

*Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc.*

**BARRANCA DEL COBRE  
(Mexico's Copper Canyon)**

**March 19-27, 2005**

**Leader: Brian Gibbons**

**ITINERARY:**

- **March 19<sup>th</sup>** - Arrival in Los Mochis, trip introduction and dinner (for most folks).
- **March 20<sup>th</sup>** – Parque Sinaloa, Los Mochis, Sinaloa; Drive to El Fuerte, afternoon town tour and birding along the El Fuerte River until dusk.
- **March 21<sup>st</sup>** – Birding the El Fuerte River Valley and Miguel Hidalgo Reservoir. Evening birding along the El Fuerte River on the Brand Ranch.
- **March 22<sup>nd</sup>** – Birding around the El Fuerte Train Station, train to Bahuichivo and transfer to Paraiso del Oso in Cerocahui. Evening birding around the grounds and down to the stream.
- **March 23<sup>rd</sup>** – Early morning birding around the Paraiso del Oso. Van to Cerro Gallegos and the Urique canyon overlook birding along the way.
- **March 24<sup>th</sup>** – Birding behind the Paraiso del Oso along the canyon trail. Transfer to Bahuichivo train station for the train to Creel with a brief stop at Divisadero.
- **March 25<sup>th</sup>** – Birding hike to Cascada Cusarare, Lunch at the falls and drive out very slowly. A brief birding stop at Arareco lake and a stop to visit a Tarahumara cave dwelling.
- **March 26<sup>th</sup>** – Starting at Creel our first birding stop was in the small community of Choguita (the Striped Sparrow spot). Lunch at Casa Carolina in La Junta and continue on to Chihuahua and the Pancho Villa Museum. Very windy on this day and we experienced a small dust storm.
- **March 27<sup>th</sup>** – Departures for points north

**LIST:**

Unusual or especially memorable observations are underlined. Mexican endemics and near-endemics are **boldfaced**.

Least Grebe (*Tachybaptus dominicus*) – Several seen on the pond near El Fuerte

Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*) – A few seen on lake Arareco

American White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchus*) – A few on Miguel Hidalgo Reservoir

Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) – Along the El Fuerte River and at Miguel Hidalgo Reservoir

Neotropic Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – Common along the El Fuerte River and at Miguel Hidalgo Reservoir

Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) – Along the River and a few here and there

Great Egret (*Ardea alba*) – El Fuerte River valley  
 Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) – El Fuerte River valley  
 Black-bellied Whistling Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) – Parque Sinaloa  
 American Wigeon (*Anas Americana*) – El Fuerte Pond and Lake Arareco  
 Gadwall (*Anas strepera*) – A few on the pond near El Fuerte  
 Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos diazi*) – “Mexican Duck” El Fuerte River Valley  
 Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*) – A few in the spillway at Miguel Hidalgo Reservoir  
 Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*) – Lake Arareco  
 Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*) - Lake Arareco  
 Bufflehead (*Bucephala albeola*) – Lake Arareco  
 Ruddy Duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) – A couple on the pond near El Fuerte  
 Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*) – Fairly common throughout the tour  
 Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*) – Fairly common throughout the tour  
 Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) – Several along the El Fuerte River  
 White-tailed Kite (*Elanus leucurus*) – One seen from Parque Sinaloa  
 Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) – One seen from the bus in the grasslands around Guerrero  
 Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*) – Two singles seen in different locations  
 Cooper’s Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*) – One seen near El Fuerte  
 Gray Hawk (*Asturina nitida*) – Parque Sinaloa and El Fuerte River valley  
 Common Black Hawk (*Buteogallus anthracinus*) – Several seen from the train  
 Swainson’s Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) – El Fuerte and the grasslands around Guerrero  
 Zone-tailed Hawk (*Buteo albonotatus*)- Several seen in various places but never well  
 Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) – A few seen daily including a beautiful Rufous morph  
 bird at Paraiso del Oso  
 Crested Caracara (*Caracara cheriway*) – Common Along the El Fuerte River valley  
 American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) – Common in the lowlands with a few other scattered  
 sightings  
 Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) – One seen near El Fuerte  
**Rufous-bellied Chachalaca** (*Ortalis wagleri*) – Heard Only near El Fuerte  
 Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*) – A few on the pond near El Fuerte  
 American Coot (*Fulica americana*) – Near El Fuerte and a couple at Lake Arareco  
 Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*) – A couple seen along the El Fuerte River  
 Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*) - A bunch around the Miguel Hidalgo Reservoir  
 Caspian Tern (*Sterna caspia*) – A large group loafing on the spillway at Miguel Hidalgo  
 Reservoir  
 Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*) – Common, seen daily around towns and cities  
 Red-billed Pigeon (*Columba flavirostris*) – Nice Studies at Parque Sinaloa  
 Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*) – Common in the lowlands and a few seen around  
 Chihuahua  
 White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*) – Common in the lowlands and a few seen around  
 Chihuahua  
 Ruddy Ground-Dove (*Columbina talpacoti*)– Common in the El Fuerte River valley  
 Inca Dove (*Columbina inca*) – Uncommon but seen and heard nearly daily  
 White-tipped Dove (*Leptotila verreauxi*) – Heard only in the El Fuerte area  
**Mexican Parrotlet** (*Forpus cyanopygius*) – Several seen and scoped in Parque Sinaloa  
Squirrel Cuckoo (*Piaya cayana*) – Joanne spotted one from the train, very lucky!  
Lesser Roadrunner (*Geococcyx velox*) – The second van got lucky with this bird!  
 Greater Roadrunner (*Geococcyx californianus*) – One seen on the Brand Ranch  
 Groove-billed Ani (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*) – Several seen in Parque Sinaloa

Mountain Pygmy-Owl (*Glaucidium gnoma*) – Nice scope views of this distinctive form of Northern Pygmy-Owl

Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl (*Glaucidium brasilianum*)– Good scope looks near El Fuerte

White-throated Swift (*Aeronautes saxatalis*) – Common daily in the mountains but tough to get a good look

Broad-billed hummingbird (*Cynanthus latirostris*)– Common in the lowlands

White-eared Hummingbird (*Hylocharis leucotis*)– A couple elusive birds in the mountains

Violet-crowned Hummingbird (*Agyrtria violiceps*) – A few of these stunners at Parque Sinaloa and El Fuerte

Berylline Hummingbird (*Saucerottia beryllina*) – Several were visiting the Paraiso del Oso feeders, great looks

Magnificent Hummingbird (*Eugenes fulgens*) – Common at the Paraiso del Oso feeders, beautiful

Broad-tailed Hummingbird (*Selasphorus platycercus*) – Several heard at various locations in the mountains but rarely seen

Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*) – A few around El Fuerte

Mountain Trogon (*Trogon mexicanus*) – Seen well on the way to Cerro Gallegos, a trip highlight with both birds seen in the scope while they were excavating their cavity.

Belted Kingfisher (*Ceryle alcyon*) – One seen along the El Fuerte River

Acorn Woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus*)– Common in the mountains

Gila Woodpecker (*Melanerpes uropygialis*) – Abundant in the lowlands

Ladder-backed Woodpecker (*Picoides scalaris*) – El Fuerte area and Casa Carolina Orchard

Arizona Woodpecker (*Picoides arizonae*) – A few seen around Paraiso del Oso

Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*) – Red-shafted Form a few in the mountains

**White-striped Woodcreeper** (*Lepidocolaptes leucogaster*) – Finally great looks for all around the Paraiso del Oso

Tufted Flycatcher (*Mitrephanes phaeocercus*) – Great looks at the Paraiso del Oso, and a few around Cascada Cusarare

Greater Pewee (*Contopus pertinax*) – Good looks at the Paraiso del Oso

Hammond's Flycatcher (*Empidonax hammondi*) – A few around Paraiso del Oso

Gray Flycatcher (*Empidonax wrightii*) – A couple along the El Fuerte River

Pacific-slope Flycatcher (*Empidonax difficilis*) – One bird by Miguel Hidalgo Reservoir

Buff-breasted Flycatcher (*Empidonax fulvifrons*) – One brief appearance just outside the Paraiso del Oso

Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*) – Common in the mountains

Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*) – A few around Creel

Vermilion Flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*) – Fairly Common in low to middle elevations

Dusky-capped Flycatcher (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) – A few lucky folks got to see one behind the Paraiso del Oso

Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*) – A few in the El Fuerte area

Nutting's Flycatcher (*Myiarchus nuttingi*) – A few around the El Fuerte area

Great Kiskadee (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) – Fairly common in the lowlands

Social Flycatcher (*Myiozetetes similis*) – Common in the lowlands

Cassin's Kingbird (*Tyrannus vociferans*) – Common in the lowlands

Thick-billed Kingbird (*Tyrannus crassirostris*) – One bird on the Brand Ranch

Western Kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*) – One flyover at the El Fuerte train station

Violet-Green Swallow (*Tachycineta thalassina*) – Common in the mountains

Northern Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) – Common throughout

Cliff Swallow (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*) – Several around the dam at Miguel Hidalgo

Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) – A few seen in a couple locations  
 Ruby-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus calendula*) – Common in the mountains  
 Cactus Wren (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*) – A few in the El Fuerte area  
 Rock Wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus*) – A few seen in the mountains  
 Canyon Wren (*Catherpes mexicanus*) – Heard regularly in the mountains but seen only a few times  
**Happy Wren** (*Thryothorus felix*) – Good looks for everyone in El Fuerte  
**Sinaloa Wren** (*Thryothorus sinaloa*) – Heard only late in the evening on the Brand Ranch  
 Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*) – One seen near Paraiso del Oso  
 House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*) – Heard only in the mountains  
 Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*) - Several seen in the lowlands  
 Curve-billed Thrasher (*Toxostoma curvirostre*) – A few seen at various elevations  
 Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*) – A few seen on the trip out to Cerro Gallegos  
 Western Bluebird (*Sialia mexicana*) – Common in the fields around Creel  
Brown-backed Solitaire (*Myadestes occidentalis*) – Several of these amazing songsters completely eluded getting sighted by our group, but we heard them!  
 Hemit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*) – One seen along the stream behind the Paraiso del Oso  
**Rufous-backed Robin** (*Turdus rufopalliatus*) – One glimpsed around the El Fuerte train station  
 American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) – Fairly Common in the mountains  
 Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (*Polyoptila caerulea*) – A few seen here and there  
**Black-capped Gnatcatcher** (*Polyoptila nigriceps*) – Parque Sinaloa and El Fuerte area  
 Bushtit (*Psaltriparus minimus*) – Fairly common in the mountains  
 Mexican Chickadee (*Poecile scalaris*) – Several seen in the mountains  
 Bridled Titmouse (*Baeolophus wollweberi*) – Fairly common in the mountains  
 White-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*) – Just a few seen in the mountains  
 Brown Creeper (*Certhia americana*) – Several seen along the trail to Cascada Cusarare, a distinctive, dark Mexican subspecies  
 Verdin (*Auriparus flaviceps*) – A few seen around El Fuerte  
 Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) – A few seen throughout the trip  
 Steller's Jay (*Cyanocitta stelleri*) – Common in the mountains  
**Black-throated Magpie-Jay** (*Calocitta colliei*) – A striking bird that was common around El Fuerte  
**Purplish-backed Jay** (*Cyanocorax beecheii*) – Great looks in Parque Sinaloa  
 Mexican Jay (*Aphelocoma ultramarina*) – Common but elusive in the mountains  
 Sinaloa Crow (*Corvus sinaloae*) – Common in the El Fuerte River valley  
 Chihuahuan Raven (*Corvus cryptoleucus*) – Seen from the bus on the last day  
 Common Raven (*Corvus corax*) – Seen daily  
 European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) – Around towns  
 House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) – Around towns  
 Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii*) – Easily heard and sometimes seen around El Fuerte  
 Plumbeous Vireo (*Vireo plumbeus*) – A couple seen  
 Hutton's Vireo (*Vireo huttoni*) – Heard more often than seen in the pine-oak forests in the mountains  
 House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*) – This striking Mexican form was easy to see throughout the trip  
 Pine Siskin (*Carduelis pinus*) – A few seen in the orchard at Casa Carolina on the last day  
 Lesser Goldfinch (*Carduelis psaltria*) – Common throughout the tour  
 Olive Warbler (*Peucedramus taeniatus*) – A few seen well in the mountains  
 Orange-crowned Warbler (*Vermivora celata*) – Numerous along the El Fuerte River valley

Nashville Warbler (*Vermivora ruficapilla*) – A couple around El Fuerte  
 Lucy's Warbler (*Vermivora luciae*) – Several around El Fuerte  
Crescent-chested Warbler (*Parula superciliosa*) – One cooperative bird on the trip out to Cerro Gallegos  
 Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*) – All “Audubon's” form present in small numbers throughout the trip  
 Black-throated Gray Warbler (*Dendroica nigrescens*) – Seen along the river near El Fuerte  
 Grace's Warbler (*Dendroica graciae*) – Seen along the road during the trip to Cerro Gallegos  
 Northern Waterthrush (*Seiurus noveboracensis*) – One heard in Parque Sinaloa  
 MacGillivray's Warbler (*Oporornis tolmiei*) - A sneaky bird round El Fuerte station  
 Wilson's Warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla*) – Along the river at the Brand Ranch  
Red-faced Warbler (*Cardellina rubrifrons*) – Great looks along the Cascada Cusarare trail  
Painted Redstart (*Myioborus pictus*) – This beautiful bird was downright common in the mountains, I could never get tired of looking at these guys despite what I may have said  
Slate-throated Redstart (*Myioborus miniatus*) – A couple seen, Cerro Gallegos a great bird  
 Hepatic Tanager (*Piranga flava*) – A few seen in the mountains  
 Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*) – Seen at Parque Sinaloa and heard around El Fuerte  
 Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*) – Several seen at Parque Sinaloa  
 White-collared Seedeater (*Sporophila torqueola*) – The “cinnamon-rumped” form of western Mexico, a single female seen along the river at the Brand Ranch  
 Green-tailed Towhee (*Pipilo chlorurus*) – Only seen by a few around El Fuerte  
 Canyon Towhee (*Pipilo fuscus*) – Fairly Common throughout the tour  
 Rufous-winged Sparrow (*Aimophila carpalis*) – One cooperative bird along the road near El Fuerte  
**Striped Sparrow** (*Oriturus superciliosus*) – Choguita, several seen well along the road  
 Chipping Sparrow (*Spizella passerina*) – Common in the mountains  
 Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*) – El Fuerte and in the Paraiso del Oso pastures  
 White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*) – A couple seen around El Fuerte  
 Dark-eyed Junco (*Junco hyemalis*) – “Gray-headed” form in the mountains  
 Yellow-eyed Junco (*Junco phaeonotus*) – Common in the mountains  
 Grayish Saltator (*Saltator coerulescens*) – Fairly common in the lowlands  
 Northern Cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) – Fairly common in the El Fuerte River valley  
 Pyrrhuloxia (*Cardinalis sinuatus*) – A couple seen around El Fuerte  
 Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*) – Seen around El Fuerte and the Paraiso del Oso  
 Blue Grosbeak (*Passerina caerulea*) – Several seen in the El Fuerte River valley  
 Lazuli Bunting (*Passerina amoena*) – Several seen in the El Fuerte River valley  
Varied Bunting (*Passerina versicolor*) – A nice pair in the El Fuerte River valley  
 Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*) – One sneaky female was seen by a few folks along the El Fuerte River valley with the large flock of buntings and grosbeaks  
 Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) – One along the El Fuerte River  
 Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*) – A few in the grasslands around Guerrero and Chihuahua  
 Brewer's Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) – A single bird well seen at a toll booth on the last day  
 Great-tailed Grackle (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) – Common throughout, especially around cities  
 Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*) – El Fuerte area  
Streak-backed Oriole (*Icterus pustulatus*) – Parque Sinaloa and along the El Fuerte River  
 Hooded Oriole (*Icterus cucullatus*) – Along the El Fuerte River

Leader Only: Band-tailed Pigeon, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet, Townsend's Solitaire, Spotted Towhee, Five-striped Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Yellow-headed Blackbird.

#### Other Fauna

Nine-banded Armadillo

Rock Squirrel

Spiny-tailed Iguana