

**COLOMBIA: SANTA MARTA
MOUNTAINS EXTENSION**

FEBRUARY 28–MARCH 6, 2016

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By Steve Hilty

This trip, which follows the Bogotá-Magdalena Valley tour, provides an entirely different suite of birds and a different environment, culture, and work ethic. Our trip began with an early morning flight from Bogotá to Santa Marta and a visit to a scrub and plantation area south of the airport. Despite being hot and late in the morning, we found several of the commoner dry forest and mixed scrub species including Yellow-headed Caracara, Northern Scrub Flycatcher, Panama Flycatcher, Scrub Greenlet, and several North American breeding warblers including several Prothonotary Warblers and Yellow Warblers and a rare Northern Parula.

Soon we began the drive eastward to the Guajira Peninsula and its fascinating desert scrub birds, with a lunch stop at the Las Acacias Restaurant for some delicious Red Snapper and then early afternoon birding in moist tropical forest that was remarkably productive. Later, well out on the Guajira Peninsula, we made a few relatively brief stops that quickly added many new birds, among them Double-striped Thick-knees (six of them), a couple of Green-rumped Parrotlets, and a pair of Trinidad Euphonias among others.

The next morning, with the help of local Wayúu guide Jose Luis Pushiana from the village of Camarones, we found a long list of locally-occurring desert scrub species, among them a lovely pair of Vermilion Cardinals (what a crest!), Orinocan Saltators, Crested Bobwhite, Chestnut Piculet, White-whiskered Spinetail, Vermilion Cardinal, and much more. Late in the morning we returned to the bay at Camarones, which held a remarkable collection of shore- and water birds, before departing for Santa Marta and a rendezvous with some very macho-looking 4x4 Land Cruisers for a rough and tumble ride up to the El Dorado Lodge. This lodge, opened in 2008, offers birders a magnificent base for exploration, as well as unrivaled views of the entire Caribbean coast spread out far below.

The road to the El Dorado Lodge also extends upward well beyond it, ultimately terminating on a mountaintop at about 9,200 feet. This mountain now bristles with telecommunications towers and equipment. Driving up this road is an adventure (an understatement perhaps), as it surely ranks as one of the most difficult roads you are likely to encounter. On our first day here we reached this upper zone without incident (these are high clearance vehicles) and spent a marvelous morning finding many of the endemics including the much-sought Santa Marta Parakeets, Santa Marta Bush-Tyrant, and Santa Marta Warbler (three of them). We spent the afternoon around the lodge, and the next morning exploring areas above the lodge and a nearby forest trail. One notable highlight was a female White-tipped Quetzal at her nest cavity. This also was the first time that I have seen a pair of Blossomcrown Hummingbirds visiting the orange Marmolade bushes (*Streptosolon*) at the El Dorado Lodge. On our last morning

at the El Dorado Lodge we undertook an early morning hike, arriving at a location where it was possible to see two “Santa Marta” Screech-Owls at their day roost, and we took turns standing in a particular spot where they were visible.

Birding at lower elevations, and around Minca, on our final two days brought many more new species, and plenty of dust as these were, without doubt, the driest conditions that I have ever seen here. One highlight, remarkably, was a pair of Golden-winged Sparrows (a.k.a *Arremon*) that were coming to a fruit feeder at the Minca Hotel, and a half-dozen new hummers visiting feeders at the Minca Hotel. We also spent a fine morning on a side road a little above the hotel where we enjoyed an array of North American migrants (generally in lower numbers this year than previously), as well as Scaled Piculet, Plain-brown Woodpecker, and Black-headed Tanager among others.

Overall, the extreme drought this year almost certainly played a hand in the fact that we largely or completely missed some species or groups of species (among those conspicuously absent were: rails, jacanas, and fewer large waders; almost no swifts; no response from the Black-backed Antshrike; no large woodpeckers; poor response from antpittas and from several endemics in the extremely dry and dusty areas between El Dorado and Minca; and a notable absence of seedeaters due surely to the fact that there were few grass seeds available). On the other hand, we had more shorebirds and quite good numbers of other species that we don’t routinely see, so the list balances out.

We thank you for choosing VENT for your travels and hope you enjoyed this visit to this northern birding route in Colombia. We also hope that you consider returning to Colombia to see some of the many other spectacular birds in the Andes and elsewhere. As Colombians will tell you now, “your only risk is wanting to stay.”

ITINERARY (major sites):

Day 1. Arrival in Bogotá.

Day 2. Site south of Santa Marta (Punta Vale or the coal dock road); and two roads south of Los Camarones

Day 3. Morning at Los Camarones (Reserva Fauna y Flora Los Flemencos) and at the Cari-Cari Road. This followed by a return to the Los Camarones bay area, and later a drive back toward Tairona National Park for lunch and a late afternoon from Minca to the El Dorado Lodge, this latter in 4x4 vehicles

Day 4. Morning at high elevation (ca. 8400-9050 ft feet) on the Cuchillo de San Lorenzo road leading to the telecommunications towers; afternoon at El Dorado Lodge.

Day 5. Drive up Cuchillo de San Lorenzo road almost to the San Lorenzo Park Station of INDERENA and walk back toward lodge for balance of morning; afternoon watching hummingbirds and a late-afternoon walk into the forest near the lodge.

Day 6. Early morning departure from El Dorado Lodge; alternately walking and riding downhill and with a stop at the small store (Tienda Vereda Bellavista; then on to

Minca and the Minca Hotel with a few “dusty stops” en route. Late lunch in their unusually warm restaurant (despite fans) and late afternoon walk near Minca (surprisingly productive); overnight in Minca Hotel

Day 7. Early morning breakfast at Hotel Minca (hummingbird feeders etc) followed by a drive back uphill to a very site for the morning; lunch and checkout a couple early afternoon stops (which proved very hot and unproductive) followed by a drive on to Rodadero

Day 7. Departure at various times from Santa Marta to home destinations

KEY:

hd = heard (preceded by (*))

[] = seen/hd only by SH (Hilty); seen only by one or more clients (first names)

red = migrants from North America (boreal migrants)

boldface blue and underlined = endemic species or near endemics (latter indicated)

boldface = rare or unusual

subspecies are given for a few taxa that may eventually be elevated to specific status

BIRDS: *subspecies are provided for a select few species for which there are known taxonomic issues. For additional information and comments, interested persons are encouraged to visit the SACC web page; and the ProAves web site*

*http://www.proaves.org/rubrique.php?id_rubrique=372 and click on the *Lista de Aves de Colombia* to download the entire checklist (current to about 2013) which lists all known subspecies in Colombia and the approximate areas where each is found. Other taxonomic information can be found at the IOU (International Ornithological Union) website although their names will not always agree with those of the SACC which is the final authority for South America.*

CRACIDAE

Rufous-vented Chachalaca, *Ortalis ruficauda*, a couple both evening and morning in the Los Camarones area

Band-tailed Guan, *Penelope argyrotis*, several at the El Dorado Lodge including one that came to the fruit feeder at dusk on each of first two evenings at El Dorado Lodge; amazing how bold and tame they have become

ODONTOPHORIDAE

Crested Bobwhite, *Colinus cristatus*, families seen twice and very well by everyone in the Camarones area; one covey consisted of nearly grown offspring

Black-fronted Wood-Quail, *Odontophorus atrifrons* (near endemic), never been easier to see although we did have to check the compost area numerous times as they were coming mainly in the evening; we saw 3; perhaps because of the extreme drought we heard very little vocalization from them

CICONIIDAE

Wood Stork, *Mycteria americana*, singles both days in Guajira area

FREGATIDAE

Magnificent Frigatebird, *Fregata magnificens*, a few seen soaring high near the coast the first day

PHALACROCORACIDAE

Neotropic Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax brasilianus*, large flock of 75+ at a lagoon in the Guajira area; seen on both days there

PELECANIDAE

Brown Pelican, *Pelecanus occidentalis*, flock gliding low over beach cliffs well east of Tairona NP

ARDEIDAE

Great Blue Heron, *Ardea herodias*, 2 in slow lumbering flight over desert scrub in Camarones area; North American migrant

Great Egret, *Ardea albus*, along roads and at Los Camarones; perhaps 25 seen

Snowy Egret, *Egretta thula*, seen at various places including Los Camarones; 10+

Little Blue Heron, *Egretta tricolor*, 1 seen along Río Piedras at Las Acacias restaurant

Reddish Egret, *Egretta rufescens*, only 1 bird (a white one) seen stalking and stumbling around in Camarones bay

Cattle Egret, *Bubulcus ibis*, daily in lowlands

Green Heron, *Butorides virescens*, 1 along the Río Piedras at the Las Acacias Restaurant; a North American migrant

Striated Heron, *Butorides striata*, 3+ seen in Camarones area and 1 along the Río Piedras

THRESKIORNITHIDAE

White Ibis, *Eudocimus albus*, only 1 (but close) perched in a tree beside a lagoon in the Camarones area

Scarlet Ibis, *Eudocimus ruber*, again only 1 seen; this a bird in the bay at Los Camarones and it was not its especially bright color

Roseate Spoonbill, *Platalea ajaja*, singles and pairs totaling c. 10 in flight over Camarones bay

CATHARTIDAE,

Black Vulture, *Coragyps atratus*, almost all days but mostly at low elevations (less than 1800m)

Turkey Vulture, *Cathartes aura*, all days and all elevations including at 2300m+ m (higher than Black Vulture)

Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, *Cathartes burrovianus*, two seen the first morning on the El Vale road

ACCIPITRIDAE

Plumbeous Kite, *Ictinia plumbea*, 1 perched in dead tree near village of Campano (ca. 1200m)

Bicolored Hawk, *Accipiter bicolor*, great study in scope of 1 about 15 minutes by vehicle above the El Dorado Lodge (ca. 2100m); rare at this elevation and never common anywhere

Great Black Hawk, *Buteogallus urubitinga*, 1 seen in flight on Guajira Peninsula
Roadside Hawk, *Buteo magnirostris*, 1 rather dry and heavily marked bird soaring close overhead on the El Vale road the first morning

White-rumped Hawk, *Parabuteo leucorrhous*, 1 beautiful adult soaring over forest about 15 minutes by vehicle above the El Dorado lodge

Broad-winged Hawk, *Buteo platypterus*, we saw only 2 (overall surprisingly few of this North American wintering bird); both records in mountains about 1200m and 2100m

BURHINIDAE

Double-striped Thick-knee, *Burhinus bistriatus*, total of 6 birds seen in dry field in Guajira Peninsula; a good find because they can be difficult to spot here (or anywhere)

HAEMATOPIDAE

American Oystercatcher, *Haematopus palliatus*, one on outer Camarones beach

CHARADRIIDAE

Black-bellied Plover, *Pluvialis squatarola*, 4 at Los Camarones (bay)

American Golden Plover, *Pluvialis dominica*, 1 at Los Camarones (bay); rare or uncommon here

Southern Lapwing, *Vanellus chilensis*, several in dry fields and near freshwater lakes south of Ríohacha (seen both days on Guajira)

SCOLOPACIDAE

Spotted Sandpiper, *Actitis macularius*, 1 seen in Guajira

Solitary Sandpiper, *Tringa solitaria*, 2 seen at waterholes near Camarones

Greater Yellowlegs, *Tringa melanoleuca*, seen both days near Camarones; 20+ at the bay

Willet, *Tringa semipalmata*, 40+ o in Camarones (bay)

Lesser Yellowlegs, *Tringa flavipes*, at least 3 in Camarones (bay)

Sanderling, *Calidris alba*, flock of 50+ in bay at Camarones

Least Sandpiper, *Calidris minutilla*, 100+ in bay at Camarones

Western Sandpiper, *Calidris mauri*, 12+ in bay at Camarones

LARIDAE

A disappointment because we saw a huge number of gulls and terns across the inland bay at Los Camarones but they were very far away and, although they once flushed, they all settled again out of sight almost immediately and we were not able to really identify any of them with any satisfaction.

COLUMBIDAE

Rock Pigeon, *Columba livia*, towns and cities

Pale-vented Pigeon, *Patagioenas cayennensis*, seen flying overhead at along the coal dock road and again over the Guajira desert; a couple were eventually seen in scope

Scaled Pigeon, *Patagioenas speciosa*, 1 seen in a wooded ravine about 30 minutes above Minca (an incredibly dusty area); it was perched rather low in woodland for a few moments, then flew right over our heads

Bare-eyed Pigeon, *Patagioenas corensis*, Los Camarones (we saw perhaps a couple dozen total but did have excellent scope views of one group of three bird

Band-tailed Pigeon, *Patagioenas fasciata*, Santa Marta Mts. (a dozen or more seen)

Ruddy Ground-Dove, *Columbina talpacoti*, commonly seen the first two mornings at El Vale Road and in the Guajira desert

Scaled Dove, *Columbina squammata*, surprisingly we saw very few of these and the ones we did see were distant; not sure why so few this time

White-tipped Dove, *Leptotila verreauxi*, seen and/or heard everywhere including one at the El Dorado Lodge (at the compost pile); common in Guajira Peninsula and in dry forest around Santa Marta and Minca

CUCULIDAE,

Squirrel Cuckoo, *Piaya cayana*, seen along the coal dock road and on a quiet wooded road east of Palomino

[No Groove-billed or Smooth-billed Anis seen; where were they?]

STRIGIDAE

Santa Marta Screech-Owl, *Megascops (gilsei)* (E), final name (both English and scientific) provisional pending official description of this new species; it was heard some nights by some of you (light sleepers) and a super cute pair and quite rufous pair were seen roosting together about 10m up in a leafy area post-dawn

Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl, *Glaucidium brasilianum*, one in the Guajira desert

[*Mottled Owl, *Ciccaba virgata*, heard just outside my cabin (the further one from the El Dorado lodge); but not seen by anyone]

Black-and-white Owl, *Ciccaba nigrolineata*, two subadults see at a roost about 15 minutes above Minca (about 80m el); I'm sure glad the drivers knew where they were or we would have never have know to stop

CAPRIMULGIDAE

Lesser Nighthawk, *Chordeiles nacunda*, 1 perched crosswise on a limb on a quite road east of Palomino (scope study); pretty sure it was this species and not a migrant Common Nighthawk

APODIDAE

White-collared Swifts, *Streptoprocne zonaris*, 2 seen above Minca; where were the swifts this trip; unusual drought may have forced some to move elsewhere due to lack of aerial insects (?)

TROCHILIDAE

White-necked Jacobin, *Florisuga mellivora*, several males and females at the Minca Hotel feeders

Rufous-breasted Hermit, *Glaucis hirsute*, 1 (or2?) at feeders at Minca Hotel

Pale-bellied hermit, *Phaethornis anthophilus*, seen several times at Minca feeders

Sooty-capped Hermit, *Phaethornis augusti*, 1 at feeders at the small *tienda* (store) Vereda Bellavista; quite a spectacular hermit and it is well-known for its remarkable curiosity

Brown Violetear, *Colibri delphinae*, several at El Dorado Lodge

Green Violetear, *Colibri thalassinus*, feeders at El Dorado where they were one of the two dominate hummers; a few were also at the feeders at Minca

Black-throated Mango, *Anthracothorax nigricollis*, 1M and 1F came to the Minca Hotel feeders a few times

Blossomcrown, *Anthocephala floriceps* (E), 2 birds were coming to the Marmolade bushes outside the closest lodge rooms at El Dorado; a male was seen only one time; a female was seen repeatedly

Tyrian Metaltail, *Metallura tyrianthina tyrianthina*, a few (MM & FF) at high elevations and both MM & FF visiting feeders at the El Dorado Lodge; this race is a possible future split as Santa Marta Metaltail; females have much brighter and more sharply defined rufous throat than Andean populations; also tail color (reddish in some lights) differs from Andean birds)

White-tailed Starfrontlet, *Coeligena phalerata* (E), at least 1M and 1F at feeders at El Dorado Lodge; male had an immaculate white tail; another at higher elevation

Red-billed Emerald, *Chlorostilbon gibsoni*, a female and a couple males the first two days in Guajira area (rather few overall again perhaps due to lack of flowers in the desert at this time of year)

White-vented Plumeteer, *Chalybura buffonii*, several males at feeders at Minca Hotel

Crowned (Violet-crowned) Woodnymph, *Thalurania colombica*, abundant at feeders at the El Dorado Lodge; a few at the tienda (store); males are gorgeous; a bird (along with Green-crowned Woodnymph) that was split off from Fork-tailed Woodnymph a few years and now has been re-merged with the Green-crowned Woodnymph because of a couple hybrid specimens

Steely-vented Hummingbird, *Amazilia saucerrottei*, abundant at feeders at Minca Hotel with up 12-15 simultaneously at feeders; shows white stockings (usually) and narrow coppery rufous upper tail covert band (variable and sometimes weakly indicated)

Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, *Amazilia tzacatl*, several at feeders at Minca Hotel

White-chinned Sapphire, *Hylocharis cyanus*, brilliant red bill with small black tip; one in scope along quite moist forest road east of Palomino

TROGONIDAE

White-tipped Quetzal, *Pharomachrus fulgidus*, 1F seen at a nest cavity not far from the El Dorado Lodge; but little vocalization

Gartered Trogon, *Trogon caligatus*, 1M in scope along the quiet moist forest road east of Palomino

Masked Trogon, *Trogon personatus*, male and female seen at different times (male above El Dorado; female below the lodge); both in scope

MOMOTIDAE

Whooping Motmot, *Momotus subrufescens*, 1 coming to feeder at Minca Hotel!

ALCEDINIDAE

Ringed Kingfisher, *Megaceryle torquata*, 1 at a lagoon in Los Camarones area

Amazon Kingfisher, *Chloroceryle amazona*, 1 at the Río Piedra/Las Acacias lunch stop

Green Kingfisher, *Chloroceryle americana*, seen at the Río Las Piedras (Las Acacias Restaurant) and another along a lagoon edge in Los Camarones area

BUCCONIDAE

Russet-throated Puffbird, *Hypnelus ruficollis*, a couple seen very close in Guajira area

GALBULIDAE

Rufous-tailed Jacamar, *Galbula ruficauda*, 1 male seen in scope along moist forest road east of Palomino; also heard along Coal Dock road the first day

RAMPHASTIDAE

Emerald (Andean; Santa Marta) Toucanet, *Aulacorhynchus albivitta (lautus)*, at least 2-3 seen around El Dorado Lodge; this could be a separate species (taxonomy in debate); Santa Marta birds are of subspecies *lautus*

Groove-billed Toucanet, *Aulacorhynchus sulcatus*, 1 in scope near the little store ca. 1600m)

Keel-billed Toucan, *Ramphastos sulfuratus*, great pair seen very close near the Minca Hotel

Collared Araçari, *Pteroglossus torquatus*, we had a pair stunningly close at the Las Acacias restaurant; another near Minca

PICIDAE

Scaled Piculet, *Picumnus squamatus*, 1 seen well by almost everyone above Minca (1200m)

Chestnut Piculet, *Picumnus cinnamomeus*, a couple singles in Guajira area; very cute

Red-crowned Woodpecker, *Melanerpes rubricapillus*, all lowland areas up to Minca (600 m) and a little higher (to c. 1100 m)

Golden-olive Woodpecker, *Piculus rubiginosus*, seen at the El Dorado Lodge and also above Minca at ca. 1200m

FALCONIDAE

Crested Caracara, *Caracara cheriway*, mainly Guajira Peninsula few also on the Guajira Peninsula area

PSITTACIDAE

Orange-chinned Parakeet, *Brotogeris jugularis*, this species was heard and seen at almost all of our lower elevation sites including at Minca

Red-billed Parrot, *Pionus sordidus*, Santa Marta Mts.; especially at or near the El Dorado Lodge

Blue-headed Parrot, *Pionus menstruus*, seen well (scope views) at Minca and below Minca; probably this species seen in Guajira once or twice

Scaly-naped Parrot, *Amazona mercenaria*, pairs and small groups at high elevation (2350-2450 m) in Santa Marta Mts.

Green-rumped Parrotlet, *Forpus passerinus*, pair near the road toll booth southwest of Ríohacha but they were hard to see well

Santa Marta Parakeet, *Pyrrhura viridicata* (E), flock flying or silhouettes at dawn; then a flock of 12 perched very close for several minutes as we watched them feeding in a small tree; spectacular views.

Brown-throated Parakeet, *Aratinga pertinax*, several small flocks; seen mainly in flight; coal dock road and Guajira

Scarlet-fronted Parakeet, *Aratinga wagleri*, large numbers from the El Dorado Lodge upwards to 2800m

THAMNOPHILIDAE

Barred Antshrike, *Thamnophilus doliatus*, pair along quiet moist forest road east of Palomino

(Northern) White-fringed Antwren, *Myrmotherula grisea*, subspecies *intermedia*; seen in Guajira Peninsula; all forms in western and northern Colombia and Venezuela surely represent a species separate from birds of south of the Orinoco in Venezuela and in the Guianas, Brazil and Bolivia although they are not yet classified as such

***Santa Marta (formerly Long-tailed) Antbird, *Drymophila hellmayri* (E)**, Santa Marta Mts. We were barely able to get a response from this species that was obviously not singing because of the drought; heard above the “J” (about 1500m) and a little lower down (1200m); this is a recent split as the former Long-tailed Antbird now represents some four or five species

*White-bellied Antbird, *Myrmeciza longipes*, heard east of Palomino

FORMICARIIDAE

***Santa Marta Antpitta, *Grallaria bangsi* (E)**, no spontaneous vocalization from this species; one did answer playback (near the INDERENA field station) but it would not approach; other birding groups were having similar problems

Rufous Antpitta, *Grallaria rufula spatiator, a species that did answer playback (at one site) but with little obvious enthusiasm and did not approach; this form is a certain future split from main populations in the Andes; this species also quiet and not vocalizing

RHINOCRYPTIDAE

Santa Marta Tapaculo, *Scytalopus sanctaemartae* (E), 1 seen by a few members of our group; limited response to playback; about 1650 m el

***Brown-rumped Tapaculo, *Scytalopus latebricola* (E)**, heard (fast trill) at c. 2400 m elevation and a little lower

FURNARIIDAE

Gray-throated Leaf-tosser, *Sclerurus albigularis, one heard at dawn on our owl prowl; on our return we tried playback with no response

Plain-browed Woodcreeper, *Dendrocincla fuliginosa*, 1 seen nicely at 1200 m el

Strong-billed Woodcreeper, *Xiphocolaptes promeropirhynchus*, Santa Marta Mts.; seen very well close to the El Dorado Lodge

Straight-billed Woodcreeper, *Xiphorhynchus picus*, 1 seen the first morning along coal dock road and again in the Guajira desert

Montane Woodcreeper, *Lepidocolaptes lacrymiger*, 3+ seen in mountains

Pale-legged Hornero (Caribbean), *Furnarius (longirostris) leucopus*, eventually seen in Guajira desert along Cari-Cari road thanks to local guide Jose Luis's efforts; currently not recognized as a separate species from Amazonian *F. leucopus* but it is a likely split candidate in future

Montane Foliage-gleaner, *Anabacerthia striaticollis*, several seen around or below the El Dorado Lodge

***Santa Marta Foliage-gleaner, *Automolus rufipectus* (E)**, Santa Marta Mts.; a pair at c. 1750 m el called in response to playback but would not approach despite considerable effort; a split from Ruddy Foliage-gleaner, *A. rubiginosus* of Andes that was based on voice

Streak-capped Spinetail, *Cranioleuca hellmayri* (near endemic), Santa Marta Mts.; we saw several of these at elevations of around 2450 m

Rusty-headed Spinetail, *Synallaxis fusciorufa* (E), Santa Marta Mts.; good view up the road toward the telecom towers; we did not hear it calling around the El Dorado Lodge

White-whiskered Spinetail, *Synallaxis candei*, Guajira desert; we saw several very well and heard a few others; one of the most striking "spinetails" on the continent

TYRANNIDAE

Southern Beardless Tyrannulet, *Camptostoma obsoletum*, one seen at Minca

White-throated Tyrannulet, *Mecocerculus leucophrys*, surprisingly we only saw one (but an extended study of this cute little flycatcher)

Yellow-bellied Elaenia, *Elaenia flavogaster*, heard and seen the first morning on the El Vale road; also seen at Minca

Mountain Elaenia, *Elaenia frantzii*, heard and seen on both mornings when we drove up to high elevation (c.2150-2650 m)

Olive-striped Flycatcher, *Mionectes olivaceus*, a couple at mid-elevation

[Venezuelan (Paltry) Tyrannulet, *Zimmerius vilissimus*, 1 seen by SH only; 1200m moist woodland/coffee plantation area above Minca; not yet split from Paltry Tyrannulet despite size and plumage and vocal differences (will be split in future); not especially numerous here

Northern Scrub-Flycatcher, *Sublegatus arenarum*, seen along the coal dock road the first morning; then again in desert scrub stops in Guajira

Slender-billed (Tyrannulet) Inezia, *Inezia tenuirostris*, seen around Los Camarones on Guajira Peninsula

Pale-eyed Pygmy-Tyrant, *Atalotriccus pilaris*, 1 seen above Minca (c. 1100 m); several below Minca at 390 m el (a tiny little bird with a loud voice for size of bird)

Black-throated Tody-Tyrant, *Hemitriccus granadensis*, Santa Marta Mts (several from El Dorado Lodge upwards but remarkably unresponsive to playback; one eventually see)

Common Tody-Flycatcher, *Todirostrum cinereum*, one seen the first morning (coal dock road)

Bran-colored Flycatcher, *Myiophobus fasciatus*, 1 seen well; 1200 m; coffee region

Tropical Pewee, *Contopus cinereus*, 1 well studied in scope at Minca

Vermilion Flycatcher, *Pyrocephalus rubinus*, several seen on Guajira Peninsula

Santa Marta Bush-Tyrant, *Myiotheretes pernix* (E), we were lucky here; one bird perched right out in the open for an extended period at remarkably closer range; upper elevation zone; one of the most difficult Santa Marta endemics to find

Pied Water-Tyrant, *Fluvicola pica*, two at a waterhole near Los Camarones

Yellow-bellied Chat-Tyrant, *Ochthoeca diadema*, one at close range; upper level; we forgot to put this one on the list but it was seen (and heard) by everyone

Venezuelan Flycatcher, *Myiarchus venezuelensis*, 1 seen near Minca at 600 m el photographed; no vocalizations heard and identification based largely on elimination of other species; thin all dark bill; slight crest but not puffy-headed; two dull grayish wing bars; no rufous edging in flight feathers or tail; local in dry forest areas

Panama Flycatcher, *Myiarchus panamensis*, one along coal dock road came to pygmy-owl whistles; quite thin billed and plain (even for a *Myiarchus*)

Great Crested Flycatcher, *Myiarchus crinitus*, one seen along coal dock road; a typical bright individual with contrasting underparts and extensive rufous in tail; no vocalizations heard

Brown-crested Flycatcher, *Myiarchus tyrannulus*, a couple seen late in day in dry zone of Guajira; large and heavy-billed and bushy-headed

Great Kiskadee, *Pitangus sulphuratus*, seen the first morning (El Vale or coal dock road) and on Guajira

Boat-billed Flycatcher, *Megarynchus pitangua*, three seen the first morning and early afternoon; also again at Minca

Social Flycatcher, *Myiozetetes similis*, a pair at Las Acacias restaurant on both of our stops (Río Piedra)

[Noteworthy that we saw **no Rusty-margined Flycatchers, *Myiozetetes cayanensis*** on this trip although they were the only *Myiozetetes* seen on the previous trip]

Golden-crowned Flycatcher, *Myiodynastes chrysocephalus*, El Dorado Lodge

Streaked Flycatcher, *Myiodynastes maculatus*, Minca

Piratic Flycatcher, *Legatus leucophaeus*, Minca

Tropical Kingbird, *Tyrannus melancholicus*, first two days; but not as high at El Dorado Lodge

Gray Kingbird, *Tyrannus dominicensis*, one scope view of a bird in moist forest east of Palomino; some Gray Kingbirds may be migrants from Caribbean region

COTINGIDAE

Golden-breasted Fruiteater, *Pipreola aureopectus*, pair above El Dorado (ca. 2000m) and a male nicely in scope on the Giles trail near El Dorado Lodge

PIPRIDAE

Lance-tailed Manakin, *Chiroxiphia lanceolata*, a couple males seen in moist forest east of Palomino; one was seen perched by part of group; the second only in flight but close

TITYRAS ETC.

Masked Tityra, *Tityra semifasciata*, a couple pair at 1200 m and another pair at Minca
Cinnamon Becard, *Pachyramphus cinnamomeus*, a single above Minca

VIREONIDAE

Red-eyed Vireo, *Vireo olivaceus*, a couple in moist forest east of Palomino
Scrub Greenlet, *Hylophilus flavipes*, coal dock road and afternoon on the Guajira peninsula
*Rufous-browed Peppershrike, *Cyclarhis gujanensis*, heard in moist forest east of Palomino

CORVIDAE

Black-chested Jay, *Cyanocorax affinis*, numerous from the El Dorado Lodge down to Minca

HIRUNDINIDAE

Southern Rough-winged Swallow, *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*, lower elevations including El Vale Road (coal dock road); at Minca
Gay-breasted Martin, *Progne chalybea*, scattered pairs in Guajira area
Barn Swallow, *Hirundo rustica*, at least 15 seen in vicinity of Camarones bay

TROGLODYTIDAE

House Wren, *Troglodytes aedon*, heard along coal dock (El Vale) road; seen in Guajira area
Bicolored Wren, *Campylorhynchus griseus*, desert scrub of Guajira (Cari-Cari road); also Minca
Rufous-breasted Wren, *Thryothorus rutilus*, pair seen about 30 minutes above Minca at el of 1200 m; cute and energetic
Grey-breasted Wood-Wren, *Henicorhina l. leucophrys*, heard in highlands (at and above El Dorado lodge); we saw the lower elevation form (*H. l. leucophrys*) at c. 1200m el; I don't seen much difference in the songs of these species because all forms (throughout New World tropical areas) sing a great variety of songs; these birds are classic "composers" that learn their songs and thus the songs of all populations are subject to changes and variations; nevertheless this split may be official (if not already)

POLIOPTILIDAE

Tropical Gnatcatcher, *Polioptila plumbea*, abundant just about everywhere on Guajira Peninsula

TURDIDAE

*Slaty-backed Nightingale-Thrush, *Catharus fuscater*, one was singing (a few times) at our first stop below the El Dorado lodge the day we departed; no song at upper elevations; most singing and breeding starts in May

Yellow-legged Thrush, *Platycichla flaviceps*, fairly common on our descent from El Dorado Lodge down to Minca with sightings increasingly common down to about 1100 m

Pale-breasted Thrush, *Turdus leucomelas*, this species was common in the lowlands (first day and last two days from Minca downward)

Great Thrush, *Turdus fuscater*, quite common at c. 2350 m and higher

White-necked Thrush, *Turdus albicollis*, 1 seen at 1200m by SH and a few members of the group; this bird flew and did not respond to playback; apparently either uncommon or seasonal here

MIMIDAE

Tropical Mockingbird, *Mimus gilvus*, common on the Guajira Peninsula

PARULIDAE [note that the genus *Dendroica* and some other genera in this family are in the process of being changed. Consult recent checklist literature for possible updates

Northern Waterthrush, *Parkesia noveboracensis*, 1 seen at wooded lagoon on Guajira Peninsula

Black-and-white Warbler, *Mniotilta varia*, at least 3 seen the last 2 days; 600-1200m

Prothonotary Warbler, *Protonotaria citrea*, 8-10 the first morning in dry woodland and banana plantation area along coal dock road

Tennessee Warbler, *Oreothlypis peregrina*, one or two above Minca; 1200m

American Redstart, *Setophaga ruticilla*, between c. 600-1200 m 6-7 individuals between including a couple adult males

Northern Parula, *Setophaga pitiayumi*, one male well seen (wing bars; white belly; rusty band on chest; eye arcs) in Mango tree close to the coal dock road the first morning; there are very few records for this species in northern South America; an accidental species in Colombia

Blackburnian Warbler, *Setophaga fusca*, commonest North American breeding migrant in the mountains we saw up to 8 the last day at 1200m; 3-4 at or a short distance above El Dorado

Yellow Warbler, *Setophaga petechia*, mainly lowlands and foothills; first two days and last two days with at least 15+ seen; up to 1200m

Rufous-capped Warbler, *Basileuterus rufifrons*, pair in coffee zone at 1200m

Santa Marta Warbler, *Basileuterus basilicus* (E), no song heard initially but a late morning pair responded with a vigorous duet; 1 bird at 2450m; a pair at ca. 2400m

White-lored Warbler, *Basileuterus conspicillatus* (E), yet another endemic warbler; one seen on a trail near the El Dorado Lodge a pair at c.1200 m

Slate-throated Redstart (Whitestart), *Myioborus miniatus*, mainly at or below the El Dorado Lodge (especially in coffee growing zone) down to 1200m
Yellow-crowned Whitestart, *Myioborus flavivertex* (E), Santa Marta Mts; we saw perhaps 5-6 pairs the first day on the upper section of the Cuchillo de San Lorenzo road (c. 2300-2450 m el); a couple at ca. 2000m

THRAUPIDAE

White-lined Tanager, *Tachyphonus rufus*, one female seen at ca. 1200m in coffee zone area with bamboo

Crimson-backed Tanager, *Ramphocelus dimidiatus*, common at lower elevations (seen from ca. 1200 m down to 600m); Minca area and fruit feeders

Black-cheeked (Santa Marta) Mountain-Tanager, *Anisognathus melanogenys* (E), at ca. 2450m; two others at ca. 2000-2100m

Blue-gray Tanager, *Thraupis episcopus*, first day (coal dock road) and near Minca the last two days

Glaucous Tanager, *Thraupis glaucocolpa*, up to 6 total during an afternoon and morning in Camarones area and southwestward

Palm Tanager, *Thraupis palmarum*, several around Minca

Blue-capped Tanager, *Thraupis cyanocephala*, only a couple seen at ca. 2100m

Black-capped Tanager, *Tangara heinei*, only a single bird seen above El Dorado Lodge

Black-headed Tanager, *Tangara cyanoptera*, at least 2 females and 1 male seen; 1200-1600m

Bay-headed Tanager, *Tangara gyrola*, up to 6 seen; 1200-1900m

Swallow Tanager, *Tersina viridis*, up to 20+ seen at various lower elevations (ca. 600-1600m); a trip highlight was our observation of a male repeatedly sallying and returning to feed a female and later she sallied into the same swarm of gnats and returned to feed the male all seen close and under perfect lighting

Blue Dacnis, *Dacnis cayana*, a male and female in moist forest east of Palomino

Red-legged Honeycreeper, *Cyanerpes cyaneus*, one male seen in moist forest east of Palomino; nice study in scope

[Guira Tanager, *Hemithraupis guira*, 1 male seen only by SH; 1200m]

Black Flowerpiercer, *Diglossa humeralis*, 2 seen at ca. 2100m

White-sided Flowerpiercer, *Diglossa albilatera*, an energetic pair or two were seen regularly around El Dorado Lodge at the **Marmolade Bush shrubs (*Streptosolon jamesonii*)**; also a few at both higher and lower elevations; [recent genetic data now move this species and other flowerpiercers back into the Thraupidae and out of Emberizidae]

Plushcap, *Catamblyrhynchus diadema*, one very bright individual seen at ca. 2650m el at edge of dense broadleaf vegetation mixed with bamboo (*Chusquea*)

Pileated Finch, *Coryphospingus pileatus*, 6-8 seen in desert scrub of Guajira

Bananaquit, *Coereba flaveola*, several seen in dry lowlands the first two days

Buff-throated Saltator, *Saltator maximus*, seen the first day and last two days; sea level to 1200m

Orinocan Saltator, *Saltator orenocensis*, lovely pair in desert scrub near a lagoon; great duet song

Grayish Saltator, *Saltator coerulescens*, desert scrub the second day
Streaked Saltator, *Saltator striatipectus*, one at 1200m

EMBERIZIDAE

Golden-winged Sparrow (Arremon), *Arremon schlegeli*, a lovely pair observed at length at fruit feeders at Minca Hotel

Sierra Nevada Brush-Finch, *Arremon basilicus* (E), seen at or near the compost pile at the El Dorado Lodge; a pair at 1200m in humid ravine in coffee zone; a recent split from Stripe-headed Brush-Finch

Santa Marta Brush-Finch, *Atlapetes melanocephalus* (E), daily in the mountain; at elevations from c. 1200 to 2600m el

Rufous-collared Sparrow, *Zonotrichia capensis*, El Dorado Lodge and higher

CARDINALIDAE

Summer Tanager, *Piranga rubra*, one male at 1200m el

Vermilion Cardinal, *Cardinalis phoeniceus*, pair foraging on the ground in the Los Camarones desert scrub; male was seen particularly well and for an extended length of time

Rose-breasted Grosbeak, *Pheucticus ludovicianus*, we saw only 1 male on our last day; in large *Inga* tree over coffee at 1200m

ICTERIDAE

Great-tailed Grackle, *Quiscalus mexicanus*, several seen along the Río Piedra during our lunch stops at the Las Acacias Restaurant; also near Santa Marta

Carib Grackle, *Quiscalus lugubris*, we saw a few in and near the Río Piedras during lunch stops and a few in the Guajira desert; this bird is a recent invader from Venezuela and now locally common and seems to be spreading rapidly across Colombia with records up to ca. 1500 m el or higher in parts of the Eastern Andes and Magdalena Valley

Giant Cowbird, *Molothrus oryzoborus*, one seen in flight over coffee plantation area at 1200m

Yellow-backed Oriole, *Icterus chrysater*, pair or 3 in coffee zone at ca. 1500m

Orange-crowned Oriole, *Icterus auricapillus*, a pair in shrubbery along Río Piedra at our Las Acacias lunch stop the first day

Yellow Oriole, *Icterus nigrogularis*, at several sites on the Guajira Peninsula where it is common

Yellow-rumped Cacique, *Cacicus cela*, one male observed at **some length as it mimicked the songs of numerous species**; moist forest east of Palomino; this mimicking ability is typical of this species east of the Andes but not in Central America where they are apparently not known to mimic; curious that here also they mimic so well

Crested Oropendola, *Psarocolius decumanus*, just about everywhere except desert scrub; small colony at El Dorado Lodge

FRINGILLIDAE

Trinidad Euphonia, *Euphonia trinitatis*, a pair seen late afternoon and again the next morning in Guajira area

Thick-billed Euphonia, *Euphonia lanirostris*, seen along the El Vale road the first morning; also at Minca

Blue-naped Chlorophonia, *Chlorophonia cyanea*, a colorful little gang of 3 visiting the banana feeders at the El Dorado Lodge; they do not come in to these feeders year-round; amazingly beautiful little birds each one like a multicolored jewel

MAMMALS:

Night Monkey, *Aotus sp.*, they were seen in *Cecropia* trees twice by some members of our group but apparently not by everyone

*Red Howler Monkey, *Alouatta seniculus*, distant groups heard at couple times; one group above El Dorado Lodge; another at ca. 1200m was closer

Red-tailed Squirrel, *Sciurus granadensis*, several seen at various elevations; highland animals have blackish bodies mixed with reddish hairs and bright rufous tails; animals seen in tropical dry forest were almost entirely bright rufous (quite striking)

Unidentified bat, in one of our rooms (upper floor) in the large residence building at El Dorado