



Field Guides Tour Report

Mexico: Oaxaca - Sykes Private Tour 2020

Mar 14, 2020 to Mar 21, 2020

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



Mountain Trogon was one of many highlights of our tour. (Photo by guide Micah Riegner)

It's strange and sobering to sit here thinking back on our Oaxaca tour together and the pre-pandemic world we lived in. To think we clustered in vans winding our way through the mountains of Mexico, and gathered in claustrophobic restaurants! What a different world we now live in! Well, despite closures and cancelations underway in the rest of the world, the tour ran smoothly, and we escaped unscathed, albeit, sooner than we had planned for. The birding was great overall even though it was quite dry (not a single drop of rain since early November!), and we managed to soak up some nifty Mexican avifauna like Lesser Roadrunner, Orange-breasted Bunting, Dwarf Jay, Chestnut-sided Shrike-vireo, Ocellated Thrasher, Red-headed Tanagers, and loads of Red Warblers.

We kicked off the tour with a day trip to Teotitlan del Valle, a dusty cobblestone town famous for its rugs. We birded the fields near the town and had two unexpected species—Botteri's Sparrow and a brilliant male Red-legged Honeycreeper! How about that!?

From there, we stopped at Presa Piedra Azul and saw numerous waterbirds, including Least Grebes, a smattering of herons and Green Kingfishers. We also had our first encounters with Bridled Sparrows, one of the best-looking sparrows in Mexico. We then crept up to the higher elevations where the first oaks and pines appear. A pair of Chestnut-sided Shrike-vireos shot into view and put on a show—certainly one of my favorite Mexican birds. After a picnic lunch, we birded some more and had our first views of Collared Towhee singing from a riparian drainage.

The next day we took the winding mountain road up Cerro San Felipe—one of the only places in the world to see Dwarf Jay. We stopped first at Pollo Niño, a lower-elevation site at the base of the mountain where we encountered Red-headed Tanager, a handsome Mexican endemic, our first of several Slaty Vireos and Oaxaca Sparrow, a bird that resembles Rufous-crowned Sparrow but with more contrast on the face. When we reached the trail for the Dwarf Jays, the forest was alive with the chips and seeds of foraging warblers. In one feeding flock we saw Red, Townsend's, Hermit, and Crescent-chested Warblers, all feeding simultaneously in the moss-laden branches. As we continued down the trail, it wasn't long before we heard wiry contact

calls of Dwarf Jays. As usual, they were accompanying a flock of Gray-barred Wrens and Steller's Jays, moving noisily through the canopy. An added bonus was a Rose-throated Becard, a bird that reaches to some of the lowland riparian areas in Arizona. Here in Mexico, this species is found high in mixed conifer forests. After "Field Guides Tuna Salad," we birded the main road and had exquisite views of a Gray-breasted Wood-wren singing its heart out in a steep drainage. This single species will probably be split into multiple species down the line.

The day we visit the cactus forest along KM 77 tends to shine as the best day of the tour. It's just such a contrast to all the other sites we visit in Oaxaca. As soon as we unloaded from the vans, we encountered a handsome pair of Russet-crowned Motmots glowing in front of a backdrop of rocks and cacti. Other highlights of the morning included Elegant Trogons, a flock of White-throated Magpie-Jays, a Ferruginous Pygmy-owl and a pair of Lesser Roadrunners scuttling across the desert rocks! These closely resemble Greater Roadrunners but have exquisite blue orbital skin around the eye and an unstreaked breast. We watched them run across a hillside and ascend a tree. Orange-breasted Bunting is a striking bird that only lives along the Pacific Slope of Mexico and KM 77 is the only place we see it on our Oaxaca tour. We searched for it the entire morning, but the bird didn't appear even though we'd seen it well with the previous group. However, just as we loaded back into the vans, Dan spotted the bird on the hillside and it stayed there long enough for everyone to get scope views. Fantastic! Certainly, a highlight of the tour. Before lunch, we stopped briefly at the microwave towers and saw a cooperative Dwarf Vireo in the dry scrub. We heard an Ocellated Thrasher, but it just wouldn't show itself. After lunch we had a tour of the Mezcal production (you wouldn't believe how much goes into making it!) and then went to the ruins of Mitla and Yagul. Jorge, the driver, gave us a wonderful tour of both spectacular archaeological sites.

Monte Alban is Oaxaca's premier archeological site and also happens to be great for birding. Before ascending to the ruins, we spent some time trying to draw out an Ocellated Thrasher that was singing incessantly from the dense Oaxacan mesic scrub-forest (that's a term I just invented!). After several minutes searching, we finally found a window where we could get it in the scope and the bird miraculously sat there long enough for everyone to get a look. Woohoo!

After a much-needed siesta at the hotel, we layered up with sweaters and wound our way back to Cerro San Felipe for some owling. Dan and I prepared pasta salad for dinner and, as we ate, we soaked in the tinkling chorus of Brown-backed Solitaires to bring the day to a close. A distant Long-tailed Wood-Partridge chimed in a couple times before night fully settled in. Our first nightbirds were Mexican Whip-poor-wills seen along the road. Soon after that we saw an extremely vocal Northern Saw-Whet Owl—quite a rare bird in this part of Mexico. It was in fact Dan's first time seeing one on the Oaxaca Tour!

Our final day of birding we worked the Yuvila Road. It's one of my favorite roads we bird on the tour as it follows the east-facing ridge, getting extra moisture off the Gulf Slope. The forest there often rings with the sound of Brown-backed Solitaires and Mountain Trogons and our visit was no exception. While trying to elicit a mob response from some migrant warblers, we inadvertently stirred up a Northern Pygmy-owl, which shot in and landed in great light.

With news of the eminent border closure, alas, we were forced to leave Mexico before our Coastal Extension. But thank goodness we were able to get back home safely. Kudos to Tina who wrangled with the airlines to change all our flights! Dan and I had a great time birding with all of you—we certainly look forward to birding with you again once we're through with the pandemic. Perhaps we'll all be wearing masks, so we may in fact not recognize one another! I hope you're all staying healthy and appreciating spring migration.

Cheers from the Arizona desert,

Micah

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)

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Spatula discors*) – Several seen at Presa Piedra Azul.

RUDDY DUCK (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) – Just a few were on at Presa Piedra Azul.

Cracidae (Guans, Chachalacas, and Curassows)

WEST MEXICAN CHACHALACA (*Ortalis poliocephala*) – Holy smokes! These were everywhere along the road above Teotitlan del Valle!

Somehow we missed seeing them there with the previous group. [E]

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

LEAST GREBE (*Tachybaptus dominicus*) – At Presa Piedra Azul, one of the few bodies of water in the Oaxaca Central Valley.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) [I]

BAND-TAILED PIGEON (*Patagioenas fasciata*) – We had a few flyovers while we birded up in the mountains.

INCA DOVE (*Columbina inca*)

COMMON GROUND DOVE (*Columbina passerina*)

WHITE-TIPPED DOVE (*Leptotila verreauxi*) [*]

WHITE-WINGED DOVE (*Zenaida asiatica*) – Fairly common in the arid environments.

MOURNING DOVE (*Zenaida macroura*)

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

LESSER ROADRUNNER (*Geococcyx velox*) – Certainly one of the best birds of the tour! First, we saw a pair at KM 77, and then we had fantastic looks at a bird that sang on a bolder at Yagul. It put on quite the show.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies).

MEXICAN WHIP-POOR-WILL (*Antrastomus arizonae*) – We had these on the night we went owling up in the mountains.

Apodidae (Swifts).

VAUX'S SWIFT (*Chaetura vauxi*)

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds).

RIVOLI'S HUMMINGBIRD (*Eugenes fulgens*) – One of these enormous hummingbirds came to mob a Northern Pygmy-owl in the Cerro San Felipe.

PLAIN-CAPPED STARHROAT (*Heliomaster constantii*) – A few of these came in to mob the Ferruginous Pygmy-owl we saw at KM 77.

BLUE-THROATED MOUNTAIN-GEM (*Lampornis clemenciae*) – We saw a female sitting quietly in the shade at Rio Verde.

BEAUTIFUL HUMMINGBIRD (*Calothorax pulcher*) – We had brief views at Yagul. [E]

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Archilochus colubris*)

DUSKY HUMMINGBIRD (*Cynanthus sordidus*) – The most common hummer of the tour. We saw them regularly in the dry Central Valley. [E]

BERYLLINE HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia beryllina*) – These were also fairly common.

GREEN-FRONTED HUMMINGBIRD (CINNAMON-SIDED) (*Amazilia viridifrons wagneri*) – We saw a few of these in the dry forest at KM 77.

The look a lot like Violet-crowned Hummingbird [E]

WHITE-EARED HUMMINGBIRD (*Hylocharis leucotis*) – The most common hummer up in the mountains.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots).

AMERICAN COOT (*Fulica americana*)

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings).

KILLDEER (*Charadrius vociferus*)

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies).

LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*)

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*)

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns).

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – All of the following herons were at Presa Piedra Azul.

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*)

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*)

LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*)

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*)

GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens*)

Cathartidae (New World Vultures).

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*)

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*)

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites).

WHITE-TAILED KITE (*Elanus leucurus*) – We saw one at the outskirts of the city.

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK (*Accipiter striatus*) – One blasted past us while we birded at Rio Verde.

COOPER'S HAWK (*Accipiter cooperii*) – We came across a few throughout the tour.

SHORT-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo brachyurus*)

ZONE-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo albonotatus*)

RED-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo jamaicensis*)

Strigidae (Owls).

NORTHERN PYGMY-OWL (MOUNTAIN) (*Glaucidium gnoma gnoma*) – We bumped into a few of these up in the mountains. The ones here in Oaxaca come in both red and gray morphs.

FERRUGINOUS PYGMY-OWL (*Glaucidium brasilianum*) – Well spotted by John at KM 77.

NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL (*Aegolius acadicus*) – What a performance! We had one up at Cerro San Felipe the evening we went owling and it turned out to be a lifer for quite a few folks!

Trogonidae (Trogons).

ELEGANT TROGON (*Trogon elegans*) – Nice! This was a bird that we missed with the previous group and for some reason it called back for us at KM 77.

MOUNTAIN TROGON (*Trogon mexicanus*) – We certainly had our fill of Mountain Trogon on this tour, especially along the Yuvila Road.

Momotidae (Motmots).

RUSSET-CROWNED MOTMOT (*Momotus mexicanus*) – Another highlight of the tour! We had outstanding views at KM 77.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers).

BELTED KINGFISHER (*Megasceryle alcyon*) – Seen at Presa Piedra Azul.

GREEN KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle americana*) – These were along the creek below Presa Piedra Azul.

Picidae (Woodpeckers).

ACORN WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes formicivorus*)

GRAY-BREASTED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes hypopolius*) – Common in the dry Central Valley. [E]

GOLDEN-FRONTED WOODPECKER (WEST MEXICO) (*Melanerpes aurifrons polygrammus*) – Seen in the cactus forest along KM 77. They are in the same genus as Gila and Red-bellied Woodpeckers and look a lot alike.

LADDER-BACKED WOODPECKER (*Dryobates scalaris*)

HAIRY WOODPECKER (SOUTH MEXICAN) (*Dryobates villosus jardinii*) – The ones in this part of Mexico are a lot smokier than the ones we're used to seeing up north.

NORTHERN FLICKER (RED-SHAFTED) (*Colaptes auratus mexicanus*) [*****]

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras).

CRESTED CARACARA (*Caracara cheriway*)

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*)

MERLIN (*Falco columbarius*) – It was cool to see a Taiga form Merlin at KM 77 although it probably kept other bird activity down for a good hour or so while it hung around.

Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers).

WHITE-STRIPED WOODCREEPER (*Lepidocolaptes leucogaster*) – We had decent looks at one of these pine forest woodcreepers on the road above Teotitlan del Valle. [**E**]

SPOT-CROWNED WOODCREEPER (NORTHERN) (*Lepidocolaptes affinis affinis*) – Replaces White-striped Woodcreeper in the slightly moister forest at Cerro San Felipe.

Tityridae (Tityras and Allies).

ROSE-THROATED BECARD (*Pachyramphus aglaiae*) – There was one hanging out in with the flock of Dwarf Jays at Cerro San Felipe.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers).

NORTHERN BEARDLESS-TYRANULET (*Camptostoma imberbe*)

GREENISH ELAENIA (WEST MEXICO) (*Myiopagis viridicata jaliscensis*) – One came in and landed right above us at Presa Piedra Azul.

PILEATED FLYCATCHER (*Xenotriccus mexicanus*) – After quite a few minutes it finally showed itself along the entrance road at Monte Alban. There is only one other member of the genus *Xenotriccus*, the Belted Flycatcher of Chiapas and northern Guatemala. [**E**]

TUFTED FLYCATCHER (MEXICAN) (*Mitrephanes phaeocercus phaeocercus*) – We finally caught up with these on our last visit to Rio Verde. Somehow they eluded us until that point.

GREATER PEWEE (*Contopus pertinax*) – A fairly common winter visitor to this part of Mexico. We had decent look at some at Pollo Niño,

WESTERN WOOD-PEWEE (*Contopus sordidulus*) – We heard a couple of these migrants at Monte Alban. [*****]

HAMMOND'S FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax hammondi*) – We located a few up in the mountains.

DUSKY FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax oberholseri*) – Generally more common than Hammond's at the lower elevations.

PINE FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax affinis*) – We got on one briefly along the Cabeza de Vaca trail at Cerro San Felipe.

BLACK PHOEBE (*Sayornis nigricans*)

SAY'S PHOEBE (*Sayornis saya*)

VERMILION FLYCATCHER (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*)

DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) – We scoped a couple below us on the road past Teotitlan del Valle.

ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus cinerascens*)

NUTTING'S FLYCATCHER (NUTTING'S) (*Myiarchus nuttingi inquietus*) – We had a couple nice looks at one along the trail at KM 77.

GREAT KISKADEE (*Pitangus sulphuratus*)

SOCIAL FLYCATCHER (VERMILION-CROWNED) (*Myiozetetes similis texensis*) – We saw these at the famous Tule Tree.

TROPICAL KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus melancholicus*)

CASSIN'S KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus vociferans*)

THICK-BILLED KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus crassirostris*) – We scoped a few of these in the dry forest above Teotitlan del Valle.

WESTERN KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus verticalis*)

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis).

CHESTNUT-SIDED SHRIKE-VIREO (*Vireolanius melitophrys*) – One of my all time favorite birds! We saw some above Teotitlan del Valle.

GOLDEN VIREO (*Vireo hypochryseus*) – We had brief looks at one at Monte Alban, but we needed better views so we stopped at Pollo Niño and had great views of one. [**E**]

SLATY VIREO (*Vireo brevipennis*) – Holy cow, we didn't even need to call it in! It just appeared on its own at Pollo Niño! This is one of the best looking of all the vireos in my humble opinion. John Coons agrees with me on that. [**E**]

DWARF VIREO (*Vireo nelsoni*) – This one sneaked around us at the cell tower hillside. It looks a lot like a Ruby-crowned Kinglet. [**E**]

HUTTON'S VIREO (*Vireo huttoni*) – Fairly common up in the mountains.

CASSIN'S VIREO (*Vireo cassinii*)

BLUE-HEADED VIREO (*Vireo solitarius*)

PLUMBEOUS VIREO (*Vireo plumbeus*) – We had these in the dry forest above Teotitlan del Valle.

WARBLING VIREO (*Vireo gilvus*)

Laniidae (Shrikes).

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE (*Lanius ludovicianus*) – Seen our first morning in the open fields below Teotitlan del Valle.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies).

DWARF JAY (*Cyanolyca nanus*) – One of the key birds of the tour! We had fabulous looks at them along the Cabeza de Vaca Trail at Cerro San Felipe. There are few other places in the world to see them ! [**E**]

WHITE-THROATED MAGPIE-JAY (*Calocitta formosa*) – What a cool, cool bird! We had a small flock go by at KM 77.

STELLER'S JAY (CENTRAL AMERICAN) (*Cyanocitta stelleri coronata*) – These were with the Dwarf Jays up at Cerro San Felipe.

WOODHOUSE'S SCRUB-JAY (SUMICHRASST'S) (*Aphelocoma woodhouseii sumichrasti*) – This particular subspecies is endemic to Mexico. They are much paler than the ones in the US.

COMMON RAVEN (*Corvus corax*)

Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice).

MEXICAN CHICKADEE (*Poecile sclateri*) – Fairly common up in the mountains. They often joined mixed species flocks.

BRIDLED TITMOUSE (*Baeolophus wollweberi*) – We had brief views of a pair that were in the valley above Teotitlan. Strangely, birds here in Mexico are less responsive than those in Arizona.

Hirundinidae (Swallows).

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) – The most common swallow around Presa Piedra Azul.

VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW (*Tachycineta thalassina*) – Fairly common in the mountains.

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*)

CLIFF SWALLOW (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*) – We saw a couple fly through at Monte Alban.

Aegithalidae (Long-tailed Tits).

BUSH TIT (MELANOTIS GROUP) (*Psaltiriparus minimus melanotis*) – The ones here have dark masks. We came across them several times over the course of the tour.

Regulidae (Kinglets).

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET (*Regulus satrapa*) – We saw a few the night went owling at Cerro San Felipe. This is a low density bird here in Oaxaca.

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET (*Regulus calendula*)

Certhiidae (Treecreepers).

BROWN CREEPER (ALBESCENS/ALTICOLA) (*Certhia americana alticola*) – We saw a few of these up on Cerro San Felipe.

Poliophtilidae (Gnatcatchers).

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER (*Poliophtila caerulea*)

WHITE-LORED GNATCATCHER (*Poliophtila albiloris*) – Found in the dry forests of West Mexico. We saw this species at KM 77.

Troglodytidae (Wrens).

ROCK WREN (*Salpinctes obsoletus*) – We saw these at Mitla and Monte Alban.

CANYON WREN (*Catherpes mexicanus*) – Somewhat uncooperative, but we finally got them into view at Monte Alban.

HOUSE WREN (BROWN-THROATED) (*Troglodytes aedon brunneicollis*) – We had great scope views of this bird above Teotitlan del Valle.

BEWICK'S WREN (MEXICANUS GROUP) (*Thryomanes bewickii mexicanus*)

GRAY-BARRED WREN (*Campylorhynchus megalopterus*) – One of my favorite birds in Mexico. These are the Cactus Wren equivalents of the high, moss-laden oak forests. They often form large groups that move noisily through the trees. [E]

RUFIOUS-NAPED WREN (SCLATER'S) (*Campylorhynchus rufinucha humilis*) – We saw these in the dry forest at KM 77.

BOUCARD'S WREN (*Campylorhynchus jocosus*) – These were common in the dry habitats around Oaxaca City. [E]

BANDED WREN (*Thryophilus pleurostictus*) – Steve was the only one who saw this bird at Km 77.

GRAY-BREASTED WOOD-WREN (CENTRAL AMERICAN) (*Henicorhina leucophrys mexicana*) – What a voice for such a small bird! We saw this little guy at Cerro San Felipe.

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers).

BLUE MOCKINGBIRD (*Melanotis caerulescens*) – We had our best looks at one right at the hotel! [E]

CURVE-BILLED THRASHER (CURVIROSTRE GROUP) (*Toxostoma curvirostre curvirostre*)

OCELLATED THRASHER (*Toxostoma ocellatum*) – This bird gave us our run for our money, but we finally got decent views at Monte Alban. [E]

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus polyglottos*)

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies).

BROWN-BACKED SOLITAIRE (*Myadestes occidentalis*) – One of great sounds of the Mexican highlands. These were especially common along the Yuvila Road.

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

RUSSET NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH (*Catharus occidentalis*) [E]

WHITE-THROATED THRUSH (WHITE-THROATED) (*Turdus assimilis oaxacae*) – Heard singing near Pollo Niño.

CLAY-COLORED THRUSH (*Turdus grayi*) – Common at the hotel. [I]

BLACK THRUSH (*Turdus infuscatus*) – We had a fleeting look from the van and heard a few along the Yuvila Road.

AMERICAN ROBIN (MIGRATORIUS GROUP) (*Turdus migratorius phillipsi*) – This is about as far south as American Robins get.

RUFIOUS-BACKED ROBIN (*Turdus rufopalliatus*) – Also common at the hotel. Apparently these were introduced to the Oaxaca Valley. [I]

Ptiliogonatidae (Silky-flycatchers).

GRAY SILKY-FLYCATCHER (*Ptiliogonys cinereus*) – What a bird! We saw these just about every day we went up into the mountains.

Peucedramidae (Olive Warbler).

OLIVE WARBLER (*Peucedramus taeniatus*) – Not a warbler nor an olive, but in a family all by itself. We saw also saw these just about every day we went up into the mountains.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows).

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) [I]

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits).

AMERICAN PIPIT (*Anthus rubescens*) – We saw one our first morning at Presa Piedra Azul.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

ELEGANT EUPHONIA (*Euphonia elegantissima*) – Another sharp looking bird of the Mexican highlands. We saw several at Pollo Niño.

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

RED CROSSBILL (*Loxia curvirostra stricklandi*) – It was cool to see these above Teotitlan del Valle.

LESSER GOLDFINCH (*Spinus psaltria*)

Passerellidae (New World Sparrows)

BRIDLED SPARROW (*Peucaea mystacalis*) – One of the best looking sparrows in my humble opinion. These are fairly common in the arid habitats of the Central Valley. [E]

BOTTERI'S SPARROW (*Peucaea botterii*) – It was the first time both Dan and Micah saw this species in Oaxaca! We had it our first morning near Teotitlan del Valle.

GRASSHOPPER SPARROW (*Ammodramus savannarum*) – These were pretty common in the fields near Teotitlan del Valle.

CHIPPING SPARROW (*Spizella passerina*)

LARK SPARROW (*Chondestes grammacus*) – We saw a few of these near Presa Piedra Azul.

CHESTNUT-CAPPED BRUSHFINCH (CHESTNUT-CAPPED) (*Arremon brunneinucha suttoni*) – We had our best views of this skulker along the Yuvila Road.

YELLOW-EYED JUNCO (*Junco phaeonotus*)

VESPER SPARROW (*Poocetes gramineus*) – Also seen in the fields near Teotitlan del Valle.

LINCOLN'S SPARROW (*Melospiza lincolni*)

WHITE-THROATED TOWHEE (*Melospiza albicollis*) – A common bird of the Central Valley. [E]

RUFIOUS-CROWNED SPARROW (*Aimophila ruficeps*)

OAXACA SPARROW (*Aimophila notosticta*) – Another endemic! We saw one well at Pollo Niño. [E]

SPOTTED TOWHEE (MACULATUS GROUP) (*Pipilo maculatus oaxacae*)

COLLARED TOWHEE (*Pipilo ocai*) – Very similar in appearance to Chestnut-capped Brushfinch but with a different voice. We had great scope views of some at Rio Verde. [E]

RUFIOUS-CAPPED BRUSHFINCH (*Atlapetes pileatus*) – Yet another towhee-like bird we saw on the tour. [E]

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

EASTERN MEADOWLARK (*Sturnella magna*) – A few of these were out in the fields near Teotitlan del Valle.

BLACK-VENTED ORIOLE (*Icterus wagleri*) – Fairly common at the lower elevations.

ORCHARD ORIOLE (*Icterus spurius*)

STREAK-BACKED ORIOLE (*Icterus pustulatus*) – We had decent scope views at KM 77.

BULLOCK'S ORIOLE (*Icterus bullockii*)

AUDUBON'S ORIOLE (DICKY'S) (*Icterus graduacauda dickeyae*) – It was cool to see this bird along the Yuvila Road. What a nice lemon yellow!

BALTIMORE ORIOLE (*Icterus galbula*)

BRONZED COWBIRD (*Molothrus aeneus*)

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD (*Molothrus ater*) – We saw one above Teotitlan del Valle. They are quite rare in the Central Valley.

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus mexicanus*)

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia motacilla*) – Dan called one in from the creek below Presa Piedra Azul.

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

CRESCENT-CHESTED WARBLER (*Oreothlypis superciliosa*) – Common in the feeding flocks at the higher elevations.

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER (*Leiothlypis celata*)

NASHVILLE WARBLER (*Leiothlypis ruficapilla*) – One of the most common wintering birds of the tour. We saw them just about everywhere.

VIRGINIA'S WARBLER (*Leiothlypis virginiae*) – These were more common in the cactus covered hillsides of KM 77.

MACGILLIVRAY'S WARBLER (*Geothlypis tolmiei*) – We managed a couple views of this skulking warbler throughout the tour.

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

BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER (*Setophaga nigrescens*)

TOWNSEND'S WARBLER (*Setophaga townsendi*) – Common up in the conifers.

HERMIT WARBLER (*Setophaga occidentalis*) – Fairly common, although not as common as Townsend's.

RUFIOUS-CAPPED WARBLER (RUFIFRONS GROUP) (*Basileuterus rufifrons rufifrons*) – These were one of my favorite birds of the trip. We had nice close views at Pollo Niño.

GOLDEN-BROWED WARBLER (*Basileuterus belli*) – I recently found out this was Rise's 3,000th bird! Congrats Rise!

WILSON'S WARBLER (*Cardellina pusilla*)

RED-FACED WARBLER (*Cardellina rubrifrons*) – We saw one lingering at Rio Verde. It probably wasn't long before it took off to Arizona.

RED WARBLER (*Cardellina rubra*) – We had numerous great views of this remarkable Mexican endemic. What a bird! [E]

PAINTED REDSTART (*Myioborus pictus*) – Another winter resident getting ready to leave for Arizona.

SLATE-THROATED REDSTART (*Myioborus miniatus miniatus*) – Very similar to Painted Redstart but lacks the white wing patches. We saw lots of them up in the mountains.

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

HEPATIC TANAGER (NORTHERN) (*Piranga flava hepatica*)

SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*)

WESTERN TANAGER (*Piranga ludoviciana*)

RED-HEADED TANAGER (*Piranga erythrocephala*) – This was a lifer for me on the last tour. We saw the same pair hanging out at Pollo Niño. [E]

BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*)

BLUE GROSBEAK (*Passerina caerulea*)

INDIGO BUNTING (*Passerina cyanea*) – Fairly common in the weedy stuff near Presa Piedra Azul.

ORANGE-BREASTED BUNTING (*Passerina leclancherii*) – After a full morning of search at KM 77 we returned to the vans without having seen the bird. Just as we loaded up to leave, Dan spotted one and we all got great looks at it! What a save! [E]

VARIED BUNTING (*Passerina versicolor*) – These were also present at KM 77.

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

CINNAMON-BELLIED FLOWERPIERCER (*Diglossa baritula baritula*) – Some folks got on this one at Cerro San Felipe.

MAMMALS

MEXICAN GRAY SQUIRREL (*Sciurus aureogaster*) – All over the place at the hotel. We saw a few up in the mountains too.

GRAY FOX (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*) – Some of us had fleeting looks as it scampered off in the night at Cerro San Felipe.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 191 bird taxa and 2 mammal taxa