

**ECUADOR: AMAZONIA AT  
NAPO WILDLIFE CENTER**

**JANUARY 8-17, 2015**

**LEADERS: DAVID WOLF & JORGE RIVANIDEIRA**

**COMPILED BY: DAVID WOLF**

**VICTOR EMANUEL NATURE TOURS, INC.  
2525 WALLINGWOOD DRIVE, SUITE 1003  
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78746  
WWW.VENTBIRD.COM**

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**By David Wolf**

To visit the Napo Wildlife Center is to enter another realm, one so totally different from our own that it is easy to feel “lost.” Here we left the familiar behind and entered the world of the Amazonian rainforest. For our local guide Jorge Rivanideira, however, this forest is home and he knows it intimately. As soon as we arrived he began to put his knowledge and formidable skills to work for us, and for the next week we went from one exciting bird or animal to the next. Each excursion produced memorable sightings, small pieces of a very complex puzzle, and by the time we left we had begun to understand this unique environment a bit more.

We began our explorations based in quiet Anyangu village at the Yasuni Eco-Lodge, a project of the women of the community. Our first day was a full one, visiting an amazing variety of habitats along and near the great Napo River, beginning with a short hike across a sandbar to view a distant Amazonian Umbrellabird sitting up in an emergent tree. From there it was off to the famous clay licks along the river banks where dozens of rowdy Mealy, Yellow-crowned, and Blue-headed parrots and Dusky-headed Parakeets came down to eat the mineral-impregnated dirt, an incredible cacophony of sound and color. Since it was a cloudy and relatively cool morning we then opted to land on a river island, replete with its own ecology of colonizing plants and birds rarely found on the “mainland.” Rounding up a tiny Gray-breasted Crake was a challenge, but eventually we circled it and all had point-blank looks as it froze motionless amidst the tufts of grass. Birds like this may not be rare, but they are rarely seen, and to have it right at our feet was stunning. In the late morning we made our first walk into the true rainforest, an especially lush area along a quiet stream leading to a small forest interior cave. As we approached the cave (and photo blind) it was clear from the deafening noise that hundreds of parakeets were present in the trees above the mineral lick, but above the high-pitched chattering we also heard the raucous squawks of shy Scarlet Macaws. It took time and patience, but eventually the birds came down to drink the salty mud— hundreds of Cobalt-winged Parakeets and a smattering of gorgeous Orange-cheeked Parrots and Scarlet-shouldered Parrotlets. Finally the macaws descended, giving us great photo ops when at least 5 birds landed just in front of us and stayed at the mud for some time, their colors blazing! This amazing day wasn't over yet though, as a late afternoon stroll through the community yielded our first sighting of the cute Golden-mantled Tamarins, a primate of very restricted range and the logo animal of the area, and then a White-fored Antpitta singing full force from just a few feet away as we stood motionless in the tall cane!



**Scarlet Macaw © David Wolf**

A light drizzle at dawn the next day delayed our departure a bit, but it soon stopped and we found ourselves climbing up their new tower on the crest of the first low ridge above the Napo. As we ascended this sturdy and stable structure, we just went higher and higher until we were astounded to find ourselves well above the forest canopy, with magnificent vistas of the vast forest stretching in all directions from the Napo inland across the huge Yasuni National Park. As we adjusted our senses a parade of birds began, and for most of the morning we found ourselves racing back and forth on the platform and up and down a few flights of stairs. Colorful Gilded and Lemon-throated barbets and a male Black-tailed Trogon came



Purple-throated Cotinga © David Wolf

right into “our” tree at close range, parrots raced by below us, and five members of the toucan family were spotted. Best of all was a pair of rarely-seen Purple-throated Cotingas, an enigmatic bird of the high canopy. In his many years of guiding here Jorge had never seen this species so closely or well! The show continued even as we descended the tower, when a gorgeous Great Jacamar popped out and sat in the open, just as a mixed-flock with White-fronted Nunbirds, Amazonian Trogons, woodcreepers, and two species of becards passed through.

From here we made our first trip up Anyangu Creek to the Napo Wildlife Center, gazing in awe as we passed through the dark and mysterious

swamp forest, with its masses of tangled roots and epiphyte-laden trees. At times it was absolutely still as we drifted along in silence, but then suddenly something special would appear like magic, like the Agami Heron slipping away up the bank or a sleepy Boat-billed Heron at its day roost, or the brilliant blue flash of a passing Morpho butterfly. A pair of Black-banded Owls roosting high up in a vine-tangled tree was a rare surprise, but best of all was a well-concealed Zigzag Heron frozen motionless on a nest overhanging the creek, spotted by our quiet but very adept paddler. Most of what little is known about this near-mythical bird has been learned in this region, but this was the first nest that the local guides had found this season.

A visit to the Napo Wildlife Center tower the next morning again took us into the realm of the canopy, where much of the activity of the forest happens. Toucans and oropendolas were much in evidence, a White-necked Puffbird came right into our tree a few feet away, and we spotted our first Red Howler Monkeys. Unfortunately, an extremely distant Harpy Eagle never came closer to us—but just knowing that this indicator species is present here was thrilling. Mid-afternoon brought a very impressive storm that blew in from across the lake, but it passed through quickly, as tropical storms often do, and a late afternoon canoe cruise on the tranquil lagoon was a perfect ending to the day.

On Day 4 we went for quality rather than quantity, as we hiked well back into the very tall high-ground (*terra firme*) forest. Even though this is the richest environment on earth for species diversity, it is not an easy habitat to work. Layers of vegetation seem to reach endlessly to the sky, while so little light penetrates the understory that it is always dark and dense. Often the forest seems very quiet, while at other times mysterious voices are heard but cannot be spotted. All of this combines to make every sighting that much more special. Our first great bird here appeared with the briefest flicker of movement, when a

stunning Purplish Jacamar zipped out from the midstory and returned to a perch with its insect prey. For the next 10 minutes we enjoyed watching this performance over and over, amazed at the bird's agility. Then we played games with a softly-calling Black-throated Trogon which eventually landed in full view, just as a small lek of Screaming Pihás began sounding off. This is one of the most amazing sounds of the forest, incredibly loud and distinctive, but made by a very plain gray thrush-like bird that was—typically—quite hard to spot. Soon thereafter a thundering stampede somewhere in the forest froze us in our tracks. White-lipped Peccaries! Jorge motioned us to follow him off the trail in pursuit, but alas, all we saw of them were a few gray rumps disappearing in the understory. It was then that we turned our attention to the monkeys crashing through the tall trees above us and realized that it was a sizable troop of Woolly Monkeys, the largest New World primate. Fortunately they calmed down and we were able to watch them for almost 30 minutes, truly a rare treat as this is one of the most heavily-hunted mammals in the Amazonian forests, locally extirpated in many areas, as are the peccaries. Our major quest for the morning lay further ahead, however, and we pushed along to an open grove of shady trees nestled at the base of a low ridge. Within seconds of arriving here Jorge had spotted our goal, a male Black-necked Red Cotinga. We all got one quick look in the scope before it left, a look that would have been enough, but...we waited patiently, the bird returned, and it then sat still for the next 45 minutes! This bird is so beautiful and so scarce that I firmly stated that I was not leaving until it left, and it started to seem like we might be there all day, except that a large herd of peccaries were again heard nearby. This time Jorge was able to push them towards us so that we caught glimpses as they moved away up-slope, in the process flushing the cotinga.

Another special creature that Napo is known for had so far been missing in action for us, so the next day we birded our way down the creek in the canoes, finally encountering the family group of Giant Otters. They popped up right beside our canoe, hissing and grunting and disturbed by our close presence, and then scrambled up a muddy bank. Apparently they didn't want to be there, so they descended back down the bank, plopped into the creek, and then proceeded to swim alongside of us for a long time, several of them momentarily pulling up onto a log for full views. This is yet another of the locally-extirpated glamour mammals of South America, and their presence here is indicative of just how well the Anyangu community is protecting their forests and wildlife. Here along the creek we also encountered a rowdy troop of Capuchin monkeys, several of the youngsters coming down to inspect us closely; watched Silvered, Dot-backed, and Plumbeous antbirds foraging next to our canoe; encountered uncommon Monk Saki monkeys; and held our breath when a gorgeous adult Agami Heron in full breeding-plumage stalked into view.



Giant Otters © David Wolf

On our final morning afield we again visited the Napo tower, this time completing our list of all of the cotingas of the region with the sighting of a male Plum-colored. Even better was the male Spangled Cotinga that landed right beside us in our tree, while we were looking down on close Gilded Barbets and Many-banded Aracaris. A mixed-flock of the small birds of the canopy circled us several times,

acquainting us with Pygmy Antwren, euphonias, dacnis, tanagers, and several obscure little flycatchers, while our return walk through the forest took us to an active lek of brilliant male Golden-headed Manakins displaying in the midstory. Here Jorge's incredible eyes spotted a Citron-bellied Attila perched motionless high overhead, a rare good sighting of this range-restricted species. On our final canoe cruise late that afternoon we said goodbye to old friends like the Hoatzins and Donacobius...and all too soon our week in this amazing place came to an end, though the memories will linger forever. Our special thanks go to Jorge and all of the members of the Anyangu community who have protected their forest and wildlife so well and made this visit possible.

### **ITINERARY:**

January 8: night at the Hosteria San Carlos in Tababela (near the Airport).

January 9: a mid-morning flight to Coca, where upon arrival we transferred to the dock on the Napo River and boarded the motorized boat for the trip downriver to the landing for Yasuni EcoLodge. After checking in we spent the late afternoon birding the community trail and clearings.

January 10: a big day along the Napo River, beginning with the umbrellabird and then visiting the parrot clay lick, a nearby river island, and the forest interior "parrot cave." After a little time off we birded the community trail in the late afternoon.

January 11: morning at the amazing new tower above the Napo River, then landing at the "bodega" for lunch. In the afternoon a peaceful canoe trip upstream to the Napo Wildlife Center.

January 12: a morning visit to the Napo Wildlife Center tower and a late afternoon canoe cruise on the lake after a fast-moving and rather fierce rainstorm.

January 13: most of the day spent hiking the Tiputini Trail into the upland *terra firme* forest.

January 14: a morning canoe trip down the creek and back upstream to the lodge for a late lunch. Late afternoon birding from the new tower right at Napo WC.

January 15: a return trip to the Napo Tower and nearby, and then in the afternoon a final canoe cruise on the lake and a quiet side-stream.

January 16: early morning departure for the return trip to Coca. For those departing, a late morning flight back to Quito. Participants continuing on the "Eastern Slope of the Andes" tour had lunch in Coca and then drove to Wild Sumaco, arriving in time to enjoy the hummingbird feeders for the first time.

January 17: departure for home for those not continuing on the Eastern Slope of the Andes tour.

**BIRDS:** a few highlights, group favorites and rare sightings are bolded.

Cinereous Tinamou (*Crypturellus cinereus*) – heard only

Undulated Tinamou (*Crypturellus undulates*) – heard only (often!); the only tinamou that was very vocal right now.

Speckled Chachalaca (*Ortalis guttata*)

Spix's Guan (*Penelope jacquacu*)

Blue-throated Piping-Guan (*Pipile cumanensis*)

Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*)

**Zigzag Heron** (*Zebrilus undulatus*) – amazing looks at an incredibly well-camouflaged bird as it sat on its nest with neck and bill stretched upright; seen several times.

Rufescent Tiger-Heron (*Tigrisoma lineatum*)

Cocoi Heron (*Ardea cocoa*)

**Great Blue Heron** (*Ardea herodias*) – close bird seen from the boat just after leaving Coca; rufous thighs noted carefully. A great rarity in Ecuador.

Great Egret (*Ardea alba*)

Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*)

Little Blue Heron (*Egretta caerulea*)

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*)

Striated Heron (*Butorides striatus*)

**Agami Heron** (*Agamia agami*) – two sightings, one an immature and the other a stunning adult in full breeding finery. Both were lurking in the shadows of the tangled swamp forest along the creeks.

Capped Heron (*Pilherodius pileatus*)

Boat-billed Heron (*Cochlearius cochlearius*)

**Roseate Spoonbill** (*Platalea ajaja*) – 2 in a backwater of the Napo River; a local rarity.

Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*)

Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*)

Greater Yellow-headed Vulture (*Cathartes melambrotus*)

**King Vulture** (*Sarcoramphus papa*)

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)

Hook-billed Kite (*Chondrohierax uncinatus*)

**Harpy Eagle** (*Harpia harpyja*) – extremely distant bird sighted from the Napo Tower by sharp-eyed Jorge; we could barely discern a few of the features of this magnificent predator. Tantalizing!

Snail Kite (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*)

**Slender-billed Kite** (*Helicolestes hamatus*) – eventually a great look at this very localized swamp inhabitant.

Double-toothed Kite (*Harpagus bidentatus*)

**Bicolored Hawk** (*Accipiter bicolor*) – nice scope study of an adult perched on the canopy in the early morning, from the Napo Tower.

Crane Hawk (*Geranospiza caerulescens*) – a close study of one along the Napo River.

Slate-colored Hawk (*Buteogallus schistaceus*)

Roadside Hawk (*Rupornis magnirostris*)

Black-faced Hawk (*Leucopternis melanops*) – distant bird seen from the Napo Tower both visits.

**Gray-breasted Crake** (*Laterallus exilis*) – Jorge did an amazing job of rounding this up for us on a young river island.

Purple Gallinule (*Porphyrio martinicus*)

Limpkin (*Aramus guarauna*)

Southern Lapwing (*Vanellus chilensis*) – close pair on the “futbol” field at Anyangu.

Wattled Jacana (*Jacana jacana*)

Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularius*)

Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*)

Large-billed Tern (*Phaetusa simplex*) – a declining species along the heavily-travelled Napo.

Pale-vented Pigeon (*Patagioenas cayennensis*)

Plumbeous Pigeon (*Patagioenas plumbea*)

Ruddy Pigeon (*Patagioenas subvinacea*)

Ruddy Ground-Dove (*Columbina talpacoti*)

Gray-fronted Dove (*Leptotila rufaxilla*)

**Sapphire Quail-Dove** (*Geotrygon saphirina*) – incredibly good look at this rarely-seen bird on the trail near the Napo Tower in the early morning.

**Hoatzin** (*Opisthocomus hoazin*) – a comical favorite that was common and conspicuous.

Squirrel Cuckoo (*Piaya cayana*)

Black-bellied Cuckoo (*Piaya melanogaster*) – seen well on the Tiputini Trail.

**Greater Ani** (*Crotophaga major*) – large numbers along the creek and lakeshore.

Smooth-billed Ani (*Crotophaga ani*)

Tropical Screech-Owl (*Megascops choliba*) – heard only, around the Yasuni Eco-Lodge.

**Tawny-bellied Screech-Owl** (*Megascops watsonii*) – peering out of its day roost in a large tree.

Crested Owl (*Lophotrix cristata*) – a well-hidden bird at its day roost.

Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl (*Glaucidium brasilianum*)

**Black-banded Owl** (*Ciccaba huhula*) – lovely pair side-by-side at the day roost high up in a vine-tangled tree along the creek.

**Ladder-tailed Nightjar** (*Hydropsalis climacocerca*) – close study of a male along the Napo.

Great Potoo (*Nyctibius grandis*) – two in one afternoon!  
Common Potoo (*Nyctibius griseus*) – heard only  
White-collared Swift (*Streptoprocne zonaris*)  
Short-tailed Swift (*Chaetura brachyura*)  
Gray-rumped Swift (*Chaetura cinereiventris*)  
Fork-tailed Palm-Swift (*Tachornis squamata*)  
Great-billed Hermit (*Phaethornis malaris*) – “singing” from a perch in the forest understory.  
Black-eared Fairy (*Heliostyris auritus*)  
Olive-spotted Hummingbird (*Leucippus chlorocercus*) – brief look at this specialist found only on the young river islands.

**Black-tailed Trogon** (*Trogon melanurus*) – especially the close male in “our” Tower tree.

Green-backed (Amazonian White-tailed) Trogon (*Trogon viridis*) – a recent split from the White-tailed Trogon of southern Central America and the western Andean lowlands.

Amazonian (Amazonian Violaceous) Trogon (*Trogon ramonianus*) – active pair at the base of the high-ground tower seen repeatedly. A recent split from the Violaceous Trogon of Central America.

Black-throated Trogon (*Trogon rufus*) – a great find in the interior of the terra firme forest.

Amazonian Motmot (*Momotus momota*) – heard daily and finally seen! The Blue-crowned Motmot has recently been split into multiple species.

Ringed Kingfisher (*Megaceryle torquata*)

Amazon Kingfisher (*Chloroceryle amazon*)

Green Kingfisher (*Chloroceryle americana*)

**Green-and-rufous Kingfisher** (*Chloroceryle inda*) – this flighty gem was seen well a number of times along the creeks.

**White-necked Puffbird** (*Notharchus hyperhynchus*) – one joined us in “our” Tower tree.

Black-fronted Nunbird (*Monasa nigrifrons*)

White-fronted Nunbird (*Monasa morphoeus*)

White-chinned Jacamar (*Galbula tombacea*)

Purplish Jacamar (*Galbula chalcothorax*) – long scope study of one hawking insects from the midstory of the terra firme forest on the Tiputini Trail.

**Great Jacamar** (*Jacameroops aureus*) – fabulous pair around the high-ground tower; one of them was an aberrant individual with golden-bronze upperparts that really shimmered.

Scarlet-crowned Barbet (*Capito aurovirens*)

**Gilded Barbet** (*Capito auratus*) – almost close enough to touch in the Tower tree.

Lemon-throated Barbet (*Eubucco richardsoni*)

Lettered Aracari (*Pteroglossus inscriptus*)

Chestnut-eared Aracari (*Pteroglossus castanotis*)

**Many-banded Aracari** (*Pteroglossus pluricinctus*) – all of the aracaris and toucans were wonderful, but these came the closest to us in the Napo Tower tree and stayed around the longest.

Ivory-billed Aracari (*Pteroglossus azara*)

White-throated Toucan (*Ramphastos tucanus*)

Channel-billed Toucan (*Ramphastos vitellinus*)

Yellow-tufted Woodpecker (*Melanerpes cruentatus*)

Little Woodpecker (*Veniliornis passerinus*)

Spot-breasted Woodpecker (*Colaptes punctigula*)

Chestnut Woodpecker (*Celeus elegans*)

Cream-colored Woodpecker (*Celeus flavus*)

**Ringed Woodpecker** (*Celeus torquatus*) – incredible pair low and close to us along the creek for a considerable length of time; this is one of the most difficult of the genus to find and see well.

Lineated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus lineatus*)

Crimson-crested Woodpecker (*Campephilus melanoleucos*)

Black Caracara (*Daptrius ater*)

Yellow-headed Caracara (*Milvago chimachima*)  
 Bat Falcon (*Falco ruficularis*)  
 Maroon-tailed Parakeet (*Pyrrhura melanura*) – heard only, in the terra firme forest.  
 Dusky-headed Parakeet (*Aratinga weddellii*)  
 Chestnut-fronted Macaw (*Ara severus*)  
**Scarlet Macaw** (*Ara macao*) – a wonderful show from 8 or more birds at the forest interior salt lick, especially the 5 that came down to the mud at once!  
 Blue-and-yellow Macaw (*Ara ararauna*)  
 Red-bellied Macaw (*Orthopsittaca manilata*)  
**Blue-winged Parrotlet** (*Forpus xanthopterygius*) – scope studies of an adorable pair of these little sprites in the bare riverine trees in Anyangu community.  
 Cobalt-winged Parakeet (*Brotogeris cyanopectus*) – especially the 400+ at the forest mud lick.  
**Scarlet-shouldered Parrotlet** (*Touit huetii*) – an uncommon little psittacid rarely seen away from the forest interior salt lick.  
 Black-headed Parrot (*Pionites melanocephala*)  
 Orange-cheeked Parrot (*Pytilia barrabandi*) – at least 20 of these colorful parrots at the mud lick.  
 Blue-headed Parrot (*Pionus menstruus*)  
 Yellow-crowned Parrot (*Amazona ochrocephala*)  
 Mealy Parrot (*Amazona farinosa*)  
 Orange-winged Parrot (*Amazona amazonica*)  
 Great Antshrike (*Taraba major*) – heard only  
 Plain-winged Antshrike (*Thamophilus schistaceus*) – heard only  
 Mouse-colored Antshrike (*Thamophilus murinus*)  
 Dusky-throated Antshrike (*Thamnomanes ardesiacus*)  
 Cinereous Antshrike (*Thamnomanes caesius*)  
 Plain-throated Antwren (*Iseria hauxwelli*)  
**Pygmy Antwren** (*Myrmotherula brachyuran*) – very close to us in the canopy vine tangles just under the Napo Tower platform.  
 Moustached (Short-billed) Antwren (*Myrmotherula ignota obscura*)  
 Amazonian Streaked-Antwren (*Myrmotherula multostriata*)  
 White-flanked Antwren (*Myrmotherula axillaris*)  
 Peruvian Warbling-Antbird (*Hypocnemis peruviana*)  
**Black-faced Antbird** (*Myrmoborus myotherinus*) – an especially beautiful antbird, close at hand.  
 Silvered Antbird (*Sclateria naevia*)  
 Spot-winged Antbird (*Schistocichla leucostigma*)  
 White-shouldered Antbird (*Myrmeciza melanoceps*) – heard only  
**Plumbeous Antbird** (*Myrmeciza hyperythra*) – especially responsive and close to us.  
 Sooty Antbird (*Myrmeciza fortis*) – heard only  
**Dot-backed Antbird** (*Hylophylax punctulatus*) – an attractive specialty of the swamp forest.  
 Ochre-striped Antpitta (*Grallaria dignissima*) – heard only  
**White-lored Antpitta** (*Hylopezus fulviventris*) – repeatedly calling very close at hand and finally seen (and photographed!) in the dense *Gynerium* cane in the community.  
 Rufous-capped Antthrush (*Formicarius colma*)  
 Plain-brown Woodcreeper (*Dendrocincla fuliginosa*)  
 Wedge-billed Woodcreeper (*Glyphorhynchus spirurus*)  
**Cinnamon-throated Woodcreeper** (*Dendrexetastes rufigula*) – at close range in the Tower tree.  
 Striped Woodcreeper (*Xiphorhynchus obsoletus*)  
 Buff-throated Woodcreeper (*Xiphorhynchus guttatus*)  
 Olive-backed Foliage-gleaner (*Automolus infuscatus*) – heard only; at the base of the high Tower.  
 White-bellied Spinetail (*Synallaxis propinqua*) – glimpsed on the river island.  
 White-lored Tyrannulet (*Ornithion inermis*)

Yellow-crowned Tyrannulet (*Tyrannulus elatus*)  
 Spotted Tody-Flycatcher (*Todirostrum maculatum*)  
 Gray-crowned Flycatcher (*Tolmomyias poliocephalus*)  
 Eastern Wood-Pewee (*Contopus virens*)  
 Fuscous Flycatcher (*Cnemotriccus fuscatus*) – heard and glimpsed on young river island.  
 Drab Water-Tyrant (*Ochthornis littoralis*)  
 Cinnamon Attila (*Attila cinnamomeus*) – low down in the swampy tangles.  
**Citron-bellied Attila** (*Attila citriniventris*) – scope view of one sitting quietly under the canopy at the Golden-headed Manakin lek; amazing that Jorge spotted this rarely-seen and very localized species.  
 Bright-rumped Attila (*Attila spadiceus*) – heard only  
 Sirystes (*Sirystes sibilator*)  
 Grayish Mourner (*Rhytipterna simplex*) – great look from the tower.  
 Short-crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus ferox*)  
 Lesser Kiskadee (*Pitangus lector*)  
 Great Kiskadee (*Pitangus sulphuratus*)  
 Boat-billed Flycatcher (*Megarynchus pitangua*)  
 Social Flycatcher (*Myiozetetes similis*)  
 Gray-capped Flycatcher (*Myiozetetes granadensis*)  
 Piratic Flycatcher (*Legatus leucophaeus*)  
 Tropical Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus*)  
**Black-necked Red-Cotinga** (*Phoenicircus nigricollis*) – we hiked a long way to get our looks at this stunning bird, but it sat out in full view for 45 minutes, finally leaving when the thundering herd of White-lipped Peccaries came crashing through the understory (followed by Jorge).  
 Purple-throated Fruitcrow (*Querula purpurata*)  
 Amazonian Umbrellabird (*Cephalopterus ornatus*) – one distant male.  
 Plum-throated Cotinga (*Cotinga maynana*)  
**Spangled Cotinga** (*Cotinga cayana*) – a spectacular male came right into our Tower tree a few feet away from us!  
 Screaming Piha (*Lipaugus vociferans*)  
**Purple-throated Cotinga** (*Porphyrolaema porphyrolaema*) – fairly close looks at this very rarely-seen canopy bird, from the high-ground Tower.  
 Bare-necked Fruitcrow (*Gymnoderus foetidus*)  
 Dwarf Tyrant-Manakin (*Tyrannetes stolzmanni*)  
**Golden-headed Manakin** (*Ceratopipra erythrocephala*) – males displaying in the midstory.  
 Orange-crowned Manakin (*Heterocercus aurantiivertex*) – a drab species that is almost an Ecuador endemic.  
**Wire-tailed Manakin** (*Pipra filicauda*) – colorful sprite in the forest understory.  
 Blue-crowned Manakin (*Lepidothrix coronata*)  
 Black-tailed Tityra (*Tityra cayana*)  
 Black-crowned Tityra (*Tityra inquisitor*)  
 White-browed Purpletuft (*Iodopleura isabellae*) – distant trio from the Napo tower.  
**Chestnut-crowned Becard** (*Pachyramphus castaneus*) – close study at the high-ground tower.  
 White-winged Becard (*Pachyramphus poliopterus*)  
 Pink-throated Becard (*Pachyramphus minor*) – also in the mixed-flock at the high-ground tower.  
 Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*)  
 Yellow-green Vireo (*Vireo flavoviridis*)  
 Violaceous Jay (*Cyanocorax violaceus*)  
 Blue-and-white Swallow (*Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*) – in Coca  
 Gray-breasted Martin (*Progne chalybea*)

**Brown-chested Martin** (*Progne tapera*) – small flocks along the Napo and then on Jan 15 an amazing concentration of 200+ birds at Napo WC, both close and hand and distantly roosting on the tall radio tower. Where did they come from?

White-winged Swallow (*Tachycineta albiventer*)

Bank Swallow (Sand Martin) (*Riparia riparia*)

Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) – a very few amidst the numerous Bank Swallows on the river.

House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon musculus*)

Thrush-like Wren (*Campylorhynchus turdinus*)

Coraya Wren (*Pheugopedius coraya*)

Long-billed Gnatwren (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*) – heard only

**Black-capped Donacobius** (*Donacobius atricapilla*) – a vocal and conspicuous favorite seen often around the lakeshore and along the creek.

Hauxwell's Thrush (*Turdus hauxwellii*)

**Lawrence's Thrush** (*Turdus lawrencii*) – heard only, but one of the world's most talented mimics, seemingly imitating the songs of every other bird in the forest.

Black-billed Thrush (*Turdus ignobilis*)

Blackpoll Warbler (*Setophaga striata*) – wintering in the forest canopy; seen in our tower tree.

Red-capped Cardinal (*Paroaria gularis*)

Magpie Tanager (*Cissopis leverianus*)

Orange-headed Tanager (*Thlypopsis sordida*) – on the river island.

Gray-headed Tanager (*Eucometis penicillata*)

**Masked Crimson Tanager** (*Ramphocelus nigrogularis*) - stunning!

Silver-beaked Tanager (*Ramphocelus carbo*)

Blue-gray Tanager (*Thraupis episcopus*)

Palm Tanager (*Thraupis palmarum*)

Yellow-bellied Tanager (*Tangara xanthogastra*)

Paradise Tanager (*Tangara chilensis*) – a real “wow” bird of the high canopy, from the towers.

Opal-crowned Tanager (*Tangara callophrys*)

Black-faced Dacnis (*Dacnis lineata*)

Blue Dacnis (*Dacnis cayana*)

Purple Honeycreeper (*Cyanerpes caeruleus*)

Green Honeycreeper (*Chlorophanes spiza*)

Black-and-white Seedeater (*Sporophila luctuosa*) – flock on the young river island, inc. males.

Chestnut-bellied Seedeater (*Sporophila castaneiventris*)

Grayish Saltator (*Saltator coerulescens*)

**Slate-colored Grosbeak** (*Saltator grossus*) – scope look at a singing male in the vine-tangled canopy by the high-ground tower; not often seen here.

Red-crowned Ant-Tanager (*Habia rubica*)

Oriole Blackbird (*Gymnomystax mexicanus*)

Shiny Cowbird (*Molothrus bonariensis*)

Giant Cowbird (*Molothrus oryzivorus*)

Epaulet Oriole (*Icterus cayanensis*) – the *chrysocephalus* race seen here is sometimes split as a separate species, the “Morange” Oriole.

**Orange-backed Troupial** (*Oriolus croconotus*) – in Anyangu community.

Solitary Black Cacique (*Cacicus solitaries*) – heard only

**Yellow-rumped Cacique** (*Cacicus cela*) – the most conspicuous bird around the lodge, with several nesting colonies in full swing.

Russet-backed Oropendola (*Psarocolius angustifrons*) – widespread and common.

**Green Oropendola** (*Psarocolius viridis*) – great looks at a displaying male from the tower.

Crested Oropendola (*Psarocolius decumanus*)

Olive (Amazonian) Oropendola (*Psarocolius bifasciatus*)

Golden-bellied (White-lored) Euphonia (*Euphonia chrysopasta*)  
Orange-bellied Euphonia (*Euphonia xanthogaster*)  
Rufous-bellied Euphonia (*Euphonia rufiventris*)

**MAMMALS:**

(Giant Armadillo) (*Priodontes maximus*) – diggings of this nocturnal species were prominent along the trail to the Napo Tower.

Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth (*Bradypus variegatus*) – a ball of fur curled up in a tree emerging from the marsh near the lodge.

Golden-mantled Tamarin (*Saguinus tripartitus*)

Dusky Titi Monkey (*Callicebus moloch*) – quick look at one on the trail up to the high-ground tower; also heard several times.

Common Squirrel Monkey (*Saimiri sciureus*)

White-fronted Capuchin (*Cebus albifrons*)

**Monk Saki Monkey** (*Pithecia monachus*)

**Common Woolly Monkey** (*Lagothrix lagothricha*)

Red Howler Monkey (*Aloatta seniculus*)

Long-nosed Bat (*Rhynchonycteris naso*) – roosting under the dock and nearby trees in the lake.

Fishing Bat sp? (*Noctilio sp?*)

insectivorous bats sp?

fruit bat sp? – a medium-sized one in Anyangu community at dawn.

**Giant Otter** (*Pteronura brasiliensis*) – great close and prolonged encounter with a family group of 7, including right beside our canoe.

(Brazilian Tapir) (*Tapirus terrestris*) – tracks only, on the creekbanks and Tiputini Trail

**White-lipped Peccary** (*Tayassu pecari*) –

**REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS:** very little information is available for this group of vertebrates in this region.

Poison-dart Frog sp? (*Dendrobates sp?*) – caught by Jorge on the Tiputini Trail.

“tiny forest frog” – photographed on the Tower Trail.

Crested Forest Toad (*Bufo margaritifera*) – small toad on the trail from the Napo Tower

“giant treefrog” (*Hyla sp?*) – in Rachel’s room

**Black Caiman** (*Caiman (Melanosuchus) niger*) – including a couple of very big ones!

Yellow-spotted River Turtle (*Podocnemis unifilis*) – only the juveniles have yellow head spots.

Collared Tree Runner (*Trepidurus plica*) – in a buttress of huge strangler fig near the Tower.

Amazon Forest Dragon (*Enyalioides laticeps*) – large lizard low in the understory on Tower Trail.

Northern Caiman Lizard (*Dracaena guianensis*) – very large lizard lounging in marsh tree.

small gray-blotched lizard (anole or gecko?)

Green Anaconda (*Eunectes murinus*) – a very small one lounging on a stump along the creek

Vine Snake (*Oxybelis sp?*) - very slender snake in marsh grass along the creek

**BUTTERFLIES:** *Butterflies of Southern Amazonia* (Garwood & Lehman) is my **primary reference** and starting point for identifying those that we found. A good **website** for further study is [www/neotropicalbutterflies.com](http://www/neotropicalbutterflies.com).

PIERIDAE (Sulphurs & Whites)

Florida White (*Glutophrissa drusilla*) - the common “white”.

Black-banded White (*Itaballia demophile*) – at the river landing for the high-ground tower.

Elathea? Yellow (*Eurema elathea?*) - this small white pierid that was common in the marshes all around the cocha and sunnier stretches along the creek, but never photographed.

Straight-lined Sulphur (Trite) (*Rhadbodryas trite*) – with the Orange-barred at the bodega.

Orange-barred Sulphur (*Phoebis philea*) – “puddling” at the mud at the bodega.

Apricot Sulphur (*Phoebis argante*) – especially on the turtles and lakeshore mud at Napo WC.

#### LYCAENIDAE (Blues & Hairstreaks)

Separata Stripestreak (*Arawacus separata*) - the Tiputini Trail.

#### RIODINIDAE (Metalmarks)

*Helicopsis cupido?* - this fancy species was fairly common in the “elephant ears” around the cocha, seen especially in the late afternoon.

#### NYMPHALIDAE (Brush-footed Butterflies)

“clearwings”

Helenor? Morpho (*Morpho helenor*) - is this the common morpho species here?

Menelaus? Morpho (*Morpho menelaus*) - a large morpho that looked entirely blue above seen at the forest interior parrot lick.

Deidamia Morpho (*Morpho deidamia*) - beautifully patterned below; seen and photographed on the quiet side creek in late afternoon.

giant-owl sp? (*Caligo sp?*) – along the creek.

Berecynthia Giant-Owl (*Catoblepia berecynthia*) – forest interior on the Tiputini Trail.

Lowland Owlet (*Opsiphanes invitae*) – at rotting papayas in Anyangu our first afternoon.

satyrs – small brown or brown-and-white ones were quite common around the forest edges.

Piera Satyr (*Haetera piera*) - clear-winged satyr of the forest ground floor.

Lena Pierella (*Pierella lena*) – seen only once.

Lamia Pierella (*Pierella lamia*) – common along the forest floor; brown with an odd shape.

*Pierella lucia* – this is the pierella with the conspicuous white patch on the hindwing.

***Pierella*** ----- - a scarce pierella with a blue patch on the wings; seen on the Napo Tower and Tiputini Trails.

Crethon Daggerwing (*Marpesia crethon*) – at the mud at the Bodega landing.

Berania Daggerwing (*Marpesia berania*) - the bright orange daggerwings at the Bodega.

**asterope sp?** (*Asterope sp?*) – a rare and beautiful butterfly found by Dave on his room – and then paraded around on his finger.

Red Rim – landing on Dave’s trousers at the base of the high-ground tower.

**Cynosura Eighty-eight** (*Callicore 12ynosure*) – has a ½ spot pattern on the ventral hindwing.

**Pygas Eighty-eight** (*Callicore pygas*) – has a 3/2 spot pattern on the ventral hindwing.

Zunilda Emperor (*Doxocopa zunilda*) – one at the base of the high-ground tower.

Pavon Emperor (*Doxocopa pavon*) – on the stone pathway at Yasuni Eco-Lodge.

Scarlet Peacock (*Anartia amathea*) - common in all open areas.

White Peacock - open grassy areas in Anyangu community.

Tropical Buckeye (*Junonia evarete?*) - common in open grassy areas in Anyangu community.

Elissa Page (*Metamorphia elissa*) – seen best, and photographed, at the Bodega.

Malachite (*Siproeta stelenes*) – especially the one at the base of the high-ground tower.

Orion (*Historis odius*) – the large aggressive leafwing at the Bodega and the NWC pier.

sister sp? (*Adelpha sp?*) – the most complex genus in the Neotropics; several species seen.

#### HESPERIIDAE (Skippers).

#### AND A FEW OTHER CREATURES OF NOTE:

“huge gray tarantula” – inside Rich & Judy’s room. It was removed with some effort!

big millipedes

army ants – no large swarms

leaf-cutter ants

giant nocturnal cricket – on the Tiputini Trail