

**HOLIDAY SEASON IN PANAMA:
CHRISTMAS AT EL VALLE'S
CANOPY LODGE PRE-TRIP**

DECEMBER 22 – 27, 2009

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Canopy Lodge Pre-Trip
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Itinerary

With its incredibly active banana feeding stations for the birds, very comfortable accommodations, pleasant climate, and various birding locations nearby, the Canopy Lodge in El Valle is a great way to spend the holiday season. And although its location in the foothills cannot quite match the diversity of the lower location of the Canal Zone, it does offer a good opportunity to see a group of birds that do not wander from their higher altitudes. Knowing that we would have the chance to see the lowland species at the Canopy Tower, we excitedly set our focus on the birds at hand.

After arriving at the Canopy Lodge, the task of sorting out the various species frantically feeding on the bananas just meters away began in earnest. Numerous Blue-gray Tanagers alongside Palm Tanagers, Clay-colored Thrushes, and Thick-billed Euphonias flew back and forth from feeder to feeder as we watched in excited joy. We managed to sort out a pair of Tawny-capped Euphonias, a Streaked Saltator, various Red-legged Honeycreepers and Crimson-backed Tanagers, a pair of White-lined Tanagers, and Red-crowned Ant-Tanagers. And if this excitement weren't enough, a Rufous Motmot flew in next to a Red-crowned Woodpecker to gorge on a banana; we could barely contain ourselves! Oh, I should mention that this was all within the first few minutes of our arrival.

As we continued watching the feeders from our elevated porch—complete with exotic tropical juices and views of the forested caldera walls of El Valle and the picturesque river flowing by—we saw Flame-Rumped Tanager, Plain-colored Tanager, Green Honeycreeper, and a pair of Dusky-faced Tanagers gingerly approach the feeders to get their share of banana. On the ground below the feeders hopped Yellow-faced Grassquit and Black-striped Sparrow alongside White-tipped Doves, as Rufous-tailed Hummingbird and Snowy-bellied Hummingbird fed in the flowers behind the feeders. A Rufous-capped Warbler gleaned insects from the same bushes alongside a Bananaquit drinking nectar. A Bay Wren sang loudly from the brush along the river, drawing our attention away from the feeders momentarily. Whew! We started our trip only a few minutes ago! Oh, the joys of birding in the Tropics.

Other highlights from our stay included great views of a Tody Motmot, which flew in and sat on a nearby perch. After an

extended view, as everyone breathlessly watched in amazement, it returned to its densely vegetated environs. We also had great views of the Orange-bellied Trogon, which is range-restricted to Costa Rica and Central Panama. We watched as a pair sat and called to each other, quickly raising their tails and slowly lowering them again with each churring note. Another range-restricted species, the Veraguan Mango Hummingbird, was seen during our day-trip to the coast. This beautiful hummer sat perched in the sun atop a leafless tree. Here we also saw the Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl as it was being mobbed by various other colorful tropical species.

During a walk along the upper road of La Mesa we witnessed a Band-tailed Barbthroat hummingbird feeding at a nearby *Heliconia* flower. As they returned to their cabins one afternoon, two participants had the unexpected blessing of seeing a Rufous-vented Ground-Cuckoo along the edge of the forest. A memorable sighting that we all enjoyed was the Black-faced Antthrush that walked slowly and deliberately over the forest floor with its tail cocked practically straight up in the air. This normally not-so-easy-to-see species entertained us as it made many passes back and forth in the understory, giving its characteristic three-note whistle call.

These were only a few of the many highlights of our tour. Every VENT tour I lead to Panama is always filled with rewarding and exciting moments that confirm the fact that tropical birding is a great way to spend the holiday season.

- December 22, 2009- Arrival and transfer to Country Inn
- December 23, 2009- Transfer to Canopy Lodge with some birding in route, remainder of day spent birding Canopy Lodge grounds.
- December 24, 2009- Morning birding at La Mesa; after lunch and some birding at Canopy Lodge grounds, we spent the afternoon at Cara Iguana.
- December 25, 2009- Day Trip to El Chiru and Playa Santa Clara in the morning and El Valle Chiquito for the afternoon.
- December 26, 2009- Morning birding at Cerro Gaital, afternoon birding at Finca Candalareo.
- December 27, 2009- Morning spent birding at Finca Candalareo and Canopy Lodge grounds; after lunch we spent some time at local market before transfer and birding at Canopy Tower.

Bird List

Tinamous

Little Tinamou

Guans & Chachalacas

Gray-headed Chachalaca

Gannets & Boobies

Brown booby

Pelicans

Brown Pelican

Cormorants

Neotropic cormorant

Frigatebirds

Magnificent Frigatebird

Hérons, Egrets, & Bitterns

Great Egret

Cattle Egret

Green Heron

New World Vultures

Black Vulture

Turkey Vulture

Hawks, Eagles, & Kites

Osprey

White-tailed Kite

Snail Kite

White Hawk

Savanna Hawk

Roadside Hawk

Broad-winged Hawk

Gray Hawk

Short-tailed Hawk

Zone-tailed Hawk

Black Hawk-Eagle

Tinamidae

Crypturelius (heard only)

Cracidae

Ortalis cinereiceps

Sulidae

Sula leucogaster

Pelecanidae

Pelecanus occidentalis

Phalacrocoracidae

Phalacrocorax brasilianus

Fregatidae

Fregata magnificens

Ardeidae

Ardea alba

Bubulcus ibis

Butorides virescens

Cathartidae

Coragyps atratus

Cathartes aura

Accipitridae

Pandion haliaetus

Elanus leucurus

Rostrheamus sociabilis

Leucopternis albicollis

Buteogallus meridionalis

Buteo magnirostris

Buteo platypterus

Buteo nitidus

Buteo brachyurus

Buteo albonotatus

Spizaetus tyrannus

Falcons & Caracaras

Yellow-headed Caracara

Sunbittern

Sunbittern

Plovers & Lapwings

Southern Lapwing

Sandpipers & allies

Spotted Sandpiper

Willet

Whimbrel

Gulls & Terns

Laughing Gull

Royal Tern

Sandwich Tern

Doves & Pigeons

Rock Pigeon

Mourning Dove

Pale-vented Pigeon

Plain-breasted Ground-Dove

Ruddy Ground-Dove

White-tipped Dove

Parrots, Macaws, & Allies

Brown-throated Parakeet

Orange-chinned Parakeet

Brown-hooded Parrot

Blue-headed Parrot

Yellow-crowned Parrot

Cuckoos

Squirrel Cuckoo

Smooth-billed Ani

Typical Owls

Tropical Screech-Owl

Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl

Swifts

White-collared Swift

Band-rumped Swift

Falconidae

Milvago chimachima

Eurypygidae

Eurypyga helias

Charadriidae

Vanellus chiliensis

Scolopacidae

Actitis macularius

Tringa semipalmata

Numenius phaeopus

Laridae

Larus atricilla

Thalasseus maxima

Thalasseus sandvicensis

Columbidae

Columba livia

Zenaida macroura

Patagioenas cayennensis

Columbina minuta

Columbina talpacoti

Leptotila verreauxi

Psittacidae

Aratinga pertinax

Brotogeris jugularis

Pionopsitta haematotis

Pionus menstruus

Amazona ochrocephala

Cuculidae

Piaya cayana

Crotophaga ani

Strigidae

Megascops choliba

Glaucidium brasilianum

Apodidae

Streptoprocne zonaris

Chaetura spinicaudus

Hummingbirds

Green Hermit
Stripe-throated Hermit
White-tipped Sicklebill
White-necked Jacobin
Veraguan Mango
Green Thorntail
Garden Emerald
Violet-crowned Woodnymph
Sapphire-throated Hummingbird
Snowy-bellied Hummingbird
Rufous-tailed Hummingbird
Snowcap
White-vented Plumeleteer
Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer
Long-billed Starthroat

Trogons

Orange-bellied Trogon

Motmots

Tody Motmot
Blue-crowned Motmot
Rufous Motmot
Broad-billed Motmot

Kingfishers

Amazon Kingfisher

Toucans

Blue-throated Toucanet
Collared Aracari
Keel-billed Toucan

Woodpeckers & Allies

Red-crowned Woodpecker
Lineated Woodpecker

Ovenbirds & Woodcreepers

Red-faced Spinetail
Plain Xenops
Wedge-billed Woodcreeper
Cocoa Woodcreeper

Trochilidae

Phaethornis guy
Phaethornis striigularis
Eutoxeres aquila
Florisuga mellivora
Anthracothorax veraguensis
Discosura conversii
Chlorostilbon assimilis
Thalurania colombica
Lepidopyga coeruleogularis
Amazilia (Saucerottia) edward
Amazilia tzacatl
Microchera albocoronata
Chalybura buffonii
Chalybura urochrysis
Heliomaster longirostris

Trogonidae

Trogon aurantiiventris

Momotidae

Hylomanes momotula
Momotus momota
Baryphthengus martii
Electron platyrhynchum

Alcedinidae

Chloroceryle amazona

Ramphastidae

Aulacorhynchus prasinus
Pteroglossus torquatus
Ramphastos sulfuratus

Picidae

Melanerpes rubricapillus
Dryocopus lineatus

Furnariidae

Cranioleuca erythroptus
Xenops minutus
Glyphorhynchus spirurus
Xiphorhynchus susurrans

Spotted Woodcreeper
Brown-billed Scythebill
(heard only)

Typical Antbirds

Fasciated Antshrike
Great Antshrike
Barred Antshrike
Russet Antshrike
Plain Antvireo
Spot-crowned Antvireo
Slaty Antwren
Dusky Antbird
Chestnut-backed Antbird
Dull-mantled Antbird

Antthrushes & Antpittas

Black-faced Antthrush
(heard only)

Tyrant Flycatchers

Southern Beardless-Tyrannulet
Yellow-bellied Elaenia
Olive-striped Flycatcher
Paltry Tyrannulet
Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant
(heard only)
Common Tody-Flycatcher
Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher
(heard only)
Yellow-margined Flycatcher
White-throated Spadebill
Dusky-capped Flycatcher
Panama Flycatcher
Great Kiskadee
Boat-billed Flycatcher
Social Flycatcher
Gray-capped Flycatcher
Tropical Kingbird
Fork-tailed Flycatcher

Genera incertae sedis

Thrush-like Schiffornis

Manakins

Golden-collared Manakin

Xiphorhynchus erythropygius
Campylorhamphus pusillus

Thamnophilidae

Cymbilaimus lineatus
Taraba major
Thamnophilus doliatus
Thamnistes anabatinus
Dysithamnus mentalis
Dysithamnus puncticeps
Myrmotherula schisticolor
Cercomacra tyrannina
Myrmeciza exsul
Myrmeciza laemosticta

Formicariidae

Formicarius analis

Tyrannidae

Camptostoma obsoletum
Elaenia flavogaster
Mionectes olivaceus
Zimmerius villssimus
Lophotriccus pileatus

Todirostrum cinereum
Todirostrum nigriceps

Tolmomyias sulphurescens
Platyrrinchus mystaceus
Myiarchus tuberculifer
Myiarchus panamensis
Pitangus sulphuratus
Megarynchus pitangua
Myiozetetes similis
Myiozetetes granadensis
Tyrannus melancholicus
Tyrannus savanna

Schiffornis turdina

Pipridae

Manacus vitellinus

White-ruffed Manakin
Lance-tailed Manakin

Corapipo altera
Chiroxiphia lanceolata

Vireos & Allies

Yellow-throated vireo
Scrub Greenlet
Golden-fronted Greenlet
Lesser Greenlet
Rufous-browed Peppershrike

Vireonidae

Vireo flavifrons
Hylophilus flavipes
Hylophilus aurantiifrons
Hylophilus decurtatus
Cyclarhis gujanensis

Crows, Jays, & Magpies

Black-chested Jay

Corvidae

Cyanocorax affinis

Swallows

Gray-breasted Martin
Southern Rough-winged Swallow

Hirundinidae

Progne chalybea
Stelgidopteryx ruficollis

Wrens

Black-bellied Wren
(heard only)
Bay Wren
Rufous-breasted Wren
Rufous-and-White Wren
Plain Wren
House Wren
White-breasted Wood-Wren
Gray-breasted Wood-Wren
Scaly-breasted Wren
(heard only)

Troglodytidae

Thryothorus fasciatoventris

Thryothorus nigricapillus
Thryothorus rutilus
Thryothorus rufalbus
Thryothorus modestus
Troglodytes aedon
Henicorhina leucosticta
Henicorhina leucophrys
Microcerculus marginatus

Old World Warblers

Tawny-faced Gnatwren
Long-billed Gnatwren

Sylviidae

Microbates cinereiventris
Ramphocaenus melanurus

Thrushes & Allies

Clay-colored Robin

Turdidae

Turdus grayi

Mockingbirds & Thrashers

Tropical Mockingbird

Mimidae

Mimus gilvus

New World Warblers

Golden-winged Warbler
Tennessee Warbler
Yellow Warbler
Chestnut-sided Warbler

Parulidae

Vermivora chrysoptera
Vermivora peregrina
Dendroica petechia
Dendroica pensylvanica

Black-throated Green Warbler
Blackburnian Warbler
Bay-breasted Warbler
Black-and-White Warbler
American Redstart
Mourning Warbler
Canada Warbler
Rufous-capped Warbler

Dendroica virens
Dendroica fusca
Dendroica castanea
Mniotilta varia
Setophaga ruticilla
Oporornis Philadelphia
Wilsonia Canadensis
Basileuterus rufifrons

Genus incertae sedis

Bananaquit

Coereba flaveola

Tanagers & Allies

Dusky-faced Tanager
Tawny-crested Tanager
White-lined Tanager
Red-crowned Ant-Tanager
Hepatic Tanager
Crimson-backed Tanager
Flame-rumped Tanager
Blue-gray Tanager
Palm Tanager
Plain-colored Tanager
Silver-throated Tanager
Bay-headed Tanager
Golden-hooded Tanager
Green Honeycreeper
Red-legged Honeycreeper

Thraupidae

Mitrospingus cassinii
Tachyphonus delatrii
Tachyphonus rufus
Habia rubica
Piranga flava
Ramphocelus dimidiatus
Ramphocelus flammigerus
Thraupis episcopus
Thraupis palmarum
Tanagara inornata
Tanagara icterocephala
Tanagara gyrola
Tanagara larvata
Chlorophanes spiza
Cyanerpes cyaneus

Buntings, Sparrows, & Allies

Blue-black Grassquit
Variable Seedeater

Thick-billed Seed-Finch
Yellow-faced Grassquit
Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch
Orange-billed sparrow
Black-striped Sparrow

Emberizidae

Volatinia jacarina
Sporophila (corvine)
americana
Oryzoborus funereus
Tiaris olivaceus
Arremon brunneinucha
Arremon aurantiirostris
Arremon conirostris

Saltators & Cardinals

Streaked Saltator
Buff-throated Saltator
Slate-colored Grosbeak

Cardinalidae

Saltator striatipectus
Saltator maximus
Saltator grossus

Troupials & Allies

Red-breasted Blackbird

Icteridae

Sturnella militaris

Eastern Meadowlark
Great-tailed Grackle
Yellow-backed Oriole
Baltimore Oriole
Chestnut-headed Oropendola

Siskins, Crossbills, & Allies

Yellow-crowned Euphonia
Thick-billed Euphonia
Tawny-capped Euphonia

Mammal List

Squirrels

Variegated Squirrel
Red-tailed Squirrel

Sloths

Hoffman-s Two-toed Sloth
Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth

Agoutis

Central American Agouti

Reptile List

Green Iguana
Central American Whiptail
Common Basilisk
Frog sp.

Sturnella magna
Quiscalus mexicanus
Icterus chrysater
Icterus galbula
Psarocolius wagleri

Fringillidae

Euphonia luteicapilla
Euphonia laniirostris
Euphonia anae

Scluridae

Sciurus variegatoides
Sciurus granatensis

Megalonychidae & Bradypodidae

Choloepus hoffmanni
Bradypus variegates

Dasyproctidae

Dasyprocta punctata

Iguana iguana
Ameiva festiva
Basiliscus basiliscus