



COLOMBIA

SHOWCASING PROAVES RESERVES

Feb 1 – 20, 2007

Tour leader: Paul Salaman

Guides: Nick Athanas, Joe Tobias, Luis Eduardo Urueña, and local guides. Niels Krabbe helped in El Dorado.

Donors: Gwenda Brewer, Paul Bristow, Donnie and Jackie Dann, Steve Gast, Robert Giles, Josep del Hoyo, George Jett, George Ledec, Peary and BK Stafford, Mark Weinberger

Trip report and photos by Nick Athanas

Photo left: Black Inca (Endangered Colombian endemic)

Introduction

In February 2007, Paul Salaman of American Bird Conservancy (ABC) organized an ambitious donor tour to Colombia to showcase several of the bird reserves owned and run by ProAves Colombia. Word of the trip spread like wildfire and very quickly twelve people had signed up, with several more on the waiting list. Funds generated from the tour helped ProAves to build several new lodges in their reserves to accommodate our group as well as future ones. I was invited on the trip to assist as a guide, and also to determine if Tropical Birding will be able to run trips here in the future. Based on what I saw, the answer is an overwhelming “YES”. While there were certain logistical hiccups, none of them really affected the birding; we had a great time and saw some fantastic birds, some of them among the rarest and most endangered in all of South America.

The ground arrangements for the tour were done by EcoTurs Colombia, a company set up by ProAves to operate tours to their reserves. They hope that ecotourism will be able to help offset the running costs of their growing system of excellent protected areas. This was the first large tour that they had arranged, and it was not an easy one. None of the reserves had ever dealt with groups of our size, and some of the new lodges weren't totally completed in time for our arrival. Driving times were also notably longer than expected due to the slow speed of the bus we had to use. Despite this, I applaud EcoTurs for really giving a huge effort to make everyone as comfortable as possible under the circumstances. In the end, we'll remember the great birds and experiences of the trip long after we've forgotten the relatively minor inconveniences we had to put up with. EcoTurs learned a huge amount from this first trip, and have already taken steps to ensure that future trips run more smoothly.

Transport for the main tour was in a 20-seater bus with a good local driver. The bus was comfortable, but unfortunately very slow. ProAves also provided a 4WD vehicle, and this was essential in some of the reserves to help ferry passengers, luggage, and supplies. Alonso Quevedo, the president of ProAves, drove the 4WD; he and Luis Eduardo Urueña coordinated arrangements with the reserve directors and assisted with logistics.

Security has long been a concern in Colombia due to the presence of leftist guerrilla groups such as FARC and ELN, and very few birders have dared visit in recent years. Fortunately, the Colombian government has had great recent success in fighting back against the rebels, and now most of the country is as safe to travel in as any of its neighbors. The guerrillas still have strongholds in more remote areas of the country, and it is essential that any visiting birders check with a local organization, such as ProAves, to ensure that all the areas they intend to visit are safe. ProAves

keeps a close watch on the security situation – they don't want to send their own people into harm's way either. Never during the course of this tour did we feel at risk, and when we talked with locals, they always told us that the areas had long since been free of the guerrilla.

I made quite a few audio recordings during the course of the trip. Many of these I have uploaded to www.xeno-canto.org, where they can be downloaded for free. I mention the catalog number of some species that I recorded in this report, prefixed with the "XC". Josep del Hoyo took video of more than 130 species, and he will upload them to the Internet Bird Collection at www.hbw.com/ibc/.

About ProAves Colombia

ProAves is a Colombian NGO dedicated to the conservation of birds and their habitats. They own a superb network of 11 reserves totaling over 10,000 hectares, protecting critical habitat for many of Colombia's threatened and endemic bird species. ProAves also invests a lot in ornithological research, in order to improve our knowledge of Colombia's avifauna and to identify new target areas for reserves. They don't neglect environmental education either, and their mobile environmental classroom, called the *Loro Bus* ("Parrot Bus"), is known throughout the country. Their countrywide campaign against the cutting of the wax palm tree for religious ceremonies went a long way towards saving the Yellow-eared Parrot from extinction. See www.proaves.org for more info. Please be aware that all visits to ProAves reserves must be organized in advance. While ProAves does encourage birders to visit, you cannot just turn up and expect to be allowed in. Please contact Luis Eduardo Urueña at leurena@proaves.org to make arrangements. Luis does speak some English, and is quite happy to help.

Birding sites

All but a few of these sites are ProAves reserves, identified by the prefix RNA (Reserva Natural de las Aves).

Parque Nacional Natural Chingaza (Jan 31)

Some of the group had arrived a day early, and took the opportunity to bird near this park located in the mountains a few hours north of Bogotá. ProAves is running a project there to study the ecology of the Flame-winged Parakeet, a threatened species endemic to the eastern Andes of Colombia. Those who took this optional excursion had some excellent views of this rare and beautiful bird, as well as some more common high Andean species.



Parque La Florida (Feb 1)

This isn't a ProAves reserve, but it was a convenient place to bird before heading out of Bogotá. It is a small park with a reed-fringed lake not far from El Dorado International Airport, and a well-known site for Bogotá Rail (photo left) and Apolinar's Wren, both of which are endangered Colombian endemics. In our two hours of birding there, we had fantastic views of both of these specialties without too much difficulty. We had to ask a security guard to open a gate for us, then walk left along the edge of the lake to the reeds.

RNA El Paujil (Feb 1-4)

It was a seven hour drive from Parque Carolina to get to this reserve. We dropped steeply down into the Magdalena Valley, then drove north to Puerto Boyacá, where we turned onto the 50km, mostly unpaved, road to the base of the Serranía de las Quinchas, a low ridge lying slightly to the west of the eastern cordillera. The last section of road is very poor, so we birded our way to the lodge while the luggage was sent ahead in the 4WD. In the wet season, it is easier to access the reserve by boat from the nearby town of Puerto Pinzón.

The reserve was created to protect the critically endangered Blue-billed Curassow, a species thought to be nearly extinct until a ProAves expedition located a viable population here in 2003. The discovery could not have been more timely, as the company which owned the property was about to subdivide the land and sell it off to farmers, which would have spelled doom for the forest. With financial support from ABC and Conservation International, ProAves was able to secure 1300 hectares or some of the last remaining humid lowland forest in the Magdalena Valley. They have worked with the local community of Puerto Pinzón to eliminate hunting in the reserve, and thus have given the Blue-billed Curassow a new lease on life. There are an additional 1200 hectares of forest next to the existing reserve that ProAves hopes to be able to purchase in the near future. Several other threatened and near-threatened species occur in the reserve, including White-mantled Barbet, Antioquia Bristle-Tyrant, Saffron-headed Parrot, and Sooty Ant-Tanager.

Some of the money raised by the tour went to help build a new cabin with two nice rooms with private bathrooms and AC. There are a further three rooms with private bathrooms and fans in the main building, and additional dormitory rooms with shared bathrooms are available for staff. Excellent local dishes were served in an open-air patio near the edge of the river. A few trails have been built through the forest, the best of which is on the other side of the river from the reserve. In the dry season, it is easy to wade across the river to the start of the trail, but in the wet season a boat would be necessary. The entrance road and the lodge clearing are great for edge species, and there is even a small wetland nearby.

El Paujil has a very hot and humid climate, with an average high temperature of 35°C(95°F). February is the dry season, and it was extremely hot in the middle of the day, with no rain, but fortunately almost no mosquitoes.

We had about 2 ½ days to bird here, and we usually split up into smaller groups in order to make the forest birding easier and to maximize our chances of encountering curassows. Birding was fairly good, and the trail on the other side of the river offered up some real gems, including the beautiful endemic White-mantled Barbet and the local Dull-mantled Antbird. On the second day, Joe Tobias found an odd flycatcher that he thought was Black-billed, and he took us back to the spot after lunch. Luckily, it was still there, and he got some photos; I even got a short recording of it



(XC10731). This bird is almost endemic to Colombia, but it does get into the Darien in Panama. Our record was the first for the reserve and appears to be a minor range extension. Sooty Ant-Tanagers turned out to be quite common in the forest, and we saw them on most trails. In the forest along the main road, we found a lek of Western Striped Manakin (photo previous page). The subspecies here, *antioquiae*, is endemic to Colombia, and the only one to occur west of the main chain of the Andes. We only had flyovers of Saffron-headed Parrots, unfortunately. It would have been nice to see this beauty perched.

Some ProAves people were doing some bird banding while we were there, and some interesting species fell into the nets. My favorite was the Shining-green Hummingbird, which has a rather small range in Colombia and western Venezuela. This little guy is very hard to ID in the field, and it was nice to have close views of one in the hand.

The Blue-billed Curassow, like most curassows, is extremely shy and wary due to hunting pressure. After two full days in the reserve, only Joe and one of the local guides had gotten even a glimpse of it, and it was a brief one at that. We were able to hear a male booming every morning (XC10728), but it was up a steep and seemingly inaccessible slope. On our third afternoon there, Paul Salaman decided to try to cut a trail to where he thought the bird was booming from, and a few of us went up there very early the following morning. We arrived in the dark in time to find a Vermiculated Screech-Owl; its voice (XC10835) indicated it was subspecies *centralis*, and this appears to be a significant range extension. We waited for nearly an hour before the male Blue-billed Curassow started booming. It seemed to be a long way off, but we crept down Paul's trail after the sound, and soon realized that it was much closer than we thought. We all tried to walk as quietly as possible, avoiding dry leaves and sticks, when



George Ledec whispered triumphantly "I see it!". And there it was, in a tree at eye level moving agitatedly back and forth, showing every feature and giving an odd alarm call (XC10733). Oddly, despite its elated audience, it seemed reluctant to leave its perch. Paul and I had time to go back and grab our scope and cameras, which we had left farther back on the trail, and return in time to get off a few shots. It was a terrific moment, but we were sad that not everyone could have experienced it. It was time to move on to our next destination.

RNA Reinita Cielo Azul (Feb 4-7)

It was another long, eight hour drive, as we made our way north through the Magdalena Valley. We turned off on the road to Bucaramanga, then later onto the rough road south up the mountains to San Vicente de Chucurí. Donnie and Jackie tried in vain to find a TV showing the Super Bowl, and eventually had to settle with periodic updates on Steve's Blackberry. We made our way up the final stretch of steep, rough road to the lodge, enjoying the refreshingly cool climate of the subtropical Andes.

Reinita Cielo Azul is the local Spanish name for the Cerulean Warbler, and this 200 hectare reserve was established specifically to protect this beautiful yet threatened boreal migrant. Several threatened Colombian endemics also occur here, including Gorgeted Wood-Quail, Parker's Antbird, White-mantled Barbet, Turquoise Dacnis-Tanager, and Black Inca. Mountain Grackle occurs in temperate forest just above the reserve, and Chestnut-bellied Hummingbird has been found in drier habitats below the reserve.

ProAves had just completed a nice new lodge on a coffee farm adjacent to the reserve, with four rooms, each with private bathroom. There are additional rooms with shared bath in the main building. Access to the forest is via the Camino de Lengerke, a stone path built 150 years ago by Geo von Lengerke, a German settler and engineer. It is about an hour's walk up this path to the start of the reserve (horses are available), and the path then continues through beautiful montane forest for many kilometers. The path is not difficult, but can be extremely slippery due to the wet moss that grows on it.

We spent most of the first day in this forest, but had no hint of Gorgeted Wood-Quail. Parker's Antbird was fairly common along in scrubby vegetation on the side of the path, and we found several Black Incas perched by the trail. A ProAves team had set up some nets, and they managed to catch, among others, a pair of pretty White-mantled Barbets, though they did not seem to enjoy their 15 minutes of fame! Higher up the mountain, we found a small group of Yariquies Brush-Finch, a newly-described subspecies of the widespread Yellow-breasted Brush-Finch. We could see the distant ridge where the Mountain Grackles live, but did not have time to fight the overgrown trail up to see them.

Later in the afternoon, ironically, those who lounged around the lodge managed to score the fabled Turquoise Dacnis-Tanager, sitting and preening in a tree right next to the buildings! This turn of events convinced some of us to bird the coffee plantations the next morning rather than heading back to the forest, and we did managed to located several more of this pretty endemic (photo right). The coffee plantations below the lodge were absolutely jam-packed with boreal migrants, a greater concentration than I had ever seen anywhere in South America. Cerulean, Golden-winged, Canada, Blackburnian, Mourning, Tennessee, Black-and-white Warblers were all present in good numbers along with American Redstart, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Acadian Flycatcher, Western Wood-Pewee, and Olive-sided Flycatcher. George Jett even photographed a warbler that could be a Connecticut, but were still awaiting word from some experts to confirm the ID. After that morning, we all had a much greater appreciation of the



value of shade coffee plantations to North American migrants; it isn't just a fad. Also in the coffee plantation, we had great views of a male Bar-crested Antshrike (below), nearly endemic to Colombia. The few who returned to the forest that morning had better luck with the Gorgeted Wood-Quail, having a nice views in the trail of a small covey.



On the morning we left, Paul Salaman suggested we leave very early to look for Chestnut-bellied Hummingbird in dry woodland near the Rio Chucurí, in an area where ProAves had once netted one. It seemed like a longshot, but we were all up for it. Luck happened to smile on us that morning, and about 15 minutes after getting out of the bus we had managed to find one feeding high up in a tree. It was giving a high-pitched but surprisingly distinctive call that I managed to record (XC10739). With such a satisfying sighting, it was a lot easier to bear another eight hour drive north to Ocaña.

RNA El Hormiguero de Torcoroma (Feb 7-8)

This is one of the newest of the ProAves reserves, protecting one of the only known sites for the enigmatic and endangered Recurve-billed Bushbird. At the moment, the other known sites for it are in the Sierra de Perijá along the Colombia-Venezuela border, an area that is currently hard to access and not safe to visit. Robert Giles provided the funds to buy this small 80 hectare reserve, and it is hoped that the reserve can be expanded to at least 200 hectares in the near future.

The reserve is conveniently located only 20 minutes from the pleasant town of Ocaña, where there are good hotels and restaurants available. Several trails have been built through the reserve, passing through the *chusquea* bamboo thickets that the bushbird favors. Unfortunately, it is a terribly shy bird, and our group size worked against us here. We only found one responsive individual (XC10740), and while at one point it came very close, it never showed itself. With a small group, it would have been possible to clamber down the slope into the bamboo, probably giving a better chance of actually seeing the bird.

There are a few other special birds here that only occur in northeastern Colombia and western Venezuela: Gray-throated Warbler, Moustached Brush-Finch, and Black-fronted Wood-Quail, and at least some of the group saw each of these. We also heard what sounded like a flock of *Pyrhura* parakeets; by range, the only one that should occur there is Todd's Parakeet, a very poorly known species known from very few records. It would be a real bonus if it also occurred in this reserve, though not a huge surprise, since one of the type locations is just 3 km from the reserve.

We couldn't linger too long here as our longest drive of the trip awaited – an eleven hour marathon north to the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. We passed time by “genning up” on the Santa Marta endemics, and by betting with each other how many of them we would see. Josep wagered a volume of HBW that we would see less than ten, but Paul Salaman took him on, and bet a free return trip to El Dorado that we would see more than 12. On future trips, it would be best to find a way to break up this journey. The bus could only make it to within six kilometers of the lodge, so we had to use the 4WD and a pickup truck to ferry us the rest of the way. It was very late by the time we arrived.

RNA El Dorado (Feb 8-10)

The Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta is a unique continental massif totally separated from the Andes, yet still has the highest peak in Colombia (5775 m). The highest concentration of endemic bird species in Colombia occurs here, so it is of great interest to birders and ornithologists. Most of the range is quite inaccessible without an expedition, but there is one isolated ridge, called the Cuchilla de San Lorenzo, that has road access all the way up to some radio towers at nearly 2800m elevation. All but two or three of the endemics can be seen in the excellent forest along this road, and ProAves recently acquired a 680 hectare fantastic reserve in the prime area for the endemics, including the endangered Santa Marta Parakeet (photo right).



There is the beautiful new “Jeniam EcoLodge” here that was 90% completed when we arrived. It has six rooms with private bathrooms, and the cool climate makes it a pleasure to stay here. Considering the large number of endemics that can be seen here, this lodge has the best potential of any that we visited. The bar/restaurant hadn't been built yet, but we still enjoyed good meals in the staff house. The road is terrible; a high clearance vehicle is essential, and during wet times 4WD might be required. We did see a road crew that was making some badly-needed repairs thanks to funds from ProAves, so hopefully things will improve.



Niels Krabbe was here doing field work during our stay, and he very generously guided us for much of our visit, sharing what he had learned during his time here. He was mainly doing sound recording, and intends to publish a CD of the birds of the Santa Marta Mountains. He had found a nest of the endemic race of Ruddy Foliage-gleaner, which he showed to us. Based on his sound recordings, it is clearly a distinct species that had been overlooked. One evening, he called in the screech-owl that occurs near the lodge, and we saw it well. It looks and sounds nothing like any *Megascops* known from the region, and is probably an undescribed species.

We only had a day and a half to bird here, which didn't seem like much time considering the number of key birds to be found here. Luckily, the birding turned out to be surprisingly easy, and we had little trouble finding nearly all the likely endemics. The highest elevations

along the ridge were good for Santa Marta Parakeet, Brown-rumped Tapaculo, Santa Marta Bush-Tyrant, Santa Marta Warbler, Yellow-crowned Redstart, and Santa Marta Mountain-Tanager. We also saw the endemic races of Rufous Antpitta and Páramo Seedeater; the antpitta is almost certainly a good species, but the jury is still out on the seedeater. A bit lower down we started seeing the gaudy White-tailed Starfrontlet, a few White-lored Warblers, and started hearing Santa Marta Antpitta. It took some work to pull him into view, but most saw it fairly well in the end. At lower elevations of the reserve, we found Santa Marta Toucanet (photo left) and Santa Marta Tapaculo. Santa Marta Brush-Finch and Rusty-headed Spinetail were very common and we saw them through a very wide elevational range. In the end, Josep happily conceded that Paul had won the bet!

Apart from the endemics species, there was plenty more to look at here. White-tipped Quetzals were surprisingly common in the reserve, and Streak-capped Spinetails, which only barely make it into Venezuela, were often with mixed flocks. We saw endemic subspecies of Black-capped Tyrannulet, Cinnamon Flycatcher, Blue-naped Chlorophonia, Gray-throated Leaf-tosser, Stripe-headed Brush-Finch, and even Great Thrush. Some of these were distinctive, but unlike the Ruddy Foliage-gleaner, they don't seem likely to be split.

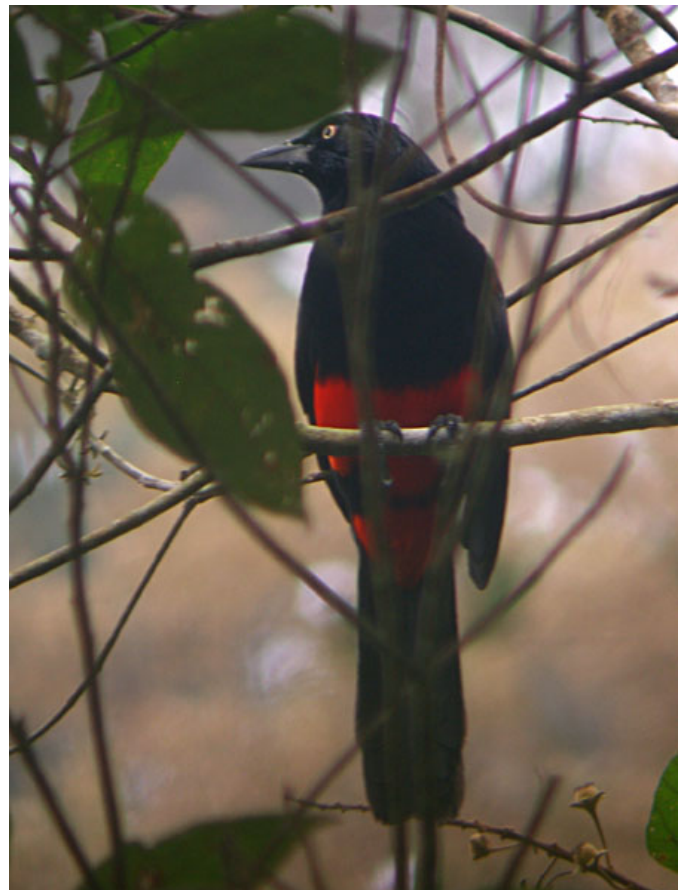
As we left the mountains to catch flights out of Santa Marta, we birded a bit in the drier, lower elevations of the mountains, hoping to find Santa Marta Woodstar. No luck with that one, but we did find a superb Golden-winged Sparrow, which we unanimously agreed was the most beautiful member of its genus, and a few lucky ones saw the Blossomcrown.

Thanks to a flight schedule change, we had to scramble to catch our flights back to Bogotá, where most of the group finished their trip. A few of us carried on to Medellín, where we planned to visit a few more of the ProAves reserves. This was more of a scouting trip, as most of these reserves had never received big birding groups before, and the conditions were going to be a lot tougher than on the main tour. We spent the night near the airport, which is actually in the town of Rio Negro, about 40km from Medellín.

RNA Arrierito Anioqueño (Feb 11-13)

We drove to Medellín and headed northeast away from the city. What should have been a five hour drive turned into six thanks to lots of road work delays, but we finally arrived at this reserve, the newest of them all. It is named after the Chestnut-capped Piha, only described in 2001 from a very restricted area in the northern part of the central Andes. This is an area that has suffered tremendous deforestation, so the establishment of this 530 hectare reserve is a real boon to the piha, as well as other endangered species, such as Red-bellied Grackle, Multicolored Tanager, Black-and-gold Tanager, Parker's Antbird, and Stiles's Tapaculo.

There is a small house on the reserve that has three bunk rooms that share a single bathroom. The wife of one of the reserve guards cooked very tasty local cuisine for us. They had a banana feeder that attracted some common birds.



The reserve was so new that there were still relatively few trails. The best area for birding was meant to be higher up along a ridge, accessible by a mule track. Horses and mules were provided for us one morning to go up there, but they were really more trouble than they were worth. It was only a couple of kilometers up with an elevational gain of 250m, and my horse was so useless I ended up walking up the mountain, leading it behind me. Unfortunately, this mule track only passes through a few hundred meters of good habitat on the edge of the reserve, and while we could see lots of nice forest nearby, there weren't any trails going through it. We bushwhacked a bit along the ridge, but had no luck finding the piha. ProAves definitely plans to put in more trails, but the reserve guard had only just been hired and hadn't been able to do it yet. Better trails will greatly increase the chance of finding the reserve's special birds.

Lower down we did manage to call in a Stiles's Tapaculo, another new species only described in 2005. We also waded up a stream that was supposed to be another good spot for the piha. Though we didn't find it, there was a small flock of Red-bellied Grackles (photo previous page), a fantastically handsome and entertaining bird. Later on in our visit we found several more flocks of them, and even located a nest. This bird definitely made it onto the short list for being favorite of the trip, and it alone made our trip here well worthwhile.

Late one evening we heard a very distant but quite clear Pavonine Cuckoo. This is a bird known in Colombia only from one "Bogotá" specimen, with no modern records. This was a very unexpected place to find it, at 1660m in the central Andes. Unfortunately, we could not record or photograph it; hopefully ProAves field workers will be able to do so sometime soon.

Just as we were about to leave this reserve for the long drive to Urrao, our vehicle decided to break down. We had to leave Alonso with the 4WD and arrange alternate transport. We ended up spending the night in Medellín in a hotel opposite the main square in the city, with its sculptures by Fernando Botero, famous for sculpting grotesquely fat people and animals. A one-armed photographer snapped a Polaroid of us cowering below a gigantic bronze woman.

RNA Colibrí del Sol (Feb 14-15)

We hired two taxis to take us down the Cauca Valley then up into the western cordillera. More road work delays and a fender-bender ensured that we didn't arrive in Urrao until 2pm. Urrao is now a quiet, peaceful little town, though only five years ago it was a hotbed of guerrilla activity. We stayed in an acceptable hotel, and there were good restaurants nearby.



This 580 hectare reserve was established to protect two endangered species restricted to the Colombian western Andes, the Dusky Starfrontlet and the Chestnut-bellied Flowerpiercer. The Dusky Starfrontlet was rediscovered in 2004, having previously been known only from its type specimen, a juvenile taken in 1951. Due to lack of material, it was originally described as a race of Golden-bellied Starfrontlet, but recent research showed that it was a good species. There is also a significant population of the threatened Rusty-faced Parrot in the lower parts of the reserve.

Access to the reserve is not easy. From the end of the dirt road heading northeast out of Urrao, it is seven kilometers with a 1000m elevational gain to reach the area where the starfrontlet occurs, and often there is no clear trail. Diego, the reserve director, had to arrange horses and mules to take us up, and one of our group found this to be so frightening that it was preferable to walk. Thanks to the difficulty of getting up there, we did not arrive until well after 9am, but we were still able to find our two main targets fairly quickly. We saw the starfrontlet several times inside elfin forest on the edge of the páramo, and it responded well to playback of Andean Pygmy-Owl. The flowerpiercer was extremely vocal (XC10762), and was easy to see in *polylepis* bushes in the páramo itself. On the way back down the mountain, we luckily encountered two flocks (a total of seven individuals) of Rusty-faced Parrot.

Thanks to the delays caused by the car trouble, we had to head out that afternoon, driving five hours south to Jardín, where we arrived rather late in the evening. Jardín is a popular tourist town, so there are some excellent hotels here. We stayed in the Hacienda Balandú, which was very nice, though the food was a bit disappointing. We were happy to see that Alonso had managed to repair the 4WD and had arrived earlier that afternoon in Jardín.

Jardín and RNA Loro Orejiamarillo (Feb 15-17)

The key bird in this area is the critically endangered Yellow-eared Parrot. Once occurring all the way down into central Ecuador, this species is now only known from a couple sites in the western and central Andes of Colombia. A new 130 hectare reserve has been acquired to protect some of the prime forest for the parrot, but the birds wander widely throughout the area in search of food, making it impossible to buy up all the habitat. Public awareness programs have been essential to protect this species, and ProAves has done a great job with this. Local people are now aware of the parrots and are proud to have them on their land. The wax palm tree, which the Yellow-eared Parrots use for nesting, has nearly been wiped out, since their leaves are highly sought-after for use in religious ceremonies. A national campaign has helped people to understand the importance of this tree, and has encouraged people to use other types of leaf in their ceremonies. Researches also learned that the parrots would readily use artificial nest boxes, and these have now been placed in key nesting areas.



On our first morning, we drove 45 minutes up a bad road (high clearance needed) to a lookout at 2900m high up in the reserve. We arrived at dawn, hoping to see the parrots leave their roosting areas on their way out to search for food. Thick fog made this an impossibility, so we birded our way down the mountain. Activity was good, and we saw a variety of high montane species. A nice surprise was finding a Tanager Finch (photo left), an extremely localized, threatened species, known only from a few sites in the western Andes of Colombia and Ecuador.

It was past noon before we finally located a flock of eleven Yellow-eared Parrots feeding in a fruiting tree by the road (photo right). They use their massive beaks to crack open the hard outer shell to get to the edible parts in the middle, making a soft but rather distinctive crackling noise that we could use to relocate the birds after they had flown to a different tree. While the birds were fearless of humans, they were easily spooked by passing Turkey Vultures; whenever one soared overhead, the whole flock took off screaming, milled around for about a minute, then settled back into another tree.



We found another flock of Yellow-eared Parrots the following morning, in rather disturbed habitat with only small fragments of forest, a bit to the northwest of Jardín. This flock stayed up the slope, and we did not see them nearly as well.

This was the end of the trip for most, but I had arranged to stay on a few days more to visit one more reserve a bit farther to the south. Alonso had to drive that way anyway on the way back to his home in the city of Ibaqué, so he dropped Luis Eduardo and me in Armenia before departing.

RNA El Mirador (Feb 18-20)

This is a fantastically beautiful high elevation reserve in the central Andes, but also by far the most difficult birding of the trip. There's a great list of near-mythical rare and beautiful birds here, but the hard conditions make them difficult to find. The reserve is actually owned by the municipality of Génova as a watershed, but ProAves signed an agreement to manage the land as a reserve. It protects one of only two known sites for the critically endangered Indigo-winged (Fuertes's) Parrot, which was only rediscovered in 2002. Other threatened species occurring in the reserve include Rufous-fronted Parakeet, Golden-plumed Parakeet, Bicolored Antpitta, and Masked Mountain-Tanager. Brown-banded Antpitta occurs lower down, but outside the current boundaries of the reserve. There are unconfirmed reports of Chestnut-bellied Cotinga here, but the habitat looks good, so it would not surprise me. Crescent-faced Antpitta has been netted in the forest above the house.



A 45 minute taxi ride took us to the town of Génova, where we met up with Nicolai Osorno, the director of the reserve, who helpfully guided us during our stay. From Génova, it is necessary to hire small and uncomfortable jeeps called “Willys” for the 45 minute drive to the start of the trail up to the reserve. The trail climbs 900 m in only 6 kilometers, and it is steep, rocky, and muddy. Good horses are available to take you up this trail. I rode the horse up, but birded my way back down on the morning I left, which worked well. Rubber boots are essential here due the wet conditions. Once inside the reserve, it is still necessary to do a lot of walking on difficult terrain to get to some of the key sites.

There is a house in the reserve that has three bunk rooms and one shared bathroom. Electricity is provided through a small hydroelectric generator, but there is no hot water. The reserve guard’s wife cooked us up some really nice, hot meals on a wood-burning stove, and we got used to drinking *agua panela*, a hot drink made with brown sugar that they often mixed with instant coffee. The weather here was terrible. It was frequently foggy and we had quite a lot of rain. Here, at 3300m elevation, the temperature only varied between about 2°-8°C (36°-46°F), making for very cold and damp conditions. We needed three thick blankets at night and were still sometimes uncomfortable. The reserve guard told us that Novemeber-February usually has good weather, so maybe we were a bit unlucky. He recommended March as good time to come as that is when the Fuertes Parrots start breeding, but told us to avoid the windy season of July-August.

On the first afternoon, we had good weather, and hiked a couple of hours up to the edge of the páramo, hoping to see Rufous-fronted Parakeet. Nicolai had already told us that he hadn’t seen them for quite some time, so it wasn’t a surprise that we had no luck. The elfin forest cloaking the slopes here was really beautiful, but afternoon is not the best time to bird here. We did find one nice mixed flock with mostly common birds. Luis Eduardo caught a glimpse of Masked Saltator, but unfortunately I never got on it.

The next morning we woke up to a driving rain which lasted several hours. We sat around eating soup and drinking hot chocolate, trying to stave off a chill that went straight to the bone. When the rain finally stopped, Nicolai took us along the edge of the forest to where he had last seen the Fuertes’s Parrots, but the fog rolled in and we did not have much hope. We sat shivering under a tree that provided a bit of shelter from the rain that continued on and off. Occasionally we heard distant parrots. Once the fog lifted for a few minutes, and we enjoyed the unique spectacle of seeing both Gray-breasted (photo left) and Black-billed Mountain-Toucans from the same place. A pair of Bronze-



winged Parrots flew in as well. They were nesting in artificial boxes here, and nowhere else in the world are they known to occur so high. The fog came back, and we settled down to wait again. It wasn’t until around 12:30 that the Fuertes’s Parrots called again, and Nicolai suddenly got very excited. He knew they were much closer than they sounded, and went a bit up the slope to get a better vantage point. Soon he was motioning us up the hill, so I grabbed my scope and ran. He pointed to some motion in a tree about 30 meters away, and we saw some silhouettes of chunky parrots moving around in the leaves. It was not the way we wanted to see them, and when most of the flock took off, our hearts sank. Miraculously, the one remaining bird climbed to the top of the tree just as the fog cleared away, giving us one fantastic 30 second view before it flew off to join its friends. It was an unforgettable moment, even if there was no chance for a photo.

On the way back to the house, we managed to call in a Bicolored Antpitta for a pretty good view before the rain started again. Finally, late in the afternoon, the weather improved. Nicolai took us up a hill to show us the active nest boxes of the Golden-plumed Parakeets. The late afternoon light made them really glow as they sat peering out the doorways of their adopted homes (photo right).

Heading back down the mountain the next morning, we didn't see very much, but following a tip from Alonso, I played some tape for Brown-banded Antpitta. Not far from the end of the trail, there was finally a clear response. I scrambled on hands and knees up a steep slope, and managed to find a more open area in the otherwise dense understory. I sat and played the antpitta game, but it only took five minutes before the curious bird hopped up into view, very close. I think it was a juvenile, since the white on the throat was reduced to only a few thin streaks. It was a bird I had hoped, but never really expected to see, and it was fitting way to end one of the most memorable bird trips I have ever done. It has given me a great taste of what Colombia has to offer, and I will certainly be back!



Bird list

This list follows Clements taxonomy (Clements, James F. 2000. *Birds of the World: A Checklist*. Fifth Edition. Vista, CA: Ibis Publishing Co., including updates), not because I think it is the best, but because it's the list that nearly everyone on the tour used for their world lists. Keep in mind that the sixth edition of this list is due to be published in March 2007, and will have many new changes from the previous version. For some birds, I mention the particular subspecies that we saw. If a subspecies is sometimes considered a full species by other authorities, I give the English name in double quotes. For some species, I give an alternate English names in parentheses.

Codes used:

H=Heard only

net=seen only in the hand after having been mist-netted

M=Boreal migrant

?=Questionable record (mentioned in text)

E=Endemic to Colombia

VU=Considered Vulnerable by BirdLife International.

EN=Considered Endangered by BirdLife International.

CR=Considered Critically Endangered by BirdLife International.

Totals:

Total spp. seen: 537

Total spp. heard only: 50

Total recorded: 587

Collared Inca	<i>Coeligena torquata</i>									X	X		
White-tailed Starfrontlet (E-VU)	<i>Coeligena phalerata</i>						X						
Golden-bellied ("Dusky") Starfrontlet (E-CR)	<i>Coeligena bonapartei orina</i>									X			
Buff-winged Starfrontlet	<i>Coeligena lutetiae</i>											X	
Sword-billed Hummingbird	<i>Ensifera ensifera</i>									X		X	
Amethyst-throated Sunangel	<i>Helangelus amethysticollis</i>	X											
Tourmaline Sunangel	<i>Heliangelus exortis</i>									X	X	X	
Glowing Puffleg	<i>Eriocnemis vestitus</i>									X	X		
Black-thighed Puffleg	<i>Eriocnemis derbyi</i>											X	
Golden-breasted Puffleg	<i>Eriocnemis mosquera</i>											X	
Booted Racket-tail	<i>Ocreatus underwoodii</i>				X			H					
Purple-backed Thornbill	<i>Ramphomicron microrhynchum</i>									X		X	
Tyrian Metaltail	<i>Metallura tyrianthina</i>									X	X	X	
"Santa Marta" Metaltail	<i>Metallura tyrianthina stricta</i>						X						
Long-tailed Sylph	<i>Agelaiocercus kingi</i>				X					X			
Purple-crowned Fairy	<i>Heliophryx barroti</i>			X									

TROGONS AND QUETZALS

Trogonidae

White-tailed Trogon	<i>Trogon viridis</i>			X									
Violaceous Trogon	<i>Trogon violaceus</i>			X									
Collared Trogon	<i>Trogon collaris</i>				X			X					
Masked Trogon	<i>Trogon personatus</i>						X		X		X		
Black-throated Trogon	<i>Trogon rufus</i>			X									
Black-tailed Trogon	<i>Trogon melanurus</i>			H									
White-tipped Quetzal	<i>Pharomachrus fulgidus</i>						X						
Golden-headed Quetzal	<i>Pharomachrus auriceps</i>			X				H	X				

KINGFISHERS

Alcedinidae

Ringed Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle torquatus</i>												X
Amazon Kingfisher	<i>Chloroceryle amazona</i>												X
Green Kingfisher	<i>Chloroceryle americana</i>			X									

MOTMOTS

Momotidae

Highland Motmot	<i>Momotus aequatorialis</i>							X	X				
Rufous Motmot	<i>Baryphthengus martii</i>			X									
H Broad-billed Motmot	<i>Electron platyrhynchum</i>			H									

JACAMARS

Galbulidae

Rufous-tailed Jacamar	<i>Galbula ruficauda</i>			X			X						
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PUFFBIRDS

Bucconidae

Black-breasted Puffbird	<i>Notharchus pectoralis</i>			X									
H Barred Puffbird	<i>Nystalus radiatus</i>			H									
Two-banded (Russet-throated) Puffbird	<i>Hypnelus bicinctus</i>											X	
Moustached Puffbird	<i>Malacoptila mystacalis</i>				H	X							
White-fronted Nunbird	<i>Monasa morphoeus</i>			X									

BARBETS

Capitonidae

White-mantled Barbet (E-EN)	<i>Capito hypoleucus</i>			X	net								
Red-headed Barbet	<i>Eubucco bourcierii</i>							X					

TOUCANS

Ramphastidae

Santa Marta (Emerald) Toucanet (E)	<i>Aulacorhynchus lautus</i>						X						
Andean (Emerald) Toucanet	<i>Aulacorhynchus albivitta</i>								X	X			
Groove-billed ("Yellow-billed") Toucanet	<i>Aulacorhynchus sulcatus calorrhynchus</i>						X						
Crimson-rumped Toucanet	<i>Aulacorhynchus haematopygus</i>				X			H					
Collared Aracari	<i>Pteroglossus torquatus</i>			X				H					
Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan	<i>Andigena hypoglauca</i>											X	
Black-billed Mountain-Toucan	<i>Andigena nigrirostris</i>									X	H	X	

Montane Woodcreeper	<i>Lepidocolaptes lacrymiger</i>						X			X		
Brown-billed Scythebill	<i>Campylorhamphus pusillus</i>					net						
TYPICAL ANTBIRDS		Thamnophilidae										
Great Antshrike	<i>Taraba major</i>					X						
H Barred Antshrike	<i>Thamnophilus doliatus</i>					H						
Bar-crested Antshrike	<i>Thamnophilus multistriatus</i>					X						
Black Antshrike	<i>Thamnophilus nigriceps</i>					X						
Uniform Antshrike	<i>Thamnophilus unicolor</i>					X			X			
Western Slaty-Antshrike	<i>Thamnophilus atrinucha</i>					X						
H Recurve-billed Bushbird (EN)	<i>Clytoctantes alixii</i>							H				
Plain Antvireo	<i>Dysithamnus mentalis</i>					net				X		
Pacific Antwren	<i>Myrmotherula pacifica</i>											X
Slaty Antwren	<i>Myrmotherula schisticolor</i>					net						
White-fringed Antwren	<i>Formicivora grisea</i>											X
Long-tailed Antbird	<i>Drymophila caudate</i>						X	X				H
Parker's Antbird (E-EN)	<i>Cercomacra parkeri</i>					X			H		X	
Jet Antbird	<i>Cercomacra nigricans</i>					X						
Bare-crowned Antbird	<i>Gymnocichla nudiceps</i>					X						
Chestnut-backed Antbird	<i>Myrmeciza exsul</i>					X						
Dull-mantled Antbird	<i>Myrmeciza laemosticta</i>					X						
Bicolored Antbird	<i>Gymnopathys leucaspis (bicolor)</i>					X						
ANTTHRUSHES AND ANTPITTAS		Formicariidae										
H Black-faced Antthrush	<i>Formicarius analis</i>					H						
Santa Marta Antpitta (E-VU)	<i>Grallaria bangsi</i>							X				
H Chestnut-crowned Antpitta	<i>Grallaria ruficapilla</i>									H	H	H
Bicolored Antpitta (VU)	<i>Grallaria rufocinerea</i>											X
H Chestnut-naped Antpitta	<i>Grallaria nuchalis</i>									H	H	H
H White-bellied Antpitta	<i>Grallaria hypoleuca</i>					H			H			
H Rufous Antpitta	<i>Grallaria rufula (rufula?)</i>										H	H
"Santa Marta" Rufous Antpitta	<i>Grallaria rufula spatiator</i>							X				
H Tawny Antpitta	<i>Grallaria quitensis</i>											H
Brown-banded Antpitta (E-EN)	<i>Grallaria milleri</i>											X
Ochre-breasted Antpitta	<i>Grallaricula flavirostris</i>					X						
Rusty-breasted Antpitta	<i>Grallaricula ferrugineipectus</i>							X				
Slate-crowned Antpitta	<i>Grallaricula nana</i>										X	H
TAPACULOS		Rhinocryptidae										
H Ash-colored Tapaculo	<i>Myornis senilis</i>											H
Blackish Tapaculo	<i>Scytalopus latrans</i>										H	X
Unidentified tapaculo	<i>Scytalopus sp.</i>					X						
(Northern) White-crowned Tapaculo	<i>Scytalopus atratus</i>					H		X				
Santa Marta Tapaculo (E)	<i>Scytalopus sanctaemartae</i>							X				
Stiles' Tapaculo (E)	<i>Scytalopus stilesi</i>							X				
Brown-rumped Tapaculo	<i>Scytalopus latebricola latebricola</i>							X				
H Spillmann's Tapaculo	<i>Scytalopus spillmanni</i>										H	
H Paramo Tapaculo	<i>Scytalopus canus</i>									H		H
H Ocellated Tapaculo	<i>Acropternis orthonyx</i>											H
COTINGAS		Cotingidae										
Red-crested Cotinga	<i>Ampelion rubrocristata</i>											X
Green-and-black Fruiteater	<i>Pipreola riefferii</i>					X					X	H
Barred Fruiteater	<i>Pipreola arcuata</i>											X
Golden-breasted Fruiteater	<i>Pipreola aureopectus</i>							X	H			
Purple-throated Fruitcrow	<i>Querula purpurata</i>					X						

Tropical Parula	<i>Parula pitiayumi</i>					X			H				
Yellow Warbler	<i>Dendroica petechia (aestiva)</i>			X									
Blackburnian Warbler (M)	<i>Dendroica fusca</i>	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Bay-breasted Warbler (M)	<i>Dendroica castanea</i>				X				X				
Blackpoll Warbler (M)	<i>Dendroica striata</i>				X								
Cerulean Warbler (M-VU)	<i>Dendroica cerulea</i>				X						X		
Black-and-white Warbler (M)	<i>Mniotilta varia</i>				X		X						
American Redstart (M)	<i>Setophaga ruticilla</i>				X		X						
Northern Waterthrush (M)	<i>Seiurus noveboracensis</i>				X								
? Connecticut Warbler (M)	<i>Oporornis agilis</i>						?						
Mourning Warbler (M)	<i>Oporornis philadelphia</i>				X	X					X		
Canada Warbler (M)	<i>Wilsonia canadensis</i>				X						X		
Slate-throated Redstart	<i>Myioborus miniatus</i>				X		X				X		
Golden-fronted Redstart	<i>Myioborus ornatus</i>	X								X	X	X	
Yellow-crowned Redstart (E)	<i>Myioborus flavivertex</i>						X						
Citrine Warbler	<i>Basileuterus luteoviridis</i>									X	H	X	
Black-crested Warbler	<i>Basileuterus nigrocristatus</i>											X	
Santa Marta Warbler (E-VU)	<i>Basileuterus basilicus</i>						X						
Gray-throated Warbler	<i>Basileuterus cinereicollis</i>						X						
White-lored Warbler (E)	<i>Basileuterus conspicillatus</i>							X					
Russet-crowned Warbler	<i>Basileuterus coronatus</i>									H	X		
Golden-crowned Warbler	<i>Basileuterus culicivorus</i>							X					
Rufous-capped Warbler	<i>Basileuterus rufifrons</i>					X	X						
Three-striped Warbler	<i>Basileuterus tristriatus</i>					X			X				
Buff-rumped Warbler	<i>Basileuterus fulvicauda</i>				X								

BANANAQUIT

Coerebidae

Bananaquit	<i>Coereba flaveola</i>				X	X			X				
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TANAGERS AND ALLIES

Thraupidae

Blue-backed Conebill	<i>Conirostrum sitticolor</i>									X		X	
Capped Conebill	<i>Conirostrum albifrons</i>									X	X		
Black-faced Tanager	<i>Schistochlamys melanopis</i>								X				
Grass-green Tanager	<i>Chlorornis riefferii</i>										X	X	
White-capped Tanager	<i>Sericossypha albocristata</i>									X	H		
Common Bush-Tanager	<i>Chlorospingus ophthalmicus</i>				X								
Yellow-throated Bush-Tanager	<i>Chlorospingus flavigularis</i>								X				
Gray-hooded Bush-Tanager	<i>Cnemoscopus rubrirostris</i>									X			
Black-capped Hemispingus	<i>Hemispingus atropileus</i>									X	X		
Superciliaried Hemispingus	<i>Hemispingus superciliaris</i>											X	
Guira Tanager	<i>Hemithraupis guira</i>				X								
Yellow-backed Tanager	<i>Hemithraupis flavicollis</i>				X								
Gray-headed Tanager	<i>Eucometis penicillata</i>				X								
Scarlet-browed Tanager	<i>Heterospingus xanthopygius</i>				X								
White-shouldered Tanager	<i>Tachyphonus luctuosus</i>				X								
White-lined Tanager	<i>Tachyphonus rufus</i>				X	X		X				X	
Sooty Ant-Tanager (E)	<i>Habia gutturalis</i>				X								
Summer Tanager	<i>Piranga rubra</i>				X	X			X		X		
White-winged Tanager	<i>Piranga leucoptera</i>						X						
Crimson-backed Tanager	<i>Ramphocelus dimidiatus</i>				X	X		X					
Flame-rumped Tanager (E)	<i>Ramphocelus flammigerus flammigerus</i>											X	
Flame-rumped ("Yellow-rumped") Tanager	<i>Ramphocelus flammigerus icteronotus</i>				X	X			X				
Blue-gray Tanager	<i>Thraupis episcopus</i>				X	X		X	X		X		
Blue-capped Tanager	<i>Thraupis cyanocephala</i>	X			X		X			X	X		
Palm Tanager	<i>Thraupis palmarum</i>				X	X	X		X		X		

Hooded Mountain-Tanager	<i>Buthraupis montana</i>										X	X
Santa Marta Mountain-Tanager (E)	<i>Anisognathus melanogenys</i>						X					
Lacrimose Mountain-Tanager	<i>Anisognathus lacrymosus</i>									X	X	X
Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanager	<i>Anisognathus igniventris</i>											X
Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager	<i>Anisognathus somptuosus</i>					X						
Golden-crowned Tanager	<i>Iridosornis rufivertex</i>									X		
H Buff-breasted Mountain-Tanager	<i>Dubusia taeniata</i>						H				H	H
Fawn-breasted Tanager	<i>Pipraeidea melanonota</i>									X	X	
Thick-billed Euphonia	<i>Euphonia laniirostris</i>				X	X		X				
Golden-rumped Euphonia	<i>Euphonia cyanocephala</i>					H						
Fulvous-vented Euphonia	<i>Euphonia fulvicrissa</i>				X							
Orange-bellied Euphonia	<i>Euphonia xanthogaster</i>					X			X			
Blue-naped Chlorophonia	<i>Chlorophonia cyanea</i>					H	X	X				
Plain-colored Tanager	<i>Tangara inornata</i>				X							
Golden Tanager	<i>Tangara arthus</i>					X	X		X		X	
Saffron-crowned Tanager	<i>Tangara xanthocephala</i>					X						
Speckled Tanager	<i>Tangara guttata</i>						X		X			
Bay-headed Tanager	<i>Tangara gyrola</i>					X		X	X		X	
Scrub Tanager	<i>Tangara vitriolina</i>					X			X		X	
Metallic-green Tanager	<i>Tangara labradorides</i>					X						
Blue-necked Tanager	<i>Tangara cyanicollis</i>					X			X			
Beryl-spangled Tanager	<i>Tangara nigroviridis</i>					X			X	X	X	
Blue-and-black Tanager	<i>Tangara vassorii</i>										X	X
Black-capped Tanager	<i>Tangara heinei</i>					X	X	X	X	X	X	
Black-headed Tanager	<i>Tangara cyanoptera</i>						X	X				
Turquoise Dacnis-Tanager (E-VU)	<i>Pseudodacnis hartlaubi</i>					X						
Black-faced ("Yellow-tufted") Dacnis	<i>Dacnis lineata egregia</i>				X							
Green Honeycreeper	<i>Chlorophanes spiza</i>				X							
Swallow-Tanager	<i>Tersina viridis</i>							X				
Tanager Finch (VU)	<i>Oreothraupis arremonops</i>										X	

EMBERIZID FINCHES
Emberizidae

Blue-black Grassquit	<i>Volatinia jacarina</i>				X	X			X			
Yellow-bellied Seedeater	<i>Sporophila nigricollis</i>					X					X	
Ruddy-breasted Seedeater	<i>Sporophila minuta</i>				X	X		X				
Large-billed Seed-Finch	<i>Oryzoborus crassirostris</i>				X							
Thick-billed Seed-Finch	<i>Oryzoborus funereus</i>											X
Páramo ("Santa Marta") Seedeater	<i>Catamenia homochoera oreophila</i>							X				
Yellow-faced Grassquit	<i>Tiaris olivacea</i>					X					X	
Rusty Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossa sittoides</i>							X				
Chestnut-bellied Flowerpiercer (E-EN)	<i>Diglossa gloriosissima</i>									X		
White-sided Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossa albilatera</i>							X	H	X	X	
Glossy Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossa lafresnayii</i>											X
Black Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossa humeralis</i>							X				
Black-throated Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossa brunneiventris</i>									X		
Masked Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossopsis cyanea</i>	X								X	X	X
Saffron Finch	<i>Sicalis flaveola</i>					X						
White-naped ("Yellow-throated") Brush-Finch	<i>Atlapetes albinucha gutturalis</i>								X		X	
Pale-naped Brush-Finch	<i>Atlapetes pallidinucha</i>	X										X
Yellow-breasted ("Yariguies") Brush-Finch	<i>Atlapetes latinuchus yariguierum</i>					X						
Slaty Brush-Finch	<i>Atlapetes schistaceus</i>									X		X
Santa Marta Brush-Finch (E)	<i>Atlapetes melanocephalus</i>							X				
Moustached Brush-Finch	<i>Atlapetes albofrenatus</i>							X				
Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch	<i>Buarremon brunneinucha</i>					X	H				X	

Stripe-headed Brush-Finch	<i>Buarremon torquatus</i>							X			H	X	
"Black-headed" Brush-Finch	<i>Buarremon torquatus atricapillus</i>				X								
Orange-billed Sparrow	<i>Arremon aurantirostris</i>			X					H				
Golden-winged Sparrow	<i>Arremon schlegeli</i>							X					
Black-striped Sparrow	<i>Arremonops conirostris</i>			X									
Rufous-collared Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia capensis</i>		X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
SALTATORS AND GROSBEAKS		Cardinalidae											
Streaked Saltator	<i>Saltator striatipectus</i>				X			H				X	
Buff-throated Saltator	<i>Saltator maximus</i>			X	X	H	X	H					
H Slate-colored Grosbeak	<i>Saltator grossus</i>			H									
Black-winged Saltator	<i>Saltator atripennis</i>				X							X	
Golden-bellied Grosbeak	<i>Pheucticus chrysogaster</i>							X					
Rose-breasted Grosbeak (M)	<i>Pheucticus ludovicianus</i>				X		X					X	
BLACKBIRDS AND ORIOLES		Icteridae											
Yellow-hooded Blackbird	<i>Chrysomus icterocephalus</i>		X										
Red-breasted Blackbird	<i>Sturnella militaris</i>												X
Eastern Meadowlark	<i>Sturnella magna</i>		H		X								
Great-tailed Grackle	<i>Quiscalus mexicanus</i>												X
Shiny Cowbird	<i>Molothrus bonariensis</i>				X			X		X			
Giant Cowbird	<i>Molothrus oryzivorus</i>			X	X			X		X			
Yellow-backed Oriole	<i>Icterus chrysater</i>				X		X				X		
Yellow-tailed Oriole	<i>Icterus mesomelas</i>				X								
Orange-crowned Oriole	<i>Icterus auricapillus</i>			X									
Baltimore Oriole (M)	<i>Icterus galbula</i>				X		X						
Yellow-billed Cacicque	<i>Amblycercus holosericeus</i>												X
Scarlet-rumped Cacicque	<i>Cacicus uropygialis</i>				X								
Mountain Cacicque	<i>Cacicus chrysonotus</i>								X			X	
Crested Oropendola	<i>Psarocolius decumanus</i>			X			X						
Russet-backed Oropendola	<i>Psarocolius angustifrons</i>				X							X	
Red-bellied Grackle (E-EN)	<i>Hypopyrrhus pyrohypogaster</i>								X				