



The perky, endemic Sumichrast's Wren obliged very well in its karst habitat (Mark Van Beirs)

SOUTHERN MEXICO

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LEADER: MARK VAN BEIRS



The enigmatic Horned Guan posed beautifully at El Triunfo (Mark Van Beirs)

The fabulous, rare and truly enigmatic Horned Guan was without a doubt the BIRD of the TOUR on our recent Southern Mexico jaunt. The exquisite Pink-headed Warbler and the ever so endearing Bumblebee Hummingbird were other highlights and we were also very much enchanted with our encounter with the uniquely coloured Rosita's (or Rose-bellied) Bunting. The closely related, sprightly Nava's and Sumichrast's Wrens both gave terrific performances full of character in their attractive karst habitat. The tour started under a bad omen, as a nasty bug, picked up with our first picnic lunch caused virtually the whole group to suffer Montezuma's revenge for more than a week. We were also marred by unusual weather systems that caused a cold front on both of our visits to the Sumidero Canyon, dense mist on our 1,5 day stay in the Valle Nacional and extreme storm winds on our nocturnal foray near San Cristobal. Despite these setbacks we enjoyed a productive tour through the varied habitats of southern and central Mexico. Bird families that performed particularly well were the Corvids (11 species out of 21 Mexican residents), Wrens (24 species out of 34) and Parulid Warblers (34 species out of 66). A group of birds that, sadly, didn't cooperate at all on this tour were the owls, although we sure tried. Particular highlights of our three week wanderings included Highland Guan, Spotted Wood and Singing Quails, Black Storm Petrel, Townsend's Shearwater, Bare-

throated Tiger Heron, King Vulture, Elegant Tern, White-faced Quail-Dove, Lesser Ground Cuckoo, Fulvous Owl, Buff-collared Nightjar, Mexican Whip-poor-will, Emerald-chinned Hummingbird, Black-crested Coquette, Garnet-throated Hummingbird, Beautiful Sheartail, Resplendent Quetzal, Citreoline Trogon, Blue-throated and Russet-crowned Motmots, Wagler's Toucanet, Grey-breasted, Strickland's and Grey-crowned Woodpeckers, Aplomado Falcon, Rufous-breasted Spinetail, Belted, Pileated, Pine and Buff-breasted Flycatchers, Chestnut-sided and Green Shrike-Vireos, Golden Vireo, Azure-hooded, Dwarf, Black-throated and Transvolcanic Jays, Grey Silky-flycatcher, Black-capped Swallow, Giant, Boucard's, Grey-barred, Happy, and Rufous-browed Wrens, Ocellated Thrasher, Blue and Blue-and-white Mockingbirds, Brown-backed and Slate-coloured Solitaires, Russet, Black-headed and Gould's Nightingale-Thrushes, Rufous-backed and Rufous-collared Thrushes, Olive Warbler, Hooded Grosbeak, Blue-crowned Chlorophonia, Sierra Madre, Bridled, Cinnamon-tailed and Striped Sparrows, Collared and White-throated Towhees, Prevost's Ground Sparrow, Mexican Cacique, Yellow-backed, Altamira, Spot-breasted and Black-vented Orioles, Black-polled and Hooded Yellowthroats, Crescent-chested, Fan-tailed, Golden-cheeked, Golden-browed and Red Warblers, Red-breasted Chat, Orange-breasted Bunting, Crimson-collared Tanager and Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer. We encountered several interesting mammals like Grey Fox, Long-tailed Weasel and Paca, and adored the tremendous performances of Pantropical Spotted, Spinner and Short-beaked Common Dolphins. Our splendid eye-ball to eye-ball view of an impressive Godman's Pit Viper will never be forgotten and we saw several fascinating Banded Sea Snakes and many Green Sea Turtles on our little pelagic off Puerto Angel. 486 bird species and 13 mammals were recorded.



The fabulous Godman's Pit Viper of El Triunfo (tour participant Dave Williamson)

Upon arriving in mid-morning at the Tuxtla Gutierrez airport, we were welcomed by the smiling faces of Jorge and Amy, our amiable and very knowledgeable guides for the El Triunfo pre-trip. We boarded our comfortable bus and started to make our way through hilly scrubby meadows and patches of dry forest towards the southeast of the state of Chiapas. We made several stops at strategic locations, which offered a splendid introduction to the local avifauna. Highlights included three impressive King Vultures, a lovely, angry

Ferruginous Pygmy Owl, several very smart, obliging Rose-throated Becards and a couple of ever so attractive male Painted Buntings. The countryside was dotted with eye-catching, flowering Tabebuia and Combretum trees which gave us Berylline and Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and Altamira, Streak-backed, Baltimore and Orchard Orioles. Marshy areas and streams gave us a good selection of waterbirds including Wood Stork, American White Ibis, Green and Little Blue Herons, Western Cattle, Great and Snowy Egrets, Neotropic Cormorant, Purple Gallinule, Northern Jacana, Spotted and Solitary Sandpipers, Green and Ringed Kingfishers, Black Phoebe and Common Yellowthroat. Birds of prey were quite obvious as we picked up Turkey and Black Vultures, White-tailed Kite, Common Black, White-tailed, Short-tailed and Zone-tailed Hawks, Northern Crested Caracara, American Kestrel and a Peregrine Falcon. We also noted fairly widespread species like American White Pelican, Inca Dove, Common and Ruddy Ground Doves, White-winged Dove, Groove-billed Ani, Vaux's Swift, Gartered Trogon, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Northern Beardless Tyrannulet, Yellow-olive Flatbill, Willow, Vermilion, Social, Boat-billed and Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, Great Kiskadee, Tropical and Western Kingbirds, Bell's and Warbling Vireos, White-throated Magpie-Jay, Grey-breasted Martin, Northern Rough-winged, Barn and Cave Swallows, Cabanis's Wren, Tropical Mockingbird, Clay-coloured Thrush, House Sparrow, Lesser Goldfinch, Lincoln's Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Bronzed Cowbird, the ubiquitous Great-tailed Grackle, Black-and-white, Tennessee and American Yellow Warblers, Rose-breasted and Blue Grosbeaks, Indigo Bunting, Blue-grey Tanager, Red-legged Honeycreeper, Black-headed and Greyish Saltators and Blue-black Grassquit. In late afternoon we rolled into the small town of Jaltenango, where we organized ourselves for our exciting stay in the famous El Triunfo Reserve.



A Yellow-winged Tanager in a fruiting Cecropia; the group along the El Triunfo trail (Mark Van Beirs)

When we gathered for breakfast early in the morning, it aspired that most of the group had experienced a rather uncomfortable night due to a major bout of Montezuma's revenge (or Montezuma's quickstep). We boarded the truck that would take us along an extremely dusty track to the Finca Prusia trailhead. We made several stops at rough meadows and at interesting-looking stretches of forest edge, where we picked up a good variety of species. Particular highlights included a terrific Black Hawk-Eagle that flew low over us, a cracking adult and a more subdued young male Long-tailed Manakin, a Plumbeous Vireo (of the distinctive race *montanus*), several fairly well-behaving Black-capped Swallows and a couple of lovely Prevost's Ground Sparrows. We also found Grey Hawk, a dark morph Red-tailed Hawk, Red-billed Pigeon, White-tipped Dove, Azure-crowned Hummingbird, Plain-capped Starthroat, Lesson's Motmot, Acorn Woodpecker, White-crowned Parrot, Red-lore Amazon, Green Parakeet, Olivaceous Woodcreeper, Ochre-bellied Flycatcher, Common Tody-Flycatcher, Greater Pewee, Least and Dusky-capped Flycatchers, Yellow-throated Vireo, Lesser Greenlet, Swainson's and White-throated Thrushes, Black-headed Siskin, Yellow-throated Euphonia, Melodious Blackbird, American Redstart, Wilson's Warbler and Summer and Yellow-winged Tanagers. We reached the trailhead just before midday, enjoyed our picnic lunch, stacked up on trailmix and started the 12km long walk up to the famous El Triunfo clearing. Our luggage was loaded onto several horses and mules and some of the harder hit participants managed to get a ride upon these sturdy animals. In the heat of the day the birds kept a low profile, but we did pick up White-collared Swift, Mexican

Violetear, several dainty Emerald-chinned Hummingbirds, Collared Trogon, Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaner and White-winged Tanager. We reached the clearing in late afternoon and after an early dinner everyone hit the sack, with high expectations of the goodies to come.



The male of the guatemalensis race of the Yellow Grosbeak is a real cracker (Mark Van Beirs)

Before dawn we were already patrolling the clearing observing Venus, Saturn and Jupiter and listening to the barking of a couple of Barred Forest Falcons. As it was getting light, we started scanning the surrounding forest edge and for the next two hours we enjoyed some excellent bird activity. The Barred Forest Falcons flew across the clearing and a smart Gould's Nightingale-Thrush (split from Spotted) was foraging near cover. Flowering bushes attracted a gaudy Violet Sabrewing and a Green-throated Mountaingem. Several striking Hooded Grosbeaks were sunning themselves in the treetops and lovely Yellow Grosbeaks (of the bright orange race *guatemalensis*) were posing in the scope. A cute Deppe's Squirrel and a gorgeous Grey Fox visited the compost dump behind the kitchen. Other goodies included Band-tailed Pigeon, Chestnut-collared Swift, Golden-olive and Hairy Woodpeckers, Hammond's Flycatcher, Brown-capped Vireo, Swainson's and Black Thrushes, Elegant Euphonia, Common Bush Tanager, Townsend's and Wilson's Warblers and Flame-coloured and Hepatic Tanagers. After a filling breakfast we hit a trail and slowly wandered along, picking up several interesting species. A family of Singing Quails performed beautifully, several Highland Guans gave terrific views and a Black-throated Jay obliged nicely. The list was further enriched with Broad-winged Hawk, Emerald Toucanet, Spot-crowned Woodcreeper, Northern Tufted and Yellowish Flycatchers, Rufous-browed Wren, Grey-breasted Wood Wren, Brown-backed Solitaire, Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush, Blue-crowned Chlorophonia, Rufous-collared Sparrow, Golden-browed Warbler and Slate-throated Whitestart. We paused for a while in the middle of the day, as not everyone's tummy had recovered yet. At the edge of the clearing a White-faced Quail-Dove and a Chestnut-capped Brushfinch

showed all too briefly. Under a threatening sky we walked another trail where the highlight was a fabulous encounter with a truly impressive Fulvous Owl. This beautiful speciality allowed extended scope studies as dusk was creeping in.



We enjoyed magical moments with this magnificent Fulvous Owl (tour participant Dave Williamson)

After scoping up planet Saturn with its magnificent rings just before dawn, we watched the activity at the clearing for a while. New birds included the modest Paltry Tyrannulet, Hermit Thrush and a lovely Crescent-chested Warbler. After breakfast we birded the entrance trail, where we were delighted to be able to observe a pair of truly fantastic Horned Guans at close range. They were sedately clambering about in a bromeliad-laden tree allowing us excellent looks at their bizarre, blood-red horn, their strange white irises and their smart black and white plumage. Exquisite, never to be forgotten moments!!! We found a pair of all too furtive Resplendent Quetzals and glimpsed a rather vocal Blue-throated Motmot. A Ruddy Foliage-gleaner played hide and seek and Black-throated Jays obliged beautifully. We also obtained perfect looks at a male Blue-crowned Chlorophonia and a bromeliad destroying Spotted Woodcreeper. Upon returning at the clearing we noted a Grey Fox which had just killed a large Godman's Pit Viper. During the midday break some people did a bit of exploring and came back with great sightings of another pair of Horned Guans, a couple of showy Resplendent Quetzals, a surprise Tody Motmot and a tame Central American Red Brocket. A very obliging White-faced Quail-Dove visited the compost pit behind the kitchen, allowing most of the group superb views of this gorgeous speciality. Foraging flocks of Chestnut-collared and White-collared Swifts were overhead and in late afternoon we tried yet another trail, which gave us very good looks at another spectacular Fulvous Owl.



The Resplendent Quetzals at El Triunfo are exquisite, but very shy creatures (tour participant Dave Williamson)

After the regular dawn stint at the clearing one group walked the Costa trail till the continental divide. They came away with a very obliging Rufous-browed Wren and a bizarre Morelet's Alligator Lizard. Guide Jorge and hardy Barbara then walked quite a ways down the Pacific slope towards Cañada Honda where excellent species like Cabanis's (or Azure-rumped) Tanager, Rufous Sabrewing, Sparkling-tailed Woodstar, a female Black-crested Coquette, Stub-tailed Spadebill and a Greater Grison showed. The other group stayed in the surroundings of the clearing and finally managed to get the much-desired Horned Guan on everyone's list. Good looks at several Chestnut-capped Brushfinches were also appreciated. In the afternoon we birded the clearing and the nearby trails. A c65 cm long Godman's Pit Viper was located just outside our bunk house! Many photos were taken of this restricted range reptile. A male Highland Guan was found feeding in a mora fruiting tree and a pair of Singing Quail showed well. We also had several perfect encounters with White-faced Quail-Doves. An after-dinner stroll gave us a couple of beautiful Pacas at the compost pit, a Central American Red Brocket and a heard only Cacomistle.



White-faced Quail-Doves were regularly encountered at El Triunfo (Mark Van Beirs)

Our final hours at the magnificent ecobiosphere reserve of El Triunfo were spent walking up and mostly down to the Finca Prusia trailhead. We finally managed to observe a canopy inhabiting Blue-throated Motmot and were waved farewell by a gorgeous Horned Guan, perched at ease in a fruiting mora tree. Lower down we were, much to everyone's surprise, treated to good looks at a couple of rarely-seen Cabanis's (or Azure-rumped) Tanagers in a fruiting tree. At the trailhead we boarded the coffee truck for the dusty drive to Jaltenango, where our comfortable bus was waiting to take us to the large city of Tuxtla Gutierrez.



The endearing Nava's Wren of the El Ocote limestone hills (Mark Van Beirs)

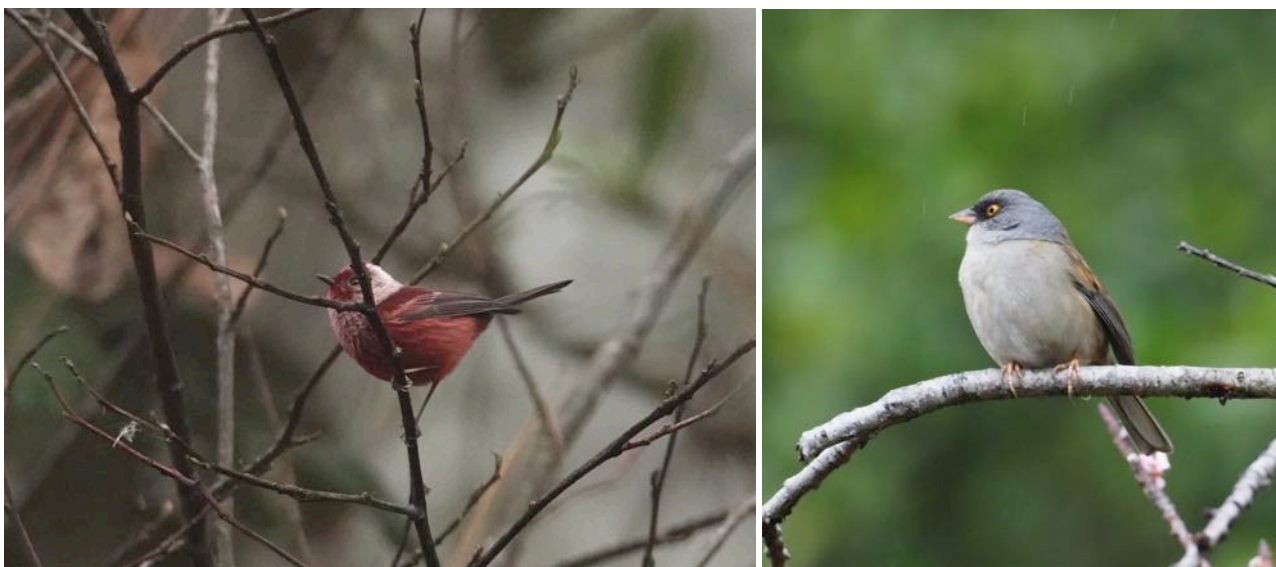
Just after sunrise we reached the forested limestone hills of the famous El Ocote reserve, which is situated on the Caribbean side of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. We walked along a wide track and the first hours were splendidly birdy. The highlight of our visit was without a doubt the unique Nava's Wren, which we managed to admire so very well as it posed at minimum distance in its unique karst habitat. This magnificent species has a restricted range on the border of the states of Chiapas and Veracruz. A colourful Keel-billed Toucan was rasping away in a treetop and a Collared Forest Falcon flew about haunted by vociferous Brown Jays. We scoped a tiny Yellow-bellied Tyrannulet and a usually difficult to see, well-camouflaged Green Shrike-Vireo. The mournful song of Slaty-breasted Tinamous and the ethereal song of Slate-coloured Solitaires resounded through the forest. We eventually found the modestly-plumaged Solitaire in a fruiting tree. A pair of cute Olive-backed Euphonias was building its nest in a bromeliad. The sides of the track were covered in flowers which gave us Stripe-throated Hermit and the localized Long-tailed Sabrewing. Other goodies included Blue Ground Dove, Squirrel Cuckoo, Smoky-brown Woodpecker, Barred Antshrike, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Masked Tityra, Band-backed and Spot-breasted Wrens, Grey Catbird, Wood Thrush, Rusty Sparrow, Montezuma Oropendola, Black-cowled Oriole, Blue-winged, Magnolia, Black-throated Green and

Golden-crowned Warblers, Tropical Parula, White-winged Tanager, Red-throated Ant-Tanager, Black-faced Grosbeak, Bananaquit and Morelet's Seedeater (a recent split from White-collared Seedeater).



An unobtrusive Rusty Sparrow at El Ocote (Mark Van Beirs); a widespread and very variable Mexican Grey Squirrel (tour participant Dave Williamson)

The famous El Sumidero Canyon was our birding venue the following morning. The reserve is normally closed on Tuesdays, but with some smooth talking we managed to get us in just after dawn. It was a marvellous experience to have the reserve just to ourselves, but, sadly, a cold front had just arrived from the north and kept the temperature and the bird activity down and a sabotaging mist up. At the famous viewpoint at the end of the road, we were barely able to see the well-known deep gorge of the Grijalva river because of the dense fog that had developed along the cliffs. Persistence paid off though as we obtained excellent looks at a lovely, restricted range Belted Flycatcher in its bamboo habitat. Some patient waiting at a flowerbank resulted in pretty decent sightings of a couple of rarely-encountered Slender Sheartails. Other new hummingbirds included Canivet's Emerald, Buff-bellied and Green-fronted Hummingbirds. Plain Chachalaca, Ivory-billed Woodcreeper, Green Jay, Banded Wren, Blue-grey Gnatcatcher, Olive Sparrow, Black-vented



The magnificent Pink-headed Warbler (tour participant Dave Williamson) and the localized fulvescens race of Yellow-eyed Junco were observed near San Cristobal (Mark Van Beirs)

Oriole, Nashville and Fan-tailed Warblers, Western Tanager and Mexican Grey Squirrel were other additions to the tally. In the afternoon we left the hubbub of Tuxtla Gutierrez and drove via a fast highway to the enchanting colonial town of San Cristobal de las Casas.

The bromeliad-laden, mixed pine-evergreen forests packed with dense bushy undergrowth is the habitat of our main target in the San Cristobal area, the glorious Pink-headed Warbler. Our man on the spot took us to a favourite area of this unique species and it was the first bird we encountered on our morning walk. Although it was cold and gloomy with bad light conditions, we were able to admire the fantastic colours of this near endemic beauty. Warblers were everywhere and amongst the many Townsend's and Hermit Warblers we also found three exquisite Golden-cheeked Warblers. A Garnet-throated Hummingbird posed very nicely and we obtained good looks at the important Olive Warbler. We scoped a Yellow-eyed Junco of the distinctive race *fulvescens*, which is endemic to Chiapas and a possible future split. Other new species included Hutton's Vireo, Steller's and Unicoloured Jays, Grey Silky-flycatcher (many), Rufous-collared Thrush, Red Crossbill, Spotted Towhee, Yellow-backed Oriole, Grace's Warbler and Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer. We also visited the San Cristobal botanical gardens where White-eared and Rivoli's Hummingbirds were plundering the plentiful flowering bushes. We found Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, American Bushtit and Bullock's Oriole here. After a scrumptious lunch we birded a stretch of mixed pine-oak forest where the near-endemic Blue-and-white Mockingbird performed and a pair of Northern Flickers (of the distinctive race *mexicanoides*) could be scoped. We also noted Acorn Woodpecker, Band-backed Wren and MacGillivray's Warbler. Our extended owling session on a nearby mountaintop was sabotaged by high winds and just produced a heard only Mexican Whip-poor-will.



Northern Flicker (of the race mexicanoides) and Grey Silky-flycatchers enlivened the San Cristobal forests (Mark Van Beirs)

We started the next day's birding just after dawn with a stop-over in the Sumidero Canyon. The weather was better than on our first visit, but bird activity was still not what it should have been. The famous red flowering oriole tree was only visited by Baltimore and several Streak-backed Orioles. We also found a Slender Sheartail and a Cassin's Vireo. In mid-morning we resumed our travels towards the little town of Arriaga, and while driving through Tuxtla Gutierrez we picked up Eurasian Collared Dove. In the afternoon we explored the foothills of the Sepultura Biosphere Reserve and enjoyed a fantastic time. The highlight was obviously the spectacular Rosita's (or Rose-bellied) Bunting. The male of this fabulous, restricted range species has to be seen to be believed and we were fortunate enough to have a male pose just meters away. Glorious Orange-breasted Buntings also showed very well. Citreoline Trogons were decidedly common and a cracking Russet-crowned Motmot was scoped at length and studied in detail. Other goodies here included Green-fronted Hummingbird, Collared Aracari, Velasquez's Woodpecker, Orange-fronted and Pacific

Parakeets, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Banded Wren, White-lored Gnatcatcher and a smart Stripe-headed Sparrow.



The male Rosita's (or Rose-bellied) Bunting is one of those "must see" birds (tour participant Dave Williamson)

The Pacific lowlands south of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec are home to two restricted range species and on our visit to the varied habitats in the surroundings of the seaside resort of Puerto Arista we easily encountered both. The magnificent, well-marked Giant Wren showed brilliantly at close range and the vociferous White-bellied Chachalaca tolerated excellent scope views as it sat in the canopy of a tall spreading tree. Before sunrise we saw a Western Barn Owl and heard the distinctive calls of a Pacific Screech Owl. Sadly, a feisty Ferruginous Pygmy Owl chased the Screech Owl out of view. Our walk along a shrubby patch of woodland eventually gave us cracking scope views of a beautifully posing Lesser Ground Cuckoo, allowing us to discern the intricate facial pattern of this beauty. We also noted Crane Hawk, Cinnamon Hummingbird, Red-lored Amazon, lots of Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, Brown-crested Flycatcher, a party of gaudy Painted Buntings, Mexican Cacique, Spot-breasted Oriole, Northern Parula, Audubon's Warbler and a male Morelet's Seedeater. A good look at some saltwater lagoons produced Blue-winged Teal, Pied-billed Grebe, American White Ibis, Roseate Spoonbill, Great Blue Heron, Reddish Egret, American White and Brown Pelicans, hundreds of Magnificent Frigatebirds, Western Osprey, a female Northern Harrier, Black-necked Stilt, Whimbrel, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Lesser Yellowlegs, Willet, Royal Tern, Belted Kingfisher and Tree Swallow. A nearby patch of mangrove held a roost of antediluvian-looking Boat-billed Herons, while a short visit to the nearby Pacific coast gave us Laughing and Franklin's Gulls. In the heat of the day we returned to our hotel and later drove west along the southside of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, admiring the enormous windfarms on the way. In late afternoon we arrived at our hotel at the edge of the town of Tehuantepec.



A posing Giant Wren and a retiring Lesser Ground Cuckoo in the Puerto Arista area (Mark Van Beirs)

A pre-breakfast outing in the dry, scrubby woodland near Tehuantepec produced several excellent specialities. The first bird we encountered was a modestly-plumaged Cinnamon-tailed (or Sumichrast's) Sparrow, a species with a very restricted range. Several shining Doubleday's Hummingbirds performed nicely and a pair of Sclater's Wrens showed extremely well at close range. We managed to study a West Mexican Chachalaca through the scope and identified Ash-throated, Nutting's and Brown-crested Flycatchers ... real *Myiarchus* heaven. A Cooper's Hawk, a female Beautiful Sheartail and a Yellow-green Vireo also made an appearance. After a yummy brunch we hit the coastal road and drove for most of the day westwards to the small town of Puerto Angel. An Aplomado Falcon being harassed by a Northern Crested Caracara enlivened the journey. A patch of woodland gave us Laughing Falcon, Golden Vireo and Northern Cardinal. A major stop at some salinas yielded 600+ American Avocets, of which some were already attaining breeding colours. We located several Elegant Terns amongst the many Royals and found Blue-



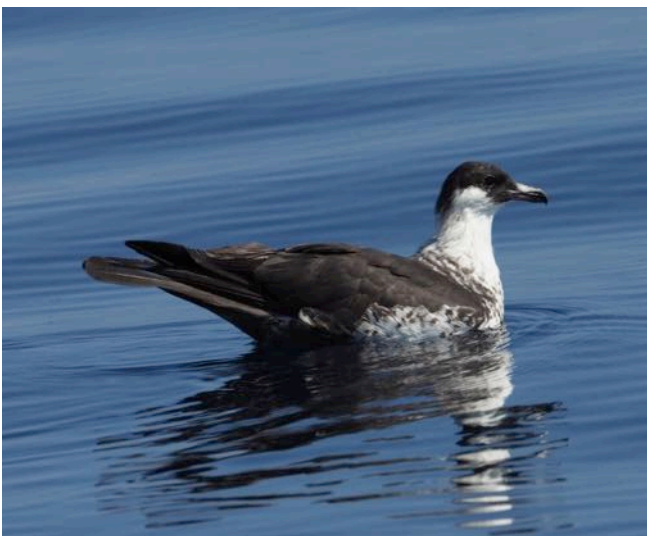
In the scrubby woodland near Tehuantepec Sclater's Wren and Cinnamon-tailed (or Sumichrast's) Sparrow were seen (Mark Van Beirs)

winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Least Grebe, Black-crowned and Yellow-crowned Night Herons, Black-necked Stilt, Stilt Sandpiper, a Spotted Sandpiper in breeding attire and a Greater Yellowlegs. Several Blue-footed and Brown Boobies were roosting on some offshore rocks and closer to Puerto Angel we found a pair of Golden-cheeked Woodpeckers. We were welcomed by our gracious hosts at our cosy hotel and enjoyed a tasty fish dinner on the beach while sipping delicious Margarita cocktails.



The boat trip off Puerto Angel gave us Pink-footed Shearwater (Mark Van Beirs) and playful Spinner Dolphins (tour participant Dave Williamson)

The boat trip off Puerto Angel turned out to be a very pleasant outing. We set off in our little boat just after dawn. The ocean was like a mirror and we were regularly entertained by pods of three different species of dolphin, as Pantropical Spotted, Spinner and Short-beaked Common Dolphins vied for attention. We saw more than a hundred Green Sea Turtles loafing at the surface and spotted several, extremely poisonous, attractively-patterned Banded Sea Snakes. Pink-footed Shearwaters showed regularly, several Black Storm Petrels performed quite nicely and a single Townsend's Shearwater allowed positive identification. We sailed up to 22 kilometres (c12 nautical miles) offshore and also observed Wedge-tailed Shearwaters, Red Phalaropes in non-breeding attire and several cracking Pomarine Jaegers. One of the "Poms" flew in to inspect our boat and sat watching us just several meters away! About ten km out we observed a hunting Peregrine Falcon! On the return journey we made a small detour to have a look at an isolated, guano-covered stack which held several hundred Brown Boobies of the distinctive eastern Pacific race *brewsteri*. After a break in the heat of the day we explored a nearby dry arroyo where we found a male Ruby-throated



The boat trip also produced a splendid Pomarine Jaeger and a posing young Brown Booby on the back of a Green Sea Turtle (Mark Van Beirs)

Hummingbird, a lovely Happy Wren, a not very cooperative Red-breasted Chat, several gorgeous Rufous-backed Robins and a heard only Colima Pygmy Owl.

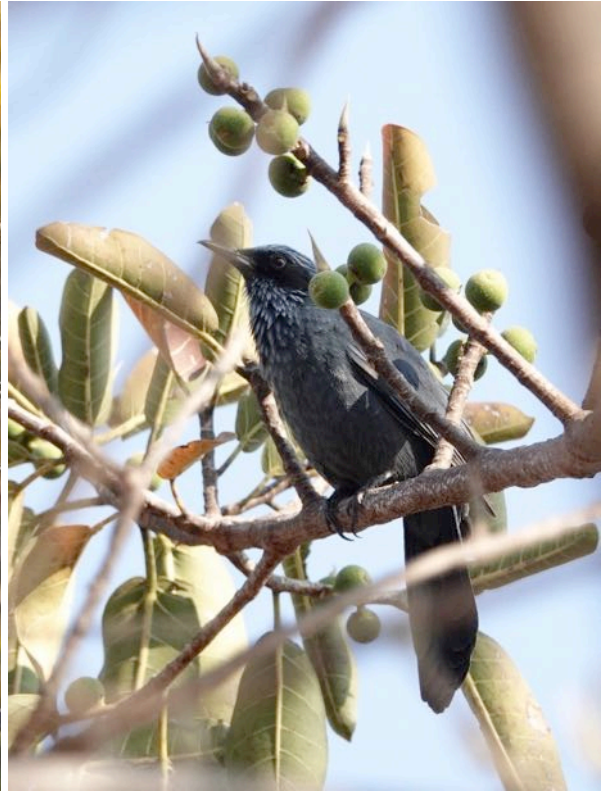


Our first Rufous-backed Robin appeared near Puerto Angel (tour participant Dave Williamson); Wagler's Toucanet is a recent split in the "Emerald" Toucanet complex (Mark Van Beirs)

After an excellent, early sit down breakfast, we started the long drive up along a very winding road to the town of Oaxaca. We made several stops in the evergreen submontane woodland where an Oaxaca (or Blue-capped) Hummingbird showed all too briefly. Several Wagler's Toucanets performed very well and a pair of Grey-crowned Woodpeckers gave brilliant views. Black Hawk-Eagle, Plain-capped Starthroat, Lineated Woodpecker, Greater Pewee and a Pacific-slope Flycatcher were other additions to the list. Higher up, we stood guard at some flowering heliconias and eventually observed a lovely Mexican Hermit coming in to feed. Short stops in the pine zone didn't really produce anything and in the early evening we finally arrived at our oasis-like hotel in the suburbs of the large conurbation of Oaxaca.



This Grey-crowned Woodpecker played hard to get in the Puerto Angel foothills; the Bridled Sparrow is one of the best-looking members of its tribe (Mark Van Beirs)



Unobtrusive Pileated Flycatcher (Mark Van Beirs) and Blue Mockingbird inhabit the Teotitlan scrub (tour participant Dave Williamson)

Next morning, we explored a splendid tract of deciduous shrubby woodland near the village of Teotitlan as the sun was lighting up the nearby hilltops. Several very localized endemics gave themselves up fairly easily. Subtly-attired Dusky Hummingbirds were visiting flowering bushes and a rarely-seen Pileated Flycatcher sat up for excellent scope studies. A bulky Boucard's Wren posed on top of a cactus, while a Blue Mockingbird was singing from within a bush. Very attractively patterned Bridled Sparrows and sedate White-throated Towhees showed really well. More widespread species included West Mexican Chachalaca, American



The Oaxaca valley also gave us Black-headed Grosbeak and Woodhouse's Scub Jay (Mark Van Beirs)

Dusky Flycatcher, Cassin's and Thick-billed Kingbirds, Woodhouse's Scrub Jay, Northern Raven, Violet-green Swallow, Bewick's Wren, Northern Mockingbird, House Finch, Virginia's and Black-throated Grey Warblers, Hepatic Tanager and Black-headed Grosbeak. A nearby pond held Least Grebe, American Coot, Killdeer, Least Sandpiper, Say's Phoebe, Sand Martin and Buff-bellied Pipit. At the famous Zapotec ruins at Yagul we patrolled the many impressive prickly pear and organ pipe cacti clumps and had great looks at the endemic Grey-breasted Woodpecker. Skittish Beautiful Sheartails and more showy Dusky Hummingbirds were visiting the prickly pear flowers. In the heat of the day we visited an oak scrub-covered hillslope where a sneaky, endemic Ocellated Thrasher eventually deigned to show to most of us.



The cool pine forests overlooking the city of Oaxaca yielded great endemics like Dwarf Jay and Collared Towhee (Mark Van Beirs)

Long before dawn we were already admiring a splendid male Mexican Whip-poor-will in the cool, montane forests of the Sierra Juarez, high above the city of Oaxaca. We heard and briefly saw a Mottled Owl and, just when the sun was waking up, while munching our breakfast, a party of Steller's and much-wanted, endemic Dwarf Jays was coming through. We spent the better part of the day walking the wide tracks through these outstanding pine-oak forests. We obtained much better looks in good light at a mixed party of Dwarf Jays and endemic, vociferous Grey-barred Wrens. Magnificent Red Warblers regularly accompanied us and other excellent specialties included Long-tailed Wood Partridge, Mountain Trogon, Pine Flycatcher, a trio of Chestnut-sided Shrike-Vireos, Russet Nightingale-Thrush, Olive Warbler, Collared Towhee, Rufous-capped Brushfinch and a heard only Mountain Pygmy Owl. A brief stop in a patch of dry scrubby woodland on the return drive gave us a Rock Wren and an attractive Lark Sparrow.

The following day started with a terrific performance of a singing Buff-collared Nightjar posing in the torchbeam in the outskirts of Oaxaca. We then visited the world-famous archaeological site of Monte Alban, which is also an excellent birding area. While strolling about the impressive ruins we picked up Rock and Canyon Wrens, Blue Mockingbird, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, MacGillivray's Warbler, several lovely Rufous-capped Warblers and a Mexican Cottontail. In late morning we packed up, left the town of Oaxaca and drove along a winding mountain road across the Sierra Juarez north to the Caribbean lowlands to the unlovely town of Tuxtepec. A brief stop gave us a pair of very well-behaved Rufous-breasted Spinetails, Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, Olive-throated Parakeets and a nice Coyote.



The famous Zapotec ruins of Monte Alban are an ideal habitat for the sprightly Rock Wren (Mark Van Beirs)

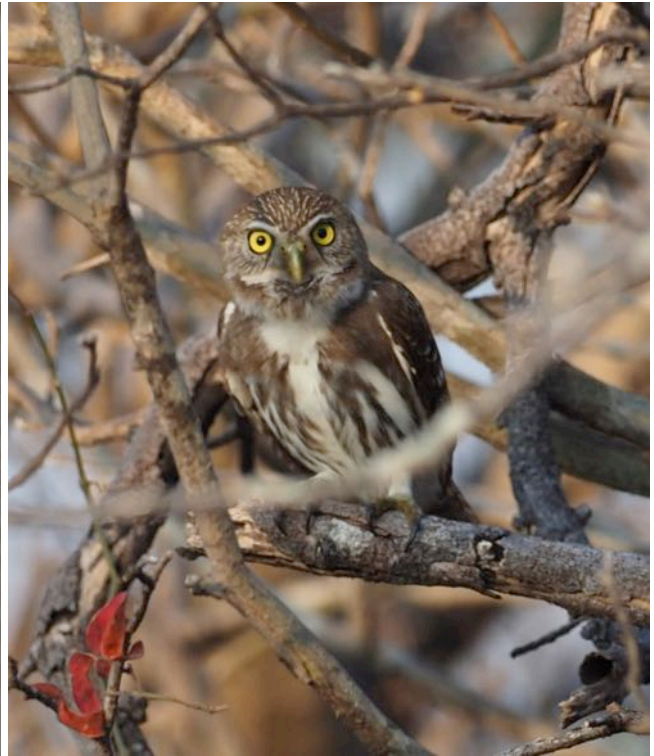
Next morning, in the lower reaches of the Valle Nacional, we stood guard at a particular flowering tree and were rewarded with good looks at a young male Black-crested Coquette. Piratic Flycatcher, Couch's Kingbird, Yellow-billed Cacique, a cracking Crimson-collared Tanager and a Variable Seedeater were other excellent additions to the growing list. In late morning we arrived at the higher levels of the Valle Nacional and found the evergreen forest shrouded in a dense mist which got worse and worse during the course of the afternoon. We did manage to get fantastic scope views of an exquisite male Bumblebee Hummingbird and admired this little jewel at length. It took a while to get good looks at an Azure-hooded Jay, as the mist tended to creep in at the wrong time, but in the end, we were able to discern its nice head pattern. Azure-crowned Hummingbird, Brown-hooded Parrot, Slate-coloured Solitaire, Black-headed Nightingale-Thrush and a gorgeous male Blue-crowned Chlorophonia also performed well. We heard the loud calls of Spotted Wood Quail at close range, and although the birds approached, they remained a voice in the undergrowth. We also heard a distant Pheasant Cuckoo and Barred Parakeets typically flew low overhead through the clouds.



Bumblebee Hummingbird and Blue-crowned Chlorophonia were some of the prizes at Valle Nacional (tour participant Dave Williamson)

Another morning in the lower areas of the Valle Nacional was again marred by inclement weather as rain and rather dense mist sabotaged our birding efforts. Despite that, we did manage to find a few new birds for the trip. A close calling Spotted Wood Quail was observed by several sharp-eyed participants. We heard a

couple of Central American Pygmy Owls, but, sadly, they didn't want to budge from their inaccessible roost. A Yellow-faced Grassquit was picked up along the roadside. After lunch we left Tuxtepec and drove westwards to the city of Cordoba in the state of Veracruz. A short stop at a nice wetland gave us a gorgeous Bare-throated Tiger Heron and a speedy Aplomado Falcon which we also saw perched up. The area was teeming with birds including new species like White-faced ibis, lots of American White Pelicans, Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, a female Snail Kite, Limpkin, loads of Northern Jacanas, Wilson's Snipe, Caspian Tern, Tree Swallow and Brown-headed Cowbird.



Black-necked Stilt and Ferruginous Pygmy Owl were regularly seen along our itinerary (Mark Van Beirs)

We enjoyed a birdy morning in the steep limestone hills near Cordoba under a grey, gloomy sky. The highlight of our visit was without a doubt the perky Sumichrast's Wren, which performed so very, very well at minimal distance in its specialized karst habitat. We were able to admire this little fellow for minutes as it sang its heart out, while perched on a lichen-covered outcrop. The localized Curve-winged Sabrewing showed well, as did several White-bellied Emeralds. A couple of Lesson's Motmots were feeding in a mossy tree and Wood Thrush and Hooded Warbler were foraging at ground level. We heard the mournful notes of several Thicket Tinamous emanate from the coffee plantations, but they, typically, remained elusive. In the afternoon our agent Roberto drove us to the enormous, chaotic metropolis of Mexico City. A serious road accident involving a tanker and a bus delayed our arrival by a few hours, but an endemic Striped Sparrow provided a bit of consolation.



Black-polled Yellowthroat and Strickland's Woodpecker are restricted to the Mexico City area (tour participant Dave Williamson)

The bunch grass covered volcanic slopes to the south of Mexico City are the favoured habitat of the critically endangered Sierra Madre Sparrow. Just after dawn we were already studying this extremely rare species in all its glory through the scope as it was singing on top of a little bush. This modestly-attired sparrow definitely is one of Mexico's rarest endemics, as the total population is now estimated at less than 300 pairs! We walked amongst the open pine woodland and obtained superb looks at the very localized Strickland's Woodpecker, while endemic pot-bellied Striped Sparrows were everywhere. With the help of our local guide Joren, we collected an excellent list of specialities including Northern Flicker (red-shafted race), Pine and Buff-breasted Flycatchers, Plumbeous Vireo (rare here), Mexican Chickadee, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Grass and Brown-throated House Wrens, White-breasted Nuthatch, gorgeous Western Bluebirds, American Robin, Pine Siskin, Song, Savannah and Chipping Sparrows, Spotted and Canyon Towhees and Eastern Meadowlark. A swift Long-tailed Weasel was seen dashing through the bunchgrass clumps. A stop on the way to the Almoloya marshes gave us several Transvolcanic Jays. The famous wetland was brimming with birds and it didn't take long to get cracking looks at the endearing, very local Black-polled Yellowthroat in its rush habitat. A Virginia Rail allowed good views and we also added Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mexican Duck, Northern Pintail, Ruddy Duck, Black-necked and Clark's Grebes, Least Bittern, Aztec Rail (heard only), Sora, Common Gallinule, Long-billed Dowitcher, Marsh Wren, Yellow-headed Blackbird and Red-winged Blackbird (of the Bicoloured race) to the list.

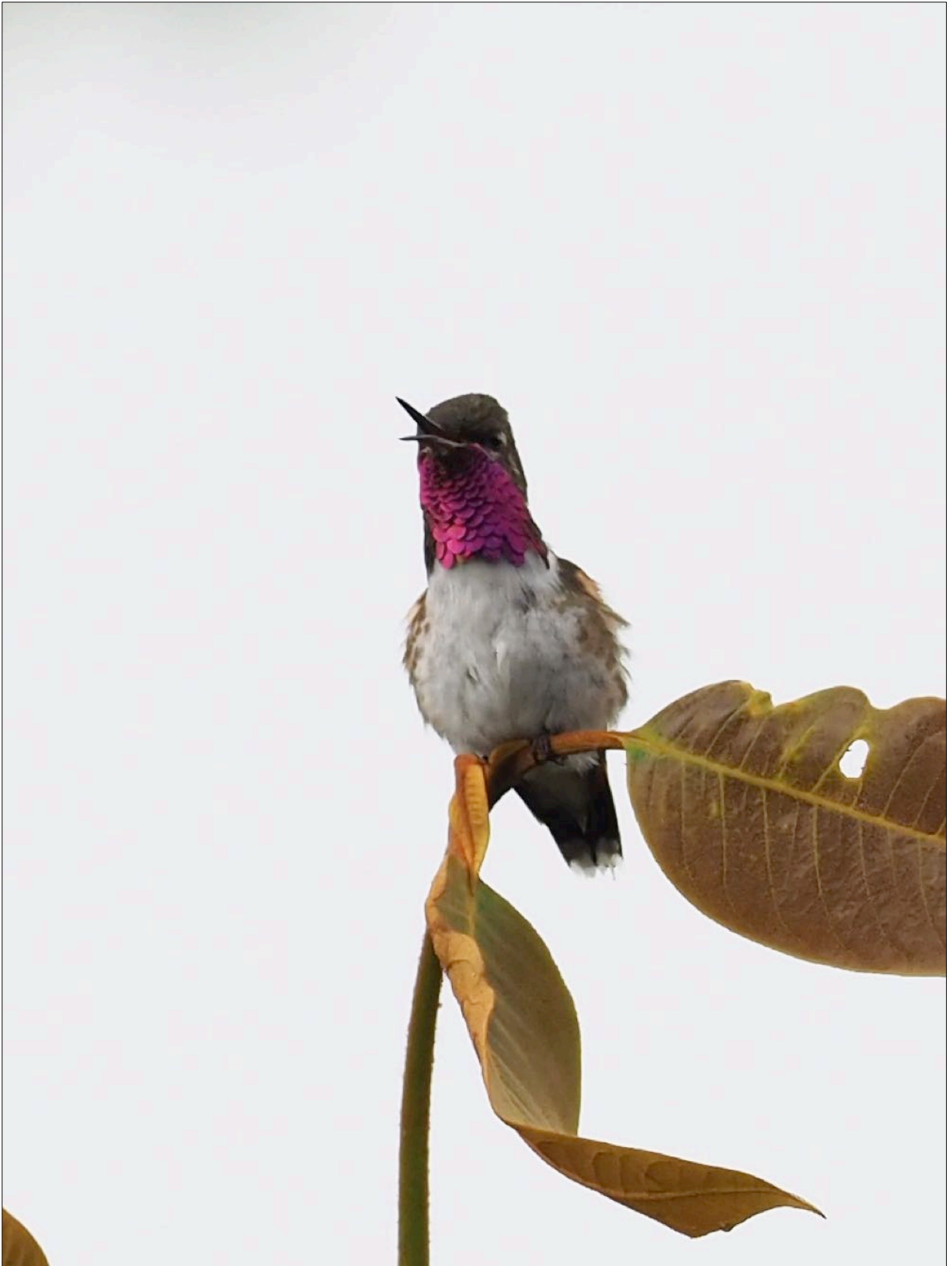


The attractive black morph of Mexican Grey Squirrel and Broad-billed Hummingbird were noted within Mexico City (Mark Van Beirs)

On the final morning of the tour we visited a patch of nice shrubby woodland within Mexico City. We had to work hard to get to grips with the usually more cooperative Hooded Yellowthroat, but in the end we all got excellent views of this localized species as it was skulking in brushy undergrowth. Several Broad-billed Hummingbirds showed well, a Cordilleran Flycatcher was identified, a flock of Cedar Waxwings were foraging in a fruiting eucalyptus, a couple of Rufous-crowned Sparrows (of the localized race *duponti*) gave a sterling performance, a Scott's Oriole obliged and a Varied Bunting disappeared all too quickly. We only heard the sought-after Black-backed Oriole and encountered many black Mexican Grey Squirrels. And then it was time to pack up and say goodbye to the land of beans, sombreros, guacamole and bloody topes (sleeping policemen).



*Rufous-crowned Sparrow is represented by the isolated race *duponti* in Mexico City (Mark Van Beirs)*



The male Bumblebee Hummingbird is a real jewel (Mark Van Beirs)



The Red Warbler is a truly exquisite bird (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).

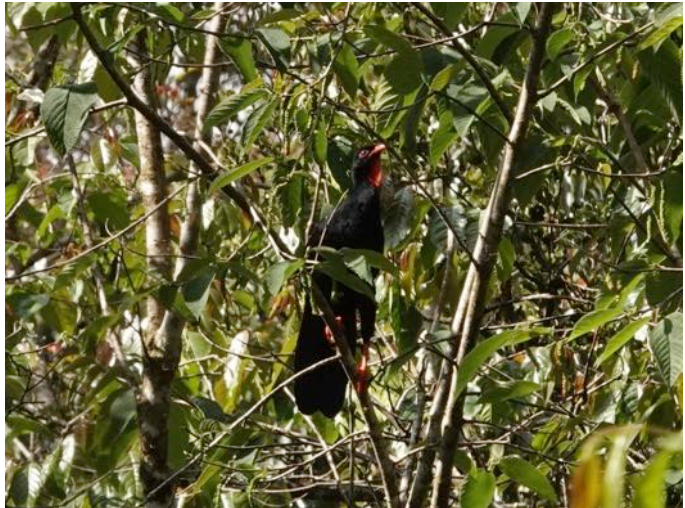
Species which were not personally recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (NL).

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).

Thicket Tinamou ◊ *Crypturellus cinnamomeus* (H) Heard at the Sumidero Canyon and near Cordoba.

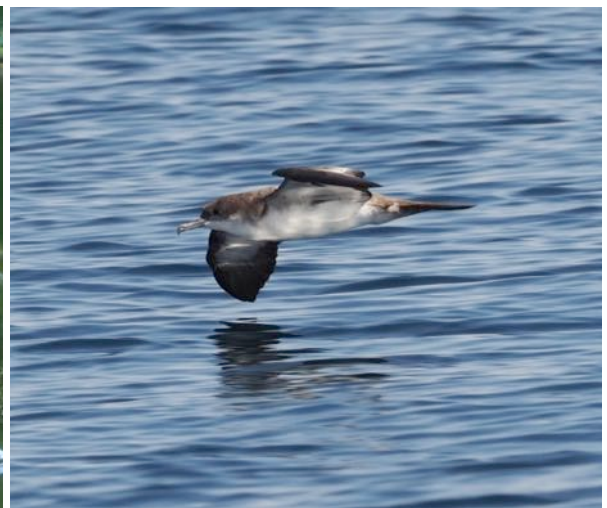
Slaty-breasted Tinamou *Crypturellus boucardi* (H) Heard at the Nava's Wren spot.

Blue-winged Teal *Spatula discors* The most regularly encountered duck.
Northern Shoveler *Spatula clypeata* Good numbers near Tehuantepec and at Almoloya.
Gadwall *Mareca strepera* A handful at Almoloya.
American Wigeon *Mareca americana* Common at the Almoloya marshes.
Mexican Duck ♦ *Anas diazi* Small numbers were noted at the Almoloya marshes.
Northern Pintail *Anas acuta* Just a few at Almoloya.
Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis* Common at Almoloya.
Plain Chachalaca ♦ *Ortalis vetula* Regularly seen and more often heard.
West Mexican Chachalaca ♦ *Ortalis poliocephala* Good looks near Tehuantepec and near Oaxaca.



White-bellied Chachalaca (Mark Van Beirs); Highland Guan (tour participant Dave Williamson)

White-bellied Chachalaca ♦ *Ortalis leucogastra* Several showed well at Puerto Arista.
Highland Guan ♦ (Black Penelopina) *Penelopina nigra* Regularly seen and heard at El Triunfo.



The wonderful Horned Guan (tour participant Dave Williamson); Pink-footed Shearwater (Mark Van Beirs)

Horned Guan ♦ *Oreophasis derbianus* THE BIRD of the TRIP. Terrific looks at El Triunfo.
Long-tailed Wood Partridge ♦ *Dendrortyx macroura* Brief views for some near Oaxaca.
Spotted Wood Quail ♦ *Odontophorus guttatus* Regularly heard at Valle Nacional. Glimpsed by some.
Singing Quail ♦ *Dactylortyx thoracicus* Splendid views at El Triunfo.
Black Storm Petrel ♦ *Oceanodroma melania* Four encounters on our pelagic off Puerto Angel.
Wedge-tailed Shearwater *Ardenna pacifica* Two dark morphs were seen on the pelagic.
Pink-footed Shearwater *Ardenna creatopus* Regular and close encounters on the pelagic.
Townsend's Shearwater ♦ *Puffinus auricularis* A single bird showed quite well on the pelagic.

Least Grebe *Tachybaptus dominicus* Two near Tehuantepec and c30 at Teotitlan.

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps* Regular sightings of this widespread species.

Black-necked Grebe (Eared G) *Podiceps nigricollis* Just a few at the Almoloya marshes.

Clark's Grebe *Aechmophorus clarkii* Small numbers of this elegant species were noted at Almoloya.

Wood Stork *Mycteria americana* A handful of sightings along our route.

American White Ibis *Eudocimus albus* Five observations at ponds and lakes.

White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi* 30 near Tuxtepec and 50 at Almoloya.

Roseate Spoonbill *Platalea ajaja* A single bird was seen at Puerto Arista.

Bare-throated Tiger Heron *Tigrisoma mexicanum* Good looks at a single bird near Tuxtepec.

Boat-billed Heron *Cochlearius cochlearius* Excellent views at c12 birds in the Puerto Arista mangroves.

Least Bittern *Ixobrychus exilis* A single bird flew over the rushes at Almoloya.

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* An immature was identified near Tehuantepec.

Yellow-crowned Night Heron *Nyctanassa violacea* Two observations along the Pacific coast.

Green Heron *Butorides virescens* Four observations along streams or in mangroves.

Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* Widespread in small numbers.

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias* Small numbers were noted along our route.

Great Egret (American G E) *Ardea [alba] egretta* Regular.

Reddish Egret *Egretta rufescens* A single dark morph was observed at the Puerto Arista mudflats.

Tricolored Heron (Louisiana H) *Egretta tricolor* Just a few along the Pacific coast.

Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea* Small numbers at streams, ponds and the coast.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula* Regular observations.

American White Pelican *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos* Flocks were noted at four localities.

Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis* Regular along the Pacific coast.



Magnificent Frigatebirds (Mark Van Beirs)

Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens* Hundreds along the Pacific coast.

Blue-footed Booby *Sula nebouxii* Just a few on offshore stacks in the Puerto Angel area.

Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster* The race *brewsteri* was regularly seen along the Pacific coast.

Neotropic Cormorant (Olivaceous C) *Phalacrocorax brasilianus* Fairly common.

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura* Common.

Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture (Savanna V) *Cathartes burrovianus* A few in the Caribbean lowlands.

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus* Common where man lives.

King Vulture *Sarcoramphus papa* Four observations in the El Triunfo area.

Western Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* 11 observations of this widespread piscivore.



Brown Boobies; Broad-winged Hawk (Mark Van Beirs)

White-tailed Kite *Elanus leucurus* Four observations of this elegant bird of prey.

Black Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus tyrannus* One at El Triunfo and one in the Puerto Angel foothills.

Ornate Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus ornatus* (H) One was heard on the walk out of El Triunfo.

Sharp-shinned Hawk *Accipiter striatus* (NL) One showed at the Oaxaca Hummingbird watch.

Cooper's Hawk *Accipiter cooperii* Two observations of this northern migrant.

Northern Harrier (American H) *Circus hudsonius* Nine sightings of female plumaged birds.

Snail Kite *Rostrhamus sociabilis* A female was at the Tuxtepec wetland.

Crane Hawk *Geranospiza caerulescens* Two observations in the Pacific lowlands.

Common Black Hawk *Buteogallus anthracinus* Two sightings at El Triunfo.

Great Black Hawk *Buteogallus urubitinga* A single showed at El Triunfo.

Roadside Hawk *Rupornis magnirostris* Just three sightings of this widespread bird of prey.

White-tailed Hawk *Geranoaetus albicaudatus* Immature birds were seen on two occasions.

White Hawk *Pseudastur albicollis* (NL) Sue saw one in flight in Valle Nacional.

Grey Hawk *Buteo plagiatus* Regular observations.

Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus* Small numbers of this northern migrant were noted.

Short-tailed Hawk *Buteo brachyurus* A handful of sightings. Only one dark morph was found.

Zone-tailed Hawk *Buteo albonotatus* Two observations of this Turkey Vulture mimic.

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis* Regular.

Aztec Rail ♦ *Rallus tenuirostris* (H) We heard the distinctive call at the Almoloya marshes.

Virginia Rail *Rallus limicola* Good looks at this skulking species at Almoloya.

Sora *Porzana carolina* Two showed briefly at the Almoloya marshes.

Purple Gallinule *Porphyrio martinica* One showed well on the drive to Jaltenango.

Common Gallinule (Laughing G) *Gallinula galeata* Ten or so were seen at the Almoloya marshes.

American Coot *Fulica americana* We saw fair numbers at three different sites.

Limpkin *Aramus guarauna* A single bird was found at the Tuxtepec wetland.

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus* Regular observations.

American Avocet *Recurvirostra americana* A flock of 600 showed well near Tehuantepec.

Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus* A few observations of this well-voiced species.

Northern Jacana *Jacana spinosa* Two near Jaltenango and 200+ at the Tuxtepec wetland.

Whimbrel (Hudsonian W) *Numenius [phaeopus] hudsonicus* Half a dozen birds were at Puerto Arista.

Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus* A single bird showed at Salinas near Tehuantepec.

Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla* Good looks at 25 at the Teotitlan pond.

Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla* A few were identified at Puerto Arista.

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus* A single bird was seen at the Almoloya marshes.

Wilson's Snipe *Gallinago delicata* One was seen in flight at the Tuxtepec wetland.

Red Phalarope (Grey P) *Phalaropus fulicarius* Excellent views of six on the Puerto Angel pelagic.



Grey Phalarope; Fulvous Owl (Mark Van Beirs)

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius* Regular encounters. Also in immaculate breeding plumage!

Solitary Sandpiper *Tringa solitaria* A single bird was found on our drive to Jaltenango.

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* A handful of records.

Willet (Western W) *Tringa [semipalmata] inornata* Four showed well at Puerto Arista.

Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca* A single bird was seen near Tehuantepec.

Laughing Gull *Leucophaeus atricilla* Regular along the Pacific coast. Also noted near Tuxtepec.

Franklin's Gull *Leucophaeus pipixcan* Six birds were seen near Tehuantepec.

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* Two showed at the Tuxtepec wetland.

Royal Tern *Thalasseus maximus* Common at the Salinas near Tehuantepec.

Elegant Tern ♦ *Thalasseus elegans* A few amongst the Royal Terns near Tehuantepec.

Pomarine Jaeger (P Skua) *Stercorarius pomarinus* Terrific sightings on our Puerto Angel pelagic.

Rock Dove (introduced) *Columba livia*

Band-tailed Pigeon *Patagioenas fasciata* Regular in the highland forests.

Red-billed Pigeon *Patagioenas flavirostris* Fairly common in the lowland woodlands.

Eurasian Collared Dove (introduced) *Streptopelia decaocto* Fairly common all along our itinerary.

Inca Dove *Columbina inca* Regular.

Common Ground Dove *Columbina passerina* Three observations of this diminutive species.

Ruddy Ground Dove *Columbina talpacoti* Fairly common.

Blue Ground Dove *Claravis pretiosa* A male was seen in flight at the Nava's Wren spot.

White-tipped Dove *Leptotila verreauxi* Regular observations.

White-faced Quail-Dove ♦ *Zenaidura macroura albifacies* Superb sightings at El Triunfo. A real gem.

Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura* Just a few encounters.

White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica* Common in the drier habitats.

Groove-billed Ani *Crotophaga sulcirostris* Regular sightings of the "garrapatero" (tick eater).

Pheasant Cuckoo *Dromococcyx phasianellus* (H) We heard one distantly in Valle Nacional.

Lesser Ground Cuckoo ♦ *Morococcyx erythropygus* Fantastic scope views at Puerto Arista.

Lesser Roadrunner ♦ *Geococcyx velox* (H) We heard it a couple of times in dense habitat.

Squirrel Cuckoo *Piaya cayana* Just five sightings.

American Barn Owl *Tyto furcata* One was seen in the very early morning at Arriaga.

Pacific Screech Owl ♦ *Megascops cooperi* (H) We heard one nearby at Puerto Arista.

Middle American Screech Owl ♦ *Megascops guatemalae* (H) Heard at the Sumidero Canyon.

Fulvous Owl ♦ *Strix fulvescens* Two magnificent encounters at El Triunfo.

Mottled Owl *Strix virgata* One was glimpsed predawn at La Cumbre.

Mountain Pygmy Owl ♦ *Glaucidium gnoma* (H) One was heard in the distance at La Cumbre.

Colima Pygmy Owl ♦ *Glaucidium palmarum* (H) We heard one nearby at Puerto Angel...

Central American Pygmy Owl ♦ *Glaucidium griseiceps* (H) Two were heard in the Valle Nacional.

Ferruginous Pygmy Owl *Glaucidium brasilianum* Regular observations of this feisty species.

Common Nighthawk *Chordeiles minor* One flew at dawn at the Sumichrast's Wren site.

Pauraque *Nyctidromus albicollis* (NL) Barbara W. flushed one at Puerto Arista.

Buff-collared Nightjar ♦ *Antrostomus ridgwayi* Splendid studies of a singing bird just outside Oaxaca.

Mexican Whip-poor-will ♦ *Antrostomus arizonae* Exquisite views of a male at La Cumbre.

Chestnut-collared Swift *Streptoprocne rutila* Regular at El Triunfo.

White-collared Swift *Streptoprocne zonaris* Fairly common. Some impressive flocks!

Vaux's Swift *Chaetura vauxi* A few were seen on the first day of the tour.

Mexican Hermit ♦ *Phaethornis mexicanus* Good looks at heliconias in the Puerto Angel foothills.

Stripe-throated Hermit *Phaethornis striigularis* Several were noted in the El Ocote reserve.

Curve-winged Sabrewing ♦ (Wedge-tailed S) *Campylopterus curvipennis* Good looks at El Ocote.

Long-tailed Sabrewing ♦ *Campylopterus excellens* Several showed well at the Sumichrast's Wren site.

Rufous Sabrewing ♦ *Campylopterus rufus* One showed well for those who walked to Cañada Honda.

Violet Sabrewing ♦ *Campylopterus hemileucurus* A nice performance of a male at El Triunfo.

Mexican Violetear ♦ *Colibri thalassinus* Brief looks at one at El Triunfo.

Emerald-chinned Hummingbird ♦ *Abeillia abeillei* Several excellent observations at El Triunfo.

Black-crested Coquette ♦ *Lophornis helenae* A female at El Triunfo and a juv male at Valle Nacional.

Canivet's Emerald ♦ (Fork-tailed E) *Chlorostilbon canivetii* Regular in the Isthmus area.

Oaxaca Hummingbird ♦ (Blue-capped H) *Eupherusa cyanophrys* Brief looks above Puerto Angel.

Dusky Hummingbird ♦ *Cynanthus sordidus* Regular in the Oaxaca area.

Broad-billed Hummingbird *Cynanthus latirostris* Excellent looks at several in the Bosque de Tlalpan.

Doubleday's Hummingbird ♦ *Cynanthus doubledayi* Fairly common along the Pacific coast.



Cinnamon Hummingbird (Mark Van Beirs); Green-throated Mountaingem (tour participant Dave Williamson)

Cinnamon Hummingbird ♦ *Amazilia rutila* Very nice encounters in the Pacific lowlands.

Buff-bellied Hummingbird ♦ *Amazilia yucatanensis* We encountered several in the Sumidero canyon.

Rufous-tailed Hummingbird *Amazilia tzacatl* A few in Valle Nacional.

White-bellied Emerald ♦ *Amazilia candida* Excellent looks at the Sumichrast's Wren spot.

Azure-crowned Hummingbird ♦ *Amazilia cyanocephala* Regular in Valle Nacional.

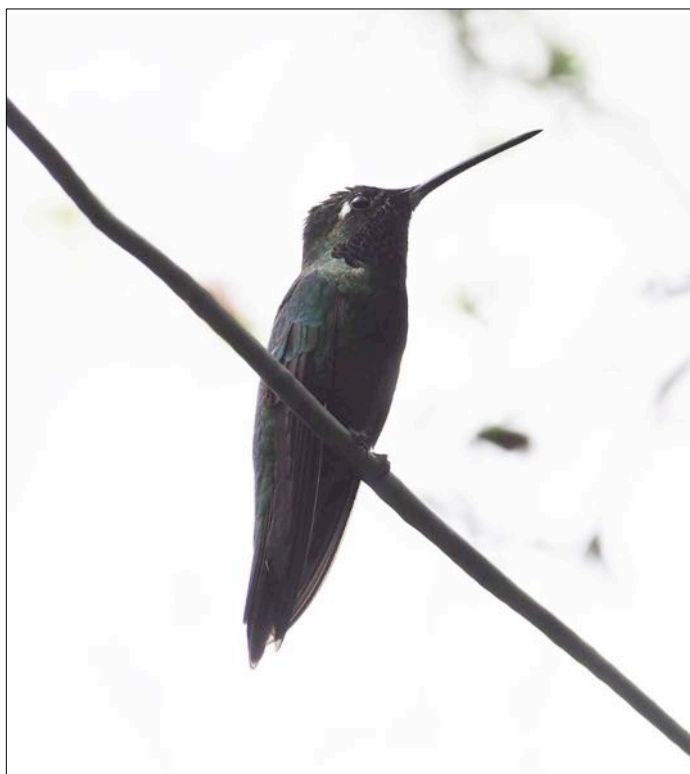
Green-fronted Hummingbird ♦ *Amazilia viridifrons* Good views at several in the Arriaga hills.

Berylline Hummingbird ♦ *Amazilia beryllina* Common in the highlands.

Green-throated Mountaingem ♦ *Lampornis viridipallens* Regular at El Triunfo.

White-eared Hummingbird ♦ *Basilinna leucotis* Regular in the highland forests.

Garnet-throated Hummingbird ♦ *Lamprolaima rhami* Cracking looks near San Cristobal.



Rivoli's Hummingbird (Mark Van Beirs); Resplendent Quetzal (tour participant Dave Williamson)

Rivoli's Hummingbird ♦ *Eugenes fulgens* Regular.

Plain-capped Starthroat ♦ *Helimaster constantii* A couple of observations on the Pacific slope.

Sparkling-tailed Woodstar ♦ *Tilmatura dupontii* A male for the hardy walkers at El Triunfo.

Slender Sheartail ♦ *Doricha enicura* Two males showed well at the Sumidero Canyon.

Beautiful Sheartail ♦ (B Hummingbird) *Calothorax pulcher* Seen at Tehuantepec and near Oaxaca.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird *Archilochus colubris* Regular observations of this northern migrant.

Bumblebee Hummingbird ♦ *Atthis heloisa* This beauty showed extremely well in the Valle Nacional.

Resplendent Quetzal ♦ *Pharomachrus mocinno* Fair views of this splendid species at El Triunfo.

Citreoline Trogon ♦ *Trogon citreolus* Regular on the Pacific slope.

Gartered Trogon (Northern Violaceous T) *Trogon caligatus* Fairly common all along our route.

Mountain Trogon ♦ *Trogon mexicanus* We saw it at El Triunfo and at La Cumbre.

Collared Trogon *Trogon collaris* Several nice encounters with this widespread species.

Green Kingfisher *Chloroceryle americana* Four observations.

Ringed Kingfisher *Megaceryle torquata* We only saw it along a stream on the first day of the tour.

Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon* Five sightings of this northern migrant.

Tody Motmot ♦ *Hylomanes momotula* (NL) Dave and Sue found one at El Triunfo.

Blue-throated Motmot ♦ *Aspatha gularis* Fair views of one in the canopy at El Triunfo.

Russet-crowned Motmot ♦ *Momotus mexicanus* Several excellent encounters along the Pacific slope.

Lesson's Motmot ♦ (Blue-diademed M) *Momotus lessonii* Good looks at El Triunfo and near Cordoba.

Wagler's Toucanet ♦ *Aulacorhynchus wagleri* Several showed in the mountains above Puerto Angel.

Emerald Toucanet ♦ *Aulacorhynchus prasinus* Regular encounters.

Collared Aracari *Pteroglossus torquatus* Two were seen in the Arriaga hills.

Keel-billed Toucan (Rainbow-billed T) *Ramphastos sulfuratus* Regular observations of this beauty.

Acorn Woodpecker *Melanerpes formicivorus* Regular observations; often in parties.

Golden-cheeked Woodpecker ♦ *Melanerpes chrysogenys* Nice sightings in the Puerto Angel area.

Grey-breasted Woodpecker ♦ *Melanerpes hypopolius* We only saw this localized species at Yagul.

Velasquez's Woodpecker ♦ *Melanerpes santacruzi* Common, widespread and vocal.



Citreoline Trogon; Russet-crowned Motmot (Mark Van Beirs)

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker *Sphyrapicus varius* One showed well in San Cristobal.

Ladder-backed Woodpecker *Dryobates scalaris* Regular sightings.

Smoky-brown Woodpecker *Leuconotopicus fumigatus* A single showed briefly at El Ocote.

Strickland's Woodpecker ♦ *Leuconotopicus stricklandi* Great looks in the Mexico City area.



Emerald Toucanet; Golden-cheeked Woodpecker (Mark Van Beirs)

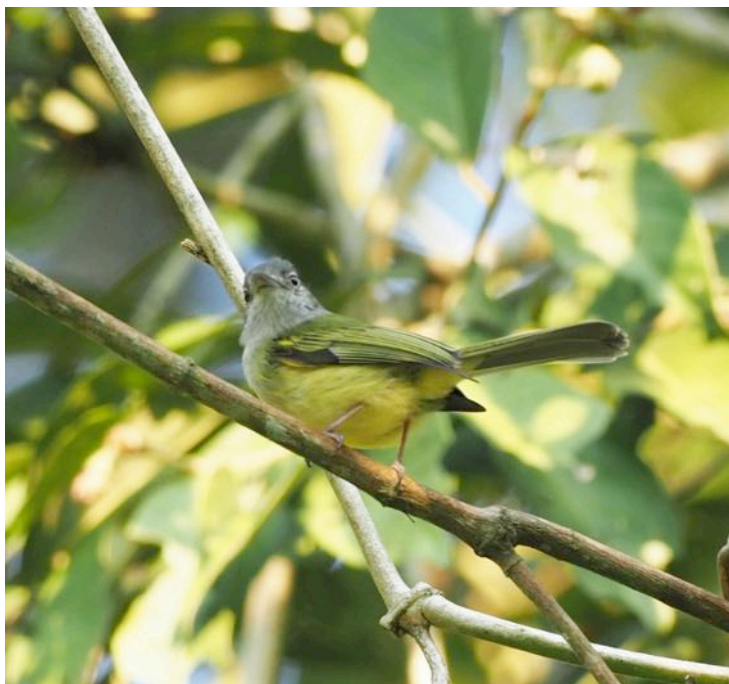
Hairy Woodpecker *Leuconotopicus villosus* Fairly common.
Golden-olive Woodpecker *Colaptes rubiginosus* Several sightings of this widespread species.
Grey-crowned Woodpecker ♦ *Colaptes auricularis* Excellent views above Puerto Angel.
Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus* Great looks at two different races, *mexicanoides* and *mexicanus*.
Lineated Woodpecker *Dryocopus lineatus* Four observations of this well-known species.
Pale-billed Woodpecker *Campephilus guatemalensis* Singles were recorded in the Isthmus area.
Northern Crested Caracara (Northern C) *Caracara cheriway* Regular.



Laughing Falcon; Red-lored Amazons (Mark Van Beirs)

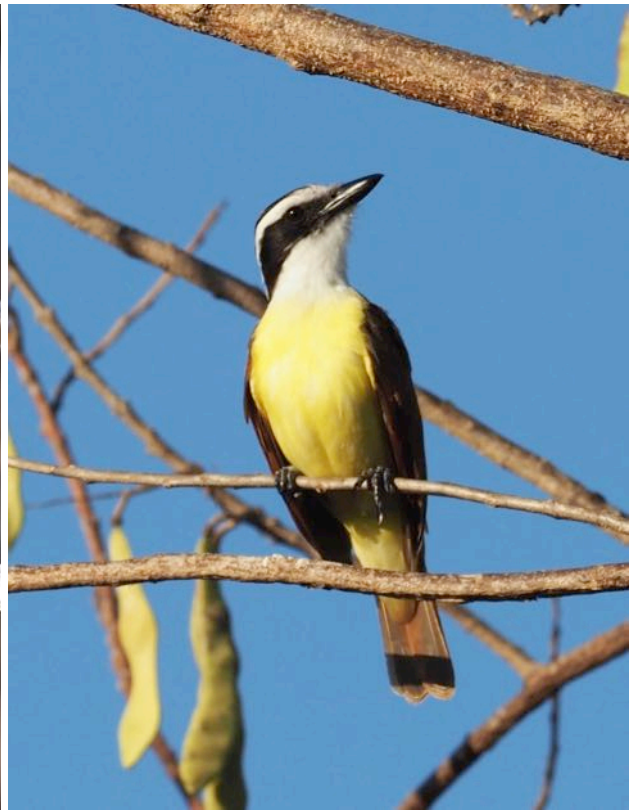
Laughing Falcon *Herpetotheres cachinnans* Perfect looks at a perched bird near Tehuantepec.
Barred Forest Falcon *Micrastur ruficollis* Several were heard and seen at El Triunfo.
Collared Forest Falcon *Micrastur semitorquatus* Fair views of two at El Ocote. Heard elsewhere.
American Kestrel *Falco sparverius* Regular.
Aplomado Falcon *Falco femoralis* First-rate looks at a perched and flying bird near Tuxtepec.
Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* Three at El Triunfo and one c12 km offshore at Puerto Angel.
Barred Parakeet *Bolborhynchus lineola* Heard and glimpsed in the Valle Nacional.
Brown-hooded Parrot *Pyrilia haematotis* One in flight at the Valle Nacional.
White-crowned Parrot ♦ *Pionus senilis* Several very nice observations of small flocks.
Red-lored Amazon (R-I Parrot) *Amazona autumnalis* Regular observations. Display at Puerto Arista.
Olive-throated Parakeet ♦ *Eupsittula nana* Nice views at Valle Nacional.
Orange-fronted Parakeet ♦ *Eupsittula canicularis* Regular in the Isthmus.
Green Parakeet ♦ *Psittacara holochlorus* Fairly common in the Oaxaca area.
Pacific Parakeet ♦ *Psittacara strenuus* Regular in the Arriaga foothills.
Rufous-breasted Spinetail ♦ *Synallaxis erythrothorax* Perfect views of a pair in the Valle Nacional.
Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaner *Anabacerthia variegaticeps* Several nice encounters.
Ruddy Foliage-gleaner *Automolus rubiginosus* Seen and heard at El Triunfo.
Tawny-throated Leaf-tosser *Sclerurus mexicanus* (H) One was heard at El Triunfo, but no response.
Olivaceous Woodcreeper *Sittasomus griseicapillus* Just two observations of this widespread species.
Ivory-billed Woodcreeper ♦ *Xiphorhynchus flavigaster* Several encounters.
Spotted Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus erythropygius* Two showed well at El Triunfo.
Spot-crowned Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes affinis* A few observations in the highland forests.
Barred Antshrike *Thamnophilus doliatus* Seen at El Ocote and heard at Valle Nacional.
Dusky Antbird *Cercomacroides tyrannina* (H) We heard it at Valle Nacional.
Mayan Antthrush ♦ (Mexican A) *Formicarius moniliger* (H) Heard at Valle Nacional, but out of reach.
Greenish Elaenia *Myiopagis viridicata* (H) Heard at Valle Nacional, but we were busy with bigger fry.
Yellow-bellied Elaenia *Elaenia flavogaster* (H) Heard at Valle Nacional, but the Coquette distracted us.
Yellow-bellied Tyrannulet *Ornithion semiflavum* Scope views of this tiny critter at El Ocote.
Northern Beardless Tyrannulet *Camptostoma imberbe* Regular encounters with this unobtrusive bird.
Paltry Tyrannulet ♦ *Zimmerius vilissimus* Several showed well at El Triunfo.

Ochre-bellied Flycatcher *Mionectes oleagineus* Great looks at two in a fruiting tree near Jaltenango.
Common Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum cinereum* This widespread species was seen near Jaltenango.



Yellow-olive Flatbill; Hammond's Flycatcher (Mark Van Beirs)

Yellow-olive Flatbill (Y-o Flycatcher) *Tolmomyias sulphurens* Three observations in the south.
Stub-tailed Spadebill ♦ *Platyrinchus cancrominus* One for the hardy walkers at El Triunfo.
Belted Flycatcher ♦ *Xenotriccus callizonus* Superb looks at this attractive species at the Sumidero.
Pileated Flycatcher ♦ *Xenotriccus mexicanus* A perfect performance near Oaxaca.
Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans* Regular. Always near water.
Say's Phoebe *Sayornis saya* Seen at Teotitlan and at Almoloya. A northern migrant.
Northern Tufted Flycatcher *Mitrephanes phaeocercus* Regular in the highland forests.
Greater Pewee *Contopus pertinax* Regular in the highland pine forests.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher *Empidonax flaviventris* One showed well at the El Ocote reserve.
Willow Flycatcher *Empidonax traillii* A single bird was identified on the first day of the tour.
Least Flycatcher *Empidonax minimus* Regular encounters with this migrant in the lowlands.
Hammond's Flycatcher *Empidonax hammondii* Fairly common in the highland forests.
American Dusky Flycatcher *Empidonax oberholseri* A few in dry highland scrub.
Pine Flycatcher ♦ *Empidonax affinis* Nice views at La Cumbre and near Mexico City.
Pacific-slope Flycatcher *Empidonax difficilis* One gave good views above Puerto Angel.
Cordilleran Flycatcher ♦ *Empidonax occidentalis* Excellent studies of one at the Bosque de Tlalpan.
Yellowish Flycatcher ♦ *Empidonax flavescens* Regular in the El Triunfo forests.
Buff-breasted Flycatcher ♦ *Empidonax fulvifrons* First rate looks at this beauty near Mexico City.
Vermilion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus obscurus* Fairly common and so charming in open habitat.
Piratic Flycatcher *Legatus leucophaeus* A few were noted in Valle Nacional.
Social Flycatcher *Myiozetetes similis* Common and vocal in the lowlands.
Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus* Fairly common and vociferous in the lowlands.
Boat-billed Flycatcher *Megarynchus pitangua* Several nice encounters with this widespread species.
Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus* Common.
Couch's Kingbird ♦ *Tyrannus couchii* We identified a pair at Valle Nacional.
Cassin's Kingbird *Tyrannus vociferans* Regular in open habitat in the highlands.
Thick-billed Kingbird ♦ *Tyrannus crassirostris* Two were found in shrubby woodland near Oaxaca.
Western Kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis* Two were seen on our drive to Jaltenango on day one.
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus forficatus* A few on day one and regular at Puerto Arista.
Dusky-capped Flycatcher *Myiarchus tuberculifer* Regular encounters with this widespread species.



Vermilion Flycatcher; Great Kiskadee (Mark Van Beirs)

Ash-throated Flycatcher *Myiarchus cinerascens* Regular sightings in woodland on the Pacific slope.

Nutting's Flycatcher ♦ *Myiarchus nuttingi* Two showed very well in the Isthmus woodland.

Brown-crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus tyrannulus* Regular in scrubby forest.

Bright-rumped Attila (Flammulated A) *Attila [spadiceus] flammulatus* A couple of encounters only.



Brown-crested Flycatcher; Masked Tityra (Mark Van Beirs)

Long-tailed Manakin ◇ *Chiroxiphia linearis* Good looks at two on the drive to the El Triunfo trailhead.
Masked Tityra *Tityra semifasciata* Regular observations of this well-known species.
Rose-throated Becard *Pachyramphus aglaiae* Fairly common.
Rufous-browed Peppershrike *Cyclarhis gujanensis* Only recorded on the first two days of the tour.
Chestnut-sided Shrike-Vireo ◇ *Vireolanius melitophrys* Three showed quite well at La Cumbre.



Green Shrike-Vireo; White-throated Magpie-Jay (Mark Van Beirs)

Green Shrike-Vireo ◇ *Vireolanius pulchellus* Scope views at El Ocote. Always a bit tricky.
Bell's Vireo *Vireo bellii* Two showed well on the drive to Jaltenango.
Yellow-throated Vireo *Vireo flavifrons* Two observations of this attractive northern migrant.
Plumbeous Vireo *Vireo plumbeus* Seen at El Triunfo (the distinctive race *montanus*) and in Mexico City.
Cassin's Vireo *Vireo cassinii* Several encounters with this northern migrant.
Hutton's Vireo *Vireo huttoni* A few sightings in oak-pine woodland.
Golden Vireo ◇ *Vireo hypochryseus* Several excellent observations of this lovely endemic.
Warbling Vireo *Vireo gilvus* Common.
Brown-capped Vireo *Vireo leucophrys* Regular at El Triunfo.
Yellow-green Vireo *Vireo flavoviridis* Just a few. They hadn't started singing yet.
Lesser Greenlet *Hylophilus decurtatus* One at El Triunfo and several at El Ocote.
Azure-hooded Jay ◇ *Cyanolyca cucullata* Perfect looks in the misty forests of Valle Nacional.
Black-throated Jay ◇ *Cyanolyca pumilo* Regular observations at El Triunfo.
Dwarf Jay ◇ *Cyanolyca nanus* Scope studies of this endemic at La Cumbre.
Green Jay *Cyanocorax luxuosus* Regular and always well-dressed.
Brown Jay *Psilorhinus morio* Common and very vocal in the Caribbean lowlands.
White-throated Magpie-Jay ◇ *Calocitta formosa* Regular and attractive on the Pacific slope.
Steller's Jay *Cyanocitta stelleri* Fairly obvious in the highland pine forests.
Transvolcanic Jay ◇ *Aphelocoma ultramarina* Several showed well near Mexico City.
Unicolored Jay ◇ *Aphelocoma unicolor* Heard at El Triunfo and seen well near San Cristobal.
Woodhouse's Scrub Jay ◇ *Aphelocoma woodhouseii* Seen well near Oaxaca and near Mexico City.
Northern Raven (Common R) *Corvus corax* A few in the Oaxaca area.
Cedar Waxwing *Bombycilla cedrorum* Eight birds were found feeding high in a tree at Tlalpan.
Grey Silky-flycatcher ◇ (G Silky) *Ptiliogonys cinereus* Regular observations of this delightful species.
Mexican Chickadee ◇ *Poecile sclateri* A few near Oaxaca and Mexico City.
Horned Lark (Shore L) *Eremophila alpestris* (H) One was heard at the Almoloya marshes.
Sand Martin (Bank Swallow) *Riparia riparia* Two birds were foraging over the Teotitlan pond.
Tree Swallow *Tachycineta bicolor* Seen at Puerto Arista and at the Tuxtepec wetland.
Mangrove Swallow *Tachycineta albilinea* Glimpses only at a bridge near Tuxtepec.
Violet-green Swallow *Tachycineta thalassina* Regular over the highland forests.

Grey-breasted Martin *Progne chalybea* Regular. Especially obvious above Puerto Angel.

Black-capped Swallow ◇ *Notiochelidon pileata* A few at El Triunfo and also near San Cristobal.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis* Common and widespread.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* Regular observations of this well-known species.

American Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota* A single bird was identified at El Triunfo.

Cave Swallow *Petrochelidon fulva* A few were noted in the El Triunfo area.

American Bushtit *Psaltiriparus minimus* Small flocks were noted at several locations.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet *Regulus calendula* Regular and well-behaved in the Mexico City area.

Band-backed Wren *Campylorhynchus zonatus* Several good sightings of noisy family parties.

Grey-barred Wren ◇ *Campylorhynchus megalopterus* Obvious and noisy in the forests of La Cumbre.

Giant Wren ◇ *Campylorhynchus chiapensis* Excellent observations at Puerto Arista.

Sclater's Wren ◇ *Campylorhynchus humilis* Quite a show in the Tehuantepec scrub.

Boucard's Wren ◇ *Campylorhynchus jocosus* Nice looks in the Oaxaca scrubby woodlands.

Rock Wren *Salpinctes obsoletus* Very entertaining at Monte Alban.

Canyon Wren *Catherpes mexicanus* Recorded at Monte Alban and near Mexico City.

Sumichrast's Wren ◇ *Hylorchilus sumichrasti* A fantastic performance near Cordoba!

Nava's Wren ◇ *Hylorchilus navai* Exquisite views at the El Ocote reserve.

Grass Wren *Cistothorus platensis* Good looks at the Sierra Madre site.

Marsh Wren *Cistothorus palustris* Brief looks in the rushes at Almoloya.

Bewick's Wren *Thryomanes bewickii* Regular in the shrubby woodlands north of the Isthmus.

Happy Wren ◇ *Pheugopedius felix* First rate looks at Puerto Angel.

Spot-breasted Wren *Pheugopedius maculipectus* Regular at El Ocote and in Valle Nacional.

Banded Wren ◇ *Thryophilus pleurostictus* Several nice observations in the Isthmus area.

Rufous-and-white Wren *Thryophilus rufalbus* Seen by the hardy walkers at El Triunfo.

Cabanis's Wren ◇ *Cantorchilus modestus* Several in the El Triunfo lowlands.

House Wren (Northern H W) *Troglodytes [aeson] aeson* A handful of records north of the Isthmus.

House Wren ◇ (Brown-throated H W) *Troglodytes [aeson] brunneicollis* Seen well near Mexico City.

House Wren (Southern H W) *Troglodytes [aeson] musculus* A few were noted in Chiapas.



Rufous-browed Wren (tour participant Dave Williamson); male Elegant Euphonia (Mark Van Beirs)

Rufous-browed Wren ◇ *Troglodytes rufociliatus* Excellent looks, eventually, at El Triunfo.

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

White-breasted Wood Wren *Henicorhina leucosticta* Recorded at several lowland sites.

Grey-breasted Wood Wren *Henicorhina leucophrys* Regular at El Triunfo. Also noted at Valle Nacional.

Long-billed Gnatwren *Ramphocaenus melanurus* (H) We heard one at El Ocote.

Blue-grey Gnatcatcher *Polioptila caerulea* Regular encounters.

White-lored Gnatcatcher ◇ *Polioptila albiloris* Common in dry woodland on the Pacific slope.

Pygmy Nuthatch *Sitta pygmaea* (H) We heard it in the pine forests near Mexico City.

White-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta carolinensis* Great looks at several at the Sierra Madre Sparrow site.

Grey Catbird *Dumetella carolinensis* Seven observations of this northern migrant.

Northern Mockingbird *Mimus polyglottos* Two were seen at Teotitlan.

Tropical Mockingbird *Mimus gilvus* A couple near Jaltenango and also seen at Puerto Arista.

Ocellated Thrasher ♦ *Toxostoma ocellatum* Good looks for most near Oaxaca. Sneaky!

Curve-billed Thrasher *Toxostoma curvirostre* A couple showed all too briefly at Yagul.

Blue Mockingbird ♦ *Melanotis caerulescens* Several nice encounters in the Oaxaca area.

Blue-and-white Mockingbird ♦ *Melanotis hypoleucus* Two showed well near San Cristobal.

Common Starling (introduced) *Sturnus vulgaris* A handful in the Mexico City area.

Western Bluebird *Sialia mexicana* Perfect scope views of this gorgeous species near Mexico City.

Brown-backed Solitaire ♦ *Myadestes occidentalis* Regular at El Triunfo and in other highland forests.

Slate-colored Solitaire ♦ *Myadestes unicolor* Seen at El Ocote and in Valle Nacional.

Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus aurantirostris* One was seen at El Triunfo.

Russet Nightingale-Thrush ♦ *Catharus occidentalis* Several excellent observations of this endemic.

Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush ♦ *Catharus frantzii* Two performed nicely at El Triunfo.

Black-headed Nightingale-Thrush ♦ *Catharus mexicanus* Good looks at one in the Valle Nacional.

Gould's Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus dryas* Repeated, excellent looks at the El Triunfo clearing.

Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus* This northern migrant showed well on many occasions.

Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus* Good looks around the El Triunfo clearing.

Wood Thrush *Hylocichla mustelina* Seen well at El Ocote and near Cordoba.

Black Thrush ♦ (B Robin) *Turdus infuscatus* Fairly common at El Triunfo.

Clay-colored Thrush (C-c Robin) *Turdus grayi* Common along our route.

White-throated Thrush (W-t Robin) *Turdus assimilis* A handful of encounters in fruiting trees.

Rufous-backed Thrush ♦ *Turdus rufopallatus* Seen well at several venues north of the Isthmus.

Rufous-collared Thrush ♦ *Turdus rufitorques* Regular in the San Cristobal surroundings.

American Robin *Turdus migratorius* Regular around Mexico City.

House Sparrow (introduced) *Passer domesticus* Fairly common.

Olive Warbler ♦ *Peucedramus taeniatus* Several fantastic encounters with this important species.

Buff-bellied Pipit (American P) *Anthus rubescens* Seen well at Teotitlan, Almoloya and Zempoala.

Hooded Grosbeak ♦ *Hesperiphona abeillei* Good, but rather distant scope views at El Triunfo.

House Finch *Haemorhous mexicanus* Common in dry habitat north of the Isthmus.

Red Crossbill (Common C) *Loxia curvirostra* A male showed well near San Cristobal.

Lesser Goldfinch (Dark-backed G) *Spinus psaltria* Many observations.

Pine Siskin *Spinus pinus* Several showed well near Mexico City.

Black-headed Siskin ♦ *Spinus notatus* Good looks below El Triunfo and also seen above Puerto Angel.

Scrub Euphonia *Euphonia affinis* Regular observations.



Stripe-headed Sparrow; White-throated Towhee (Mark Van Beirs)

Yellow-throated Euphonia ♦ *Euphonia hirundinacea* Fairly common.
Elegant Euphonia (Blue-hooded E) *Euphonia elegantissima* Great looks at El Triunfo.
Olive-backed Euphonia ♦ *Euphonia gouldi* Nestbuilding was observed at El Ocote.
Blue-crowned Chlorophonia ♦ *Chlorophonia occipitalis* Splendid encounters at El Triunfo.
Song Sparrow *Melospiza melodia* Many near Mexico City.
Lincoln's Sparrow *Melospiza lincolni* Small numbers of this migrant were noted along our route.
Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis* Seen at El Triunfo and around San Cristobal.
Yellow-eyed Junco ♦ *Junco phaeonotus* Good looks in Chiapas, La Cumbre and near Mexico City.
Savannah Sparrow *Passerculus sandwichensis* A single bird was identified near Mexico City.
Sierra Madre Sparrow ♦ *Xenospiza baileyi* Perfect scope views of the rarest bird of the tour.
Chipping Sparrow *Spizella passerina* Two were seen near Mexico City.
Lark Sparrow *Chondestes grammacus* A single bird showed well near Oaxaca. Smart!
Stripe-headed Sparrow ♦ *Peucaea ruficauda* Several were seen in the Arriaga area.
Bridled Sparrow ♦ *Peucaea mystacalis* Great views of this gorgeous species near Oaxaca.
Cinnamon-tailed Sparrow ♦ *Peucaea sumichrasti* Well behaved birds performed near Tehuantepec.
Rufous-crowned Sparrow ♦ *Aimophila ruficeps* Seen at Monte Alban and in Mexico City.
Rusty Sparrow ♦ *Aimophila rufescens* A handful of observations.
Striped Sparrow ♦ *Oriturus superciliosus* Common and obvious around Mexico City.
Collared Towhee ♦ *Pipilo ocai* Terrific views of a pair at La Cumbre.
Spotted Towhee *Pipilo maculatus* Seen near San Cristobal and around Mexico City.
White-throated Towhee ♦ *Melospiza albicollis* Regular in the Oaxaca area.
Canyon Towhee ♦ *Melospiza fusca* Fairly common around Mexico City.
Prevost's Ground Sparrow ♦ *Melospiza biarcuata* Two showed quite well on the drive to El Triunfo.
Olive Sparrow ♦ *Arremonops rufivirgatus* A couple were noted at the Sumidero Canyon.



Chestnut-capped Brushfinch; El Triunfo scenery (Mark Van Beirs)

Chestnut-capped Brushfinch *Arremon brunneinucha* Regular, excellent observations at El Triunfo.
Rufous-capped Brushfinch ♦ *Atlapetes pileatus* Good looks at La Cumbre and near Mexico City.
White-naped Brushfinch ♦ *Atlapetes albinucha* Seen well at San Cristobal and in Valle Nacional.
Common Bush Tanager *Chlorospingus flavopectus* Regular in the highland forests.
Yellow-headed Blackbird *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus* A few were found at Almoloya.
Eastern Meadowlark *Sturnella magna* A few were seen near Mexico City.
Yellow-billed Cacique *Amblycercus holosericeus* A single bird showed briefly in Valle Nacional.
Mexican Cacique ♦ (Yellow-winged C) *Cassiculus melanicterus* Regular in the Pacific lowlands.
Chestnut-headed Oropendola *Psarocolius wagleri* A few were seen near Cordoba.
Montezuma Oropendola *Psarocolius montezuma* Displaying birds showed well at Valle Nacional.
Scott's Oriole *Icterus parisorum* Two were seen in the Bosque de Tlalpan.

Yellow-backed Oriole *Icterus chrysater* Nice looks in the San Cristobal area.

Altamira Oriole ◇ *Icterus gularis* Regular encounters. Good-looking!

Bullock's Oriole *Icterus bullockii* A single bird was seen in San Cristobal.

Streak-backed Oriole ◇ *Icterus pustulatus* Common on the Pacific slope.

Black-backed Oriole ◇ *Icterus abeillei* (H) We heard one in the Bosque de Tlalpan.

Baltimore Oriole *Icterus galbula* Regular.

Spot-breasted Oriole ◇ *Icterus pectoralis* Three showed well at Puerto Arista.

Black-vented Oriole ◇ *Icterus wagleri* Excellent looks in flowering trees near Oaxaca.

Black-cowled Oriole ◇ *Icterus prothemelas* Seen at El Ocote and in Valle Nacional.

Orchard Oriole *Icterus spurius* This smart-looking migrant was regularly seen.

Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus* A few in marshy habitat.

Red-winged Blackbird ◇ (Bicoloured B) *Agelaius [phoeniceus] gubernator* Good looks in Mexico City.

Bronzed Cowbird *Molothrus aeneus* Common.

Brown-headed Cowbird *Molothrus ater* Regular near Tuxtepec and in the Mexico City area.

Melodious Blackbird *Dives dives* Regular and noisy.

Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus* One of the most common species along our route.

Ovenbird *Seiurus aurocapilla* A single bird was seen at El Triunfo.

Blue-winged Warbler *Vermivora cyanoptera* One was found at the El Ocote reserve.

Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia* Regular encounters. Always a joy seeing this little fellow.

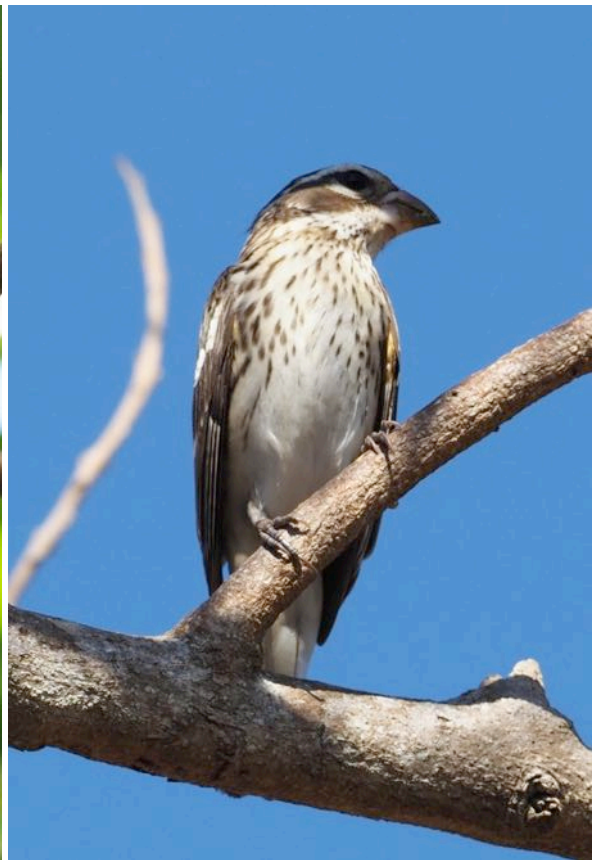
Crescent-chested Warbler ◇ *Oreothlypis superciliosa* Regular in the highland forests.

Tennessee Warbler *Leiothlypis peregrina* Small numbers all along our route.



Rufous-capped Warbler (Mark Van Beirs)

Orange-crowned Warbler *Leiothlypis celata* Just a handful of sightings.
Nashville Warbler *Leiothlypis ruficapilla* Regular.
Virginia's Warbler *Leiothlypis virginiae* Nice looks at two in the Teotitlan scrub.
Grey-crowned Yellowthroat *Geothlypis poliocephala* A single was seen near Cordoba.
MacGillivray's Warbler *Geothlypis tolmiei* Several excellent observations of this rather skulking migrant.
Black-poll'd Yellowthroat ♦ *Geothlypis speciosa* Perfect scope studies at the Almoloya marshes.
Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas* Regular.
Hooded Yellowthroat ♦ *Geothlypis nelsoni* Good looks, eventually, in shrubby woodland in Mexico City.
Hooded Warbler *Setophaga citrina* Several were seen near Cordoba. Attractive!
American Redstart *Setophaga ruticilla* Just a few encounters with this lovely migrant.
Northern Parula *Setophaga americana* A single bird was seen at Puerto Arista.
Tropical Parula *Setophaga pitiaumi* A couple of encounters only.
Magnolia Warbler *Setophaga magnolia* Regular in small numbers.
American Yellow Warbler (Yellow W) *Setophaga aestiva* Small numbers were seen along our route.
Audubon's Warbler *Setophaga auduboni* Regular observations of this good-looking migrant.
Grace's Warbler *Setophaga graciae* A few in the highland forests.
Black-throated Grey Warbler *Setophaga nigrescens* Excellent sightings at Teotitlan.
Townsend's Warbler *Setophaga townsendi* Regular in the highland forests.
Hermit Warbler *Setophaga occidentalis* Small numbers in the highland forests.
Golden-cheeked Warbler ♦ *Setophaga chrysoparia* Great looks at three near San Cristobal!
Black-throated Green Warbler *Setophaga virens* One of the more regular migrant warblers.
Fan-tailed Warbler ♦ *Basileuterus lachrymosus* Good looks in the Sumidero Canyon.
Rufous-capped Warbler ♦ *Basileuterus rufifrons* Several excellent encounters.
Golden-browed Warbler ♦ *Basileuterus belli* Regular in the highland forests. Very attractive!
Golden-crowned Warbler *Basileuterus culicivorus* Seen at El Ocote and above Puerto Angel.
Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla* Fairly common.
Red Warbler ♦ *Cardellina rubra* One of the jewels of the highland forests north of the Isthmus.



Female Summer Tanager and female Rose-breasted Grosbeak (Mark Van Beirs)

Pink-headed Warbler ♦ *Cardellina versicolor* A fantastic encounter in the forests near San Cristobal!

Slate-throated Whitestart (S-t Redstart) *Myioborus miniatus* Regular.

Flame-colored Tanager ♦ *Piranga bidentata* Regular at El Triunfo.

Hepatic Tanager (Northern H T) *Piranga hepatica* A few sightings in montane areas.

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra* A regular migrant along our route.

Western Tanager *Piranga ludoviciana* Fairly common along our route.

White-winged Tanager *Piranga leucoptera* Seen at El Triunfo and at El Ocote.

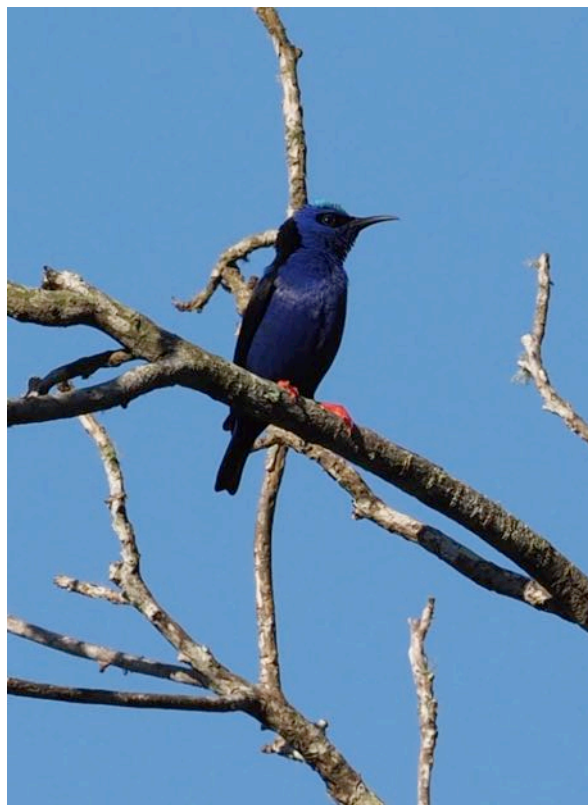
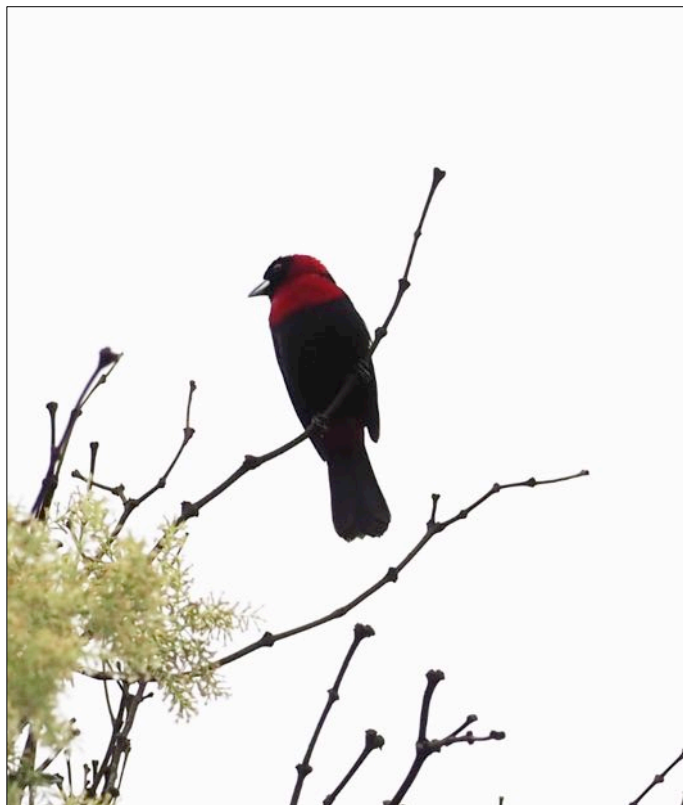
Red-crowned Ant Tanager *Habia rubica* (H) Heard in Valle Nacional and near Cordoba.

Red-throated Ant Tanager ♦ *Habia fuscicauda* Males showed well at El Ocote and near Cordoba.



The extraordinary Orange-breasted Bunting (Mark Van Beirs)

Yellow Grosbeak ♦ **(Mexican Y G) *Pheucticus chrysopheplus*** Many fantastic looks at El Triunfo.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak *Pheucticus ludovicianus* Regular.
Black-headed Grosbeak *Pheucticus melanocephalus* Fairly common during the last week.
Red-breasted Chat ♦ ***Granatellus venustus*** Fair looks at a female near Puerto Angel.
Northern Cardinal *Cardinalis cardinalis* Just a few encounters.
Black-faced Grosbeak ♦ ***Caryothraustes poliogaster*** Excellent scope views at El Ocote.
Blue Grosbeak *Passerina caerulea* Fairly common.
Indigo Bunting *Passerina cyanea* Quite common.
Varied Bunting *Passerina versicolor* Brief looks at two on the final morning of the tour.
Painted Bunting ♦ ***Passerina ciris*** This beauty showed well near Jaltenango and at Puerto Arista.
Rose-bellied Bunting ♦ ***Passerina rositae*** Amazing looks at an amazing endemic near Arriaga.
Orange-breasted Bunting ♦ ***Passerina leclancherii*** Many great looks. A truly fantastic species!



Crimson-collared Tanager and male Red-legged Honeycreeper (Mark Van Beirs)

Crimson-collared Tanager ♦ ***Ramphocelus sanguinolentus*** Nice studies in Valle Nacional.
Blue-grey Tanager *Thraupis episcopus* Regular.
Yellow-winged Tanager ♦ ***Thraupis abbas*** Fairly common.
Cabanis's Tanager ♦ **(Azure-rumped T) *Tangara cabanisi*** Scope looks for all at El Triunfo! Localized.
Red-legged Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes cyaneus* Regular encounters.
Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer ♦ ***Diglossa baritula*** Good looks in the San Cristobal area.
Black-headed Saltator *Saltator atriceps* Regular and noisy in the Caribbean lowlands.
Greyish Saltator *Saltator coerulescens* A few sightings of this widespread species.
Blue-black Grassquit *Volatinia jacarina* Just a few.
Variable Seedeater *Sporophila corvina* Nice views of a male at Valle Nacional.
Morelet's Seedeater *Sporophila moreletii* Several brief encounters.
Thick-billed Seed Finch (Lesser S F) *Oryzoborus funereus* (NL) Bernard saw a female near Cordoba.
Bananaquit *Coereba flaveola* Just a few sightings of this well-known bird.
Yellow-faced Grassquit *Tiaris olivaceus* A single bird was seen at Valle Nacional.



This nosy Grey Fox lived around the camp at El Triunfo (Mark Van Beirs)

MAMMALS

Mexican Cottontail *Sylvilagus cunicularius* One showed beautifully at Monte Alban.

Mexican Gray Squirrel (Red-bellied S) *Sciurus aureogaster* Common.

Deppe's Squirrel *Sciurus deppei* Regular at El Triunfo.

Paca *Agouti paca* Two showed well at night at El Triunfo.

Coyote *Canis latrans* One was seen in the Sierra Madre above Puerto Angel.

Grey Fox *Urocyon cinereoargenteus* Fantastic looks at several at El Triunfo.

Greater Grison *Galictis vittata* One was seen by the hardy walkers at El Triunfo.

Long-tailed Weasel *Mustela frenata* Good looks at one just outside Mexico City.

Cacomistle *Bassariscus sumichrasti* (H) We heard the loud noises at night at El Triunfo.



Mexican Cottontail; Deppe's Squirrel (Mark Van Beirs)

Pantropical Spotted Dolphin *Stenella attenuata* 30+ showed well off Puerto Angel.

Spinner Dolphin *Stenella longirostris* Small numbers showed off on our Puerto Angel boat trip.

Short-beaked Common Dolphin *Delphinus delphis* Several pods performed off Puerto Angel.

Central American Red Brocket *Mazama temama* One was seen at the El Triunfo clearing.



Short-beaked Common Dolphin; Pantropical Spotted Dolphin (tour participant Dave Williamson)



The fantastic Godman's Pit-Viper (Mark Van Beirs)

REPTILES

Common Green Iguana *Iguana iguana* Regular in the lowlands.

Black Spiny-tailed Iguana (Ctenosaur) *Ctenosaura similis* Two showed well at Puerto Arista.

Morelet's Alligator Lizard *Mesaspis moreletii* One was seen at El Triunfo.

Eastern Spiny Lizard *Sceloporus spinosus* Common at Monte Alban.

Godman's Pit Viper *Cerrophidion godmani* Cracking looks at one just our accommodation at El Triunfo.

Banded Sea Snake (Banded Sea Crait) *Laticauda colubrina* Good looks at several off Puerto Angel.

Green Sea Turtle *Chelonia mydas* Many on our Puerto Angel boat trip.



Eastern Spiny Lizard; Green Sea Turtle (Mark Van Beirs)



Tiger Moth sp; Mexican Heliconian (tour participant Dave Williamson)

LEPIDOPTERA (compiled by tour participant Dave Williamson)

MOTHS

Arctiinae (Tiger Moths, Footmen etc)

Panthera paradalara Valle Nacional

BUTTERFLIES

Papilionidae (Swallowtails)

Two-tailed Swallowtail *Papilio multicaudatus* Bosque de Tlalpan

Pieridae (Whites & Yellows)

Northern Surprising-White *Pereute charops* El Ocote

Felder's White *Ganyra phaloe* El Ocote

Orange-barred Sulphur *Phoebis phileas* El Ocote

Mimosa Yellow *Eurema nise* El Triunfo; Monte Alban

Salome Yellow *Eurema salome* El Triunfo

Sleepy Orange *Eurema nicippe* El Sumidero

Lycaenidae (Hairstreaks, Coppers, Blues)

Gargoyle Hairstreak *Gargina gargophia* El Triunfo

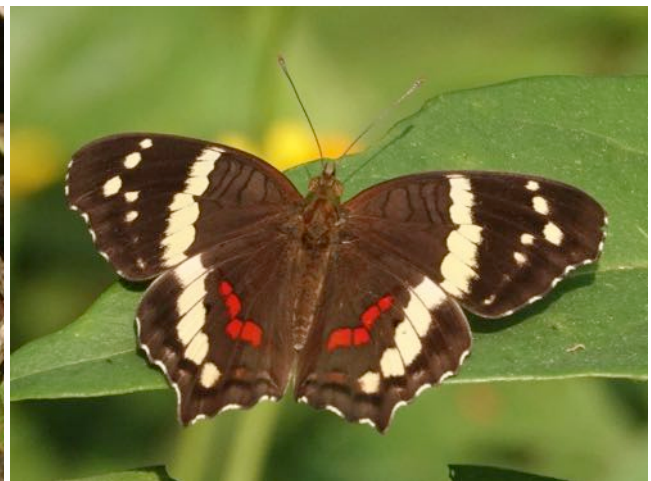
Nymphalidae (Brush-foots)

sub-family Heliconiinae (Heliconians & Fritillaries)

Mexican Silverspot *Dione moneta* Bosque de Tlalpan

Julia Heliconian *Dryas iulia* various localities

Mexican Heliconian *Heliconius hortense* El Triunfo



Crimson Patch; Banded Peacock (tour participant Dave Williamson)

Zebra Heliconian *Heliconius charithonia* El Ocote; en route Puerto Angel - Oaxaca

sub-family Nymphalinae (True Brushfoots)

Crimson Patch *Chlosyne janais* El Ocote; Amatlan

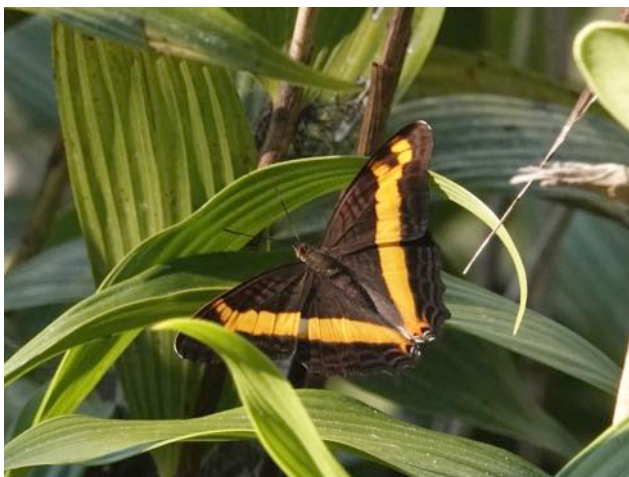
Square-tipped Crescent *Eresia philyra* El Ocote

Texan Crescent *Phyciodes texana* El Triunfo; en route Oaxaca - Tuxtepec

Orange-patched Crescent *Phyciodes drusilla* El Triunfo

West Coast Lady *Vanessa annabella* Almoloya

Banded Peacock *Anartia fatima* El Ocote



Rusty-tipped Page; Veracruz Sister (tour participant Dave Williamson)

Rusty-tipped Page *Siptoeta epaphus* El Ocote

sub-family Limenitidinae (Admirals & relatives)

Veracruz Sister *Adelpha leucerioides* El Triunfo

Anna's Eighty-eight *Diaethria anna* Valle Nacional

Common Banner *Epiphyle adrasta* El Ocote

subfamily Charaxinae (Leafwings and relatives)

Black-veined Leafwing *Consul excellens* El Triunfo

sub-family Satyrinae (Browns & Satyrs)

Mexican Pine-Satyr *Paramacera xicaque* La Cumbre, Oaxaca

Renata's Satyr *Yphthimoides renata* El Triunfo

Carolina Satyr *Hermeuptychia sosybius* El Triunfo

sub-family Danainae (Monarchs & Ticlears)

Monarch *Danaus plexippus* en route to Jaltenango & elsewhere

Klug's Clearwing *Dircenna klugii* El Ocote; La Cumbre, Oaxaca

Hesperiidae (Skippers)

Yellow-tipped Flasher *Astraptes anaphus* Arriaga foothills

Tropical Checkered Skipper *Pyrgus oileus* El Triunfo



Two-tailed Swallowtail (Mark Van Beirs)



Grey Fox (Mark Van Beirs)



The group at the El Triunfo clearing (Mark Van Beirs)



Klug's Clearwing (Mark Van Beirs)