

Trip Report — Machu Picchu & Abra Malaga, Peru 2025

June 25-July 4, 2025 with Dan Lane



The group hiking above 14,000 feet at the pass of Abra Malaga. Air is thin up here, but the scenery is hard to beat! Photo by Dan Lane.

Often considered one of the crown jewels of the pre-colonial Americas, the ruins of Machu Picchu are without a doubt one of the most awe-inspiring sites many of us will ever have the chance to visit! The scenery here is breathtaking, and one leaves wondering how the people of the time were able to found and build such an amazing achievement! The fact that the site was never discovered by the Spanish, who had a penchant for wrecking indigenous constructions, allows us to see a relatively unsullied expression of pre-Colombian architecture. It also doesn't hurt that the region is also a great one for more modern cultural exploration and, of course, for birding! We were able to enjoy comfortable lodging, good food, and visits to the High Andean localities around Ollantaytambo and the Sacred Valley of the Rio Urubamba, and the marshes of Huacarpay. It's a short tour that really gives you a flavor of the Cusco region and the avifauna of the surrounding Andes region.



An endemic Junin Canastero isn't prone to soaring, but it does like the wind beneath its wings from time to time. Photo by Dan Lane.

Our tour took us from the new airport in Lima to Cusco, and thence quickly to Huacarpay, where we birded around the lakes and rush marshes and arid hillside scrub. From here, we descended the Sacred Valley of the Urubamba with a stop at the interesting Ensifera Camp hummingbird garden before arriving at our hotel in Ollantaytambo. The next morning we took the train to Aguas Calientes and a bus up to the ruins at Machu Picchu for a few hour tour of these magnificent structures. Back to Aguas Calientes for lunch and to settle into our luxurious hotel. The next day we embarked on a fairly easy, but somewhat long, walk down to the Mandor Valley and back to see the birds of this subtropical cloudforest, with a nice picnic lunch on the grounds of a small café at the turn-around point. Some ice cream upon reaching Aguas Calientes rallied us enough to get back to our rooms for some well-deserved rest! Finally, we spent a morning birding on our hotel grounds

before checking out and taking the train back to Ollantaytambo. We birded the grounds of our hotel there before dinner. Our next two days were spent visiting the pass at Abra Malaga, both the “dry” near side and the more humid far side of the pass. Finally, our last birding morning was spent walking a trail up and over a ridge into a remnant patch of Polylepis woodland before we returned to the hotel, checked out, and headed back to Cusco with a few stops for lunch and at Laguna Piuray for some waterbirds. Once in Cusco, we had a morning free to explore the city and see the sights and markets before we flew back to Lima and ended the tour.



A recent development on this tour route is a hummingbird garden that has tamed Undulated Antpittas! This one had no fear of us, as shown in this image by Daryl Kellenberger.

As always, we took away many memories from this tour! Some involved overall experiences such as our views from the Machu Picchu ruins or from Maxima's restaurant down the valley toward the Urubamba. We also

experienced the importance of microhabitats on birds, with an example being the specialist and endemic species we pulled out of the Chusquea bamboo at one stop on the humid side of Abra Malaga! Folks certainly enjoyed seeing local specialties and endemics such as Parodi's Hemispingus, Cusco and Golden-crowned (formerly Tricolored) brushfinches, and Green-and-white Hummingbird. We certainly enjoyed some of the brightly-colored species we encountered such as Chilean Flamingo, Andean Cock-of-the-Rock, Andean Motmot, Many-colored Rush-Tyrant, and Violet-throated Starfrontlet. Then there are species that just simply have a style about them that some of us really appreciated, such as Slate-throated Redstart, Pearled Treerunner, White-capped Dipper, Andean Flicker, Andean Lapwing, Andean Ibis, Cinnamon Flycatcher, and Red-crested Cotinga. Then there were a couple of skulkers that performed well for us, particularly the very tame Undulated Antpittas at Ensifera Camp and the Diademed Tapaculo we called up at treeline at Abra Malaga!



A local endemic mammal we see on this tour is the Kalinowski's Agouti. Photo by Dan Lane.

Mammal list:

Guinea Pig (*Cavia tschudii*): around Huacarpay lakes.

Kalinowski's Agouti (*Dasyprocta kalinowskii*): this was the agouti we saw on the hotel grounds.

Common Mountain Viscacha (*Lagidium viscacia*): a couple lucky participants caught a glimpse of this rabbit-squirrel mix on the humid side of Abra Malaga above treeline.



Participant Daryl Kellenberger captured this pair of Andean Motmots along our hike at Aguas Calientes, where the species is common and easy to see!



The Urubamba valley here can be one of the best places to see White-capped Dipper. This pair seemed to be engaging in some sort of display. Photo by Dan Lane.

So, thanks for joining me on this short visit into the Inca homeland in the Cusco Andes! I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did, and perhaps we'll meet again somewhere else on the trail primed for more birding in another gorgeous location!



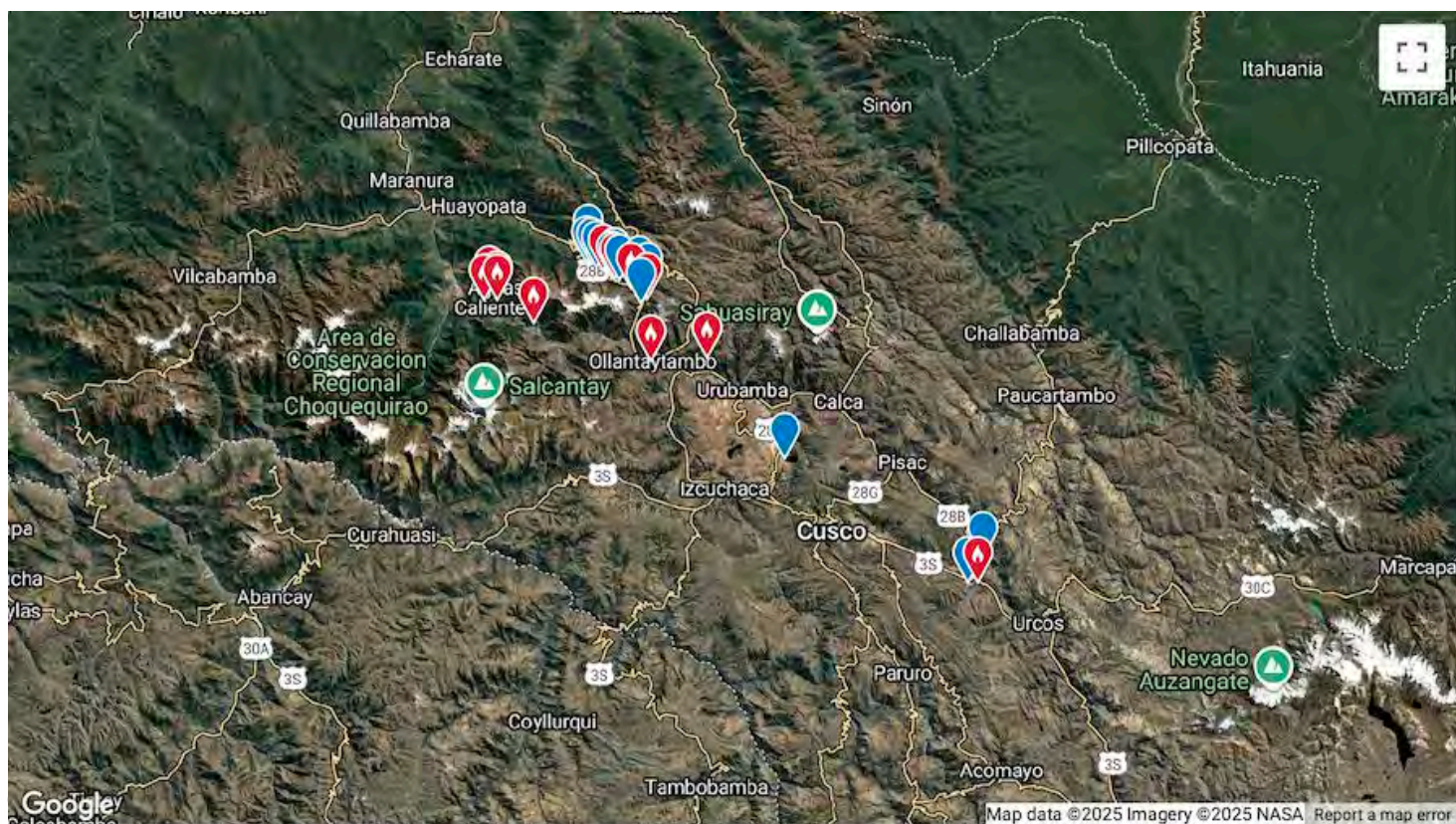
A panorama of the view from Machu Picchu! This is one of the big draws of the tour. Image by Dan Lane.

You can see my complete trip report on eBird at this link: <https://ebird.org/tripreport/392119>

Good birding! Dan (the Barbet)

Field Guides Birding Tours --PERU: MACHU PICCHU & ABRA MALAGA, 2025 (with Dan Lane)

25 Jun – 3 Jul 2025 (9 days) Link-only



 Cuzco [Cusco], Peru

 Dan Lane FGI tours



For a narrative summary of this tour, including a Field Guides photo gallery and additional media for this trip...

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Species Observed

























Checklists
























LIFERS  104 
























Species Observed
























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10	Andean Goose	<i>Oressochen melanopterus</i>		  3
22	Torrent Duck	<i>Merganetta armata</i>		  4
24	Puna Teal	<i>Spatula puna</i>		  2
22	Cinnamon Teal	<i>Spatula cyanoptera</i>		  2
15	Yellow-billed Pintail	<i>Anas georgica</i>		  2
68	Yellow-billed Teal	<i>Anas flavirostris</i>		  6
33	Andean Duck	<i>Oxyura ferruginea</i>		  2
7	Andean Guan	<i>Penelope montagnii</i>		  2
20	Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>		  5
100	Spot-winged Pigeon	<i>Patagioenas maculosa</i>		  7
4	Bare-faced Ground Dove	<i>Metriopelia ceciliae</i>		  2
2	White-tipped Dove	<i>Leptotila verreauxi</i>		  2
4	White-throated Quail-Dove	<i>Zentrygon frenata</i>		  2
26	Eared Dove	<i>Zenaida auriculata</i>		  4
3	White-tipped Swift	<i>Aeronautes montivagus</i>		  2
5	Andean Swift	<i>Aeronautes andecolus</i>		  3
22	Sparkling Violetear	<i>Colibri coruscans</i>		  8
1	Brown Violetear	<i>Colibri delphinae</i>		  1
4	Lesser Violetear	<i>Colibri cyanotus</i>		  3
2	Amethyst-throated Sunangel	<i>Heliangelus amethysticollis</i>		  2
1	Speckled Hummingbird	<i>Adelomyia melanogenys</i>		  1
























2	Long-tailed Sylph	<i>Agelaiocercus kingii</i>	▶  2
3	Green-tailed Trainbearer	<i>Lesbia nuna</i>	▶  2
1	Rufous-capped Thornbill	<i>Chalcostigma ruficeps</i> ✓	▶  1
19	Tyrian Metaltail	<i>Metallura tyrianthina</i>	▶  7
1	Scaled Metaltail	<i>Metallura aeneocauda</i> ✓	▶  1
4	White-tufted Sunbeam	<i>Aglaeactis castelnaudii</i> ✓	▶  2
2	Bronzy Inca	<i>Coeligena coeligena</i>	▶  1
2	Violet-throated Starfrontlet	<i>Coeligena violifer</i> ✓	▶  2
1	Sword-billed Hummingbird	<i>Ensifera ensifera</i>	▶  1
3	Great Sapphirewing	<i>Pterophanes cyanopterus</i> ✓	▶  1
16	Chestnut-breasted Coronet	<i>Boissonneaua matthewsii</i>	▶  4
3	Rufous-booted Racket-tail	<i>Ocreatus addae</i> ✓	▶  3
1	Giant Hummingbird	<i>Patagona gigas</i> ✓	▶  1
5	White-bellied Woodstar	<i>Chaetocercus mulsant</i>	▶  2
24	Green-and-white Hummingbird	<i>Elliotomyia viridicauda</i> ✓	▶  5
6	Plumbeous Rail	<i>Pardirallus sanguinolentus</i>	▶  2
13	Common Gallinule	<i>Gallinula galeata</i>	▶  2
1050	Slate-colored Coot	<i>Fulica ardesiaca</i> ✓	▶  2
36	Andean Lapwing	<i>Vanellus resplendens</i> ✓	▶  6
1	Greater Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa melanoleuca</i>	▶  1
1167	Andean Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus serranus</i> ✓	▶  8
1	Chilean Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus chilensis</i> ✓	▶  1
8	White-tufted Grebe	<i>Rollandia rolland</i> ✓	▶  3
15	Silvery Grebe	<i>Podiceps occipitalis</i> ✓	▶  1
























204	Puna Ibis	<i>Plegadis ridgwayi</i>	✓	▶  7
25	Andean Ibis	<i>Theristicus branickii</i>	✓	▶  4
3	Fasciated Tiger-Heron	<i>Tigrisoma fasciatum</i>	✓	▶  1
1	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>		▶  1
2	Little Blue Heron	<i>Egretta caerulea</i>		▶  1
1	Western Cattle-Egret	<i>Ardea ibis</i>		▶  1
1	Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>		▶  1
3	Roadside Hawk	<i>Rupornis magnirostris</i>		▶  2
3	Variable Hawk	<i>Geranoaetus polyosoma</i>		▶  2
3	Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle	<i>Geranoaetus melanoleucus</i>	✓	▶  1
1	Peruvian Pygmy-Owl	<i>Glaucidium peruanum</i>	✓	▶  1
1	Masked Trogon	<i>Trogon personatus</i>		▶  1
10	Andean Motmot	<i>Momotus aequatorialis</i>	✓	▶  4
3	Black-streaked Puffbird	<i>Malacoptila fulvogularis</i>		▶  1
1	Versicolored Barbet	<i>Eubucco versicolor</i>		▶  1
4	Blue-banded Toucanet	<i>Aulacorhynchus coeruleicinctis</i>	✓	▶  2
5	Ocellated Piculet	<i>Picumnus dorbignyanus</i>	✓	▶  2
3	Golden-olive Woodpecker	<i>Colaptes rubiginosus</i>		▶  2
3	Andean Flicker	<i>Colaptes rupicola</i>	✓	▶  2
4	Mountain Caracara	<i>Daptrius megalopterus</i>	✓	▶  2
6	American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>		▶  4
2	Aplomado Falcon	<i>Falco femoralis</i>		▶  1
5	Speckle-faced Parrot	<i>Pionus tumultuosus</i>		▶  2

40	Mitred Parakeet	<i>Psittacara mitratus</i>	▶  1
2	Variable Antshrike	<i>Thamnophilus caerulescens</i>	▶  1
3	Undulated Antpitta	<i>Grallaria squamigera</i> ✓	▶  1
1	Stripe-headed Antpitta	<i>Grallaria andicolus</i> ✓	▶  1
10	Urubamba Antpitta	<i>Grallaria occabambae</i> ✓	▶  4
5	Puna Tapaculo	<i>Scytalopus simonsi</i> ✓	▶  2
7	Diademed Tapaculo	<i>Scytalopus schulenbergi</i> ✓	▶  3
4	Trilling Tapaculo	<i>Scytalopus parvirostris</i> ✓	▶  4
3	Montane Woodcreeper	<i>Lepidocolaptes lacrymiger</i>	▶  3
5	Streaked Xenops	<i>Xenops rutilans</i>	▶  2
8	Wren-like Rushbird	<i>Phleocryptes melanops</i> ✓	▶  2
30	Cream-winged Cinclodes	<i>Cinclodes albiventris</i> ✓	▶  7
8	Pearled Treerunner	<i>Margarornis squamiger</i>	▶  4
3	Line-fronted Canastero	<i>Asthenes urubambensis</i> ✓	▶  2
3	Junin Canastero	<i>Asthenes virgata</i> ✓	▶  2
1	Streak-backed Canastero	<i>Asthenes wyatti</i> ✓	▶  1
4	Streak-throated Canastero	<i>Asthenes humilis</i> ✓	▶  2
1	Puna Thistletail	<i>Asthenes helleri</i> ✓	▶  1
2	Rusty-fronted Canastero	<i>Asthenes ottonis</i> ✓	▶  1
4	Marcapata Spinetail	<i>Cranioleuca marcapatae</i> ✓	▶  3
8	Creamy-crested Spinetail	<i>Cranioleuca albicapilla</i> ✓	▶  5
7	Red-crested Cotinga	<i>Ampelion rubrocristatus</i> ✓	▶  3
7	Andean Cock-of-the-rock	<i>Rupicola peruvianus</i>	▶  2

4	Barred Becard	<i>Pachyramphus versicolor</i>	▶  3
5	Many-colored Rush Tyrant	<i>Tachuris rubrigastra</i> ✓	▶  1
1	Streak-necked Flycatcher	<i>Mionectes striaticollis</i>	▶  1
4	Mottle-cheeked Tyrannulet	<i>Phylloscartes ventralis</i>	▶  1
4	Common Tody-Flycatcher	<i>Todirostrum cinereum</i>	▶  2
4	Yellow-olive Flatbill	<i>Tolmomyias sulphurescens</i>	▶  2
3	Cinnamon Flycatcher	<i>Pyrrhomyias cinnamomeus</i>	▶  2
8	White-banded Tyrannulet	<i>Mecocerculus stictopterus</i> ✓	▶  3
6	White-throated Tyrannulet	<i>Mecocerculus leucophrys</i>	▶  1
2	Tufted Tit-Tyrant	<i>Anairetes parulus</i> ✓	▶  1
3	Unstreaked Tit-Tyrant	<i>Uromyias agraphia</i> ✓	▶  1
6	White-crested Elaenia	<i>Elaenia albiceps</i>	▶  1
5	Sierran Elaenia	<i>Elaenia pallatangae</i>	▶  4
12	Torrent Tyrannulet	<i>Serpophaga cinerea</i> ✓	▶  3
8	Sclater's Tyrannulet	<i>Phyllomyias sclateri</i> ✓	▶  2
1	White-fronted Tyrannulet	<i>Acrochordopus zeledoni</i> ✓	▶  1
3	Smoke-colored Pewee	<i>Contopus fumigatus</i>	▶  1
11	Black Phoebe	<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>	▶  5
2	Taczanowski's Ground-Tyrant	<i>Muscisaxicola griseus</i> ✓	▶  1
1	Ochre-naped Ground-Tyrant	<i>Muscisaxicola flavinucha</i> ✓	▶  1
14	Rufous-breasted Chat-Tyrant	<i>Ochthoeca rufipectoralis</i> ✓	▶  5
5	Brown-backed Chat-Tyrant	<i>Ochthoeca fumicolor</i> ✓	▶  5
1	d'Orbigny's Chat-Tyrant	<i>Ochthoeca oenanthoides</i> ✓	▶  1

2	White-browed Chat-Tyrant	<i>Ochthoeca leucophrys</i>	✔	▶  1
8	Social Flycatcher	<i>Myiozetetes similis</i>		▶  3
2	Golden-crowned Flycatcher	<i>Myiodynastes chrysocephalus</i>	✔	▶  1
11	Tropical Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus melancholicus</i>		▶  5
6	Brown-capped Vireo	<i>Vireo leucophrys</i>		▶  2
4	Chivi Vireo	<i>Vireo chivi</i>		▶  2
4	Green Jay	<i>Cyanocorax yncas</i>		▶  1
110	Blue-and-white Swallow	<i>Pygochelidon cyanoleuca</i>		▶  6
27	Brown-bellied Swallow	<i>Orochelidon murina</i>	✔	▶  3
5	Gray-mantled Wren	<i>Odontorchilus branickii</i>	✔	▶  2
24	Southern House Wren	<i>Troglodytes musculus</i>		▶  12
5	Mountain Wren	<i>Troglodytes solstitialis</i>		▶  3
3	Grass Wren	<i>Cistothorus platensis</i>	✔	▶  2
12	Inca Wren	<i>Pheugopedius eisenmanni</i>	✔	▶  3
19	Gray-breasted Wood-Wren	<i>Henicorhina leucophrys</i>		▶  4
7	White-capped Dipper	<i>Cinclus leucocephalus</i>	✔	▶  2
5	Andean Solitaire	<i>Myadestes raloides</i>		▶  2
11	Great Thrush	<i>Turdus fuscater</i>		▶  6
36	Chiguanco Thrush	<i>Turdus chiguanco</i>	✔	▶  8
6	Paramo Pipit	<i>Anthus bogotensis</i>	✔	▶  2
1	Blue-naped Chlorophonia	<i>Chlorophonia cyanea</i>		▶  1
13	Thick-billed Euphonia	<i>Euphonia laniirostris</i>		▶  3
4	Orange-bellied Euphonia	<i>Euphonia xanthogaster</i>		▶  2

63	Hooded Siskin	<i>Spinus magellanicus</i>	✓	▶  3
5	Chestnut-capped Brushfinch	<i>Arremon brunneinucha</i>		▶  3
33	Rufous-collared Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia capensis</i>		▶  9
2	Golden-crowned Brushfinch	<i>Atlapetes tricolor</i>	✓	▶  1
2	Cuzco Brushfinch	<i>Atlapetes canigenis</i>	✓	▶  1
6	Dusky-green Oropendola	<i>Psarocolius atrovirens</i>	✓	▶  2
6	Yellow-winged Blackbird	<i>Agelasticus thilius</i>	✓	▶  2
8	Tropical Parula	<i>Setophaga pitayumi</i>		▶  4
2	Three-striped Warbler	<i>Basileuterus tristriatus</i>		▶  1
2	Citrine Warbler	<i>Myiothlypis luteoviridis</i>	✓	▶  1
3	Pale-legged Warbler	<i>Myiothlypis signata</i>	✓	▶  2
11	Russet-crowned Warbler	<i>Myiothlypis coronata</i>		▶  2
20	Slate-throated Redstart	<i>Myioborus miniatus</i>		▶  4
15	Spectacled Redstart	<i>Myioborus melanocephalus</i>		▶  5
3	Hepatic Tanager	<i>Piranga flava</i>		▶  3
6	Black-backed Grosbeak	<i>Pheucticus aureoventris</i>	✓	▶  2
2	Slaty Tanager	<i>Creurgops dentatus</i>	✓	▶  1
4	Parodi's Hemispingus	<i>Kleinotherapis parodii</i>	✓	▶  2
3	Oleaginous Hemispingus	<i>Sphenopsis frontalis</i>	✓	▶  1
3	Silver-beaked Tanager	<i>Ramphocelus carbo</i>		▶  1
4	Scarlet-bellied Mountain Tanager	<i>Anisognathus igniventris</i>	✓	▶  2
2	Chestnut-bellied Mountain Tanager	<i>Dubusia castaneoventris</i>	✓	▶  1
3	Fawn-breasted Tanager	<i>Pipraeidea melanonota</i>	✓	▶  1

7	Blue-and-yellow Tanager	<i>Rauenia bonariensis</i>	✓	▶  2
19	Blue-gray Tanager	<i>Thraupis episcopus</i>		▶  4
12	Palm Tanager	<i>Thraupis palmarum</i>		▶  3
1	Golden-naped Tanager	<i>Chalcothraupis ruficervix</i>	✓	▶  1
6	Silvery Tanager	<i>Stilpnia viridicollis</i>		▶  3
6	Blue-necked Tanager	<i>Stilpnia cyanicollis</i>		▶  3
1	Blue-and-black Tanager	<i>Tangara vassorii</i>		▶  1
8	Saffron-crowned Tanager	<i>Tangara xanthocephala</i>		▶  3
6	White-browed Conebill	<i>Conirostrum ferrugineiventris</i>	✓	▶  1
4	Capped Conebill	<i>Conirostrum albifrons</i>	✓	▶  1
5	Cinereous Conebill	<i>Conirostrum cinereum</i>	✓	▶  2
2	Moustached Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossa mystacalis</i>	✓	▶  1
5	Black-throated Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossa brunneiventris</i>	✓	▶  3
2	Rusty Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossa sittoides</i>		▶  2
3	Masked Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossa cyanea</i>		▶  1
1	Peruvian Sierra Finch	<i>Phrygilus punensis</i>	✓	▶  1
2	Tit-like Dacnis	<i>Xenodacnis parina</i>	✓	▶  1
2	Glacier Finch	<i>Idiopsar speculifer</i>	✓	▶  1
10	Plumbeous Sierra Finch	<i>Geospizopsis unicolor</i>	✓	▶  4
3	Ash-breasted Sierra Finch	<i>Geospizopsis plebejus</i>	✓	▶  2
2	Chestnut-breasted Mountain Finch	<i>Poospizopsis caesar</i>	✓	▶  2
10	Black-and-white Seedeater	<i>Sporophila luctuosa</i>	✓	▶  1
15	Band-tailed Seedeater	<i>Catamenia analis</i>	✓	▶  4

- 3

Plain-colored Seedeater

Catamenia inornata

✔

▶ 1
- 2

Dull-colored Grassquit

Asemospiza obscura

▶ 1
- 4

Golden-billed Saltator

Saltator aurantiirostris

✔

▶ 3

ADDITIONAL TAXA

- 1

White-bellied/Green-and-white Hummingbird

Elliotomyia chionogaster/viridicauda

▶ 1