its distinctive song at El Ocote.

White-breasted Wood Wren *Henicorhina leucosticta* Regularly recorded in the lowlands.

Grey-breasted Wood Wren *Henicorhina leucophrys* Fairly common in the highland forests.

Blue-grey Gnatcatcher *Poliophtila caerulea* One was seen at Amatlan.

White-lored Gnatcatcher ◇ *Poliophtila albiloris* Regular in the dry scrub of the Pacific slope.

Pygmy Nuthatch *Sitta pygmaea* A party showed well at La Cima.

Brown Creeper (B Treecreeper) *Certhia americana* We observed one at Cerro San Felipe.

Grey Catbird *Dumetella carolinensis* Six sightings of this northern migrant.

Northern Mockingbird *Mimus polyglottos* Regularly seen north of the Isthmus.

Tropical Mockingbird *Mimus gilvus* A handful of observations south of the Isthmus.

Ocellated Thrasher ◇ *Toxostoma ocellatum* Superb looks at a singing bird at Monte Alban.

Curve-billed Thrasher *Toxostoma curvirostre* A single sighting at Teotitlan.

Blue Mockingbird ◇ *Melanotis caerulescens* Regularly observed in the Oaxaca area.

Blue-and-white Mockingbird ◇ *Melanotis hypoleucus* A few showed well near San Cristobal.

Common Starling (introduced) (European S) *Sturnus vulgaris* Several were noted at Almoloya.

Eastern Bluebird *Sialia sialis* A female was seen near San Cristobal.

Western Bluebird *Sialia mexicana* Great looks at this jewel at La Cima.

Brown-backed Solitaire ◇ *Myadestes occidentalis* Many sightings in the highland forests. Very vocal.

Slate-colored Solitaire ◇ *Myadestes unicolor* Good looks at several in Valle Nacional.

Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus aurantirostris* Brief looks in the Sumidero Canyon.

Russet Nightingale-Thrush ◇ *Catharus occidentalis* Excellent views of several at Cerro San Felipe.

Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush ◇ *Catharus frantzii* Nicely behaved at El Triunfo and at Cerro San Felipe.

Black-headed Nightingale-Thrush ◇ *Catharus mexicanus* Scope views of one at Valle Nacional.

Spotted Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus dryas* Two sightings of this smart denizen at El Triunfo.

Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus* A regularly seen migrant.

Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus* Several observations of this migrant.

Wood Thrush *Hylocichla mustelina* Three sightings of this very smart species.

Black Thrush ◇ (B Robin) *Turdus infuscatus* A few observations. More often heard.

Clay-colored Thrush (C-c Robin) *Turdus grayi* The most common thrush of the tour.

White-throated Thrush (W-t Robin) *Turdus assimilis* Some great studies in fruiting trees.

Rufous-backed Thrush ◇ *Turdus rufopalliatus* Regular excellent encounters north of the Isthmus.

Rufous-collared Thrush ◇ *Turdus rufitorques* Regularly seen in the San Cristobal area.



American Robin and Rock Wren (tour participant Peter Hills)

American Robin *Turdus migratorius* A few in the highland forests north of the Isthmus.

American Dipper *Cinclus mexicanus* One showed briefly on our way to El Triunfo.

House Sparrow (introduced) (introduced) *Passer domesticus* Common in towns and villages.

Olive Warbler ◇ *Peucedramus taeniatus* This unique species showed well at Cerro San Felipe.

Buff-bellied Pipit (American P) *Anthus rubescens* Several encounters with this migrant.

Hooded Grosbeak ♦ *Hesperiphona abeillei* A male showed distantly at El Triunfo.

House Finch *Haemorhous mexicanus* Regular.

Red Crossbill (Common C) *Loxia curvirostra* Brief observations at La Cima.

Lesser Goldfinch (Dark-backed G) *Spinus psaltria* Several nice sightings.

Pine Siskin *Spinus pinus* A few were seen at La Cima.

Black-headed Siskin ♦ *Spinus notatus* Several were seen well at El Triunfo.

Scrub Euphonia *Euphonia affinis* Regular observations.

Yellow-throated Euphonia ♦ *Euphonia hirundinacea* Another fairly common species.

Elegant Euphonia (Blue-hooded E) *Euphonia elegantissima* Great looks at El Triunfo. Very smart!

Blue-crowned Chlorophonia ♦ *Chlorophonia occipitalis* A few observations at El Triunfo.

Worm-eating Warbler *Helmitheros vermivorum* One was found by the Pacific slope hikers at El Triunfo.

Northern Waterthrush *Parkesia noveboracensis* A couple of observations of this migrant.

Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia* Fairly common and always good fun.

Crescent-chested Warbler ♦ *Oreothlypis superciliosa* Several excellent observations.

Tennessee Warbler *Leiothlypis peregrina* One of the more common migrant warblers.

Orange-crowned Warbler *Leiothlypis celata* We found a couple at Monte Alban.

Nashville Warbler *Leiothlypis ruficapilla* Fairly common.

MacGillivray's Warbler *Geothlypis tolmiei* Two well-behaved birds could be studied at length.

Kentucky Warbler *Geothlypis formosa* A male showed well in Valle Nacional. Skulking!

Black-poll'd Yellowthroat ♦ *Geothlypis speciose* Stunning views of this endemic at the Almoloya marshes.

Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas* A few encounters.

Hooded Yellowthroat ♦ *Geothlypis nelsoni* Good looks at a male in the UNAM Botanical Gardens.

American Redstart *Setophaga ruticilla* A few sightings only.

Tropical Parula *Setophaga pitaiyumi* We only recorded it at El Ocote.

Magnolia Warbler *Setophaga magnolia* A handful of observations.

American Yellow Warbler (Yellow W) *Setophaga aestiva* Quite common in the Isthmus area.

Blackpoll Warbler *Setophaga striata* A male was found in the UNAM Botanical Gardens. A big surprise!

Black-throated Blue Warbler *Setophaga caerulescens* A male was seen by the hikers at El Triunfo.

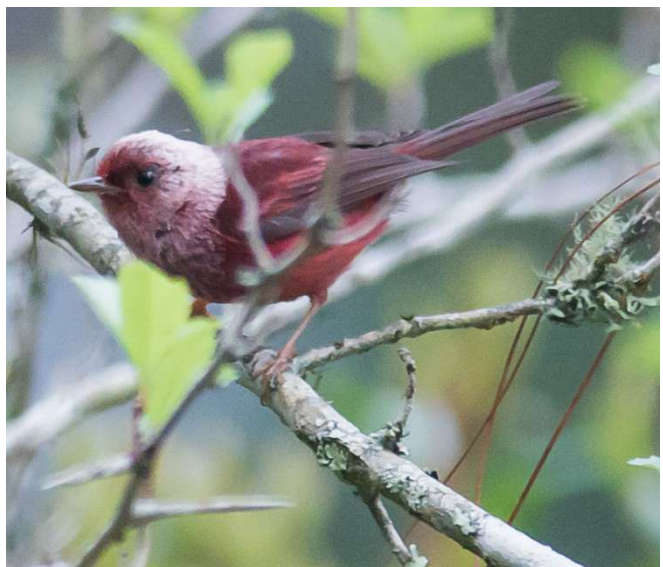
Audubon's Warbler *Setophaga auduboni* Several encounters – Isthmus and UNAM Botanical Gardens.

Grace's Warbler *Setophaga graciae* Terrific looks on our way to El Triunfo.

Townsend's Warbler *Setophaga townsendi* A regularly encountered migrant.

Hermit Warbler *Setophaga occidentalis* A single bird was seen at the El Triunfo clearing.

Black-throated Green Warbler *Setophaga virens* One of the regular migrants.



Rufous-capped Warbler and Pink-headed Warbler (tour participant Peter Hills)

Rufous-capped Warbler ◇ *Basileuterus rufifrons* Several very nice observations.
Golden-browed Warbler ◇ *Basileuterus belli* This cracker showed particularly well at El Triunfo.
Golden-crowned Warbler *Basileuterus culicivorus* Small numbers were noted along our route.
Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla* Probably the most common migrant.
Red Warbler ◇ *Cardellina rubra* Fantastic views of this stunning warbler. Cerro San Felipe and La Cima.
Pink-headed Warbler ◇ *Cardellina versicolor* A great performance near San Cristobal. Awesome!
Slate-throated Whitestart (S-t Redstart) *Myioborus miniatus* Small numbers were seen in the highlands.
Yellow-headed Blackbird *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus* Hundreds were in the reeds at Almoloya.
Eastern Meadowlark *Sturnella magna* Two sightings in open areas.
Mexican Cacique ◇ (Yellow-winged C) *Cassiculus melanicterus* A few sightings on the Pacific coast.
Chestnut-headed Oropendola *Psarocolius wagleri* A single observation in Valle Nacional.
Montezuma Oropendola *Psarocolius montezuma* Regular in the Caribbean lowlands.
Audubon's Oriole ◇ *Icterus graduacauda* Two sightings of the smart 'dickeyae' form above Puerto Angel.
Altamira Oriole ◇ *Icterus gularis* Several very nice observations.
Streak-backed Oriole ◇ *Icterus pustulatus* Regular.
Black-backed Oriole ◇ (Abeille's O) *Icterus abeillei* The final endemic of the tour. Good looks in Mexico City.



Baltimore Oriole and Bronzed Cowbird (tour participant Peter Hills)

Baltimore Oriole *Icterus galbula* A regularly seen migrant.
Yellow-tailed Oriole *Icterus mesomelas* A pair showed beautifully in Valle Nacional.
Spot-breasted Oriole ◇ *Icterus pectoralis* Good looks at several at Puerto Arista.
Bar-winged Oriole ◇ *Icterus maculialatus* A pair allowed great views at the Sumidero Canyon.
Black-vented Oriole ◇ *Icterus wagleri* Several nice sightings in the Oaxaca area.
Orchard Oriole *Icterus spurius* A few were noted on our way to El Triunfo.
Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus* Common in a marshy area near Jaltenango.
Red-winged Blackbird ◇ (Bicoloured B) *Agelaius [phoeniceus] gubernator* Good numbers at Almoloya.
Bronzed Cowbird *Molothrus aeneus* Very common. Smart when seen well.
Brown-headed Cowbird *Molothrus ater* Regular observations. Also seen south of the Isthmus!
Melodious Blackbird *Dives dives* Fairly common and very vocal.
Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus* One of the most common birds in Mexico...
Bananaquit *Coereba flaveola* Just a few sightings. Seen nest building.
Song Sparrow *Melospiza melodia* Very common at the Almoloya marshes.
Lincoln's Sparrow *Melospiza lincolnii* Regular in the Mexico City area.
Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis* Fairly common south of the Isthmus.
Yellow-eyed Junco ◇ *Junco phaeonotus* Regular observations in the highland forests.
Savannah Sparrow *Passerculus sandwichensis* Two were seen at the Almoloya marshes.
Sierra Madre Sparrow ◇ *Xenospiza baileyi* Excellent looks at La Cima. The rarest bird of the tour!
Chipping Sparrow *Spizella passerina* Regular sightings north of the Isthmus.
Lark Sparrow *Chondestes grammacus* A few were seen well at Monte Alban.
Stripe-headed Sparrow ◇ *Peucaea ruficauda* Several were seen in the Arriaga foothills.

Bridled Sparrow ♦ *Peucaea mystacalis* Great looks at this very smart species in the Oaxaca area.

Cinnamon-tailed Sparrow ♦ (Sumichrast's S) *Peucaea sumichrasti* Perfect looks near Tehuantepec.

Rufous-crowned Sparrow ♦ *Aimophila ruficeps* Seen at Monte Alban and in Mexico City.

Rusty Sparrow ♦ *Aimophila rufescens* Regular encounters.

Oaxaca Sparrow ♦ *Aimophila notosticta* Good looks, eventually, of this restricted endemic.

Striped Sparrow ♦ *Oriturus superciliosus* Common and obvious at La Cima.

Spotted Towhee *Pipilo maculatus* Two forms were seen: *maculatus* and *macronyx*.

White-throated Towhee ♦ *Melospiza albicollis* Common in the Oaxaca area.

Canyon Towhee ♦ *Melospiza fusca* Regular in Mexico City.

Prevost's Ground Sparrow ♦ *Melospiza biarcuata* Good looks at this specialty on the way to El Triunfo.

White-eared Ground Sparrow ♦ *Melospiza leucotis* The hikers had great views at El Triunfo.

Olive Sparrow ♦ *Arremonops rufivirgatus* A few were noted at the Sumidero Canyon.

Chestnut-capped Brush Finch *Arremon brunneinucha* Several observations at El Triunfo.

Rufous-capped Brush Finch ♦ *Atlapetes pileatus* Seen at Cerro San Felipe and at La Cima.

White-naped Brush Finch ♦ (Yellow-throated B F) *Atlapetes gutturalis* Very nice looks at El Triunfo.

Common Bush Tanager *Chlorospingus flavopectus* A regular of the highland forests.

Crimson-collared Tanager ♦ *Ramphocelus sanguinolentus* This smart boy showed well at Valle Nacional.

Blue-grey Tanager *Thraupis episcopus* Just a few observations.

Yellow-winged Tanager ♦ *Thraupis abbas* Regular below El Triunfo and on the Caribbean slope.

Cabanis's Tanager ♦ (Azure-rumped T) *Tangara cabanisi* The hikers had good looks at El Triunfo.

Golden-hooded Tanager *Tangara larvata* Nice views at El Ocote and in Valle Nacional.

Red-legged Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes cyaneus* Fairly common in the south and the east.

Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer ♦ *Diglossa baritula* Repeated excellent looks.

Blue-black Grassquit *Volatinia jacarina* A few sightings of this widespread species.

Variable Seedeater *Sporophila corvina* A male allowed scope views in Valle Nacional.



A stunning Yellow Grosbeak (tour participant Peter Hills)

White-collared Seedeater *Sporophila torqueola* Regular observations.

Flame-colored Tanager ♦ *Piranga bidentate* Fairly common at El Triunfo.

Hepatic Tanager (Northern H T) *Piranga hepatica* We saw a pair in the Teotitlan scrub.

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra* Small numbers of this migrant were seen along our route.

Western Tanager *Piranga ludoviciana* A regularly encountered migrant.

White-winged Tanager *Piranga leucoptera* Several nice observations of this striking species.

Red-crowned Ant Tanager *Habia rubica* A couple of sightings.

Red-throated Ant Tanager *Habia fuscicauda* Brief looks at one at El Ocote.

Dickcissel *Spiza americana* Several distant flocks were seen near Jaltenango.

Yellow Grosbeak ♦ (Mexican Y G) *Pheucticus chrysopheplus* Many superb looks at El Triunfo. 'aurantiacus'.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak *Pheucticus ludovicianus* A fairly common northern migrant.

Black-headed Grosbeak *Pheucticus melanocephalus* Several great sightings.

Red-breasted Chat ♦ *Granatellus venustus* (H) We heard it in the Sumidero Canyon.

Northern Cardinal *Cardinalis cardinalis* Several posed beautifully in the UNAM Botanical Gardens.

Black-faced Grosbeak ♦ *Caryothraustes poliogaster* Good looks at several at El Ocote.

Black-headed Saltator *Saltator atriceps* Several noisy groups were recorded in the south and the east.

Buff-throated Saltator *Saltator maximus* Just a single bird was seen at El Ocote.

Greyish Saltator *Saltator coerulescens* (H) One was heard in Valle Nacional.

Blue-black grosbeak *Cyanocompsa cyanooides* Scope views of a singing male at El Ocote.

Blue Bunting ♦ *Cyanocompsa parellina* Several observations of both sexes.

Blue Grosbeak *Passerina caerulea* Repeated excellent looks at this northern migrant.

Indigo Bunting *Passerina cyanea* Small numbers were noted along our route.

Varied Bunting *Passerina versicolor* Three males were observed at different locations.

Painted Bunting ♦ *Passerina ciris* This gorgeous species showed very well on several occasions.

Rose-bellied Bunting ♦ (Rosita's B) *Passerina rositae* Perfect looks in the Arriaga foothills.

Orange-breasted Bunting ♦ *Passerina leclancherii* This gem of a bird won a big place in our hearts.



Song Sparrow and Orange-breasted Bunting (tour participant Peter Hills)



Variegated Ground Squirrel (Mark Van Beirs)

MAMMALS

Mexican Cottontail *Sylvilagus cunicularius* Good looks at La Cima and at Monte Alban.

Mexican Grey Squirrel (Red-bellied S) *Sciurus aureogaster* Many sightings of this variable species.

Deppe's Squirrel *Sciurus deppei* Fairly common at El Triunfo.

Variegated Ground Squirrel (Rock S) *Spermophilus variegatus* One showed at the Botanical Gardens.

Grey Fox *Urocyon cinereoargenteus* (NL) One was seen at the El Triunfo clearing.

Cacomistle (Southern Ringtail) *Bassariscus astutus* (H) We heard it several times at night at El Triunfo.

Central American Spider Monkey (Black-handed S M) *Ateles geoffroyi* (H) The hikers heard it at El Triunfo.

Common Bottle-nosed Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus* A large mixed pod was seen off Puerto Angel.

Pantropical Spotted Dolphin *Stenella attenuate* Lots together with the previous species.

Spinner Dolphin *Stenella longirostris* 200+ performed well off Puerto Angel.

Collared Peccary (Javelina) *Pecari tajacu* Three were seen on a nightwalk at El Triunfo.

Baird's Tapir (Central American T) *Tapirus bairdii* Fantastic views of this impressive creature at El Triunfo.



Godman's Pit Viper; birding at the El Triunfo clearing (Mark Van Beirs)

Godman's Pit Viper *Cerrophidion godmani* One showed well along the Palo Gordo trail at El Triunfo.



The forest at El Triunfo (Mark Van Beirs)