



Field Guides Tour Report

OAXACA 2013

Jan 18, 2013 to Jan 26, 2013

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For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE.

The lovely colonial city of Oaxaca, surrounded by its wide, dry intermontane valley and ringed by forest-cloaked mountain ranges, offers a wonderful base from which to explore the western Mexican state that shares its name. From our conveniently located hotel (with endemics right on the grounds), we ventured out to scrubby, dusty hillsides, giant cactus forests and fabulously fragrant pine-oak woodlands in search of the area's special birds. And the week's pleasant temperatures and mostly cloudless skies made for a nice midwinter break from chilly winter climes further north!

Our birding highlights were many. Chief among them, of course, were a trio of endemics which are largely confined to Oaxaca. Our first skulking Oaxaca Sparrow (which required standing at just the right spot on the road) was quickly eclipsed by a trio rummaging around a well-head -- so close we could nearly have reached out and touched them. In the mountains, we found not one but THREE different mixed flocks with diminutive Dwarf Jays in tow, flickering like little dark shadows (albeit shadows with sky blue throats) through the trees. And an Ocellated Thrasher warbled from a tangled hillside, his song thick in our ears even as we struggled (at times anyway) to see him through the intervening branches. But there were plenty of other species to enjoy as well.

A fabulously spotty Boucard's Wren peered from a roadside bush. A pair of Collared Towhees scrambled to the top of a downhill tree -- conveniently right at eye level for us.

Gaudy Elegant Euphonias plucked berries from wads of mistletoe. A showy Slaty Vireo, elegant in tones of gray, white and chartreuse, danced through leafless twigs right in front of us. Red Warblers flashed, shots of color against green backgrounds. A jewel-bright Mountain Trogon called from a moss-draped branch. Gray-barred Wrens swarmed along branches, poking and prodding at bromeliads. A Golden Vireo searched for bugs in nearby bushes. The brilliant scarlet flowers of the ubiquitous Coral Bean trees attracted hordes of Black-vented, Bullock's and Hooded orioles. A Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch, his skulking habits momentarily overcome by hormones, sang from a perch in plain sight. A pair of Bridled Sparrows demonstrated the endearing wing-waving territorial display of the species.

Of course, it's not just the birds that are the draw in Oaxaca. We visited the ruins of three ancient Zapotec cities: the vast, sprawling mountaintop plaza of Monte Alban with its dozens of pyramids, the hilltop fortress of Yagul, surrounded by its columnar cactus forest, and Mitla, with its intricately patterned square buildings. An afternoon in Teotitlan del Valle included a traditional Zapotec meal and a demonstration of the dyeing and weaving process used in creating their distinctive rugs. And visits to a number of local eateries let us sample many of the local specialties: flavorful moles (the sauces, not the critters), smoky mescals, and spicy fried grasshoppers among them!

Thanks to all of you for your help in spotting birds and for your companionship and good humor during the week. Pepe and I enjoyed sharing some adventures with you, and look forward to seeing you in the field again, somewhere, some day! -- Megan

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

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

GADWALL (*Anas strepera*) – At least three lurked among the big flock of ducks snoozing along the edge of Presa Piedra Azul, the reservoir above



Two Collared Towhees scrambled right to the top of a tree near the visitor's center at La Cumbre, getting our search for the mountain's endemics off to a good start. Photo by participant Brian Anderson.

Teotitlan del Valle. This is the second year in a row that we've found this species there.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Anas discors*) – By far the most common duck of the tour, found in big numbers on Presa Piedra Azul.

CINNAMON TEAL (*Anas cyanoptera*) – A handsome male snoozed among a mob of Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal along the edge of Presa Piedra Azul.

NORTHERN SHOVELER (*Anas clypeata*)

GREEN-WINGED TEAL (*Anas crecca*)

REDHEAD (*Aythya americana*) – A pair floating among the ducks on Presa Piedra Azul were a surprise; this species generally doesn't stray as far south as Oaxaca.

RING-NECKED DUCK (*Aythya collaris*)

LESSER SCAUP (*Aythya affinis*) – A few in loose association with the Ring-necked Ducks on Presa Piedra Azul.

RUDDY DUCK (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) – Dozens of these stiff-tailed little ducks floated on Presa Piedra Azul, including a few males already starting to show some signs of their snazzy breeding plumage.

Cracidae (Guans, Chachalacas, and Curassows)

WEST MEXICAN CHACHALACA (*Ortalis poliocephala*) – One flashed across the road as we drove up towards the mountains on our first visit, but our best views came in the switchbacks above Teotitlan, where we found an early morning gang clambering through some fruiting trees. [E]

Odontophoridae (New World Quail)

LONG-TAILED WOOD-PARTRIDGE (*Dendrortyx macroura*) – Glenn was the lucky one who happened to be standing right beside me when one strolled across the scruffy hillside below the road, rustling the leaves gently as it went. [E]

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

LEAST GREBE (*Tachybaptus dominicus*)

EARED GREBE (*Podiceps nigricollis*) – A few among the waterfowl on Presa Piedra Azul.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*)

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*)

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*)

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – By far the most common heron of the tour, seen daily in picturesque flocks winging across the dusty hillsides or lurking around the feet of livestock.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*)

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*) – Daily, typically in much bigger numbers than the previous species.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

WHITE-TAILED KITE (*Elanus leucurus*) – Two along a back road into Santa Maria de Tule were fun to watch, particularly as they took turns resting and preening in a tree between strafing runs over a nearby field. We saw others hovering over fields along the Pan American Highway.

NORTHERN HARRIER (AMERICAN) (*Circus cyaneus hudsonius*) – A youngster banked low over some fields near Santa Maria de Tule, showing its distinctive white rump patch as it hunted.

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK (*Accipiter striatus*)

COOPER'S HAWK (*Accipiter cooperii*)

SHORT-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo brachyurus*)

ZONE-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo albonotatus*) – One tilted above Teotitlan del Valle, doing its best "don't mind me, I'm just a Turkey Vulture" imitation.

RED-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo jamaicensis*)

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

CRESTED CARACARA (*Caracara cheriway*) – Quite common, particularly around Teotitlan del Valle and Yagul, where we had a quartet chasing each other around the nearby countryside.

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*)

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

AMERICAN COOT (*Fulica americana*)

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

KILLDEER (*Charadrius vociferus*) – A couple worked along the gravelly edge of the reservoir, occasionally calling their distinctive calls.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*)

LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*) – Scores pattered along the muddy edges of Presa Piedra Azul, their yellowish legs obvious in the sunlight.

WILSON'S SNIPE (*Gallinago delicata*) – A few rummaged through some scruffy grasses along the edge of Presa Piedra Azul, proving surprisingly difficult to spot even when we knew they were there -- good spotting, David!

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) [I]

WHITE-WINGED DOVE (*Zenaida asiatica*) – Abundant throughout; their "who cooks for you" calls were a regular part of the tour soundtrack.

MOURNING DOVE (*Zenaida macroura*)

INCA DOVE (*Columbina inca*) – Particularly nice views of a little group trundling around in a horse ring near Yagul.

COMMON GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina passerina*) – A little flock along the Yagul entrance road played hard to get, dropping from the tree we spotted them in into the long grass of a nearby field and virtually disappearing. While some saw them well, others only saw their flashy reddish wing patches as they whirred off into the distance.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

GROOVE-BILLED ANI (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*) – A couple, making their distinctive upslurred calls, worked along the edge of the Yagul entrance road, peering at us through the rank vegetation.

Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)

BARN OWL (*Tyto alba*) – Pepe and a few of the group spotted one flying over the city as we walked across the main zocalo en route to our balcony restaurant.

Strigidae (Owls)

NORTHERN PYGMY-OWL (MOUNTAIN) (*Glaucidium gnoma gnoma*) – Arg! One tooted (and tooted and tooted and tooted) from the fog-draped pines above our heads on Cerro San Felipe, but we just could not entice it out to where we could actually see it -- no matter how winningly we whistled! [*]

Apodidae (Swifts)

VAUX'S SWIFT (*Chaetura vauxi*) – A few folks in my van saw one rocket past while we waited for a light on our way "home" from Monte Alban, and others saw them over the hill by the microwave tower south of Mitla.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

MAGNIFICENT HUMMINGBIRD (*Eugenes fulgens*) – A male foraged among some flowering coral bean trees at a roadside stop on our way to the mountains, perching occasionally on a convenient twig. Its size and dark color -- and that little white mark behind its eye -- are distinctive.

BLUE-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Lampornis clemenciae*) – One in a leafy gully high above Teotitlan del Valle returned again and again to the same group of thin hanging vines, allowing us all the chance to study him in the scopes. His loud repeated chip note allowed us to track his progress through the flower banks below.

BEAUTIFUL HUMMINGBIRD (*Calothorax pulcher*) – She certainly made us work for it, but one of these tiny hummers FINALLY put in an appearance in the giant columnar cactus forest outside Yagul. [E]

BROAD-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD (*Selasphorus platycercus*) – Including one little male that sat only a foot or so off the ground, amid a little patch of purple flowers only about 4 feet off the road. He filled the whole scope view!

DUSKY HUMMINGBIRD (*Cynanthus sordidus*) – Plenty of these big, rather drab hummingbirds seen hovering around cactus flowers (with their wing beats ALMOST countable) throughout the valley. [E]

BERYLLINE HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia beryllina*) – Especially nice views -- and in nice comparison with the previous species -- in a stand of tree tobacco near the dam at Presa Piedra Azul. Those rusty wing patches are distinctive.

WHITE-EARED HUMMINGBIRD (*Hylocharis leucotis*) – Common and widespread in the highlands.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

MOUNTAIN TROGON (*Trogon mexicanus*)

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

GREEN KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle americana*) – One sitting in a tiny tree along the edge of a rivulet at Presa Piedra Azul was a treat, allowing us all good scope studies -- nice spotting, Penny!

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

ACORN WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes formicivorus*)

GRAY-BREASTED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes hypopolius*) – Seen well on several days in the Oaxaca Valley, with especially nice studies of close birds in the columnar cacti near the entrance to Yagul. [E]

YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER (*Sphyrapicus varius*)

LADDER-BACKED WOODPECKER (*Picoides scalaris*) – A female investigated a nest hole (and surrounding arms) in a cactus on the switchbacks above Teotitlan del Valle -- nice spotting, Karen!

HAIRY WOODPECKER (*Picoides villosus*) – Single birds moved with wren / jay flocks in the highlands. The subspecies found in Oaxaca's mountains is quite dusky compared with birds most of us are familiar with in North America.

NORTHERN FLICKER (RED-SHAFTED) (*Colaptes auratus cafer*)

Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)

STRONG-BILLED WOODCREEPER (*Xiphocolaptes promeropirhynchus*) – One called repeatedly from the darkening forest as I prepared our picnic supper in the mountains, but we had no luck actually seeing the singer. [*]

WHITE-STRIPED WOODCREEPER (*Lepidocolaptes leucogaster*) – A lucky few found one of these along a side trail they were exploring while I put together our picnic lunch on Sierra Aloapaneca. We heard another calling up the hill from where we stood at El Jilguero arroyo, but never caught sight of it. [E]

SPOT-CROWNED WOODCREEPER (*Lepidocolaptes affinis affinis*)

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

NORTHERN BEARDLESS-TYRANULET (*Camptostoma imberbe*) – One right over the entrance drive at our hotel, spotted on our first afternoon's ramble around the grounds.

GREENISH ELAENIA (*Myiopagis viridicata*)

TUFTED FLYCATCHER (*Mitrephanes phaeocercus*) – A pair of these colorful little flycatchers sallied again and again from their perches high above

El Jilguero arroyo.

GREATER PEWEE (*Contopus pertinax*) – One hunting from a snag on a switchback above Teotitlan del Valle showed well its pointed crest and distinctively orange lower mandible.

LEAST FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax minimus*)

HAMMOND'S FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax hammondii*)

DUSKY FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax oberholseri*)

CORDILLERAN FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax occidentalis*)

BLACK PHOEBE (*Sayornis nigricans*) – A few flashed around the fringes of Presa Piedra Azul.

SAY'S PHOEBE (*Sayornis saya*)

VERMILION FLYCATCHER (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*)

DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*)

ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus cinerascens*)

NUTTING'S FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus nuttingi*) – A calling pair of these, conveniently close to a calling pair of Ash-throated Flycatchers for good comparison, kept us hopping near the parking lot at Yagul.

GREAT KISKADEE (*Pitangus sulphuratus*)

SOCIAL FLYCATCHER (*Myiozetetes similis*) – A noisy gang of these aptly named birds flashed through a tree near Santa Maria de Tule, helpfully close to a pair of Great Kiskadees for comparison.

TROPICAL KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus melancholicus*)

CASSIN'S KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus vociferans*) – Abundant throughout, venturing even as far as our Oaxaca City hotel.

THICK-BILLED KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus crassirostris*) – One flashed across the highway while we birded our way up to La Cumbre one morning; fortunately, it perched right at the top of a nearby tree, which led to fine scope studies.

Tityridae (Tityras and Allies)

ROSE-THROATED BECARD (*Pachyrhamphus aglaiae*) – A pink-throated male and his cinnamon mate moved with one of the Dwarf Jay flocks we found on Cerro San Felipe.

Laniidae (Shrikes)

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE (*Lanius ludovicianus*)

Vireonidae (Vireos)

SLATY VIREO (*Vireo brevipennis*) – After a frustrating first encounter -- one creeping back and forth through the same bushes that our Ocellated Thrasher was creeping through -- we had fine, in-your-face views of another working in the open bushes right above our trio of Oaxaca Sparrows. Now that's more like it! [E]

DWARF VIREO (*Vireo nelsoni*) – Quick views for some of a female flicking through low bushes near the track Edgar brought us to; sadly, she melted off into the thicker growth before everyone got a look. [E]

CASSIN'S VIREO (*Vireo cassinii*)

BLUE-HEADED VIREO (*Vireo solitarius*)

HUTTON'S VIREO (*Vireo huttoni*) – Regular in the highlands, where their repetitious songs were part of the tour soundtrack.

GOLDEN VIREO (*Vireo hypochryseus*) – Fabulous views of one bright bird working its way through some bushes right across the road from where we stood in a roadside pullout. [E]

WARBLING VIREO (*Vireo gilvus*) – Common and widespread, seen on every day of the tour.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

DWARF JAY (*Cyanolyca nana*) – They proved rather adept at slinking through the pines and oaks of the mountains, but they were noisy and busy and eventually worked their way out to the tips of the branches. What handsome little birds! [E]

STELLER'S JAY (*Cyanocitta stelleri*)

WESTERN SCRUB-JAY (SUMICHRAST'S) (*Aphelocoma californica sumichrasti*) – We saw several small, noisy flocks in the switchbacks above Teotitlan del Valle, scudding across the hillsides or perched atop trees. This subspecies is particularly dark blue on the head and upperparts.

COMMON RAVEN (*Corvus corax*)

Alaudidae (Larks)

HORNED LARK (*Eremophila alpestris*) – Two rummaging in the dirt beside the road near Presa Piedra Azul seemed totally unconcerned about our nearby presence.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*)

VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW (*Tachycineta thalassina*) – Regular throughout, though particularly common in the air over Presa Piedra Azul.

Paridae (Chickadees and Tits)

MEXICAN CHICKADEE (*Poecile sclateri*) – Several mingled with a mixed flock high on Cerro San Felipe, their hoarse calls helping us to track them through the pines.

BRIDLED TITMOUSE (*Baeolophus wollweberi*) – A handful, calling loudly, drew our attention to a little mixed flock along the roadside right before lunch on our first full day in Oaxaca.

Aegithalidae (Long-tailed Tits)

BUSHTIT (BLACK-EARED) (*Psaltriparus minimus melanotis*) – A little mob of them swarmed along the dusty hillsides above Teotitlan del Valle, scrupulously examining every twig and branch. Particularly cooperative were the DOWNHILL birds, which were eye level for us as they

investigated the treetops.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

GRAY-BARRED WREN (*Campylorhynchus megalopterus*) – Quite common in the highlands, with some spectacular looks at a big, quietly feeding gang of them probing through epiphytes on the Yuvila road. [E]

BOUCARD'S WREN (*Campylorhynchus jocosus*) [E]

ROCK WREN (*Salpinctes obsoletus*) – Glenn spotted one at Monte Alban, and the ruins goers watched another bounce across a temple wall at Mitla.

CANYON WREN (*Catherpes mexicanus*) [*]

BEWICK'S WREN (*Thryomanes bewickii*)

HOUSE WREN (BROWN-THROATED) (*Troglodytes aedon brunneicollis*)

Poliophtilidae (Gnatcatchers)

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER (*Poliophtila caerulea*) – Twitching through bushes all throughout the Oaxaca Valley and surrounding mountains.

Regulidae (Kinglets)

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET (*Regulus satrapa*) – A couple of these mingled with a mixed flock on Cerro San Felipe. This is a species of uncertain status in Oaxaca.

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET (*Regulus calendula*)

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

BROWN-BACKED SOLITAIRE (*Myadestes occidentalis*) – We heard the lovely cascading tinkle of this retiring species song from the grounds of our hotel, and caught up with several in the moss-draped forests of the highlands.

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

RUSSET NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH (*Catharus occidentalis*) – Two seen right at dusk along the track into the camp on Cerro San Felipe; it was very nearly too dark to really make them out! [E]

HERMIT THRUSH (*Catharus guttatus*)

BLACK THRUSH (*Turdus infuscatus*) – A male low in a tree beside the Yuvila road gave us brief -- though very clear -- views before disappearing off down the hill.

CLAY-COLORED THRUSH (*Turdus grayi*) – Best seen on the first afternoon of the tour, when we found several gobbling figs from some of the trees on the grounds of our hotel. These birds are likely descendents of escaped cage birds.

WHITE-THROATED THRUSH (*Turdus assimilis*) – Numbers of them foraged a big fig tree up one of the arroyos above Teotitlan del Valle, flashing in and out of view as they searched for fruits.

RUFOUS-BACKED ROBIN (*Turdus rufopalliatus*) – Another thrush seen only on the grounds of our hotel. This is another species with a disjunct population in the city, probably also descended from escaped cage birds. [E]

AMERICAN ROBIN (*Turdus migratorius*)

AZTEC THRUSH (*Ridgwayia pinicola*) – All too brief views of a single bird on our first visit to the highlands, and a trio when we returned to explore the Yuvila road. Both times, they flew out of a tree near the visitor's center, perched for a few seconds in another nearby tree, then disappeared off down the valley. [E]

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus polyglottos*)

OCELLATED THRASHER (*Toxostoma ocellatum*) – It was hard, hard work, but we finally all got scope views of one reticent bird singing from the scruffy hillside beyond the biggest temple at Monte Alban. Somehow, he always seemed to have a branch (or two or six) between him and us, even when he was singing from the top of a bush! [E]

CURVE-BILLED THRASHER (*Toxostoma curvirostre*)

BLUE MOCKINGBIRD (*Melanotis caerulescens*) [E]

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

AMERICAN PIPIT (*Anthus rubescens*) – A few of these winter visitors strolled along the edges of Presa Piedra Azul.

Ptilogonatidae (Silky-flycatchers)

GRAY SILKY-FLYCATCHER (*Ptilogonys cinereus*)

Peucedramidae (Olive Warbler)

OLIVE WARBLER (*Peucedramus taeniatus*) – These proved uncharacteristically tough this year. Though we heard several calling from high in nearby pines, only a few of the group actually spotted one -- and then it was a less colorful female.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia motacilla*) – One teetered along beside a little stream rushing down the mountain, seen as we birded our way up to La Cumbre one morning.

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

CRESCENT-CHESTED WARBLER (*Oreothlypis superciliosa*)

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER (*Oreothlypis celata*)

NASHVILLE WARBLER (*Oreothlypis ruficapilla*)

VIRGINIA'S WARBLER (*Oreothlypis virginiae*)

MACGILLIVRAY'S WARBLER (*Geothlypis tolmiei*) – A male moved through the brush near our trio of Oaxaca Sparrows, and others did the same in the switchbacks above Teotitlan del Valle.

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis trichas*) – A male chortled from short bushes and narrow reed beds edging a wet spot along the Yagul

entrance road, occasionally flicking into view.

NORTHERN PARULA (*Setophaga americana*) – One working in the trees near the Yagul parking lot was a surprise; it's the first time I've seen Northern Parula in Oaxaca.

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (MYRTLE) (*Setophaga coronata coronata*)

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (AUDUBON'S) (*Setophaga coronata auduboni*)

BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER (*Setophaga nigrescens*)

TOWNSEND'S WARBLER (*Setophaga townsendi*)

HERMIT WARBLER (*Setophaga occidentalis*)

RUFOUS-CAPPED WARBLER (NORTH MEXICO) (*Basileuterus rufifrons rufifrons*)

GOLDEN-BROWED WARBLER (*Basileuterus belli*) – A calling pair near our showy Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch was equally cooperative, crawling around in some roadside bushes practically at arm's length.

WILSON'S WARBLER (*Cardellina pusilla*)

RED-FACED WARBLER (*Cardellina rubrifrons*) – Three or four different birds showed very well as they foraged with mixed flocks at various stops in the switchbacks above Teotitlan del Valle.

RED WARBLER (*Cardellina rubra*) – This one is the eye candy that everyone dreams of seeing well -- and see them well we did! Intriguingly, the feathers of this species contain toxins. [E]

SLATE-THROATED REDSTART (*Myioborus miniatus miniatus*) – Reasonably common in the highlands, where we watched them flirt their fanned, white-tipped tails as they hunted for insects.

Emberizidae (Buntings, Sparrows and Allies)

WHITE-COLLARED SEEDEATER (CINNAMON-RUMPED) (*Sporophila torqueola torqueola*) – A handful, including several handsome males, with the Blue Grosbeaks and White-throated Towhees along the road into Yagul -- good spotting, Glenn! This subspecies is far more colorful than that found in southern Texas. [E]

CHESTNUT-CAPPED BRUSH-FINCH (CHESTNUT-CAPPED) (*Arremon brunneinucha suttoni*) – A singing bird sneaked through roadside weeds early in our day on Cerro San Felipe, eventually perching on a low branch and allowing us all superb views of this generally skulking species. It looks remarkably like a Collared Towhee, though with a buffy, rather than white, supercilium.

RUFOUS-CAPPED BRUSH-FINCH (*Atlapetes pileatus*) – One in the gully near the La Cumbre visitor's center played hard to get, showing well for some and not at all for others. [E]

COLLARED TOWHEE (*Pipilo ocai*) – A pair across the road from the visitor's center at La Cumbre could not have been more cooperative, bouncing their way to the top of a nearby bush (right at eye level) and singing loudly for several minutes. Lovely! [E]

SPOTTED TOWHEE (*Pipilo maculatus*)

RUFOUS-CROWNED SPARROW (*Aimophila ruficeps*)

OAXACA SPARROW (*Aimophila notosticta*) – Wow! Edgar's new spot turned up trumps when we found a trio of these big endemic sparrows scrounging around a metal well cover, looking for tidbits. Amazingly, they appeared completely unfazed by our excited presence mere yards away! [E]

WHITE-THROATED TOWHEE (*Melospiza albicollis*) – By far the most easily found of Oaxaca's endemics, seen on most days of the tour, often in noisy groups along the road edges. [E]

BRIDLED SPARROW (*Peucaea mystacalis*) – Fine views of a handful of these handsome sparrows on one of the switchbacks above Teotitlan del Valle -- including a couple doing their endearing wing-waving territorial display. [E]

CHIPPING SPARROW (*Spizella passerina*) – A handful around the Monte Alban parking lot, with dozens of others swarming over the hillsides in the switchbacks above Teotitlan del Valle, part of a big mixed sparrow flock.

LARK SPARROW (*Chondestes grammacus*) – Quite common in the Oaxaca Valley, with scope views of several groups of these handsome sparrows.

SAVANNAH SPARROW (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) – A couple of alert birds perched in some roadside weeds near Teotitlan del Valle. This is an uncommon species in the Oaxaca Valley.

LINCOLN'S SPARROW (*Melospiza lincolni*)

YELLOW-EYED JUNCO (*Junco phaeonotus*)

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

HEPATIC TANAGER (NORTHERN) (*Piranga flava hepatica*) – Seen on several days, with our best views coming not far from our trio of Oaxaca Sparrows, where we spotted a male sitting at the top of a nearby tree.

SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*)

WESTERN TANAGER (*Piranga ludoviciana*)

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) – Including one bright male rummaging through a tree near the lobby of our hotel the first afternoon of the tour.

BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*) – Best seen in the switchbacks above Teotitlan, where we spotted a pair foraging in the same trees as our big mob of Gray Silky-Flycatchers.

BLUE GROSBEAK (*Passerina caerulea*)

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

EASTERN MEADOWLARK (*Sturnella magna*) – One warbled from atop a cactus along the start of the road through Teotitlan del Valle. The subspecies found in Oaxaca is "Lilian's Meadowlark", the same as that found

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus mexicanus*)

BRONZED COWBIRD (*Molothrus aeneus*) – A handful mooched around on the grounds of Restaurante Zapata, seen while we waited for lunch to arrive.

BLACK-VENTED ORIOLE (*Icterus wagleri*) – Very common among the valley's flowering coral bean trees, where they contrasted nicely with the

brilliant scarlet flowers; we also regularly heard their distinctively nasal calls.

ORCHARD ORIOLE (ORCHARD) (*Icterus spurius spurius*) – A few folks spotted one in the Monte Alban parking lot, and others saw a male in bush near the entrance gate to Edgar's family's compound.

HOODED ORIOLE (*Icterus cucullatus*)

BULLOCK'S ORIOLE (*Icterus bullockii*) – Several in the flowering coral bean trees, including some bright males showing the big white wing patches that help distinguish this species.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE (*Icterus galbula*) – A distant male in his bold colors perched up in the same tree as all our Social Flycatchers and Great Kiskadees near Santa Maria de Tule.

SCOTT'S ORIOLE (*Icterus parisorum*)

Fringillidae (Siskins, Crossbills, and Allies)

ELEGANT EUPHONIA (*Euphonia elegantissima*) – Gorgeous views of several pairs as they nibbled mistletoe berries in the switchbacks above Teotitlan del Valle.

HOUSE FINCH (COMMON) (*Carpodacus mexicanus roseipectus*)

BLACK-HEADED SISKIN (*Spinus notatus*) – A male calling from a pine tree near the visitor's center at La Cumbre was a nice treat; he swiveled on his perch, allowing us to see all sides as we studied him in the scopes.

LESSER GOLDFINCH (*Spinus psaltria*)

EVENING GROSBEAK (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*) – A trio perched high in a pine tree near the visitor's center at La Cumbre were certainly a surprise; though they're resident in the highlands of central Mexico, they're quite rare in Oaxaca.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) **[I]**

MAMMALS

EASTERN COTTONTAIL (*Sylvilagus floridanus*)

MEXICAN GRAY SQUIRREL (*Sciurus aureogaster*)

HISPID COTTON RAT (*Sigmodon hispidus*) – A furtive one snuffling around in the bushes near the gate to Yagul distracted us briefly from our search for Beautiful Hummingbird.

COYOTE (*Canis latrans*) – A sleek looking animal trotted at the edge of some unharvested corn growing along the Pan American highway one morning.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 179 bird taxa and 4 mammal taxa