

MANU, PERU

Machu Picchu Extension

AUGUST 19-24, 2009

Leader: Steve Hilty
Co-Leader and Machu Picchu Guide: Doris Valencia

Compiled by Steve Hilty

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Machu Picchu Peru Extension Tour
(Extension trip following Part II: Manu Lowlands Tour)
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If the hummingbirds at Abra Malaga were good this year—and they were—the mixed flock at the Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel was even better. This was one of those rare occasions when the flock moved slowly, first in one direction, then slowly back again, providing unparalleled opportunities to see a good variety of little flycatchers, tanagers, and warblers, including some we rarely see here such as Black-capped Tyrannulet, Slaty Tanager, and Blue-naped Chlorophonia. All in all, our final morning of birding provided a fitting climax to a week-and-a-half of spectacular birds and wildlife viewing in southern Peru.

This short itinerary, coming on the heels of our Manu Lowlands trip, provides a dramatic contrast to the steamy lowlands and overwhelming biological diversity of the Manu Biosphere Reserve. This is a trip through high mountain valleys carved from powerful rushing rivers, a trip into high Andean grasslands and, most of all, a trip through history. It is, by all accounts, a region of colorful markets and of remarkable people dressed in distinctive but regionally varied clothing. Women carry babies, wrapped in bright blankets, on their backs. Men with broad sandal-clad feet, bent under heavy loads, move with a quick shuffling gait, all amidst majestic ruins, ancient terraced valleys, and beside puna lakes shimmering beneath ultraviolet skies. Our route took us through traditional villages, past Usnea-draped basaltic cliffs, into mossy woodland inhabited by sprightly tanagers, and among deep, cold valleys where dawn comes slowly to restless hummingbirds fleeing retreating shadows in endless pursuit of flowers.

Lago Huacarpay and the high puna grasslands of Abra Malaga provide an excellent cross section of high Andean birdlife, while the hotel grounds around the Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel offer an oasis of birds, flowers, and tranquility amidst a cacophony of hawkers of souvenirs, tourists, noise, and congestion in the little town of Aguas Calientes. The hotel grounds, mined to the hilt with orchids, flowering Heliconia, bird-of-paradise, Centropogon, and dozens of other flowering plants, offer hummingbirds, multicolored tanagers, and other small birds a diverse array of places to forage and seek shelter. Inca Wrens, first observed around the Machu Picchu ruins in 1965, were not formally described until 1985. Curiously, these wrens may not have been present during the years of intensive surveys and collecting following the discovery of Machu Picchu in the first half of the last century. Also, it seems that a trip into this valley below these famous ruins would not be complete without at least a glimpse of its most famous avian inhabitant, the Andean Cock-of-the-rock, whose image now adorns everything from t-shirts to luggage tags. And so, of course, one more view of this bird, after our cloud forest trip, was like icing on an already luscious cake.

The combination of birds, scenery, and history is incomparable on this trip. The ruins, as always, remain impressionable, mysterious, and evocative—the more so perhaps because so little is known of their origins, and because of the breathtaking location. The ruins of Machu Picchu are indeed one of the world's great travel destinations, but they are, in themselves, just a brief chapter in a long and fascinating history of human occupation of the Urubamba River Valley.

KEY:**Hd** - heard**Boldface and underlined** - rare, uncommon or of special interest**LIST OF BIRDS:**

White-tufted Grebe	Rollandia rolland
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
Black-crowned Night-Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
Puna Ibis	<i>Plegadis ridgwayi</i>
Torrent Duck	<i>Merganetta armata</i>
Speckled Teal	<i>Anas flavirostris</i>
Yellow-billed Pintail	<i>Anas georgica</i>
Puna Teal	<i>Anas puna</i>
Cinnamon Teal	<i>Anas cyanoptera</i>
Andean Condor	<i>Vultur gryphus</i>
Cinereous Harrier	<i>Circus cinereus</i>
Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle	<i>Geranoaetus melanoleucus</i>
Mountain Caracara	<i>Phalco boenus megalopterus</i>
American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>
Andean Guan	<i>Penelope montagnii</i>
*Stripe-faced Wood-Quail	<i>Odontophorus balliviani</i>
Plumbeous Rail	<i>Pardirallus sanguinolentus</i>
Common Gallinule	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Andean (Slate-colored) Coot	<i>Fulica ardesiaca</i>
Andean Lapwing	<i>Vanellus resplendens</i>
Gray-breasted Seedsnipe	<i>Thinocorus orbignyianus</i>
Andean Gull	<i>Larus serranus</i>
Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon)	<i>Columba livia</i>
Spot-winged Pigeon	<i>Patagioenas maculosa</i>
Eared Dove	<i>Zenaida auriculata</i>
Bare-faced Ground-dove	<i>Metriopelia ceciliae</i>
White-tipped Dove	<i>Leptotila verreauxi</i>
White-throated Quail-Dove	<i>Geotrygon frenata</i>
Mitred Parakeet	<i>Aratinga mitrata</i>
White-collared Swift	<i>Streptoprocne zonaris</i>
Chestnut-collared Swift?	<i>Streptoprocne rutila</i>
[Andean Swift	<i>Aeronautes andecolus</i>
Sparkling Violetear	<i>Colibri coruscans</i>
White-bellied Hummingbird	<i>Amazilia chionogaster</i>
Green-and-white Hummingbird	<i>Amazilia viridicauda</i>
Speckled Hummingbird	<i>Adelomyia melanogenys</i>
Chestnut-breasted Coronet	<i>Boissonneaua matthewsii</i>
Shining Sunbeam	<i>Aglaeactis cupripennis</i>
White-tufted Sunbeam	<i>Aglaeactis castelnaudii</i>
Collared (Gould's) Inca	<i>Coeligena coeligena</i>
Great Sapphirewing	<i>Pterophanes cyanopterus</i>

Giant Hummingbird	<i>Patagonia gigas</i>
[Booted Racquettail	<i>Ocreatus underwoodii</i>
Green-tailed Trainbearer	<i>Lesbia nuna</i>
Tyrian Metaltail	<i>Metallura tyrianthina</i>
Long-tailed Sylph	<i>Agelaiocercus kingi</i>
Highland Motmot	<i>Momotus aequatorialis</i>
Ocellated Piculet	<i>Picumnus dorbygianus</i>
Andean Flicker	<i>Colaptes rupicola</i>
Bar-winged Cinclodes	<i>Cinclodes fuscus</i>
Wren-like Rushbird	<i>Phleocryptes melanops</i>
Creamy-crested Canastero	<i>Asthenes dorbignyi</i>
[Streak-throated Canastero	<i>Asthenes humilis</i>
Streaked Xenops	<i>Xenops rutilans</i>
Stripe-headed Antpitta	<i>Grallaria andicola</i>
Red-crested Cotinga	<i>Ampelion rubrocristatus</i>
Sclater's Tyrannulet	<i>Phyllomyias sclateri</i>
Plumbeous-crowned Tyrannulet	<i>Phyllomyias plumbeiceps</i>
Mottle-cheeked Tyrannulet	<i>Phylloscartes ventralis</i>
Black-capped Tyrannulet	<i>Phyllomyias nigrocapillus</i>
[Sierran Elaenia	<i>Elaenia pallatangae</i>
Streak-necked Flycatcher	<i>Mionectes striaticollis</i>
Many-colored Rush-Tyrant	<i>Tachuris rubrigastra</i>
Smoky-colored Pewee	<i>Contopus fumigatus</i>
Black Phoebe	<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>
White-winged Black-Tyrant	<i>Knipolegus aterrimus</i>
White-browed Chat-Tyrant	<i>Ochthoeca leucophrys</i>
Puna Ground-Tyrant	<i>Muscisaxicola juninensis</i>
Rufous-naped Ground-Tyrant	<i>Muscisaxicola rufivertex</i>
[Ochre-naped Ground-Tyrant	<i>Muscisaxicola flavinucha</i>
*Golden-crowned Flycatcher	<i>Myiodynastes chrysocephalus</i>
Tropical Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus melancholicus</i>
Barred Becard	<i>Pachyramphus versicolor</i>
Blue-and-white Swallow	<i>Notiochelidon cyanoleuca</i>
White-capped Dipper	<i>Cinclus leucocephalus</i>
Inca Wren	<i>Thryothorus eisenmanni</i>
House Wren	<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>
Gray-breasted Wood-Wren	<i>Henicorhina leucophrys</i>
*Andean Solitaire	<i>Myadestes ralloides</i>
White-eared Solitaire	<i>Entomodestes leucotis</i>
Chiguanco Thrush	<i>Turdus chiguanco</i>
Great Thrush	<i>Turdus fuscater</i>
Brown-capped Vireo	<i>Vireo leucophrys</i>
Red-eyed Vireo	<i>Vireo olivaceus</i>
Thick-billed Euphonia	<i>Euphonia laniirostris</i>
Blue-naped Chlorophonia	<i>Chlorophonia cyanea</i>
Hooded Siskin	<i>Carduelis magellanica</i>
Black Siskin	<i>Carduelis atrata</i>

Tropical Parula	<i>Parula pitiayumi</i>
Slate-throated Redstart (Whitestart)	<i>Myioborus miniatus</i>
Spectacled Redstart (Whitestart)	<i>Myioborus melanocephalus</i>
[Pale-legged Warbler	<i>Basileuterus signatus</i>
Russet-crowned Warbler	<i>Basileuterus coronatus</i>
Cinereous Conebill	<i>Conirostrum cinereum</i>
Capped Conebill	<i>Conirostrum albifrons</i>
Rust-and-yellow Tanager	<i>Thlypopsis ruficeps</i>
Slaty Tanager	<i>Creurgops dentatus</i>
Highland Hepatic-Tanager	<i>Piranga lutea</i>
Blue-gray Tanager	<i>Thraupis episcopus</i>
Blue-capped Tanager	<i>Thraupis cyanocephala</i>
Blue-and-yellow Tanager	<i>Thraupis bonariensis</i>
Saffron-crowned Tanager	<i>Tangara xanthocephala</i>
Blue-necked Tanager	<i>Tangara cyanicollis</i>
Beryl-spangled Tanager	<i>Tangara nigroviridis</i>
Silver-backed Tanager	<i>Tangara viridicollis</i>
Blue Dacnis	<i>Dacnis cayana</i>
Peruvian Sierra-Finch	<i>Phrygilus punensis</i>
Ash-breasted Sierra-Finch	<i>Phrygilus plebejus</i>
White-winged Diuca-Finch	<i>Diuca speculifera</i>
Chestnut-breasted Mountain-Finch	<i>Poospiza caesar</i>
Band-tailed Seedeater	<i>Catamenia analis</i>
Plain-colored Seedeater	<i>Catamenia inornata</i>
Rusty Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossa sittoides</i>
Black-throated Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossa brunneiventris</i>
Greenish Yellow-Finch	<i>Sicalis olivascens</i>
Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch	<i>Buarremon torquatus</i>
Rufous-collared Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia capensis</i>
Golden-billed Saltator	<i>Saltator aurantiirostris</i>
Black-backed Grosbeak	<i>Pheucticus aureoventris</i>
Yellow-winged Blackbird	<i>Agelaius thilius</i>
Dusky-green Oropendola	<i>Psarcolius atrovirens</i>

MAMMALS

Alpacas and llamas (long domesticated)