

Trip Report — Panama's Canopy Lodge: El Valle de Anton 2024

December 29, 2024-January 5, 2025 with John Coons & Danilo Rodriguez Jr.



One of the highlights of the trip was coming upon an army ant swarm where we had close views of Black-crowned Antpitta, one of the best birds in Central America. Photo by participant Eric Gustafson.

We enjoyed a wonderful week of birding in central Panama, escaping some very cold weather at home. We gathered on our first day on the banks of the entrance to the Panama Canal. The next morning, we met Danilo Jr, our Canopy Lodge guide and driver, and started our birding with a visit to Panama City's Metropolitan Park only about 10 minutes from our motel. One of our first birds was a perched Bat Falcon sitting atop the high crane on the hilltop. We birded here for a couple of hours, finding a few local specialties along with some widespread Panamanian species. The highlight here was definitely a singing male Rosy Thrush-Tanager that sat still long enough for all of us to get a few scope views. Mid-morning we headed across the Panama Canal on the Bridge of the Americas and continued west along the Pan-American Highway before turning north and winding our way through the foothills to the quaint town of El Valle de Anton, the home of the Canopy Lodge. We enjoyed lunch and the fruit and rice feeders, where three Spot-crowned Barbets were feeding with Clay-colored Thrush, Crimson-backed Tanagers, a Green Hermit, and a Rufous Motmot, before getting situated in our rooms. We then walked up the road outside the lodge in a light mist, where we scoped our first Keel-billed Toucans, and enjoyed a Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher. A Violet-bellied Hummingbird put on a nice show. At the Canopy Adventure site one of the guys had a couple of Tawny-crested Tanagers coming to a mango he was holding, while a close Dusky-faced Tanager was summoning the courage to approach as well. We enjoyed a nice dinner in the open area dining area.



We birded in the cloud forest along the roads of Altos del Maria in a foggy mist that came and went during the day. Photo by participant Suzanne Winckler.

Our first morning at the Canopy Lodge found a number of new species, including a Gray-cowled Wood-Rail, coming to the feeder during our breakfast time where there was, again, a mist falling but not enough to deter our birding. It was hard to pull away for our morning outing as a Buff-rumped Warbler was singing up a storm as it hopped among the boulders in the stream and a Panama Flycatcher was gleaning insects off the windshield wipers of one of the cars in the parking area. We headed up to La Mesa with a stop at the Chorro de Macho waterfall and a Black-throated Trogon, and nearby we scoped a pair of Mottled Owls roosting overhead. Further up the road we strolled up the trail at Las Minas for some flock birding where a Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer showed well. We saw a handful of wintering warblers, with Bay-breasted being the most common and a Canada Warbler looking out of place. After lunch we headed to Las Mozas for some drier forest birding. Danilo Jr found a roosting Spectacled Owl. We enjoyed a special roast turkey dinner for New Year's Eve but I don't think any of us made it to midnight.



Another uncommon species, the unusual looking Spot-crowned Barbet was a frequent visitor to the feeders at the Canopy Lodge. Photo by participant Eric Gustafson.

We started 2025 with our barbet, toucan, and tanager friends visiting the fruit feeders again and today was also the 40th Anniversary of the founding of Field Guides. We headed up the road again in a light rain that soon subsided since it was the dry

season. Not far along we stopped for a few birds including a close Spotted Woodcreeper and a pair of Tropical Screech-Owls that were tucked into the limbs of a tree. A fruiting fig tree gave us good views of several Silver-throated and Bay-headed Tanagers. We waited out a brief rain before going on a trail where we encountered an army ant swarm with several special birds in attendance. A pair of sharply marked Spotted Antbirds and Chestnut-backed Antbirds were here, but the stars of the show were two Black-crowned Antpittas, normally a difficult to see forest bird, that hopped about near our feet as they snatched arthropods the ants were stirring up. A great sighting! We headed back to the Lodge as the rain picked up again. In the afternoon we did some roadside birding at Mata Ahogado where we encountered a close Broadbilled Motmot, quite local Black-headed Saltators, White-winged Becard, Long-tailed Tyrants, and a couple more Bat Falcons. That evening a group of young carolers celebrated New Year's Day with us.



Tody Motmot is a rather uncommon bird throughout its range. It took quite a bit of searching but we found this cooperative individual on the Caribbean slope. Photo by guide John Coons.

We were out a bit earlier on January 2nd in three SUVs to visit the cloud forest for a number of new species. At our first stop, a tanager flock with more Silver-throateds and our first looks at beautiful Emerald Tanagers showed well, as did an uncommon Rufous Mourner and White-ruffed Manakin. A highlight here was a rather cooperative view of the usually secretive and spectacular Crimson-bellied Woodpecker feeding amongst the huge trees in the cloud forest. Further along we scoped a tiny Rufouscrested Coquette on its perch then had a few glimpses of a male Snowcap before it settled for a several minute scope view. A fabulous bird. After our lunch in the field, we hit a few other spots and saw a Brown Violetear on its nest and finally got nice looks at an uncommon Dull-mantled Antbird along a creek as we headed back to the Lodge. We were out again in the SUVs the next morning to bird the Caribbean side. We spent a chunk of the day here with some of the highlights being two perched White Hawks, a singing Barred Puffbird, a few White-necked Jacobins, Cinnamon Becard, and Bran-colored Flycatcher. But our highlight was finding a wonderful Tody Motmot that posed for us for a few minutes. For our final dinner at the Lodge we celebrated Dawn's birthday.

On our final day of birding we headed off with Danilo Jr to the lowlands of the Pacific side of Panama. An early stop found a quite close Wedge-tailed Grass-Finch, Lesser Elaenia, and Hepatic Tanager. Further along we spotted a calling Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl and had nice views of a singing Rufous-browed Peppershrike and a pair of Olive-throated Parakeets. Near the coast we came upon a rice field being worked by a couple of tractors and found a large congregation of birds that included all the egrets, Little Blue Herons, Glossy Ibis, Wood Storks, Lesser and Greater yellowlegs, White Ibis, and a Gray Kingbird. We then enjoyed a relaxing lunch at Raul Arias's beach house at Santa Clara where there were a handful of coastal birds, Brown Pelicans, Laughing Gulls, Whimbrels and cormorants. Our final new bird was a nearby Common Potoo that was perfectly camouflaged on an upright perch. From here we bid adieu to Danilo and headed back to Panama City with Eric, arriving at the airport hotel about 5:00 pm. We enjoyed our final dinner here. It was a real joy birding with all of you on this holiday trip. I hope we can do it again one of these days.



Gustafson photographed this well camouflaged Common Potoo at Santa Clara on our final day of birding.

Mammals encountered on our trip included:

Geoffroy's Tamarin (Saguinus geoffroyi) Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth (Bradypus variegatus) Forest Rabbit (Sylvilagus brasiliensis) Variegated Squirrel (Sciurus variegatoides) Red-tailed Squirrel (Sciurus granatensis) Central American Agouti (Dasyprocta punctata) White-nosed Coati (Nasua narica) White-tailed Deer (Odocoileus virginianus)

A few of the specialty herps we found were:

Brilliant Forest Frog (Lithobates sp.) Fleischmann's Glass Frog (Hyalinobatrachium fleischmanni) Eyelash Palm Pit Viper (Bothriechis sp.) Common Basilisk (Basilicus basilicus)

You can see my complete trip report on eBird at this link:

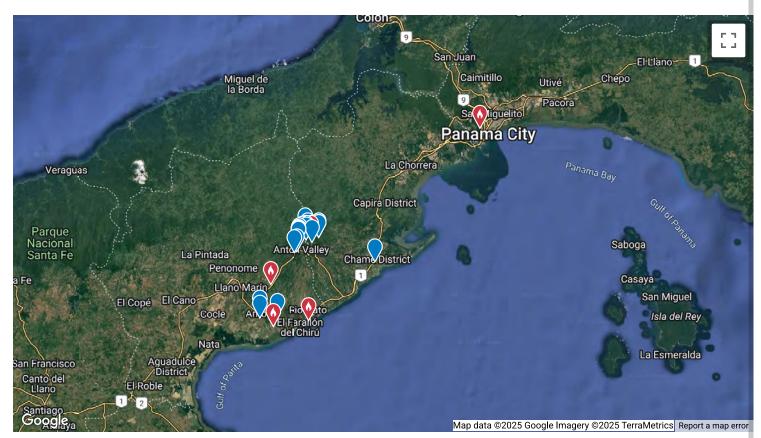
https://ebird.org/tripreport/320519

John Coons



Field Guides Birding Tours—Panama's Canopy Lodge: El Valle de Anton, 2024 (with John Coons and Danilo Rodriguez Jr)

30 Dec 2024 – 4 Jan 2025 (6 days) Link-only



🚱 Panama

Coclé | Panamá

🐣 John Coons



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

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Species Observed

1	Little Tinamou Crypturellus soui	• 🖪 1
35	Gray-headed Chachalaca Ortalis cinereiceps	Þ 🖪 7
1	Crested Bobwhite Colinus cristatus	• 🚮 1
2	Rock Pigeon Columba livia *	• 🚮 1
3	Pale-vented Pigeon Patagioenas cayennensis	• 👖 1
2	Ruddy Ground Dove Columbina talpacoti	• 🖪 1
6	White-tipped Dove Leptotila verreauxi	▶ 🖪 4
5	Smooth-billed Ani Crotophaga ani	• 🗐 1
2	Groove-billed Ani Crotophaga sulcirostris	• 🖪 1
2	Squirrel Cuckoo Piaya cayana	Þ 🖪 2
1	Common Potoo Nyctibius griseus	• 🖬 1
20	White-collared Swift Streptoprocne zonaris	• 💼 1
3	White-necked Jacobin Florisuga mellivora	Þ 🖪 2
2	Green Hermit Phaethornis guy	Þ 🛯 2
1	Long-billed Hermit Phaethornis longirostris	• 🖬 1
3	Stripe-throated Hermit Phaethornis striigularis	▶ 🖪 2
1	Brown Violetear Colibri delphinae	• 🖪 1
1	Rufous-crested Coquette Lophornis delattrei	• 👖 1
1	Garden Emerald Chlorostilbon assimilis	• 💼 1
2	Violet-headed Hummingbird Klais guimeti	Þ 🖪 2
1	Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer Chalybura urochrysia) 🖬 1

Show all details

25, 3:17	PM Field Guides Birding Tours—Panama's Canopy Lodge: El Valle de Anton, 2024 (with John Coons and Danilo Rodriguez Jr) - eBird I	rip Repor	t
2	White-vented Plumeleteer Chalybura buffonii	▶ ∎ 2	
3	Crowned Woodnymph Thalurania colombica	Þ 🖪 2	
1	Snowcap Microchera albocoronata	• 🗊 1	
3	Snowy-bellied Hummingbird Saucerottia edward) 🖪 3	
11	Rufous-tailed Hummingbird Amazilia tzacatl	Þ 🖪 9	
1	Sapphire-throated Hummingbird Chrysuronia coeruleogularis	• 🖬 1	
3	Blue-chested Hummingbird Polyerata amabilis	Þ 🖪 3	
5	Gray-cowled Wood-Rail Aramides cajaneus	Þ 🖪 3	
1	Black-bellied Plover Pluvialis squatarola	• 🖬 1	
7	Southern Lapwing Vanellus chilensis	Þ 🖪 2	
3	Wattled Jacana Jacana jacana	• 💼 1	
2	Whimbrel Numenius phaeopus	• 🖬 1	
3	Long-billed Dowitcher Limnodromus scolopaceus	• 💼 1	
20	Lesser Yellowlegs Tringa flavipes	• 💼 1	
1	Willet Tringa semipalmata	• 💼 1	
15	Greater Yellowlegs Tringa melanoleuca	• 💼 1	
11	Western Sandpiper Calidris mauri	• 🖬 1	
6	Laughing Gull Leucophaeus atricilla	• 💼 1	
1	Royal Tern Thalasseus maximus	• 💼 1	
20	Wood Stork Mycteria americana	• 💼 1	
10	Magnificent Frigatebird Fregata magnificens	• 💼 1	
1	Cocos Booby Sula brewsteri	• 💼 1	
1	Neotropic Cormorant Nannopterum brasilianum	• 🛙 1	
10	White Ibis Eudocimus albus	• 🖬 1	
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25	Glossy Ibis Plegadis falcinellus		ו ה
2	Black-crowned Night Heron Nycticorax nycticorax		1 1
17	Little Blue Heron Egretta caerulea	•	13
5	Snowy Egret Egretta thula		ן ה
2	Green Heron Butorides virescens	•	12
222	Western Cattle-Egret Ardea ibis	•	15
52	Great Egret Ardea alba	•	12
3	Great Blue Heron Ardea herodias		ר ה
8	Brown Pelican Pelecanus occidentalis		ר ה
13	Black Vulture Coragyps atratus	•	15
12	Turkey Vulture Cathartes aura	•	14
7	Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture Cathartes burrovianus	•	2
1	Osprey Pandion haliaetus		1 1
2	White-tailed Kite Elanus leucurus	•	12
1	Black Hawk-Eagle Spizaetus tyrannus		1 1
1	Common Black Hawk Buteogallus anthracinus		ן ה
4	Savanna Hawk Buteogallus meridionalis	•	12
2	Roadside Hawk Rupornis magnirostris	•	12
2	White Hawk Pseudastur albicollis	•	12
3	Broad-winged Hawk Buteo platypterus	•	12
3	Short-tailed Hawk Buteo brachyurus	•	1 3
2	Tropical Screech-Owl Megascops choliba		ר ה
1	Spectacled Owl Pulsatrix perspicillata		1 1

1	Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl Glaucidium brasilianum		1
2	Mottled Owl Strix virgata	Þ	1
3	Slaty-tailed Trogon Trogon massena) I	11
2	Collared Trogon Trogon collaris		2
1	Tody Motmot Hylomanes momotula	Þ Í	11
1	Lesson's Motmot Momotus lessonii	Þ	11
3	Rufous Motmot Baryphthengus martii)	2
1	Broad-billed Motmot Electron platyrhynchum		11
2	Ringed Kingfisher Megaceryle torquata	Þ Í	11
1	Green Kingfisher Chloroceryle americana	Þ Í	11
2	Barred Puffbird Nystalus radiatus) i	11
1	White-whiskered Puffbird Malacoptila panamensis) i	11
17	Spot-crowned Barbet Capito maculicoronatus	ŀ	1 7
2	Northern Emerald-Toucanet Aulacorhynchus prasinus		11
16	Collared Aracari Pteroglossus torquatus		5
6	Keel-billed Toucan Ramphastos sulfuratus	ŀ	14
1	Black-cheeked Woodpecker Melanerpes pucherani		11
4	Red-crowned Woodpecker Melanerpes rubricapillus		3
2	Crimson-bellied Woodpecker Campephilus haematogaster) i	11
3	Lineated Woodpecker Dryocopus lineatus)	3
1	Barred Forest-Falcon Microstur ruficollis		11
6	Crested Caracara Caracara plancus		2
5	Yellow-headed Caracara Daptrius chimachima) ∎	1 3

2	American Kestrel Falco sparverius	•	2
5	Bat Falcon Falco rufigularis) 📄 2	4
8	Orange-chinned Parakeet Brotogeris jugularis	•	2
8	Brown-hooded Parrot Pyrilia haematotis)	2
10	Blue-headed Parrot Pionus menstruus)	3
2	Brown-throated Parakeet Eupsittula pertinax		1
1	Fasciated Antshrike Cymbilaimus lineatus	•	1
3	Barred Antshrike Thamnophilus doliatus	•	3
1	Plain Antvireo Dysithamnus mentalis		1
1	Spot-crowned Antvireo Dysithamnus puncticeps	•	1
1	Checker-throated Stipplethroat Epinecrophylla fulviventris	•	1
1	Dusky Antbird Cercomacroides tyrannina	•	1
1	White-bellied Antbird Myrmeciza longipes		1
2	Chestnut-backed Antbird Poliocrania exsul	•	1
2	Dull-mantled Antbird Sipia laemosticta		1
2	Bicolored Antbird Gymnopithys bicolor	•	1
2	Spotted Antbird Hylophylax naevioides		1
2	Black-crowned Antpitta Pittasoma michleri		1
1	Black-faced Antthrush Formicarius analis		1
1	Cocoa Woodcreeper Xiphorhynchus susurrans	•	1
2	Spotted Woodcreeper Xiphorhynchus erythropygius	•	2
1	Straight-billed Woodcreeper Dendroplex picus	•	1
1	Spotted Barbtail Premnoplex brunnescens	•	1

2	Red-faced Spinetail Cranioleuca erythrops	•	11
1	Lance-tailed Manakin Chiroxiphia lanceolata	•	11
1	White-ruffed Manakin Corapipo altera	•	11
1	Velvety Manakin Lepidothrix velutina	•	11
2	Golden-collared Manakin Manacus vitellinus	•	2
2	Cinnamon Becard Pachyramphus cinnamomeus	•	11
1	Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher Myiobius sulphureipygius	•	11
1	Olive-striped Flycatcher Mionectes galbinus	•	11
1	Ochre-bellied Flycatcher Mionectes oleagineus	•	11
1	Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant Lophotriccus pileatus	•	1
3	Common Tody-Flycatcher Todirostrum cinereum	•	2
1	Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher Todirostrum nigriceps	•	11
1	Eye-ringed Flatbill Rhynchocyclus brevirostris	•	11
1	Western Olivaceous Flatbill Rhynchocyclus aequinoctialis	•	11
1	Yellow-olive Flatbill Tolmomyias sulphurescens	•	11
1	Brown-capped Tyrannulet Ornithion brunneicapillus	•	11
3	Yellow-bellied Elaenia Elaenia flavogaster	•	3
1	Lesser Elaenia Elaenia chiriquensis	•	n
2	Mistletoe Tyrannulet Zimmerius parvus	•	2
1	Bran-colored Flycatcher Myiophobus fasciatus	•	n
1	Tufted Flycatcher Mitrephanes phaeocercus		n
1	Eastern Wood-Pewee Contopus virens		11
1	Acadian Flycatcher Empidonax virescens	•	11

1	Long-tailed Tyrant Colonia colonus	• 🗐 1	
2	Rufous Mourner Rhytipterna holerythra	Þ 🛯 2	
3	Dusky-capped Flycatcher Myiarchus tuberculifer) 🖪 3	
4	Panama Flycatcher Myiarchus panamensis) 📲 3	
2	Great Kiskadee Pitangus sulphuratus	Þ 🛯 2	
1	Boat-billed Flycatcher Megarynchus pitangua	Þ 🚮 1	
2	Rusty-margined Flycatcher Myiozetetes cayanensis	Þ 🚮 1	
5	Social Flycatcher Myiozetetes similis	▶ ∎ 5	
1	Streaked Flycatcher Myiodynastes maculatus) 🖬 1	
11	Tropical Kingbird Tyrannus melancholicus	▶ 🖪 7	
2	Gray Kingbird Tyrannus dominicensis) 🖬 1	
3	Fork-tailed Flycatcher Tyrannus savana	Þ 🖪 2	
1	Rufous-browed Peppershrike Cyclarhis gujanensis	Þ 🚮 1	
1	Green Shrike-Vireo Vireolanius pulchellus	• 🚮 1	
2	Yellow-throated Vireo flavifrons	Þ 🖪 2	
14	Black-chested Jay Cyanocorax affinis	▶ ∎ 4	
2	Bank Swallow Riparia riparia	• 🚮 1	
4	Gray-breasted Martin Progne chalybea	Þ 🖪 2	
3	Northern Rough-winged Swallow Stelgidopteryx serripennis	Þ 🚮 1	
2	Southern Rough-winged Swallow Stelgidopteryx ruficollis	Þ 🚮 1	
1	Blue-and-white Swallow Pygochelidon cyanoleuca) 🖬 1	
40	Barn Swallow Hirundo rustica	Þ 🚮 1	
1	Long-billed Gnatwren Ramphocaenus melanurus	• 💼 1	

1	Scaly-breasted Wren Microcerculus marginatus	
•	Stary breasted Wren melocicalis marginatus	· •
2	Southern House Wren Troglodytes musculus) a 2
1	Ochraceous Wren Troglodytes ochraceus	• 👔 1
5	Rufous-breasted Wren Pheugopedius rutilus	▶ ∎ 4
1	Rufous-and-white Wren Thryophilus rufalbus	• 💼 1
2	Isthmian Wren Cantorchilus elutus	• 🖬 1
10	Bay Wren Cantorchilus nigricapillus	▶ 🖪 7
1	White-breasted Wood-Wren Henicorhina leucosticta	• 📭 1
4	Tropical Mockingbird Mimus gilvus *	Þ 🛯 2
27	Clay-colored Thrush Turdus grayi	Þ 🖪 8
3	House Sparrow Passer domesticus *	• 🖬 1
1	Thick-billed Euphonia Euphonia Ianiirostris	• 🚮 1
1	Fulvous-vented Euphonia Euphonia fulvicrissa	• 💼 1
5	Tawny-capped Euphonia Euphonia anneae	Þ 🖪 3
2	Rosy Thrush-Tanager Rhodinocichla rosea	• 💼 1
9	Common Chlorospingus Chlorospingus flavopectus	Þ 🛯 2
4	Black-striped Sparrow Arremonops conirostris	Þ 🖪 3
1	Orange-billed Sparrow Arremon aurantiirostris	• 💼 1
2	Eastern Meadowlark Sturnella magna	• 🖬 1
2	Crested Oropendola Psarocolius decumanus	• 🗊 1
2	Chestnut-headed Oropendola Psarocolius wagleri	Þ 🖬 2
1	Baltimore Oriole Icterus galbula	• 👖 1
1	Shiny Cowbird Molothrus bonariensis	• 🖬 1

1	Giant Cowbird Molothrus oryzivorus	• 🖬 1
4	Great-tailed Grackle Quiscalus mexicanus	Þ 🛯 2
4	Louisiana Waterthrush Parkesia motacilla	▶ ∎ 4
2	Northern Waterthrush Parkesia noveboracensis	▶ ∎ 2
2	Golden-winged Warbler Vermivora chrysoptera	▶ ∎ 2
1	Black-and-white Warbler Mniotilta varia	• 🗊 1
3	Prothonotary Warbler Protonotaria citrea	• 💼 1
3	Tennessee Warbler Leiothlypis peregrina	Þ 🛯 2
1	Mourning Warbler Geothlypis philadelphia	• 💼 1
8	Bay-breasted Warbler Setophaga castanea	▶ 🖪 5
3	Blackburnian Warbler Setophaga fusca	Þ 🖪 3
1	Yellow Warbler Setophaga petechia	• 👖 1
4	Yellow-rumped Warbler Setophaga coronata	• 👖 1
8	Chestnut-capped Warbler Basileuterus delattrii	▶ ∎7
3	Buff-rumped Warbler Myiothlypis fulvicauda	Þ 🖪 2
2	Canada Warbler Cardellina canadensis	Þ 🛯 2
2	Dusky-faced Tanager Mitrospingus cassinii	Þ 🛯 2
4	Hepatic Tanager Piranga flava	Þ 🛯 2
4	Red-crowned Ant-Tanager Habia rubica	ه 🖪 ک
2	Red-throated Ant-Tanager Driophlox fuscicauda	• 👖 1
1	White-shouldered Tanager Loriotus luctuosus	• 👖 1
13	Tawny-crested Tanager Tachyphonus delatrii	Þ 🖪 3
2	White-lined Tanager Tachyphonus rufus	▶ ∎ 2

7	Flame-rumped Tanager Ramphocelus flammigerus	Þ 🖪 3
12	Crimson-backed Tanager Ramphocelus dimidiatus	▶ 🖪 6
8	Blue-gray Tanager Thraupis episcopus	▶ ∎ 5
7	Palm Tanager Thraupis palmarum	▶ ∎ 5
1	Golden-hooded Tanager Stilpnia larvata	• 🖬 1
12	Plain-colored Tanager Tangara inornata) 🖪 3
13	Bay-headed Tanager Tangara gyrola	▶ 🖪 6
1	Emerald Tanager Tangara florida	• 🖬 1
8	Silver-throated Tanager Tangara icterocephala	▶ ∎ 5
2	Shining Honeycreeper Cyanerpes lucidus	▶ ∎ 2
1	Red-legged Honeycreeper Cyanerpes cyaneus	• 🖬 1
1	Green Honeycreeper Chlorophanes spiza	• 💼 1
5	Black-and-yellow Tanager Chrysothlypis chrysomelas	• 🖬 1
2	Wedge-tailed Grass-Finch Emberizoides herbicola	• 🖬 1
2	Blue-black Grassquit Volatinia jacarina	• 🖬 1
7	Variable Seedeater Sporophila corvina	▶ ∎ 4
2	Yellow-bellied Seedeater Sporophila nigricollis	• 🖬 1
1	Slate-colored Seedeater Sporophila schistacea	• 💼 1
7	Bananaquit Coereba flaveola	Þ 🖪 3
2	Yellow-faced Grassquit Tiaris olivaceus	Þ 🛯 2
9	Buff-throated Saltator Saltator maximus	▶ 🖪 6
1	Black-headed Saltator Saltator atriceps	• 🖬 1
1	Slate-colored Grosbeak Saltator grossus) 🖬 1