

EL TRIUNFO

March 21-31, 2009

Leaders: Brad Boyle & Brian Gibbons

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Not that I have ever missed it, but every year I worry. Will this be the year I fail to find one of the strangest, most charismatic birds on earth? Of course, there is more to this tour than just the Horned Guan. Two-thousand-foot-deep Sumidero Canyon, for example, with its White-lored Gnatcatchers, Canivet's Emeralds, and the highly local Belted Flycatcher. Or the cloud forests of El Triunfo, their brooding groves of oaks and tree ferns echoing with the calls of Resplendent Quetzals and Fulvous Owls, whistling Highland Guans, and the glassy jumble of Brown-backed Solitaires. Or the incomparable Cañada Honda, a green oasis far from the nearest town, truck, or road, where flocks of Azure-rumped Tanagers forage on figs and Blue-throated Motmots yodel across the canyon.

Still, I worry. Imagine the avian equivalent of a panda bear, black with a white pin-striped bib and single white band across its tail, staring eyes, and disdainful bill. And then there's the "horn"—more like a traffic cone, or an unfortunate orange party hat from some New Year's gala. And as if the Horned Guan's appearance weren't enough, it hums, it coughs, and it clacks its beak like castanets. You can't travel that far and not see such a bird.

It turned out I needn't have worried.

By the end of the long hike up to El Triunfo, we had already had a wonderful day of birding: Black Hawk-Eagle during the truck ride, Tody Motmot seen well by all during the first hour on the trail, and scope views of an Emerald Toucanet that refused to quit. So wonderful, in fact, that I forgot about the Horned Guan.

Jorge heard it first: a low-pitched, double hum, inaudible to some. We hurried down the trail until the sound suddenly seemed close. Or was it far? Then we saw it, directly over the trail just a short distance away. Snapping its bill disapprovingly, it flapped and hopped to an even better perch where everyone saw it well. Finally, it worked its way up into the canopy and disappeared. Wow!

The Horned Guan is one of many remarkable species restricted or nearly restricted to the mountains of Chiapas and Guatemala. Other endemics seen include Fulvous Owl, Blue-throated Motmot, Rufous Sabrewing, Green-throated Mountain-gem, Wine-throated Hummingbird, Yellowish Flycatcher, Black-throated Jay, Black-capped Swallow, and Azure-rumped Tanager.

Equally remarkable is the great diversity of regions, climates, and vegetation we traversed, much of it on foot. The montane thorn forests above Sumidero Canyon produced a number of Gulf-slope species not found elsewhere on the tour (Plain

Chachalaca, Buff-bellied Hummingbird), as well as the highly local Belted Flycatcher. On the way to Jaltenango, agricultural areas yielded many widespread tropical birds and migrants (such as Scissor-tailed Flycatcher), while around Jaltenango we found species characteristic of Pacific slope dry forests, for example, Plain-capped Starthroat and Russet-crowned Motmot. These species follow the dry forest inland up into the Río Grijalva valley.

Three full days in the cloud forest enabled us to see most of the special highland species, including Resplendent Quetzal (the long-tailed northern subspecies), Fulvous Owl, and of course the Horned Guan. Some species, such as Yellowish Flycatcher and Green-throated Mountain-gem, were so common we had to remind ourselves that they were highly local endemics. Other sightings of note in the cloud forest included a large troop of spider monkeys seen well and close up (almost too close, if you know what I mean) by some of us.

After leaving El Triunfo we worked our way down the Pacific slope of the mountains over the course of three days, traveling on foot through one of the last great wilderness regions of Mexico. The contrasts were striking: only a few hours after leaving El Triunfo and crossing the Continental Divide, we abruptly left the cloud forest and descended through a zone of tall pines and cypresses before entering the verdant subtropical Cañada Honda, with its towering fig trees and Azure-rumped Tanagers.

Though only about five trail miles away, our next camp at Limonal is outside the “cloud trap” of Cañada Honda and therefore much drier and warmer. One remarkable sighting here, spotted by Inocente, was a southern ring-tailed cat, or cacomixtle, foraging in a tree almost directly over our camp. I have heard this species (and indeed, been kept awake by its yowling) many times before, but had never seen it on this tour.

Down at Paval, we encountered a rich diversity of lowland tropical birds...not to mention roosters, barking dogs, chickens, pigs, and our first road in many days. Fortunately, chilled drinks and a delicious fresh lunch at the Arguetas helped compensate for the less appealing aspects of “civilization.”

Finally, just when we thought the fun was over, we found yet more endemics right on the grounds of our hotel in Tapachula, including my favorite, the Giant Wren: largest, and certainly loudest, in the world.

Itinerary:

March 21– Late afternoon arrival at Tuxtla Gutierrez, Chiapas, Mexico.

March 22 – Morning birding at Sumidero Canyon, then drove to Jaltenango with a few birding stops enroute.

March 23 – After breakfast we rode trucks to Finca Prusia, a coffee growing area on the Atlantic slope of the mountains. From Finca Prusia we hiked to El Triunfo.

March 24-26 – Birded the El Triunfo cloud forest. A number of different trails available for birding here allowed us to thoroughly explore the area.

March 27 – Hiked from El Triunfo to Cañada Honda birding enroute. After leaving the cloud forest, we passed through pine-cypress forest before descending into the humid subtropical vegetation of Cañada Honda.

March 28 – Birded Cañada Honda in the morning, then birded our way to Limonal in the afternoon.

March 29 – Birded the Limonal area in the early morning, then hiked down to Paval. The hike down took us along a series of ridge through a distinctive zone of oaks. The oaks were just leafing out, loaded with catkins, and crowded with hummingbirds and migrating warblers. The transition into tropical deciduous forest closer to Paval brought us to the rich lowland avifauna of the coastal foothills of Chiapas.

March 30 – Birded near Paval in the early morning, then took the short hike to the dirt road where our truck met us. Ate lunch with our horsemen the Argueta brothers, and their families, and continued on by truck to Mapastepec where we transferred to vans for the final ride to our hotel in Tapachula. Birded the hotel grounds in the late afternoon.

March 31 – Departure for home

Site codes:

- S – Sumidero Canyon near Tuxtla Gutierrez (tropical and montane dry forest, with bamboo; from 2500-4000 feet elevation)
- J – Jaltenango and nearby Rio Grijalva valley; includes stops along highways (tropical dry forest; 2100 feet and lower) and ride up to Finca Prusia
- ET – El Triunfo cloud forest (about 6500 feet elevation; summit of Cerro El Triunfo is 8000 feet)
- H – Cañada Honda and area; includes pine-cypress forest above H (montane moist forest; 4500 feet elevation at H)
- L – Limonal (montane dry forest; 4200 feet elevation)
- P – Paval (tropical dry to moist forest; 1600 feet elevation)
- T – Tapachula, mainly at the Hotel Loma Real (near sea level); also includes birds seen along highway

BIRDS OBSERVED

Common names in **bold** are species endemic to Mexico and northern Central America, as defined in Howell & Webb 1995 (A Guide to the Birds of Mexico and Northern Central America). This definition includes species ranging as far south as extreme

northern Nicaragua, and, in a few cases, as far north as extreme SW USA. Common names in **bold italics** are narrow endemics, restricted almost entirely to Chiapas and adjacent Guatemala. Underlined species are rare or unusual for the area of the tour.

TINAMOUS (Tinamidae)

Thicket Tinamou (*Crypturellus cinnamomeus*) – heard only, from H to P.

CHACHALACAS & GUANS (Cracidae)

Plain Chachalaca (*Ortalis vetula*) – P, J. Heard at Sumidero and seen on the way to Finca Prusia.

White-bellied Chachalaca (*Ortalis leucogastra*) – T. On the hotel grounds at T on our last afternoon. Found only along the Pacific coast from Chiapas to northwestern Nicaragua.

Crested Guan (*Penelope purpurascens*) – H, L, P. Heard on multiple occasions and seen once.

Highland Guan (*Penelopina nigra*) – S, ET, L, P. A signature sound of the Chiapas highlands: a slow ascending whistle, followed by the sound of “ripping cloth” as the male dives from a high perch. Ripping sound is made with the flight feathers. Ranges from the highlands of Chiapas and Guatemala to northern Nicaragua.

Horned Guan (*Oreophasis derbianus*) – ET. Seen by all during stunning, close-up encounter along the Finca Prusia trail during our hike up to El Triunfo. Afterward, glimpsed briefly on two occasions. We got lucky on that first day! One of the rarest and strangest of all Cracids.

NEW WORLD QUAILS (Odontophoridae)

Singing Quail (*Dactylortyx thoracicus*) – ET. Heard only, far off, on a couple of occasions.

PELICANS (Pelecanidae)

Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) – S, P. Two sightings. One of several birds deep in Sumidero Canyon, and a second of several large V-formations of perhaps 200 individuals high over Ariel Argueta’s house during lunch on our way to Tapachula.

CORMORANTS (Phalacrocoracidae)

Neotropic Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – S, J. Far below in reservoir at S, also some seen on the drive to Jaltenango.

HERONS, EGRETS & BITTERNES (Ardeidae)

Great Egret (*Ardea alba*) – S, J

Tricolored Heron (*Egretta tricolor*) – Seen from bridge during stop on way to J. A first for the tour.

Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*) – S, J, P, T

Little Blue Heron (*Egretta caerulea*) – J.

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) – S, J, P, T.

Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*) – At bridge stop on way to J.

AMERICAN VULTURES (Cathartidae)

Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*) – W.

Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*) – W.

HAWKS, EAGLES & KITES (Accipitridae)

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) – J.

White Hawk (*Leucopternis albicollis*) – P. Excellent views during hike down to P

Roadside Hawk (*Buteo magnirostris*) – P.

Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*) – W. Seen at many locations.

Short-tailed Hawk (*Buteo brachyurus*) – S, J, ET, P. Both light and dark morph individuals.

Zone-tailed Hawk (*Buteo albonotatus*) – S, J.

Gray Hawk (*Asturina nitida*) – S, P, T.

Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) – ET, H, L.

Black Hawk-Eagle (*Spizaetus tyrannus*) – J. Sighted high overhead during ride to Finca Prusia.

CARACARAS & FALCONS (Falconidae)

Barred Forest-Falcon (*Micrastur ruficollis*) – ET. Heard throughout our stay in the clearing at ET, and finally glimpsed by a lucky few.

Collared Forest-Falcon (*Micrastur semitorquatus*) – P. Heard only.

Crested Caracara (*Caracara cheriway*) – J.

American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) – J.

JACANAS (Jacanidae)

Northern Jacana (*Jacana spinosa*) – J.

SANDPIPERS & ALLIES (Scolopacidae)

Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*) – J. On way to Finca Prusia.

PIGEONS & DOVES (Columbidae)

Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*) – S, J, T. Widespread in cities and towns

Red-billed Pigeon (*Columba flavirostris*) – J, P, T.

Band-tailed Pigeon (*Columba fasciata*) – ET, H

Short-billed Pigeon (*Columba nigrirostris*) – P. Heard only. The distinctive call was heard by Brian's group during hike from L to P. A first for the tour.

White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*) – S, J

Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*) – S

Inca Dove (*Columbina inca*) – S, J, P, T.

Ruddy Ground-Dove (*Columbina talpacoti*) – S, J, P

White-tipped Dove (*Leptotila verreauxi*) – S, J, L, P

White-faced Quail-Dove (*Geotrygon albifacies*) – ET, H

PARROTS (Psittacidae)

Green Parakeet (*Aratinga holochlora*) – J; a few overhead during our drive to Finca Prusia.

Orange-fronted Parakeet (*Aratinga canicularis*) – Common at P, T
Orange-chinned Parakeet (*Brotogeris jugularis*) – P. In tree at Ariel Argueta's house.
White-crowned Parrot (*Pionus senilis*) – S, J.
White-fronted Parrot (*Amazona albifrons*) – J, P, T.

CUCKOOS (Cuculidae)

Squirrel Cuckoo (*Piaya cayana*) – P
Pheasant Cuckoo (*Dromococcyx phasianellus*) – P. Heard only.
Groove-billed Ani (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*) – S, P, P, T. Widespread in small numbers in lowlands

TYPICAL OWLS (Strigidae)

Pacific Screech-Owl (*Otus cooperi*) – Heard only near hotel in T
Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl (*Glaucidium brasilianum*) – S, J, P
Mottled Owl (*Ciccaba virgata*) – Seen by some at T, heard at H.
Black-and-white Owl (*Ciccaba nigrolineata*) – P.
Spectacled Owl (*Lophotrix cristata*) – P. Heard only.
Fulvous Owl (*Strix fulvescens*) – Excellent close-up views at ET. Endemic to cloud forests of Chiapas, Guatemala, and Honduras.

NIGHTJARS AND ALLIES (Caprimulgidae)

Common Pauraque (*Nyctidromus albicollis*) – Heard at P, and finally called in by Brian.
(Mexican) Whip-poor-will (*Caprimulgus vociferus ssp. mexicanus*) – Heard only at ET by Joyce.

SWIFTS (Apodidae)

Chestnut-collared Swift (*Streptoprocne rutila*) – J, and large flocks seen daily high over the ET clearing.
White-collared Swift (*Streptoprocne zonaris*) – seen from ET to the Pacific lowlands, including one large flock over P.
Vaux's Swift (*Chaetura vauxi*) – J, ET.

HUMMINGBIRDS (Trochilidae)

Rufous Sabrewing (*Campylopterus rufus*) – H, L, and hike from L to P. A narrow endemic restricted to mid-elevation montane forest along the Pacific slope of the Sierra Madre of Chiapas and Guatemala.
Violet Sabrewing (*Campylopterus hemileucurus*) – Mostly in Heliconia groves, during hikes from H to L and L to P.
Green Violet-ear (*Colibri thalassinus*) – ET
Emerald-chinned Hummingbird (*Abeillia abeillei*) – H, L; mostly in drier mid-montane forests
Black-crested Coquette (*Lophornis helenae*) – ET. Palo Gordo trail along the creek. Great spotting Joyce!
Canivet's Emerald (*Chlorostilbon canivetii*) – S. Formerly known as Fork-tailed Emerald

White-eared Hummingbird (*Hylocharis leucotis*) – ET. One seen alongside creek, Palo Gordo trail.

Buff-bellied Hummingbird (*Amazilia yucatanensis*) – S. Several individuals seen. Mostly found along the Gulf slope of Mexico and the Yucatan peninsula. A first for this tour.

Cinammon Hummingbird (*Amazilia rutila*) – Seen well at our camping spot at P.

Azure-crowned Hummingbird (*Agyrtria cyanocephala*) – J

Berylline Hummingbird (*Saucerottia beryllina*) – J, also seen in large numbers in the willow oak zone during the hike from L to P.

Green-throated Mountain-Gem (*Lampornis viridipallens*) – ET to H; the common cloud forest hummingbird at ET

Garnet-throated Hummingbird (*Lamprolaima rhami*) – ET; a single individual seen briefly feeding at canopy bromeliads along the Cerro Bandera trail.

Magnificent Hummingbird (*Eugenes fulgens*) – ET

Long-billed Starthroat (*Heliomaster longirostris*) – P. Seen at camp.

Plain-capped Starthroat (*Heliomaster constantii*) – S, J. This species is found in drier habitats than the Long-billed Starthroat.

Sparkling-tailed (Woodstar) Hummingbird (*Tilmatura dupontii*) – E, H. Females only, seen almost daily alongside the creek at ET, also at our campsite at H. Much more common than in previous years.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*) – S, J.

Wine-throated Hummingbird (*Atthis ellioti*) – ET. Both males and females seen. One of the smallest hummingbirds in the world, restricted to the Chiapas-Guatemala highlands.

TROGONS (Trogonidae)

Violaceous Trogon (*Trogon violaceus*) – Seen by Brian's group during hike from L to P.

Mountain Trogon (*Trogon mexicanus*) – Heard only at ET, also during hike from L to H.

Collared Trogon (*Trogon collaris*) – ET, H, P

Resplendent Quetzal (*Pharomachrus mocinno subsp. mocinno*) – ET. Seen well by all on multiple occasions. This subspecies, restricted to the Chiapas-Guatemala highlands, has a noticeably long tail (actually, upper tail coverts) than the subspecies in Costa Rica and Panama.

MOTMOTS (Momotidae)

Tody Motmot (*Hylomanes momotula*) – J, L, P

Blue-throated Motmot (*Aspatha gularis*) – ET, H, L. Heard occasionally throughout our stay up at ET, seen by a few, then finally seen well at H, where much more common.

Russet-crowned Motmot (*Momotus mexicanus*) – J. Multiple views of this striking dry forest endemic, in and around J and during the ride to Finca Prusia.

Blue-crowned Motmot (*Momotus momota*) – J, L, P

Turquoise-browed Motmot (*Eumomota superciliosa*) – Seen well by several people at P.

KINGFISHERS (Alcedinidae)

Ringed Kingfisher (*Ceryle torquatus*) – J

Amazon Kingfisher (*Chloroceryle americana*) – J, P.

TOUCANS (Ramphastidae)

Emerald Toucanet (*Aulacorhynchus prasinus*) – S, J, ET. One memorable individual, seen during our hike up to ET, remained perched in the open for so long we eventually had to walk away from it.

Collared Aracari (*Pteroglossus torquatus*) – Seen by Roger during lunch at the Argueta's house.

WOODPECKERS (Picidae)

Acorn Woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus*) – J.

Golden-fronted Woodpecker (*Melanerpes aurifrons*) – lowland areas: S, J, P

Hairy Woodpecker (*Picoides villosus*) – ET. This dark brown subspecies is found south of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in Mexico and northern Central America.

Golden-olive Woodpecker (*Piculus rubiginosus*) – J, ET, L

Lineated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus lineatus*) – At our hotel grounds in T.

OVENBIRDS & WOODCREEPERS (Furnariidae)

Scaly-throated (Spectacled) Foliage-gleaner (*Anabacerthia variegaticeps*) – J, ET, H

Ruddy Foliage-gleaner (*Automolus rubiginosus*) – ET

Tawny-throated Leaf-tosser (*Sclerurus mexicanus*) – Heard at ET and H, finally seen by some during hike down to P.

Olivaceous Woodcreeper (*Sittasomus griseicapillus*) – P

Ivory-billed Woodcreeper (*Xiphorhynchus flavigaster*) – J, P

Spotted Woodcreeper (*Xiphorhynchus erythropygius*) – ET. The common large cloudforest woodcreeper.

Streak-headed Woodcreeper (*Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*) – Seen by some at P.

Spot-crowned Woodcreeper (*Lepidocolaptes affinis*) – ET. The common small cloudforest woodcreeper.

TYPICAL ANTBIRDS (Thamnophilidae)

Barred Antshrike (*Thamnophilus doliatus*) – Heard only near H and L.

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS (Tyrannidae)

Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet (*Camptostoma imberbe*) – S (Roger only), H, L.

Greenish Elaenia (*Myiopagis viridicata*) – Seen during hike down to P.

Paltry Tyrannulet (*Zimmerius vilissimus*) – ET. Heard commonly in the cloud forest, and seen by several people. This inconspicuous flycatcher feeds mostly on mistletoe fruits in the canopy.

Northern Bentbill (*Oncostoma cinereigulare*) – Heard only during hike down to P.

Common Tody-Flycatcher (*Todirostrum cinereum*) – P

Yellow-olive Flycatcher (*Tolmomyias sulphurescens*) – J, P

Stub-tailed Spadebill (*Platyrinchus cancrominus*) – Seen by some during hike from L to

P

Tufted Flycatcher (*Mitrephanes phaeocercus*) – ET; seen daily in the cloud forest, also down to H.

Belted Flycatcher (*Xenotriccus callizonus*) – S; this very local habitat specialist forages close to the ground in mid-elevation forests with an abundance of the bamboo *Chusquea*. Restricted to drier parts of the Guatemala-Chiapas highlands.

Greater Pewee (*Contopus pertinax*) – Seen from truck near Finca Prusia.

Eastern Wood-Pewee (*Contopus virens*) – Heard at ET and seen near L and P.

Willow Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*) – J, P.

Hammond's Flycatcher (*Empidonax hammondi*) – ET; seen daily in small numbers in the cloud forest; also L.

Yellowish Flycatcher (*Empidonax flavescens*) – the common forest flycatcher at ET

Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*) – J, ET; near streams.

Vermilion Flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*) – S, J.

Bright-rumped Attila (*Attila spadiceus*) – Heard only, ET & H.

Dusky-capped Flycatcher (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) – heard commonly at middle and lower elevations; finally seen by many people near L & P.

Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*) – S, P. Usually associated with very dry habitats; it was particularly interesting to encounter this species on the moist Pacific slope at P. A first for this tour.

Nutting's Flycatcher (*Myiarchus nuttingi*) – S. This *Myiarchus* flycatcher is closely associated with tropical thorn scrub in Mexico.

Great Kiskadee (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) – common in lowlands at S, J, P, and T

Boat-billed Flycatcher (*Megarynchus pitangua*) – S, J, P, T

Social Flycatcher (*Myiozetetes similis*) – S, J, P, T

Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher (*Myiodynastes luteiventris*) – J, P, T

Piratic Flycatcher (*Legatus leucophaeus*) – P

Tropical Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – S, J, P, T

Western Kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*) – P.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus forficatus*) – in field alongside the road during the drive to J

Rose-throated Becard (*Pachyramphus aglaiae*) – ET, P

Masked Tityra (*Tityra semifasciata*) – P.

MANAKINS (Pipridae)

Long-tailed Manakin (*Chiroxiphia linearis*) – the “toledo” call made by duetting males is one of the characteristic sounds of the drier forests from H down to P. We had several excellent views of handsome males.

VIREOS & ALLIES (Vireonidae)

Plumbeous Vireo (*Vireo plumbeus*) – During hike down to P.

Cassin's Vireo (*Vireo cassinii*) – One seen by some during hike to P.

Blue-headed Vireo (*Vireo solitarius*) – Seen at many locations from S to L.

Warbling Vireo (*Vireo gilvus*) – Seen near L.

Brown-capped Vireo (*Vireo leucophrys*) – H, L. Essentially a darker, browner, non-migratory version of the Warbling Vireo.

Yellow-green Vireo (*Vireo flavoviridis*) – common at P

Chestnut-sided Shrike-Vireo (*Vireolanius melitophrys*) – Seen by some people during hike up to ET. Also heard once or twice around the ET clearing. A spectacular regional endemic.

Green Shrike-Vireo (*Vireolanius pulchellus*) – Heard during hike up to ET, and seen by some during hike from L to P.

Rufous-browed Peppershrike (*Cyclarhis gujanensis*) – J,P.

JAYS (Corvidae)

White-throated Magpie-Jay (*Calocitta formosa*) – S, J, P, T

Green Jay (*Cyanocorax yncas*) – S, J, P.

Black-throated Jay (*Cyanolyca pumilo*) – this shy *Cyanolyca* jay was heard commonly and seen occasionally during our stay in the cloud forest ast ET. Also heard a couple of times as far down as H.

Unicolored Jay (*Aphelocoma unicolor*) – ET; larger and noisier than Black-throated Jay

SWALLOWS (Hirundinidae)

Black-capped Swallow (*Notiochelidon pileata*) – ET. Endemic to the highlands of Chiapas & Guatemala.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) – S, J

Ridgeway's Rough-winged Swallow (*S. serripennis ridgewayi*, or *S. ridgewayi*) – S. This Mexican resident is probably a separate species, closely related to the migrant Northern Rough-winged Swallow. Distinguished from the latter species primarily by the dark crissum.

Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) – S, P

WRENS (Troglodytidae)

Giant Wren (*Campylorhynchus chiapensis*) – Seen on our hotel grounds at T. This large, noisy wren is restricted entirely to the coastal plain of Chiapas

Spot-breasted Wren (*Thryothorus maculipectus*) – H, L.

Rufous-and-white Wren (*Thryothorus rufalbus*) – One of the beautiful bird songs of the world. H, L, P.

Plain Wren (*Thryothorus modestus*) – S, J, P.

(Southern) House Wren (*Thryothorus aedon*) – J, P, T.

Rufous-browed Wren (*Troglodytes rufociliatus*) – ET.

White-breasted Wood-Wren (*Henicorhina leucosticta*) – Heard only, during hike up to ET.

Gray-breasted Wood-Wren (*Henicorhina leucophrys*) – ET.

GNATCATCHERS (Poliophtilidae)

White-lored Gnatcatcher (*Poliophtila albilorus*) – S; restricted to the arid thorn forests of southern Mexico and Central America.

Long-billed Gnatwren (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*) – heard only, during hike from L to P

THRUSHES (Turdidae)

Brown-backed Solitaire (*Myadestes occidentalis*) – heard and seen from ET down to P; the strange, jumbled song of this species is a characteristic sound of the Mexican highlands

Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush (*Catharus aurantiirostris*) – Heard during hike up to ET, seen a few times near L and above P.

Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush (*Catharus frantzii*) – ET

Spotted Nightingale-Thrush (*Catharus dryas*) – ET

Swainson's Thrush (*Catharus ustulatus*) – J, ET, H, L, P; the common migrant thrush from H down to the Pacific foothills.

Black Robin (*Turdus infuscatus*) – ET

Clay-colored Robin (*Turdus grayi*) – seen at all locations, including the clearing at ET

White-throated Robin (*Turdus assimilis*) – H, L, P

Rufous-collared Robin (*Turdus rufitorques*) – ET. Restricted to Chiapas and Guatemala, in Mexico this species is found mostly in the pine-forested highlands to the north of the Río Grijalva valley (i.e., the San Cristobal area) and is rare in the Sierra Madre Sur. Only the third time this species has been seen on this tour.

MOCKINGBIRDS & THRASHERS (Mimidae)

Tropical Mockingbird (*Mimus gilvus*) – During drive to J.

Blue-and-white Mockingbird (*Melanotus hypoleucus*) – S, ET. Endemic to highlands of Chiapas, Guatemala and Honduras.

WAXWINGS (Ptilonotidae)

Gray Silky-flycatcher (*Ptilogonys cinereus*) – seen daily at ET, also heard overhead as low down as P.

WAXWINGS (Bombycillidae)

Cedar Waxwing (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) – ET. A single flock by creek along the Palo Gordo trail.

WOOD-WARBLERS (Parulidae)

Tennessee Warbler (*Vermivora peregrina*) – H to P; a common migrant at middle elevations on the Pacific slope, especially abundant in the willow oak zone.

Nashville Warbler (*Vermivora ruficapilla*) – S, L to P

Crescent-chested Warbler (*Parula superciliosa*) – ET. A characteristic warbler of the Mexican highlands

Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*) – S, P.

Magnolia Warbler (*Dendroica magnolia*) – S, J, P.

Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*) – During hike from L to P.

Black-throated Green Warbler (*Dendroica virens*) – S, J, H, L, P

Townsend's Warbler (*Dendroica townsendi*) – J, ET, H, L, P

Grace's Warbler (*Dendroica graciae*) – In pines above the road during the drive up to Finca Prusia.

Black-and-white Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*) – S, J, H, L, P

Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*) – One, during hike to P.

Louisiana Waterthrush (*Seiurus motacilla*) – J, also seen on several occasions along the creek at ET. Previously, this species has only been heard (once) on this tour.
MacGillivray's Warbler (*Oporornis tolmiei*) – ET, mostly in thick vegetation near the creek.

Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*) – ET, near the creek.

Gray-crowned Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis poliocephala*) – one near P. Unlike most other *Geothlypis* warblers, this species is associated with dry scrubby vegetation rather than water.

Wilson's Warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla*) – J, ET, H. Ubiquitous at higher elevations.

Slate-throated Redstart (*Myioborus miniatus*) – J, ET, H, L; common at middle and higher elevations

Fan-tailed Warbler (*Euthlypis lachrymosa*) – H, L, P. Particularly memorable were the large aggregations of individuals seen at ant swarms near L and P.

Golden-crowned Warbler (*Basileuterus culicivorus*) – H, L, P, also during hike up to ET. This is the common *Basileuterus* warbler at middle elevations below cloud forest.

Golden-browed Warbler (*Basileuterus belli*) – daily in the cloud forest at ET

Rufous-capped Warbler (*Basileuterus rufifrons*) – during hike from Finca Prusia, also from H to L.

Chestnut-capped Warbler (*Basileuterus delatrii*) – Seen singing during the hike down to P, also during hike out to road from P. Generally regarded as a subspecies of the Rufous-capped Warbler; distinctive plumage, song and habitat suggest recognition as a separate species is warranted.

Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*) – One seen at P.

TANAGERS & ALLIES (Thraupidae)

Common Bush-Tanager (*Chlorospingus ophthalmicus*) – common at ET with some down to L

Red-crowned Ant-Tanager (*Habia rubica*) – H, L, P.

Red-throated Ant-Tanager (*Habia fuscicauda*) – J, P.

Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*) – T

Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*) – S, J, L, P

Flame-colored Tanager (*Piranga bidentata*) – fairly common at ET, also H.

White-winged Tanager (*Piranga leucoptera*) – A couple of sightings near L and P.

Blue-gray Tanager (*Thraupis episcopus*) – P, T.

Yellow-winged Tanager (*Thraupis abbas*) – W

Azure-rumped Tanager (*Tangara cabanisi*) – H, L. A narrow endemic, restricted to moist, middle-elevation canyons along the Pacific slope of Chiapas and nearby Guatemala

Red-legged Honeycreeper (*Cyanerpes cyaneus*) – H, L, P.

BUNTINGS, SPARROWS & SEEDEATERS (Emberizidae)

Blue-black Grassquit (*Volatinia jacarina*) – S, P

White-collared Seedeater (*Sporophila torqueola*) – P, T.

Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer (*Diglossa baritula*) – ET

White-naped (Yellow-throated) Brush-Finch (*Atlapetes albinucha*) – Heard only at ET.

Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch (*Buarremon brunneinucha*) – ET

Olive Sparrow (*Arremonops rufivirgatus*) – common at S
Prevost's Ground-Sparrow (*Melospiza biarcuatum*) – Finally seen by most people at P thanks to sharp spotting by Cathy.
White-eared Ground-Sparrow (*Melospiza leucotis*) – Heard commonly and occasionally seen from H to P.
Rufous-collared Sparrow (*Zonotrichia capensis*) – A couple of individuals, resident in the clearing at ET.

SALTATORS, GROSBEAKS, & BUNTINGS (Cardinalidae)

Grayish Saltator (*Saltator coerulescens*) – P.
Black-headed Saltator (*Saltator atriceps*) – S, J, P.
Yellow Grosbeak (*Pheucticus chrysopleus*) – common in the clearing at ET
Rose-breasted Grosbeak (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) – S, J, H, L.
Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*) – S.
Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*) – J, T.

ORIOLES, BLACKBIRDS, & ALLIES (Icteridae)

Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) – several, in agricultural fields during drive to J.
Melodious Blackbird (*Dives dives*) – J, ET, P, T.
Great-tailed Grackle (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) – S, J, P, T; throughout in the lowlands, especially in towns and cities.
Bronzed Cowbird (*Molothrus aeneus*) – J.
Black-vented Oriole (*Icterus wagleri*) – J. Seen during our stop by the river just before J.
Orchard Oriole (*Icterus spurius*) – S, J, P.
Streak-backed Oriole (*Icterus pustulatus*) – several seen from S to J.
Spot-breasted Oriole (*Icterus pectoralis*) – T.
Altamira Oriole (*Icterus gularis*) – P.
Baltimore Oriole (*Icterus galbula*) – S, J.

SISKINS, CROSSBILLS & ALLIES (Fringillidae)

Scrub Euphonia (*Euphonia affinis*) – L, P.
Yellow-throated Euphonia (*Euphonia hirundinacea*) – S.
Elegant Euphonia (*Euphonia elegantissima*) – ET, H.
Blue-crowned Chlorophonia (*Chlorophonia occipitalis*) – Mainly ET, down to L .
Black-headed Siskin (*Carduelis notata*) – See by some during ride to Finca Prusia.
Hooded Grosbeak (*Coccothraustes abeillei*) – ET.

OLD WORLD SPARROWS (Passeridae)

House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) – S, J; towns and cities

230 Bird species seen
15 Species head only

245 Total species

OTHER OBSERVATIONS

REPTILES

Spiny-tailed Iguana (*Ctenosaurus sp.*) – ET. Large, heavily “armed” iguana seen near P. Several species in southern Mexico.

MAMMALS

Central America Spider Monkey (*Ateles geoffroyi*) – A large troupe seen at close quarters by some people at ET. This species is usually seen at lower elevations.

Mexican Gray Squirrel (*Sciurus aureogaster*) – S. The common large squirrel of lowland areas in southern Mexico.

Variegated Squirrel (*Sciurus variegatoides*) – T. This was the large, grayish squirrel seen on the grounds of our hotel in T.

Deppe’s Squirrel (*Sciurus deppei*) – ET. The common small squirrel of the cloud forest at ET

Cacomixtle, or Southern Ring-tailed Cat (*Bassariscus sumichrasti*) ET, L. The strange cries of this tropical relative of the racoon were heard at several locations, most memorably at L, where several of us were kept awake by their cries. We were treated to excellent views of one foraging in a tree at the campsite, thanks to Inocente.

Gray Fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*) – Several times at ET, also at P, where one was seen carrying of a young chicken (unfortunately not a rooster, as far as we could tell).

White-nosed Coati (*Nasua narica*) – This social, long-nosed relative of the racoon was seen a few times at both ET and H.

Jaguarundi (*Herpailurus jaguarondi*) – A spectacular sighting by Brian and a few other people in his group at ET. This dark, long-bodied feline looks more like a weasel than a cat. Who was it—Roger?—aptly labeled this the “stretch limousine” of the cat world.