

*Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc.*

**SHORT WEST MEXICO  
January 10-16, 2005**

**Leaders: Marshall Iliff (and Brian Gibbons)**

Our first ever Short West Mexico tour turned out to be an amazing success. Rancho Primavera lived up to the positive reports we had heard. The food (cooked by Monterey nutritionist Bonnie and Ranch owner Pat Morrow) was phenomenal at all times, and the fresh-squeezed juices, lemongrass tea, and delectable desserts were especially welcome treats. The ranch was hospitable and homely, and afforded chances at swimming and trampoline-jumping for those that tired of the birds around the ranch.

But who could tire of the birds around the ranch!? During our stay there were recorded 136 species on Ranch property, including an amazing 122 in a single day (15 Jan)! (Had we stayed longer and tried harder, I would expect 20 to 30 more species on ranch property.) From the porch we regularly saw San Blas Jays, Acorn Woodpeckers, Great Kiskadees, and Black-vented Orioles. The hummingbird feeders attracted a kaleidoscope of hummingbird colors – big, showy Cinnamon Hummingbirds and small, jewel-like Broad-billeds; similar Ruby-throateds and Black-chinneds to test our identification skills; and an occasional Berylline and Calliope to boost the variety. The hillside behind the ranch produced some of our better birds, including two more hummers: a female Golden-crowned Emerald and a showy male Sparkling-tailed Hummingbird with its absurdly long tail. The ranch ponds were always worth a visit and we hit them 5 or 6 times during our stay, with new species for our list every single time. At dusk herons, egrets, and ibis would arrive from the surrounding valley to roost at the pond, sometimes accompanied by ducks. The pond highlights included a Blue Mockingbird out in bright sun; a sneaky Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush; and a subtle but distinctive White-throated Flycatcher performing for us. The other ranch highlight was discovering a fruiting fig tree in the fog one morning. A Rufous-backed Robin began a barrage of new species that would include White-throated Robin, Boat-billed Flycatcher, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Ivory-billed Woodcreeper, and others – all visiting that one tree for fruit. In all we must have seen almost 30 species in that one tree. We even found Rosy Thrush-Tanager on the Ranch – a secretive but spectacular cross between a catbird and a Scarlet Tanager, with a long bill like a Rock Wren.

The good birding was not limited to the Ranch though. On one day we headed down through unique West Mexican thorn forest in search of some specialties. Our number one target eventually cooperated, and everyone had smashing views of the two male (one immature) Red-breasted Chats while they serenaded us. Other thorn forest birds, such as the incredibly showy Orange-breasted Buntings, cryptic Black-capped Gnatcatchers, a heard-only Flammulated Flycatcher, and a giant Plain-capped Starthroat just added to the excitement. A hot afternoon search for another specialty culminated in success as well. Near La Presa Cajon de Pena we took a side road and trolled for a really unique roadrunner relative – the Lesser Ground-Cuckoo. We finally got a response, and despite a difficult situation (looking into the sun), managed to tape the bird right in on top of us so that everyone could get incredible looks at this incredible bird. The bare skin around its eye was so unique and seen so well, that this ranked among the top birding experiences of the tour.

For a change of pace, on other mornings we climbed in elevation to the pine forests of La Bascula, and the pine-oak of Cienega de Ojuelos. Specialties there included Black-capped Vireo (wintering), Painted Redstart, White-striped Woodcreeper, Gray-crowned Woodpecker, Mexican Hermit (wow!), Tufted Flycatcher, Gray-collared Becard, and many more. In lowlands areas of Cruz de Loreto, Puerto Vallarta, and Laguna de Quelele in adjacent Nayarit we amassed even more birds. Among many migrant North American birds and waterbirds, we had such specialties as Mexican Parrotlet, Northern Jacana, Purple Gallinule, Roadside Hawk, Crane Hawk, Mangrove Warbler, Blue-footed and Brown Boobies,

Magnificent Frigatebirds in droves, a rare Franklin's Gull among other species, Reddish Egret and Roseate Spoonbill, Wood Stork, as well as such attractive species as Orchard Oriole, Vermilion Flycatcher, and Crested Caracara. The tour highlight for many, Martha in particular, was the stunning views of Dickcissels flying ¼ mile overhead and looking every bit like a House Sparrow as they did. Other species seen over the course of the tour included Squirrel Cuckoo, White-throated *and* Black-throated Magpie-Jays, Rufous-bellied *and* West Mexican Chachalacas, Masked Tityra, Lilac-crowned Parrot, Orange-fronted Parakeet, Rose-throated Becard, and Stripe-headed Sparrow, among many others. Our group turned out to be passionate about collecting a big trip list, and adamantly vetoed potential breaks from the birding for fear of diminishing our total. In the end, it showed, because the 252 species we found was a truly massive list for this "Short West Mexican" tour. It will be tough to beat both the quantity and quality.

### **ITINERARY**

**Day 1, January 10:** Arrival in Puerto Vallarta; afternoon birding at ranch ponds (39 species)

**Day 2, January 11:** We birded down the first 5 km of the Bioto Road in the morning (7:30-12:00); lunch at Altamira Restaurant; La Bascula Road (14:00-16:30); evening at Ranch ponds (108 species; 121 total)

**Day 3, January 12:** We birded at the Ranch (7:30-10:30), where fog stifled our efforts early on until we found the magical fruiting fig tree which provided us a solid hour of entertainment and 25 or so species. Later we hiked down below the main house and Brian found us the Sparkling-tailed Hummingbird! We departed 10:30 for Tehua, with ample birding on route (including the estero at Maito) and a 13:30 arrival. After the slow lunch in Tehua, we got back on the road, with some more birding stops (beginning at Ipala) and evening birding in the very birdy fields around Cruz de Loreto (145 species; 182 total)

**Day 4, January 13:** We birded La Bascula Road (7:30-12:30); lunch at Altamira Restaurant; after a near mutiny objecting to an afternoon break, we continued our birding by heading towards La Presa (on getting as far as the road to the north from El Tule), and ending our day again around Cruz de Loreto. The evening highlight was finding a small pond that was full of jacanas and Purple Gallinules! (125 species; 209 total)

**Day 5, January 14:** We left early and birded briefly at La Bascula Road, ultimately deciding to continue on to Cienega de Ojeulos Road (km 178.3), which was extremely birdy and got us Black-capped Vireo. We then headed down to Puerto Vallarta, checking Los Arcos and a small river crossing en route. After lunch we birded the Río Ameca mouth and caught up on shorebirds before closing our day at Laguna de Quelele (150 species; 240 total)

**Day 6, January 15:** A more-mellow day today, we set out to set a Rancho Primavera Big Day list. We birded around the Ranch house early, than walked slowly towards the ponds, returning via the "secret trail" and the fig tree. We went into El Tuito for lunch at Nena's and then headed west from the Ranch for a brief, but mostly bird-free, afternoon excursion. (125 species; 247 total; ranch Big Day total **122** )

**Day 7, 16 Jan:** Departure for home, with morning birding at Ranch (chachalacas); late morning birding at Boca de Tomatlán (Gray Silky-Flycatchers etc.); final stop at Boca de Tomate (Mangrove Warbler). Arrival at airport at 12:30 and departure for home. (81 species; 252 total; total of 136 species seen on Ranch)

**Locations:** Bioto (Bioto Road); CDL (=Cruz de Loreto, and adjacent farmland); CO (=Cienega de Ojuelos road, just north of LB); El Tule (small town near La Presa Cajon de Pena); Ipala (small town between Tehua and CDL); LB (=La Bascula Road); LQ (=Laguna de Quelele, Nayarit); PV (=Puerto Vallarta); Ranch (Rancho Primavera); Río Ameca mouth (=Boca de Tomate);

Tour highlights are in ALL CAPS; local rarities are underlined; Mexico endemics are denoted with an (E); \* = recorded on the Rancho Primavera property; (h) = heard only

## **SPECIES LIST (252 species)**

**Least Grebe\*** – seen most days at Ranch; also Altamira Restaurant

**Blue-footed Booby** – 300 feeding off Río Ameca 14 Jan

**Brown Booby** – Several seen on our two visits to the coast

**American White Pelican\*** – 75 on 14 Jan and 20 over Ranch 15 Jan

**Brown Pelican** – Common along coast

**Neotropic Cormorant\*** – Common on freshwater; one on ocean 12 Jan

**Anhinga** – six at LQ 14 Jan

**Magnificent Frigatebird** - Common along coast

**Great Blue Heron\*** – Several seen at Ranch and around PV

**Great Egret\*** – Fairly common, especially near coast

**Snowy Egret\*** – Fairly common, especially near coast

**Little Blue Heron\*** – One seen regularly at Ranch; others in lowlands near PV and CDL

**Tricolored Heron** – Several around PV and Río Ameca mouth

**Reddish Egret** – One immature at Río Ameca mouth

**Cattle Egret\*** – Common; seen daily

**Green Heron\*** – Seen daily

**Black-crowned Night-Heron\*** – Two seen at Ranch ponds 11-12 Jan

**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** – Four each Maito estero 12 Jan and Río Ameca mouth

**White Ibis** – Common around PV and LQ; also single immatures in El Tuito 11 Jan, in CDL 12 & 13 Jan

**White-faced Ibis\*** – Abundant around CDL, with flocks going to roost at dusk; small flock also at Ranch ponds

**Roseate Spoonbill** – Two immatures in CDL 13 Jan and two at Río Ameca Mouth 14 Jan

**Wood Stork** – One near El Tule, 15 at LQ, and 10 in PV 16 Jan

**Fulvous Whistling-Duck** – One at LQ 14 Jan

**Black-bellied Whistling-Duck\*** – In addition to 1200 at LQ, we had 2 at the Ranch 11 Jan and one at CDL 13 Jan

**Green-winged Teal\*** – 40 at LQ and 2 at Ranch 15 Jan

**Blue-winged Teal\*** – 2 females at Maito, 15 at LQ, 1 at Río Ameca mouth 14 Jan, and 10 at Ranch 15 Jan

**Cinnamon Teal\*** – Four at Ranch 15 Jan

**Northern Shoveler** – 70 at LQ

**Gadwall** – 20 at LQ

**American Wigeon** – 3 at LQ

**Lesser Scaup** – 15 at Maito

**Black Vulture\*** – Common; seen daily

**Turkey Vulture\*** – Common; seen daily

**Osprey\*** – One at Ranch 11 & 15 Jan

**Hook-billed Kite** – Two (male and female) near El Tule 13 Jan; great call by Amy!!!

**White-tailed Kite** – Two near CDL on both visits

**Northern Harrier** – One near CDL 12 Jan; Becky nabbed this one for our list

**Sharp-shinned Hawk** – One near Tehua 12 Jan

**Cooper's Hawk** – One near El Tule and one at LQ

**CRANE HAWK** – One near CDL 12 Jan was distinctive, though seen fairly distantly and in poor light

**Common Black-Hawk** – One immature at LQ 14 Jan

**Gray Hawk\*** – Our most common raptor, seen daily

**Roadside Hawk** – One immature near CDL 13 Jan

**Short-tailed Hawk** – One at Bioto, one at Río Ameca Mouth 14 Jan, and one at Nena's in El Tuito 15 Jan

**Zone-tailed Hawk** – Three seen: one over Altamira Restaurant 11 Jan; one en route to La Presa 13 Jan; and one at Río Ameca Mouth 14 Jan. Their similarity to Turkey Vultures was shocking!

**Red-tailed Hawk\*** – Just three seen: one LB; one near El Tule; and one at Ranch 15 Jan.

**Crested Caracara** – Surprisingly, this species was seen only in the Ipala – CDL area. It was seen very well on both dates, especially when that @#%-hole finally turned around!

**Collared Forest-Falcon\*** (h) – One-two heard almost daily at Ranch; also on at LB 13 Jan

**American Kestrel\*** – Common; seen daily

**Merlin** – One in CDL 13 Jan

**Peregrine Falcon** – One near El Tule 13 Jan

**Rufous-bellied Chachalaca** (E) – One flashed across road between Bioto and Tehua

**West Mexican Chachalaca\*** (E) – Seen on our last morning at the Ranch

**Sora\*** – Heard on each visit to Ranch ponds, and seen by some

**PURPLE GALLINULE** – Five in pond in CDL 13 Jan

**Common Moorhen** – 3 at Maito, 10 at pond in CDL, and 7 at Nayarit pond near LQ

**American Coot** – Seen on Ranch ponds, as well as near CDL, LQ, and Altamira restaurant

**Black-bellied Plover** – Singles at Río Ameca mouth and LQ on 14 Jan

**plover sp.** – Distant banded plovers at LQ were probably Collared Plover, but could have been Semipalmated Plover

**Killdeer** – 2-4 near CDL on 12 & 13 Jan

**American Oystercatcher** – One at Tehua

**Black-necked Stilt** – Seen in PV on 10 Jan, near El Tule (75), at LQ, and Río Ameca mouth

**American Avocet** – 7 at LQ

**NORTHERN JACANA** – 20 at pond in CDL, and another 10 at pond in Nayarit near LQ; their improbable yellow flight feathers were a treat to see

**Greater Yellowlegs** – Singles seen twice at Ranch, others at LQ, Río Ameca mouth, and in PV

**Solitary Sandpiper** – One seen repeatedly at Ranch

**Willet** – Common around PV and Río Ameca mouth; also one at Tehua; these were subspecies *inornatus*

**Wandering Tattler** – One at Tehua was a great pick by Amy

**Spotted Sandpiper** – Two at PV 10 Jan, one at Tehua, 15 at Río Ameca mouth and Pv area 14 Jan and 16 Jan

**Whimbrel** – 5 at Río Ameca Mouth 14 & 16 Jan and one at LQ; American subspecies *hudsonicus*

**Long-billed Curlew** – 12 near CDL 12 Jan

**Marbled Godwit** - One at LQ

**Sanderling** – 15 at Río Ameca Mouth 14 Jan

**Least Sandpiper** – 25 at Río Ameca Mouth, with one in Puerto Vallarta, on 14 Jan

**Long-billed Dowitcher** – 3 dowitchers near CDL 12 Jan were probably this species; 200 at LQ may have been this species or Short-billed Dowitcher

**Wilson's Snipe\*** – One at ponds 11 Jan and five there 15 Jan; this is the bird formerly known as Common Snipe

**Laughing Gull** – Abundant along coast

**Franklin's Gull** – One adult at Río Ameca mouth 14 Jan; rare here in winter.

**Heerman's Gull** – Common along coast

**Ring-billed Gull** – Three at Río Ameca mouth 14 Jan

**California Gull** – Uncommon around Puerto Vallarta

**Caspian Tern** – One at Río Ameca mouth 14 Jan

**Royal Tern** – Uncommon along coast

**Forster's Tern** – Five at Río Ameca mouth 14 Jan

**Black Skimmer** – One at LQ 14 Jan

**Rock Pigeon** – Common; seen almost daily, but missed on 12 Jan (were we sleeping through town?)

**Red-billed Pigeon\*** – 20 found on hills above Boca de Tomatlán on 16 Jan for one of our last additions

**White-winged Dove\*** – Fairly common in El Tuito area, especially so around CDL; 75 at Ranch 15 Jan

**Mourning Dove** – Surprisingly absent from most areas, they were common around CDL and LQ.

**Inca Dove\*** – Common; seen almost daily

**Common Ground-Dove** – Common in lowlands only, where seen around Ipala – CDL and LQ

**Ruddy Ground-Dove\*** – Uncommon, but seen on Ranch, at LQ, and around Ipala – CDL

**White-tipped Dove\*** – A couple seen well, but heard or glimpsed daily

**Orange-fronted Parakeet\*** – Common, seen on ranch and en route to Tehua

**MILITARY MACAW\*** – We saw only flyovers, but had them on every full day of birding at locales including Bioto, LB, Altamira Restaurant, and the Ranch. It is encouraging to find this species so readily, since it has been heavily pressured by the cage-bird trade.

**MEXICAN PARROTLET (E)** – Flock of 35 studied at LQ

**Lilac-crowned Parrot\*** – Regularly seen flying overhead at dawn and dusk at Bioto, Ranch, and elsewhere; we finally had good perched looks near Boca de Tomatlán on our last day

**SQUIRREL CUCKOO\*** – Good looks on several dates, with the best being two seen sunning on LB 13 Jan

**LESSER GROUND-CUCKOO** – Perhaps the highlight of the tour, we had a responsive bird that gave very good look near El Tule. This is a truly unique species and typically quite hard to see.

**Groove-billed Ani\*** – Common; seen daily

**Barn Owl\* (h)** – Heard by Becky 16 Jan (and on other nights by leaders)

**COLIMA PYGMY-OWL (E)** – Seen and heard well on Bioto and LB

**FERRUGINOUS PYGMY-OWL\*** – Seen and heard frequently

**Mottled Owl\* (h)** – One heard 15 Jan at Ranch

**Lesser Nighthawk\*** – Regularly seen at dusk at Ranch and near CDL

**Vaux's Swift\*** – Seen overhead at Bioto, Ranch, LB, and elsewhere

**MEXICAN HERMIT (E)** – One on LB 13 Jan; life bird for all, including leaders!

**Golden-crowned Emerald\*** – Females on Bioto and at Ranch 15 Jan

**Broad-billed Hummingbird\*** – Common; seen daily

**Berylline Hummingbird\*** – Extremely common at LB, with just a few at Ranch (including Ranch feeders)

**Cinnamon Hummingbird\*** – Very common, but spectacular

**Violet-crowned Hummingbird\*** – Seen near El Tule and at Ranch (3) on 15 Jan; did not visit Ranch feeders

**PLAIN-CAPPED STARThroat** – One near Tehua

**SPARKLING-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD\*** – Male seen well at Ranch 12 Jan and near LB 14 Jan; this is a rare species anywhere and was a lifer for all, and a spectacular one at that!

**Ruby-throated Hummingbird\*** – Common at Ranch feeders, where easily compared to Black-chinned

**Black-chinned Hummingbird\*** – Common at Ranch feeders

**Calliope Hummingbird\*** – Common on LB and nearby, with 2-3 females also at Ranch feeders

**Citreoline Trogon (E)** – One on Bioto

**Elegant Trogon\*** – One seen well on Bioto, and others seen on two occasions at Ranch

**RUSSET-CROWNED MOTMOT\*** – Seen well on Bioto, LB, and Ranch

**Ringed Kingfisher** – One at LQ

**Belted Kingfisher\*** – Seen regularly at Ranch; also at Maito estero and Río Ameca mouth

**Green Kingfisher\*** – At least two seen regularly at Ranch; others at LQ

**Acorn Woodpecker\*** – Common in pines of LB, but also in more tropical vegetation around Ranch and El Tuito

**Golden-cheeked Woodpecker\* (E)** – Common; seen daily. This striking endemic woodpecker was a joy to behold.

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker\*** – One immature on LB; Brian had two other briefly-seen sapsuckers, one on the Ranch and one at LB that had red on the nape and may have been Red-naped Sapsucker

**Ladder-backed Woodpecker\*** – Heard on several dates at Ranch and Bioto, finally seen 15 Jan  
**Arizona Woodpecker** – Seen very well at LB  
**Gray-crowned Woodpecker\*** (E) – Seen well on several dates at Bioto, LB, and Ranch  
**LINEATED WOODPECKER\*** – Seen exceedingly well on Ranch 15 Jan; heard most other days  
**PALE-BILLED WOODPECKER** – Seen well on Bioto  
**Ivory-billed Woodcreeper\*** – Several seen on Bioto and one at Ranch 12 Jan  
**White-striped Woodcreeper** (E) – One seen well on LB 13 Jan and near LB 14 Jan  
**Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet\*** – This nondescript little flycatcher was seen on several dates and heard on most days  
**Greenish Elaenia\*** – Heard one most days of the trip, we finally saw this cryptic species at the Ranch 15 Jan  
**TUFTED FLYCATCHER** – One on LB  
**Greater Pewee\*** – Common; seen daily. Most common in pines of LB, it was also a regular flock component at lower elevations of LB, Bioto, and the Ranch.  
**Willow Flycatcher\*** – Singles seen near El Tule and on the Ranch 15 Jan; others heard “whitting”  
**WHITE-THROATED FLYCATCHER\*** – One at Ranch ponds 15 Jan; this scarce species is a near-endemic but is distinctive from the migrant *Empidonax*. We were treated to superb scope views of this calling bird.  
**Least Flycatcher\*** – The second most-common *Empidonax*, we saw several on the Ranch  
**Pacific-slope Flycatcher\*** – The most common *Empidonax*, we saw many at Ranch, Bioto, and elsewhere  
**Black Phoebe\*** – One at Ranch seen on three dates  
**Vermilion Flycatcher\*** – Common; seen daily. This spectacular species was a treat to see so commonly.  
**Bright-rumped Attila\*** (h) – One heard 15 Jan  
**Dusky-capped Flycatcher\*** – Common in all forested habitats: Bioto, Ranch, LB, near Tehua  
**Ash-throated Flycatcher** – Several seen and heard near Tehua; surprisingly absent elsewhere  
**Nutting’s Flycatcher\*** – Fairly common on Bioto, near Tehua, and at Ranch; we had good studies of this species and heard its diagnostic call which eliminates Ash-throated Flycatcher  
**Brown-crested Flycatcher** – Two on Bioto and one heard near Tehua were the only ones; interesting that 4 *Myiarchus* could coexist in the thorn forest near Tehua  
**Flammulated Flycatcher** (h) (E) – One heard near Tehua  
**Great Kiskadee\*** – Common; seen daily  
**Boat-billed Flycatcher\*** – Two in fig tree on Ranch 12 Jan and three at Boca de Tomatlán 16 Jan  
**Social Flycatcher\*** – Common; seen daily.  
**Tropical Kingbird\*** – One of the most common birds; seen daily  
**Thick-billed Kingbird\*** – Second most common flycatcher; seen daily  
**Gray-collared Becard\*** – Male seen well on LB; Brian had one at the Ranch  
**Rose-throated Becard\*** – Seen commonly in forests, especially at Bioto  
**MASKED TITYRA\*** – Common in small numbers and seen almost daily, though Bioto was our best spot; this plump shrike-like bird is spectacular with its red bill and was a nice one to encounter with regularity  
**Gray-breasted Martin** – Two at LQ  
**Tree Swallow** – Four (or more) flybys near CDL 12 Jan  
**Violet-green Swallow** – Flocks at Bioto and Altamira Restaurant, but not elsewhere  
**Northern Rough-winged Swallow\*** – Common; seen daily  
**Bank Swallow** – Large flocks in lowlands around CDL, with lesser numbers near LQ  
**Barn Swallow** – Small numbers near CDL and Río Ameca mouth  
**BLACK-THROATED MAGPIE-JAY** (E) – A mixed flock on Bioto included 12 Black-throateds and 3 White-throateds.  
**WHITE-THROATED MAGPIE-JAY** – In addition to the 3 on Bioto, we had 12 en route to Tehua  
**Green Jay** – Several seen well on LB  
**San Blas Jay\*** (E) – Common and seen well at Ranch and environs  
**Common Raven** – One seen near Boca de Tomatlán by Becky (and two by Brian) were our only ones

**SPOTTED WREN** – Excellent views of a couple groups of this large wren at LB

**Happy Wren\*** – Uncommon, but seen most days on Ranch or elsewhere

**Sinaloa Wren\*** – Common, and seen daily at Bioto, Ranch, and elsewhere

**White-bellied Wren** – Two seen near Tehua

**House Wren\*** – Singles seen or heard on 5 dates, including at Ranch; these were of the northern *aedon* subspecies group, as opposed to the highland “Brown-throated” Wren

**Marsh Wren\*** – One at Ranch pond seen several times

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher\*** – Common; seen daily. This may have been the most common passerine in mixed flocks.

**Black-capped Gnatcatcher (E)** – A couple were seen (and heard) en route to Tehua

**Eastern Bluebird** – Seven on LB 14 Jan

**Brown-backed Solitaire (h)** – One heard near Boca de Tomatlán 16 Jan

**Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush\*** – Apparently common within Ranch forest; seen well 15 Jan

**White-throated Robin\*** – A pile of these robins was at the fruiting fig on the Ranch 12 & 15 Jan

**Rufous-backed Robin\* (E)** – One at fruiting fig on Ranch 12 Jan and treefull at fruiting cecropia near El Tuito on 13 Jan

**BLUE MOCKINGBIRD\* (E)** – Seen several times, but the best views were in the incredible sunlight at the Ranch 15 Jan, when it actually looked blue!

**Northern Mockingbird** – Only seen in the lowlands, including Ipala – CDL area, Puerto Vallarta – LQ area, and one in Boca de Tomatlán 16 Jan

**Cedar Waxwing\*** – Flock of 15 on Bioto and one at Ranch 15 Jan

**Gray Silky-Flycatcher** – 20 seen distantly at Boca de Tomatlán 16 Jan

**Loggerhead Shrike** – Seen only in the lowlands near CDL 12 Jan

**Bell’s Vireo\*** – Common at Ranch, and especially in lowlands at LQ and Ipala – CDL; these birds seemed moderately greenish and may have been the *arizonae* subspecies

**BLACK-CAPPED VIREO** – Two (male, female) near LB 14 Jan were great to see on their wintering grounds.

**Cassin’s Vireo** – Three seen on LB 13 Jan and at three at CO the next day

**Plumbeous Vireo** – Uncommon; seen at Bioto, LB, and CO

**Golden Vireo\* (E)** – Common on Bioto, with others on LB and CO, and at Ranch 15 Jan

**Warbling Vireo\*** – One of the more common flock components; however, their scarcity at Bioto was worth a greenback to Marshall since Brian bet we’d get 10+ there (special thanks to the three we did see for keeping their friends out of sight!)

**Orange-crowned Warbler\*** – Common and seen in small numbers most days; those seen included mostly *lutescens*, but also a few that looked like *celata*

**TENNESSEE WARBLER\*** – One on Ranch 15 Jan; a vagrant to this part of Mexico

**Nashville Warbler\*** – Common; seen daily. This species vied with gnatcatcher as most common mixed-flock passerine.

**Lucy’s Warbler** – One near El Tule was (surprisingly) the only one

**Tropical Parula** – Three near Tehua, 6 near El Tule, one at LQ, and one in mangroves at Río Ameca Mouth 16 Jan

**Yellow Warbler\*** – Common and seen or heard daily, especially in open areas and lowland areas. One 16 Jan a highlight at the Río Ameca Mouth was the single chestnut-headed male “**Mangrove Warbler**” (subspecies group *erithachorides*). Watch for this form as one of the next AOU splits.

**CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER\*** – We had an amazing three birds: one on LB 11 Jan; one on the Ranch 12 Jan; and one near LB 14 Jan. This species is listed as a vagrant only in West Mexico, but perhaps it is more common than previously thought. Brian had one or two more on the next tour.

**Yellow-rumped Warbler\*** – Common, especially in pine forest of LB and in mangos on Ranch; these were all of the “Audubon’s Warbler” subspecies group (*auduboni*)

**Black-throated Gray Warbler\*** – Very common; one of the primary flock components in all habitats

**Townsend’s Warbler** – Just one seen, a single female-type near LB 14 Jan

**Hermit Warbler** – One male on LB 12 Jan

**Black-throated Green Warbler** – Four on LB 11 Jan and 5 at CO 14 Jan  
**Grace's Warbler** – Common in pine forest of LB and nearby  
**Black-and-white Warbler\*** – Common in woodlands  
**American Redstart\*** – One at Ranch 12 Jan, four there 15 Jan, and 4 at LQ 14 Jan  
**WORM-EATING WARBLER\*** – One on the Ranch 11 Jan was a surprise; there is just one prior record from Mainland West Mexico.  
**Ovenbird\*** – Singles at Ranch 11 & 15 Jan  
**Northern Waterthrush** – Heard and eventually seen, in mangroves 14 & 16 Jan  
**Louisiana Waterthrush\*** – Resident bird along stream at Ranch seen several times; also at Bioto and near El Tule  
**MacGillivray's Warbler\*** – Very common in brushy and weedy habitats  
**Common Yellowthroat\*** – Very common in brushy and weedy habitats  
**Wilson's Warbler\*** – Very common in forested and brushy habitats  
**Painted Redstart** – Very common in pine forest of LB and CO; possibly (but not certainly) heard on Ranch  
**Fan-tailed Warbler\*** – One on Ranch 11 Jan was seen by Becky only  
**Rufous-capped Warbler\*** – Fairly common on LB and CO; two on Ranch 15 Jan  
**Yellow-breasted Chat\*** – Three on Ranch 15 Jan; also one at LQ seen by Brian (“Blo”)  
**RED-BREASTED CHAT** – This spectacular thorn-forest specialty was a definite tour highlight. We had two responsive males (one immature, one near-adult) on the road to Tehua on 12 Jan.  
**Scrub Euphonia\*** – Common, especially on Bioto; the West Mexican form (*godmani*) is sometimes known as “**Godman's Euphonia**” and is considered a possible split. Euphonias are spectacular and (very) cute goldfinch-like birds, and their relationships recently have been revised and they are now thought to be closer to finches than to tanagers  
**Hepatic Tanager** – Common in pine forest of LB  
**Summer Tanager\*** – Uncommon on ranch and nearby  
**ROSY-THRUSH-TANAGER\*** – Seen exceedingly well on Bioto and at Ranch 15 Jan, including vivid males on both dates. Another near El Tule. Which species was more spectacular, this one or the Red-breasted Chat??  
**Grayish Saltator\*** – Common in open areas around Ranch  
**Black-headed Grosbeak** – Three near LB were well-seen  
**Blue Bunting\*** – One spectacular male seen at Ranch 12 Jan; females seen on three dates  
**Blue Grosbeak\*** – Common in lowlands of LQ and CDL; 4 on Ranch 15 Jan  
**Varied Bunting\*** – Females seen most days, but we never caught up with a male for the group  
**ORANGE-BREASTED BUNTING** – We had unbelievable views of males (and females) at Bioto and near Tehua  
**Painted Bunting\*** – Stunning males and distinctive green females seen on several dates  
**Dickcissel** – Flyovers near CDL 12 Jan and LQ 14 Jan; Martha's favorite high flyover calling bird  
**Blue-black Grassquit\*** – Six near CDL 12 Jan, and 10 seen very well on Ranch 15 Jan  
**White-collared Seedeater\*** – We saw this little sprite well on most days, including adult males at the Ranch and near CDL; note that this subspecies (*torqueola*), sometimes known as “**Cinnamon-rumped Seedeater**”, has been granted full-species status by some and is a possible future split.  
**Stripe-headed Sparrow\*** – This common but striking species was seen daily  
**RUSTY SPARROW** – We had great looks at this large sparrow at LB 13 Jan, and one the next day nearby  
**Lark Sparrow** – Common around La Presa and CDL; also 10 at LQ  
**Lincoln's Sparrow\*** – Fairly common in brushy habitats at Ranch and elsewhere  
**Red-winged Blackbird** – 6 at CDL were the only ones  
**Eastern Meadowlark** – Several seen and heard near CDL 12& 13 Jan  
**Great-tailed Grackle** – Common; seen daily  
**Bronzed Cowbird** – Common from Ipala – CDL; a few at Río Ameca Mouth were the only others  
**Brown-headed Cowbird** – Common around CDL; not seen elsewhere  
**Orchard Oriole\*** – Flock of 20 near CDL 12 Jan was our first; others near El Tule and on Ranch

**Hooded Oriole\*** – Small numbers seen on 4 dates, including one on Ranch 15 Jan by Bob  
**Black-vented Oriole\*** – Two at Ranch were seen on several dates  
**Streak-backed Oriole\*** – Common and seen daily, but a magnificent bird  
**Baltimore Oriole\*** – Seen on three dates  
**Bullock's Oriole** – One male near El Tuito (with Baltimore) 11 Jan and one female at LB 13 Jan  
**Yellow-winged Cacique\*** – Common and seen daily, but a also a magnificent bird  
**Black-headed Siskin** – Fairly common in pine forest of LB, and stunning when seen well  
**Lesser Goldfinch\*** – Seen around Ranch and El Tuito on several dates; these were all of the black-backed form  
**House Sparrow** – Common in towns, including El Tuito

Leader only: Pied-billed Grebe (BLO), Harris's Hawk, Lesser Yellowlegs, Mangrove Swallow, Western Tanager, Yellow Grosbeak, Pine Siskin (BLO)

Leader only scouting: Northern Pintail, Rufous Hummingbird, Dusky Flycatcher, Ruby-crowned Kinglet (BLO), Magnolia Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Olive Sparrow (BLO), towhee sp. (BLO), Rusty-crowned Ground-Sparrow

### MAMMALS

**large squirrel sp.** – Several sightings of a very large, long-tailed, gray squirrel at Bioto and LB; I am still working on identifying it  
**Bat sp.** – A very fast flying, medium-sized bat along the coast at Río Ameca and in PV; possibly others as well  
**Gray Fox** – One inquisitive little guy watching us (and the chachalacas) at the Ranch on our last morning

### REPTILES

**Specatacled Caiman** – Four at LQ included a very large (7-8 ft?) individual  
**Black Iguana** – Two near El Tule on 13 Jan  
**Green Iguana** – Several on golf course in PV were almost certainly escapees  
**Mud Turtle sp.** – Several photographed at Ranch  
**rattlesnake sp.** – One seen and photographed on LB on 13 Jan; I have not yet found a good resource on West Mexican rattlesnakes, but Brian and I suspected it might be related to one of the southwestern U.S. Rock Rattlesnakes  
**Cat-eyed Snake** – Brian caught one in the road near the Ranch on the night of 13 Jan  
**Other lizards** – Other lizards seen included several *Anolis* Anoles, *Cnemidophorus* whiptails, and *Sceloporus* lizards, not identified to species

### **IDENTIFIED BUTTERFLIES AT RANCHO PRIMAVERA (21 species, plus 6 probables)**

*Underlined species are those that I know the group saw and enjoyed. I only made passing efforts to identify the butterflies, but below are the species I succeeded with. I am hoping Becky's pictures can help me identify another 5 or more species.*

**Large Orange Sulphur** – Common at Ranch bougainvillea hedge  
**Cloudless Sulphur** – Common at Ranch bougainvillea hedge  
**White Angled Sulphur** – One in PV 16 Jan  
**Erato Heliconian** – 10+ at LQ; showy with yellow bar and red spot  
**Zebra Longwing** – Commonly seen in woodlands (ph)  
**Julia** – A few seen at Ranch (ph)  
**Malachite** – Seen best at vado west of Ranch on 15 Jan  
**White Morpho** – The huge white butterflies (3) seen on Bioto  
**Mexican Silverspot** – Common in gardens (ph)  
**Mexican Fritillary** – A few seen at Ranch  
**Red Rim** – About 10 seen on Bioto Road, and a few elsewhere

**Red-bordered Pixie** – Abundant on Bioto (ph)

**Fatima** – Common throughout

**Tropical Buckeye** (*nigrosuffusia*) – A few visited garden (ph)

**Mangrove Buckeye** – Seen in mangroves at LQ

**Mexican Bluewing** – One seen in lowlands 12 Jan

**Monarch** – A few seen

**Queen** – A few in the lowlands near PV

**Band-celled Sister** – Identified at Bioto Road and vado west of Ranch

**Long-tailed Skipper** – A couple on Bioto

**Yellow-tipped Flasher** – One (ph) on Bioto

Other possible identifications:

Orange-barred Sulphur

cf. Rusty-tipped Page

Pale-banded Crescent

Sickle-winged Skipper

Hermit Skipper - ph

Ocola Skipper - ph