

Galápagos Islands & Ecuador

Thursday 26 June - Saturday 04 July, 2008

Leader: Richard Thaxton
Local leader: Monica Plaza

Daily Diary

Day 1. Thursday 26th June.

Warm & sunny, with some cloud.

Arrival in Quito.

Our outbound travel day. David and Anne Martin, Graham and Cath Sanderson met me at Heathrow for our early morning flight to Madrid then onwards to Quito. Jo and Graham Clarke meantime had gone out ahead of us for a pre-tour to Napo in the Amazon. They were waiting for us on arrival at our hotel in Quito. After a long day of travel, it was supper and promptly to bed forthwith.

Day 2. Friday 27th June

Cool start, warm, sunny and breezy later.

Transfer to Galapagos, North Seymour

We breakfasted early in preparation for our prompt departure this morning, back to Quito airport for our flight to Guayaquil and onward to Baltra in Galapagos to join our boat. *M. Y. Beluga*

It was wildlife right from the start. At Baltra we met the formidably knowledgeable Monica, our guide and as we awaited our transfer to *Beluga*, Frigatebirds very high overhead were a first taste of what was to come, we spotted our first Galapagos Lava Lizard doing courtship press-ups on a rock, and the cameras were out for our first of those beautiful Large Painted Locusts. The bus ride to the quay took just a matter of minutes but on arrival there, we were denied a seat in the shade, they were already taken by snoozing Galapagos Sealions! In fact the wildlife of Galapagos was there to greet us *en masse*, with Blue-footed Boobies, Common Noddy, Brown Pelicans, and Frigatebirds flying around the boat dock, plus Galapagos Shearwaters just off-shore and a Nazca Booby fly-by, all in the first few minutes. Crikey!

Transferring to *Beluga* by inflatable zodiacs, known locally as pangas, we boarded our boat and met with our other cruise participants, who we would come to know well and with whom we would share and enjoy so many experiences to come. We were a multi-national bunch with, besides us seven Brits, there were people from America, Sweden, Switzerland and Germany.

Once settled into our cabins, we got underway, around the Baltra headland towards North Seymour. There were seabirds everywhere. Elliot's Storm Petrels flew alongside and followed in our wake. These delightful, delicate birds would be our constant companions throughout the tour, always around the boat somewhere from dawn to dusk. Amongst them too, we picked out our first Wedge-rumped Storm Petrels. Galapagos Shearwaters glided past effortlessly and Frigatebirds were back and forth across the boat. As if this wasn't wildlife greeting enough, 50+ Bottled-nosed Dolphins just appeared from no-where riding the bow wave and encircling *Beluga*, as engines were cut and we came to a halt, enabling us to peer at them directly overboard down into the clear blue waters immediately next to the hull.

From our mooring 200m off North Seymour we got distant tantalising views of what was to come when on shore, but first we had to make time for lunch, during which however we continued to watch seabirds through the galley windows. After the ship's mandatory briefing and fire drill, we eagerly boarded the pangas and made for the island.

The crossing was a bit choppy but all the more exciting for it. Soon we were stepping onto N. Seymour and immediately amongst some spectacular wildlife, and all just so unbelievably tame, confiding and approachable. Swallow-tailed Gulls nested on the low cliffs and amongst the rocks, with an adult and well-grown young sleeping right at our feet. These, are the only nocturnal gull species in the world, so do spend much of the daylight hours resting. Contrasting strikingly with the grey-black rocks were the moving patches of bright orange-red, Sally Lightfoot Crabs, so named because of their ability to walk on water as they scurry from rock to rock.

Much closer views of Frigatebirds now, enabled us to distinguish the two species present, Greater and Magnificent, both species were nesting here on N. Seymour with several young seen. Galapagos Sealions looked more in-keeping here than on those benches as Baltra, the benign-looking females (cows) inviting close-approach for photographs, whilst the belligerent male (bull) keeping a watchful eye on his ladies warranted a more respectful, safer distance.

As we walked the path along the shore amongst nesting Frigates, our route was blocked at one point by a huge male Baltra Land Iguana, the size and menacing appearance of a bulldog, giving us great photo opportunities. In contrast to it, were the diminutive Galapagos Lava Lizards, either sat warming & revving up on rocks or scurrying across the sandy path at our feet. Amongst the melee of seabirds we picked out and our first Lava Gulls-the rarest gull in the world, and like so much else here, endemic to Galapagos and numbering just 400 pairs, what a privilege to see them. We spotted too, our first Red-billed Tropicbirds returning from fishing trips far out at sea, only to have to run the gauntlet of the marauding, klepto-parasitic Frigatebirds, those corsairs of the tropics, their cute gawky young, a façade that hides their menacing tendencies. They're a nuisance even amongst themselves and we witnessed them, stealing sticks from each others nests.

The trail took us inland a little amongst Galapagos Shore Petunias, Horse Purslane and Giant Prickly Pear Cactus. Here we came across nesting Blue-footed Boobies, performing their peculiar foot-lifting display accompanied by honks from the female and whistled replies from the male. The Palo Santo scrub-forest held our first passerines, a scattering of American Yellow Warblers, rapid fly-by Galapagos Doves and our first of Darwin's finches- Small Ground Finch.

Returning to the landing point, while we awaited the arrivals of the pangas from *Beluga*, we witnessed a complete seabird feeding frenzy with spectacular views of fishing Blue-footed Boobies spearing the water and Brown Pelicans thumping into the sea only to surface for a chancer-Brown Noddy to alight on their heads!

We arrived back on board by 6pm, in time to be formally introduced to the crew and sample the Captains welcoming sundowner cocktail – the appropriately named, *Blue-footed Booby*, containing amongst other things and coloured by blue curacao. We dined whilst moored here then, as we retired for the evening, the crew raised the anchor and headed into the night, bound for Espanola.

Day 3. Saturday 28th June.

Cloudy start, sunny, warm & bright later.

Espanola – Gardner Bay & island and Punta Suarez.

It was a bit of rough night, pitching and yawing, or was it just because it was our first night at sea on *Beluga*? Anyway, we awoke to find ourselves becalmed and moored in Gardner Bay, 200m off Espanola. On deck, it was a cloudy but fresh, breezy morning and by first-light at 6am Petrels were already fluttering around the boat and Frigates sat atop the rigging of another ship moored nearby. In the distance, across the azure blue waters, sealions loafed on the white sand beach which contrasted with the grey scrubby hinterland of Espanola. Blue-footed Boobies speared the shallows for fish and a Nazca Booby circled further off-shore.

After breakfast at 7am, we were ferried by panga to that above mentioned white-sand beach. Here we were met by inquisitive Espanola (Hood) Mockingbirds, literally running down the beach to greet us. Weaving our way amongst the sleeping sealions littering the beach, and taking care not to step on the Espanola Lava Lizards, we walked a little along the beach and into the surrounding vegetation. Here we literally bumped into more of Darwin's famous finches, this time Large Cactus Finch, Small Ground Finch and, most unlike the rest, the aptly named Warbler Finch. We had good views here too,

of Galapagos Dove, showing that beautiful pale cobalt-blue eye-ring and its bright red legs. American Yellow Warblers were numerous and we heard but couldn't locate Galapagos Flycatcher.

The clear blue water and white sand beach proved irresistible to some of us and the chance to swim and cavort with sealions, was just not to be missed. Immersing oneself in the water and having a sealion swim up and look you in the eye at eye level was a completely thrilling experience, though thankfully they were the more gentle curious females. Deft in their movements, they are of course far more at home in the water than we were, though one did surface rapidly, leap out of the water and land on Ricard's head. Not quick sure who was the more shocked.

A few of us briefly attempted to snorkel around Isla Gayle, a rock stack just off-shore, but it was a bit choppy for the less experienced amongst us. A shame really, as for those that did, the fish were great, apparently. So, we settled for more swimming instead. Those that didn't swim, spent the time relaxing on the beach, watching and photographing the squabbling Mockingbirds and the clockwork Ruddy Turnstones running amongst the dozing sealions.

We returned to *Beluga* at noon, moved a little further up the coast, escorted by both Elliot's and Wedge-rumped Storm Petrels, mooring off Punta Suarez for lunch. After some down-time, relaxing on the sun-deck, some napping, others sea-watching, we re-boarded the pangas and went back ashore to Espanola. As we approached the landing point at Punta Suarez, sealions swam alongside and under the pangas and we glimpsed what we believed to be a Lava Heron, but the view was all too fleeting. The rock landing itself was awash with Sally Lightfoot Crabs and we had our first good looks at Marine Iguanas, here on Espanola, the most brightly coloured, classic-looking, pink-faced sub-species. Can the phrase "good looks" be used in reference to these really quite ugly, but endearing creatures? They were everywhere, laying here in piles, warming in the sun, drawing heat from each other and snorting out goblets of salt.

The rocks exposed by low tide had attracted an unusual number of American Yellow Warblers and Warbler Finches, foraging for insects I guess. It looked quite strange to see so many passerines in this littoral habitat, but then that's Galapagos for you, full of the strange and unusual. Heading up the beach, passing the mockingbird welcoming committee, we took the coastal leg of a circular route up through a colony of Waved Albatrosses. We could see dozens of these, off-shore, belting along effortlessly, without so much as a wing flap, returning to their mates at nests ahead of us. We were able to walk right passed these beautiful birds, nesting adjacent to the path, and watch their romantic, courtship bill-clacking ritual, unperturbed by our presence.

Again, there were seabirds everywhere. We must have seen 40+ Red-billed Tropicbirds in total in small parties returning to nests. Espanola is a nesting island for Nazca Boobies and we saw more of these here too than anywhere else. At one point we walked right passed a bird on its nest ledge at eye level. Blue-foots were nesting here also as were Swallow-tailed Gulls and the whole place had that unmistakable seabirds colony smell of guano, all part of the ambience. Not surprisingly with so many seabirds providing so much potential food, predators were never far away. Three Galapagos Hawks patrolled the air above the seabird nesting colonies on the look out for an unguarded chick, and those pterodactyl look-alikes, the Frigates were ever-present., waiting to hijack returning tropicbirds. Those mockingbirds aren't as cute, comical and innocent as they look either, we found an abandoned albatross egg at which they had been chipping and feeding on the yolk.

At the top of the trail we sat and soaked up the whole atmosphere of the place, as birds everywhere went about their family business. From the cliff top we spied Galapagos Shearwaters in their hundreds out at sea while below us Marine Iguanas battled in swirling surf amongst the rocks. Monica told us of how iguanas have been known to get sucked by the surf into the blowhole in the cliff-face and get blasted up and into the air. We waited a while to see if we could see one fly, but no.

Returning the shore via the landward leg of the trail, we came across a delightful "covey" of Galapagos Doves right on the path in front of us, so too, a nesting albatross, which we had to side-step around. A Hooded Racer snake, slithered across at our feet and it seemed like Lava Lizards were everywhere.

Another full day packed with wildlife, phew! Dinner and an early night were most welcome. Meanwhile, the crew took us on through the night to Floreana.

That night I awoke in the early hours and peered into the darkness through my cabin window and was startled to see white ghostly shapes surrounding the ship. They were the nocturnal Swallow-tailed Gulls. Apparently they are attracted to boats at night to forage for food, predominantly squid, detecting their flashing bioluminescence as they churn in the turbulent waters, with their large eyes with night-vision abilities. How amazing is that?

Day 4. Sunday 29th June.

Hot & sunny all day.

Floreana – Punta Cormoran and Post Office Bay.

Those of us up early, rose to a beautiful sunrise, at anchor on a flat calm in Punta Cormoran, just off Floreana, with both Elliot's and Wedge-rumped Storm Petrels silently fluttering and pattering at the water's surface all around *Beluga*. Before long both Blue-footed and Nazca Boobies were on the move too heading out to fish.

After breakfast at 7am, we boarded the pangas and made the short crossing to the landing onto the beach. Here, at first glance, the sand appeared to be uniformly dark in colour but on closer inspection was actually a mixture of green tones from the presence of the mineral olivine, a green silicate mineral found in many igneous rocks. In Galapagos, even each island's beach sand is different - white sand yesterday, green today.

Our first bird on the island was a Great Blue Heron, sat atop a mangrove tree but it was off before we all saw it. Less skittish were a couple of American Warblers which remained in the tree as we walked right underneath it, giving great, close views. A dark-billed Cuckoo flew across the mangrove bushes but was gone in an instant, but more of them later. Monica led us along a short stretch of the beach pointing out the burrows of Ghost Crabs, before cutting inland along the trail to Flamingo Lagoon. Here, not surprisingly we saw our first American Flamingos, the endemic sub-species of these bizarre-looking birds, 15 in total busy filter-feeding shrimps from the briny water. We counted 20 White-cheeked (Galapagos) Pintails too, dabbling about. Waders here included a few Semipalmated Plovers feeding with their typical stop-start behaviour, and Black-necked Stilts strutting around on those out-of-proportion bright pink legs of theirs. A lone Whimbrel of the American (*hudsonicus*) race was at first just, heard but then located at the mangrove edge. Ten Cattle Egrets flew passed us over the lagoon.

Along another trail, lined with Floreana Daisies, we saw our first butterflies of the tour - Galapagos Blues and Galapagos Sulphurs plus many Spot-winged Glider dragonflies. Along the path there were several traps set in an attempt to rid the island of the introduced Yellow Paper Wasps, an unlikely task given the numbers we saw.

The trail rose up over the isthmus dropping to Flour Sand Beach. Along here we finally saw Galapagos Flycatcher (heard only yesterday) Medium Ground Finches **and** a Medium Tree Finch. This one of Darwin's birds is more normally found at the higher elevation humid zone of the island's interior, but is known to move to lower levels, and we were lucky.

Flour Sand Beach is aptly named. Immediately tempted as we were, to take off shoes, walk the fine power sand and paddle, Diamond Stingrays there in the shallows persuaded us otherwise. Further along the beach as we watched a small (40cm) Galapagos Shark in the surf, a larger one (1.5m) shot in from deeper water, gave chase and tried to grab it. This beach is a nesting site for Pacific Green Turtles and though we didn't see any, only tracks, we spotted a large mass of discarded blue nylon rope floating in on the surf, which could be a death-trap for turtles and other wildlife. When it came within reach in the shallows, taking care not to step on stingray, we dragged it out and took it back with us to *Beluga* for safe disposal.

Heading back to the landing beach, on the path we came across a Blue-footed Booby that was absolutely covered in what looked like burrs and thorns, to the point where it couldn't fly, its wings were hooked to its sides. The guide from another group removed what burrs he could and then carried the bird to the sea in that hope that bathing and preening might save it.

The intrepid members of the extended group, went off to snorkel proper, whilst some of us returned to *Beluga*, leaving a few of us to swim and potter about in the shallows. Eventually though, once all back

on board the crew weighed anchor and got us underway, whilst we lunched, which was interrupted when Orcas were spotted from the meal table through the galley window. We dashed topside to watch a pod of six cruising parallel with us for a spell before disappearing.

After lunch we anchored off Post Office Bay, also Floreana. On shore here, it is traditional to check the mail box for cards & letter that you take to post back home whilst leaving your own for others to do likewise, so we did our duty. There was time then to relax, walk the beach, swim and snorkel, while rival crews from *Beluga* and another boat, played football.

The scrub at the back of the beach held a few birds, Smooth-billed Anis and better views this time of Dark-billed Cuckoos, both Medium and Small Ground Finches and the now ubiquitous American Yellow Warblers. Undetected at first, tucked away under a bush at the edge of a stagnant pool stuffed with fish fry, we spied a Lava Heron, quite close to us, there all along but just hidden and motionless, absorbed in stalking its prey.

Back on board *Beluga* we enjoyed some late afternoon sun on deck, swaying along with the motion, sea-watching and just generally relaxing. The birds seen were, the by now usual mix, but two Galapagos Petrels that crossed our bow and two Madeiran Petrels in our wake were new. Talking of motions, the ever present Frigatebirds overhead made their presence known in more ways than one for unlucky Graham S, the recipient of a dollop of white-wash. It's actually supposed to be lucky isn't it?

After dark we arrived and anchored for the night in Academy Bay, off Puerto Ayora, Santa Cruz.

Day 5. Monday 30th June.

Sunny & warm all day.

Santa Cruz – Charles Darwin Research Station and Los Gemelos.

For those of us up on deck early, we were greeted with the amazing serene scene of between 350-400 Brown Noddies surrounding the boat, wafting in silence. What a start to a day.

Looking across the bay, Puerto Ayora, the largest town in Galapagos, was slowly coming to life, so too was a Cattle Egret roost of at least 100 birds on the edge of town. Once breakfasted we “panga-ed” across to shore to visit the Charles Darwin Research Station. At the boat dock, a Great Blue Heron sat on the quay, four Lava Herons sat on moored boats and we spotted a juvenile Yellow-crowned Night Heron stalking the dark depths of the mangroves.

Stepping over Marine Iguanas, we made our way through a tunnel of mangroves towards the Station. Here it was interesting though a bit dispiriting, to learn about the ecological problems that have beset Galapagos, in particular the extent of introduced species. It was heartening though too, to hear of the colossal efforts going into programmes of elimination of pests and the restoration of ecosystems.

We toured the various enclosures and pens containing captive-bred Galapagos Tortoises and Land Iguanas, awaiting repatriation to their respective islands. We called in to pay our respect and commiserate with Lonesome George, very sadly, the sole survivor of his sub-species, from the island of Pinta

As you would perhaps expect, the namesake Station grounds proved a great place to catch up with Darwin's finches. We were able to get close comparative views and were able to pick out Large and Small Tree Finches, Large, Medium and Small Ground Finches, Warbler Finch and Common Cactus Finch. Try hard as we might to find Vegetarian Finch, known to occur here and one of the two remaining finches were hoped to see, alas we could not. However, Galapagos Mockingbirds were everywhere, so too were American Yellow Warblers, Smooth-billed Anis and we saw other Dark-billed Cuckoos and Galapagos Flycatchers here too.

We wandered into town to rendezvous at the pier to return to *Beluga* for lunch. Along the main street at a fish stall, there was the comical sight of Brown Pelicans, Sealions and a Great Blue Heron lining up and jostling for scraps, right at the roadside!

After lunch we headed by coach up into the Highlands of Santa Cruz and the scalesia forest zone. We stopped at the *Los Gemelos* pit craters. The moist conditions and climate up here meant the trees were absolutely festooned with lichens and other epiphytes and in stark contrast to the mostly arid

xerophytic habitats seen so far. It was here we hoped to catch up with Woodpecker Finch, the last of the likely Darwin finches we had a chance of seeing. By quietly walking the trails, checking everything that moved, we eventually found not one but three.

With time pressing on, we drove down hill to a ranch area where we caught up with Santa Cruz Giant Tortoises living wild (not difficult to catch up with a tortoise!). As we walked along a path through a patch of woodland, something moved in the marshy undergrowth. It was I suspect, either a Galapagos Rail or Paint-billed Crake. We quietly waited a while to see if it would reappear to clinch the identification, but no, it got away from us. Ouch.

Our last stop before heading back was to *Los Tuneles*, an amazing lava tunnel. Descending the wet steps into the gloom, watching carefully where we put our feet, we missed the two Barn Owls roosting almost at arms reach right above our heads. Knowing this would happen, Monica was there as we came back up to point them out.

We arrived back on board to the sound of George's salsa music and him, dapper as always in his waiter's outfit complete with bow-tie, ready to serve us pre-dinner drinks.

Day 6. Tuesday 1st July.

Hot & sunny all day.

Isabela – Punta Moreno and Elizabeth Bay

Having journeyed all night, 10 hours at sea west from Santa Cruz, we awoke this morning to sunrise over Punta Moreno, Isla Isabela. The sea was flat calm. The petrels were there as ever and lines of Blue-footed Boobies were returning to shore, but out on water was something new. Ten Pacific Green Turtles were lolling about on the surface 50-100m from *Beluga*. Fish were jumping everywhere too, it looked like they were being pursued and driven to the surface by sealions beneath. This commotion attracted Galapagos Shearwaters to the scene, which hurried flew from spot to spot as each fish jumped.

After breakfast, we took the pangas to shore to visit the 200 year old Pahoe-hoe lava field from Azul Volcano. As we approached the rocks we immediately spotted several birds new for the tour; our first Galapagos Penguins, Flightless/Galapagos Cormorants, a Striated Heron, and a Wandering Tattler. Not a bad start.

Once out of the boat we were able to look into shallow pools and lagoons created by collapsed craters and tunnels in the lava, the first of which held two male and two female Pacific Green Turtles, right there beneath us, less than 20ft away. We were able to watch turtles underwater with our binoculars! It was good fish-watching too amongst which were, a Whitetip Reef-Shark.

We set off across an amazing variety of lava patterns including some resembling coils of thick rope. Others were of plate-like in form. It was a weird place. Though at first stark and bare in appearance, this lava field has become colonised by an array of plants including Lance-leaved Darwin's Bush, Mullugo, Radiate-headed Scalesia and Palo Santo. To add to the strangeness, the field was dotted with small crater ponds, formed when the roofs of lava caves have collapsed. Filling with brackish water, they are oases for wildlife in an otherwise very barren landscape. Here we found a total of 20 Common Gallinules, yes Moorhens! There were a few Flamingoes, several Black-necked Stilts, lots of Smooth-billed Anis and two Galapagos Martins, the only resident member of the swallow family and a difficult bird to see in Galapagos.

We nipped back to *Beluga* for coffee and snacks, some then went back out snorkelling and became the envy of us all, managing as they did, to swim alongside turtles, bah! Still, we had a nice time too, (said through gritted teeth), relaxing on the boat.

Lunch was taken whilst on the move, heading for Elizabeth Bay, sea-watching *en route*. At 3pm we boarded the pangas for a ride into the red mangroves. Cutting the engines we floated up close to a small rocky islet covered in wildlife including boobies, cormorants, penguins and sealions giving great opportunities for photographs.

Within the mangroves, though we missed out on swimming with them, we saw several turtles in here including a beautiful orange-morph specimen. There were penguins in here too including one we saw, which seemed to be sleeping on its side.

We found American Yellow Warblers and Galapagos Mockingbirds also, and as we made our way out, we passed under a tree beneath a Galapagos Hawk. The journey back to *Beluga* was choppy which made doing anything more than holding on quite difficult, but did see another Galapagos Petrel though.

Day 7. Wednesday 2nd July.

Hot & sunny all day.

Isabela – Urvina Bay and Fernandina – Punta Espinoza.

We alighted onto the black volcanic beach of Urvina Bay and set off along the trails.

These islands are still moving - in 1954 the whole area was uplifted by up to 10m in places, by volcanic activity. Immediately we were approached by a mixture of Darwin's finches, amongst them Large, Medium and Small Ground Finches and Small Tree Finch. At one point our path was blocked by Land Iguanas squabbling over territory and den occupancy. Perhaps anticipating a casualty, and a potential meal to scavenge, three Galapagos Hawks were on stand-by close by, one calling persistently.

We sauntered along the trail amongst Galapagos Acacia bushes, Palo Santo scrub and Poison Apple during which we had our best views yet of at least three Dark-billed Cuckoos. Smooth-billed Anis were seen too, as were a few Galapagos Doves and a few butterflies, Monarch and Galapagos Sulphurs. Looking up to the hillsides above us, Monica pointed out the extent of vegetation recovery since the completion of a programme to eliminate the introduced population of feral goats. This had resulted in the widespread regeneration of native scrub habitat, and was a heartening example of what can be achieved when there's a will to restore ecosystem decay.

Some of the party returned to the beach, whilst others continued to explore further and added female Vermillion Flycatcher to our tally, our only record during the tour. The water was a bit choppy and murky for snorkelling, but some braved the conditions. A bit of beachcombing produced Semi-terrestrial Hermit Crab, again our only sighting.

Returning to *Beluga*, we headed across the Bolivar Channel to the island of Fernandina to alight at Punta Espinoza. Here, at one point we all sat for while and witnessed what seemed like a microcosm of all things Galapagos. For before us, there was just so much going on and involving so many of the island's special creatures. There was a small colony of Flightless Cormorants a pair from which were busy performing their elaborate aquatic dancing courtship ritual, known as snake-necking where the pair swim back and forth passed each other, their necks moving like a pair of charmed cobras. On the rocks nearby we watched another pair presenting seaweed nesting material to each other. A few pairs had young already and the ever watchful and opportunistic Galapagos Hawk walked boldly amongst the nesting birds. Some Galapagos Penguins cavorted in the shallows and American Oystercatchers (at last!) flew about us noisily. As all this was going on, just to our left a Great Blue Heron stalked, caught and swallowed a young Marine Iguana, whilst behind us we could hear the suckling sounds of a sealion pup busy feeding from its mother. Meanwhile a bull sealion was charging around keeping watch on his harem alert to the sounds of another male nearby on the other side of some rocks which he could hear but not see. He quickly clambered up and over them, plunged into the water and chased off his rival. Lava Lizards scurried at our feet everywhere and Marine Iguanas literally littered the place. Boobies and pelicans off-shore were engaged in a feeding frenzy, whilst the piratic frigates hung around menacingly. And all the while as we watched all this, a huge Pacific Green Turtle, so graceful in the water yet so ungainly and ponderous on land, came ashore and lumbered up the beach. It just seemed like the complete condensed Galapagos experience right here in front of us and was utterly charming.

The late afternoon was spent topside on *Beluga*, as we steamed further north through the Bolivar Channel into Banks Bay. This time on deck proved to be our most productive spell of sea-watching. There were seabirds every, as usual, the regular mix of boobies, petrels, storm-petrels, shearwaters, tropicbirds and frigates, plus a lone Waved Albatross. We also kept spotting small parties of a small bird fluttering at and resting on the surface of the water. The motion of the boat made identification tricky at first, but eventually we clinched it, Red-necked Phalaropes, 10-20 in total, a bit of an odd time to see them, but non-breeders perhaps.

The west coast of Isabela is known as a good area in which to see cetaceans and we were not disappointed. We saw two separate, distant spouting whales, which were probably Bryde's Whales.

Then at one stage the boat passed through a large and widely spread pod of Common Dolphins, crossing the channel. There must have been 500-600 at least, maybe more, in all directions as far as the eye could see. Unlike their Bottle-nosed cousins, Common Dolphins are not known to actively seek out and approach boats, remaining somewhat aloof in their behaviour, but these guys were surely putting on a show for us, with dozens showing-off, repeatedly leaping high out of the water before crashing back down. For me it was one of the most spectacular things I've seen.

At one point our bearing seemed to be taking us very close and on a collision course with Punta Vicente Roca, very high steep cliffs below Volcan Ecuador, but all was in hand as the captain slowed and very skilfully edge *Beluga* into the gape of a huge sea-cave entrance. In here we were able to look down into the water upon our first Galapagos Fur Seals and a turtle. Pressing on, as evening approached, we all joined the captain on the bridge to watch the count down on the navigational instruments, as the skipper with expert timing, deftly slowed *Beluga* to a halt at and on the point of crossing the equator, at the point at which the sun dipped below the horizon, whilst we, cocktails in hands, sang and cheered the moment.

We did in fact cross the equator again later that night, but we were all long-since in bed, as we rounded the northernmost point of Isabela and came south on the other side of the island to Santiago.

Day 8. Thursday 3rd July.

Overcast at first, hot & sunny all day later.

Santiago – Puerto Egas, Bartelome – summit trail.

We anchored in James Bay and went ashore to Puerto Egas on Santiago, setting off along the trail parallel to the coast. Large, Medium and Small Ground Finches were seen along the way, as were American Yellow warblers, Galapagos Mockingbirds and a Galapagos Flycatcher.

On the wave-cut lava platform we found a selection of waders, including several Hudsonian Whimbrels, Semipalmated Plovers, Wandering Tattlers and American Oystercatchers, plus several Lava Herons. At the distal end of our walk we reached an area of collapsed lava sea-caves, forming cool, shady grottos, perfect places for the night-feeding Galapagos Fur Seals to hold up out of the glare of the sun. Here we saw three resting on shady ledges their strikingly large eyes peering up at us. Also here we had very close views of two very confiding Yellow-crowned Night Herons.

Along the return path, we added a couple of new invertebrates to our tally, Bi-coloured Moth and several Galapagos Scorpions found under rocks. Back at the beach, some swam whilst others snorkelled and the crew played football, watched by a Galapagos Hawk. The fish here, even for us swimmers, were spectacular, the best being Jo's Blue-chin Parrotfish. Seeing penguins from underwater was special too.

After lunch, *Beluga* moved to the other side of Santiago, to Sullivan Bay off the small island of Bartelome. Once ashore here we climbed the summit trail 114m high. The views from the top, of Pinnacle Rock and far beyond were stunning. Out to see we could see the tops of a series of spatter cones. This wee island alone makes for a volcanologist's paradise, with evidence aplenty of how these islands came into being.

Later, some of us swam and relaxed on the beach, others snorkelled and others still, took an extra panga ride around Pinnacle Rock where many Galapagos Penguins, boobies, pelicans and Wandering Tattlers were seen.

We returned to *Beluga* for our last night aboard. Over dinner, with the tour almost over, there was much recounting of the experiences of the week and with so many highlights, it was a struggle to choose any one. For some it was the courting Waved Albatrosses at Punta Suarez for others the Common Dolphins, but there was general consensus that the amalgam of all things Galapagos yesterday at Punta Espinoza was up there amongst the most memorable.

Day 9. Friday 4th July.

Hot & sunny, Galapagos, humid & overcast in Quito.

Santa Cruz – Black Turtle Cove, Baltra and return to Quito.

With our return to Quito pending, we set off early this morning for a final pang ride into the mangroves. We saw much that by now was very familiar to us, yet on this, our last morning in

Galapagos still we had sights to marvel at. Not least of all, an isolated island of mangroves absolutely covered in roosting Cattle Egrets which, as we approached from a distance, looked like a giant white-flowered rhododendron bush in bloom. There must have been anything between 800-1000 birds.

Cutting the panga engines we were able to enjoy the utter peace and tranquillity of the place at this early hour. Moving gently into the shallows we saw two Spotted Eagle Rays and several White tipped Sharks, seven at one point sleeping together on the bottom, beneath the boat. Our final send-off was one of the many sites with which the tour began, a seabird spectacular, a frenzy of fishing Blue-footed Boobies spearing the waters close to the boats.

At 8am we disembarked at Baltra, bade farewell to Monica and our new found friends with which we had shared so much. Returning to Quito, directly we took a tour of the city, adding somewhat unexpectedly, Peregrine Falcon to our list! That evening we hit the town for a slap-up farewell dinner to the accompaniment of local Andean musicians, said our goodbyes to Graham and Cath who were returning to Blihty the next day, and retired for the night in preparation for tomorrow's early start.

GALAPAGOS Species list: birds - 54 species

The lists below use the following references:

Birds **The worldwide English names and systematic order as recommended by the I.O.C. and published in *Birds of the World – Recommended English Names* (Gill F. & Wright M. 2006).**

The North American Bird Guide (Sibley D. 2000).

Birds, Mammals & Reptiles of the Galapagos Islands (Swash A. & Still R. 2000).

Wildlife of Galapagos (Fitter J. Fitter D. & Hosking D. 2007).

Mammals **The suggested worldwide English names and systematic order as found in *Mammals of the World, a checklist* (Duff A. & Lawson A. 2004).**

BIRDS – AVES

GEESE, DUCKS & SWANS –Anatidae

White-cheeked Pintail *Anas bahamensis*: noted on one day only, a total of 20 on Flamingo Lagoon on Floreana, 29/6

PENGUINS – Spheniscidae

Galapagos Penguin *Spheniscus mendiculus*: noted on 3 days, 25+ at Punta Morena Bay, on Isabella, similar numbers at Punta Espinoza on Fernandina, fewer in number (10-15+ seen at Puerto Egas on Santiago.

ALBATROSSES – Diomedidae

Waved Albatross *Phoebastria irrorata*: at least 100+ birds seen in total on our visit to Punta Suarez on Espanola, (28/6) , both nesting pairs (20prs) plus many wheeling around off-shore. 8 seen whilst at sea between Floreana and Puerto Ayora on Santa Cruz 29/6, also singles seen at sea on 1/7 & 2/7.

PETRELS & SHEARWATERS – Procellariidae

Galapagos (Dark-rumped) Petrel *Pterodroma phaeopygia*: noted on 3 days, 2 crossed our bow when at sea between Floreana and Santa Cruz on 29/6, 8 in total on 1/7 at sea between Punta Morena and Elizabeth Bay, Isabela. 20 in total while at sea on 2/7 off west coast of Isabela.

Galapagos (Audubon's) Shearwater *Puffinus (lherminier) sublaris*: noted in good numbers on every day of the tour.

STORM PETRELS – Hydrobatidae

White-vented/Elliott's Storm Petrel *Oceanites gracilis*: constant companions all day, every day throughout the tour, probably 30-40 every day.

Wedge-rumped Storm Petrel *Oceanodroma tethys*: noted daily too, but just 1-3 seen each day.

Band-rumped/Madeiran Storm Petrel *Oceanodroma castro*: 2 seen on one day only, 29/6, while at sea between Floreana and Santa Cruz.

FLAMINGOES – Phoenicopteridae

American Flamingo *Phoenicopus rubber*: 15 at the Flamingo Lagoon on Floreana 29/6, 3 at one of the ponds within the pahoe-hoe lava field on Isabela 1/7.

HERONS & BITTERNs – Ardeidae

Yellow-crowned Night Heron *Nyctanassa violacea*: a juvenile at the boat dock on Santa Cruz 30/6 and 2 adults and 1 juvenile seen unbelievably close at the Fur Seal cave-grottos on Santiago

Lava Heron *Butorides sundevalli*: noted on 6 days, 1-4 most days at; Punta Suarez on Espanola 28/6, Punta Cormoran on Floreana 29/6, 4 at boat dock Academy Bay on Santa Cruz 30/6, one in the red mangrove swamp at Elizabeth Bay on Isabela 1/7 and a total of 7 seen on 3/7 at Puerto Egas on Santiago

Striated Heron *Butorides striata*: single bird Punta Morena, Isabela on 1/7

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*: noted on 2 days; 10+ fly-by birds on 29/6 at Flamingo Lagoon on Floreana, at least 100+ seen on Santa Cruz 30/6, including a roost near Puerto Ayora

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*: single Punta Cormoran, Floreana 29/6, 2 on Santa Cruz 30/6-one on the boat dock as we arrived and another scavenging at street fish stall! 2 in red mangrove swamp, Elizabeth Bay on Isabela 1/7. At Punta Espinosa on Fernandina 2/7, we watched one stalk, catch and devour a young Marine Iguana.

Great (White) Heron *Ardea alba*: one day only, 7 seen coming into land, (us, not them) at Guayaquil airport on 27/6.

TROPICBIRDS – Phaethontidae

Red-billed Tropicbird *Phaethon aethereus*: noted on 5 days; all fly-by birds either whilst at sea or overhead on island visits. Highest numbers were 10+ North Seymour on 27/6, 40+ in total on Espanola on 28/6, smaller numbers seen at sea 29/6 to 2/7.

FRIGATEBIRDS – Fregatidae

Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens*: ubiquitous, always present, wherever we went, from nesting on North Seymour 27/6, always with us at sea to even perching on the boat as we cruised!

Great Frigatebird *Fregata minor*: as above, but fewer in number. Breeding alongside Magnificent Frigates on North Seymour 27/6

PELICANS – Pelecanidae

Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis*: noted daily.

GANNETS & BOOBIES - Sulidae

Blue-footed Booby *Sula nebouxii*: noted daily, always seen at sea, and on most islands and best views of nesting birds were North Seymour on 27/6.

Nazca Booby *Sula granti*: noted on all days, but much fewer in number than the Blue-foots. Mainly seen at sea, though seen nesting and off-shore (100+) at Punta Suarez on Espanola. Highest numbers seen at sea, 25+ off west coast of Isabela on 2/7.

CORMORANTS – Phalacrocoracidae

Flightless/Galapagos Cormorant *Phalacrocorax harrisi*: noted on 2 days; Punta Morena and close views in the red mangrove swamp of Elizabeth Bay, both on Isabela 1/7, and at Punta Espinosa on Fernandina 2/7.

HAWKS, EAGLES & allies – Accipitridae

Galapagos Hawk *Buteo galapagoensis*: noted on 4 days. 3 on 28/6 at Punta Suarez, Espanola. One sat obligingly in a tree in red mangrove swamp at Elizabeth Bay, Isabela, 1/7, 4 seen in total on 2/7, 3 in the morning at Urvina Bay, Isabela and another one that afternoon at Punta Espinosa, Fernandina. On 3/7 one perched on a building at Puerto Egas, Santiago and another that afternoon from the summit trail on Bartelome

RAILS, CRAKES & COOTS – Rallidae

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*: somewhat bizarrely, 20+ in total at the ponds within the pahoe-hoe lava field, Isabela on 1/7.

OYSTERCATCHERS – Haematopidae

American Oystercatcher *Haematopus palliatus*: 2 Punta Espinosa, Fernandina 2/7 and 4 Puerto Egas, Santiago 3/7.

STILTS & AVOCETS – Recurvirostridae

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus*: 4 at the Flamingo Lagoon at Punta Cormoran, Floreana 29/6 and 2 Punta Morena Bay, Isabela on 1/7

PLOVERS & LAPWINGS – Charadriidae

Semipalmated Plover *Charadrius semipalmatus*: noted on 3 days, 2 at the Flamingo Lagoon at Punta Cormoran, Floreana 29/6, a single Punta Morena Bay, Isabela on 1/7 and 2 Puerto Egas, Santiago on 3/7.

SANDPIPERS, SNIPES & allies - Scolopacidae

(Hudsonian) Whimbrel *Numenius (phaeopus) hudsonicus*: one at the Flamingo Lagoon, Punta Morena Bay, Isabela on 29/6, 2 at Punta Espinosa, Fernandina 2/7 and 2 Puerto Egas, Santiago 3/7.

Wandering Tattler *Heteroscelus incanus*: noted on 3 days; 1 Punta Morena Bay, Isabela 29/6, 2 Punta Espinosa, Fernandina 2/7 and 2 Puerto Egas, Santiago 3/7.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*: noted on 3 days; 6 scurrying amongst loafing sealions on the beach at North Seymour 28/6, 1 at boat dock on Puerto Ayora, Santa Cruz 30/6 and 1 Punta Morena, Isabela 1/7.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*: 10+ seen whilst at sea, off the west coast of Isabela 2/7.

GULLS, TERNS & SKIMMERS – Laridae

Lava Gull *Larus fuliginosus*: noted on 4 days. A total of 6 on 27/6 at North Seymour, 2 on 29/6 Punta Cormoran, Floreana, and 2 at boat dock, Puerto Ayora, Santa Cruz 30/6 and 2 on 2/7 perched on the boat as we cruised off the west coast of Isabela.

Swallow-tailed Gull *Creagrus furcatus*: noted on 3 days, 20+ including nesting birds with young, North Seymour 27/6, 100+ in total on Espanola on 28/7, both nesting birds and off-shore fly-bys.

Brown/Common Noddy *Anous stolidus*: noted daily. The best was waking at dawn on 30/6 moored off Puerto Ayora, Santa Cruz, with 350-400 swarming around the boat!

PIGEONS & DOVES - Columbidae

Galapagos Dove *Zenaida galapagoensis*: noted on 5 days in small numbers, usually 1-5, but 30+ seen in total on Espanola on 28th, where the best and closest views were of a group of 6 on the path looking like a covey of quail.

CUCKOOS – Cuculidae

Smooth-billed Ani *Crotophaga ani*: noted on 5 days, Post Office Bay, Floreana 29/6, 25+ in total at Charles Darwin Research Station, (CDRS) Santa Cruz 30/6, 2 pahoe-hoe lava field, Isabela 1/7, 3Urvina Bay, Isabela 1/7 and heard only at Puerto Egas, on Santiago 3/7.

Dark-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus melancoryphus*: noted on 4 days, 2 at Flamingo Lagoon on Floreana 29/6, 1 CDRS, Santa Cruz 30/6 and 3 (the best views) Urvina Bay, Isabella 2/7.

BARN OWL – Tytonidae

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*: 2 roosting at the entrance to the lava tunnel, Santa Cruz 30/6.

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS – Tyrannidae

Vermillion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus*: group-only bird, I missed it, bah! Female, Urvina Bay, Isabela 2/7.

Galapagos Flycatcher *Myiarchus magnirostris*: noted on 5 days. Heard only to begin with, Espanola 28/6, 2 eventually seen 29/6 on Floreana, a total of 10 on Santa Cruz 30/6, 4 Urbina Bay, Isabela 2/7 and a single Puerto Egas, Santiago 3/7

SWALLOWS AND MARTINS – Hirundinidae

Galapagos Martin *Progne modesta*: only record was of 2 at a pond, within the pahoe-hoe lava field, Isabela 1/7.

MOCKINGBIRDS & THRASHERS – Mimidae

Galapagos Mockingbird *Nesomimus parvulus*: noted on 6 days, common on Santa Cruz, Santiago and Isabela.

Espanola/Hood Mockingbird *Nesomimus macdonaldi*: 25+ in total at both Gardner Bay and Punta Suarez, Espanola 28/6

NEW WORLD WARBLERS – Parulidae

American Yellow Warbler *Dendroica petechia*: Common noted each day. Looking somewhat out of place for a warbler, they were numerous on the beach and amongst rock exposed at low tide at Punta Suarez, Espanola 28/6.

TANAGERS, NEW WORLD FINCHES & allies – Thraupidae

Large Ground Finch *Geospiza magnirostris*: noted on 4 days, at CDRS, Santa Cruz, 30/6, at Pahoe-hoe lava field, Isabella 1/7, Urvina Bay, Isabella 2/7 and Puerto Egas Santiago 3/7.

Medium Ground Finch *Geospiza fortis*: noted on 5 days on Floreana 29/6, CDRS, Santa Cruz 30/6, Pahoe-hoe lava field, Isabela 1/7, Urvina Bay, Isabela 2/7 and Puerto Egas, Santiago 3/7.

Small Ground Finch *Geospiza fuliginosa*: noted daily at all sites.

Common Cactus Finch *Geospiza scandens*: 6 CDRS Santa Cruz 30/6 were our only records.

Large Cactus Finch *Geospiza conirostris*: a total of 15 at Gardner Bay and Punta Suarez, Espanola 28/6.

Large Tree Finch *Camarhynchus psittacula*: 2 at CDRS, Santa Cruz 30/6 was our only record.

Medium Tree Finch *Camarhynchus pauper*: though normally an interior/highland species, 1 seen on our walk across the neck of the headland from Punta Cormoran, passed Flamingo Lagoon to (Diamond Stingray) beach, Floreana 29/6.

Small Tree Finch *Camarhynchus parvulus*: noted on 2 days, CDRS, and Los Gemelos pit craters, Santa Cruz 30/6 and Urvina Bay, Isabela 2/7

Woodpecker Finch *Camarhynchus pallidus*: 3 at Los Gemelos pit craters, Santa Cruz Highlands 30/6.

Warbler Finch *Certhidea olivacea*: noted on 2 days, up to 15 at Gardner Bay, Espanola on 28/6, and 5 at Charles Darwin Research Station, Santa Cruz on 30/6.

MAMMALS – MAMMALIA

Galapagos Fur Seal *Arctocephalus galapagoensis*: 2 seen when the Captain nosed the boat into the sea-cave below Volcan Ecuador, Isabela 2/7, then 3 in shady cave grottos, Puerto Egas, Santiago 3/7.

Galapagos (Californian) Sealion *Zalophus (californianus) wollebakei*: noted every day; stepped over, swam with, seen when snorkelling.

Bryde's Whale *Balaenoptera brydei*: (two distant sighting of a large cetacean spouting, probably this species, quite common in Galapagos, 2/7 off west coast of Isabela).

Common Dolphin *Delphinus delphis*: an amazing spectacle of 500-600 crossing our bow and in all directions as we cruised up the west coast of Isabela 2/7.

Bottle-nosed Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus*: 50+ surrounding our boat when moored off North Seymour 27/6, plus singles(?) seen while at sea 29/6 and 1/7.

Orca *Orcinus orca*: 6 seen from the dining table, off Floreana 29/6.

REPTILES – REPTILIA

Galapagos Lava Lizard *Microlophus/Tropidurus albermarlensis*

Espanola Lava Lizard *Microlophus delanonis*

Floreana Lava Lizard *Microlophus grayi*

Marine Iguana *Amblyrhynchus cristatus*

Galapagos Land Iguana *Conolophus subcristatus*

Galapagos Giant Tortoise *Geochelone elephantopus*

Pacific (Green) Turtle *Chelonia mydas*

Hood Racer (snake) *Philodryas hoodensis*

BUTTERFLIES – LEPIDOPTERA

Large-tailed Skipper *Urbanus galapagens*
Galapagos Sulphur *Phoebis sennae marcellina*
Galapagos Blue *Leptodes parrhasiodes*
Monarch *Danaus plexippus*
Bi-coloured Moth (???)

DAMSELFLIES & DRAGONFLIES – ODONATA

Spot-winged Glider *Pantala hymeanaea*

OTHER SELECTED INSECTS – INSECTA

Large Painted Locust *Schistocerca melanocera*
Yellow Paper Wasp *Polistes versicolor*
Galapagos Carpenter Bee *Xylocopa darwini*
Galapagos Ladybird *Cylonea sanguinea*
Galapagos Green-eyed Horsefly *Tabanus vittiger*

OTHER SELECTED TAXA

Star Spider *Gasteracantha servillei*
Zig-zag Spider *Neoscona cooksoni*
Galapagos Scorpion *Centruroides exsul*
Sally Lightfoot Crab *Grapsus grapsus*
Semi-terrestrial Hermit Crab *Coenobita compreeus*
Ghost Crab *Ocypode gaudichaudii*
Slate Pencil Urchin *Eucidaris thouarsii*
Green Sea Urchin *Lytechinus semituberculatus*

LARGER FISH – PISCES

We were not a group of snorkellers, but the following larger fish species were seen by those who did give it a try, or else were seen whilst swimming or peering into lagoons and rock pools.

Razor Surgeonfish *Prionurus laticlavus*
Moorish Idol *Zanclus cornutus*
Striped/Yellow-tailed Mullet *Mugil cephalus rammelsbergi*
Galapagos Silver Mullet *Mugil galapagensis*
Galapagos Ringtail Damsel *Stegastes beebei*
Yellow-tailed Damsel *Stegastes arcifrons*
Bumphead Damsel *Microspathodon bairdii*
Bluechin Parrotfish *Scarus ghobdan*
Pacific Creolefish *Paranthias colonus*
Spinster Wrasse *Halichoeres nicholsi*
Cortez rainbow Wrasse *Thalassoma lucasanum*
Blacktip Cardinalfish *Apogon atradorsatus*
Bullseye Puffer *Sphoeroides annulatus*
Reef Cornetfish *Fistularia commersonii*
Galapagos Shark *Carcharinus galapagensis*
Whitetip Reef Shark *Triaenodon obesus*
Diamond Sting Ray *Dasyatis brevis*
Spotted Eagle Ray *Aetobatus narinari*

Ecuador extension

Saturday 4 to Saturday 13 July, 2008

Participants: Jo & Graham Clarke, Anne & David Martin.

Leader: Richard Thaxton

Local leader: Norby

Driver: Ivan

Mainland Ecuador extension:

Day 1. Saturday 5th July Warm & sunny in the morning, cool, cloudy & rain in the afternoon.

Depart Quito, Old Mindo Road to Yanacocha, to Septimo Paraiso, Mindo on west slope of Andes

We breakfasted earlier and made a prompt start, to get us through the suburbs of Quito before the bulk of the traffic. Before long we were climbing up the old Quito-Nano-Mindo Road making frequent roadside birding stops as we headed for Yanacocha Reserve. It wasn't long before we saw the first of a total of 5 variable Hawks quartering hillside pastureland, many Great Thrushes and Eared Doves. Our first stop at some road-edge flowering shrubs produced Black Flowerpiercer, Masked Flowerpiercer, Cinereous Conebill, our only Tufted Tit-tyrant and our first hummingbirds; Sparkling Violetear, Tyrian Metaltail and the superb Black-tailed Trainbearer. Skulking in the depths of bushes we managed to glimpse Rufous-naped Brush Finch and the first of many Azara's Spinetails and Rufous-collared Sparrows. Several American Kestrels hunted the road edges, a Plain-breasted Hawk whipped passed us all too quickly and Brown-bellied Swallows sallied overhead.

But this was but nothing to what happened next. We had stopped to watch more Variable Hawks and two Black-chested Buzzard-Eagles – an adult and an immature bird, drifting across a hillside, when a huge raptor hove into view. We all latched on to it more or less simultaneously as the cry went up - Andean Condor!! Here we were barely a stone's throw from Quito's city limits and having spectacular views of not one but two (a pair) of these iconic birds. Norby, our guide was as much beside himself as we were, never had he seen a Condor in this area. We were treated to prolonged views of these monsters cruising effortlessly on their massive wings. With all that was yet to come, we knew this was already a highlight of this leg of the tour.

With "the biggie" in the bag, a strange sense of calm and well-being seemed to descend upon the group, as if it didn't matter now what else we saw from now on. But as new birds continued to come thick and fast, this soon passed. On arriving at the entrance to Yanacocha Reserve we had lunch whilst enjoying the delights of more hummers including Shinning Sunbeam, Buff-winged Starfrontlet, Great Sapphirewing, Sapphire-vented Puffleg and the astoundingly well-endowed Sword-billed Hummingbird.

We then walked the trail that contours around the hillside affording spectacular views of the forest slopes below. As always in tropical forest, we at first heard more than we saw, but we still managed to see a lot of new species, amongst them; Spectacled Whitestart, Scarlet-bellied Mountain Tanager, Hooded Mountain Tanager, Blue-backed Conebill, Streaked Tuftedcheek and Rufous Spinetail. At the moment we arrived at the end of the trail, Anne and I saw a Rufous Antpitta, momentarily out in the open before it trotted off into the undergrowth, and so alas missed by most.

By now mist and fine drizzle had descended –it's not called cloud forest for nothing, so we headed back to the vehicles forthwith, seeing little on the return though we did at least hear Spillmann's Tapaculo. Returning to the old main road we began our descent towards Nano, the mist worsened but we stopped at intervals to look for birds, but just adding the only Red-crested Cotingas of the tour. We did though do our Good Samaritan bit by helping a confused-looking mouse to cross the road.

As we reached a lower elevation, visibility improved and so did the birding, at various stops along the way we picked up Andean Guan, Blue-and-black Tanager, Three-striped warbler, Blue-and-white Swallow and our only Mountain Velvetbreast hummingbird. Tawny Antpitta was heard but remained unseen. Lower down still we came across a group of three stunning Turquoise Jays, two White-capped Dipper at a small roadside trout farm, a White-throated Quail-Dove and a leader-only male Torrent Duck, sorry. It was getting dark by now and raining heavily so we pressed on directly to our base for the next few days – Septimo Paraiso.

Day 2. Sunday 6th July

Warm & sunny in the morning, cool and cloudy in the afternoon.

Septimo Paraiso, Mindo Road and Rio Mindo and Nambillo valleys.

Woken by the cacophony of bird song and other forest sounds, we were up and out early. We only had to step outside the front door to get amongst the birds, literally.

The first trees we looked at held; Lemon-rumped Tanager, Slate-coloured Whitstart, Red-eyed Vireo, Tropical Parula and Golden Tanager. We spied a very distant and high up Andean Guan calling loudly and heard Golden-headed Quetzal but couldn't locate it. The fantastic feeder set-up, with a dozen or more arranged and numbered like a clock face, meant that by sitting in the middle and swivelling left and right, trying to keep up with the frantic comings and go-ings at each one, we were amongst a veritable hummer-fest. Here we caught up with; Purple-throated Woodstar, White-necked Jacobin, Brown Violetear, Green-crowned Woodnymph, Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, Andean Emerald, Fawn-breasted Brilliant, Green-crowned Brilliant, the bizarre Booted Racket-tails and the simply gorgeous Purple-bibbed Whitetip. Wow! Having only just got up we were already in need of a lie-down after this heady mixture of fantastic hummers.

Still, with lots more to see and do, after breakfast we set out along the Snake Valley trail towards the viewing platform and it proved to be birds from start to finish. First up was Bright-rumped Attila calling close by but it took us awhile to get a fix on it, but was eventually found perched almost above us on the trail. An Andean Solitaire sang beautifully from the forest depths but remained unseen, as did Grey-breasted Wood Wren and Toucan Barbet – the former we would eventually see, the later we only ever heard. Next was Scale-crested Pygmy Tyrant, flitting restlessly in the gloomy forest understorey, where we also found Uniform Antshrike and Long-tailed Antbird, whilst above us a Chestnut-mandibled Toucan flew across a canopy gap.

Further along, we came across Yellow-throated Bush Tanager, Flame-faced Tanager and Glossy-black Thrush. On trees trunks festooned with epiphytes, we found Montane Woodcreeper and Buff-fronted Foliage-gleaner. White-collared Swifts were hunting insects high above the forest canopy and whilst we watched them six beautiful Swallow-tailed Kites floated overhead.

Towards the viewpoint, we had great views of two Ornate Flycatchers, Orange-billed Euphonia whilst Violet-tailed Sylphs zipped to and from along the trail, too fast to see properly and a Beryl-spangled Tanager was also, all too brief. From the viewing deck we watched both Black and Turkey Vultures fly back and forth along the forested ridges, not so much on the look-out for prey but on the sniff-out for some decaying critter in the forest below them. Choco Toucan was heard here and Golden-crowned Flycatcher seen, whilst rapid fly-by birds here included a Glistening Green Tanager and Red-billed Parrots.

Proceeding a little further before heading back we added Rufous Motmot and Golden-naped Tanager to our morning's tally. Back at base, both before and after lunch, we watched the feeders, adding White-whiskered hermit to our list of hummers plus Maroon-tailed Parakeets and Ruddy Pigeons.

In the afternoon, we drove down to and beyond the town of Mindo, checking out some pastureland with scattered trees. Here we picked up both Golden-crowned and Sociable Flycatchers, Tropical Kingbirds, Shiny Cowbirds, a Smoke-coloured Pewee, a group of Pale-mandibled Aracaris and a very distant white bird atop a snag which when 'scoped became a Masked Tityra.

At the bridge of the Mindo River we had great views of a Squirrel Cuckoo right over our heads and a selection of yet more tanagers including Blue-grey, White-shouldered and Dusky Bush Tanager. At one point a rusty-red bird, the size of an Andean Cock-of-the Rock flew across the road ahead of us. We barely saw it and were flummoxed as to what it might have been, and it naggd and gnawed away

at me for days afterwards, and had me thumbing the field guide and discussing it with Norby. In the end, I'm confident now that it actually **was** a female Andean Cock-of the Rock!

Further up the road towards the Nambillo valleys area, we made several stops at forest edge to find; Black Phoebe, Dusky-capped Flycatcher, Blue-necked Tanager, Swallow Tanager, Fawn-breasted Tanager, Bananaquit and Golden-faced Tyrannulet. Later still at a spot that looked down across pastureland to forest beyond, and with forest behind us, we had a purple patch of birding, with, amongst many species; Yellow-bellied Seedeater, Cinnamon Becard, Purple-crowned Fairy, Black-winged Saltator, Thick-billed Euphonia, and best of all, two superb displaying Bat Falcons, giving chase to each other with a mix of dives and stoops, which with time horsing on, made for a spectacular close to the day.

Day 3. Monday 7th July.

Warm & sunny in morning, cloudy & muggy in the afternoon.

Milpe Reserve, Rio Silanche Reserve and Septimo Paraiso.

Today we drove west and down slope to two lower elevation forest areas at Milpe and Rio Silanche. First Milpe, here on arrival at the reserve car park, it was heaving with birds. No sooner were we out of the minibus than we were enjoying many species already seen but in addition, new were Common Tody Flycatcher, Smooth-billed Ani, Pacific Hornero, Variable Seedeater, Green Honeycreeper, Silver-throated Tanager, Green Thorntail, Tricoloured Brush Finch and the humble House Wren. Black Vultures and Turkey Vultures were here in numbers too.

Whilst we walked the main trail, Bronze-winged Parrots were constantly overhead. In the forest depth our attention was drawn to the somewhat mechanical "kip, kip" sound of displaying Club-winged Manakin. Eventually we located three different males performing their wing-opening display, to females there somewhere no doubt. A Broad-billed Motmot sat very obligingly for us to 'scope and a Nightingale Wren sang from deep cover.

There then followed an amazing spell of tanager-watching when in just one tree, above our heads we saw; Blue-grey Tanager, Ochre-breasted Tanager, Rufous-throated Tanager, Silver-throated Tanager, Palm Tanager, Bay-headed Tanager, Grey and Gold Tanager and Yellow-throated Bush Tanager, plus a few Red-eyed Vireos in there for good measure! Whilst enjoying these we also picked up Crimson-rumped Toucanet and Guayaquil Woodpecker, all these in a 10 minutes spell.

Returning to the vehicle we rejoined the main road and pressed on a little further, making an unscheduled coffee stop at Mirador Rio Blanco, a café perched high up on the ridge with spectacular vistas, looking down on the Blanco River far below. The coffee was welcome but the birding was unexpectedly good here too, with a mixture of tanagers including Scarlet browed Tanager, plus Black-cheeked Woodpecker and Black-capped Sparrow.

Just before turning off for Rio Silanche we spotted our first and only Masked Water Tyrants of the tour. It was almost lunchtime when we arrived, so we headed directly for the observation tower for some canopy-level birding whilst we ate. Several Ruddy Pigeons were seen, and a Streaked Flycatcher, whilst Grey-rumped Swifts passed overhead and a Double-toothed Kite put in a brief appearance.

The trail we took after lunch proved to be busy with birds. First we found Dusky Pigeon, Rusty-margined Flycatcher and Tyrannine Woodcreeper, then we stumbled across a mixed flock including White-flanked Antwren, Dot-winged Antwren, Wedge-billed Woodcreeper and Tawny-crested Tanager – a tricky bird to see. Shortly after this at a forest clearing, we spied a Roadside hawk and had fleeting views of a Linneated Woodpecker. Back-tracking along the trail we came upon White-bearded Manakins, bouncing about from sapling to sapling in display. Back at the tower we had great 'scope views of Pale-mandibled Aracaris, adding Grey and Gold Tanager and Scarlet-browed tanager to the day's tally.

As we left Rio Silanche, along the road we saw a few Southern Rough-winged Swallows, half a dozen Pacific Parrotlets and more Swallow-tailed Kites. Two Scrub Blackbirds were new also. We were back at Septimo Paraiso by 4.30pm giving us time to check out the feeders. The by now usual suspect hummers were there, though Brown Inca and Velvet Purple Coronet were new and that wonderful Purple-bibbed Whitetip appeared not to have moved.

Day 4. Tuesday 8th July. Warm though cloudy at Septimo Paraiso, cool and wet from Quito to Guango.

Depart Septimo Paraiso, return to Quito, through Papallacta Pass to Guango.

Pre-dawn, a Swallow-tailed Nightjar was seen in the grey-dark of the car park and as light levels slowly picked up, at last we managed to actually see Grey-breasted Wood Wren. Before going into breakfast we were also able to enjoy a last look at the feeders and their assorted hummingbirds.

Then with the vehicle loaded, we set off for our return to Quito and beyond. However before we had even left the grounds of Septimo Paraiso, we stopped to look at a Roadside Hawk. On the main road a Sickle-winged Guan flew across right in front of the vehicle giving close, almost too close views as it nearly hit the windscreen. Thereafter, we saw little else *en route* to Quito, bar a few roadside American Kestrels.

Once through the bulk of the capital's traffic, we made a slight detour into the suburbs, where we located four Hooded Siskins and two Southern Yellow Grosbeaks. Pressing on, we then climbed and entered the Pappallacta Pass - Pass of the Potato. Here we drove the main road at first before taking the old, now little used road through the pass, amongst many very dark soil potato-growing fields. As we climbed, the landscape changed from agricultural to a form of montane scrub forest - bushes really. We stopped briefly to enjoy two adult Carunculated Caracaras, strutting about in a field next to the road and then further up saw them in flight together with a juvenile bird. Whilst stopped here we also heard Tawny Antpitta up above us somewhere. At another stop we walked for awhile along a track through the montane scrub and picked up a few new birds including White-crested Elaenia and Band-tailed Seedeater plus several now familiar, Great Thrushes, Band-tailed Pigeons and Tyrian Metaltail Hummingbirds. Rain had started by now which made birding tricky, but at each roadside stop we made, we still managed to see new birds, including Rainbow-bearded Thornbill hummingbird and Black-billed Shrike-Tyrant. With the rain quite heavy now, we drove along slowly, watching from the vehicle in search of Stout-billed Cinclodes, creeping about in the thick carpet of moss. Eventually we found one and much debate ensued as regards its size, suggestions ranging from Wheatear to Grey Partridge! Was this a question of size-illusion, from looking through vehicle windows running with rain, or simply the rarefied air at this level affecting our judgement?!

We crossed the high pass and began our descent on the east side, turning off the main road again to drive down alongside Papallacta Lake. Here we found three Andean Gulls and two Andean Teal. We arrived at Guango in the pouring rain, but our spirits were immediately lifted by the unbelievable frenzy of hummingbird activity at the Lodge's feeders. With birds so close, zipping back and forth it was a little claustrophobic, but it gave fantastic chances for photos. The delights here were new hummers with names as spectacular as their appearance – Tourmaline Sunangel, Chestnut-fronted Coronet, Collared Inca, Long-tailed Sylph and White-bellied Woodstar. Basically we just sat before and after lunch and gorged ourselves on this hummer-fest. Here too were some now familiar species, including Shining Sunbeam, Swordbill and Buff-fronted Starfrontlet.

For the rest of the afternoon until close to dusk, and despite the incessant rain, we set off birding along a trail taking us through pasture and woodland and adjacent to the raging river. The conditions were hardly conducive but nevertheless we picked up a few things including Grey-hooded Tanager, Slaty Brush Finch, Northern Mountain Cacique, Hooded Mountain Tanager, Rufous-breasted Chat Tyrant, Cinnamon Flycatcher, White-bearded Tyrannulet and Pale-naped Brush Finch – not bad considering.

Day 5. Wednesday 9th July.

Cold, wet and rain all day.

Guango then onwards down east slope of Andes to San Isidro.

The day started right at the front door to the Lodge, with the hummer selection and flowerpiercers at the feeders. Some very bold and inquisitive Turquoise Jays came very close too. At least we could watch these birds from the shelter of the veranda, as beyond that it was still raining and cold with it.

However, undaunted we set out along the same route as yesterday and saw many of the same species too, but we ventured that bit further, birding the roadside and up another forest trail. Here are endeavours were rewarded. In a short space of time we had seen Pearled Treerunner, Montane Woodcreeper, Capped Conebill, Grey-hooded Tanager, Slaty Finch, Northern Mountain Cacique and

Lacrimose Mountain Tanager. Having only previously heard Mountain Wren we finally managed to see one. Bird of this session though was Red-hooded Tanager – not an easy species to see and one that got Norby as excited as we were. We saw 7 in total and saw them well, shortly followed in quick succession by good views too of Grey-breasted Mountain Toucan and Bar-bellied Woodpecker, all new birds for the tour tally. Seeing quality birds like these made us forget that it was cold, wet and miserable, well almost.

Returning to base, we then set out along a trail taking us alongside the river. Days of rain had turned this into a very angry looking, but otherwise spectacular river. Any self-respecting Torrent Duck would be holed up somewhere surely and not venturing in to paddle, or so we thought. But we were lucky, we spotted a male on a boulder, then struggling in the torrent before flying up stream, but thankfully we all saw it, together with a Torrent Tyrannulet. The noise of the river's roar was deafening and made picking up birds difficult, but we did locate Black-crested Warbler and a couple of Inca Jays.

After lunch, we loaded up and set off for San Isidro, but not before we were treated to a most bizarre experience. One of the staff, armed with a handful of worms, proceeded to call out to a Chestnut-crowned Antpitta. Not only did he mimic it's call but called it by its adopted name. After sometime, when it looked like his party-piece would be a no-show, she dutifully appeared for us, collected her worm reward before disappearing back into the gloomy understorey. How amazing was that?

Birding as we drove was almost impossible due to the rain so we went directly to our next stop San Isidro. On arrival the Inca Jays that had thrilled us this morning, were everywhere here, not that we didn't still enjoy them. We did some birding from the veranda and wander the paths between our rooms and dining room finding lots of fly-by Band-tailed Pigeons and Red-billed Parrots. The feeders here held a mix of hummingbirds, some familiar others new including Bronzy Inca - making 13 species of hummer seen today at both Guango and now here at San Isidro.

Day 6. Thursday 10th July.

Cool and wet virtually all day.

San Isidro & surrounds.

At first-light, on stirring to the sound of the rain falling, some of us rolled back over and stayed in bed for an extra hour or two, but for the more determined the rewards were out there. At the parking area in the half-light, up to seven Short-tailed Nighthawks and one Rufous-bellied Nighthawk were seen wafting back and forth.

Other pre-breakfast birds included Highland Masked Trogons, Russet-backed Oropendola, Highland Motmot, Olive-backed and Montane Woodcreeper, Russet-crowned Warbler and Subtropical/Scarlet-rumped Cacique.

After breakfast we headed down slope along the trail below our rooms. After all the rain, it was slippery in places, but we persevered. Parrots seemed to be flying over all morning but eventually we located some perched in a tree and 'scope-able. Red-billed Parrots dominated (with 50+ seen in total today), but amongst them we managed to pick out a dozen or more White-capped Parrots. In contrast to the raucous calls of parrots, the trail was otherwise quiet, a Streaked Flycatcher being the only other bird we saw. We did though hear Andean Cock-of-the-rock. The further down the trail we went, the more muddy it became so eventually we retraced our steps. Back at base, near our rooms, we located Crimson-mantled Woodpecker and Black-eared Hemispingus and from the viewing deck and veranda we picked up Fawn-breasted Tanager, Saffron-crowned Tanager, Black-capped Tanager, Glossy Black Thrush, Masked Flowerpiercer, Capped Conebill, Smoke-coloured Pewee and White-tailed Tyrannulet. A Short-tailed Hawk was also seen, all too fleetingly and was a leader-only bird I think?

By the time lunch was over the weather had improved marginally, so we set off along the gravel road beyond the lodge. Though conditions were inclement, scenically it looked wonderful, with the cloud and mist billowing across the high forested slopes above us. We saw several Roadside Hawks, including good views of one perched on a fence post devouring unidentified prey. Having heard but not seen Golden-headed Quetzal earlier in the week at Spetimo Paraiso, it was great to finally find one, a male sat quietly and obligingly just under the forest canopy. Passing through forest at first the road broke out into agricultural areas. Here we found several Black Phoebes and two very handsome Southern Lapwings immediately adjacent to the vehicle, giving great chances for pictures.

We returned to base to dry off, but having done so we couldn't then resist the temptation to head back out briefly having been tipped-off that an Andean Potoo was roosting nearby. One of the San Isidro ground staff, nonchalantly escorted us up the road and pointed out this weird-looking bird, sat classically atop a broken snag. Marvellous.

Day 7. Friday 11th July.

And still it rained!

Guacamayos Ridge, Rio Cosanga, then return through Papallacta Pass to Quito.

As a *hors d'oeuvre* before breakfast we again witnessed the amazing technique for seeing antpittas, of habituating one bird to the voice of one person. After a few minutes of calling Chestnut Antpitta (*Maria* by name) she duly appeared for her worm breakfast, for all to see.

Our objective today was to walk along part of the Guacamayos Ridge. But first we went in search of dry socks! We drove slowly around the streets of nearby Cosanga town, looking for sock shops (!) and stopping to ask locals where we might by some – our enquiries were met with bemused expressions, wry smiles or stifled laughter. Still, our quest wasn't fruitless. The incessant rain had continued, turning the Cosanga River into a fearsome spate, to such an extent that bizarrely we found the otherwise always riparian Torrent Tyrannulets, had opted for the safer option of the street gutters, themselves pouring with run-off. Try as we might to find Torrent Ducks here too, we couldn't.

Earnestly, we set off along the ridge trail, but didn't get far before we decided against going further. We were seeing very little and the wet, slippery path was treacherous. This ridge seemingly, is the first high ground for weather systems coming in from the Amazon which, whilst making it an unusual and exciting birding area, means too that it gets 5m of rain a year, apparently. It seemed to us like we had it all that morning. So, putting safety first, we gave up. A good decision as it turned out as later we met another group who had gone on much further, seen absolutely nothing, were completely soaked and were mutinous.

Back at San Isidro, we spent the rest of our time on the ever-productive veranda and viewing deck, looking out over the rainforest below us. In a short spell, from the dry and comfort of our chairs, we located a host of species, many new including; Barred Parakeet, Flavescent Flycatcher, Sulphur-bellied Tyrannulet, Flame-faced Tanager, Marble-faced Bristle Tyrant, Ashy-headed Tyrannulet, plus the by now, usual hummers.

After lunch, it was time to depart and reluctantly return to Quito, though the weather in the capital was warm and dry which was welcome. However before that, we had to re-cross the Papallacta Pass. We stopped at the lake briefly to see Andean Gull again in passing but saw little else that is except a huge black raptor drift low over the road Andean Condor! Having topped the pass, on the descent down the other side, a Tawny Antpitta flew right across the road in front of the vehicle – how lucky was that?

Day 8. Saturday 12th July.

Warm and sunny.

Quito, depart for UK.

With a free morning before our afternoon flight, some of us explored parts of Quito, went shopping or wandered in the park (Vermillion Flycatcher!) enjoyed the warmth and the eclectic mix of arts and crafts on display and the general fascinating hive of activity of Quito at the weekend. Come afternoon, it was home time.

Day 9. Sunday 13th July

Arrival back in London.

In contrast to the wondrous weather in Galapagos, I guess we couldn't have everything but the rain on the east slope of the Andes, whilst it dampened us literally, couldn't dampen our enthusiasm for this wonderful place and its birding treasures. Highlights? You will have your own, but amongst them will surely be; those Andean Condors on day one, those majestic Swallow-tailed Kites, that weird Andean Potoo perhaps or maybe those displaying Bat Flacons or the dancing manakins? The myriad of tanagers deserve a mention too and surely so do all those spectacular hummingbirds - 35 species of them in all, of which Purple-bibbed Whitetip was probably the most stunning. You choose. But I hope that reading this report has brought back many memories and conjured up in your mind's eye many of the fantastic things we saw and experienced.

My thanks to you all for the part you each played in helping make the trip a success. I hope to see you all some other time before too long.

Richard Thaxton July 2007
Limosa Holidays

ECUADOR mainland extension species list: 227 species.

The species lists below, use the following references:

Birds The worldwide English names and systematic order as recommended by the I.O.C. and published in *Birds of the World –Recommended English Names* (Gill F. & Wright M. 2006).

The North American Bird Guide (Sibley D. 2000).

The Birds of Ecuador – a field guide (Ridgely R.S & Greenfield P.J. 2001)

Mammals The suggested worldwide English names and systematic order as found in *Mammals of the World, a checklist* (Duff A. & Lawson A. 2004).

BIRDS – AVES

CHACHALACAS, CURASSOWS, GUANS - Cracidae

Andean Guan *Penelope montagnii*: 1 seen on road down from Yanacocha 5/7. Others heard Rio Silanche 7/7 and Guango 8/8.

Crested Guan *Penelopepurpurascens*: 1 seen Septimo Paraiso 6/7.

Sickle-winged Guan *Chamaepetes goudotii*: 1 flew up in front of vehicle between Septimo Paraiso and Quito 8/7

GEESE, SWANS & DUCKS -Anatidae

Torrent Duck *Merganetta armata*: 1 male seen on road down from Yanacocha 5/7 and another male 9/7 at Guango.

Andean Teal *Anas andium*: 2 Papallacha Lake 8/7

HERONS & BITTERNs – Ardeidae

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*: noted on two days, 12 at Mindo 6/7 and 10+ seen from car park at Milpe 7/7.

NEW WORLD VULTURES – Cathartidae

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*: noted daily at most sites visited. Closest views from veranda of Mirador Rio Blanco coffee-stop 7/7

(American) Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus*: noted daily as above.

Andean Condor *Vultur gryphus*: unexpected and superb views of a pair quartering hillsides on drive up to Yanacocha 5/7. A female seen all too fleetingly near Papallacta Lake when returning to Quito 11/7.

FALCONS & allies – Falconidae

Carunculated Caracara *Phalcoboenus carunculatus*: 4 seen walking somewhat comically, in field Papallacta Pass 8/7, later seen flying too.

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius*: 1 seen Yanacocha 5/7, 1 seen on drive from Setimo Paraiso 8/7 and then 2 Papallacta pass that same day. One on the outskirts of Quito 11/7.

Bat Falcon *Falco rufigalaris*: two (a pair?) seen displaying/chasing each other Mindo 6/7.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*: 1 seen while on city tour in Quito 4/7 (noted in species list for Galapagos leg of tour).

HAWKS, EAGLES & allies – Accipitridae

Swallow-tailed Kite *Elanoides forficatus*: at least 10+ in the air together at Septimo Paraiso on our morning walk along trail 6/7. 6 seen from road when leaving Rio Silanche 7/7.

Double-toothed Kite *Harpagus bidentatus*: two (or same one twice) seen as we lunched atop observation tower at Rio Silanche 7/7.

Plain-breasted Hawk *Accipiter ventralis*: Only record was of one along road up to Yanacocha 5/7.

Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle *Geranoaetus melanoleucus*: 2 (adult + an immature bird) seen quartering hillsides (as we watched Andean Condors too!) along road to Yanacocha 5/7.

Roadside Hawk *Buteo magnirostris*: 1 seen on road up to Yanacocha 5/7. 1 heard only at Rio Silanche 7/7. 1 seen on departure from Septimo Paraiso 8/7 and 3 in total 10/7 along road from San Isidro, including a perched bird eating prey.

Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus*: 1 seen perched in roadside tree on drive down from Yanacocha 5/7.

Variable/Red-backed Hawk *Buteo polyosoma polyosoma*: 5 in total, light-phase birds on road up to Yanacocha 5/7. 2 Papallacta Pass 8/7.

PLOVERS & LAPWINGS – Charadriidae

Southern Lapwing *Vanellus chilensis*: 2 in field along road from San Isidro 10/7.

GULLS, TERNS & SKIMMERS – Laridae

Andean Gull *Larus serranus*: 1 seen high overhead at septimo Paraiso 6/7, 3 Papallacta Lake on 8/7 and probably the same 3 there on 11/7.

PIGEONS & DOVES - Columbidae

Rock Dove/Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*: noted on 2 days when passing through towns/villages.

Band-tailed Pigeon *Patagioenas fasciata*: 4 Yanacocha 5/7, 1 Mindo 6/7, 2 Papallacta Pass 8/7, 50+ in total Guango 9/7, 20+ from veranda, San Isidro 10-11/7.

Ruddy Pigeon *Patagioenas subvinacea*: 4 in grounds of Septimo Paraiso 6/7 and 2 en route to Rio Silanche 7/7.

Dusky Pigeon *Patagioenas goodsoni*: 2 from forest trail, Rio Silanche 7/7

Eared Dove *Zenaida auriculata*: noted on 3 days; drive to Yanacocha 5/7, outskirts of Quito 8/7 and when returning 11/7.

White-throated Quail-Dove *Geotrygon frenata*: 1 seen in road ahead of vehicle, on descent from Yanococha 5/7.

PARROTS & allies – Psittacidae

Maroon-tailed Parakeet *Pyrrhura melanura*: 4 in immediate grounds of Septimo Paraiso 6/7.

Barred Parakeet *Bolborhynchus lineola*: a flock of 23 seen from veranda/viewing platform, wheeling around San Isidro 10/7.

Pacific Parrotlet *Forpus coelestis*: 10+ along road when leaving Rio Silanche 7/7, mainly flight views but a couple seen briefly perched.

Red-billed Parrot *Pionus sordidus*: noted on 6 days. Highest numbers were at San Isidro with 20+ 9/7 and 11/7 and 45 10/7. Mainly fly-by birds but some were scoped from forest trail below San Isidro.

White-capped Parrot *Pionus seniloides*: up to 12 in mixed flock with Red-billed at San Isidro 10/7, 2 in grounds of San Isidro 11/7

Bronze-winged Parrot *Pionus chalcopterus*: 15+ fly-by birds seen from forest trail at Milpe and finally a perched specimen Rio Silanche 7/7.

CUCKOOS – Cuculidae

Smooth-billed Ani *Crotophaga ani*: several seen Milpe 7/7.

Squirrel Cuckoo *Piaya cayana*: 2 at roadside stops near Mindo, best views were of one right above our heads at the bridge over Rio Mindo 6/7.

POTOOS – Nyctibiidae

Andean Potoo *Nyctibius maculosus*: a tip-off from staff at San Isidro had us nipping out late to see this superb bird, perched atop a stump, potoo-style, obviously, along the road from S. Isidro 10/7.

NIGHTJARS – Caprimulgidae

Short-tailed Nighthawk *Lurocalis semitorquatus*: 7 at dusk at car park, San Isidro 10/7, 10 there the following evening 11/7.

Rufous-bellied Nighthawk *Lurocalis rufiventris*: 1 bird at dusk at car park at San Isidro, another (same?) there next evening too.

Swallow-tailed Nightjar *Uropsalis segmentata*: 1 (leader only bird, I think?) at dawn around car park at Septimo Paraiso 8/7.

SWIFTS – Apodidae

White-collared Swift *Streptoprocne zonaris*: 100s seen at Mindo/Septimo 6-8/7.

Grey-rumped Swift *Chaetura cinereiventris*: 5 seen from observation tower at Rio Silanche 7/7.

HUMMINGBIRDS – Trochilidae

White-whiskered Hermit *Phaethornis yaruqui*: on feeders, Septimo Paraiso 6-7/7.

White-necked Jacobin *Florisuga mellivora*: noted on 3 days at feeders, Septimo Paraiso 6-8/7

Brown Violetear *Colibri delphinae*: noted on 3 days at the feeders, Septimo Paraiso 6-8/7

Sparkling Violetear *Colibri coruscans*: 6 at feeders, Yanacocha 5/7, 1 Guango 8/7 and 9/7.

- Green Thorntail** *Discosura conversii*: 3 at feeder at Milpe 7/7.
- Green-crowned Woodnymph** *Thalurania fannyi*: 1-2 at feeders, Septimo Paraiso 6/7 & 7/7, 3 at feeders at Milpe 7/7.
- Rufous-tailed Hummingbird** *Amazilia tzacati*: noted on 4 days (10-15) at Septimo Paraiso 6-8/7.
- Andean Emerald** *Amazilia franciae*: noted on 2 days Septimo Paraiso 6-7/7.
- Speckled Hummingbird** *Adelomyia melanogenys*: 2 at Guango 8/7, 10+ San Isidro 9-11/7.
- Fawn-breasted Brilliant** *Heliodoxa rubinoides*: noted on 6 days at; Septimo Paraiso, Guango and San Isidro.
- Green-crowned Brilliant** *Heliodoxa jacula*: 1-2 at Septimo Paraiso 6-8/7.
- Empress Brilliant** *Heliodoxa imperatrix*: 1 (leader only) Septimo Paraiso 7/7.
- Buff-tailed Coronet** *Boissonneaua flavescens*: 2 at feeders at Guango 8/7.
- Chestnut-breasted Coronet** *Boissonneaua matthewsii*: Common at feeders at both Guango 8-9/7 and San Isidro 9-11/7
- Velvet-purple Coronet** *Boissonneaua jardini*: 1 Septimo Paraiso 7/7.
- Shining Sunbeam** *Aglaectis cupripennis*: 5 at Yanacocha 5/7, others at Guango 8/7.
- Mountain Velvetbreast** *Lafresnaya lafresnayi*: 1 seen on drive down from Yanacocha 5/7 was our only record.
- Bronzy Inca** *Coeligena coeligena*: noted on 3 days at San Isidro, 6+ 9-11/7
- Brown Inca** *Coeligena wilsoni*: 1 at feeders at Septimo Paraiso 7/7 was our only record.
- Collard Inca** *Coeligena torquata*: noted on 4 days 8-11/7 at both Guango and San Isidro.
- Buff-winged Starfrontlet** *Coeligena lutetiae*: Common at Yanacocha 5/7 and at Guango 8-9/7.
- Sword-billed Hummingbird** *Ensifera ensifera*: noted on 3 days, Yanacocha 5/7 and Guango 8-9/7.
- Great Sapphirewing** *Pterophanes cyanopterus*: 6 at feeder at Yanacocha 5/7.
- Tourmaline Sunangel** *Heliangelus exortis*: noted on 2 days at Guango 8-9/7.
- Sapphire-vented Puffleg** *Eriocnemis luciani*: 6 Yanacocha 5/7.
- Purple-bibbed Whitetip** *Urosticte benjamini*: 1 bird seen, on the same perch on each of 3 days at Septimo Paraiso 6-8/7
- Booted Racket-tail** *Ocreatus underwoodii*: 2-3 birds noted on 3 days, Septimo Paraiso 6-8/7.
- Black-tailed Trainbearer** *Lesbia victoriae*: 3 seen on road up to Yanacocha 5/7 and 2 seen Papallacta Pass 8/7.
- Tyrian Metaltail** *Metallura tyrianthina*: Yanacocha 5/7, Papallacta pass 8/7 & 11/7, Guango 9/7.
- Rainbow-bearded Thornbill** *Chalcostigma herrani*: 1 seen Papallacta Pass8/7.
- Long-tailed Sylph** *Aglaiocercus kingi*: noted on 4 days at both Guango and San Isidro 8-11/7.

Violet-tailed Sylph *Agaiocercus coelestis*: 4 Septimo Paraiso 6/7.

Purple-crowned Fairy *Heliothryx barroti*: 1 Mindo 6/7.

Purple-throated Woodstar *Calliphlox mitchellii*: noted on 3 days at Septimo Paraiso 6-8/7.

White-bellied Woodstar *Chaetocercus mulsanti*: 4-6 at Guango 8-9/7

TROGONS –Trogonidae

Highland Masked Trogon *Trogon (personatus) temperatus*: heard only at first at San Isidro 9/7, but then 2 males and 3 females on 10/7 and probably the same birds seen 11/7.

Golden-headed Quetzal *Pharomachrus auriceps*: heard only at first at Septimo Paraiso 6-7/7, then an obliging male perched in a tree along road from San Isidro 10/7.

MOTMOTS – Momotidae

Highland Motmot *Momotus aequatorialis*: 2 different birds seen at San Isidro 10/7.

Rufous Motmot *Baryphthengus martii*: 1 plus others heard at Septimo Paraiso 6-8/7

Broad-billed Motmot *Electron platyrhynchum*: 1 perched above us whilst on forest trail at Milpe 7/7.

TOUCANS & BARBETS – Ramphastidae

Crimson-rumped Toucanet *Aulacorhynchus haematopygus*: 1 on edge of clearing, Milpe 7/7.

Pale-mandibled Aracari *Pteroglossus erythropygius*: noted on 3 days; 2 on 6/7 and 2 on 8/7 at Septimo Paraiso, 5 on 7/7 scoped from observation tower at Rio Silanche.

Grey-breasted Mountain Toucan *Andigene hypoglauca*: heard at Guango on 8/7 then 2 seen at road edge 9/7.

Choco Toucan *Ramphastos brevis*: heard only at Septimo Paraiso 6/7 and at Milpe 7/7.

Chestnut-mandibled Toucan *Ramphastos swainsonii*: 2 on 6/7 at Septimo Paraiso, 1 Milpe 7/7.

Toucan Barbet *Semnornis ramphastinus*: alas, heard only at Septimo Paraiso 6-7/7.

WOODPECKERS – Picidae

Black-cheeked Woodpecker *Melanerpes pucherani*: 2 females and one male at feeder at Mirador Rio Blanco coffee-stop 7/7.

Bar-bellied Woodpecker *Venillornis nigriceps*: 2 at road edge, Guango 9/7.

Crimson-mantled Woodpecker *Piculus rivolii*: 1 bird (same?) noted on 3 days at San Isidro 9-11/7.

Lineated Woodpecker *Dryocopus lineatus*: fleetingly glimpse Milpe 7/7.

Guayaquil Woodpecker *Campephilus guayaquilensis*: 1 Milpe 7/7

MANAKINS – Pipridae

Club-winged Manakin *Machaeropterus deliciosus*: 3 plus others heard, Milpe 7/7.

White-bearded Manakin *Manacus manacus*: 2 plus others heard Rio Silanche 7/7.

COTINGAS – Cotingidae

Masked Tityra *Tityra semifasciata*: 1 distant perched bird seen from the road down from Septimo Paraiso to Mindo 6/7.

Cinnamon Becard *Pachyramphus cinnamomeus*: 2-4 seen at roadside stop during our afternoon drive down beyond Mindo 6/7.

Red-crested Cotinga *Ampelion rubrocristatus*: 2 seen on drive down from Yanacocha 5/7.

Andean Cock-of-the-rock *Rupicola peruviana*: a glimpse of a ruddy/brown bird of the right size at the bridge over the Rio Mindo is now believed to have been a female. Heard only at San Isidro 10/7.

TYRANT-FLYCATCHERS – Tyrannidae

Ashy-headed Tyrannulet *Phyllomyias cinereiceps*: 1 seen from veranda at San Isidro 11/7.

Sulphur-bellied Tyrannulet *Mecocerculus minor*: 1 seen from veranda at San Isidro 11/7

White-crested Elaenia *Elaenia albiceps*: 2 seen in montane scrub “forest” in Papallacta Pass 8/7.

White-tailed Tyrannulet *Mecocerculus poecilocercus*: 1 seen from veranda at San Isidro 10/7

White-banded Tyrannulet *Mecocerculus stictopterus*: noted on 2 days at Guango 1 on 8/7 and 2 on 9/7.

Tufted Tit-tyrant *Anairetes parulus*: 1 on road up to Yanacocha 5/7 was our only record.

Torrent Tyrannulet *Serpophaga cinerea*: 1 along river walk at Guango 9/7 and 3 in the streets of Cosanga (!) near San Isidro 11/7.

Golden-faced Tyrannulet *Zimmerius chrysops*: 2 at trail viewpoint, Septimo Paraiso 6/7.

Marble-faced Bristle Tyrant *Pogonotriccus ophthalmicus*: 1 seen from veranda, San Isidro 11/7.

Flavescent Flycatcher *Myiophobus flavicans*: 1 seen from veranda, San Isidro 11/7.

Ornate Flycatcher *Myiotriccus ornatus*: 2 along trail to viewpoint, Septimo Paraiso 6/7 and 2 at Milpe 7/7.

Scale-crested Pygmy Tyrant *Lophotriccus pileatus*: 2 along trail to viewpoint, Septimo Paraiso 6/7 and 3 at Rio Silanche 7/7.

Rufous-crowned Tody-Flycatcher *Poecilotriccus ruficeps*: 1 at Guango 9/7.

Common Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum cinereum*: 2 in the car park on arrival at Milpe 7/7.

Cinnamon Flycatcher *Pyrrhomyias cinnamomeus*: 2 at Guango on both 8/7 and 9/7 (same birds?), 1 in the grounds at San Isidro 10 & 11/7.

Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans*: 4 seen during our afternoon spent around Mindo 6/7, 2 along road from San Isidro 10/7 and again 11/7.

Smoke-coloured Pewee *Contopus funigatus*: 1 Mindo 6/7.

Black-billed Shrike-Tyrant *Agriornis montanus*: 1 rapid fly-by bird, Papallacta Pass 8/7.

Masked Water Tyrant *Fluvicola nengeta*: a total of 4 seen at roadsides *en route* between Milpe and Rio Silanche 7/7.

Rufous-breasted Chat-Tyrant *Ochthoeca rufipectoralis*: 1 Guango 8/7 and almost certainly the same bird seen again 9/7.

Rusty-margined Flycatcher *Myiozetetes cayanensis*: 1 along trail at Rio Silanche 7/7 was our only record.

Social Flycatcher *Myiozetetes similes*: 5+ in pastureland & at woodland edges of fields around Mindo 6/7 and 1 at Rio Silanche 7/7.

Golden-crowned Flycatcher *Myiodynastes chrysocephalus*: 1 along trail to viewpoint, Septimo Paraiso 6/7.

Streaked Flycatcher *Myiodynastes maculatus*: 1 during lunch at observation tower, Rio Silanche 7/7.

Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus*: common, noted all days at all sites.

Dusky-capped Flycatcher *Myiarchus cephalotes*: noted on 5 days at sites on both slopes.

Bright-rumped Attila *Attila spadiceus*: 1 along trail to viewpoint at Septimo Paraiso 6/7 was our only record.

ANTBIRDS – Thamnophilidae

Uniform Antshrike *Thamnophilus unicolor*: 2 along trail to viewpoint, Septimo Paraiso 6/7, though difficult views.

Dot-winged Antwren *Microrhopias quixensis*: 1 in a mixed flock of birds along trail at Rio Silanche forest trail 7/7.

White-flanked Antwren *Myrmotherula axillaries*: 2 in the same mixed flock as Dot-winged Antwren along forest trail, Rio Silanche 7/7.

Long-tailed Antbird *Drymophila caudate*: 3 + others heard along trail to viewpoint, Septimo Paraiso 6/7. 1 San Isidro 9/7.

TAPACULOS – Rhinocryptidae

Spillmann's Tapaculo *Scytalopus spillmanni*: heard only along trail at Yanacocha 5/7 and heard only again San Isidro 11/7.

ANTTHRUSHES & ANTPITTAS – Formicariidae

Chestnut-crowned Antpitta *Grallaria ruficapilla*: 1 impressively called out for us by member of staff at Guango, likewise at San Isidro 10 & 11/7!

Rufous Antpitta *Grallaria rufula*: 1 at head of trail at Yanacocha, well me and Ann saw it!

Tawny Antpitta *Grallaria quitensis*: heard in Papallacta Pass on 8/7 then one flew across the road in front of vehicle as we returned through the pass on 11/7.

OVENBIRDS – Furnariidae

Stout-billed Cinclodes *Cinclodes excelsior*: 2 at head of Papallacta Pass 8/7.

Pacific Hornero *Furnarius cinnamomeus*: 3 seen on 7/7 between Milpe and Rio Silanche.

Azara's Spinetail *Synallaxis azarae*: noted on 6 days, mostly just heard but seen Yanacocha 5/7, Septimo Paraiso 6 & 8/7

Pearled Treerunner *Margarornis squamiger*: 1 Guango 9/7 and 1 San Isidro 10/7.

Streaked Tuftedcheek *Pseudocolaptes boissonneautii*: 1 along trail at Yanacocha 5/7 was our only record.

Buff-fronted Foliage Gleaner *Philydor rufum*: 3 during our afternoon spent in the area below Mindo 6/7.

WOODCREEPERS – Dendrocolaptidae

Tyrannine Woodcreeper *Dendrocincla tyrannina*: 1 along forest trail at Rio Silanche 7/7.

Wedge-billed Woodcreeper *Glyphorhynchus spirurus*: 1 along forest trail at Rio Silanche 7/7.

Olive-backed Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus triangularis*: 1 in the grounds of San Isidro 10/7.

Montane Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes lacrymiger*: 1 along trail to viewpoint, Septimo Paraiso 6/7, 1 at Guango 9/7, 3 at San Isidro 10/7.

VIREOS – Vireonidae

Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus*: 4 in total Septimo Paraiso 6/7, 1 Milpe 7/7 and 1 San Isidro 11/7.

CROES, JAYS & MAGPIES – Corvidae

Turquoise Jay *Cyanolyca turcosa*: 3 on road down from Yanacocha 5/7, 10+ very close at Guango Lodge 8/7 and 6 again around lodge 9/7. San Isidro 11/7.

Inca Jay *Cyanocorax yncas*: 12 in total on last morning at Guango 9/7, then common in grounds at San Isidro 10-11/7.

SWALLOWS & MARTINS – Hirundinidae

Blue-and-white Swallow *Notiochelidon cyanoleuca*: seen every day.

Brown-bellied Swallow *Notiochelidon murina*: noted on 5 days; Yanacocha, Guango and San Isidro.

Southern Rough-winged Swallow *Steigodopteryx ruficollis*: 5 along road as we left Rio Silanche 7/7 were our only records.

WRENS – Troglodytidae

House Wren *Troglodytes aedon*: seen & heard Septimo Paraiso 7-8/7.

Mountain Wren *Troglodytes solstitialis*: 1 at Guango 9/7 and at San Isidro 11/7.

Grey-breasted Wood Wren *Henicorhina leucophrys*: heard every day! Finally saw one just before leaving Septimo Paraiso 8/7.

Southern Nightingale Wren *Microcerculus marginatus*: heard only at Milpe 7/7.

THRUSHES – Turdidae

Andean Solitaire *Myadestes ralloides*: heard on 5 days at Yanacocha, Septimo Paraiso and eventually saw one at San Isidro 11/7.

Great Thrush *Turdus fuscater*: noted every day.

Glossy-black Thrush *Turdus serranus*: 2 along trail to viewpoint, Septimo Paraiso 6/7.

DIPPERS – Cinclidae

White-capped Dipper *Cinclus leucocephalus*: 2 at trout ponds on road down from Yanacocha 5/7.

FINCHES & allies – Fringillidae

Thick-billed Euphonia *Euphonia lanirostris*: 1 Septimo Paraiso 6/7 and 1 at bird table at Mirador Rio Blanco coffee-stop 7/7.

Orange-bellied Euphonia *Euphonia xanthogaster*: 1 along trail to viewpoint at Septimo Paraiso 6/7 and 2 at bird table, Mirador Rio Blanco coffee-stop.

Hooded Siskin *Carduelis olivacea*: 4 on outskirts of Quito 8/7.

NEW WORLD WARBLERS – Parulidae

Tropical Parula *Parula pitiayumi*: 1 Yanacocha 5/7 and 1 Septimo Paraiso 6/7.

Slate-throated Whitestart *Myioborus miniatus*: noted on 5 days; at Septimo Paraiso, Guango and San Isidro.

Spectacled Whitestart *Myioborus melanocephalus*: noted on 6 days at all sites.

Black-crested Warbler *Basileuterus nigrocristatus*: 1 at Guango 9/7 was our only record.

Russet-crowned Warbler *Basileuterus coronatus*: noted on 2 days in the grounds of San Isidro 10-11/7.

Three-striped Warbler *Basileuterus tristriatus*: 1 at Yanacocha 5/7 and 1 Septimo Paraiso 6/7.

NEW WORLD ORIOLES & BLACKBIRDS – Icteridae

Russet-backed Oropendola *Psarocolius angustifrons*: 15+ at San Isidro 10/7 and again next day.

Subtropical/Scarlet-rumped Cacique *Cacicus uropygialis*: noted on each of our 3 days at San Isidro.

Northern Mountain Cacique *Cacicus leucoramphus*: 1 Guango 8/7 and 5 there on 9/7. Several at San Isidro 11/7.

Shiny Cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis*: only one record, a group of 6 below Mindo 6/7.

Scrub Blackbird *Dives warszewiczi*: 2 seen along road as we left Rio Silanche 7/7.

BANANAQUIT – Coerebidae

Bananaquit *Coereba flaveola*: 1 seen along road, below Mindo 6/7.

BUNTINGS, NEW WORLD SPARROWS & allies – Emberizidae

Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis*: noted daily.

Chestnut-capped Brush Finch *Buarremom brunneinucha*: 1 seen on last morning at Guango 9/7.

Pale-naped Brush Finch *Atlapetes pallidinucha*: 1 Guango 8/7 and again 9/7.

Tricoloured Brush Finch *Atlapetes tricolour*: 2 at Milpe 7/7 is our only record.

Rufous-naped Brush Finch *Atlapetes latinuchus*: 1 on road up to Yanacocha 5/7 was our only sighting.

Slaty Brush Finch *Atlapetes schistaceus*: at Guango on 8/7 is our only record.

TANAGERS, NEW WORLD FINCHES & allies – Thraupidae

Ochre-breasted Tanager *Chlorothraupis stolzmanni*: only sighting was of a single bird at Milpe in a mixed flock of tanager, along forest trail 7/7.

Black-eared Hemispingus *Hemispingus melanotis*: one bird seen on three days at San Isidro 9-11/7.

Grey-hooded Bush Tanager *Cnemoscopus rubrirostris*: 1 at Guango 8/7 and again (same bird?) 9/7.

White-shouldered Tanager *Tachyphonus luctuosus*: from the bridge over Rio Mindo 6/7 and 1 at Milpe 7/7.

Tawny-crested Tanager *Tachyphonus delatrii*: 3 in a mixed flock of antwrens and other tanagers, along forest trail at Rio Silanche 7/7.

Lemon-rumped Tanager *Ramphocelus icteronotus*: noted on 4 days at Yanacocha, Septimo Paraiso, and Guango.

Blue-grey Tanager *Thraupis episcopus*: noted on 5 days at sites on both slopes.

Palm Tanager *Thraupis palmarum*: usually very common but only a couple seen at Mirador Rio Blanco coffee-stop 7/7 and a few others in a mixed tanager flock along forest trail at Milpe.

Hooded Mountain Tanager *Buthraupis Montana*: 1 at Yanacocha 5/7, 2 at Septimo Paraiso 8/7, several at Guango 9/7 and San Isidro 11/7.

Lacrimose Mountain Tanager *Anisognathus lacrymosus*: 3 Guango 9/7.

Scarlet-bellied Mountain Tanager *Anisognathus igniventris*: several seen along trail at Yanacocha 5/7.

Fawn-breasted Tanager *Pipraeidea melanonota*: 4 at a roadside stop below Mindo 6/7, 2 at Milpe 7/7 and several over our two days at San Isidro 10-11/7

Glistening-green Tanager *Chlorochrysa phoenicotis*: an all-too-quick fly-by bird at viewpoint, Septimo Paraiso 6/7.

Grey-and-gold Tanager *Tangara palmeri*: 2 seen from observation tower at Rio Silanche 7/7.

Golden Tanager *Tangara arthus*: noted on 3 days at Septimo Paraiso 6-8/7.

Silver-throated Tanager *Tangaraicterocephala*: 2 in mixed tanager flock along forest trail, Milpe 7/7.

Saffron-crowned Tanager *Tangara xanthocephala*: 2 seen from viewing deck at San Isidro 10/7.

Flame-faced Tanager *Tangara parzudakii*: 3 seen along trail to viewpoint, Septimo Paraiso 6/7 and 2 in car park on arrival at Milpe 7/7.

Rufous-throated Tanager *Tangara rufigula*: only record is of a single bird in that mixed tanager flock, along forest trail, Milpe 7/7

Bay-headed Tanager *Tangara gyrola*: one day only, Milpe 7/7.

Golden-naped Tanager *Tangara ruficervix*: a leader-only bird, Septimo Parasio 6/7.

Blue-necked Tanager *Tangara cyanicollis*: several seen at roadside stops during our afternoon spent below Mindo 6/7.

Golden-hooded Tanager *Tangara larvata*: only one record, a single at Septimo Paraiso 8/7.

Beryl-spangled Tanager *Tangara nigroviridis*: only one record, a single along trail to viewpoint at Septimo Paraiso 6/7.

Blue-and-black Tanager *Tangara vassorii*: on road down from Yanacocha 5/7.

Black-capped Tanager *Tangara heinei*: 1 seen from deck at San Isidro 10/7.

Swallow Tanager *Tersina viridis*: 1 seen at roadside stop below Mindo 6/7 and 1 in car park on arrival at Milpe 7/7.

Green Honeycreeper *Chlorophanes spiza*: 3 at Milpe 7/7.

Scarlet-browed Tanager *Heterospingus xanthopygius*: 1 seen from observation tower at Rio Silanche 7/7.

Cinereous Conebill *Conirostrum cinereum*: 2 on road up to Yanacocha 5/7.

Blue-backed Conebill *Conirostrum sitticolor*: 1 on road up to Yanacocha 5/7.

Capped Conebill *Conirostrum albifrons*: 2 females, Guango 8/7 a male Guango 9/7 and 1 male + 3 females San Isidro 10/7.

Glossy Flowerpiercer *Diglossa lafresnayii*: San Isidro 10-11/7

Black Flowerpiercer *Diglossa humeralis*: on road up to Yanacocha 5/7 and in Papallacta Pass 8/7.

Masked Flowerpiercer *Diglossopsis cyanea*: noted on 5 days; at Yanacocha, Guango, and San Isidro.

Plumbeous Sierra Finch *Phrygilus unicolor*: heard only, Papallacta Pass 8/7.

Slaty Finch *Haplospiza rustica*: 1 at Guango 9/7 and a female at San Isidro 11/7.

Variable Seedeater *Sporophila corvine*: at car park on arrival at Milpe 7/7.

Yellow-bellied Seedeater *Sporophila nigricollis*: seen at roadside, below Mindo 6/7.

Band-tailed Seedeater *Catamenia analis*: 1 in montane scrub “forest”, Papallacta Pass 8/7.

Plain-coloured Seedeater *Catamenia inornata*: on road up to Yanacocha 5/7.

Dull-coloured Grassquit *Tiaris obscurus*: along road as we left Rio Silanche 7/7.

Black-capped Sparrow *Arremon abeillei*: 3 at bird table at Mirador Rio Blanco coffee-stop 7/7.

Dusky Bush Tanager *Chlorospingus semifuscus*: Yanacocha 5/7 and Septimo Paraiso 6/7.

Yellow-throated Bush Tanager *Chlorospingus flavigularis*: along trail to viewpoint, Septimo Paraiso 6/7 and at Milpe 7/7.

Red-hooded Tanager *Piranga rubriceps*: 7 at Guango 9/7.

Southern Yellow Grosbeak *Pheucticus chrysogaster*: 2 in outskirts of Quito 8/7.

Black-winged Saltator *Saltator atripennis*: noted on 3 days; along road below Mindo 6/7, Milpe 7/7 and Septimo Paraiso 8/7.

MAMMALS – Mammalia

RABBITS & HARES – Leporidae

Forest/Brazilian Rabbit *Sylvilagus brasillensis*: on road up to Yanacocha 5/7 and 2 *en route* between Septimo Paraiso and Quito 8/7.

SQUIRRELS – Sciuridae

Red-tailed Squirrel *Sciurus granatensis*: noted on 6 days, singles at most sites visited, but 6 at San Isidro 10/7.