

**AMAZON RIVER CRUISE:  
A BIRDING AND NATURAL  
HISTORY ODYSSEY,  
NORTHEASTERN PERU**

**JANUARY 23 – FEBRUARY 1, 2009**

**GUIDES: STEVE HILTY AND DAVID ASCANIO  
LIST COMPILED BY STEVE HILTY**

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January 23–February 1, 2009

By Steve Hilty

Our January 2009 Amazon River Cruise provided an exceptional opportunity to see birds and wildlife along the Ríos Amazon, Ucayali, and Marañón, and various tributaries of these rivers. We experienced some rain, as might be expected, and one hard downpour late one afternoon. Light or intermittent drizzle continued throughout the morning on the day allotted to the high ground (*terra firme*) forest, and this reduced bird activity and created some muddy conditions on the trails. Overall, however, weather conditions were typical for the Amazon and generally quite pleasant. The high water levels of all rivers and tributaries permitted us to travel virtually wherever we pleased, making access even to small creeks easy. This, in fact, is a great advantage and one of the main reasons for visiting at this time of year.

In such a large and diverse avifauna as that of the Iquitos area, much of one's enjoyment comes from the sum of visiting the many different habitats in which birds live, and in observing their behaviors and their unusual, often novel songs, duets, and breeding activities. In a way, this is more important than numbers on a list. We made a point, in fact, of visiting river islands and early successional growth habitats, *várzea* or floodplain forests, riverbank and creekside habitats, and *terra firme* or high ground forest, all with the aim of a more well-rounded experience. And, of course, who could forget our memorable visit to an indigenous community and one, remarkably enough, headed not by a man, but by a middle-aged woman.

The great complexity and diversity of a rainforest avifauna is, perhaps, better illustrated in western Amazonia than anywhere else in the world. We began the trip birding in very light, misty rain along the Iquitos waterfront where we saw a surprising number of birds, and later steamed up the Amazon for a visit to a river island late that first afternoon. Our daily routine varied somewhat, but generally included early morning and mid-afternoon ship departures to explore small creeks or work along the forested riverbanks of the Amazon, Ucayali, and Marañón. After spending a week searching for some of the avifaunal pieces in this greatest of all natural jigsaw puzzles, we hopefully came away with a better appreciation of how this diversity fits together. And, not all the pieces were in the forest. A rich and varied river island fauna, some long distance migrants, and soil and water types strongly influence the natural vegetation and, in turn, the birds in them.

For decades the Iquitos areas has been under intense pressure from hunting and trapping of birds and mammals for food, and it has been a supplier of caged wildlife and wildlife products for international markets. The results of this history of persecution are immediately obvious to naturalists—species that are edible, or have value for their hides, feathers, or for cage purposes, are absent or rare. More recently, selective cutting of trees for lumbering has become a problem, even in remote areas. This, combined with a dramatic increase in human population during this same period of time, suggests a future of hard decisions and discipline if Iquitos is to remain as wild as it is now, much less return to its more pristine earlier condition. Nevertheless, the Iquitos

area remains one of the top rainforest destinations anywhere in the New World with an overall diversity that may just be the highest anywhere in the world.

**KEY:**

Asterisk (\*) = heard only

Boldface and underline: rare or infrequently seen or of interest for other reasons

[ ] Brackets = probably noted only by one or more of your guides

SH - Steve Hilty; DA - David Ascanio

**BIRD LIST:**

\*Variegated Tinamou, *Tinamus variegatus*

Neotropic Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax brasilianus*

Anhinga, *Anhinga anhinga*

Capped Heron, *Pilherodius pileatus*

Cocoi Heron, *Ardea cocoi*

Great Egret, *Ardea alba*

Little Blue Heron, *Egretta caerulea*

Snowy Egret, *Egretta thula*

Cattle Egret, *Bulbulcus ibis*

Striated Heron, *Butorides striatus*

Black-crowned Night-Heron, *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Green Ibis, *Mesembrinibis cayennensis*

Horned Screamer, *Anhima cornuta*

Muscovy Duck, *Cairina moschata*

Black Vulture, *Coragyps atratus*

Turkey Vulture, *Cathartes aura*

Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, *Cathartes burrovianus*

Greater Yellow-headed Vulture, *Cathartes melambrotus*

Osprey, *Pandion haliaetus*

Gray-headed Kite, *Leptodon cayanensis*

**Hook-billed Kite**, *Chondrohierax uncinatus*

Swallow-tailed Kite, *Elanoides forficatus*

Snail Kite, *Rostrhamus sociabilis*

**Slender-billed Kite**, *Rostrhamus sociabilis*

Plumbeous Kite, *Ictinia plumbea*

Crane Hawk, *Geranospiza caerulescens*

Slate-colored Hawk, *Leucopternis schistaceus*

Great Black Hawk, *Buteogallus urubitinga*

Black-collared Hawk, *Busarellus nigricollis*

Roadside Hawk, *Buteo magnirostris*

Zone-tailed Hawk, *Buteo albonotatus*

**Black Hawk-Eagle**, *Spizaetus ornatus*

Black Caracara, *Daptrius ater*

**Red-throated Caracara**, *Daptrius americanus*

Yellow-headed Caracara, *Milvago chimachima*

Laughing Falcon, *Herpetotheres cachinnans*

Bat Falcon, *Falco ruficularis*  
 Peregrine Falcon, *Falco peregrinus*  
 Speckled Chachalaca, *Ortalis guttata*  
Hoatzin, *Opisthocomus hoazin*  
 Purple Gallinule, *Porphyrio martinica*  
 Sungrebe, *Heliornis fulica*  
 Sunbittern, *Eurypyga helias*  
 Wattled Jacana, *Jacana jacana*  
 Spotted Sandpiper, *Actitis macularia*  
 Large-billed Tern, *Phaetusa simplex*  
 Yellow-billed Tern, *Sterna superciliaris*  
 Rock Pigeon, *Columba livia*  
 Pale-vented Pigeon, *Patagioenas cayennensis*  
 Ruddy Pigeon, *Columba subvinacea*  
 \*Plumbeous Pigeon, *Columba plumbea*  
 Ruddy Ground-Dove, *Columba pretiosa*  
 White-tipped Dove, *Leptotila verreauxi*  
 Gray-fronted Dove, *Leptotila rufaxilla*  
Blue-and-yellow Macaw, *Ara ararauna*  
 Red-bellied Macaw, *Orthopsittaca manilata*  
 White-eyed Parakeet, *Aratinga leucophthalmus*  
 Dusky-headed Parakeet, *Aratinga weddellii*  
 Maroon-tailed Parakeet, *Pyrrhura melanura*  
 Blue-winged Parrotlet, *Forpus xanthopterygius*  
 Canary-winged Parakeet, *Brotogeris versicolurus*  
 Cobalt-winged Parakeet, *Brotogeris cyanoptera*  
 Tui Parakeet, *Brotogeris sanctithomae*  
 Black-headed Parrot, *Pionites melanocaphala*  
 Orange-cheeked Parrot, *Pionopsitta barrabandi*  
 Short-tailed Parrot, *Graydidascalus brachyurus*  
 Blue-headed Parrot, *Pionus menstruus*  
 Festive Parrot, *Amazona festiva*  
 Orange-winged Parrot, *Amazona amazonica*  
 Mealy Parrot, *Amazona farinosa*  
 Squirrel Cuckoo, *Piaya cayana*  
 Little Cuckoo, *Piaya minuta*  
 Greater Ani, *Crotophaga major*  
 Smooth-billed Ani, *Crotophaga ani*  
 Striped Cuckoo, *Tapera naevia*  
 \*Ferruginous Pygmy-owl, *Glaucidium brasilianum*  
Great Potoo, *Nyctibius grandis*  
 Short-tailed Nighthawk, *Lurocalis semitorquatus*  
 Ladder-tailed Nightjar, *Hydropsalis climacocerca*  
 Pale-rumped Swift, *Chaetura cinereiventris*  
 Short-tailed Swift, *Chaetura brachyura*  
 Neotropical (Fork-tailed) Palm-Swift, *Reinarda squamata*  
 White-bearded Hermit, *Phaethornis hispidus*

Reddish Hermit, *Phaethornis ruber*  
 Black-throated Mango, *Anthracothorax nigricollis*  
**Fiery Topaz**, *Topaza pyra* (mainly SH and briefly by a few others)  
 Blue-chinned Sapphire, *Chlorostilbon (Chlorestes) notatus*  
 Blue-tailed Emerald, *Chlorostilbon mellisugus*  
 Fork-tailed Woodnymph, *Thalurania furcata*  
 Golden-tailed Sapphire, *Chrysuronia oenone*  
 Olive-spotted Hummingbird, *Leucippus chlorocercus*  
 Glittering-throated Emerald, *Amazilia fimbriata*  
 Black-eared Fairy, *Heliathryx auritus*  
**Long-billed Starthroat**, *Heliomaster longirostris*  
 Amazonian White-tailed Trogon, *Trogon viridis*  
 Violaceous Trogon, *Trogon violaceus*  
 Collared Trogon, *Trogon collaris*  
 Blue-crowned Trogon, *Trogon curucui*  
 Black-tailed Trogon, *Trogon melanurus*  
 Ringed Kingfisher, *Ceryle torquata*  
 Amazon Kingfisher, *Chloroceryle amazona*  
 Green Kingfisher, *Chloroceryle americana*  
 Green-and-rufous Kingfisher, *Chloroceryle inda*  
**Pygmy Kingfisher**, *Chloroceryle aenea*  
 White-eared Jacamar, *Galbalcyrhynchus leucotis*  
 White-chinned Jacamar, *Galbula tombacea*  
 Bluish-fronted Jacamar, *Galbula cyanescens*  
 Paradise Jacamar, *Galbula dea*  
 Black-fronted Nunbird, *Monasa nigrifrons*  
 White-fronted Nunbird, *Monasa morphoeus*  
 Swallow-winged Puffbird, *Chelidoptera tenebrosa*  
 Scarlet-crowned Barbet, *Capito aurovirens*  
 \*Gilded Barbet, *Capito auratus*  
 Lemon-throated Barbet, *Eubucco richardsoni*  
 Lettered Aracari, *Pteroglossus inscriptus*  
 Chestnut-eared Aracari, *Pteroglossus castanotis*  
 Many-banded Aracari, *Pteroglossus pluricinctus*  
 Channel-billed Toucan, *Ramphastos vitellinus*  
 White-throated (Cuvier's) Toucan, *Ramphastos cuvieri*  
**Lafresnaye's Piculet**, *Picumnus lafresnayi*  
**Plain-breasted Piculet**, *Picumnus castelnaui*  
 Yellow-tufted Woodpecker, *Melanerpes cruentatus*  
 Little Woodpecker, *Veniliornis passerinus*  
 Yellow-throated Woodpecker, *Picus flavigula*  
 Spot-breasted Woodpecker, *Chrysoptilus punctigula*  
 Scale-breasted Woodpecker, *Celeus grammicus*  
 Chestnut Woodpecker, *Celeus elegans*  
 Cream-colored Woodpecker, *Celeus flavus*  
**Ringed Woodpecker**, *Celus torquatus*  
 Lineated Woodpecker, *Dryocopus lineatus*

Crimson-crested Woodpecker, *Campephilus melanoleucus*  
 \*Pale-legged Hornero, *Furnarius leucopus*  
**Bay (Pale-billed) Hornero**, *Furnarius torridus*  
 Lesser Hornero, *Furnarius minor*  
 Dark-breasted Spinetail, *Synallaxis albigularis*  
 White-bellied Spinetail, *Synallaxis propinqua*  
**Parker's Spinetail**, *Cranioleuca vulpecula*  
**Red-and-white Spinetail**, *Certhiaxis mustelinus*  
**Orange-fronted Plushcrown**, *Metopothrix aurantiacus*  
**Point-tailed Palmcreeper**, *Berlepschia rikeri*  
**Cinnamon-rumped Foliage-gleaner**, *Philydor pyrrhodes*  
 Slender-billed Xenops, *Xenops tenuirostris*  
 Olivaceous Woodcreeper, *Sittasomus griseicapillus*  
 Long-billed Woodcreeper, *Nasica longirostris*  
 Cinnamon-throated Woodcreeper, *Dendrexetastes rufigula*  
 Strong-billed Woodcreeper, *Xiphocolaptes promeropirhynchus*  
 Striped Woodcreeper, *Xiphorhynchus obsoletus*  
 Buff-throated Woodcreeper, *Xiphorhynchus guttatus*  
 Straight-billed Woodcreeper, *Xiphorhynchus picus*  
 Great Antshrike, *Taraba major*  
 Black-crested Antshrike, *Sakesphorus canadensis*  
 Barred Antshrike, *Thamnophilus doliatus*  
 Pygmy Antwren, *Myrmotherula brachyura*  
 Amazonian (Streaked-) Antwren, *Myrmotherula multostriata*  
**Ash-breasted Antbird**, *Myrmoborus lugubris*  
 Band-tailed Antbird, *Hypocnemoides maculicauda*  
 Black-and-white Antbird, *Myrmochanes hemileucus*  
 Silvered Antbird, *Sclateria naevia*  
 Plumbeous Antbird, *Myrmeciza hyperythra*  
 Black-throated Antbird, *Myrmeciza atrothorax*  
 \*Bicolored Antbird, *Gymnopithys leucaspis*  
 Scale-backed Antbird, *Hylophylax poecilinota*  
**Rufous-capped Antthrush**, *Formicarius colma*  
 \*Rusty-belted Tapaculo, *Liosceles thoracicus*  
**Plum-throated Cotinga**, *Cotinga maynana*  
 Bare-necked Fruitcrow, *Gymnoderus foetidus*  
 Purple-throated Fruitcrow, *Querula purpurata*  
**Amazonian Umbrellabird**, *Cephalopterus ornatus*  
 Golden-headed Manakin, *Pipra erythrocephala*  
 Striped Manakin, *Machaeropterus regulus*  
 Dwarf Tyrant-Manakin, *Tyranneutes stolzmanni*  
 Várzea Schiffornis, *Schiffornis major*  
 Yellow-crowned Tyrannulet, *Tyrannulus elatus*  
 \*Forest Elaenia, *Myiopagis gaimardii*  
**Yellow-crowned Elaenia**, *Elaenia flavivertex*  
 Southern Beardless-Tyrannulet, *Camptostoma obsoletum*  
 Mouse-colored Tyrannulet, *Phaeomyias murina*

River Tyrannulet, *Serpophaga hypoleuca*  
**Lesser Wagtail-Tyrant**, *Stigmatura napensis*  
 Slender-footed Tyrannulet, *Zimmerius gracilipes*  
 Double-banded-Pygmy-Tyrant, *Lophotriccus vitiensis*  
 Spotted Tody-Tyrant, *Todirostrum maculatum*  
 Yellow-browed Tody-Tyrant, *Todirostrum chrysocrotaphum*  
 Yellow-margined Flycatcher, *Tolmomyias assimilis*  
 [Gray-crowned Flycatcher, *Tolmomyias poliocephalus*  
 Yellow-breasted Flycatcher, *Tolmomyias flaviventris*  
 [Amazonian Royal-Flycatcher, *Onychorhynchus coronatus*  
 Fuscus Flycatcher, *Cnemotriccus fuscatus*  
 ?Western Wood Pewee, *Contopus virens*  
 Drab Water Tyrant, *Ochthornis littoralis*  
 White-headed Marsh-Tyrant, *Arundinicola leucocephala*  
 Piratic Flycatcher, *Legatus leucophaeus*  
 Social Flycatcher, *Myiozetetes similis*  
 Gray-capped Flycatcher, *Myiozetetes granadensis*  
 Great Kiskadee, *Pitangus sulphuratus*  
 Lesser Kiskadee, *Philohydor lictor*  
 Streaked Flycatcher, *Myiodynastes maculatus*  
 Boat-billed Flycatcher, *Megarynchus pitangua*  
 \*Sulphury Flycatcher, *Tyrannopsis sulphurea*  
 Tropical Kingbird, *Tyrannus melancholicus*  
 Eastern Kingbird, *Tyrannus tyrannus*  
 Grayish Mourner, *Rhytipterna simplex*  
 Short-crested Flycatcher, *Myiarchus ferox*  
 Cinnamon Attila, *Attila cinnamomeus*  
 \*Bright-rumped Attila, *Attila spadiceus*  
 Dull-capped (White-eyed) Attila, *Attila bolivianus*  
 Masked Tityra, *Tityra semifasciata*  
 Black-tailed Tityra, *Tityra cayana*  
 Masked Tityra, *Tityra semifasciata*  
 Black-crowned Tityra, *Tityra inquisitor*  
 Cinereous Becard, *Pachyramphus rufus*  
 Chestnut-crowned Becard, *Pachyramphus castaneus*  
 White-winged Becard, *Pachyramphus polychopterus*  
 Black-capped Becard, *Pachyramphus marginatus*  
 Bank Swallow, *Riparia riparia*  
 White-winged Swallow, *Tachycineta albiventer*  
 Gray-breasted Martin, *Progne chalybea*  
 Brown-chested Martin, *Progne tapera*  
 Southern Rough-winged Swallow, *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*  
 Barn Swallow, *Hirundo rustica*  
 Black-capped Donacobius, *Donacobius atricapillus*  
 Thrush-like Wren, *Campylorhynchus turdinus*  
 Buff-breasted Wren, *Thryothorus leucotis*  
 House Wren, *Troglodytes aedon*

Black-billed Thrush, *Turdus ignobilis*  
 \*Hauxwell's Thrush, *Turdus hauxwelli*  
 \*White-necked thrush, *Turdus albicollis*  
 Violaceous Jay, *Cyanocorax violaceus*  
 Red-eyed (Chivi) Vireo, *Vireo olivaceus* (or if split *Vireo chivi*)  
**Yellow-green Vireo, *Vireo flavoviridis***  
 Purple-throated Euphonia, *Euphonia chlorotica*  
 Thick-billed Euphonia, *Euphonia laniirostris*  
 Golden-bellied (White-lored) Euphonia, *Euphonia chrysopasta*  
 White-vented Euphonia, *Euphonia minuta*  
 Orange-bellied Euphonia, *Euphonia xanthogaster*  
 Yellow Warbler, *Dendroica petechia*  
 Northern Waterthrush, *Seiurus noveboracensis*  
 Orange-headed Tanager, *Thlypopsis sordida*  
 Guira Tanager, *Hemithraupis guira*  
 Hooded Tanager, *Nemosia pileata*  
 Gray-headed Tanager, *Eucometis penicillata*  
 White-winged Shrike-Tanager, *Lanio versicolor*  
 Masked Crimson Tanager, *Ramphocelus nigrogularis*  
 Silver-beaked Tanager, *Ramphocelus carbo*  
 Blue-gray Tanager, *Thraupis episcopus*  
 Palm Tanager, *Thraupis palmarum*  
 Turquoise Tanager, *Tangara mexicana*  
 Paradise Tanager, *Tangara chilensis*  
 Green-&-gold Tanager, *Tangara schrankii*  
 Yellow-bellied Dacnis, *Dacnis flaviventer*  
**Opal-crowned Tanager, *Tangara velia***  
 Black-faced Dacnis, *Dacnis lineata*  
 Yellow-bellied Dacnis, *Dacnis flaviventer*  
 Blue Dacnis, *Dacnis cayana*  
 Green Honeycreeper, *Chlorophanes spiza*  
 Caquetá Seed-eater, *Sporophila murallae*  
 Lesson's Seed-eater, *Sporophila bouvronides*  
 Chestnut-bellied Seed-eater, *Sporophila castaneiventris*  
 Chestnut-bellied (Lesser) Seed-Finch, *Oryzoborus angolensis*  
 Red-capped Cardinal, *Paroaria gularis*  
 Yellow-browed Sparrow, *Ammodramus aurifrons*  
 Grayish Saltator, *Saltator coerulescens*  
 Buff-throated Saltator, *Saltator maximus*  
 Slate-colored (Grosbeak) Saltator, *Saltator (formerly Pitylus) grossus*  
 Yellow-hooded Blackbird, *Chrysomus icterocephalus*  
 Shiny Cowbird, *Molothrus bonariensis*  
 Giant Cowbird, *Molothrus oryzivorus*  
 Orange-backed Troupial, *Icterus croconotus*  
 Yellow-rumped Cacique, *Cacicus cela*  
 Solitary (Black) Cacique, *Cacicus solitarius*  
 Russet-backed Oropendola, *Psarocolius angustifrons*



Oriole Blackbird, *Gymnomystax mexicanus*  
Velvet-fronted Grackle, *Lamprosar tanagrinus*

**Lima birds (species noted from bus between airport and hotel):**

Peruvian Pelican, *Pelecanus thagus*  
Franklin's Gull, *Larus pipixcan*  
Inca Tern, *Larosterna inca*  
Belcher's (Band-tailed) Gull, *Larus belcheri*  
Croaking Ground-Dove, *Columbina cruziana*  
West Peruvian Dove, *Zenaida meloda*  
Vermillion Flycatcher, *Pyrocephalus rubinus*  
Scrub Blackbird, *Dives warszewiczi*

**MAMMALS AND HERPS:**

**Sloths**

Brown-throated three-toed Sloth, *Bradypus variegatus*, at least 4 noted during the week

**Bats**

Fishing (or Bulldog) bats, *Noctilio spp.*, seen in evenings and on night excursion  
Long-nosed Bat, *Rhynchonycteris naso*, groups clinging beneath trees overhanging creeks

**Primates**

Saddleback Tamarin, *Saguinus fasciollis*, small groups on three separate days  
Night Monkey, *Aotus sp.*, wonderful group of ca. 4 in large tree hole  
Common Squirrel Monkey, *Saimiri sciureus*, large troop  
Red Howler Monkey, *Alouatta seniculus*, heard (not seen)

**Squirrels**

Northern Amazonian Red Squirrel, *Sciurus igniventris*, 1-2 seen  
Amazonian Dwarf Squirrel, *Microsciurus flaviventer*, 1 on terra firme trail

**Dolphins**

Pink River Dolphin, *Inia geoffrensis*, seen most days  
Gray Dolphin, *Sotalia fluviatilis*, only one group seen