



Field Guides Tour Report

Colombia: Santa Marta Escape 2018

Feb 24, 2018 to Mar 4, 2018

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One of the more amazing experiences on this tour was enjoying the sunrise from the Cuchilla de San Lorenzo. Photo by guide Cory Gregory.

Escape. It's right there in the tour name. That's exactly what some of us were doing; escaping the lingering northern winter! Most of us found ourselves together in South America after a quick 2-3 hour flight from Miami... a rather easy jaunt for most of us! And just like that, new birds started coming out of the woodwork.

We kicked things off with some birding around Barranquilla where we enjoyed the Colombian endemic Chestnut-winged Chachalacas and a slew of species on Isla Salamanca including Pied and Russet-throated puffbirds, Bicolored Conebills, and Straight-billed Woodcreepers. Farther along the coast, even toll booths & rest areas were hosting cool birds! Bare-eyed Pigeons flocked overhead while Glaucous Tanagers and Yellow Orioles foraged nearby. We ended the day with a beautiful sunset in Camarones as we watched curlews, Willets, terns, herons, and local fishermen foraging in the big lagoon.

Birding the dry country of the Guajira Peninsula can be surprisingly rewarding given the many specialty species. We found ourselves face-to-face with Chestnut Piculet, Striped Cuckoo, White-fringed Antwren, White-whiskered Spinetail, Pileated Finch, and even the sneaky Tocuyo Sparrow! Attractive additions also included the brilliant Vermilion Cardinal, Orinocan Saltator, Green-rumped Parrotlet, and Trinidad Euphonias. Talk about colors!

We made our way up to Minca where we were surrounded by a new variety of species given the more lush surroundings and higher altitudes. We enjoyed Grayish Saltators, Swallow Tanagers, Lineated Woodpeckers, Pale-bellied Thrushes, and an impressive selection of hummingbirds at the feeders; Steely-vented Hummingbirds battled the larger White-vented Plumeleteers and White-necked Jacobins while a Black-throated Mango and Long-billed Starthroat snuck in quietly.

One of the main draws of this tour is the birding in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. We made our way up to the RNA El Dorado Lodge, our home for 4 nights, where we were met yet again by a new variety of hummingbirds at the feeders. The gaudy Crowned Woodnymphs swarmed alongside Lesser and Brown violetears, and even the beautiful and endemic White-tailed Starfrontlet was reliable. The grounds hosted Black-chested Jays at the cracked corn, Band-tailed and Sickle-winged guans in the nearby shadows, and the White-tipped Doves and Lined Quail-Doves kept us carefully watching the trail edge. Whether it was a lazy leaf-tosser or a White-tipped Quetzal overhead, there was always plenty to watch. Meanwhile, gardens down the road from the lodge played host to two important endemic hummers, the Santa Marta Woodstar and Santa Marta Blossomcrown... not to mention a Black-fronted Wood-Quail!

One of the gems of the entire tour is the birding up on the Cuchilla de San Lorenzo. The predawn 4x4 crawl to the top yielded the mysterious Santa Marta Screech-Owl, a beautiful Mottled Owl, and sunrises that we'll not soon forget. The trees at the top had a flock of the endangered Santa Marta Parakeets, the thickets had a sneaky Flammulated Treehunter and Hermit Wood-Wrens, and the feeding flocks were packed with goodies like Santa Marta Warbler, Yellow-crowned Redstart, Black-faced Mountain-Tanager, and Santa Marta Bush-Tyrant. Down the road at the station, we were hosted by Kelly and her family of Santa Marta Antpittas! The antpittas performed well and so we had extra time to talk to Kelly about how this whole feeding exploration came about. Very neat stuff!

Before long, it was time to retreat from the mountains and back towards Barranquilla. However, even on our way down the mountain we tracked down some quality birds. Whether it was a roosting Black-and-white Owl, a couple of sneaky Rufous-breasted Antpittas in the shadows, the endemic Santa Marta Foliage-Gleaner playing hide-and-seek, or a couple of Collared Aracarís, there was always something to keep us busy.

Even as we approached the end of the tour, we were still enjoying new species. The stop along KM 4 on Isla Salamanca put us in range for Stripe-backed Wrens, Scaled Doves, Pied Water-Tyrants, White-headed Marsh Tyrants, and Cattle Tyrants. The marshes were teeming with Blue-winged Teal, moorhens, gallinules, a few Fulvous Whistling-Ducks, and a smattering of shorebirds. Overhead, the Snail Kites and Lesser Yellow-headed Vultures saw us off and back to the hotel.

It was a pleasure meeting all of you and both Richard and I enjoyed escaping to the Santa Martas with such a fine bunch of birders! A major thanks goes out to the invaluable Diana Balcazar for her local knowledge, great birding skills, and eagerness to help! Thanks also to Virgilio and the fleet of other drivers that made this trip a safe one. And last but not least, a big thanks to Karen who, from our base in Austin, made sure everything went smoothly.

On behalf of Field Guides, thanks again and we look forward to birding with you again on another tour.

- Cory

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

BIRDS

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

WHITE-FACED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna viduata*) – [Pre-tour: Half a dozen of these were seen in flight on Isla Salamanca]

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) – [Pre-tour: A few of these were sprinkled throughout the waterfowl on Isla Salamanca but were always outnumbered by the following species.]

FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna bicolor*) – Seen in the wetlands on Isla Salamanca pre-tour and then again on our final day of birding as we returned to Barranquilla.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Spatula discors*) – This was the most abundant duck on Isla Salamanca; we ended up seeing hundreds. [b]

Cracidae (Guans, Chachalacas, and Curassows)

CHESTNUT-WINGED CHACHALACA (*Ortalis garrula*) – Early on our first day of birding, we ventured to the Universidad del Norte in Barranquilla where we had extended views of this Colombian endemic. [E]

BAND-TAILED GUAN (*Penelope argyrotis*) – Quite the friendly species during our time at the El Dorado Lodge! We had nice looks at their red dewlaps, especially over the road just outside the lodge.

SICKLE-WINGED GUAN (*Chamaepetes goudotii sanctaemarthae*) – Always outnumbered by the previous species, a few of these dark guans were spotted at the El Dorado Lodge, especially around the compost pile. Their rapid wing rattle was also heard several times.

Odontophoridae (New World Quail)

CRESTED BOBWHITE (*Colinus cristatus*) – Our morning exploration of the dry country around Camarones yielded a relatively cooperative flock of these running through the scrub.

BLACK-FRONTED WOOD-QUAIL (*Odontophorus atrifrons*) – Although easy to hear, and we did hear them multiple times at higher elevation, one of our drivers managed to spot one hiding on the ground at the Palo Alto garden below the lodge.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

LEAST GREBE (*Tachybaptus dominicus*) – [Pre-tour: One of these tiny grebes was seen in a marsh on Isla Salamanca but we didn't cross paths with it again on our later visit.]

Fregatidae (Frigatebirds)

MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD (*Fregata magnificens*) – Gliding effortlessly, these fork-tailed pirates were seen overhead on many occasions along the coast.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – These were sprinkled throughout the lowlands, especially in the lagoon at Camarones and again on Isla Salamanca.

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

BROWN PELICAN (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) – Lines of these were seen soaring over the ocean on several occasions. Quite a large flock was also seen perched on a bridge as we drove by.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – This species only winters in Colombia; they return north to breed. We had two sightings: one at Camarones and another on Isla Salamanca on our final day. [b]

COCOI HERON (*Ardea cocoi*) – A couple of these large herons were seen in flight over the Isla Salamanca headquarters area on our first day. Good looks were had pre-tour along the KM 4 hotspot as well.

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – A widespread, common, and familiar species in wetlands along the coast.

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*) – Although smaller than the previous species, these too were common and widespread in lowland wetlands. This species is known for their distinctly yellow feet.

LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*) – Rather uncommon this time around, only a few of these were spotted on our first day at Isla Salamanca.

TRICOLORED HERON (*Egretta tricolor*) – A slender heron, this species was spotted only a few times in freshwater wetlands on Isla Salamanca.

REDDISH EGRET (*Egretta rufescens*) – We had scope views of a white morph in the lagoon at Camarones. It eventually flew closer and did some frantic feeding with wings spread.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Common and widespread in the lowlands, especially around cattle pastures. Good looks were had at Isla Salamanca.

GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens*) – [Pre-tour: Although outnumbered by the next species, we had at least one or two wintering birds on Isla Salamanca before the tour began.] [b]

STRIATED HERON (*Butorides striata*) – The southern counterpart to the previous species, one of these small herons was spotted on Isla Salamanca on our final day of birding.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – [Pre-tour: A few of these were spotted in flight over Isla Salamanca before the tour began.]

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

WHITE IBIS (*Eudocimus albus*) – A handful of these white waders were seen feeding in the lagoon near Camarones.

GLOSSY IBIS (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – Small numbers of this dark ibis were seen on Isla Salamanca on our return to Barranquilla.

BARE-FACED IBIS (*Phimosus infuscatus*) – We had scope views of this dark ibis on Isla Salamanca both on the pre-tour birding as well as our final day.

ROSEATE SPOONBILL (*Platalea ajaja*) – Any day with a spoonbill is a good day. We had more than two dozen feeding in the lagoon at Camarones and a few other flyovers.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*) – Common and widespread, this species has a noticeably shorter tail than the following species.

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*) – This common species was tallied nearly every day of tour.

LESSER YELLOW-HEADED VULTURE (*Cathartes burrovianus*) – We had nice views of this Turkey Vulture look-alike on our final day of birding on Isla Salamanca. More so than the previous species, these like to soar low to the ground in open, coastal areas.

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*) – Although several were seen in the lowlands, we also spied one (a migrant?) high over the Cuchilla San Lorenzo at 8-9,000 feet in elevation. [b]

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

SNAIL KITE (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*) – Stunning looks were had by all along the Km 4 track at Isla Salamanca. This raptor feeds almost exclusively on snails.

SAVANNA HAWK (*Buteogallus meridionalis*) – One of these long-legged raptors was seen perched on a fence behind the Double-striped Thick-knees.

ROADSIDE HAWK (*Rupornis magnirostris*) – Although the chachalacas definitely took center stage, we did spot one of these raptors perched distantly on our first morning.

HARRIS'S HAWK (*Parabuteo unicinctus*) – The dry country around Camarones yielded a couple of high flyover sightings of this species.

WHITE-RUMPED HAWK (*Parabuteo leucorrhous*) – This uncommon and small hawk was seen briefly as it soared overhead downhill from the El Dorado Lodge. This species is certainly not seen on every tour to this region.

GRAY-LINED HAWK (*Buteo nitidus*) – We looked up to find these high-soaring buteos twice on tour. In the not-too-distant past, this was lumped with Gray Hawk (found from Costa Rica northward).

BROAD-WINGED HAWK (*Buteo platypterus*) – These wintering or migrating hawks will be heading north to breed in North America. We had a couple of sightings sprinkled throughout the tour. [b]

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

SORA (*Porzana carolina*) – [Pre-tour: We heard the distinctive whinny of this secretive species on Isla Salamanca but it stayed hidden.] [b*]

PURPLE GALLINULE (*Porphyrio martinica*) – The wetlands along Isla Salamanca provided us with great looks at several ages of this marsh species. Nothing beats the colors on an adult though!

COMMON GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*) – Similar to the previous species, we found these along KM 4 on Isla Salamanca.

Aramidae (Limpkin)

LIMPKIN (*Aramus guarauna*) – Given the abundance of snails (and Snail Kites) on Isla Salamanca, I suppose it was no surprise that these snail-eaters were common there too!

Burhinidae (Thick-knees)

DOUBLE-STRIPED THICK-KNEE (*Burhinus bistriatus*) – Standing alert in a field, these large shorebirds were watching us carefully as we scoped them from the roadside on our first day of birding.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-NECKED STILT (*Himantopus mexicanus*) – These lanky waders were spotted a few times on Isla Salamanca.

Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus palliatus*) – The big lagoon at Camarones yielded a singleton standing out on the flats.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – More than 30 of these big plovers were spotted at Camarones but only in nonbreeding plumage. [b]

SOUTHERN LAPWING (*Vanellus chilensis*) – This handsome shorebird, with its striking black-and-white wing pattern, was seen at Isla Salamanca and once near Camarones.

SEMPALMATED PLOVER (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) – A few of these were feeding on the flats of the lagoon near Camarones on one of our visits. Pretty soon, they'll be migrating north to nest in the Arctic. [b]

Jacaniidae (Jacanas)

WATTLED JACANA (*Jacana jacana*) – This species, with the scientific name of *Jacana jacana*, was abundant in wetlands along Isla Salamanca. The color of the wing feathers seen in flight is a spectacular yellow.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

WHIMBREL (*Numenius phaeopus*) – This species of curlew was common on our first visit to the lagoon near Camarones. However, they had vanished by the time we visited again. [b]

SANDERLING (*Calidris alba*) – Always seemingly running, this pale shorebird was seen on the flats at Camarones on our first visit. [b]

LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*) – A small flock of these had gathered on the flats at Camarones on our first visit. [Pre-tour: At least one was spotted on Isla Salamanca as well.] [b]

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*) – Fairly common on the edges of wetlands in the lowlands. [b]

SOLITARY SANDPIPER (*Tringa solitaria*) – A relative of the yellowlegs, this shorebird was seen on Isla Salamanca as well as on the edge of the water holes we visited near Camarones. [b]

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – Isla Salamanca provided us with a quick look before it flew away, calling. [b]

WILLET (*Tringa semipalmata*) – An abundant shorebird at Camarones on our first visit where they were foraging with Whimbrel and Sanderlings.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*) – [Pre-tour: A couple of these dainty shorebirds were seen on Isla Salamanca.] [b]

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

LAUGHING GULL (*Leucophaeus atricilla*) – Only a couple were seen distantly on the flats at Camarones.

CASPIAN TERN (*Hydroprogne caspia*) – A number of these winter at Camarones and we caught up to a few resting on the flats there. [b]

ROYAL TERN (*Thalasseus maximus*) – As with the previous species, these were seen on the flats at Camarones, albeit distantly. [b]

SANDWICH TERN (CABOT'S) (*Thalasseus sandvicensis acutirostris*) – On our second visit to the lagoon at Camarones, we spied a few of these mixed in with other terns out on the flats. [b]

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – Common in urban areas. [I]

PALE-VENTED PIGEON (*Patagioenas cayennensis*) – [Pre-tour: We had a brief fly-by on Isla Salamanca.]

SCALED PIGEON (*Patagioenas speciosa*) – Found on our final day, this beautiful pigeon was teed up in a tree as we birded our way downslope.

BARE-EYED PIGEON (*Patagioenas corensis*) – Our first encounter with this specialty of the arid Caribbean coast was a number of flyby flocks near one of the toll booths. We later saw several perched, and in the scope, as we birded the Guajira Peninsula near Camarones.

BAND-TAILED PIGEON (WHITE-NECKED) (*Patagioenas fasciata albilinea*) – Fairly common at higher elevations, such as at the Cuchilla de San Lorenzo.

COMMON GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina passerina*) – The roadside stop along the stables on our first day yielded a few of these on the ground in the corral.

RUDDY GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina talpacoti*) – Only a few of these were spotted along KM 4 on Isla Salamanca.

SCALED DOVE (*Columbina squammata*) – In the same genus as the ground-doves, this tiny and scaly-looking dove is a relative of the Inca Dove you might know from farther north. We had good looks near Camarones and again at Isla Salamanca.

WHITE-TIPPED DOVE (*Leptotila verreauxi*) – A common and widespread species on the grounds of the El Dorado Lodge. Although they were more commonly heard, we had several looks as they fed from the feeders and ventured to the compost pile.

LINED QUAIL-DOVE (*Zenaidura macroura*) – Quail-Doves can be super tricky to see sometimes. Yet, we had great luck with this species on the grounds of the El Dorado Lodge. They repeatedly showed themselves near the compost pile.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

GREATER ANI (*Crotophaga major*) – This ani is bigger than the others, hardly a surprise given the name, but it also sports a pale eye which the other anis lack. We saw one of these at our streamside lunch restaurant on our first day.

SMOOTH-BILLED ANI (*Crotophaga ani*) – [Pre-tour: We bumped into a few of these on Isla Salamanca as we walked back to our vehicle.]

GROOVE-BILLED ANI (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*) – This long-tailed species was fairly common in the dry scrub along Isla Salamanca.

STRIPED CUCKOO (*Tapera naevia*) – Wow, one of these was singing full-on... in the dry season? Either way, we had awesome looks at it (and its crazy crest) in the dry country en route to Camarones.

DWARF CUCKOO (*Coccyzus pumila*) – [Pre-tour: It was a treat finding a couple of these on Isla Salamanca. This is an uncommon bird and one that is often missed on this tour.]

SQUIRREL CUCKOO (*Piaya cayana*) – A large and showy cuckoo, a few were seen near Camarones as well as at our coffee break near Pozo de Azul.

Strigidae (Owls)

SCREECH-OWL SP. NOV. (*Megascops sp. nov.*) – This is a mysterious endemic which has just been formally named "Santa Marta Screech-Owl." We managed to hear two of these predawn one of the mornings we drove up to the ridge. [E*]

FERRUGINOUS PYGMY-OWL (*Glaucidium brasilianum*) – Although one was seen on the pre-tour outing at Isla Salamanca, the rest of the ones on tour were heard only. [*]

MOTTLED OWL (*Ciccaba virgata*) – We were trying to find screech-owls above the El Dorado Lodge predawn one morning when one of these start hooting! Luckily for us, it swooped in right overhead and we had spectacular looks!

BLACK-AND-WHITE OWL (*Ciccaba nigrolineata*) – It did its best to remain hidden but we managed looks at this striking owl as it was roosting high near the bamboo uphill from Minca. Kudos to the birding group that was on the scene when we arrived.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

BAND-WINGED NIGHTJAR (*Systellura longirostris*) – Only a couple of people towards the front of the predawn caravan managed a glimpse of this nightjar as it swooped over near the ridge.

Apodidae (Swifts)

CHESTNUT-COLLARED SWIFT (*Streptoprocne rutula*) – On two occasions, we saw these dark swifts overhead. First was our morning outing in the town of Minca and then again from the top of Cuchilla de San Lorenzo.

WHITE-COLLARED SWIFT (*Streptoprocne zonaris*) – These large swifts were seen overhead on several days including at Cuchilla de San Lorenzo and near El Cedral. This species spends more gliding than most swifts.

LESSER SWALLOW-TAILED SWIFT (*Panyptila cayennensis*) – This was a surprise! We were birding in Minca when a few of these slender swifts flew over alongside the previous two species. This is not a species we typically see on this tour.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

WHITE-NECKED JACOBIN (*Florisuga mellivora*) – A common and striking hummingbird at the Hotel Minca feeders.

LONG-BILLED HERMIT (CENTRAL AMERICAN) (*Phaethornis longirostris susurrus*) – This large hummer was seen only briefly as it fed on flowers along a roadside below El Dorado Lodge.

PALE-BELLIED HERMIT (*Phaethornis anthophilus*) – Our only sightings came from the Hotel Minca feeders where one came in once or twice.

BROWN VIOLETEAR (*Colibri delphinae*) – Although always outnumbered by Lesser Violetears, these were still a common sight at the El Dorado Lodge feeders. This species was also quite vocal and Diana tracked a wild one down by voice, away from the lodge.

LESSER VIOLETEAR (*Colibri cyanotus*) – An abundant hummingbird at the El Dorado Lodge feeders. How many were there? Hard to say! A dozen, a couple dozen, several dozen? Either way, we all had great looks each and every day we were there.

BLACK-THROATED MANGO (*Anthracothorax nigricollis*) – Our best looks came from the Hotel Minca when one came in and perched on a leaf for several minutes.

SANTA MARTA BLOSSOMCROWN (*Anthocephala floriceps*) – Despite a relative dearth of recent reports of this uncommon endemic, we connected with one in the gardens at Palo Alto. [E]

BLACK-BACKED THORNBILL (*Ramphomicron dorsale*) – This can be a notoriously tricky endemic to find and it's missed on many of the trips. However, we were lucky to find a young male/female type at the San Lorenzo Station. This species is considered Endangered. [E]

TYRIAN METALTAIL (SANTA MARTA) (*Metallura tyrianthina districta*) – The most common hummingbird on top of the Cuchilla de San Lorenzo was this species although it was tough getting close looks. One also appeared at the El Dorado Lodge briefly but only a few saw it. Some authorities believe this subspecies deserves a full-species status but it hasn't happened yet.

WHITE-TAILED STARFRONTLET (*Coeligena phalerata*) – Not only is this hummer large and flashy, it's also an uncommon endemic found only in Colombia! We had repeated views at the El Dorado Lodge feeders. [E]

MOUNTAIN VELVETBREAST (*Lafresnaya lafresnayi*) – The flowers at the San Lorenzo Station seem to be one of the most reliable spots for this species. We had a couple of glimpses there and then another roadside sighting near the station.

LONG-BILLED STARHROAT (*Heliomaster longirostris*) – Our only sighting was of one at the Hotel Minca feeders. It came in, drank, tussled with a few other species, and then landed in a tree off the patio for a bit.

SANTA MARTA WOODSTAR (*Chaetocercus astreans*) – Our visit to the Palo Alto Gardens was already off to a great start but the cherry on top was this tiny endemic hummingbird that came in and fed in very slow, deliberate forays. [E]

RED-BILLED EMERALD (*Chlorostilbon gibsoni nitens*) – This species was spotted a few times as we birded the dry country near Camarones. The *C. g. nitens* subspecies shows only a little red on the bill.

WHITE-VENTED PLUMELETEER (*Chalybura buffonii*) – A large and common hummingbird at the Hotel Minca feeders.

CROWNED WOODNYMPH (COLOMBIAN VIOLET-CROWNED) (*Thalaurania colombica colombica*) – We were lucky to be surrounded by swarms of this gorgeous little hummer at the El Dorado Lodge feeders. When the light catches them just right, the colors are hard to beat!

STEELY-VENTED HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia saucerottei*) – The only location we encountered this species was at the Hotel Minca feeders where they were the smallest species.

RUFOUS-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia tzacatl*) – Like the previous species, these were only spotted at the Hotel Minca feeders.

SAPPHIRE-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD (*Lepidopyga lilliae*) – This is an interesting study full of mystery. There are two similar species that could be found in the Isla Salamanca mangroves: Sapphire-bellied and Sapphire-throated. The very poorly-known Sapphire-bellied should have the sapphire color extending all the way down the breast to the belly (we think!). The Sapphire-throated should have a sharp demarcation line of where the sapphire color ends on the breast. Most of the birds we saw, and that most people see at this location, seem to show intermediate traits. Are they hybrids between the two species? Or are these within the limits of pure Sapphire-bellied? Much of this still unknown but for now, we'll keep this listed as Sapphire-bellied with hopes that further knowledge will illuminate future sightings. [E]

Trogonidae (Trogons)

WHITE-TIPPED QUETZAL (*Pharomachrus fulgidus*) – Although heard quite often, these beautiful trogons were tough to spot. The roadsides right near the El Dorado Lodge were good places to look and we eventually all had scope views.

GARTERED TROGON (*Trogon caligatus*) – Well downhill from the El Dorado Lodge, we finally encountered one of these yellow-bellied trogons on our last day of birding. Once it started singing, however, it wouldn't stop!

MASKED TROGON (*Trogon personatus sanctaemartae*) – It would be hard to beat the scope views we had of this species during our time at the El Dorado Lodge. Also, it's good to make note of this subspecies, it's possible that it may be split out someday.

Momotidae (Motmots)

WHOOPIING MOTMOT (*Momotus subrufescens*) – Rather scarce on this trip, the only sighting was along the road above Minca. It sure is a stunner though!

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

RINGED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle torquata*) – Our first sighting was, strangely enough, on the dry university campus on our first morning! It perched in a tree for a few minutes before moving on.

BELTED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle alcyon*) – [Pre-tour: This surprise sighting came from Isla Salamanca when one flew over.] [b]

AMAZON KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle amazona*) – [Pre-tour: We managed brief looks along KM 4 of Isla Salamanca. This species is larger than Green Kingfisher and with no white spots on the wings.]

Bucconidae (Puffbirds)

PIED PUFFBIRD (*Notharchus tectus*) – One of these small puffbirds was spotted in the mangrove forests on Isla Salamanca on our first day. This isn't a species we see on every tour here and so the sighting was a welcome one.

RUSSET-THROATED PUFFBIRD (*Hypnelus ruficollis*) – Although our first several sightings came on Day 1 from Isla Salamanca, we saw another in Camarones after Chris joined us. This is an attractive sit-and-wait predator that will swoop down on large insects and other small critters.

Galbulidae (Jacamars)

RUFIOUS-TAILED JACAMAR (*Galbula ruficauda*) – This large-billed species was mostly heard in the dry country around Camarones. A couple of times, however, it swooped in and landed briefly.

Ramphastidae (Toucans)

SOUTHERN EMERALD-TOUCANET (SANTA MARTA) (*Aulacorhynchus albivitta lautus*) – Seen in the vicinity of the El Dorado Lodge a couple of times (remember those cinnamon undertails?). Quite recently, the species formerly known as Emerald Toucanet was split into two new species, the Northern Emerald-Toucanet and the Southern Emerald-Toucanet. Only the latter is found in South America but it should be noted that the subspecies we saw, the Santa Marta endemic *A. a. lautus*, could yet be split off someday.

GROOVE-BILLED TOUCANET (YELLOW-BILLED) (*Aulacorhynchus sulcatus calorhynchus*) – Found at lower elevations than the previous species, this green toucan lacks the cinnamon undertail. We had our first one at the Palo Alto Gardens and then farther downhill at La Yey on our final day.

COLLARED ARACARI (*Pteroglossus torquatus*) – Sometimes missable on this tour. We chanced into a lovely couple on our final day as we birded the La Yey area of the lower reaches of the mountains.

KEEL-BILLED TOUCAN (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*) – This snazzy toucan was a meaningful sight for some who had known about this species for years but finally got to see it.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

CHESTNUT PICULET (*Picumnus cinnamomeus*) – It took a little work but we eventually connected with this regional specialty in the dry areas near Camarones. This species is only found in a sliver of Colombia and some in neighboring Venezuela.

RED-CROWNED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes rubricapillus*) – A common species in the lowlands. This might have reminded you of the Red-bellied Woodpeckers that many of us are familiar with from farther north.

GOLDEN-OLIVE WOODPECKER (GOLDEN-OLIVE) (*Colaptes rubiginosus alleni*) – Only one sighting on this trip, the one at the escuela well below the lodge. It was helpful that it landed in the tree right above all of us! This subspecies, *C. r. alleni*, is only found in the Santa Martas.

SPOT-BREASTED WOODPECKER (*Colaptes punctigula*) – [Pre-tour: A pair of these attractive woodpeckers was seen along KM 4 during our morning walk.]

LINEATED WOODPECKER (*Dryocopus lineatus*) – Perhaps our best views were of a couple of birds in the town of Minca. In the morning light, one of the birds preferred to be perched high in some bare branches.

CRIMSON-CRESTED WOODPECKER (*Campephilus melanoleucos*) – I won't soon forget the encounter we had up on the ridge at Cuchilla de San Lorenzo. A beautiful female bird gave us a fine showing as she returned repeatedly to the same tree with a hole (future nest cavity?).

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

COLLARED FOREST-FALCON (*Micrastur semitorquatus*) – One was heard at the El Dorado Lodge but remained out of sight (typical for these secretive raptors). [*]

CRESTED CARACARA (*Caracara cheriway*) – Commonly seen in the lowlands, especially on the roadsides near Camarones and Riohacha.

YELLOW-HEADED CARACARA (*Milvago chimachima*) – Outnumbered by the previous species, a few of these were spotted in the lowlands including one feeding on roadkill.

LAUGHING FALCON (*Herpetotheres cachinnans*) – We had a fine look at one of these snake-eating raptors that was perched high on a snag near Camarones.

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*) – Not very abundant on this tour, only one was seen!

MERLIN (TAIGA) (*Falco columbarius columbarius*) – We had a couple of views of this falcon including one on a roadside snag that allowed us to get a scope on it. [b]

APLOMADO FALCON (*Falco femoralis*) – We had hopped out of the bus when one of these falcons was seen flying off, towards the lagoon in Camarones. Unfortunately, it didn't stick around.

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) – [Pre-tour: It wasn't too surprising that it didn't stick around long (they're fast, after all!) but there was one flying by on Isla Salamanca.] [b]

Psittacidae (New World and African Parrots)

ORANGE-CHINNED PARAKEET (*Brotogeris jugularis*) – Our best looks were of a couple perched during our walk in Minca. This is a small and short-tailed species.

RED-BILLED PARROT (*Pionus sordidus saturatus*) – At mid-elevations, such as around the El Dorado Lodge, this was the most common parrot. Some fog didn't stop us from getting scope views of a few out front of the lodge.

BLUE-HEADED PARROT (*Pionus menstruus*) – In the same genus as the previous species, this small parrot is found more at lower elevations. We had nice looks in Minca of some perched near the Lineated Woodpecker in a treetop.

ORANGE-WINGED PARROT (*Amazona amazonica*) – On our first morning near Barranquilla, a flock of these flew over the chachalaca spot. Although one must be critical of parrots in and around cities (they're often tame, non-wild birds), these seem to fit in with the pattern of other sightings in the area. My best guess is that they were indeed wild birds.... probably.

SCALY-NAPED PARROT (*Amazona mercenarius*) – Much larger than the previous two species of parrots, this Amazona was seen mostly in flight at higher elevations such as at the Cuchilla de San Lorenzo.

GREEN-RUMPED PARROTLET (*Forpus passerinus*) – Brilliantly-colored! These parrotlets, with their vibrant green hue, were gleaming as they perched in a tree near Camarones.

SANTA MARTA PARAKEET (*Pyrrhura viridicata*) – This endangered and endemic parakeet is often one of the tougher endemics to see (though you wouldn't know it from this year). This time, we were pleased to have many chances to study these in the trees up on top of the ridge at 8400' feet. It's thought that the population of this species might only be a few thousand. [E]

BROWN-THROATED PARAKEET (*Eupsittula pertinax*) – The common parakeet around Barranquilla and nearby lowlands.

SCARLET-FRONTED PARAKEET (*Psittacara wagleri wagleri*) – Fairly common around the El Dorado Lodge and adjacent areas. Our group tallied this species each of the days we were there including a few that screamed down the mountain while we were taking in the view from the Mirador Trail.

Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds)

BLACK-CRESTED ANTSHRIKE (STREAK-FRONTED) (*Sakesphorus canadensis pulchellus*) – Both the pre-tour and the main group saw these on Isla Salamanca. Remember the female bird with the crazy crest?!

BLACK-BACKED ANTSHRIKE (*Thamnophilus melanonotus*) – Getting views of this bird turned out to be a real challenge (as it often is with this species), but one or two were indeed seen as we birded the dry scrubland east of Camarones.

WHITE-FRINGED ANTWREN (NORTHERN) (*Formicivora grisea intermedia*) – Some sources split the Southern White-fringed Antwrens from the Northern White-fringed Antwrens. Either way, we encountered a couple of these in the dry habitats near Camarones on our second day of birding.

SANTA MARTA ANTBIRD (*Drymophila hellmayri*) – When Long-tailed Antbird was split into four different species, this endemic was one of the resulting species. We struggled to get looks as these hung back in the tangles above Minca. [E]

Grallariidae (Antpittas)

SANTA MARTA ANTPITTA (*Grallaria bangsi*) – Thanks to Kelly and her hard work at the San Lorenzo Station, we got to enjoy several of these skulky antpittas as they came in to feed. This is certainly not a very widespread species; it's considered "Vulnerable" and the population is thought to be less than 10,000 individuals [E]

RUFOUS ANTPITTA (SIERRA NEVADA) (*Grallaria rufula spatiator*) – Not very widespread on this tour, only one or two were heard up on the Cuchilla de San Lorenzo. [*]

RUSTY-BREASTED ANTPITTA (RUSTY-BREASTED) (*Grallaricula ferrugineipectus ferrugineipectus*) – Although they're little devils to try to see, we did eventually connect with a couple on our final day as we birded down the mountain. Hooray!

Rhinocryptidae (Tapaculos)

SANTA MARTA TAPACULO (*Scytalopus sanctaemartae*) – We tried, tried again, and tried some more to see this little gray specialty... and some did see it, but views were very tough. This tapaculo is found at lower elevations than the following species. [E]

BROWN-RUMPED TAPACULO (*Scytalopus latebricola*) – The other tapaculo in these mountains, and one that prefers the upper elevations such as near the Cuchilla de San Lorenzo, was seen by only a few near the station. [E]

Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)

GRAY-THROATED LEAFTOSSER (*Sclerurus albigularis*) – Some called it lazy; this bird was tossing no leaves! One of these retiring ovenbirds swooped in and gave us a fine view down the path from the El Dorado Lodge. A few of us saw another that, gasp, WAS tossing leaves.

BLACK-BANDED WOODCREEPER (*Dendrocolaptes picumnus*) – A fine-looking species, a couple of these were spotted just outside the front door of the El Dorado Lodge! This isn't a woodcreeper we see every time here and so it was a treat to see them so well.

STRONG-BILLED WOODCREEPER (ANDEAN/NORTHERN) (*Xiphocolaptes promeropirhynchus sanctaemartae*) – With the size of the bill on these things being what it is, the name is pretty fitting! This is another large woodcreeper that we encountered quite near the El Dorado Lodge grounds.

COCOA WOODCREEPER (*Xiphorhynchus susurrans*) – It wasn't until our final day near the El Cedral intersection when one of these swooped through a clearing. After a moment of uncertainty, we became confident of the ID when it came back in to check us out.

STRAIGHT-BILLED WOODCREEPER (*Dendroplex picus picirostris*) – A common species in the lowlands, these were spotted in Barranquilla, on Isla Salamanca, and near Camarones. The pale, dagger-shaped bill was an easy fieldmark to see.

MONTANE WOODCREEPER (*Lepidocolaptes lacrymiger sanctaemartae*) – Although most of our sightings, about 3 or so, were from the El Dorado Lodge area, we also bumped into this slender-billed species on the Cuchilla de San Lorenzo.

PLAIN XENOPS (*Xenops minutus*) – The piculet that wasn't. No matter, we were still happy to see this tiny woodcreeper just uphill from Minca.

PALE-LEGGED HORNERO (CARIBBEAN) (*Furnarius leucopus longirostris*) – Our only encounter with this sometimes-wary ovenbird was in the dry forest east of Camarones. Although sometimes easy to hear, they stroll around on the ground and never seem to cooperate fully.

MONTANE FOLIAGE-GLEANER (*Anabacerthia striaticollis anxia*) – This foliage-gleaner is quite at home right around the El Dorado Lodge grounds. This species has pale "spectacles" giving it a distinctive look. Although this subspecies is endemic, it's not likely to be split anytime soon.

SANTA MARTA FOLIAGE-GLEANER (*Clibanornis rufipectus*) – This species was originally included in the Ruddy Foliage-Gleaner complex but was later split out as an endemic species. This foliage-gleaner is often found at lower elevations than the previous species and we encountered them a few times although extended views were never offered. [E]

FLAMMULATED TREEHUNTER (*Thripadectes flammulatus*) – We were lucky to stumble on one of these at the Cuchilla de San Lorenzo. The problem is... it refused to be seen! It sang for all to hear, however. [*]

STREAK-CAPPED SPINETAIL (*Cranioleuca hellmayri*) – This species tends to be more arboreal than other spinetails and we managed glimpses at several locations such as Cuchilla de San Lorenzo, La Yey, and down along the road near Hacienda Cincinnati. Although not technically endemic to the Santa Martas, they essentially are since there's only one or two records from neighboring Venezuela.

YELLOW-CHINNED SPINETAIL (*Certhiaxis cinnamomeus*) – A duo of these came in quickly as we birded the Isla Salamanca headquarters area on our first day. Preferring marshes and reeds, this species is fairly distinctive among spinetails.

WHITE-WHISKERED SPINETAIL (*Synallaxis candei*) – What is surely one of the most attractive of the spinetails, this dry-country specialist was seen a few times low in the forests near Camarones.

RUSTY-HEADED SPINETAIL (*Synallaxis fusciorufa*) – Doug and Susan got nice looks at one of these near the San Lorenzo Station. The rest of us settled for glimpses as we birded the Cuchilla de San Lorenzo. This endemic spinetail is usually found at relatively high elevations. [E]

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

WHITE-THROATED TYRANULET (*Mecocerculus leucophrys*) – We encountered a number of these on the Cuchilla de San Lorenzo and then farther down the road by the towers. Their bright white throats really do stand out!

MOUSE-COLORED TYRANULET (NORTHERN) (*Phaeomyias murina incomta*) – We pulled in one of these drab flycatchers in the dry scrub east of Camarones. I have a hunch though, it may have been slightly overshadowed by the brilliantly-colored cardinal nearby.

YELLOW-CROWNED TYRANULET (*Tyrannulus elatus*) – This little species was heard singing during our walk in Minca but it never showed itself. [*]

GREENISH ELAENIA (*Myiopagis viridicata*) – We were sorting through a mixed flock in the bamboo above Minca when one of these flycatchers materialized overhead. That remained our only sighting of the trip.

YELLOW-BELLIED ELAENIA (*Elaenia flavogaster*) – A vocal species sporting a wild crest, a few of these were seen in Minca including at the lodge parking area.

MOUNTAIN ELAENIA (*Elaenia frantzii*) – There were a few sightings sprinkled throughout our time at mid-upper elevations including one along the Mirador Trail, one at the towers below Cuchilla de San Lorenzo, and a few along the ridge itself.

OLIVE-STRIPED FLYCATCHER (OLIVE-STRIPED) (*Mionectes olivaceus galbinus*) – Only one or two were seen during our time in the mountains. This was formerly called "Olive-striped Fruit-Tyrant" for its proclivity of feeding on fruit.

OCHRE-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Mionectes oleagineus*) – One of these buffy-bellied insect-eaters was spotted overhead uphill from Minca.

SOOTY-HEADED TYRANNULET (*Phyllomyias griseiceps*) – In the same flock as the previous species, this flycatcher was also spotted in the bamboo forests up the road from Minca.

PALTRY TYRANNULET (MOUNTAIN) (*Zimmerius vilissimus tamae*) – These *Zimmerius* flycatchers are a bit of a mess. Some sources split Paltry Tyrannulet out several ways (into Venezuelan Tyrannulet, Mistletoe Tyrannulet, etc) but currently, they're still lumped together. Either way, we saw this endemic subspecies only once, at the escuela below the El Dorado Lodge.

GOLDEN-FACED TYRANNULET (COOPMANS'S) (*Zimmerius chrysops minimus*) – This is another *Zimmerius* species that is likely to be split several ways by Clements. If/when it does, Coopmans's Tyrannulet will be found only in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta and neighboring Venezuela. This subspecies, *minimus*, is endemic to the Santa Marta though.

NORTHERN SCRUB-FLYCATCHER (*Sublegatus arenarum*) – Colored like a miniature *Myiarchus*, this flycatcher was seen well as we birded the dry scrub near Camarones.

SLENDER-BILLED TYRANNULET (*Inezia tenuirostris*) – One encounter, in the dry forests east of Camarones, was our only one. However, it was heard a few more times after that. This species was formerly known as "Slender-billed Inezia".

PALE-EYED PYGMY-TYRANT (*Atalotriccus pilaris*) – The only spot we encountered this species was in the mixed flock uphill from Minca. It's an unobtrusive, tiny little thing!

PEARLY-VENTED TODY-TYRANT (*Hemitriccus margaritaceiventer*) – The arid region around Camarones yielded several of these small flycatchers. However, once we left that habitat, we left this species as well.

BLACK-THROATED TODY-TYRANT (*Hemitriccus granadensis lehmanni*) – After only hearing this species several times, we finally connected with one or two just outside the doors of the El Dorado Lodge. This species currently has seven recognized subspecies; will they be split out someday? Time will tell.

COMMON TODY-FLYCATCHER (*Todirostrum cinereum*) – A pair was working on building a nest on Isla Salamanca during our first morning of birding. [N]

YELLOW-OLIVE FLYCATCHER (SANTA MARTA) (*Tolmomyias sulphurescens exortivus*) – This endemic subspecies was spotted in that big, mixed flock we encountered in the bamboo forest uphill from Minca. A nice bird to see, we don't see them every time on this tour.

CINNAMON FLYCATCHER (*Pyrrhomyias cinnamomeus assimilis*) – We couldn't have gotten any better views of these cute and distinctive flycatchers; a pair was foraging in a clearing, always coming back to the same vine. Note the subspecies, an endemic to the Sierra Nevada.

TROPICAL PEWEE (*Contopus cinereus*) – One of these was found sallying from a perch high over our heads as we birded up the mountain from Minca.

VERMILION FLYCATCHER (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*) – We were pausing to enjoy some Double-striped Thick-knees when one or two of these bright flycatchers were seen distantly, perched on a fence. Turns out, that would be our only sighting of the trip.

SANTA MARTA BUSH-TYRANT (*Myiotheretes pernix*) – Although it can be a tricky endemic to pin down, we had lovely looks on our first morning at the Cuchilla de San Lorenzo. The population of this endangered species is said to be less than 2,000 birds! [E]

PIED WATER-TYRANT (*Fluvicola pica*) – The Isla Salamanca stops usually held one or two of these black-and-white flycatchers, almost always low and near water.

WHITE-HEADED MARSH TYRANT (*Arundinicola leucocephala*) – The pre-tour outing had several looks but the main group encountered only one, on our final day, as we battled the winds at Isla Salamanca.

YELLOW-BELLIED CHAT-TYRANT (*Ochthoeca diadema jesupi*) – Although it was a "heard only" species for most of the group, a lucky individual or two got looks at one near our parking area on Cuchilla de San Lorenzo. Note the endemic subspecies.

CATTLE TYRANT (*Machetornis rixosa*) – In the lowlands, especially around cattle (big surprise), these flycatchers were spotted at places like Isla Salamanca and Camarones. For several of us in the airport as we departed Barranquilla, this was the last species we saw in Colombia (one was walking alongside the terminal window).

BRIGHT-RUMPED ATTLILA (*Attila spadiceus*) – Although heard calling in the dry forests around Camarones, it never came out for inspection. [*]

DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) – Although it was heard on at least three of our days, this *Myiarchus* remained hidden. [*]

PANAMA FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus panamensis*) – Drab for a *Myiarchus*, this big flycatcher was seen well in the mangrove forests on Isla Salamanca on our first day. A *Myiarchus*, that was probably this species, was also seen at our lunch stop at Las Acacias later that day.

BROWN-CRESTED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus tyrannulus*) – This big guy was heard and then seen briefly in the dry forests east of Camarones. This species can be found from Arizona to Argentina.

GREAT KISKADEE (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) – Widespread and abundant in lowland areas.

BOAT-BILLED FLYCATCHER (*Megarynchus pitangua*) – Our first good study of this big-billed species was in Minca where a couple posed for the scope. Remember, these have much less rufous in the wings than the previous species.

RUSTY-MARGINED FLYCATCHER (*Myiozetetes cayanensis*) – First, it was heard only on our walk in Minca but we eventually saw one at the escuela stop below the El Dorado Lodge. Although superficially very similar to the Social Flycatcher, the voice is an easy give-away.

SOCIAL FLYCATCHER (*Myiozetetes similis*) – Not as numerous as you might expect! We encountered them twice; first at Las Acacias for lunch on Day 1, and then in Minca.

GOLDEN-CROWNED FLYCATCHER (*Myiodynastes chrysocephalus*) – This mid-upper elevation flycatcher was spotted on the grounds of the El Dorado Lodge a couple of times, especially around dusk when they became quite vocal.

STREAKED FLYCATCHER (*Myiodynastes maculatus*) – We encountered a few of these in and around Minca including a tame one up the hill at our coffee stop.

PIRATIC FLYCATCHER (*Legatus leucophaeus*) – Not a bird we see on every tour here but we encountered one while walking through the town of Minca. It was perched on the highest branch of a distant tree.

TROPICAL KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – A common species at lower elevations. These were seen daily except during our time up at El Dorado Lodge.

GRAY KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus dominicensis*) – One of the first stops as we left Barranquilla was a busy roadside next to some stables. There was a Gray Kingbird there, perched in a tall tree on the other side of the barn. Our only other sighting was near the lagoon at Camarones. These birds only winter here; they'll be migrating north soon. [b]

FORK-TAILED FLYCATCHER (*Tyrannus savana*) – [Pre-tour: One of these long-tailed beauties flew by as we birded the KM 4 portion of Isla Salamanca.]

Cotingidae (Cotingas)

GOLDEN-BREASTED FRUITEATER (*Pipreola aureopectus*) – After a couple of close misses, we finally connected with one near the El Dorado Lodge. What a looker! The high-pitched song was one of the most distinctive ones around.

Tityridae (Tityras and Allies)

MASKED TITYRA (*Tityra semifasciata*) – On our final day, on our final descent of the mountains, we found a pair of these distinctive birds near the La Yey stop. Better late than never!

CINNAMON BECARD (*Pachyrhamphus cinnamomeus*) – A couple were seen over the road, just uphill from Minca, while we were birding in the bamboo forest area.

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

RUFOUS-BROWED PEPPERSHRIKE (*Cyclarhis gujanensis*) – A surprise sighting, one of these came in close overhead while we were birding in the scrub east of Camarones. What a monster bill!

SCRUB GREENLET (*Hylophilus flavipes*) – Although not the flashiest of species, a couple of these came in with a mixed flock near Camarones.

BROWN-CAPPED VIREO (*Vireo leucophrys*) – Closely related to Warbling Vireo, this species was spotted only a few times near the El Dorado Lodge and downhill from there.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

BLACK-CHESTED JAY (*Cyanocorax affinis*) – A fairly widespread and attractive species, especially from Minca upwards. A few of these were attending the cracked corn feeders at the El Dorado Lodge as well.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

SOUTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) – Only a few sightings from early in the trip; first at our lunch stop at Las Acacias and then again near Minca. These were identified by the pale rump that was obvious in flight.

GRAY-BREASTED MARTIN (*Progne chalybea*) – The KM 4 area was the most reliable spot for this big martin but it was only seen briefly overhead.

WHITE-WINGED SWALLOW (*Tachycineta albiventer*) – [Pre-tour: A couple of these swallows were perched distantly during our visit to Isla Salamanca.]

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*) – Although they never seemed to stick around long, we did see a couple of these familiar swallows overhead whilst on Isla Salamanca. It's likely that they were starting to migrate north. [b]

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

HOUSE WREN (SOUTHERN) (*Troglodytes aedon musculus*) – Commonly heard but less commonly seen. Although considered the same species as the House Wrens we have in the Eastern US, the subspecies here sound a bit different (and may yet be split out someday).

STRIPE-BACKED WREN (*Campylorhynchus nuchalis*) – This big and noisy wren, a relative to our Cactus Wren, was spotted along KM 4 on our final day of birding.

BICOLORED WREN (*Campylorhynchus griseus*) – This large and attractive wren put on a great show during our first morning in Barranquilla. We went on to see more in Minca and at a few other low-mid elevation areas.

RUFOUS-BREASTED WREN (*Pheugopedius rutilus*) – We had a nice duo of wren species as we birded our way up from Minca towards the lodge and this attractive wren was one of them. It even popped out and showed us the nice coloring on the breast.

RUFOUS-AND-WHITE WREN (*Thryophilus rufalbus*) – This was the other good wren we laid eyes on uphill from Minca. A wren with a beautiful and rich song, this species is often heard only... but we got to see it!

GRAY-BREASTED WOOD-WREN (BANGSI) (*Henicorhina leucophrys bangsi*) – This sneaky wren is a wide-ranging tropical taxon with a variety of interesting subspecies. This endemic subspecies is only found on the low slopes of the Santa Martas and we heard and saw a few on the El Dorado Lodge grounds.

HERMIT WOOD-WREN (*Henicorhina anachoreta*) – Recently elevated to full species status (and previously called "Santa Marta Wood-Wren"), this endemic of the Santa Marta is found at higher elevations than the previous species. We had a few brief glimpses as these snuck in while we were birding along the Cuchilla de San Lorenzo. [E]

Poliptilidae (Gnatcatchers)

LONG-BILLED GNATWREN (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*) – Our final descent out of the mountains on our last day yielded one of these that, although responsive, always seemed to hang back in the tangles.

TROPICAL GNATCATCHER (TROPICAL) (*Poliptila plumbea plumbeiceps*) – Seen and heard in the dry scrub near Camarones, this subspecies may yet be split out to full species level someday (but don't hold your breath).

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

ORANGE-BILLED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH (*Catharus aurantiirostris*) – Although common and vocal, this species is notorious for staying buried and out of view. We experienced this phenomenon near the La Yey stop on our final day where it was heard only. [*]

SLATY-BACKED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH (*Catharus fuscater*) – This is a skulky thrush that only a few of us managed to see. The compost pile at the El Dorado Lodge was our only hope.

YELLOW-LEGGED THRUSH (*Turdus flavipes*) – This attractive thrush, related to our American Robin, was fairly common on the low-mid elevation portions of the mountain.

PALE-BREASTED THRUSH (*Turdus leucomelas*) – A common thrush at the lower elevations such as around Minca. Similar to Clay-colored Thrush but with a darker bill.

BLACK-HOODED THRUSH (*Turdus olivater*) – Although widespread around the El Dorado Lodge, they were rather shy and retiring. Still, we all managed a glimpse of one or two while birding the roadsides nearby.

GREAT THRUSH (*Turdus fuscater cacozelus*) – This is a large and dark thrush limited to high elevations. We spotted a few on each of our visits to the ridgetop.

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

TROPICAL MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus gilvus*) – Only a couple were seen in the dry areas near Camarones.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – A good number of these tail-bobbing migrants were spotted in the lowlands and mangrove forests of Isla Salamanca. [b]

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER (*Mniotilta varia*) – A familiar bird to many of us from the US. A few were mixed in with feeding flocks in the Sierra Nevada. [b]

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER (*Protonotaria citrea*) – Another migrant warbler species, these were common in the mangrove forests of Isla Salamanca on our first day. [b]

TENNESSEE WARBLER (*Oreothlypis peregrina*) – A common migrant at mid-elevations in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. [b]

AMERICAN REDSTART (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – Another familiar migrant warbler, these were seen a few times in the mountains including near Minca. [b]

TROPICAL PARULA (*Setophaga pitiayumi*) – Our only encounter was with one above Minca as we birded uphill.

BAY-BREASTED WARBLER (*Setophaga castanea*) – The third day of tour produced one of these migrants as we ascended the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. [b]

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER (*Setophaga fusca*) – Seen daily at mid-elevations around the El Dorado Lodge and along the Cuchilla de San Lorenzo. [b]

YELLOW WARBLER (NORTHERN) (*Setophaga petechia aestiva*) – A few of these migrants were seen in the lowlands around KM 4 and then again in Minca. [b]

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (MYRTLE) (*Setophaga coronata coronata*) – Although hardly exciting for most birders from North America, seeing this species in South America is very rare indeed! One of these overshoots materialized in front of us as we birded around the radio towers just downhill from the Cuchilla de San Lorenzo. [b]

RUFOUS-CAPPED WARBLER (CHESTNUT-CAPPED) (*Basileuterus rufifrons mesochrysus*) – We spotted a few of these at several different locations as we ascended the Sierra Nevada.

SANTA MARTA WARBLER (*Myiothlypis basilica*) – This endemic can be tricky to find but we were lucky to find some promptly after arriving at the Cuchilla de San Lorenzo. Estimates of the total population suggest there might be fewer than 2,000 of these left. [E]

WHITE-LORED WARBLER (*Myiothlypis conspicillata*) – Another endemic of the Santa Marta, this warbler was fairly common right around the El Dorado Lodge and we had several very nice looks as they worked fairly low in the vegetation. [E]

SLATE-THROATED REDSTART (*Myioborus miniatus*) – A fairly common warbler at mid-elevations.

YELLOW-CROWNED REDSTART (*Myioborus flavivertex*) – This is another of the endemic warblers. We had very brief looks on our first visit to the Cuchilla de San Lorenzo but our second visit gave us more chances to study these. [E]

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

GRAY-HEADED TANAGER (*Eucometis penicillata*) – One of these was called out on our third day as we birded from Minca up to the El Dorado Lodge. However, it didn't stick around for long.

WHITE-LINED TANAGER (*Tachyphonus rufus*) – We chanced into a couple of pairs of these as we birded downslope from the El Dorado Lodge on our final day of birding. The male is mostly black and the female is a rich brown.

CRIMSON-BACKED TANAGER (*Ramphocelus dimidiatus*) – Beautifully plumaged, a few of these tanagers popped up here and there once we approached Minca.

BLACK-CHEEKED MOUNTAIN-TANAGER (*Anisognathus melanogenys*) – Sometimes known as the "Santa Marta Mountain-Tanager", this is an endemic (and beautiful!) species that we encountered only near the Cuchilla de San Lorenzo. [E]

BLUE-GRAY TANAGER (*Thraupis episcopus*) – We had good numbers of these in Minca and other moist lowland areas.

GLAUCOUS TANAGER (*Thraupis glaucocolpa*) – This tanager, a regional specialty limited to Venezuela and a little tip of Colombia, was seen a couple of times in the dry country as we approached Camarones. A few around KM 4 were farther west than we usually see them.

PALM TANAGER (*Thraupis palmarum*) – Only a couple were seen in the Minca area.

BLUE-CAPPED TANAGER (*Thraupis cyanocephala margaritae*) – In the same genus as the previous two species, this subtly-marked tanager was seen only briefly near the El Dorado Lodge.

BLACK-HEADED TANAGER (*Tangara cyanoptera*) – This was a nice sighting on our final day of birding as we came down the mountain. The bulk of the world population is found in Venezuela.

BLACK-CAPPED TANAGER (*Tangara heinei*) – What a stunner! We were lucky to find these reliable at the feeders at the El Dorado Lodge where we got to learn more about their sexual dimorphism (the male and female look different).

BAY-HEADED TANAGER (*Tangara gyrola*) – Fairly common; a few of these visited the fruit feeders at the El Dorado Lodge.

SWALLOW TANAGER (*Tersina viridis*) – Seen on several of the days we birded mid-elevations. This was a crowd favorite (and who can blame them with that beautiful shade of blue!).

BICOLORED CONEBILL (*Conirostrum bicolor*) – In the tanager family, these were found mostly in mangrove forests. Our only encounters came on our first day as we birded Isla Salamanca.

BLACK FLOWERPIERCER (*Diglossa humeralis nocticolor*) – Usually found at higher elevations than the next species, these were seen at the San Lorenzo Station and up along the ridge. A few of us saw one as low as the El Dorado Lodge on one or two occasions.

WHITE-SIDED FLOWERPIERCER (*Diglossa albilatera*) – An abundant species around the El Dorado Lodge, almost always seen in the vicinity of flowers.

RUSTY FLOWERPIERCER (*Diglossa sittoides*) – One female was seen on our final day at the La Yey stop but the views were very brief.

BLUE-BLACK GRASSQUIT (*Volatinia jacarina*) – Seen on two of our days, both at lower elevations: first near Camarones and secondly near La Yey where we watched a perched female downslope.

THICK-BILLED SEED-FINCH (*Sporophila funerea*) – A beautiful (can an all black bird be beautiful?) male was scoped singing downslope from us on our morning walk in Minca.

PARAMO SEEDEATER (*Catamenia homochroa oreophila*) – Seedeaters are actually placed in the Thraupidae (tanager) family and we got to study this endemic subspecies at high elevations along the Cuchilla de San Lorenzo on our first visit.

PILEATED FINCH (*Coryphospingus pileatus*) – A dry-country specialty that we encountered near Camarones. They have a bright red crest (but it's usually hidden).

BANANAQUIT (*Coereba flaveola*) – A common species in the lowlands; we saw several on Isla Salamanca attending flowering trees.

BLACK-FACED GRASSQUIT (*Tiaris bicolor*) – A very drab female was spotted in the dry forest near Camarones on our second day of birding.

BUFF-THROATED SALTATOR (*Saltator maximus*) – Only one or two were seen around Minca on our third day of tour.

ORINOCAN SALTATOR (*Saltator orinocensis*) – This attractive species is a dry-country specialty that's limited to Venezuela and a small part of Colombia. We had nice looks at a pair in the dry forest near Camarones.

GRAYISH SALTATOR (*Saltator coerulescens*) – Fairly common in the lowlands around Barranquilla, Isla Salamanca, and Minca.

STREAKED SALTATOR (*Saltator striatipectus*) – Less common than the previous species, this saltator was seen on only one day, the day we birded above Minca on our way uphill.

Passerellidae (New World Buntings and Sparrows)

TOCUYO SPARROW (*Arremonops tocuynensis*) – A very range-restricted species found only in a sliver of Colombia and extreme northwest Venezuela. Not only did we manage to find this secretive species near Camarones, most of us actually got to SEE it which is altogether a different story.

SIERRA NEVADA BRUSHFINCH (*Arremon basilicus*) – The species formerly known as Stripe-headed Brushfinch was split into several species including this now-endemic. Only a few were seen near the cracked corn feeders at the lodge and once or twice along the nearby road. [E]

GOLDEN-WINGED SPARROW (*Arremon schlegeli*) – A beautiful bird, these were seen on each of our visits to the bamboo forests uphill from Minca. This species, which is in the same genus as the previous brushfinch, is found only in a few spots in northern Colombia and Venezuela.

RUFOUS-COLLARED SPARROW (*Zonotrichia capensis*) – Seen daily at mid-elevations in the Sierra Nevada.

SANTA MARTA BRUSHFINCH (*Atlapetes melanocephalus*) – Although an endemic found only in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, these were truly abundant and friendly as well! [E]

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*) – This migrant was seen briefly near the La Yey stop as we were leaving the mountains. [b]

VERMILION CARDINAL (*Cardinalis phoeniceus*) – Wow, it was great getting views of the females and, eventually, the males in the dry scrub near Camarones. This is a very range-restricted species limited to the arid regions of northern Colombia and Venezuela. Sadly, they are sought after by bird trappers as well.

GOLDEN GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus chrysogaster*) – We had two glimpses of this bright species including at the San Lorenzo Station where one was perched up and singing.

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) – Rather scarce on this trip, only one was seen near Minca. [b]

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

RED-BREASTED MEADOWLARK (*Sturnella militaris*) – [Pre-tour: We could see the red breast of one perched on a stump in the distance at Isla Salamanca.]

CRESTED OROPENDOLA (*Psarocolius decumanus*) – Seen every other day during our time in the mountains, this Icterid was especially fond of a couple of mostly-bare trees where good numbers were seen perched.

YELLOW-BACKED ORIOLE (*Icterus chrysater*) – A gifted songster, this oriole was spotted only once, a pair near the escuela hairpin curve downhill from the El Dorado Lodge.

ORANGE-CROWNED ORIOLE (*Icterus auricapillus*) – Our only sighting was of one high above us as we birded the forest above Minca on our third day. This species is primarily found in Panama, Colombia, and Venezuela.

YELLOW ORIOLE (*Icterus nigrogularis*) – These turned out to be fairly common during our time in the lowlands. Our first sighting was at the university grounds on our first morning.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE (*Icterus galbula*) – A couple of these migrants were seen including some near Minca and at one of our tollbooth/restroom stops. [b]

SHINY COWBIRD (*Molothrus bonariensis*) – We found a group of four at our lunch stop at Las Acacias on our first day.

BRONZED COWBIRD (BRONZE-BROWN) (*Molothrus aeneus armenti*) – [Pre-tour: Our visit to Isla Salamanca yielded a few of these rare cowbirds in a roadside pasture. This poorly-understood subspecies is endemic to Colombia.]

GIANT COWBIRD (*Molothrus oryzivorus*) – Only a few of these surfaced on tour including a pair at the escuela hairpin curve below the El Dorado Lodge. It's not uncommon to find them near oropendola colonies (yes, for nefarious reasons).

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) – Widespread in the lowlands.

CARIB GRACKLE (*Quiscalus lugubris*) – Widespread in the lowlands. These were especially obvious on the beach near Camarones where they foraged around our lunch table.

YELLOW-HOODED BLACKBIRD (*Chrysomus icterocephalus*) – Only a few of these were seen on our final day of birding in the Isla Salamanca area. The pre-tour birding group had better views of this marsh-loving species.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

BLUE-NAPED CHLOROPHONIA (*Chlorophonia cyanea*) – It was a pleasure having such a stunner visiting the feeders at the El Dorado Lodge so frequently!

TRINIDAD EUPHONIA (*Euphonia trinitatis*) – We encountered this colorful species in the dry, scrubby habitat of the Guajira Peninsula near Camarones.

THICK-BILLED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia laniirostris*) – Rather scarce on this trip at low-middle elevations around Minca.

MAMMALS

GRAY-HANDED NIGHT MONKEY (*Aotus griseimembra*) – The El Dorado Lodge staff has a good system now for showing these nocturnal monkeys to visitors. This species was formerly considered a subspecies of "Gray-bellied Night Monkey" although these are still generally poorly-understood critters.

RED HOWLER MONKEY (*Alouatta seniculus*) – One of the few mammals that you aren't surprised can be a "heard only"! These were heard many times during our stay at the El Dorado Lodge. [*]

RED-TAILED SQUIRREL (*Sciurus granatensis*) – Seen daily during our time at the El Dorado Lodge.

CENTRAL AMERICAN AGOUTI (*Dasyprocta punctata*) – There was one sighting near the compost pile but only a few folks saw it before it scampered off.

CRAB-EATING FOX (*Cerdocyon thous*) – A few folks saw this fox on our fourth day but it wasn't seen by many!

KINKAJOU (*Potos flavus*) – You never know what you'll find raiding the hummingbird feeders at night! A hoard of these critters were found making good use of the sugar water!

Herps

GREEN IGUANA (*Iguana iguana*) – These were seen on our first day near Isla Salamanca.

RAINBOW WHIPTAIL (*Cnemidophorus lemniscatus*) – This attractive lizard was seen well as it inspected the laser dot at Isla Salamanca in the mangrove forests.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 298 bird taxa and 6 mammal taxa