

**ECUADOR:
THE NORTHWESTERN
ANDEAN SLOPES**

MARCH 1 – 9, 2008

LEADERS: PAUL GREENFIELD & STEVE HILTY

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BRIEF TRIP REPORT

Once again, our Northwestern Andean Slopes tour confirmed just how far birding has come in this fascinating little country. Neotropical birding is always challenging, with its varied habitats and climatic conditions, dense vegetation, and the identity of so many species to deal with, but Ecuador has developed some of the finest conditions for seeing and enjoying birds to be found anywhere.

Watching dozens of hummingbirds at feeding stations located at various altitudinal elevations as they feed side by side, chase one another, display at each other, and interact in an almost constant frenzy, as well as seeing each species time and time again, is the perfect way to learn to identify these confusing little devils! And what a way to see them! There were gasps—oohs and aahs with each flash of iridescence. The highlights of our Yanacocha stop, the first on our very first morning: a pair of Sword-billed Hummingbirds, Rainbow-bearded Thornbill, Sapphire-vented and Golden-breasted pufflegs, Great Sapphirewing, and Buff-winged Starfrontlet, plus Glossy and Masked flowerpiercers—all at the same set of feeders! I suppose one could get tired of such easy viewing conditions, but not easily, as we all seemed to remain mesmerized at each feeding station we visited...and there were quite a few on this tour: at Séptimo Paraíso, with some 14 species, or Paz Antpitta Reserve with 16, just to mention two. Unforgettable looks at so many unforgettable birds.

Okay, so maybe not everybody is a hummingbird fan. I can understand that (well, not really!). Our visit to the street light at the “Y” de Mindo was another unbelievable experience, giving us all some of the best and closest looks at several special montane beauties one could possibly hope for, including incredibly close studies of a pair of oblivious Strong-billed Woodcreepers, Montane Woodcreeper, Streak-capped Treehunter, Golden-crowned Flycatcher, Tricolored Brush-Finch, Three-striped Warbler, Slate-throated Whitestart, Brown-capped Vireo, and even a few spiffed-up Blackburnian Warblers getting ready for their upcoming northward migration. It gets better: a seemingly tame pair of Masked Trogons hung around right in front of us during our entire visit, a Crimson-rumped Toucanet decided to join in, and perhaps the most favored treat of all was a Toucan Barbet threesome that came in to feed. Oh, I almost forgot—all this activity was brought to us by the hundreds (or more) of moths that were attracted to the light throughout the night. We even viewed a fine Black-and-white Owl here on one pre-dawn as we headed off to Río Silanche.

This could only be equalled by the most amazing of experiences—our morning spent with Angel Paz. Our pre-dawn arrival at Paz Antpitta Reserve began with our steep descent to witness an active lek of stunning Andean Cocks-of-the-rock. This was followed by telescope views of a roosting pair of Rufous-bellied Nighthawks and a couple of amazing encounters with “María,” a very obliging Giant Antpitta who stood only a few feet away as she gulfed down bite-sized earthworm chunks. Before our visit was over (topped off by an excellent mid-morning breakfast of homemade “empanadas” and “bolónes de verde”), we experienced

encounters with “Susan” and “Florcita,” two wonderful Moustached Antpittas, along with the newest addition to Angel’s “collection”—“Shakira,” a charming Ochre-breasted Antpitta. Additionally, there were the great hummingbird feeders with a few fabulous additions to our already growing species list, followed by sightings of Powerful Woodpecker, Red-billed Parrots, and a slew of new montane bird species.

Río Silanche and Milpe Bird Sanctuaries, or the “Paseo del Quinde” Ecoroute, cannot be left out; and what about Mirador Río Blanco—each held new and exceptional experiences for viewing birds. A defensive Plumbeous Hawk flew up and perched atop a palm spike, calling and repositioning itself in response to tape playback, offering super looks from the canopy tower at Río Silanche. Who ever heard of a band of Blue-winged Mountain-Tanagers coming in to sip from nectar feeders, along with 12 hummingbird species? Our various stops along the Ecoroute not only brought us that experience, but also perhaps one of the most memorable of the trip, when a handsome Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan, another spectacular Chocó-Andean specialty, silently snuck up behind us and proceeded to sit...and feed...and sit, for all to see and study, digiscope and photograph for around an hour!

These and other like experiences make this Northwestern Andean Slopes tour special, not only as the “gateway” to birding this, one of earth’s most biodiverse countries, but also as a first step to deciphering and understanding the incredible Neotropics as a whole.

ITINERARY

Mar. 01 – Arrival Quito

Mar. 02 – Early departure from Quito; to Yanacocha until midday; rest of day along the Ecoroute (including waiting for community “team” to clear a landslide by hand!) to Séptimo Paraíso—long day! (3300-1500m) Overcast and strong rain in mid-AM

Mar. 03 – Dawn at the “Y” de Mindo and walk down Mindo entrance road; midday around the Séptimo Paraíso hummingbird feeders; afternoon to Mirador Río Blanco (1700-1000m) Overcast; PM mostly rainy

Mar. 04 – Río Silanche Bird Sanctuary (600m)—all day Mostly clear; lightly overcast PM

Mar. 05 – Paz Antpitta Reserve; PM at Séptimo Paraíso (1700-1500m) Light rain, then clear

Mar. 06 – Milpe Bird Sanctuary —all day (1100m) Clear AM; cloudier PM

Mar. 07 – AM lower Ecoroute; PM part of lower Mindo entrance road Rained out PM

Mar. 08 – Return to Quito via Ecoroute; stops at Bellavista and Sacha Quinde Overcast

Mar. 09 – Departure home

THE SPECIES LIST

TINAMOUS: TINAMIDAE

Little Tinamou (*Crypturellus soui*)—Heard only at Río Palenque

HERONS & BITTERNES: ARDEIDAE

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*)—Only 1 bird (flying by) was seen at Milpe (surprisingly few?)

AMERICAN VULTURES: CATHARTIDAE

Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*)—Generally very common throughout—seen on all but one day

Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*)—Seen on most days/usually not as common as previous species

KITES, EAGLES & HAWKS: ACCIPITRIDAE

Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*)—small numbers (1-4) were seen along the lower Ecoroute, at Río Silanche and at Milpe; always elegant!

Plumbeous Hawk (*Leucopternis plumbeus*)—Spectacular views of 1 that called in to Steve's tape and perched atop a new, pointy palm spike, calling and looking about

Roadside Hawk (*Buteo magnirostris*)—Singles were seen at Paz Antpitta Reserve, Milpe and along the Mindo entrance road

Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*)—Singles were seen along the Ecoroute on our first and last field days

FALCONS & CARACARAS: FALCONIDAE

American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*)—A single bird was seen at Paz Antpitta Reserve

CURASSOWS & GUANS: CRACIDAE

Andean Guan (*Penelope montagnii*)—2 were glimpsed by some of the group at Yanacochoa; then 2 were seen (1 fairly well, though briefly) along the Ecoroute on our last day

Sickle-winged Guan (*Chamaepetes goudotii*)—At least 1 was seen (2 birds were present) along the Mindo entrance road; then some 6 were seen by some of the group at Paz Antpitta Reserve

NEW WORLD QUAILS: ODONTOPHORIDAE

Rufous-fronted Wood-Quail (*Odontophorus erythrops*)—Heard only at Río Silanche

PIGEONS & DOVES: COLUMBIDAE

Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*)—6 or so; seen around towns

Band-tailed Pigeon (*Columba fasciata*)—Generally common in montane areas; along the Ecoroute, above Mindo, and surprisingly at Milpe, where at least one fairly large flock was present (quite low for the species—may be a first record for the site)

Plumbeous Pigeon (*Columba plumbea*)—3 were seen (and heard) along the Mindo entrance road on our first morning there; also heard at Paz Antpitta Reserve

Ruddy Pigeon (*Columba subvinacea*)—Scope views of 2 along the Mindo entrance road; also at Milpe where also heard

Dusky Pigeon (*Columba goodsoni*)—1 bird was called in (from wild flight!) to perch close by and afford nice scope views from the tower at Río Silanche; others heard

Eared Dove (*Zenaida auriculata*)—Common mostly in and around Quito

White-tipped Dove (*Leptotila verreauxi*)—4 seen in all over two days, along the lower Ecoroute

PARROTS & MACAWS: PSITTACIDAE

Maroon-tailed Parakeet (*Pyrhura melanura*)—A small band was seen poorly at Río Silanche; at least 12 were seen, with good close scope views, at Milpe—this is the race *pacifica* which differs from all other populations of the species by gray, not white, eye-ring

Barred Parakeet (*Bolborhynchus lineola*)—Heard only, typically, a high flying parakeet, normally seen as fleeting dots in the sky

Red-billed Parrot (*Pionus sordidus*)—A band of at least 8 were seen well (leisure scope views), perched atop a few moss-covered trees at Paz Antpitta Reserve; a few more were seen in flight long the lower Ecoroute a few days later

Bronze-winged Parrot (*Pionus chalcopterus*)—At least 2 were seen (good scope views too) at Río Silanche and 6 were seen at Milpe, with excellent views of 1 especially Mealy Amazon (*Amazona farinosa*)—A perched pair was seen (good scope views) at Río Silanche

CUCKOOS: CUCULIDAE

Squirrel Cuckoo (*Piaya cayana*)—First, heard only at Río Silanche; 1 seen very well at Milpe; another was seen along the lower Ecoroute

Smooth-billed Ani (*Crotophaga ani*)—small groups were seen on three days in open areas and pasture along the highway, west of Mindo

BARN OWLS: TYTONIDAE

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*)—1 was seen from the bus, flying off from the roadside at pre-dawn *en route* to Río Silanche Bird Sanctuary

TYPICAL OWLS: STRIGIDAE

Black-and-white Owl (*Strix [Ciccaba] nigrolineata*)—1 was seen well, perched atop a sign at the “Y” de Mindo, obviously attracted to the moths at the street light there

Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*)—1 bird was flushed from a fence post, was seen flying, then was scoped perched on shrubbery from the road to Yanacocha on our first morning

NIGHTJARS & ALLIES: CAPRIMULGIDAE

Rufous-bellied Nighthawk (*Lurocalis rufiventris*)—2 birds were seen in dawn flight at the “Y” de Mindo; then a beautiful pair was scoped on their day-perch at Paz Antpitta Reserve

SWIFTS: APODIDAE

Chestnut-collared Swift (*Streptoprocne rutila*)—At least 15 were seen well flying overhead around Milpe Bird Sanctuary

White-collared Swift (*Streptoprocne zonaris*)—This spectacular large swift was seen almost daily (some flocks and kettles of up to or even over 100 individuals)

Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*)—6-8 individuals of this uncommon transient were seen well from the tower at Río Silanche Bird Sanctuary. This was the first record of this species for the reserve

Gray-rumped Swift (*Chaetura cinereiventris*)—2-3 were seen above Milpe Bird Sanctuary

Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift (*Panyptila cayennensis*)—3 seen well and repeatedly from the tower at Río Silanche Bird Sanctuary; another was seen well at Milpe

HUMMINGBIRD: TROCHILIDAE

Band-tailed Barbthroat (*Threnetes ruckeri*)— 1 perched, singing bird was watched closely (scoped too) in understory at Río Silanche

White-whiskered Hermit (*Phaethornis yaruqui*)—2 were seen well at Mirador Río Blanco feeders; 1 was seen feeding at *Heliconia* flowers at Río Silanche; another at Paz Antpitta Reserve feeders; best repeated looks at Milpe Bird Sanstuary feeders

White-necked Jacobin (*Florisuga mellivora*)—3+ seen, mostly Séptimo Paraíso feeders; a generally widespread but beautiful species

- Brown Violet-ear (*Colibri delphinae*)—At least 1 was seen well (three days) and repeatedly at Séptimo Paraíso feeders
- Green Violetear (*Colibri thalassinus*)—Singles were seen by some of our group at Angel Paz Reserve and Séptimo Paraíso feeders: then at least 8 were seen on our last day—at Bellavista and Sacha Quinde feeders
- Green Thorntail (*Popelairia conversii*)—1 female was seen at Mirador Río Blanco feeders , and a male was seen feeding in canopy flowers at Río Silanche
- Green-crowned Woodnymph (*Thalurania fannyi*)—Common at most lowland and foothill sites; males are absolutely stunning!!
- Rufous-tailed Hummingbird (*Amazilia tzacatl*)—The most common lowland species of the west in gardens and open areas; spreading to feeders at higher elevations
- Andean Emerald (*Amazilia franciae*)—Rather common at feeders throughout the trip.
- Purple-chested Hummingbird** (*Amazilia rosenbergi*)—3 were seen at Río Silanche, including excellent views feeding at flowers in the parking area
- Speckled Hummingbird (*Adelomyia melanogenys*)—Only a few seen this trip; 2-3 were seen well at Paz Antpitta Reserve; 1 was seen along the lower Ecoroute and several more at Sacha Quinde
- Fawn-breasted Brilliant (*Heliodoxa rubinoides*)—Quite a few seen throughout the area (not at Río Silanche); most common (10+) at Paz Antpitta Reserve
- Empress Brilliant** (*Heliodoxa emperatrix*)—This rather spectacular, scarce Chocó-Andean endemic was seen well at Séptimo Paraíso and Paz Antpitta Reserve feeders
- Green-crowned Brilliant (*Heliodoxa jacula*)—Very common Séptimo Paraíso, Paz Antpitta Reserve, and Milpe feeders
- Buff-tailed Coronet (*Boissonneaua flavescens*)—This species was common Paz Antpitta Reserve, Bellavista, and at Sacha Quinde feeders
- Velvet-purple Coronet** (*Boissonneaua jardini*)—This stunning Chocó-Andean endemic species was seen beautifully at Séptimo Paraíso, Mirador Río Blanco, and probably best at Paz Antpitta Reserve feeders
- Mountain Velvetbreast (*Lafresnaya lafresnayi*)—1 female was seen along the Ecoroute on our first day
- Brown Inca** (*Coeligena wilsoni*)—Between 3-5 were seen at feeders: Séptimo, Paz Antpitta Reserve, Bellavista and Sacha Quinde
- Collared Inca (*Coeligena torquata*)—Only 4 of this truly dapper species were seen well; Bellavista and Sacha Quinde
- Buff-winged Starfrontlet (*Coeligena lutetiae*)—This temperate zone species was common and bold at Yanacochoa
- Sword-billed Hummingbird** (*Ensifera ensifera*)—2 of this unbelievably bizarre species were seen beautifully at Yanacochoa feeders
- Great Sapphirewing** (*Pterophanes cyanopterus*)—Also spectacular; close views of this, the World's second largest hummingbird, at Yanacochoa (6 in all)
- Gorgeted Sunangel** (*Heliangelus strophianus*)—First, 4 or so were seen along the ridge above Tandayapa along the Ecoroute; Then close-up views at Bellavista and Sacha Quinde feeders of a few more—all on our last day
- Sapphire-vented Puffleg (*Eriocnemis luciani*)—Some 8 were seen closely at Yanacochoa
- Golden-breasted Puffleg** (*Eriocnemis mosquera*)—2 of this rather uncommon Andean species were seen closely at Yanacochoa feeders
- Purple-bibbed Whitetip** (*Urostitte benjamini*)—Quite a few seen for such a naturally scarce species (bless those feeders!!); seen at Séptimo Paraíso, Paz Antpitta

Reserve, and Sacha Quinde—many males, only a few females (well over a dozen seen)

Booted Racket-tail (*Ocreatus underwoodii*)—This species is always a favorite! Common at feeders, mainly in the Mindo/Tandayapa area (incl. Paz Reserve)

Tyrrian Metaltail (*Metallura tyrianthina*)—At least 3 were seen well at Yanacocha feeders (few this trip)

Rainbow-bearded Thornbill (*Chalcostigma herrani*)—Wonderful close views, especially of 2 (best, an obliging male) at Yanacocha feeders; another was seen briefly along the trail there

Violet-tailed Sylph (*Aglaiocercus coelestis*)—This Chocó-Andean specialty with its male's stunning tail was fairly common at feeders throughout the Mindo/Tandayapa area (incl. Paz Reserve)

Purple-crowned Fairy (*Heliothryx barroti*)—1 male was seen in forest canopy from the Río Silanche Bird Sanctuary's canopy tower

Purple-throated Woodstar (*Calliflox mitchellii*)— The only woodstar present this trip. Mostly juveniles and females, with only 2-3 males throughout the Mindo/Tandayapa area (incl. Paz Reserve)

QUETZALS & TROGONS: TROGONIDAE

Golden-headed Quetzal (*Pharomachrus auriceps*)—Frustrating this trip; heard a few times; 1 male was seen well by Hank at Séptimo Paraíso, then another male called in but remained somewhat behind cover and flew off, along the lower Ecoroute

Western White-tailed Trogon (*Trogon chionurus*)—At least 4 were seen well at Río Silanche

Chocó Trogon (*Trogon comptus*)—a male was called in along a trail at Río Silanche; later a female was also seen—another Chocó endemic species

Collared Trogon (*Trogon collaris*)—1 male was seen well at Río Silanche

Masked Trogon (*Trogon personatus*)—A spectacular close pair was admired at the “Y” de Mindo; another male was seen at Paz Antpitta Reserve; also heard along the Ecoroute

MOTMOTS: MOMOTIDAE

Rufous Motmot (*Baryphthengus martii*)—Heard only; Río Silanche and Milpe Bird Sanctuaries

Broad-billed Motmot (*Electron platyrhynchum*)—At least 1 was seen, eventually good close-up views at Río Silanche

PUFFBIRDS: BUCCONIDAE

Lanceolated Monklet (*Micromonacha lanceolata*)—Heard only; 1 bird called, but we could not locate it, in forest understory at Río Silanche

BARBETS: CAPITONIDAE

Orange-fronted Barbet (*Capito squamatus*)—A pair came in to canopy along-side the canopy tower at Río Silanche

Red-headed Barbet (*Eubucco bourcierii*)—2 males were seen; first at Milpe, and then along the lower Mindo entrance road

Toucan Barbet (*Semnornis ramphastinus*)—3 of this stunning and unique Chocó endemic was seen spectacularly close at the “Y” de Mindo; heard only at Séptimo Paraíso grounds

TOUCANS: RAMPHASTIDAE

Crimson-rumped Toucanet (*Aulacorhynchus haematopygus*)—Singles were seen at Paz Antpitta reserve and at Milpe

Pale-mandibled Araçari (*Pteroglossua erythropygius*)—This Ecuadorian endemic species was seen at various sites; close-up views of 2-3 at Mirador Río Blanco fruit feeders; also several more seen along the Mindo entrance road, at Milpe, and Río Silanche Bird Sanctuaries

Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan (*Andigena laminirostris*)—This colorful Chocó-Andean specialty was first seen poorly and unconvincingly at Paz Antpitta Reserve; then we were treated to absolutely KILLER views of a male (and then his mate) for nearly an hour (!) along the Ecoroute—can it GET better than this?

Chocó Toucan (*Ramphastos brevis*)—Heard mostly, but 1 was seen (scoped) perched (unfortunately behind some leaves) at Río Silanche. Also heard at Milpe Bird Sanctuary

Chestnut-mandibled Toucan (*Ramphastos swainsonii*)—Heard, and then finally spotted and seen at a distance (decent scope views) from the canopy tower at Río Silanche

WOODPECKERS: PICIDAE

Black-cheeked Woodpecker (*Melanerpes pucherani*)—2 were seen (good close views) at Mirador Río Blanco fruit feeders

Smoky-brown Woodpecker (*Veniliornis funigatus*)—At least 3 were seen at Milpe; singles were seen along the Ecoroute on over two days

Golden-olive Woodpecker (*Piculus rubiginosus*)—Singles were seen from the “Y” de Mindo, at Río Silanche, and at Milpe

Lineated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus lineatus*)—Heard only at Río Silanche

Guayaquil Woodpecker (*Campephilus guayaquilensis*)—A pair was followed through the forest and seen well at Río Silanche; 1 male was later seen by some of the group at Milpe

Powerful Woodpecker (*Campephilus pollens*)—1 stunning female was called in at Paz Antpitta Reserve

OVENBIRDS: FURNARIIDAE

Pacific Hornero (*Furnarius cinnamomeus*)—A few of this comical Tumbesian endemic were seen in the Río Silanche area

Azara's Spinetail (*Synallaxis azarae*)—2 were seen fairly well on our first day along the upper Ecoroute; another was seen well along the lower Ecoroute; others heard

Slaty Spinetail (*Synallaxis brachyura*)—Heard only at Río Silanche and Milpe

Red-faced Spinetail (*Cranioleuca erythrops*)—Several seen; 5 at Paz Antpitta reserve, another 3 or so at Milpe, and 1 along the Mindo entrance road

Spotted Barbtail (*Premnoplex brunnescens*)—1 was seen quite well with an understory mixed foraging flock at Milpe Bird Sanctuary

Pearled Treerunner (*Margarornis squamiger*)—3 were seen nicely, part of a large mixed foraging flock, along the Ecoroute on our last day

Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaner (*Anabacerthia variagaticeps*)—Singles were seen at Río Silanche, Séptimo Paraíso entrance road; and best, 2 at Milpe—always with mixed foraging flocks

- Streaked Tuftedcheek (*Pseudocolaptes boissoneautilii*)—1 was seen with a mixed foraging flock along the Ecoroute on our last day
- Streak-capped Treehunter (*Thripadectes virgaticeps*)—A probable pair seen closely at the “Y” de Mindo, feeding on moths
- Lineated Foliage-gleaner (*Syndactyla subalaris*)—Excellent looks at 1 along the Mindo entrance road (responded beautifully to tape-playback)
- Western Woodhaunter (*Hyloctistes subalarus*)—1 was seen well in understory at Río Silanche. Still considered part of Striped Woodhaunter by some authors
- Buff-fronted Foliage-gleaner (*Philydor rufus*)—2 were seen closely along the Mindo entrance road; 1 was seen at Paz Antpitta Reserve; at least 4 more were found at Milpe—always with mixed flocks

WOODCREEPERS: DENDROCOLAPTIDAE

- Plain-brown Woodcreeper (*Dendrocincla fuliginosa*)—Singles were seen at Río Silanche and Milpe with mixed understory flocks
- Wedge-billed Woodcreeper (*Glyphorhynchus spirurus*)—Singles were seen at Río Silanche and Milpe with mixed understory flocks
- Strong-billed Woodcreeper** (*Xiphocolaptes promeropirhynchus*)— Spectacular looks at a very tame pair chowing down on moths at the “Y” de Mindo
- Northern Barred-Woodcreeper (*Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae*)—1 was seen with a mixed understory flock at Río Silanche
- Spotted Woodcreeper (*Xiphorhynchus erythropygius*)—1 was seen at Río Silanche; at least 2 more were seen at Milpe
- Streak-headed Woodcreeper (*Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*)—Heard only at Río Silanche
- Montane Woodcreeper (*Lepidocolaptes lacrymiger*)—Singles were seen this trip; 1 was seen well at the “Y” de Mindo, another at Paz Antpitta reserve and finally again along the lower Ecoroute
- Brown-billed Scythebill** (*Campylorhamphus trochilirostris*)—A nice pair was seen with a mixed understory foraging flock at Milpe

TYPICAL ANTBIRDS: THAMNOPHILIDAE

- Uniform Antshrike (*Thamnophilus unicolor*)—1 male was seen in deep tangles by one or two of us at Paz Antpitta Reserve
- Western Slaty-Antshrike (*Thamnophilus atrinucha*)—Heard only (a pair) in understory at Río Silanche
- Russet Antshrike (*Thamnistes anabatinus*)—Heard only, at Milpe Bird Sanctuary
- Spot-crowned Antwren (*Dysithamnus puncticeps*)—2 were seen—the female best—by a few of our group; heard by all with a small understory flock at Río Silanche
- Pacific Antwren (*Myrmotherula pacifica*)—Heard only this time, at Río Silanche parking area
- White-flanked Antwren (*Myrmotherula axillaris*)—At least 6 were seen with two mixed understory flocks at Río Silanche
- Slaty Antwren (*Myrmotherula schisticolor*)—A pair was seen with a mixed understory flock at Milpe Bird Sanctuary
- Long-tailed Antbird (*Drymophila caudata*)—Excellent, leisure looks at 1 bird along the Mindo entrance road, in edge vegetation with little *Chusquea* bamboo
- Dusky Antbird (*Cercomacra tyrannina*)—Heard only, twice at Río Silanche
- Chestnut-backed Antbird (*Myrmecisa exsul*)—1 was seen fairly well (others heard) at Río Silanche Bird Sanctuary

Esmeraldas Antbird (*Myrmeciza nigricauda*)—Heard at very close range, but never really
Seen by the group: Milpe Bird Sanctuary

ANTTHRUSHES AND ANTPITTAS: FORMICARIIDAE

Rufous-breasted Antthrush (*Formicarius rufipectus*)—Heard only, at Séptimo Paraíso

Giant Antpitta (*Grallaria gigantea*)—Spectacular studies (!), one of the highlights of this
tour, of the now famous “María” at Paz Antpitta Reserve

Scaled Antpitta (*Grallaria guatemalensis*)—Heard only; at Séptimo Paraíso

Moustached Antpitta (*Grallaria alleni*)—At least 2 (“Susan and “Florcita”) were seen, first
briefly, and then well by some of our group, at Paz Antpitta Reserve

Chestnut-crowned Antpitta (*Grallaria ruficapillus*)—Heard only, along the Ecoroute on our
first and last days

Rufous Antpitta (*Grallaria rufula*)—Heard only several times at Yanacocha

Ochre-breasted Antpitta (*Grallaricula flavirostris*)—1 (“Shakira”) was seen well by part of
our group at Paz Antpitta reserve

TAPACULOS: RHINOCRYPTIDAE

Blackish [Unicolored] Tapaculo (*Scytalopus [unicolor] latrans*)—Heard only (we were close!)
at Yanacocha

Nariño Tapaculo (*Scytalopus vicini*)—Nice looks of 1 along the Mindo entrance road;
others heard

Spillmann’s Tapaculo (*Scytalopus spillmanni*)—1 was actually seen pretty well in dense
understory at edge, along the Ecoroute on our last day

Ocellated Tapaculo (*Acropternis orthonyx*)—Heard at close range, and after much effort, a
few of us got to actually see it(!!) along the Ecoroute on our last day

COTINGA: COTINGIDAE

Green-and-black Fruiteater (*Pipreola riefferii*)—At least 1 was seen by David (at least) with
a mixed foraging flock along the Ecoroute on our last day

Andean Cock-of-the-Rock (*Rupicola peruviana*)—Some 6 males were present (at least 3
seen well by all) at their Lek at Paz Antpitta Reserve; another juvenile male
was seen in roadside vegetation along the Ecoroute on our last afternoon

MANAKINS: PIPRIDAE

White-bearded Manakin (*Manacus manacus*)—heard only this trip; at Río Silanche

Golden-winged Manakin (*Masius chrysopterus*)—1 juvenile male was seen along the
Mindo entrance road; 1 male was seen at Paz Antpitta Reserve; and finally 2
more males were seen well, though briefly at Milpe

Club-winged Manakin (*Machaeropterus deliciosus*)—1 male was seen briefly in canopy
(then briefly came lower) at Milpe Bird Sanctuary (not displaying this time)

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS: TYRANNIDAE

Southern Beardless-Tyrannulet (*Camptostoma obsoletum*)—2 were seen at Río Silanche
and a few more were found at Milpe

Yellow Tyrannulet (*Capsiempis flaveola*)—1 was seen well by some of us at Milpe

Streak-necked Flycatcher (*Mionectes striaticollis*)—Singles were seen over two days along
the Ecoroute

Slaty-capped Flycatcher (*Leptopogon striaticollis*)—2 were seen well w/ mixed foraging
flock at Río Silanche; also a few more were seen at Milpe

Marble-faced Bristle-Tyrant (*Pogonotriccus ophthalmicus*)—1 seen quite well from canopy tower (with mixed foraging flock) at Río Silanche

Sooty-headed Tyrannulet (*Phyllomyias griseiceps*)—Heard only at Río Silanche

Golden-faced Tyrannulet (*Zimmerius chrysops*)—At least 1 was seen at Río Silanche; 2 were seen at Milpe and others were heard at Paz Antpitta Reserve

White-throated Tyrannulet (*Mecocerculus leucophrys*)—Only 1 was seen at Yanacocha

White-tailed Tyrannulet (*Mecocerculus poecilocercus*)—1 was seen at Paz Antpitta reserve; at least 2 were seen along the Ecoroute with a large mixed foraging flock

Tufted Tit-Tyrant (*Anairetes parulus*)—At least 1 of this adorable species was seen along the upper Ecoroute on our first morning

Black-capped Pygmy-Tyrant (*Myiornis atricapillus*)—A pair of this *tiny* (among the smallest birds on Earth!), very special Chocó endemic was seen (scoped well too) in midstory at Río Silanche

Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant (*Lophotriccus pileatus*)—Good looks at 1 along the Mindo entrance road; others heard at Río Silanche and Milpe

Ornate Flycatcher (*Myiobius ornatus*)—A pair of this charming species was seen along the Mindo entrance road; a few more were also seen at Milpe

Bran-colored Flycatcher (*Myiophobus fasciatus*)—1 was seen at Milpe Bird Sanctuary

Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher (*Terentotriccus erythrurus*)—At least 1 was seen well in understorey, with mixed foraging flock, at Río Silanche

Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher (*Myiobius sulphureipygius*)—1 was seen at Río Silanche; another at Milpe—with mixed foraging flocks

Smoke-colored Pewee (*Contopus fumigatus*)—Several seen; along the Mindo Entrance road, and along the Ecoroute on two separate visits

Acadian Flycatcher (*Empidonax virescens*)—1 was seen at the edge of a clearing at Río Silanche

Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*)—A few seen, always around water; Río Silanche and along the Ecoroute on two days

Masked Water-Tyrant (*Fluvicola nengeta*)—Only 1 was seen from the bus along the entrance road to Río Silanche (this species is a new arrival to this area)

Dusky-capped Flycatcher (*Myarchus tuberculifer*)—Several seen—best at “Y” de Mindo; others at Río Silanche, Paz Antpitta Reserve and at Milpe

Boat-billed Flycatcher (*Megarynchus pitangua*)—2 were seen at Río Silanche

Rusty-margined Flycatcher (*Myiozetetes cayanensis*)—Common generally in the humid western lowlands and foothills; 6 were recorded at Río Silanche; at least 1 more at Milpe

Golden-crowned Flycatcher (*Myiodynastes chrysocephalus*)—At least 4 were seen closely at the “Y” de Mindo; at least 2 more at Milpe and others heard along the Ecoroute

Piratic Flycatcher (*Legatus leucophaeus*)—Heard only at Río Silanche

Tropical Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus*)—Seen on all days except our first

Cinnamon Becard (*Pachyramphus cinnamomeus*)—1 was seen at Río Palenque; another at Milpe

One-colored Becard (*Platypsaris homochrous*)—Only 1 female seen this trip, at Paz Antpitta reserve,

Masked Tityra (*Tityra semifaciata*)—Only 1 female was seen at Río Silanche

SWALLOWS: HIRUNDINIDAE

Blue-and-white Swallow (*Notiochelidon cyanoleuca*)—The most common and widespread swallow in Ecuador; seen on all but one day—though small numbers this trip

Brown-bellied Swallow (*Notiochelidon murina*)—The highland swallow; several seen at Yanacocha mainly

White-thighed Swallow (*Notiochelidon tibialis*)—1 was seen in flight at Río Silanche; then at least 4 were seen (scoped nicely) at Milpe, mostly perched on electric wires

Southern Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*)—Fairly common in open areas; Mindo entrance road, Milpe and along the Ecoroute

WRENS: TROGLODYTIDAE

Band-backed Wren (*Campylorhynchus zonatus*)—Heard only at Río Silanche

Rufous Wren (*Cinnycerthia unirufa*)—At least 8 were seen well at Yanacocha

Sepia-brown Wren (*Cinnycerthia olivascens*)—At least 1 was seen with a mixed foraging flock along the Ecoroute on our last day

Whiskered Wren (*Thryothorus mysticalis*)—This real skulker was heard only at Río Silanche

Plain-tailed Wren (*Thryothorus euophrys*)—Heard only (from *Chusquea* bamboo) along the Ecoroute on two days (unresponsive this trip)

Bay Wren (*Thryothorus nigricapillus*)—Heard only at Río Silanche and Milpe

House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*)—Common and seen on several days (also heard); especially at Séptimo Paraíso

Gray-breasted Wood-Wren (*Henicorhina leucophrys*)—Heard often in montane areas; seen on three days; Mindo entrance road, Paz Antpitta Reserve, and best at Milpe

Southern Nightingale-Wren (*Microcerculus marginatus*)—Heard only, at Río Silanche and Milpe

THRUSHES & ALLIES: TURDIDAE

Swainson's Thrush (*Catharus ustulatus*)—Only 1 or so was seen at Milpe

Great Thrush (*Turdus fuscater*)—A common highland species

Glossy-black Thrush (*Turdus serranus*)—1 juvenile male was seen along the Ecoroute with a large mixed foraging flock

Pale-vented Thrush (*Turdus obsoletus*)—At least 5 were seen feeding at *Miconia* trees at Milpe

Ecuadorian Thrush (*Turdus maculirostris*)—Only 1 was seen this trip, at Paz Antpitta Reserve

GNATCATCHERS & ALLIES: POLIOPTILIDAE

Tropical Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila plumbea*)—2 were seen well at Río Silanche

JAYS & ALLIES: CORVIDAE

Turquoise Jay (*Cyanolyca turcosa*)—6 were seen along the Ecoroute over two days (first only 1, then 5)

Beautiful Jay (*Cyanolyca pulchra*)—Heard only, close by, but they never showed—along the Ecoroute

VIREOS & ALLIES: VIREONIDAE

Brown-capped Vireo (*Vireo leucophrys*)—2 were seen well at the “Y” de Mindo; at least 5 then along the lower Ecoroute and the Mindo entrance road

Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*)—Only 1-2 were seen this trip, at the “Y” de Mindo

Lesser Greenlet (*Hylophilus decurtatus*)—1 was seen w/ a mixed flock (others heard) at Río Silanche; at least 1 more was seen at Milpe

SISKINS, CROSSBILLS & ALLIES: FRINGILLIDAE

Thick-billed Euphonia (*Euphonia lanirostris*)—2 were seen beautifully close at Mirador Río Blanco fruit feeders

Golden-rumped Euphonia (*Euphonia cyanocephala*)—Heard only at Sacha Quinde

Orange-bellied Euphonia (*Euphonia xanthogaster*)—Common and widespread in Ecuador; several seen on all but our first day

Yellow-collared Chlorophonia (*Chlorophonia flavirostris*)— Some 20 were seen in a large fruiting tree at Milpe

Yellow-bellied Siskin (*Carduelis xanthogastra*)—5 were seen well at Milpe

NEW WORLD WARBLERS: PARULIDAE

Tropical Parula (*Parula pitiayumi*)—At least 2 were seen at Milpe

Blackburnian Warbler (*Dendroica fusca*)—A common boreal migrant to Andean montane areas; a few (this time) were seen on most days including some fancy males

Olive-crowned Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis semiflava*)—A pair was seen (singing male was scoped nicely) at Milpe

Slate-throated Whitestart (*Myioborus miniatus*)—A rather common mixed flock participant at lower elevations. Some authors call it “Redstart” . . . though shows no red

Spectacled Whitestart (*Myioborus melanocephalus*)—A rather common mixed flock participant at upper elevations; only seen at Yanacocha and along Ecoroute on our first and last days. Some authors call it “Redstart” . . . though shows no red

Black-crested Warbler (*Basileuterus nigrocristatus*)—2 were seen along the upper Ecoroute-while the land-slide was being cleared; at least 1 more was seen along the lower Ecoroute on our last day

Chocó Warbler (*Basileuterus chlorophrys*)—At least 2 views of this Chocó endemic were seen at Río Silanche with a mixed understory flock; then fine views of at least 5 with another mixed flock at Milpe

Russet-crowned Warbler (*Basileuterus coronatus*)—2 were seen singing away along the Ecoroute on our last morning

Three-striped Warbler (*Basileuterus tristriatus*)—Several seen; at least 1 well at the “Y” de Mindo, 3 at Paz Antpitta Reserve and another 2 at Milpe

BANANAQUIT: COEREBIDAE

Bananaquit (*Coereba flaveola*)—At least 1 was seen at Río Silanche; at least 2 more were seen at Milpe

TANAGERS & ALLIES: THRAUPIDAE

Capped Conebill (*Conirostrum albifrons*)—A pair seen at the Paz Antpitta Reserve; another pair was seen along the Ecoroute—both with mixed foraging flocks

Dusky Bush-Tanager (*Chlorospingus semifuscus*)—At least 3 were seen at Paz Antpitta Reserve and several were seen along the Ecoroute on two separate days

Yellow-throated Bush-Tanager (*Chlorospingus flavovirens*)—2-3 were seen at Paz Antpitta Reserve; several more were seen at Milpe

Rufous-chested Tanager (*Thlypopsis ornata*)—At least 1 was seen with a mixed flock along the Ecoroute on our first day—appears warbler-like

Guira Tanager (*Hemithraupis guira*)—Nice looks at 5 (mostly males) at Río Silanche

Ochre-breasted Tanager (*Chlorothraupis stolzmanni*)—A large, drab Chocó endemic; 1 was eventually seen well at Milpe—also its strange busy dawn song was heard upon our arrival there

White-shouldered Tanager (*Tachyphonus luctuosus*)—5 were seen (males, and very different-looking females) at Río Silanche

White-lined Tanager (*Tachyphonus rufus*)—A nice pair was seen closely at Mirador Río Blanco fruit feeders

Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*)—1 male of this boreal migrant was seen at Río Silanche; at least another 2 were seen at Milpe

Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*)—1 molting juvenile male (another boreal migrant—actually a transient to western Ecuador) was seen with the previous species at Milpe

White-winged Tanager (*Piranga leucoptera*)—A pair was seen perched up in tree-top vegetation at Milpe

Lemon-rumped Tanager (*Ramphocelus icteronotus*)—By far the most common tanager at lower elevations – seen on all but two days; male is very flashy!

Blue-gray Tanager (*Thraupis episcopus*)—Very common at lower elevations; seen on all but two days

Blue-capped Tanager (*Thraupis cyanocephala*)—At least 2 were seen with a mixed foraging flock along the Ecoroute on our last day

Palm Tanager (*Thraupis palmarum*)—Fairly common at lower elevations; a few seen this trip—best at Mirador Río Blanco feeders; also several at Río Silanche and Milpe

Hooded Mountain-Tanager (*Buthraupis montana*)—At least 1 was seen at Yanacocha (a seasonal inhabitant of this high elevation forest)

Black-chested Mountain-Tanager (*Buthraupis eximia*)—At least 1 of this high elevation species was seen w/ a mixed foraging flock at Yanacocha

Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager (*Anisognathus somptuosus*)—Fairly common species throughout; seen on most days (3-15/day)—most incredible was a group of 5 that came to hummingbird feeders at Bellavista (in our faces!!)

Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager (*Anisognathus notabilis*)—True to its scientific name, this ‘noteworthy’ species was surprisingly common (at least 8 birds in all) and obliging along the lower Ecoroute on 7 March

Fawn-breasted Tanager (*Pipraeidea melanonota*)—Several seen; along the Ecoroute, Milpe and above Mindo

Gray-and-gold Tanager (*Tangara palmeri*)—At least 8 were seen (several seen well) at Milpe, always high in forest canopy

Golden Tanager (*Tangara arthus*)—Fairly common mixed flock species in the Subtropics; seen almost daily; best was 3 or so at Mirador Río Blanco fruit feeders

Silver-throated Tanager (*Tangara icterocephala*)—2 were seen beautifully at at Mirador Río Blanco; 2 were seen at Río Silanche and a few more were seen at Paz Antpitta Reserve

Flame-faced Tanager (*Tangara parzudakii*)—Good looks at 2 birds at Paz Antpitta Reserve; at least 2 were seen well at Milpe, and 5 or so were seen along the lower Ecoroute and along the lower Mindo entrance road on 7 March

Rufous-throated Tanager (*Tangara rufigula*)—Only 1 of this handsome Chocó endemic species was seen at Milpe

- Bay-headed Tanager (*Tangara gyrola*)—5 were seen at Río Silanche and another 6 were seen at Milpe—another beauty!
- Golden-naped Tanager (*Tangara rufivertex*)—At least 5 were seen at Paz Antpitta Reserve; another 6 were seen (good looks) along the lower Ecoroute
- Metallic-green Tanager (*Tangara labradorides*)—1 was seen at Paz Antpitta Reserve w/ a mixed foraging flock
- Blue-necked Tanager (*Tangara cyanicollis*)—A common and stunning lowland species; 1-2 were seen nicely at Milpe: another was seen along the lower Mindo entrance road
- Golden-hooded Tanager (*Tangara larvata*)—At least 1 was seen from the canopy tower at Río Silanche
- Beryl-spangled Tanager (*Tangara nigroviridis*)—Several seen (on all but two days); best sightings were along the Ecoroute (on two days) ; also seen along the Mindo entrance road, the Paz Antpitta Reserve, and Milpe. Hard to know what the favorite *tangara* tanager is!
- Blue-and-black Tanager (*Tangara vassorii*)—At least 7 were seen along the Ecoroute (in the Bellavista area), with a large mixed foraging flock, on our last day
- Black-capped Tanager (*Tangara heinei*)—At least 1 female (most of our group missed the male) was seen above Tandayapa, along the Ecoroute on our last day
- Yellow-tufted Dacnis** (*Dacnis egregia*)—A pair of this stunning Chocó endemic species was seen from the canopy tower at Río Silanche
- Scarlet-thighed Dacnis** (*Dacnis venusta*)—1 gleaming male was seen perched up on a tall palm leaf, w/ a mixed foraging flock, from the canopy tower at Río Silanche
- Blue Dacnis (*Dacnis cayana*)—1 male was seen well from Río Silanche canopy tower; a pair was seen also at Milpe—this, the western dark blue *coerebicolor* race
- Green Honeycreeper (*Chlorophanes spiza*)—4 of this fairly common species were seen at Río Silanche; at least 8 were seen at Milpe
- Purple Honeycreeper (*Cyanerpes caeruleus*)—1 male was seen from the canopy tower at Río Silanche; at least 6 (both males and females) were seen at Milpe

BUNTINGS, SPARROWS & ALLIES: EMBERIZIDAE

- Variable Seedeater (*Sporophila corvina*)—Several were seen (not common this trip); Río Silanche, Milpe and along the Ecoroute
- Yellow-bellied Seedeater (*Sporophila nigricollis*)—Only a few seen this trip: Paz Antpitta Reserve, Milpe and along the Ecoroute
- Blue Seedeater** (*Amaurospiza concolor*)—1 female was seen along the Mindo entrance road (a rather scarce species)
- Dull-colored Grassquit (*Tiaris obscura*)—1 was seen well in roadside vegetation at Río Silanche
- Yellow-faced Grassquit (*Tiaris olivacea*)—At least 1 male was seen closely at Paz Antpitta Reserve
- White-sided Flowerpiercer (*Diglossa albilatera*)—1 female was seen along the Mindo entrance road; at least a pair (including an odd displaying male) was then seen along the lower Ecoroute
- Glossy Flowerpiercer (*Diglossa lafresnayii*)—Very common and unbelievably tame at hummingbird feeders at Yanacocha
- Masked Flowerpiercer (*Diglossopsis cyanea*)—A fair number were seen, and especially confiding, at Yanacocha hummingbird feeders

Rufous-naped Brush-Finch (*Atlapetes latinuchus*)—1 was seen along the upper Ecoroute while awaiting for the land-slide to be cleared—called Yellow-breasted Brush-Finch by some authors

Tricolored Brush-Finch (*Atlapetes tricolor*)—At least 5 were seen closely at the “Y” de Mindo; 2 more were seen along the Ecoroute w/ a large mixed foraging flock on our last day

Orange-billed Sparrow (*Arremon aurantirostris*)—1 was seen well by Hank at Milpe

Black-striped Sparrow (*Arremonops conirostris*)—At least 1 was seen pretty well at Milpe

Rufous-collared Sparrow (*Zonotrichia capensis*)—Common highland species throughout the Andes; a few were seen throughout the trip

SALTATORS, CARDINALS & ALLIES: CARDINALIDAE

Buff-throated Saltator (*Saltator maximus*)—Fairly common at Río Silanche and at Milpe

Slate-colored [Saltator] Grosbeak (*Saltator grossus*)—1 singing male was seen at Milpe

Black-winged Saltator (*Saltator atripennis*)—2 were seen at Paz Antpitta Reserve; 2 more were seen along the Ecoroute on our last day

Southern Yellow-Grosbeak (*Pheucticus chrysogaster*)—This species was very common on our first morning, especially outside of Quito, *en route* to Yanacocha and along the upper Ecoroute

CACIQUES, ORIOLES & ALLIES: ICTERIDAE

Scarlet-rumped Cacique (*Cacicus uropygialis*)—5 were seen (and heard) at Río Silanche

Shiny Cowbird (*Molothrus bonariensis*)—1 was seen at Río Silanche: 2 more were seen at Milpe

MAMMAL LIST

SQUIRRELS: SCIURIDAE

Neotropical Red-tailed Squirrel (*Sciurus granatensis*)—Some 5 were seen; at Mirador Río Blanco fruit feeders, Río Silanche, Milpe and along the lower Ecoroute

OTHER NOTEWORTHY CREATURES

ANOLES: POLYCHROTIDAE

Anolis sp.—1 was seen at Mirador Río Banco

Earthworm sp.—1 large individual was seen along the lower Ecoroute (perhaps up to 3ft. In length)