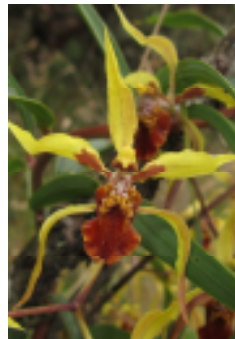


Sunrise Birding LLC

COLOMBIA 2013

Trip Report

Report & Photos by Diego Calderon

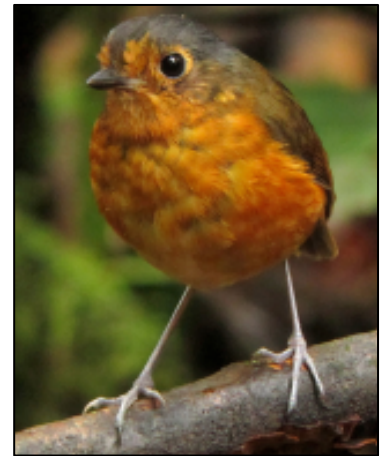




Sunrise Birding, LLC

COLOMBIA TRIP REPORT

November 2 - 16, 2013



Leader: Diego Calderon

Photo: Slate-crowned Antpitta

After scheduled landings in Bogotá international airport everyone was transferred to hotel for an early start next day.

November 2 - Chingaza NNP / Siecha Swamps / La Florida Park

We left early for Chingaza National Park where we soon got great views of the endemics up there (Silvery-throated Spinetail and Mattoral [Pale-bellied] Tapaculo) plus a neat group of the not-very-common Black-chested Mountain Tanager. Mixed flocks entertained us and we climbed a bit higher where we found Bronze-tailed Thornbill. Near-endemic Rufous-browed Conebills and Andean Siskins were flitting around too. We then headed back down for a nice lunch and a visit to a couple of wetlands where we secured views of the much wanted Andean Teal, Andean Duck, Bogota Rail, Noble Snipe, Spot-flanked Gallinule and a neat Green-tailed Trainbearer.

November 3 - Pedro Palo Lagoon/ Chicaque Park Jardin Encantado hummingbird feeders

Another early start got us tour picnic spot for breakfast and endemic Black Incas at a farm gate in a lovely rural area below Bogota. After getting the Inca we focused on the near-endemics that occur here and we share with Venezuela: Spectacled Parrotlet, Ash-browed Spinetail, Bar-crested Antshrike, Moustached Brush-Finch... got them all. Also, after a patient wait, we got our main target that was the endemic Turquoise Dacnis. We then moved to nearby Chicaque Park where we enjoyed superb hummingbird feeders while having superb lunch securing views of the much wanted **Golden-bellied Starfrontlet** and others as the fancy Glowing Puffleg and the diminutive White-bellied Woodstar. We kept moving towards the Magdalena Valley stopping at Leonor's Enchanted Garden hummingbird feeders where we added to our hummer list including: White-necked Jacobin, Brown, Green, and Sparkling Violetears, the crazy-looking Ruby-topaz Hummingbird, Black-throated Mango, Gorgeted Woodstar, White-vented Plumeleteer, Crowned Woodnymph, and Rufous-tailed, Steely-vented, and the endemic star Indigo-capped Hummingbirds.

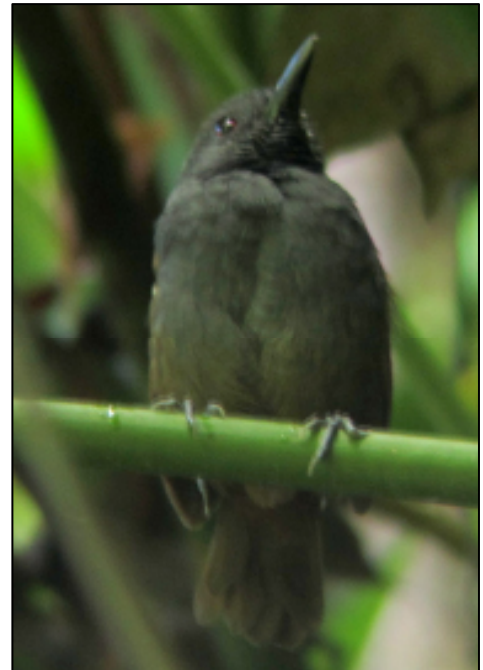


November 4 - Tabacal Park / Villeta lunch road stop

Lots of rain this night at La Vega town, so a lovely sleep for sure! Not so early we headed for Tabacal Park a few kilometers away from town. We arrived and while a yummy breakfast was prepared by doña Maria Estrela & don Jorge we secured views of Band-backed Wrens, Jet Antbirds, Bar-crested Antshrikes and Black-bellied Wrens in the parking lot. We explored the park trails and lagoon area getting Green Kingfisher, Red-billed Scythebill, Plain Antvireo, White-bellied Antbird, and the range-restricted Gray-throated Warbler. We moved towards the warmer, lower areas and made a nice lunch stop were not much but Saffron Finches were showcasing themselves. We then found some Carib Grackles in the Magdalena Valley bottom and even this was a nice unexpected addition to our list, is sad to know this invasive species is been colonizing the valley so quick in only a few years. Getting to Victoria town we made some stops finding the neat tiny Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher that cooperated for roadside shots!

November 5 - Victoria (Bellavista Reserve) / La Dorada lunch stop

We enjoyed a nice terrace breakfast at 5:15 am in this charming town and by 6 am roadside birding the reserve Bellavista. Our endemic targets here included Colombian Chachalaca, White-mantled Barbet, Beautiful Woodpecker, Sooty Ant-Tanager, and Velvet-fronted Euphonia... only the Euphonia was missed. We wandered the trails and were entertained by little colorful noisy creatures (White-bibbed, Striped, White-bearded, and Golden-headed Manakins) and got a nice bonus when leaving the reserve: the near-endemic, not so long ago split, **Magdalena Antbird!** A nice lunch stop near the Magdalena River itself yielded Neotropic Cormorant, Cocoi Heron, Cattle and Great Egrets, Bare-faced Ibis, Turkey and Black Vultures, Crested and Yellow-headed Caracaras, and Large-billed Tern. Mottled Owls called all night long in the trees near the cabins.



November 6 - Rio Claro Reserve

Birding Rio Claro Reserve is always grand... this time wasn't the exception and we got several fun birds like the rare Bronze-tailed Plumeteer and Violet-bellied Hummingbird, colorful White-tailed and Gartered Trogons, a lazy Barred Puffbird, Cinnamon Woodpecker, One-colored Becards, noisy groups of Dusky-faced Tanager, Fulvous-vented and White-vented Euphonias. We headed toward Medellin doing some road stops for more birds like Swallow Tanager before getting to enjoy a superb dinner in Medellin.

November 7 - La Romera Reserve / Cauca Valley stops / Jardin outskirts

We had an early breakfast at La Romera to search for Red-bellied Grackles and we found them before continuing to the Cauca Valley where we got the recently described endemic Antioquia Wren and also endemics Grayish Piculet and Apical Flycatcher. Rufous-naped Greenlet was a nice addition for the day too. After a great traditional

lunch we continued for one more hour to get to Jardin town before dusk to enjoy the Cock-of-the-rock best lekking area ever. In the evening we enjoyed some nice beers and dinner at the picturesque Jardin main square.

November 8 - Ventanas Peak above Jardin

5 am saw us climbing up the hill above Jardin -flushing Lyre-tailed Nightjar from road - to look for Yellow-eared Parrots that we almost missed but finally secured great views. An Andean Pygmy-Owl brought some attention and was mobbed by Tourmaline Sunangel, Speckled Hummingbird, Collared Inca, Mountain Velvetbreast, and Buff-tailed Coronet. Our packed traditional lunch wrapped in “banana” leaves was deliciously warm. Before descending to town, a Black-billed Mountain-Toucan gave us a show while feeding on a fruiting fig tree.

November 9 - La Esperanza Lodge / Manizales Hotel feeders

We enjoyed a great breakfast at Doug Knapp’s La Esperanza Lodge while having flybys of Yellow-eared and Bronze-winged Parrots; his hummingbird feeders and property plants attracted nice creatures (see below) and the endemic Flame-rumped Tanagers were all over the place in the entrance road. We kept moving alongside the Cauca River and got to Manizales for more hummingbird feeders action. Our day tally for hummers wasn’t bad: Green and Sparkling Violetears, Speckled Hummingbird, Long-tailed Sylph, Bronzy and Collared Incas, Buff-tailed Coronet, Booted Racket-tail, Fawn-breasted Brilliant, White-bellied Woodstar, Western and Andean Emeralds, and Rufous-tailed and Steely-vented Hummingbirds.

November 10 - Rio Blanco Reserve

We left very early to do some owling in the reserve entrance but we were unsuccessful and only heard the White-throated Screech-Owl and distant Rufous-banded Owls; Band-winged Nightjar was seen on the road. While enjoying a great breakfast we got tremendous views of the **Rusty-faced Parrots** feeding on oak fruits in front of the lodge. Everyone enjoyed their first time Antpitta feeding show where Chestnut-crowned, the endemic Brown-banded, and the smaller Slate-crowned



Antpittas showed up... what a thrill! Less common birds, like White-capped Tanager and Dusky Piha, entertained us with several appearances that afternoon. Before dusk we were parked at the stake out spot for Lyre-tailed Nightjars, which we got in full view! All in all, a great TANAGERISH day with views of White-capped, Blue-capped, Lacrimose Mountain-, Blue-winged Mountain-, Grass-green, Buff-breasted Mountain-, Blue-and-black, and Beryl-spangled.

November 11 - Los Nevados NNP / Otun FFS entrance

We left our nice hotel early for a highland morning up to almost 4.000 meters above sea level. We scored almost all our highland targets including Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle, Rufous-fronted Parakeet (only heard), Rainbow-bearded Thornbill, Bearded Helmetcrest (that now is a Colombian endemic called Buffy Helmetcrest after the *Oxygogon* split!), Black-thighed and Golden-breasted Pufflegs, Shining Sunbeam, Great Sapphirewing, and all those brown furnariids living the freezing cold grasses: **Stout-billed Cinclodes**, Andean Tit-Spinetail, White-chinned Thistletail, and Many-striped Canastero. Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanagers and Golden-crowned Tanagers added a bit of color to the landscape. We then drove down and reached Otun-Quimbaya Fauna and Flora Sanctuary and went ahead with some of our targets here: **Torrent Ducks** gave us such a show, and Red-ruffed Fruitcrow was around the park gardens. Common Pauraque was a few meters from our rooms and some of us got splendid views.



November 12 - Otun FFS / Montezuma entrance

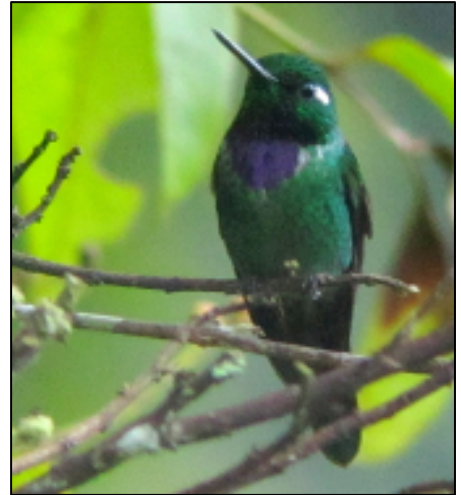
Rufous-bellied Nighthawks woke us up and soon after breakfast we cached up with the remaining targets: Cauca Guans were on the bag in the gardens themselves, and later on Multicolored Tanagers were not uncommon with mixed flocks along the road. Chestnut Wood-Quails were only distantly singing unfortunately. We then moved towards the Western Andes Choco mountains and did some birding on the Montezuma entrance that added nice ones like Barred Hawk and Rufous-throated Tanager.

November 13, 14, & 15 - Montezuma

Next three days we were birding this fantastic area and enjoying our hosts' tremendous service. We got several endemics like Chestnut Wood-Quail (only heard), Parker's Antbird, the new undescribed W Andes Tapaculo named by some as 'Pisones', the lovely singer Munchique Wood-Wren, both Colombian endemic *Bangsia* tanagers (Black-and-gold & Gold-ringed), Chestnut-bellied Flowerpiercer, and Crested Ant-Tanager that was unfortunately not seen by everyone. This place, the Montezuma Eco-

community Lodge, is run by the Tabasco family and caters wonderful food and smiles all the time.

Birding in the higher section, the mid parts, and the lower elevations near the house provided a load of special birds (either Choco Colombian near-endemics, or very tough species to get!); some of those were: Barred Hawk, Scarlet-fronted Parakeet, Colombian Screech-Owl, Violet-tailed Sylph, Brown Inca, Velvet-purple Coronet, White-tailed Hillstar, **Purple-bibbed Whitetip**, Green-crowned Brilliant, Empress Brilliant, Purple-throated Woodstar, Toucan Barbet, Yellow-vented Woodpecker, Fulvous-dotted Treerunner, Buffy Tuftedcheek, Uniform Treehunter, Bar-crested Antshrike, Yellow-breasted Antpitta, Choco Tapaculo, Nariño Tapaculo, Handsome Flycatcher, Orange-breasted Fruiteater, Golden-winged Manakin, Beautiful Jay, White-headed Wren, Sharpe's Wren, Chestnut-breasted Wren, Lemon-rumped Tanager, Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager, Purplish-mantled Tanager, Glistening-green Tanager, Rufous-throated Tanager, Flame-faced Tanager, Indigo Flowerpiercer, Dusky Bush-Tanager, Black-winged Saltator, Tanager Finch, Yellow-throated Brush-Finch, Tricolored Brush-Finch, Golden-fronted Redstart, and Yellow-collared Chlorophonia... impossible not to love this place!



November 16 - Apia and vicinity

Our final day we spent birding a bit near the small town of Apia where we targeted, and found, the Yellow-headed Brush-Finch, a Colombian endemic not known in this area until a few years ago when we discovered it with Julian our local guide. We then moved again to the Cauca Valley dry forests to do some more birding before reaching the Pereira airport adding Crested Bobwhite, Scarlet-fronted Parakeet, Spectacled Parrotlet, Blue-headed Parrot, Dwarf Cuckoo, and again got Grayish Piculets.

This marked the end of yet another successful tour in wonderful Colombia!



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