

CHAN CHICH, HIDDEN VALLEY & CARACOL

February 26, 2005 to March 6, 2005

Guided by
Richard Webster & Denis Kania

How could we miss Rock Dove? There must have been a few on some roof during one of our drives, especially that first afternoon, but we didn't note them, and then we were enjoying Belize at its best, staying in wild and remote areas free from not only feral pigeons but other introduced species.

Based at Hidden Valley Inn on Mountain Pine Ridge, we started our forest birding along the road to the Rio Frio Cave (after a stop for Laughing Falcon and Fork-tailed Flycatcher), getting good views of such skulky birds as White-bellied Wren, Thrushlike Schiffornis, and Blue-black Grosbeak. Our scenic tour of the ridge edge in the afternoon came up empty on Stygian Owl, but we did see an Orange-breasted Falcon at 1000' Falls and two dozen spectacular King Vultures at King Vulture Falls.

An early start the following day brought us to Caracol, where the morning ruckus of Red-lored Parrots and Yucatan Howler Monkeys delayed our search for Keel-billed Motmot, as did a nice antswarm with Northern Barred-, Tawny-winged, and Ruddy woodcreepers and Gray-headed Tanagers, among many species. The Keel-billed Motmot proved pleasantly and surprisingly easy and was followed immediately by a chance encounter with Tody Motmot! The energetic ascended the Caana Temple for a great view over the forests, and we then birded our way around the rest of the ruins, enjoying many species, particularly a gorgeous pair of Collared Trogons. A return to Hidden Valley before dark produced the great news that a Stygian Owl had been located, and we rushed to admire this seldom-seen bird.

A front that night spoiled birding around the lodge the next morning (but didn't prevent more photography at the feeders). However, Band-backed Wrens en route to the airstrip were a nice find, and we were soon airborne to Chan Chich. At Chan Chich the birding was quiet the first several days, although the cloud cover from the front did keep temperatures down, which was appreciated. It had been very dry throughout Belize this season, and this was especially evident at Chan Chich, where the creeks were only flowing intermittently, and Laguna Seca was threatening to live up to its name.

At Chan Chich we alternated long, slow walks on the many fine trails with excursions to birding areas around Gallon Jug, such as Laguna Seca, Xibal, and the Escarpment. The list of highlights is long and includes Ornate Hawk-Eagle (an immature and a courting pair), 18 Great Curassows, Ocellated Turkeys at our feet, Mottled Owl, Northern Potoo, another Tody Motmot, White-whiskered Puffbird, all three toucans, Scaly-throated Leaftosser, great looks at both manakins, Gray-collared Becard, Gray-throated Chat, and Rose-throated Tanager.

One special experience was several visits to Chan Chich Creek, where we found almost two dozen species bathing or drinking in the shallow pools. A male Black-throated Shrike-Tanager was special, but the star was the splash-bathing Purple-crowned Fairy, a beautiful species in any circumstance, but a knockout at close range and with a great reflection. Another aesthetic high was the leisurely birding during lunch, as a number of species ate berries within meters of our meals, including Red-capped Manakin and Black-headed Trogan.

While this was very much about seeing tropical birds free from your Chicago winter, a substantial component of Belize's avifauna is "our" birds on their wintering grounds, where they actually spend more time than in the north. For instance, we saw 22 species of wintering warblers, as well as a number of flycatchers, vireos, and so forth.

In the mammal department, we were short on the much-desired cats but enjoyed the regulars, including both Yucatan Howlers and Central American Spider Monkeys. A small Fer-de-lance was also memorable, especially to those of us who had stepped over it already. Our thanks go to Denis for spotting it, and, on a much broader scale, for putting together such a fun group of people with whom to escape to the forests of Central America.

Taxonomy follows Clements, at least moderately well. Conservation status is drawn from the publications of BirdLife International.

List total: 262 bird taxa and 11 mammal taxa

*If marked to left of list, * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic*

cha05p-RW

Tinamidae

- * GREAT TINAMOU (*Tinamus major*)
Just a couple were heard at Chan Chich in the dry conditions, and we never got lucky with any tinamou crossing a trail.
- * SLATY-BREASTED TINAMOU (*Crypturellus boucardi*)
Just a few distant birds heard at Chan Chich and Caracol.

Podicipedidae

LEAST GREBE (*Tachybaptus dominicus*)
Linda spotted one in the close pool at Laguna Seca; good views.

Anhingidae

ANHINGA (*Anhinga anhinga*)
Good studies of males and females, perched and in flight, on both visits to Laguna Seca.

Ardeidae

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*)
A few on leaving the airport, followed by more winterers at the shrinking Laguna Seca.

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*)
Ditto.

TRICOLORED HERON (*Egretta tricolor*)
A single bird at Laguna Seca on both visits; uncommon at such an inland locality.

LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*)
An adult was regular around the Chan Chich clearing, foraging like a Cattle Egret (and beating up on one, too); a few more were at Laguna Seca.

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*)
Near the airport, and then several times in small numbers around Chan Chich.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*)
Daily in widely scattered places, e.g. in flocks in pastures at Central Farms airstrip and Gallon Jug, with smaller numbers in clearings, such as the ruins at Caracol and "our friend", our much chased friend, around the porch at Chan Chich.

BARE-THROATED TIGER-HERON (*Tigrisoma mexicanum*)
An adult was seen on both visits to Laguna Seca, and we had even better views of another adult at what was left of the "Swimming Hole" on Chan Chich Creek.

Ciconiidae

WOOD STORK (*Mycteria americana*)
Seen in flight after leaving Belize City.

Anatidae

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Anas discors*)
A pair was at Laguna Seca.

Cathartidae

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*)
Almost daily, but usually in the small numbers typical of the relatively pristine forested regions we visited.

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*)
Widespread, daily, fairly common.

KING VULTURE (*Sarcoramphus papa*)
We saw a few in flight at Chan Chich, including from the plane as we departed, but these seemed tame after the fabulous experience at King Vulture Falls near Hidden Valley Inn. There we enjoyed about 25 birds, perched on roost trees and coming for a drink at the falls. Most trips to the tropics get neither such views nor so many.

Pandionidae

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*)
One over coastal marshes after we left the airport on Day 1.

Accipitridae

SWALLOW-TAILED KITE (Elanoides forficatus)

A stunning bird with which we did very well, first seeing them at Douglas D'Silva, including three perched birds (a rare treat), and then repeatedly in flight above and below us on the Chan Chich escarpment.

WHITE-TAILED KITE (Elanus leucurus)

A distant perched bird at the Central Farms airstrip.

SNAIL KITE (Rostrhamus sociabilis)

Seen over the coastal marshes the first evening as we drove south, and then one female was at Laguna Seca.

DOUBLE-TOOTHED KITE (Harpagus bidentatus)

Four soaring birds were seen at the Chan Chich escarpment and nearby, and another the next day over the Suspension Bridge.

PLUMBEOUS KITE (Ictinia plumbea)

Birds just back on the breeding grounds were seen perched and in flight in the Caracol area and around Chan Chich, with 15+ at Laguna Seca on 4 March a seldom-encountered concentration of migrants.

WHITE HAWK (Leucopternis albicollis)

A soaring bird near Caracol was our first, and we had several pairs, close and far, around the Chan Chich escarpment--a stunning bird; these Central American birds are even whiter than the South American subspecies.

GREAT BLACK-HAWK (Buteogallus urubitinga)

A distant, perched bird near Hidden Valley was marginally identified as this species. En route to the Chan Chich escarpment and then from it we had good views of birds, top and bottom, for all the field marks.

GRAY HAWK (Asturina nitida)

A couple of adults were seen in the Gallon Jug area.

ROADSIDE HAWK (Buteo magnirostris)

Daily and common, the default raptor of the trip.

SHORT-TAILED HAWK (Buteo brachyurus)

A very, very distant light-phase adult was seen from the Chan Chich escarpment; probably not counted by most.

BLACK HAWK-EAGLE (Spizaetus tyrannus)

A distant bird off the Chan Chich escarpment provided OK views, especially for those who followed it in the telescope.

ORNATE HAWK-EAGLE (Spizaetus ornatus)

It doesn't get much better. A screaming (= still begging?) juvenile was very tame along Chan Chich Creek, as we twice viewed it at close range in the telescope (Junior already had a crest). We then had a pair calling and courting over the Chan Chich escarpment, and then had one of these adults perched in the tree where they were refurbishing a nest.

Falconidae

LAUGHING FALCON (Herpetotheres cachinnans)

We stopped for nice looks at a perched bird on Mountain Pine Ridge near Hidden Valley Inn, and another was seen the next day.

* **BARRED FOREST-FALCON (Micrastur ruficollis)**

AMERICAN KESTREL (Falco sparverius)

One wintering bird at Gallon Jug.

MERLIN (Falco columbarius)

One was seen perched and in flight, at least by those who could tear themselves from the Laughing Falcon!

BAT FALCON (Falco rufigularis)

A great bird at which we had great views, daily around the Chan Chich clearing, at Laguna Seca, and then very close at the Chan Chich escarpment, where birds hunted flying insects over our heads, and consumed them on a nearby perch (photos).

ORANGE-BREASTED FALCON (Falco deiroleucus)

A huge range, but rare and local; Belize and adjacent Guatemala is one of the most reliable places to see it. We had telescope views of a distant, perched bird at 1000' Falls; closer would have been much nicer, but "OK" is better than nada.

Cracidae

PLAIN CHACHALACA (*Ortalis vetula*)

It is a measure of the quality of the habitat that this tour visits that this was the rarest of our three species of cracid (chachalacas prefer secondary drier habitats). We had good views in the evening en route to Hidden Valley, and again the next day. And that was it.

CRESTED GUAN (*Penelope purpurascens*)

This impressive, very large bird was seen first around Caracol, and then daily at Chan Chich, with great telescope views of birds feeding in fruiting trees.

GREAT CURASSOW (*Crax rubra*)

*Well, a jaguar would have been a clearer statement of the wildness of Chan Chich. However, among birds, there may be no clearer statement, even large raptors, because this big and tasty species is about the first to disappear when *Homo sapiens* takes over. But they are *Chicken Tostadas*, not *Curassow Tostadas*, that we relished on the lunch menu, and we had a remarkable 18 or so Great Curassows during our stay. Considered "Near-Threatened."*

Meleagridae

OCELLATED TURKEY (*Meleagris ocellata*)

On the subject of tasty, the Ocellated Turkey is another indicator of wildness. We saw our first few near Caracol, where the archaeological reserve protects them. We then enjoyed them daily at Chan Chich, and even the folks who had been there before went ape and photographed them endlessly. It is hard to take "turkeys" seriously, but the extraordinary beauty of this bird commands repeated attention. Also considered "Near-Threatened."

Aramidae

LIMPKIN (*Aramus guarauna*)

We saw one of this snail-eating monotypic family on each trip to Laguna Seca.

Rallidae

* RUDDY CRAKE (*Laterallus ruber*)

A few churring birds were heard well out in the grassy marsh of Xibal.

GRAY-NECKED WOOD-RAIL (*Aramides cajanea*)

Jim spotted the delayed response to playback of a pair at Chan Chich, and we were thrilled by the good looks and close approach. We were fortunate again at Laguna Seca, where one bird took those long, pink legs out into the muck, providing yet more great views.

Jacanidae

NORTHERN JACANA (*Jacana spinosa*)

Several were at Laguna Seca on each visit; good views of this lilly trotter.

Recurvirostridae

BLACK-NECKED STILT (*Himantopus mexicanus*)

A single bird was at Laguna Seca; scarce here (because water is usually more abundant, meaning too deep).

Charadriidae

KILLDEER (*Charadrius vociferus*)

Common in the pastures of Gallon Jug.

Scolopacidae

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*)

One or two at Laguna Seca.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*)

Up to seven at Laguna Seca.

SOLITARY SANDPIPER (*Tringa solitaria*)

Four at Laguna Seca.

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularia*)

A couple on our second trip to Laguna Seca.

LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*)

Up to 75 at Laguna Seca.

STILT SANDPIPER (*Calidris himantopus*)

One at Laguna Seca on 4 March was a local rarity (not on a somewhat dated version of the Chan Chich list).

Columbidae

SCALED PIGEON (*Patagioenas speciosa*)

This uncommon bird seemed more common than normal (although "resident", it probably moves seasonally). After a leader forced you to look at a speck in the telescope at King Vulture Falls, we were fortunately go get better views at Caracol and several times at Chan Chich.

PALE-VENTED PIGEON (*Patagioenas cayennensis*)

Perched birds were seen a couple of times along forest edge at cleared or marsh areas around Chan Chich.

RED-BILLED PIGEON (*Patagioenas flavirostris*)

The song of this pigeon was one of the first avian voices every morning at Chan Chich, and we had repeated views of it there.

SHORT-BILLED PIGEON (*Patagioenas nigrirostris*)

Absolutely silent the first two-thirds of the trip, they started to sing toward the end of our stay at Chan Chich (after the front had passed and it was warming up). We had good views of this forest pigeon after one responded to playback, although we had to force Linda, who has the good taste to enjoy attractive tyrannids, to look at it.

RUDDY GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina talpacoti*)

Small numbers in open areas.

BLUE GROUND-DOVE (*Claravis pretiosa*)

We had brief but good views of a couple of males from our vehicle at Gallon Jug, and then saw a tape-responsive female at the Suspension Bridge, where Ann, who appreciates the subtle beauty of Columbids, was quite willing to forego any flycatchers.

WHITE-TIPPED DOVE (*Leptotila verreauxi*)

*Marginal on our list, with a couple of *Leptotila* flushing off the road en route to Hidden Valley likely this species based on habitat, and one definitely heard en route to Central Farms airstrip.*

GRAY-HEADED DOVE (*Leptotila plumbeiceps*)

Just about daily during the tour, which is very different from saying that it was enjoyed often. We heard many, and there were brief views on a number of occasions, but this bird of the forest floor is very good at disappearing. Some of our best views were of a couple that briefly flew into the antswarm we were watching along the Logger's Trail at Chan Chich.

RUDDY QUAIL-DOVE (*Geotrygon montana*)

A couple of quick-but-close fly-bys for parts of the group at Chan Chich, with a few folks getting to see it on the ground our last morning at the same time as the Rufous Piha commanded attention.

Psittacidae

OLIVE-THROATED PARAKEET (*Aratinga nana astec*)

Daily around Chan Chich, in small to moderate numbers. Not the most stunning parrot, but still attractive and appealing, with several pairs engaging in nape nibbling and other behaviors easily converted to anthropomorphic terms (and why not!).

BROWN-HOODED PARROT (*Pionopsitta haematocephala*)

A bit of a problem, as this uncommon, forest-based parrot often is; we had several encounters at Chan Chich, perched and in flight, but all were brief.

WHITE-CROWNED PARROT (*Pionus senilis*)

Daily excluding our first evening, with good views at Caracol (especially from the top of the Caana Temple) and at Chan Chich, where a flock of about 30 regularly perched in the treetops above our rooms.

WHITE-FRONTED PARROT (*Amazona albifrons*)

Less a forest bird than many other parrots on our list, we had just a few, best at the Georgetown junction en route to the Central Farms airstrip.

RED-LORED PARROT (*Amazona autumnalis*)

Common daily, with an especially raucous group at a fruiting tree as we started our Caracol explorations, and some fine birds daily around the Chan Chich plaza.

MEALY PARROT (*Amazona farinosa*)

Much less common than Red-lored, with a pair seen well from the Caana Temple at Caracol, and other pairs periodically at Chan Chich, often around the lodge clearing.

Cuculidae

SQUIRREL CUCKOO (*Piaya cayana*)

Daily, but mostly by voice, with fewer than normal good views of this impressive, albeit widespread, neotropical cuckoo.

GROOVE-BILLED ANI (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*)

Just a few in open areas along the way, although one that had invaded the Chan Chich clearing afforded regular good views, including when it attended the army ants that impinged on our lunch one day.

Strigidae

* GUATEMALAN SCREECH-OWL (*Megascops guatemalae*)

We heard one well at length, but it wouldn't budge from its perch behind the palms, and we were further diverted by the Black-and-white Owls (that also wouldn't come in!).

MOTTLED OWL (*Ciccaba virgata*)

Now here was an owling success, with good views of a calling bird at Chan Chich.

* BLACK-AND-WHITE OWL (*Ciccaba nigrolineata*)

Close and responsive, but it had an uncanny ability to keep those obnoxious palms between us and it.

FERRUGINOUS PYGMY-OWL (*Glaucidium brasiliandum*)

Great views of one at Douglas D'Silva. This one was brazen, but we never stirred any others up, and small birds were only minimally responsive to the calls of this species during the tour.

STYGIAN OWL (*Asio stygius*)

Like Orange-breasted Falcon, a widespread species that is rare, local, and hard to observe, and something of a specialty on this tour. Thanks to Hidden Valley Inn, which is trying to monitor the shifting roosts of a number of birds, we had great views of one roosting in a pine not far from the lodge. Thanks, Rick (and Craig and Lisa). A real thrill.

Nyctibiidae

NORTHERN POTOO (*Nyctibius jamaicensis*)

One during our night drive at Chan Chich. It started as a distant, perched eyeshine, but evolved into a real bird as it flew close to us. Wow!

Caprimulgidae

PAURAQUE (*Nyctidromus albicollis*)

The common, "default" nightjar of the area, one that we saw well several times during the night drive.

Apodidae

WHITE-COLLARED SWIFT (*Streptoprocne zonaris*)

An exciting encounter with a wheeling flock in the scenic setting of 1000' Falls.

VAUX'S SWIFT (*Chaetura vauxi richmondi*)

This is the resident subspecies of the Yucatan area (and a potential split); we had several flocks in the Chan Chich area.

LESSER SWALLOW-TAILED SWIFT (*Panyptila cayennensis*)

Jim got us on our first over the Suspension Bridge at Chan Chich, and several more fly-overs there yielded some improved views.

Trochilidae

WESTERN LONG-TAILED HERMIT (*Phaethornis longirostris*)

Singles were seen nearly daily by someone somewhere somehow, as it often is with hermits as they zip in and out; seen by everyone by the end of the trip. a.k.a. Long-billed Hermit; as split from other Long-tailed Hermit taxa farther south.

STRIPE-THROATED HERMIT (*Phaethornis strigularis*)

Daily at Chan Chich, with repeated good views of birds checking out Diann's red shirt and visiting the flowers off the veranda. A split of the Little Hermit complex.

SCALY-BREASTED HUMMINGBIRD (*Phaeochroa cuvierii*)

It took a while, but eventually we found a singing bird at Chan Chich, and had telescope views as it sang its rather complex (for a hummingbird) song.

WEDGE-TAILED SABREWING (*Campylopterus curvipennis*)

We had mediocre views of a couple feeding around flowering trees and vines at Chan Chich.

WHITE-NECKED JACOBIN (*Florisuga mellivora*)

Our first was a male hovering over the Guacamayo River en route to Caracol for some on the right side of the van. At Chan Chich there were a couple of males, including great looks at one in the "Euphonia Tree."

CANIVET'S EMERALD (*Chlorostilbon canivetii*)

One for Denis and perhaps a few others at Chan Chich.

RUFOUS-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia tzacatl*)

The commonest hummingbird of the trip, seen daily.

WHITE-BELLIED EMERALD (*Agyrtria candida*)

Fairly common and seen nearly daily; not dramatic, but we had close views to see the details of the bill and tail pattern.

AZURE-CROWNED HUMMINGBIRD (*Agyrtria cyancephala*)

Common on Mountain Pine Ridge, especially at the Hidden Valley Inn feeders. Much photographed. And another "in your face" species for those wearing red shirts (startled Diann a couple of times).

PURPLE-CROWNED FAIRY (*Heliothryx barroti*)

Marscha and Mary Jo had one at Caracol, and we then had a series of sightings at Chan Chich, including one of the highlights of the tour, the spectacular bathing pool show, as a bird made repeated splash baths in Chan Chich Creek, tail spread, colors glowing in its reflection. That is what birding is all about.

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Archilochus colubris*)

Several brief birds wintering at Chan Chich, including a male around the yellow-flowering tree by the bridge.

Trogonidae

BLACK-HEADED TROGON (*Trogon melanocephalus*)

The most common trogon; encountered daily, with repeated good views. As split from Citreoline Trogan.

VIOLACEOUS TROGON (*Trogon violaceus*)

Not as common as Black-headed, but seen regularly from our first morning at Rio Frio to our last morning at Chan Chich; nice telescope views (although never enough for Linda!).

COLLARED TROGON (*Trogon collaris*)

Marscha found our only pair, on the grounds at Caracol. These cooperative birds allowed extended views, to the point that they became one of the twenty contenders for the Kania Christmas Card.

SLATY-TAILED TROGON (*Trogon massena*)

Uncommon, but with time at Chan Chich we had almost daily views of this big trogon.

Alcedinidae

BELTED KINGFISHER (*Ceryle alcyon*)

Several winterers on each visit to Laguna Seca.

AMAZON KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle amazona*)

A couple at Chan Chich, including one that perched on the railing of the Suspension Bridge (my what a big bill you have).

GREEN KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle americana*)

First along the Guacamayo River on the road from Caracol, and then several times at Chan Chich, including along the shrinking pools of Chan Chich Creek.

Momotidae

TODY MOTMOT (*Hylomanes momotula*)

Although it occurs over much of Central America, this seldom-seen species is one of the specialties of a trip to Belize. Our first pair was a lucky encounter, literally the first birds after seeing the Keel-billed Motmot. We had another one at Chan Chich, and again had telescope views, with better color than the first time. Motmots nest in holes in the ground, and the unexcavated ruins provide suitable banks for holes.

BLUE-CROWNED MOTMOT (*Momotus momota*)

One at Caracol was, surprisingly, the only one seen; also heard there and at Chan Chich.

KEEL-BILLED MOTMOT (*Electron carinatum*)

Absolutely one of the prizes of the trip, a relatively easy one at Caracol that sat patiently as we admired it in the telescope until we were done. Local and forest-based, it has declined in its limited range in Central America, and is considered "Vulnerable."

Galbulidae

RUFOUS-TAILED JACAMAR (Galbulia ruficauda)

One of the classic families of the neotropics. We saw this species several times, first at Caracol right behind the picnic tables, and then at Chan Chich, including a very confiding pair above the aguada.

Bucconidae

* WHITE-NECKED PUFFBIRD (Notharchus macrorhynchos)

Yes, it would have finished off Plate 29 nicely, but

WHITE-WHISKERED PUFFBIRD (Malacoptila panamensis)

Our first was from the vehicle as we drove into Chan Chich, which was followed by a fine view for Denis for the yardlist of his roach killing zone quarters, and then our last morning along the trail back to the lodge.

Ramphastidae

EMERALD TOUCANET (Aulacorhynchus prasinus)

Heard a couple of times, and seen once from the Service Area at Chan Chich--not for long and somewhat distant. Note that "Emerald Toucanet" has been split into as many as seven species; the birds we saw are in the nominate taxon that has retained the common and scientific name of what was the former full group.

COLLARED ARAÁARI (Pteroglossus torquatus)

After hearing them a couple of times, we started seeing them toward the end of our stay at Chan Chich, including the birds taking the evening sunlight in the (sigh) cotinga tree.

KEEL-BILLED TOUCAN (Ramphastos sulfuratus)

Almost daily, which was a good thing, because we couldn't get enough of this great tropical bird. We had regular sightings around the lodge clearing, and up to two dozen during our drives.

Picidae

ACORN WOODPECKER (Melanerpes formicivorus)

Daily at Mountain Pine Ridge, where they were much-photographed yardbirds at Hidden Valley Inn. We also got a laugh out of the granary house at Douglas D'Silva.

BLACK-CHEEKED WOODPECKER (Melanerpes pucherani)

We watched a pair excavating a hole at Caracol, and then saw them daily at Chan Chich.

GOLDEN-FRONTED WOODPECKER (Melanerpes aurifrons)

Less of a forest bird than Black-cheeked, we saw just a few, including at Caracol, en route to Central Farms airstrip, and locally outside Chan Chich.

YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER (Sphyrapicus varius)

One wintering bird at Chan Chich.

SMOKY-BROWN WOODPECKER (Veniliornis fumigatus)

The woodpecker that kept eluding us, but we then had good views of a couple near the end of our stay at Chan Chich.

GOLDEN-OLIVE WOODPECKER (Piculus rubiginosus)

Good views of one at the Rio Frio, but there was much going on at the time, so another for Ann a couple of days later was a welcome catch-up; heard at Chan Chich.

CHESTNUT-COLORED WOODPECKER (Celeus castaneus)

This is the northern representative of a great genus of tropical woodpeckers. Although not common, we ended up with seven or eight birds, and some fine telescope studies.

LINEATED WOODPECKER (Dryocopus lineatus)

A congener of Pileated Woodpecker, and like it low density but widespread. Good views several times.

PALE-BILLED WOODPECKER (Campephilus guatemalensis)

The other big woodpecker was, on this trip, actually more often encountered. Great views of a striking bird.

Furnariidae

RUFOUS-BREASTED SPINETAIL (Synallaxis erythrothorax)

A tape-responsive trio was enjoyed along the edge of the Millionario track near Caracol; good views of a close approach.

PLAIN XENOPS (Xenops minutus)

We saw this small furnariid several times in the south, first on the Rio Frio road, and then with mixed flocks at Caracol, often hanging from small stems like a nuthatch; missed entirely at Chan Chich (!?!).

BUFF-THROATED FOLIAGE-GLEANER (*Automolus ochrolaemus*)

This bird flew in immediately before tape of it was played! And then returned for another great view after tape was played. Now that is a responsive bird!

SCALY-THROATED LEAFTOSSER (*Sclerurus guatemalensis*)

At Chan Chich, we first heard one singing that would not respond. Our next encounter was unusual, as an adult (seen by most, but good angles were scarce) flushed from under a palm frond, and then a semi-fledged juvenile followed it (seen by all, but not a satisfying age!). Finally, our last morning, we stumbled into a responsive bird that perched for extended views.

Dendrocolaptidae

TAWNY-WINGED WOODCREEPER (*Dendrocincla anabatina*)

We had four encounters, and excellent studies from the top of the ruffled crest to the structure of the tail feathers. Several of these sightings were with army ants swarms, as is typical of this genus.

RUDDY WOODCREEPER (*Dendrocincla homochroa*)

Another ant follower, we saw one with a swarm at Caracol, and then had outstanding views of another with a swarm by Chan Chich Creek.

OLIVACEOUS WOODCREEPER (*Sittasomus griseicapillus*)

Perhaps our most common woodcreeper, seen almost daily in forest. Based on very different voices, this "species" is likely to be split into several; the birds we saw are in the sylvioides group.

WEDGE-BILLED WOODCREEPER (*Glyphorynchus spirurus*)

Several good views at Caracol.

* **STRONG-BILLED WOODCREEPER** (*Xiphocolaptes promeropirhynchus*)

"John" was heard by a few during breakfast one morning at Chan Chich, but was otherwise not encountered.

NORTHERN BARRED-WOODCREEPER (*Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae*)

Found twice (Caracol and Chan Chich), both times with ants, and both times seen very well at close range, including the subtle barring.

IVORY-BILLED WOODCREEPER (*Xiphorhynchus flavigaster*)

The first good views were during a women's rest stop at the Rio Frio, and were followed by several more sightings at Caracol and Chan Chich; the calls were heard regularly (it has been known as Laughing Woodcreeper).

Thamnophilidae

BARRED ANTSHRIKE (*Thamnophilus doliatus*)

Responsive males at forest edge along the Rio Frio road and at Xibal at Chan Chich provided good views of this well-named bird.

RUSSET ANTSHRIKE (*Thamnistes anabatinus*)

A moderately widespread species, but local in southern Belize, and one at Caracol was a good find. We had fairly good views as it foraged at mid levels with a mixed flock in forest.

DOT-WINGED ANTWREN (*Microrhopias quixensis*)

Small groups were seen well at Rio Frio and Caracol, with the distinctive female being especially admired.

DUSKY ANTBIRD (*Cercomacra tyrannina*)

A responsive pair at Caracol was seen in the dense shrubbery, the female showing itself best; more were heard there and once at Chan Chich.

Formicariidae

BLACK-FACED ANTTHRUSH (*Formicarius analis*)

Dennis and perhaps some others saw one cross the trail early in the morning at Caracol; also heard there and at the Rio Frio, but very quiet at Chan Chich, where only heard once.

Cotingidae

RUFOUS PIHA (*Lipaugus unirufus*)

A last morning save at Chan Chich, where we had good views of one. Dead silent our whole time there, which was part of the problem.

LOVELY COTINGA (*Cotinga amabilis*)

Exciting. Frustrating. A pair was seen to fly into a distant tree, and then to fly out, when many did catch the startling, electric blue color of the male. Distant and brief, but those of us who missed the whole thing could tell that the experience had been exciting.

Pipridae

WHITE-COLLARED MANAKIN (*Manacus candei*)

We hadn't had great views until late in our stay, when we did have the chance to see several lovely males, the best in berries by the Suspension Bridge.

RED-CAPPED MANAKIN (*Pipra mentalis*)

We saw them here and we saw them there, but the memorable ones were coming into the fruiting bushes at eye level from the lunch tables at Chan Chich. Dennis' photos looked pretty good even on his LCD.

Tyrannidae

YELLOW-BELLIED TYRANNULET (*Ornithion semiflavum*)

We had a pair at mistletoe along the Rio Frio road, and then another in the canopy of forest at Chan Chich, the birds Linda preferred to the Short-billed Pigeon.

NORTHERN BEARDLESS-TYRANNULET (*Camptostoma imberbe*)

Tom got on one at Laguna Seca before it vanished.

GREENISH ELAENIA (*Myiopagis viridicata*)

This relatively obscure "damn flycatcher" was seen nearly daily, and by the end we had had enough good views to start to become comfortable with its ID.

YELLOW-BELLIED ELAENIA (*Elaenia flavogaster*)

Heard more often than seen, but we did see several, perhaps best in the clearing at Douglas D'Silva.

OCHRE-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Mionectes oleagineus*)

Fairly common, some of our best views coming from the bathing pools at Chan Chich Creek, where this fruit-eating flycatcher was coming to get clean.

SEPIA-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Leptopogon amaurocephalus*)

Seen nicely at Rio Frio (carrying nesting material) and Caracol; heard at Chan Chich.

NORTHERN BENTBILL (*Oncostoma cinereigulare*)

Perhaps two-thirds of the group saw one somewhat responsive bird at Chan Chich; further attempts produced vocal responses but no visual satisfaction.

SLATE-HEADED TODY-TYRANT (*Poecilotriccus sylvia*)

A responsive bird along the Millionario Road came very close for good views; an attractive bird, these studies exempted it from "damn flycatcher" purgatory.

EYE-RINGED FLATBILL (*Rhynchocyclus brevirostris*)

Several encounters at Caracol, where they were nicely cooperative with mixed flocks at mid levels in the forest.

YELLOW-OLIVE FLATBILL (FLYCATCHER) (*Tolmomyias sulphurescens*)

After some good views our first couple of days, we largely ignored this species, although hearing it daily in the canopy.

STUB-TAILED SPADEBILL (*Platyrinchus cancrominus*)

Tough this trip, with only limited response to tape. We did have two visual encounters at Chan Chich, where about two-thirds of the group did get brief, good looks; more were heard.

* NORTHERN ROYAL-FLYCATCHER (*Onychorhynchus mexicanus mexicanus*)

SULPHUR-RUMPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiobius sulphureipygius sulphureipygius*)

Although our first several encounters were with actively foraging birds at which not everyone had good looks, we ended up with great studies, both at the bathing pools on Chan Chich Creek and with army ant swarms.

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax flaviventris*)

Wintering birds were heard almost daily, and a few were seen, mostly inside mature forest.

LEAST FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax minimus*)

A few winterers, mostly in edge or disturbed habitats; our best views were from the lunch table at Chan Chich.

BLACK PHOEBE (*Sayornis nigricans*)

A couple were along the rocky bed of the Rio Guacamayo.

VERMILION FLYCATCHER (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*)

Several brilliant birds were along fence lines by the Gallon Jug airstrip.

BRIGHT-RUMPED ATTILA (*Attila spadiceus*)

After hearing them at several spots, we had great views of a rufous-phase bird that Denis spotted with army ants along Chan Chich Creek; this species is seldom seen so well.

* RUFOUS MOURNER (*Rhytipterna holerythra*)

Only one heard, and it wouldn't come in.

YUCATAN FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus yucatanensis*)

Those who were prompt to lunch one day at Chan Chich got to see one at close range.

* DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*)

GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus crinitus*)

Daily by voice in forested areas; a few of these winterers were seen.

BROWN-CRESTED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus tyrannulus*)

Migrants had already returned to breeding grounds at Caracol and Chan Chich, e.g. around the lodge clearing.

GREAT KISKADEE (*Pitangus sulphuratus*)

Big and bold; not common in these forested regions, but a few were seen almost daily in edge or wetland areas.

BOAT-BILLED FLYCATCHER (*Megarhynchus pitangua*)

A couple of pairs were enjoyed at Rio Frio and Caracol; heard at Chan Chich.

SOCIAL FLYCATCHER (*Myiozetetes similis*)

Common, often in small, vocal groups (they are Social); encountered daily.

TROPICAL KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus melancholicus*)

We identified just a few of these, including around Gallon Jug and at the Suspension Bridge (where Couch's was also present). A number of other Tropical/Couch's were seen in open areas along the way, and may well have been this species.

COUCH'S KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus couchii*)

Actually the more common of the two (it seems to be a bit more of a forest, or at least woodland, bird). Our first were vocally responsive individuals at Douglas D'Silva, with more at the Georgeville intersection and around Chan Chich (daily).

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER (*Tyrannus forficatus*)

Three or four on a couple of drives through the Gallon Jug fields; these may have been early migrants.

FORK-TAILED FLYCATCHER (*Tyrannus savana*)

This striking bird was first seen our first morning on Mountain Pine Ridge, and again on our travel day at the two small airstrips.

THRUSH-LIKE SCHIFFORNIS (*Schiffornis turdinus*)

Plain in plumage, but a favorite, both because of the wonderful voice, which was heard regularly, and because it was a much-wanted species at which we had good looks along the Rio Frio road. Another put on a good show for part of the group bathing at Chan Chich near the ant swarm.

CINNAMON BECARD (*Pachyramphus cinnamomeus*)

Our first were a pair in the shade coffee plantation at Chan Chich, followed by several sightings by the Suspension Bridge.

GRAY-COLLARED BECARD (*Pachyramphus major*)

This scarce species was a good find not just once but twice at Chan Chich, first a pair in the shade coffee plantation, then a male with a mixed flock near the Suspension Bridge.

ROSE-THROATED BECARD (*Pachyramphus aglaiae*)

A male was seen at the Georgeville intersection, and a female near the Suspension Bridge.

MASKED TITYRA (*Tityra semifasciata*)

Small numbers, first at Caracol, then Chan Chich.

Hirundinidae

PURPLE MARTIN (*Progne subis*)

Northbound migrants (most winter in Brazil) were seen over Chan Chich.

GRAY-BREASTED MARTIN (*Progne chalybea*)

We had good studies of a couple of pairs near the Central Farms airstrip, then again around Gallon Jug.

MANGROVE SWALLOW (*Tachycineta albilinea*)

Although they do like mangroves, this bird is more generally distributed in wetlands and open areas, e.g. where we saw them around the Gallon Jug airstrip and at Laguna Seca.

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*)

Small flocks were seen around Gallon Jug, Laguna Seca, etc.; these appeared to be migrants that will breed in North America.

"RIDGWAY'S" ROUGH-WGD. SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx s. ridgwayi*)

This subspecies was seen well nesting in the Rio Frio Cavern; restricted to the limestone areas of the Yucatan region, it is a potential split.

Bombycillidae

CEDAR WAXWING (*Bombycilla cedrorum*)

After a single at Douglas D'Silva, we had flocks almost daily at Chan Chich, with up to 50 in a day.

Troglodytidae

BAND-BACKED WREN (*Campylorhynchus zonatus*)

A family group at the Georgeville intersection was our only encounter with this tropical relative of the Cactus Wren.

SPOT-BREASTED WREN (*Thryothorus maculipectus*)

The exuberant duets of this relative of Carolina Wren were heard daily, and we saw them several times, first at Rio Frio, better at Caracol, and again several times at Chan Chich.

(SOUTHERN) HOUSE WREN (*Troglodytes aedon musculus*)

One was at Douglas D'Silva and another was seen several times in the Chan Chich clearing.

WHITE-BELLIED WREN (*Uropsila leucogastra*)

We had good views of a very cooperative bird along the Rio Frio road and had a less cooperative pair along the Bajo Trail at Chan Chich; small numbers were heard nearly daily.

WHITE-BREASTED WOOD-WREN (*Henicorhina leucosticta*)

Heard daily, and seen several times, usually close to forest floor.

Mimidae

GRAY CATBIRD (*Dumetella carolinensis*)

Common on the wintering grounds; common enough to be a minor nuisance!

TROPICAL MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus gilvus*)

On the coastal plain as we left the airport the first afternoon.

Turdidae

SWAINSON'S THRUSH (*Catharus ustulatus*)

Uncommon in winter this far north; we saw one at Caracol and a half dozen at Chan Chich, including with army ants and bathing in the creek.

WOOD THRUSH (*Catharus mustelinus*)

Common wintering bird here, especially easily viewed around the ruins at Caracol; also seen with army ants.

CLAY-COLORED ROBIN (*Turdus grayi*)

Fairly common in edge or disturbed habitats.

Polioptilidae

LONG-BILLED GNATWREN (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*)

A few were heard singing in viney tangles almost daily, and we obtained good views along the Rio Frio road and a couple of times at Chan Chich.

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER (*Polioptila caerulea*)

Just a couple (probably winterers, not local breeders), e.g. around the Plaza at Chan Chich.

TROPICAL GNATCATCHER (*Polioptila plumbea*)

A couple of pairs along the Rio Frio road and a couple sightings at Chan Chich, where our best views of the trip were probably of a male Marscha spotted overhead.

Corvidae

GREEN JAY (*Cyanocorax yncas*)

Seen a couple of times around the Hidden Valley Inn, with good views for many the last morning. This beautiful bird has been split by some authors, with the birds from Texas into Central America being called Green Jay, and Andean forms Inca Jay.

BROWN JAY (*Cyanocorax morio*)

This very large jay was seen daily, usually in small, noisy troops. We enjoyed seeing one of those groups roosting over the road during our night drive.

Vireonidae

WHITE-EYED VIREO (*Vireo griseus*)

Wintering birds were fairly common, with several seen most days.

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO (*Vireo flavifrons*)

Uncommon at Caracol and Chan Chich; two seen and several more heard.

TAWNY-CROWNED GREENLET (*Hylophilus ochraceiceps*)

Fairly common by voice with mixed flocks in lower levels of forest; we saw them several times.

LESSER GREENLET (*Hylophilus decurtatus*)

Common visually and by voice; one of the more numerous canopy birds.

GREEN SHRIKE-VIREO (*Vireolanius pulchellus*)

It was great to see a responsive bird our first morning along the Rio Frio road (although it was typically high overhead) because the couple we heard at Chan Chich seemed uninclined to budge in a couple of brief attempts to see them. This bird is almost always hard on the neck.

Fringillidae

BLACK-HEADED SISKIN (*Carduelis notata*)

Not rare, but unpredictable, so it was nice to see a group of a half dozen at the Rio Frio, even drinking from a puddle in the road, and some folks saw a small group the next day north of Caracol.

Parulidae

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER (*Vermivora pinus*)

A half dozen wintering birds were seen at scattered locations.

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER (*Vermivora chrysoptera*)

Uncommon in winter (most winter farther south), we did well to see three (two at Caracol, one at Chan Chich).

TENNESSEE WARBLER (*Vermivora peregrina*)

Small numbers of wintering birds.

NORTHERN PARULA (*Parula americana*)

Just three or so, with our best views along the aguada behind the plaza at Chan Chich.

YELLOW WARBLER (*Dendroica petechia*)

One at Central Farms airstrip.

CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER (*Dendroica pensylvanica*)

Small numbers nearly daily, including coming to bathe in Chan Chich Creek.

MAGNOLIA WARBLER (*Dendroica magnolia*)

Probably the commonest wintering warbler, with over 50 during the course of our short trip.

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (*Dendroica coronata*)

Singles at Hidden Valley Inn and around the clearing at Chan Chich, including drinking during lunch (water in the bird bath, not six-month dead Diet Coke like us!). All were "Myrtle" Warblers (as expected).

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER (*Dendroica virens*)

Perhaps ten during the course of our visit.

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER (*Dendroica dominica*)

Ann found one for us near the Suspension Bridge (white-lored).

GRACE'S WARBLER (*Dendroica graciae*)

The masochists had a pair during a warm stroll outside the grounds at Hidden Valley Inn.

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER (*Mniotilla varia*)

One of the more common wintering warblers.

AMERICAN REDSTART (*Setophaga ruticilla*)

Two or three on most days.

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER (*Protonotaria citrea*)

At least five at Chan Chich on 3 March were already northbound migrants (they only winter farther south).

WORM-EATING WARBLER (*Helmitheros vermivorus*)

No more than three in a day, but seen on most days, with especially nice views at the bathing pools, and several opportunities to observe them in typical foraging behavior searching dead leaves for sheltering insects.

OVENBIRD (*Seiurus aurocapilla*)

About seven at Chan Chich, including one with army ants along Chan Chich Creek.

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH (*Seiurus noveboracensis*)

Common and widespread, mostly around water, but also on trails and around the cabanas.

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH (*Seiurus motacilla*)

We had a few clear IDs, first along the Rio Frio, then at Chan Chich, always along a watercourse, and we had a couple more that shook our confidence in our ID abilities.

KENTUCKY WARBLER (*Oporornis formosus*)

Wintering birds were heard daily, and seen regularly, including under Mary Jo's porch, with army ants, and at the bathing pools. They may not be lifers, but it is great to get such good looks at birds that can be harder to see on the breeding grounds.

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis trichas*)

Small numbers at Chan Chich, primarily at Laguna Seca; one female was a regular sight from our lunch tables.

HOODED WARBLER (*Wilsonia citrina*)

Fairly common on the wintering grounds, with two or three most days.

WILSON'S WARBLER (*Wilsonia pusilla*)

Small numbers, primarily in the south, but also a few at Chan Chich.

GOLDEN-CROWNED WARBLER (*Basileuterus culicivorus*)

A couple of groups were seen at Caracol, and folks were pleased to get another chance to see them on the trail behind Laguna Seca.

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT (*Icteria virens*)

One briefly for part of the group at Chan Chich.

GRAY-THROATED CHAT (*Granatellus sallaei*)

This specialty of the Yucatan region was a great success after some searching. We had lengthy views of a singing male and brief views of its mate in the tintal at Chan Chich.

Thraupidae

GRAY-HEADED TANAGER (*Eucometis penicillata*)

This was a much-desired species, and we ended up with excellent views of a pair with an army ant swarm at Caracol (this is a typical follower of army ants).

BLACK-THROATED SHRIKE-TANAGER (*Lanius aurantius*)

After having great views of a female and a young male at Caracol, an adult male was in order, and we couldn't have done better than that bathing bird in Chan Chich Creek.

RED-CROWNED ANT-TANAGER (*Habia rubica*)

Both species of ant-tanager are common and are sometimes even in the same flock; the ID isn't hard, but it isn't always easy to get a good look. Everyone did get to see both well by the end, with daily encounters with both.

RED-THROATED ANT-TANAGER (*Habia fuscicauda*)

ROSE-THROATED TANAGER (*Piranga roseogularis*)

Another Yucatan specialty and tough to find at Chan Chich; we were fortunate to have two encounters, the first with a male in the canopy, seen by most, and then with a very cooperative female spotted feeding above the Xaxe Venic track.

HEPATIC TANAGER (*Piranga flava*)

A pair was seen daily on the feeding tray at Hidden Valley Inn.

SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*)

Wintering birds were seen or heard almost daily. Dennis spotted one roosting just over the road during our night drive.

CRIMSON-COLLARED TANAGER (*Ramphocelus sanguinolentus*)

Brief views for a few of a bird that unfortunately vanished into thick shrubbery near Caracol.

BLUE-GRAY TANAGER (*Thraupis episcopus*)

Not really a forest bird, we had just a couple one day at Chan Chich.

YELLOW-WINGED TANAGER (*Thraupis abbas*)

More of a forest species than Blue-gray, this Thraupis was seen in small numbers on most days, with good views from the Caana Temple at Caracol and then around the clearing at Chan Chich, including as part of the lunch parade.

SCRUB EUPHONIA (*Euphonia affinis*)

Tom stuck to his guns on the throat color, and we all eventually saw several birds in the "Euphonia Tree" at Chan Chich.

YELLOW-THROATED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia hirundinacea*)

Fairly common; a regular eating fruit in the "Euphonia Tree" at Chan Chich.

OLIVE-BACKED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia gouldi*)

While generally common, it is unusual to see so many as well as we did around the Chan Chich Plaza this trip, including in the "Euphonia Tree" and the fruiting shrub behind the bar. The close views revealed what an attractive species this is.

GOLDEN-HOODED TANAGER (*Tangara larvata*)

A little more gaudy, we had one pair at Douglas D'Silva and another at Chan Chich.

GREEN HONEYCREEPER (*Chlorophanes spiza*)

Just one or two, including a male above the aguada.

RED-LEGGED HONEYCREEPER (*Cyanerpes cyaneus*)

Common, seen daily throughout, often in numbers in favored flowering trees. And that is just fine, because it is a beauty.

Emberizidae

BLUE-BLACK GRASSQUIT (*Volatinia jacarina*)

A few in open country by the Central Farms airstrip.

VARIABLE SEEDEATER (*Sporophila corvina corvina*)

Brief views of one north of Caracol were followed by better views of a male at Chan Chich.

WHITE-COLLARED SEEDEATER (*Sporophila torqueola moreletti*)

Widespread in small numbers; the sweet song was often heard from our cabanas.

YELLOW-FACED GRASSQUIT (*Tiaris olivacea*)

Seen around the grounds at Hidden Valley Inn.

GREEN-BACKED SPARROW (*Arremonops chloronotus*)

We had good views of a responsive bird in roadside shrubbery north of Caracol, and then of an unusually conspicuous bird at Chan Chich.

RUSTY SPARROW (*Aimophila rufescens*)

Those who went out on a warm afternoon at Hidden Valley were rewarded with good views of this large sparrow (our follow-up attempt was squashed by the weather our last morning).

Cardinalidae

GRAYISH SALTATOR (*Saltator coerulescens*)

Good views of a family group at the Georgetown intersection.

BLACK-HEADED SALTATOR (*Saltator atriceps*)

Common by voice, and seen regularly in forest throughout.

BLACK-FACED GROSBEAK (*Caryothraustes poliogaster*)

This forest-based grosbeak was seen in small groups in the canopy at the Rio Frio, Caracol, and once at Chan Chich.

BLUE BUNTING (*Cyanocompsa parellina*)

Small numbers, and tough to see in thick shrubbery; our first few were along the Millionario Road north of Caracol, followed by several at Chan Chich, with some catchup views at Laguna Seca.

BLUE-BLACK GROSBEAK (*Cyanocompsa cyanoides*)

A very cooperative male came in along the Rio Frio road for some much appreciated eye-level views.

BLUE GROSBEAK (*Passerina caerulea*)

A few wintering, female-plumaged birds were seen, first at King Vulture Falls, then at Chan Chich.

INDIGO BUNTING (*Passerina cyanea*)

Common, seen almost daily, ranging from one or two around the clearing at Chan Chich to flocks flushing off the road edge in several areas.

Icteriidae

EASTERN MEADOWLARK (*Sturnella magna*)

We had four in the grassy margins of the Central Farms airstrip, and Mary Jo had another in the fields at Chan Chich.

MELODIOUS BLACKBIRD (*Dives dives*)

Daily, with the strong voice one of the alarm clocks at Chan Chich (as though you would sleep through the others there!).

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus mexicanus*)

Common in the pastures at Gallon Jug.

BRONZED COWBIRD (*Molothrus aeneus*)

A couple were with other icterids in those pastures.

GIANT COWBIRD (*Scaphidura oryzivora*)

Good views were to be had when birds were visiting the oropendola colony above Dennis and Jim's cabana, and we also had good views of a large flock at Gallon Jug.

YELLOW-BACKED ORIOLE (*Icterus chrysater*)

A pair was seen well at Hidden Valley Inn, but were less conspicuous than the next species.

YELLOW-TAILED ORIOLE (*Icterus mesomelas*)

A much-photographed fixture on the Hidden Valley feeding tray; also once outside Chan Chich.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE (*Icterus galbula*)

One or two on most days, especially in the yellow-flowering trees at Chan Chich.

ORCHARD ORIOLE (*Icterus spurius*)

Small flocks were seen at several times, including Central Farms airstrip and around Chan Chich.

BLACK-COWLED ORIOLE (*Icterus prosthemelas*)

Uncommon, with several sightings at Chan Chich, our best of one that came to the bathing pools.

YELLOW-BILLED CACIQUE (*Amblycercus holosericeus*)

Quick views for some of one at the Georgetown intersection.

MONTEZUMA OROPENDOLA (*Gymnostinops montezuma*)

Common; we started to take them for granted, despite the size and striking markings.

MAMMALS

COMMON OPOSSUM (*Didelphis marsupialis*)

One in a pasture during the night drive.

YUCATAN HOWLER MONKEY (*Alouatta pigra*)

Our first encounter was with two troops involved in a minor territorial show down at Caracol, and these great views were followed by more at Chan Chich, where we heard them day and night (3:30 a.m. seemed the most typical time, plus the loud ones as we were trying to see the Black-and-white Owl).

CENTRAL AMERICAN SPIDER MONKEY (*Ateles geoffroyi*)

This acrobatic animal was seen almost daily at Chan Chich, most memorably perhaps the two relaxed ones in the yellow-flowering tree, the ones that weren't exactly croodling but

YUCATAN SQUIRREL (*Sciurus yucatanensis*)

One.

DEPPE'S SQUIRREL (*Sciurus deppei*)

A little more common.

CENTRAL AMERICAN AGOUTI (*Dasyprocta punctata*)

One was seen at Caracol (in front of the fallen log, then under it).

GRAY FOX (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*)

One coming to food at Hidden Valley was seen by some night owls; we also saw two of this small form during our night drive at Chan Chich. And what does scumber mean?

NORTHERN RACCOON (*Procyon lotor*)

One during our night drive was buried in clusters of fruit in a tree.

STRIPED HOG-NOSED SKUNK (*Conepatus semistriatus*)

Marscha saw one at Laguna Seca, tail held high.

COLLARED PECCARY (*Tayassu tajacu*)

We had one herd along the road on our return from Laguna Seca, and some folks disturbed one in Chan Chich Creek.

WHITE-TAILED DEER (*Odocoileus virginianus*)

Common in the pastures around Gallon Jug, but we couldn't find any of the natural born deer killers we wanted to find.

Additional Comments

There were a number of other critters, including, in no specific order:

Giant Cave Cockroach

several scorpions, glowing chartreuse in Jim's UV flashlight

Tropical King Snake = rat snake (adult in road, juv. by cabanas)

Basilisks *Basiliscus vittatus*

Fer-de-Lance--good spotting Denis, after three of us had stepped on or over it! Plus two dead ones, one still twitching in the garden.

Barbara amarilla *Bothrops asper*

Army Ants--a half dozen swarms, with attendant birds.

Leaf Cutters--endless colonies.

Morelet's Crocodile *Crocodylus moreletii* ("caiman")

Central American River Turtle *Dermatemys mawii*

turtle sp.

various *Anolis* lizards

numerous butterflies, including Postman Butterfly and Zebra Butterfly

brown toad sp.

bee swarm

cha05p-RW