



Field Guides Tour Report

Holiday Colombia: Santa Marta Escape 2015

Dec 29, 2015 to Jan 6, 2016
Richard Webster & Angel Ortiz

For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).



Happiness is enjoying the evening view from El Dorado as the last hummingbirds come to drink, the Band-tailed Guans slip off, Happy Hour and Dinner approach, not to mention a good night's sleep before another exciting day. (Photo by guide Richard Webster)

Good weather helped with the good birding, and we enjoyed a 9000-foot elevational transect from the Caribbean to the top of the San Lorenzo ridge, along the way enjoying views of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta and the gardens and feeders of ProAves' El Dorado Lodge.

While the endemic birds and habitats of the Sierra were the feature, we started with some very different birding along the coast, and our first endemic was Chestnut-winged Chachalaca near Barranquilla. Some who arrived early enjoyed a morning excursion to Isla Salamanca (unique species are marked with "Pre-Tour"), and we birded again on the island two more times, including a visit to Parque Nacional Isla Salamanca and its boardwalk through the lovely mangrove forest. Highlights included Northern Screamer, Chestnut Piculet, Russet-throated Puffbird, Bicolored Conebill, and many birds of marshes and open country.

Moving east, we traveled to Riohacha, on the edge of the Guajira Peninsula. Our birding was in the general vicinity of the tiny community of Camarones, where the large lagoon was good for a variety of herons, shorebirds, gulls, and terns, but no flamingos. Our focus was on a set of species endemic to this arid region of Colombia and Venezuela, and we found most of them, including Vermilion Cardinal, White-whiskered Spinetail, Tocuyo Sparrow (brief), Slender-billed Tyrannulet, Buffy Hummingbird, Bare-eyed Pigeon, Black-crested Antshrike, and Glaucous Tanager. A vagrant Whistling Heron was a major surprise.

We started our journey into the mountains with a night in Minca, enlivened by the community's celebrations of the New Year, and birded there, finding many widespread tropical species, featuring good views of singing Rufous-and-white and Rufous-breasted wrens, plus a couple of specialties: Scaled Piculet and Golden-winged Sparrow.

For many, simply being at El Dorado Lodge was a highlight. The hummingbird feeders were busy with stunning hummingbirds, with the bonus of a male Black-backed Thornbill that had settled in for a long stay; the banana feeders attracted Band-tailed Guans, Blue-naped Chlorophonias, and Black-capped Tanagers; and the combination of the compost pile and grain feeders produced views of Black-fronted Wood-Quail, Santa Marta Brush-Finch, and Band-tailed and Sickle-winged guans.

Birding around the lodge also turned up such interesting birds as Emerald Toucanet, Black-throated Tody-Tyrant, and Sierra Nevada Brush-Finch, with the terrific bonus of a roosting individual of the undescribed screech-owl. The views were fabulous on several evenings, featuring the outline of Isla Salamanca in between Cienega Grande and the Caribbean. The food was good, and we were treated royally by the staff.

On two mornings early departures brought us bouncing to stupendous sunrise views to the main Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta and positioned us for a morning rush of birds that included many endemics, including the elusive Santa Marta Parakeet, scarce Santa Marta Bush-Tyrant, skulking Santa Marta Warbler, dashing White-tailed Starfrontlet, and more common and cooperative birds like Black-cheeked Mountain-Tanager, Yellow-crowned Redstart. We also pursued some understory species, only hearing Santa Marta Antpitta, but seeing Rufous Antpitta, Brown-rumped Tapaculo, Rusty-headed Spinetail, and the "Santa Marta" Gray-breasted Wood-Wren.

We also birded the forests at lower elevations, finding two special hummingbirds in a garden, Santa Marta Blossomcrown and Santa Marta Woodstar, and several other endemics, including White-lored Warbler. We again looked for some skulkers, with patience seeing Santa Marta Foliage-gleaner, Santa Marta Tapaculo, and Rusty-breasted Antpitta. Some other good finds on the forested slopes included White-tipped Quetzal, Strong-billed and Black-banded woodcreepers, and Golden-breasted Fruiteater.

Our tour was into a much-threatened landscape, of which the Reserva Natural de Las Aves El Dorado is protecting an important part. Using the conservation information from BirdLife International, we encountered three Endangered, six Vulnerable, and eight Near Threatened species during our trip.

--Richard

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

BIRDS

Anhimidae (Screamers)

NORTHERN SCREAMER (*Chauna chavaria*) – Pre-tour: Good views in the telescope at one standing on top of a distant tree. It stayed there so we could look again and again during an hour in the area. This is only the third time we have seen it here. It is considered "Near Threatened." Thanks, Linda.

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) – Lovely looks at a few close ones, and distant flocks totaling a few hundred in the marshes of Isla Salamanca.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Anas discors*) – Seen on two visits to Isla Salamanca, over a thousand wintering birds on one visit, around a hundred on the other, plus a single at Camarones. [b]

Cracidae (Guans, Chachalacas, and Curassows)

CHESTNUT-WINGED CHACHALACA (*Ortalis garrula*) – This endemic was heard wonderfully and seen fairly well near Barranquilla our first morning (an average encounter); they melt away as the sun comes up. [E]

BAND-TAILED GUAN (*Penelope argyrotis*) – This species has become increasingly easy to see well at RNA El Dorado, and on this visit it was visiting the feeding platforms daily--great views and photos.

SICKLE-WINGED GUAN (*Chamaepetes goudotii sanctaemarthae*) – Good views for some folks twice at El Dorado, where one occasionally came to the compost pile. An additional bird was seen on top of the San Lorenzo ridge.

Odontophoridae (New World Quail)

BLACK-FRONTED WOOD-QUAIL (*Odontophorus atrifrons*) – There were at least four sightings, once briefly from a moving vehicle, the other three times there were great views for those who were birding from the veranda when pairs or trios visited the compost pile and grain feeders. It is considered "Near Threatened," with a population under 7,000.

Fregatidae (Frigatebirds)

MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD (*Fregata magnificens*) – A few were seen during each transit along the coast, and several were hanging over Camarones.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – Small flocks were on Isla Salamanca and at Camarones.

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

BROWN PELICAN (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) – Seen from a moving bus along the coast and on the mudflats at Camarones.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

RUFESCENT TIGER-HERON (*Tigrisoma lineatum*) – Sandra spotted an immature along the stream behind our lunch stop en route to the Guajira. Although widespread in Colombia, an unusual species for this tour.

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – Wintering birds near the southern end of the range were on Isla Salamanca (2) and at Camarones (4). [b]

COCOI HERON (*Ardea cocoi*) – This striking relative of the Great Blue was seen in small numbers on Isla Salamanca.

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – Fairly common in the coastal wetlands.

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*) – Ditto.

LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*) – A few in coastal wetlands.

TRICOLORED HERON (*Egretta tricolor*) – Two were seen on Isla Salamanca during our second visit.

REDDISH EGRET (*Egretta rufescens*) – Five were at Camarones, all dark phase birds. A couple put on a good show, running around and occasionally doing some canopy feeding. It is considered "Near Threatened" with a population of under 20,000 (and on minimal data from us, it has been declining here, especially white-phase birds).

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Small flocks were seen occasionally along the coastal plain, often with domestic stock, just like the world over.

GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens*) – Pre-tour: One on Isla Salamanca, a wintering bird near the southern end of its range. [b]

STRIATED HERON (*Butorides striata*) – One or two were seen while birding on Isla Salamanca.

WHISTLING HERON (*Syrigma sibilatrix*) – Beyond being a beautiful bird, it was also fun to see the excitement of our local expert, Luis, for whom it was a lifebird. Whistling Heron is widespread in the llanos of Colombia and Venezuela, but it is rarely recorded on the west side of the Andes (older books show no records, but there are many more birders now).

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – Pre-tour: We flushed a small number from a roost on Isla Salamanca.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

WHITE IBIS (*Eudocimus albus*) – A lovely flock landed at a cattle tank near Camarones, drinking before moving on.

SCARLET IBIS (*Eudocimus ruber*) – A couple of birds with the White Ibis were getting good color, but we were puzzled by several others that were pinkish ibis. Hybrids are known between White and Scarlet, and that is what these probably were, rather than young Scarlet moulting into adult plumage (however, the literature consulted is less than helpful).

GLOSSY IBIS (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – Small numbers were feeding in the marshes on Isla Salamanca.

BARE-FACED IBIS (*Phimosus infuscatus*) – We had good views on Isla Salamanca, where it was fairly common in pastures and marshes.

ROSEATE SPOONBILL (*Platalea ajaja*) – Several dozen were at Camarones, either feeding in the estuary or in lovely light overhead.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*) – On this tour, they were absent from the upper ridge, but otherwise a common bird, seen daily.

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*) – As usual, less common than Black, but common and widespread, scarce to absent only on the forested upper slopes.

LESSER YELLOW-HEADED VULTURE (*Cathartes burrovianus*) – This vulture of wetlands and savannahs is fairly common on Isla Salamanca, where we had good views. Linda's photos showed the interesting colors and structure (like a ruff) on the head.

KING VULTURE (*Sarcoramphus papa*) – Two striking adults circling below us at El Dorado provided a thrill enhanced by the forested ridges as a backdrop.

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*) – Pre-Tour: Two wintering birds were on Isla Salamanca. [b]

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

PEARL KITE (*Gampsonyx swainsonii*) – Linda spotted a soaring bird near Camarones that later reappeared and perched on top of a nearby tree. Great views, and a particular favorite of Bill.

BLACK-COLLARED HAWK (*Busarellus nigricollis*) – Michael spotted a perched adult on Isla Salamanca, which was followed by another good view on our return passage.

SNAIL KITE (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*) – We had frequent views of perched and foraging birds at the marshes of Isla Salamanca.

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK (PLAIN-BREASTED) (*Accipiter striatus ventralis*) – Two singles were seen on the San Lorenzo ridge, Myles's photos helping to resolve the ID of a distant one. These are residents, rather than northern migrants, populations in this area sometimes being split as Plain-breasted Hawk.

CRANE HAWK (*Geranospiza caerulescens*) – One in Barranquilla was seen by part of the group as we left our Chachalaca spot.

SAVANNA HAWK (*Buteogallus meridionalis*) – Singles were seen on Isla Salamanca and en route to the Guajira.

ROADSIDE HAWK (*Rupornis magnirostris*) – Just one of this widespread bird.

WHITE-RUMPED HAWK (*Parabuteo leucorrhous*) – Sandra spotted one moving along the San Lorenzo ridge; it kept moving, and was missed by a few. Genetic studies produced a surprise: It belongs in the same genus as Harris's Hawk!

GRAY-LINED HAWK (*Buteo nitidus*) – A soaring adult was seen at the toll station en route to Riohacha. As split from Gray Hawk, which resides from Costa Rica north.

BROAD-WINGED HAWK (*Buteo platypterus*) – About a dozen in the mountains, wintering birds, although a circling group of 5+ seemed more like a migrant group but on a date when migration seemed unlikely (5 January). [b]

ZONE-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo albonotatus*) – An adult on Isla Salamanca was a good find; widespread in the region, but low density.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

PURPLE GALLINULE (*Porphyrio martinicus*) – Pre-Tour: Several on Isla Salamanca.

COMMON GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*) – In small numbers in the marshes of Isla Salamanca.

Aramidae (Limpkin)

LIMPKIN (*Aramus guarauna*) – Good views of small numbers in the marshes on Isla Salamanca, this snail-eating species was sharing habitat with the Snail Kites.

Burhinidae (Thick-knees)

DOUBLE-STRIPED THICK-KNEE (*Burhinus bistriatus*) – Virgilio spotted a pair that was resting under an isolated tree along the highway to Riohacha. Good views of a bird we usually miss.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-NECKED STILT (*Himantopus mexicanus*) – A few in the marshes on Isla Salamanca.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

SOUTHERN LAPWING (*Vanellus chilensis*) – This noisy bird was seen well in pastures and along the edges of wetlands on the coastal plain.

Jacaniidae (Jacanas)

WATTLED JACANA (*Jacana jacana*) – Small numbers were feeding in the marshes on Isla Salamanca. Many of these were relatively black, typical of local breeding subspecies.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*) – Three on Isla Salamanca. [b]

SOLITARY SANDPIPER (*Tringa solitaria*) – Wintering birds were fairly common (for a Solitary bird!) in wetlands on the coastal plain. [b]

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – One was seen on the estuary at Camarones. [b]
WILLET (*Tringa semipalmata*) – A flock of 15 was on the estuary at Camarones. They looked like "Western" Willets. [b]
LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*) – Pre-Tour: One on Isla Salamanca. [b]
WHIMBREL (*Numenius phaeopus*) – Two at Camarones. [b]
MARbled GODWIT (*Limosa fedoa*) – One at Camarones on 31 December; it is rare this far south, but almost regular at this spot. [b]

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

LAUGHING GULL (*Leucophaeus atricilla*) – Perhaps 50 at Camarones, fewer than normal.
LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus fuscus*) – A third-winter bird at Camarones would once have seemed like a great rarity, but it has become regular at this locality (as well as expanding greatly in North America). [b]
LARGE-BILLED TERN (*Phaetusa simplex*) – A tern of large rivers, it is common along the Rio Magdalena, but usually not conspicuous at our birding spots; this year it was present in good numbers. Great views of this striking bird.
GULL-BILLED TERN (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) – Pre-Tour: a few in winter plumage were foraging over a drying pond on Isla Salamanca.
CASPIAN TERN (*Hydroprogne caspia*) – Fairly common at Camarones, with a few more on Isla Salamanca. [b]
COMMON TERN (*Sterna hirundo*) – One at Camarones. [b]
ROYAL TERN (*Thalasseus maximus*) – Common at Camarones (perhaps 300); lovely looks. Also a few along Isla Salamanca from a moving bus.
SANDWICH TERN (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*) – Fairly common at Camarones, mixed in with the other resting terns. [b]
BLACK SKIMMER (*Rynchops niger*) – A dozen at Camarones.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – As usual, highly linked to human occupancy! [I]
PALE-VENTED PIGEON (*Patagioenas cayennensis*) – A flock was seen in flight below us on the ridge at Minca.
BARE-EYED PIGEON (*Patagioenas corensis*) – Small numbers of this distinctive pigeon were seen in flight near the Guajira, and one perched for telescope views. Bared-eyed Pigeon is a regional endemic, occurring in arid areas along the Caribbean coast of South America.
BAND-TAILED PIGEON (WHITE-NECKED) (*Patagioenas fasciata albilinea*) – Band-tails were seen daily on the San Lorenzo ridge, from middle elevations to the top. Nice telescope views.
COMMON GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina passerina*) – Small numbers were in the Guajira region, including a bird on a nest at Camarones on 31 December. [N]
RUDDY GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina talpacoti*) – Common on the coastal plain, overlapping with Common Ground-Dove.
SCALED DOVE (*Columbina squammata*) – This handsome relative of Inca Dove was seen in small numbers on Isla Salamanca and near Camarones.
WHITE-TIPPED DOVE (*Leptotila verreauxi*) – Daily, including daily good views at El Dorado, where regular visitors to the compost and feeders.
LINED QUAIL-DOVE (*Zenytgon linearis*) – Heard regularly in the montane forest, but we did not get lucky with this one. [*]
EARED DOVE (*Zenaida auriculata*) – A few of this relative of Mourning Dove, mostly in flight in open areas.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

SQUIRREL CUCKOO (*Piaya cayana*) – Michael got us on one of this tropical classic moving through the canopy above the road above Minca.
GREATER ANI (*Crotophaga major*) – Pre-Tour: Good views on Isla Salamanca.
SMOOTH-BILLED ANI (*Crotophaga ani*) – Seen on each visit to Isla Salamanca, where overlapping with Groove-billed.
GROOVE-BILLED ANI (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*) – Common from Isla Salamanca to Camarones, where the only ani in the arid areas.

Strigidae (Owls)

SCREECH-OWL SP. NOV. (*Megascops sp. nov.*) – Heard regularly around our rooms at El Dorado. Angel knew of a recently-discovered day roost, and took those who were up for a steep trail to see it. Still undescribed, this is presumably the same screech-owl that Todd and Carriker collected about a century ago, but were hesitant to describe on the basis of only one specimen. [E]
MOTTLED OWL (*Ciccaba virgata*) – Heard by Sandra from her room. [*]

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

LESSER NIGHTHAWK (*Chordeiles acutipennis*) – Luis spotted a roosting bird at Camarones; great looks at close range.
BAND-WINGED NIGHTJAR (*Systellura longirostris*) – The third vehicle was the lucky one this time, spotting a bird as it flushed from the road on the San Lorenzo ridge.
COMMON PAURAUQUE (*Nyctidromus albicollis*) – One vehicle also flushed one lower down on the ridge, and it was heard at dawn near Barranquilla as we were looking for the Chestnut-winged Chachalacas.

Apodidae (Swifts)

WHITE-COLLARED SWIFT (*Streptoprocne zonaris*) – Regular sightings, from the coast to the ridgetop, thanks particularly to Linda's keen eye for swifts.
CHIMNEY SWIFT (*Chaetura pelagica*) – A flock above Minca on 1 January looked to the guide like Chimney, but not to a couple of others (who live with them in breeding season); perhaps best left as *Chaetura* sp., as a couple of other darkish-rumped species are possible, though less likely (and we know so little about this genus). Chimney Swift is considered "Near Threatened."

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

WHITE-NECKED JACOBIN (*Florisuga mellivora*) – This striking bird, part of the oldest lineage of hummingbirds, was pleasantly common at feeders in Minca.
RUFous-BREASTED HERMIT (*Glaucis hirsutus*) – Singles were occasional visitors to the feeders in Minca.
LONG-BILLED HERMIT (CENTRAL AMERICAN) (*Phaethornis longirostris susurrus*) – One was seen briefly by part of the group in forest part way up the San Lorenzo ridge.
PALE-BELLIED HERMIT (*Phaethornis anthophilus*) – One made a quick visit to the Hotel Minca feeders during our last stop there.
BROWN VIOLETEAR (*Colibri delphinae*) – At least two were visiting the El Dorado feeders intermittently during our stay, and were seen daily. A widespread species, but generally local and uncommon, so always a good find.

- GREEN VIOLETEAR** (*Colibri thalassinus*) – Common at upper elevations, particularly the throng at the El Dorado feeders.
- SPARKLING VIOLETEAR** (*Colibri coruscans*) – One was very successfully guarding some feeders at El Dorado. This species is scarce on the San Lorenzo ridge; sightings may involve visitors from the main Sierra.
- BLACK-THROATED MANGO** (*Anthracothorax nigricollis*) – Generally regular at the feeders at the Hotel Minca, they weren't this time! Fortunately a male made several appearances around lunch on our way out, to the relief of all, especially the guide who had made rash assurances, if not a guarantee! Bill's nephew will be pleased, too, to see the photos!
- SANTA MARTA BLOSSOMCROWN** (*Anthocephala floriceps*) – As usual, this species was scarce, and we were again dependent on seeing it in one of the gardens with the planted "mermelada" (*Streptosolen jamesonii*) flowers. Even there, it took patience to get good looks at a species that is low on the pecking order, and keeps a low profile. "Blossomcrown" was split into two species recently (Lozano-Jaramillo, Maria et al. 2014 PLOS One), the other one occurring in the Central Andes; the genus is endemic to Colombia. The un-split species is considered "Vulnerable," each split species presumably even more so. [E]
- BLACK-BACKED THORNBILL** (*Ramphomicron dorsale*) – One was again in temporary residence at the RNA El Dorado feeders, providing daily great views; the early dry season seems to be the best time. This endemic of the Sierra is perhaps just a visitor to the San Lorenzo ridge, and certainly to the lodge clearing. It is considered "Endangered," with no estimate of its population. [E]
- TYRIAN METALTAIL (SANTA MARTA)** (*Metallura tyrianthina districta*) – Occasional visitors were at the lodge feeders, and small numbers were in the more typical habitat of the upper San Lorenzo ridge.
- WHITE-TAILED STARFRONTLET** (*Coeligena phalerata*) – Never common, but often more conspicuous at the lodge feeders, this tour we had to settle for several quick, good looks on the San Lorenzo ridge (the bill prompting comparisons to Sword-billed in shape and partly in length), and very quick views at the El Dorado feeders. Apparently this species is now known from the Serrania de Perija of Colombia, and perhaps then in Venezuela, too. [E]
- LONG-BILLED STARHROAT** (*Heliomaster longirostris*) – One was seen at the Hotel Minca feeders on our second visit.
- SANTA MARTA WOODSTAR** (*Chaetocercus astreans*) – One of the least predictable endemics (seemingly an altitudinal migrant), we were fortunate to have several views of one or two coming to mermelada flowers in a garden. [E]
- RED-BILLED EMERALD** (*Chlorostilbon gibsoni nitens*) – We saw a handful in the arid habitats near Camarones. A paper by Gary Stiles (1996 Wilson Bull.) attributes birds here to this subspecies and includes it in Red-billed, although birds here have almost no red in the bill, and look intermediate to Blue-tailed, which occurs a short distance to the east. Cf. Handbook of the Birds of the World, which lumps them all.
- WHITE-VENTED PLUMELETEER** (*Chalybura buffonii*) – This large hummingbird was a regular visitor to feeders in Minca, and a few more were seen in the wild.
- CROWNED WOODNYMPH (COLOMBIAN VIOLET-CROWNED)** (*Thalaurania colombica colombica*) – Simply stunning, especially as on display at the RNA El Dorado feeders; one of the beautiful birds of the world. "Violet-crowned" has been re-lumped with "Green-crowned," which seems a reasonable decision.
- BUFFY HUMMINGBIRD** (*Leucippus fallax*) – Not the most dramatic hummingbird, but a scarce one with a limited range along the arid Caribbean coast of South America. Thanks, Luis!
- STEELY-VENTED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Amazilia saucerrottei*) – Common at feeders in Minca and in plantations well up the slope. Generally not dramatic, but in good light the breast is like a glistening green coat of mail.
- RUFOUS-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Amazilia tzacatl*) – Fairly common at the feeders in Minca, with a few more up and down the slope from there.
- SHINING-GREEN HUMMINGBIRD** (*Lepidopyga goudoti*) – One perched bird was seen well between Riohacha and Santa Marta; a scarce species here, more typical of the wetter Magdalena Valley.
- WHITE-CHINNED SAPPHIRE** (*Hylocharis cyanus*) – One male perched high overhead above Minca, providing good views of the thick, bright red bill, but not much else.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

- WHITE-TIPPED QUETZAL** (*Pharomachrus fulgidus*) – It took patience, but we had good views of a lovely pair on the San Lorenzo ridge. Even with patience, two others later remained heard only at and above the lodge.
- MASKED TROGON** (*Trogon personatus sanctaemartae*) – An uncommon bird of the montane forests, we had three encounters, the first (and best) coming at the entrance arch to the RNA El Dorado. Splits are almost certain in the main Andes of Ecuador and Colombia, and this subspecies, endemic to the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, has been suggested as a further split.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

- RINGED KINGFISHER** (*Megaceryle torquata*) – A couple of sightings on Isla Salamanca and behind our lunch stop in the foothills.
- GREEN KINGFISHER** (*Chloroceryle americana*) – Good views of a perched bird behind the restaurant.
- AMERICAN PYGMY KINGFISHER** (*Chloroceryle aenea*) – Not a rarity, but we don't often see it, let alone so well as we did in the mangroves at P.N. Isla Salamanca.

Bucconidae (Puffbirds)

- RUSSET-THROATED PUFFBIRD** (*Hypnelus ruficollis*) – We had good views at several spots on Isla Salamanca and around Camarones. The ruficollis group (Russet-throated) is split by some from the bicinctus (Double-banded) group of the llanos.

Ramphastidae (Toucans)

- EMERALD TOUCANET (SANTA MARTA)** (*Aulacorhynchus prasinus lautus*) – We had good views from the San Lorenzo ridge (eliciting oohs and aahs for the shade of green in the bright sun) down to the Lodge. Split by some, this endemic subspecies is very similar in appearance, voice, and habitat to the others, and the genetic distance is unimpressive.
- GROOVE-BILLED TOUCANET (YELLOW-BILLED)** (*Aulacorhynchus sulcatus calorhynchus*) – A wonderfully responsive pair provided good views in the middle-elevation forest (this species largely occurs below Emerald); we saw this subspecies of the "Yellow-billed" group, which hybridizes with "Groove-billed" in Venezuela.
- COLLARED ARACARI** (*Pteroglossus torquatus*) – Brief views of a pair overhead near Minca.
- KEEL-BILLED TOUCAN** (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*) – Mostly heard this trip, with a few brief or distant sightings.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

SCALED PICULET (*Picumnus squamulatus*) – We had good views of one on the outskirts of Minca; this tiny woodpecker is uncommon on our route, and is not seen on most trips.

CHESTNUT PICULET (*Picumnus cinnamomeus*) – Sharon spotted one of this lovely piculet in the mangroves at P.N. Isla Salamanca, which was a good thing because we did not see any more. It has a limited range, and is invariably a lifebird for all.

RED-CROWNED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes rubricapillus*) – The common "Red-bellied" type of the lowlands.

GOLDEN-OLIVE WOODPECKER (GOLDEN-OLIVE) (*Colaptes rubiginosus alleni*) – After a quick one on our way up the mountain, Ellen spotted a pair that provided good views as we returned to the lowlands.

SPOT-BREASTED WOODPECKER (*Colaptes punctigula*) – Pre-tour: A responsive pair was seen on Isla Salamanca.

CRIMSON-CRESTED WOODPECKER (*Campephilus melanoleucos*) – After a frustratingly brief first encounter with this large woodpecker, we had good views of a different pair on our way down the mountain.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

COLLARED FOREST-FALCON (*Micrastur semitorquatus*) [✱]

CRESTED CARACARA (*Caracara cheriway*) – Crested Caracaras were common along the coastal plain, particularly in the dry areas around Camarones.

YELLOW-HEADED CARACARA (*Milvago chimachima*) – We had multiple sightings from the bus, and a few while birding in the field on Isla Salamanca and at Camarones.

MERLIN (TAIGA) (*Falco columbarius columbarius*) – A wintering bird took a small landbird right in front of us at Camarones, something reddish that prompted reactions of Cardinal, Spinetail, and Ground-Dove! [b]

BAT FALCON (*Falco ruficularis*) – We saw one hunting over the top of the San Lorenzo ridge (a higher elevation than normal--2600m) and Linda spotted another from the car as we returned to the lowlands.

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) – Pre-Tour: A perched adult on Isla Salamanca was a fun sighting. It was probably a boreal migrant, but there are resident Peregrines in Colombia, too.

Psittacidae (New World and African Parrots)

ORANGE-CHINNED PARAKEET (*Brotogeris jugularis*) – Small groups were seen around Minca.

RED-BILLED PARROT (*Pionus sordidus saturatus*) – This Pionus parrot was seen or heard daily at middle elevations, mostly as fly-bys, but also perched, e.g., at Palo Alto.

BLUE-HEADED PARROT (*Pionus menstruus*) – This is the Pionus of lower elevations, which we saw around Minca.

SCALY-NAPED PARROT (*Amazona mercenarius*) – Scaly-naped Parrot (Amazon) was unusually scarce on the San Lorenzo ridge, with just a couple of pairs on our morning visits; no perched views, just calling and in flight.

GREEN-RUMPED PARROTLET (*Forpus passerinus*) – Our only encounter was en route to Riohacha at the toll station.

SANTA MARTA PARAKEET (*Pyrrhura viridicata*) – We had good luck with this very missable species, seeing them perched at length the first time, then close and vivid though brief in flight the second. Eucalyptus branches may not be the most natural setting, but to have telescope views we will accept the Australian accent. It is considered "Endangered," with a population of 3,300-6,700 individuals. [E]

BROWN-THROATED PARAKEET (*Eupsittula pertinax*) – This is the common parakeet of the coastal plain, seen even in Barranquilla.

MILITARY MACAW (*Ara militaris*) – A couple of distant squawks was all we could manage; a rare bird we usually miss. It is considered "Vulnerable." [✱]

SCARLET-FRONTED PARAKEET (*Psittacara wagleri wagleri*) – Like Scaly-naped Parrot, scarcer than normal on the ridgetop, with small groups seen mostly in flight. It is considered "Near Threatened."

Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds)

BLACK-CRESTED ANTSHRIKE (*Sakesphorus canadensis pulchellus*) – Seen twice, first in Barranquilla, then near Camarones. Note the subspecies; splits are expected.

WHITE-FRINGED ANTWREN (NORTHERN) (*Formicivora grisea intermedia*) – We had good looks at Camarones, especially of a female foraging on the ground. Note the subspecies; splits are expected in this species, too. The females are especially distinctive, with black streaking on a white breast, rather than unstreaked buffy.

SANTA MARTA ANTIBIRD (*Drymophila hellmayri*) – With patience, good views were obtained of a responsive but quiet pair. This is a recent split of Long-tailed Antbird, and is endemic to Santa Marta. It is similar in plumage and voice, but occurs in a rather different habitat, lower elevation bracken scrub rather than higher elevation bamboo. [E]

Grallariidae (Antpittas)

SANTA MARTA ANTPITTA (*Grallaria bangsi*) – Unfortunately, the feeding program at the lodge ended a couple of years ago (and we did not hear any there this visit), and we have had to work to see it, and we did not succeed this year, hearing several at close range but not finding the right hole or the right angle. It is considered "Vulnerable," with a population under 10,000. [E✱]

RUFIOUS ANTPITTA (SIERRA NEVADA) (*Grallaria rufula spatiator*) – Our work on this one did pay off, with good views for everyone of this skulker. The complex variation in this species is the subject of a major study that may produce six or more splits. Voices certainly vary greatly, and the split of this endemic subspecies is expected to be one of them.

RUSTY-BREASTED ANTPITTA (RUSTY-BREASTED) (*Grallaricula ferrugineipectus ferrugineipectus*) – We also pursued this species, twice obtaining views of birds perched on low branches and saplings inside the forest. A split is expected in this one as well, separating the northern subspecies from populations in Ecuador and Peru.

Rhinocryptidae (Tapaculos)

SANTA MARTA TAPACULO (*Scytalopus sanctaemartae*) – Our first encounter produced glimpses for a few, our second looks for all, ranging from many glimpses to even some binocular views, but it was fast on each transit past the speaker. This endemic is one of many splits of Rufous-vented Tapaculo. [E]

BROWN-RUMPED TAPACULO (*Scytalopus latebricola*) – After several failures, we found a responsive bird, and, more importantly, a good place to see it, ending up with views of it vibrating its tail as it sang from a low perch. The original Brown-rumped Tapaculo has been split (e.g., Spillmann's), with latebricola, the form endemic to the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, retaining the original common name. [E]

Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)

- RUDDY WOODCREEPER** (*Dendrocincla homochroa*) – A rare bird here and near the southern end of its range (much more common in Central America); we had a very nice chance encounter with a single bird that landed near us, paused, and then went on its way.
- BLACK-BANDED WOODCREEPER** (*Dendrocolaptes picumnus*) – A responsive bird was not easy to see, but gave us multiple chances above the Lodge.
- STRONG-BILLED WOODCREEPER (ANDEAN/NORTHERN)** (*Xiphocolaptes promeropirhynchus sanctaemartae*) – We had a couple of good views on one morning, and heard several more from the lodge to the top of the ridge.
- COCOA WOODCREEPER** (*Xiphorhynchus susurrans*) – We found a responsive bird, but initially it kept disappearing into the shrubbery. Eventually it crawled up a trunk into good view. This is a split of Buff-throated Woodcreeper.
- STRAIGHT-BILLED WOODCREEPER** (*Dendroplex picus*) – This strongly-marked woodcreeper was seen well on the coastal slope, perhaps best in the mangroves at P.N. Isla Salamanca. D. p. picirostris.
- MONTANE WOODCREEPER** (*Lepidocolaptes lacrymiger sanctaemartae*) – Seen in montane forest on three days, this endemic subspecies is one that has been proposed as a split. Good views.
- PLAIN XENOPS** (*Xenops minutus*) – Good views of one at 1300m elevation.
- PALE-LEGGED HORNERO (CARIBBEAN)** (*Furnarius leucopus longirostris*) – After quick views of one, we had longer (though not lengthy) views of a pair near Camarones. Note the subspecies; splits are likely, although this one may remain grouped with the "Pacific" form. We also saw a couple of mud nests.
- MONTANE FOLIAGE-GLEANER** (*Anabacerthia striaticollis anxia*) – This furnariid was a regular member of mixed flocks at middle elevations.
- SANTA MARTA FOLIAGE-GLEANER** (*Clibanornis rufipectus*) – A silent bird responded without detection until Angel fortunately spotted it, and Michael later got the rest of us on it as it perched in good view. Overall, for what is a very difficult bird to see, a very nice encounter. After much work by Niels Krabbe and others ((Krabbe, Bull. B.O.C.; Claramunt et al. Condor 2013), this species, formerly included in Ruddy Foliage-gleaner, has been split and placed in its proper genus. It is considered "Near Threatened." [E]
- SPOTTED BARBTAIL** (*Premnoplex brunnescens coloratus*) – One along the road above the Lodge was seen by Sandra and perhaps one or two others.
- STREAK-CAPPED SPINETAIL** (*Cranioleuca hellmayri*) – We had daily encounters, seen and/or heard, at middle and upper elevations of the forested San Lorenzo ridge. With one specimen from the Serrania de Perija of Venezuela, it is technically not an endemic, but as a practical matter, this is the only place to see it.
- YELLOW-CHINNED SPINETAIL** (*Certhiaxis cinnamomeus*) – Seen well (the whole bird, not so much the slightly yellow chin!) on Isla Salamanca.
- PALE-BREASTED SPINETAIL** (*Synallaxis albescens*) – One was seen by part of the group at Camarones, and another on a scrubby slope above Minca.
- RUSTY-HEADED SPINETAIL** (*Synallaxis fuscorufa*) – This endemic relative of Rufous Spinetail is common by voice on the upper ridge, but requires time and patience; our best views came when we least expected them, and the birds simply popped out. It is considered "Vulnerable," with a population of 2,500 to 9,999 individuals, i.e., somewhat uncertain, but not large! [E]
- WHITE-WHISKERED SPINETAIL** (*Synallaxis candei*) – We saw this lovely spinetail, one of the prettiest, twice in the arid woodlands of the Guajira near Camarones. It is restricted to the Caribbean littoral.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

- SOUTHERN BEARDLESS-TYRANULET** (*Camptostoma obsoletum*) [*]
- WHITE-THROATED TYRANULET** (*Mecocerculus leucophrys*) – Heard regularly, and seen periodically, on the San Lorenzo Ridge.
- FOREST ELAENIA** (*Myiopagis gaimardii*) – One was seen near Minca.
- YELLOW-BELLIED ELAENIA** (*Elaenia flavogaster*) – First on Isla Salamanca and then again near Minca.
- LESSER ELAENIA** (*Elaenia chiriquensis*) – One near Minca looked like this species versus Yellow-bellied, but was silent, and so perhaps a question mark.
- MOUNTAIN ELAENIA** (*Elaenia frantzii*) – A few were seen in shrubbery on both visits to the top of the ridge.
- OLIVE-STRIPED FLYCATCHER** (*Mionectes olivaceus*) – We saw them in forest at middle elevations on three days. a.k.a. Olive-striped Fruit-Tyrant, a somewhat strange name, but this genus is frugivorous, so accurate.
- OCHRE-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** (*Mionectes oleagineus*) – One was seen at Minca.
- PALTRY TYRANULET (MOUNTAIN)** (*Zimmerius vilissimus improbus*) – Seen twice at middle elevations, although the viewing was difficult high in the trees, where the birds frequented mistletoe clumps. As Linda noted, the bird with the head pattern like a Blue-headed Vireo. As for what they are, that is still being studied (Rheindt, Frank et al. Biol. J. Linn. Soc. 2013), but the initial study points to at least three, if not four groups in the original Paltry Tyrannulet. The birds of northeastern Colombia are most closely related to *petersi* of Venezuela, one of those splits (Venezuelan), but may prove to be separate. The population we saw is not named separately, and is presumably part of *improbus* (called Specious as split by the IOC).
- GOLDEN-FACED TYRANULET (COOPMAN'S)** (*Zimmerius chrysops minimus*) – We had one in the same area as the previous, again a small bird in a tall tree! And this is another taxonomic quagmire. Some lists currently split birds from Venezuela and NE Colombia as Coopman's Tyrannulet; *minimus*, endemic to Santa Marta, could potentially be further split, but has not yet been studied genetically or vocally (see generally Rheindt, Frank, Biol. J. Linn. Soc. 2013). They are strangely quiet here.
- NORTHERN SCRUB-FLYCATCHER** (*Sublegatus arenarum*) – Several were seen in the dry woodland near Camarones.
- SLENDER-BILLED TYRANULET** (*Inezia tenuirostris*) – Usually conspicuous, we only saw one near Camarones on this trip. Fortunately, it was very responsive and was seen well. This is another regional specialty of the arid Caribbean coast.
- PALE-EYED PYGMY-TYRANT** (*Atalotriccus pilaris*) – We heard it several times above Minca, but could not spot one. [*]
- BLACK-THROATED TODY-TYRANT** (*Hemitriccus granadensis lehmanni*) – We ended up with good looks at a cooperative pair at the edge of the lodge grounds. This subspecies is endemic to the Sierra.
- SLATE-HEADED TODY-FLYCATCHER** (*Poecilotriccus sylvia*) – A responsive bird in the mangroves at P.N. Isla Salamanca provided good views.
- COMMON TODY-FLYCATCHER** (*Todirostrum cinereum*) – One or two were seen on each visit to Isla Salamanca.
- YELLOW-OLIVE FLYCATCHER (SANTA MARTA)** (*Tolmomyias sulphurescens exortivus*) – One near Minca was seen by only a few.
- YELLOW-BREASTED FLYCATCHER (OCHRE-LORED)** (*Tolmomyias flaviventris aurentus*) – We saw a pair in woodland near the toll station.
- RUDDY-TAILED FLYCATCHER** (*Terenotriccus erythrurus*) – One was seen in an otherwise rather birdless stop on a warm, breezy mid-afternoon on the way to Riohacha.

CINNAMON FLYCATCHER (*Pyrrhomyias cinnamomeus assimilis*) – This extra-cinnamon endemic subspecies does not seem like a likely split, but it was nice to see on exposed perches down the road from the lodge.

OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER (*Contopus cooperi*) – A total of four wintering birds, a good number of this uncommon species. Folks greatly preferred the views of the one Myles spotted above Palo Alto to that first speck beyond Minca! It is considered "Near Threatened." [b]

TROPICAL PEWEE (*Contopus cinereus*) – Several were seen foraging around Minca.

BLACK PHOEBE (*Sayornis nigricans*) – One was along the lovely stream by our hotel in Minca, and a couple were seen up the road, including one in the garden at Palo Alto.

VERMILION FLYCATCHER (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*) – Just a few near Camarones (fewer than normal?).

SANTA MARTA BUSH-TYRANT (*Myiotheretes pernix*) – Seen twice high on the San Lorenzo ridge. This inconspicuous species can be missed, so it is always a relief to have good views. It is considered "Endangered," with a population under 1,700. [E]

PIED WATER-TYRANT (*Fluvicola pica*) – Pre-Tour: In the wetlands on Isla Salamanca.

WHITE-HEADED MARSH TYRANT (*Arundinicola leucocephala*) – Pre-Tour: Also in Isla Salamanca's wetlands.

YELLOW-BELLIED CHAT-TYRANT (*Ochthoeca diadema jesupi*) – We had better views the second morning on the high ridge.

CATTLE TYRANT (*Machetornis rixosa*) – Seen on Isla Salamanca and at Camarones, including in association with domestic stock.

BRIGHT-RUMPED ATTLA (*Attila spadiceus*) [*]

DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) [*]

PANAMA FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus panamensis*) – This was the *Myiarchus* seen well in the mangroves at P.N. Isla Salamanca.

BROWN-CRESTED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus tyrannulus*) – We saw several near Camarones and another one below Minca.

GREAT KISKADEE (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) – Common on the coastal plain, including Isla Salamanca.

BOAT-BILLED FLYCATCHER (*Megarynchus pitangua*) – A distant bird from lunch the first day was followed by better views of two near Minca.

RUSTY-MARGINED FLYCATCHER (*Myiozetetes cayanensis*) – Seen during our walk around Minca.

SOCIAL FLYCATCHER (*Myiozetetes similis*) – First seen on Isla Salamanca, then around Minca.

GOLDEN-CROWNED FLYCATCHER (*Myiodynastes chrysocephalus*) – At least three appeared around El Dorado lodge daily, sometimes taking insects that had gathered by the lights during the night. Good views, even from the breakfast table that last morning. This relative of Sulphur-bellied has a similar squeaky-toy voice.

STREAKED FLYCATCHER (*Myiodynastes maculatus*) – Good views of a pair near Minca.

TROPICAL KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – Widespread and common on the coastal plain and on the lower slopes.

GRAY KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus dominicensis*) – A migrant from the north, although not exactly "boreal"; wintering birds from Caribbean breeding grounds were seen on Isla Salamanca and around Camarones, where this big-billed kingbird was fairly common. [b]

Cotingidae (Cotingas)

GOLDEN-BREASTED FRUITEATER (*Pipreola aureopectus*) – They were hard to spot, but most folks ended up with good views. One on the top of the ridge got away quickly, better views coming from several in a fruiting tree below the Lodge and again just above the lodge.

Tityridae (Tityras and Allies)

MASKED TITYRA (*Tityra semifasciata*) – Several were seen at middle elevations.

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

BROWN-CAPPED VIREO (*Vireo leucophrys*) – Two were seen well with one of our few mixed flocks at middle elevations.

RED-EYED VIREO (*Vireo olivaceus*) – One was seen en route to Riohacha and Bill had another one at the lodge. [b]

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

BLACK-CHESTED JAY (*Cyanocorax affinis*) – We saw several groups at middle elevations, and were surprised by three at 2600m at the top of the ridge, perhaps a dispersing group.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

BLUE-AND-WHITE SWALLOW (*Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*) – A small nesting colony was at one of the transmission tower sites on the ridge.

SOUTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) – One or two pairs were along the river behind our favorite lunch stop.

GRAY-BREASTED MARTIN (*Progne chalybea*) – A few pairs were breeding on Isla Salamanca, and a few others were seen along the coastal plain.

BROWN-CHESTED MARTIN (*Progne tapera*) – Two pairs were apparently nesting near the Gray-breasted Martins on Isla Salamanca. Within known range, but simply a species we do not normally see on this tour.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

HOUSE WREN (SOUTHERN) (*Troglodytes aedon musculus*) – A few resident birds along the coastal plain and up to Minca.

STRIPE-BACKED WREN (*Campylorhynchus nuchalis*) – Seen well on the Pre-Tour on Isla Salamanca, and briefly by some on the return.

BICOLORED WREN (*Campylorhynchus griseus*) – Many fine sightings of this big wren (the relative of Giant Wren), starting on Isla Salamanca, and including from the veranda at Minca.

RUFIOUS-BREASTED WREN (*Pheugopedius rutilus*) – What can be a reclusive bird was seen very well when a responsive pair stayed in view just above Minca our first afternoon there, and then the next morning another pair came into view along with the Rufous-and-white Wrens.

RUFIOUS-AND-WHITE WREN (*Thryophilus rufalbus*) – We usually hear this species, but often have difficulty seeing it. This year we had a nicely responsive pair that climbed into some relatively open bamboo that provided good views. But hearing them is the best--a wonderful song. T. r. cumanensis.

BUFF-BREASTED WREN (*Cantorchilus leucotis*) – Two birds responded in woodland en route to Riohacha, but views were brief/limited.

GRAY-BREASTED WOOD-WREN (ANACHORETA) (*Henicorhina leucophrys anachoreta*) – The presence of two populations on this one mountain slope has been known for more than a century. A recent study (Caro et al., J. Evol. Bio. 2013) analyzed song and genetics, and found these subspecies distinct without intergradation, almost certainly representing independent colonizations by Gray-breasted Wood-Wren from the Andes. We had good views of this upper elevation taxon on both visits to the upper ridge.

GRAY-BREASTED WOOD-WREN (BANGSI) (*Henicorhina leucophrys bangsi*) – This is the lower elevation population, the one around the lodge,

where it was seen at the compost, and lower, where it was also seen well (and heard frequently).

Poliptilidae (Gnatcatchers)

TROPICAL GNATCATCHER (TROPICAL) (*Poliptila plumbea plumbeiceps*) – Easily seen, responding frequently to pygmy-owl whistles, in the dry habitats of the Guajira region. Note the subspecies; Tropical Gnatcatcher is a highly varied species likely to be split.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

ORANGE-BILLED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH (*Catharus aurantirostris*) [*****]

SLATY-BACKED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH (*Catharus fuscater*) – We had one distant view of a bird in the track; not very satisfactory.

YELLOW-LEGGED THRUSH (*Turdus flavipes*) – Fairly common at middle elevations, with some good views, though often only quick views; some were singing on our last morning.

PALE-BREASTED THRUSH (*Turdus leucomelas*) – The common thrush of the Minca area and other lower elevation spots.

BLACK-HOODED THRUSH (*Turdus olivater*) – We usually find this thrush somewhat difficult to see well, but this trip there were repeated good views, including around El Dorado.

GREAT THRUSH (*Turdus fuscater*) – This huge thrush was easily seen on the ridge top. T. f. *cacozelus*, endemic to the Sierra.

WHITE-NECKED THRUSH (*Turdus albicollis*) – Most folks were able to get on one in a fruiting tree our first morning well above Minca; widespread, but scarce on this ridge.

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

TROPICAL MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus gilvus*) – We had good views in the dry, open habitats around Camarones.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia motacilla*) – One was along a foothill stream behind our restaurant on 30 December. This is near the southern end of its wintering range. [**b**]

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – Wintering birds were fairly common in the mangroves at P.N. Isla Salamanca. [**b**]

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER (*Mniotilta varia*) – At least four sightings in montane forest 1300-1900m, including on the lodge grounds. [**b**]

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER (*Protonotaria citrea*) – Beautifully bright birds were enjoyed on Isla Salamanca, where they are common in winter in the mangroves from August to early March. [**b**]

TENNESSEE WARBLER (*Oreothlypis peregrina*) – One of the most common wintering species on the Cuchillo de San Lorenzo. [**b**]

AMERICAN REDSTART (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – Uncommon to fairly common on the lower slopes, especially in the shade coffee zone above Minca. [**b**]

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER (*Setophaga fusca*) – Fairly common in montane forest from 1000 to 2600m on the San Lorenzo ridge, memorably including one eating moths from the window during our breakfast on the veranda. This species is breeding-bright all winter long. [**b**]

YELLOW WARBLER (NORTHERN) (*Setophaga petechia aestiva*) – Seen daily on the coastal slope, but no higher than Minca. [**b**]

BLACKPOLL WARBLER (*Setophaga striata*) – One at Las Gaviotas on 30 December was wintering unusually far north; most winter in Amazonia. [**b**]

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER (*Setophaga virens*) – One in introduced conifers at 2300m was a local rarity, although undoubtedly annual on the ridge. [**b**]

RUFIOUS-CAPPED WARBLER (CHESTNUT-CAPPED) (*Basileuterus rufifrons mesochrysus*) – We had good views of a couple of this lovely warbler on the lower slopes.

SANTA MARTA WARBLER (*Myiothlypis basilica*) – We had a little luck with this species, an uncommon and furtive species of the upper San Lorenzo ridge: Good views of small groups twice. It is considered "Vulnerable," with a population of 600-1,700 individuals. [**E**]

WHITE-LORED WARBLER (*Myiothlypis conspicillata*) – The commoner and more easily seen endemic warbler, found widely, mostly at middle elevations, but also to the top of the ridge once. It is considered "Near Threatened." [**E**]

SLATE-THROATED REDSTART (*Myioborus miniatus*) – Fairly common below the elevation of the next.

YELLOW-CROWNED REDSTART (*Myioborus flavivertex*) – This lovely "whitestart" was less conspicuous than normal, but we finished with multiple great views on the upper ridge, having a close approach by a couple of pairs and some nice song. [**E**]

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

GRAY-HEADED TANAGER (*Eucometis penicillata*) – Angel spotted them twice, the second time a trio that provided good views for all.

WHITE-LINED TANAGER (*Tachyphonus rufus*) – A female above Minca was followed by a pair that had colonized upslope to the garden at Palo Alto.

CRIMSON-BACKED TANAGER (*Ramphocelus dimidiatus*) – This beauty was seen several times in the foothills.

BLACK-CHEEKED MOUNTAIN-TANAGER (*Anisognathus melanogenys*) – On some tours this bird has been a challenge or not fully enjoyed, but they were common and easily seen on this visit, perhaps attracted to the upper ridge by a purple-flowering shrub. [**E**]

BLUE-GRAY TANAGER (*Thraupis episcopus*) – Common around Minca.

GLAUCOUS TANAGER (*Thraupis glaucocolpa*) – A scarce bird around Camarones, we were pleased to see three the first afternoon and one the following morning. It is another specialty of the arid Caribbean slope.

PALM TANAGER (*Thraupis palmarum*) – A few were seen around Minca.

BLUE-CAPPED TANAGER (*Thraupis cyanocephala margaritae*) – Seen on three days, but only a pair each time, from middle elevations to the top of the ridge.

BLACK-HEADED TANAGER (*Tangara cyanoptera*) – We did unusually poorly with this species, which is generally uncommon, but generally puts in a few good appearances; perhaps only two or three folks saw it, and not all that well.

BLACK-CAPPED TANAGER (*Tangara heinei*) – Not all that common, but multiple sightings in addition to the point blank views on the fruit feeder at El Dorado.

BAY-HEADED TANAGER (*Tangara gyrola*) – Fairly common at middle elevations.

SWALLOW TANAGER (*Tersina viridis*) – We had fairly good views of a few at Minca; usually we see many, at least later in March, and this species is known to be migratory, so perhaps we were early.

- BICOLORED CONEBILL** (*Conirostrum bicolor*) – We had some of our best views ever when a pair collected nesting material right in front of us in the mangroves at P.N. Isla Salamanca on 30 December. It is considered "Near Threatened" (mangroves are a much-threatened habitat). [N]
- BLACK FLOWERPIERCER** (*Diglossa humeralis nocticolor*) – One or two were seen on each visit to the upper ridge.
- WHITE-SIDED FLOWERPIERCER** (*Diglossa albilatera*) – A few were seen daily in the garden at El Dorado, visiting the flowering mermelada.
- BLUE-BLACK GRASSQUIT** (*Volatinia jacarina*) – A small group was in wet growth around a cattle tank near Camarones.
- THICK-BILLED SEED-FINCH** (*Sporophila funerea*) – Several were seen on the slopes well above Minca. This is the black, western half of the split of Lesser Seed-Finch.
- YELLOW-BELLIED SEEDEATER** (*Sporophila nigricollis*) – A few were foraging on a disturbed slope at Minca.
- PARAMO SEEDEATER** (*Catamenia homochroa oreophila*) – We had good, close views of foraging birds on Cuchillo de San Lorenzo. This is an endemic subspecies of what is overall an uncommon bird in the Andes.
- PILEATED FINCH** (*Coryphospingus pileatus*) – We had OK views of several at Camarones, sometimes in the same field of view as the White-fringed Antwren foraging on the ground.
- BANANAQUIT** (*Coereba flaveola*) – Two on Isla Salamanca on 30 December had nearly finished a nest in the mangroves. More Bananaquits were seen the next day around Camarones. [N]
- BLACK-FACED GRASSQUIT** (*Tiaris bicolor*) – Small numbers were seen around Camarones.
- BUFF-THROATED SALTATOR** (*Saltator maximus*) – A few were seen on the slopes above Minca.
- ORINOCAN SALTATOR** (*Saltator orinocensis*) – An uncommon bird around Camarones, so we were pleased to have good looks at one our first afternoon there.
- GRAYISH SALTATOR** (*Saltator coerulescens*) – This saltator was seen around Camarones and at Minca.

Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

- BLACK-STRIPED SPARROW** (*Arremonops conirostris*) – We couldn't locate one singing near Minca. [*]
- TOCUYO SPARROW** (*Arremonops tocuynensis*) – This was a tough bird, barely responsive if responsive at all, but it did sing, and perhaps half of the group had a view of its striped head in some low branches near Camarones. This sparrow is one of the most difficult of the Guajira specialties.
- SIERRA NEVADA BRUSHFINCH** (*Arremon basilicus*) – We never saw them in the compost (a frequent location in the past), but there was a pair near the lodge, and we had good views on an afternoon walk. This is a split of Stripe-headed Brush-Finch. [E]
- GOLDEN-WINGED SPARROW** (*Arremon schlegeli*) – A lovely "sparrow"; a skulker, but they responded nicely above Minca, and we were able to watch them moving through the shrubbery above us. Although not an endemic, this species has a limited range in Colombia and Venezuela.
- RUFIOUS-COLLARED SPARROW** (*Zonotrichia capensis*) – A few were seen in open areas from the Lodge to the ridgetop.
- SANTA MARTA BRUSHFINCH** (*Atlapetes melanocephalus*) – A common bird that we saw well and then saw really well, the pair that the drivers have trained to share breakfast with us, even perching on an open hand for crumbs. [E]

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

- SUMMER Tanager** (*Piranga rubra*) – We saw several and Bill and others kept picking up on the familiar call notes; about eight encounters all told. [b]
- VERMILION CARDINAL** (*Cardinalis phoeniceus*) – One of the specialties of the arid Caribbean coast, we saw several that windy morning near Camarones, including adult males and distinctive females.
- GOLDEN GROSBEEK** (*Pheucticus chrysogaster*) – We had brief views of one on the ridge, then the next visit Linda spotted a more cooperative bird; scarce here, and not seen every tour. a.k.a. Golden-bellied Grosbeak, a split of Yellow Grosbeak.
- ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEEK** (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) – Myles spotted the first of a small parade near Minca, and we saw ones and twos on several subsequent days. [b]
- DICKCISSEL** (*Spiza americana*) – One bird at 2600m on 2 January was at an odd location at an odd time of year, and seemed unsettled, moving from shrubs to high in eucalyptus and back to shrubs; flocks are pests in rice fields in Venezuela, and a century ago it was regarded as common in the lowlands of Santa Marta, but habitats may have changed. [b]

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

- GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE** (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) – Common along the coast.
- CARIB GRACKLE** (*Quiscalus lugubris*) – A few were seen on Isla Salamanca.
- YELLOW-HOODED BLACKBIRD** (*Chrysomus icterocephalus*) – Small numbers were seen in the marshes on Isla Salamanca.
- SHINY COWBIRD** (*Molothrus bonariensis*) – One or two in the foothills, e.g., at lunch en route to Riohacha.
- BRONZED COWBIRD (BRONZE-BROWN)** (*Molothrus aeneus armenti*) – Pre-tour: This isolated, southern form was seen with other icterids on Isla Salamanca.
- YELLOW-BACKED ORIOLE** (*Icterus chrysater*) – The beautiful song was heard twice our last morning, and a pair was seen later.
- ORANGE-CROWNED ORIOLE** (*Icterus auricapillus*) – An uncommon bird we don't always see, so two encounters was a good showing, first, and best, a pair at our restaurant in the foothills, and then again near Minca.
- YELLOW ORIOLE** (*Icterus nigrogularis*) – We had multiple sightings around Camarones, on Isla Salamanca, and near Minca.
- BALTIMORE ORIOLE** (*Icterus galbula*) – Wintering birds were on Isla Salamanca and around Minca, about five in total near the southern end of the range. [b]
- CRESTED OROPENDOLA** (*Psarocolius decumanus*) – Small numbers daily, including displaying near the Lodge.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

- TRINIDAD EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia trinitatis*) – A pair was seen near Camarones the first afternoon.
- THICK-BILLED EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia lanirostris*) – Seen easily around Minca, including a over a dozen in a bare tree.
- BLUE-NAPED CHLOROPHONIA** (*Chlorophonia cyanea*) – One of the stunning birds of the trip, a wonderful mix of green (a shade Dennis enjoyed) and yellow with blue highlights, as enjoyed on the banana feeder at El Dorado, with more down the road.

MAMMALS

RED HOWLER MONKEY (*Alouatta seniculus*) – Mostly heard, the roaring audible for kilometers (even on top of the ridge), and Dennis and Sharon saw on troop from their room.

RED-TAILED SQUIRREL (*Sciurus granatensis*) – An attractive squirrel, bright rusty with a sharply demarcated white belly, seen from the utility cables in Barranquilla to the montane forests.

CENTRAL AMERICAN AGOUTI (*Dasyprocta punctata*) – One or two were regular visitors to the compost pile at the Lodge.

CRAB-EATING FOX (*Cerdocyon thous*) – Ellen saw one "well fed" fox feeding itself well on the compost pile.

NEOTROPICAL OTTER (*Lontra longicaudis*) – Pre-Tour: Sharon alerted us to the emergence of an otter from the drainage canal in front of us on Isla Salamanca, and we had a good look before it retreated to the security of the depths. I called it "Southern River Otter" at the time, but that has been split from Neotropical (River) Otter of this list.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Other critters:

Green Iguana: A handful on Isla Salamanca, and nice ones behind a restaurant.

Various teiid type lizards, including a Tegu (like a small monitor) and Ameiva (racerunner sorts).

Gecko sp., heard inside buildings.

Bat sp.

A moderate number of butterflies from lovely morphos on down.

Totals for the tour: 296 bird taxa and 5 mammal taxa