



Rufous Crab Hawk (Eustace Barnes).

EASTERN VENEZUELA

10 – 26 APRIL / 2 MAY 2016

LEADER: EUSTACE BARNES

A spectacularly diverse biological haven; Venezuela is one of the most exciting destinations for birders although not one without its problems. Extending the tour to explore remote sites including the other-worldly summit of Mount Roraima makes for what is, the most adventurous and rewarding tour to this fascinating region. We had a record breaking tour with more of the endemics found than on any previous tour, finding 40 of the 42 possible Tepui endemics, while in the north-east we recorded all the endemics. This was helped in no small way by having such a committed group. We had difficulties in the Orinoco delta as we could not access the sites and, in the three years, since Birdquest was last in Venezuela the traditional rainforest sites have been destroyed making that element of the tour very difficult. This should make this document something of an interesting historical record.



Maguari Stork (left) and Orinocan Saltator (right) (Eustace Barnes(left) and Gary Matson(right)).

Having arrived in Puerto Ordaz and enjoyed a restful night in a very plush hotel we were set to cross the Llanos de Monagas en route to Irapa on the Paria peninsula. We headed to the Rio Orinoco for our first stop just before the river. As we worked our way through the dusty scrub we quickly turned up a number of Orinocan Saltators which we watched awhile while taping in our first Yellow Orioles, Ochre-ored Flatbill, Tropical Gnatcatcher, Fuscous Flycatcher and numerous Bananaquits. It was also good to see a smart male Northern White-fringed Antwren picking about in the thick scrub just before we headed north. Crossing the spectacular new bridge we made good time, reaching Hato San Andres, just south of Maturin, for some easy open country birding. It had not rained for eight months owing to the now more chaotic southern oscillation, more commonly known as El Nino. As such most ponds and marshes were dry with few wetland species present. We found a few Maguari Storks, Whistling Herons and Snowy and Great Egrets along with several pairs of Least Grebes; the latter with chicks aboard. We retreated from the heat of the day to explore some nearby gallery forest which gave us our first Double-banded Puffbirds, Rufous-tailed Jacamars and a couple of White-throated Toucans. Working the undergrowth we turned up Slate-headed Tody Flycatcher and Black-crested Antshrikes while the taller trees overhead held Golden-fronted Greenlets, Red-crowned Woodpeckers and Trinidad Euphonias picked about.



Yellow-headed Caracara (left) and Oriole blackbird (right) (Eustace Barnes)

We enjoyed a bit of good old fence post birding. Not restricted to Africa and Europe it seems!



The very smart Capped Heron (Eustace Barnes).

At the Hato we found both Stripe-backed and Bicoloured Wrens. There were also Eastern Meadowlarks, Red-breasted and Oriole Blackbirds, numerous Northern Crested and Yellow-headed Caracaras and a pair of Aplomado Falcons around the farm buildings. So a good introduction to some of Venezuela's commoner species and now it was time to burn some fuel. North of Maturin the journey slows as the terrain is hilly and the road full of potholes. We arrived just in time for Chicken and rice! There were few shops open and during the tour we were to find that those that were open had little to sell. One shop we looked into had flip flops, a single toilet roll, a few cans of Spam and a box of matches! There were clearly shortages of basic goods including bread, toilet rolls and even fruit. The government has set prices on all staple goods that are less than 1% of their black market value. As a result no one wants to sell through the official shops or indeed produce anything other than for personal consumption.



Easy birding on the Llanos. Whistling Heron (left) and Northern Crested Caracara (right) (Eustace Barnes)

The Paria National Park remains in reasonable condition with some really outstanding forest higher up. In the last fifteen years of visiting this site I can't see much sign of further forest loss on the southern slopes or habitat degradation inside the park. This in itself is quite remarkable. It is a great place to go birding and access is easy from Irapa. Taking the highway west from Irapa for about five kilometres you turn right to Rio Grande Arriba. From the plaza take the only road out of town to Las Melenas where the road ends at the park entrance on the edge of the village. You may need to get 4x4 for the last section of road. There is only one trail to the top of the ridge and from there to Cerro Humo. Birding is good all the way but especially so on the ridge top at 1100m.



Groove-billed Toucanet (Eustace Barnes)

Once on site and while enjoying a somewhat meagre field breakfast we began a great session at the park entrance with several pairs of Groove-billed Toucanets, a Masked Trogon, Red-billed Scythebill and several Golden-winged Parakeets that fed noisily around us. We then taped out Rufous-breasted and Rufous and white Wrens in quick succession followed by a Stripe-breasted Spinetail which was building a nest in the coffee bushes. Once light enough we made our way up the lower slopes of Cerro Humo while Oscar and Leo dealt with vehicles and the chronic lack of edibles. First on our menu a delightful pair of Sucre Antpittas! Quite distinct in every way this taxon is clearly worthy of specific recognition. Next as we worked our way up slope we found Paria Whitestart and whilst watching this rare endemic we saw Lilac-tailed Parrotlets shooting overhead. As we continued steadily upslope we also found several Handsome Fruiteaters and a magnificent White-tipped Quetzal. Quetzals really are quite stunning with all their emerald finery and superior manner. A vocal Paria Brush-finch refused to show as we made our way to the ridge. Of much more importance however was the search for Scissor-tailed Hummingbird which eventually rewarded all with great views of a couple of males and a female. This rather fine looking creature does remind me of the Streamertails on Jamaica but it is much more of a forest interior species rather than those species.



Sucre Antpitta (Gary Howard)

Once atop the ridge we stood and marvelled at the magical tranquility of the forest paradise dripping with bromeliads and mosses. This tranquil scene contrasted sharply with the charred valley below shrouded in a thick plume of acrid smoke.



Paria Whitestart (Eustace Barnes)



White-throated Barbtail (Eustace Barnes)

All too soon it was time to descend but, as we made our way, a White-throated Barbtail began to sing and very soon we were all watching this beautifully marked furnarid pick about in the undergrowth. Another great find in an already very special day. A little lower and a Black-faced Antthrush popped out to see us along with a couple of Grey-throated Leaf-tossers; absolutely superb. We then returned to town in an open backed pickup at huge expense only to be stopped and searched at a military checkpoint. They only wanted to look through our possessions and suggest they might confiscate various items they liked the look of. One particularly unpleasant looking individual with a malevolent grin waved my sunglasses in my face and said 'mine, mine, mine.' A nasty little man. I smiled politely and he gave them back.



Black-faced Antthrush (left) (Gary Howard) and White-throated Barbtail (right) (Eustace Barnes)



Always a favourite the magnificent White-tipped Quetzal (Eustace Barnes)

Leaving Irapa and the grubby delights it offers the unwary we made our way to Caripe. The route was broken with several carefully selected stops that included a great boat ride along Cano Ajies. Well before that our first stop gave us a good selection of birds including a pair of Black-dotted Piculets; another endemic. We enjoyed good views of the rather well named Plain Thornbird along with Stripe-backed and Bicoloured Wrens, Orange-winged Amazon, White-eyed Parakeet, Rufous-vented Chachalaca, Black-necked Aracari, White-throated Toucan, Red-crowned Woodpecker and a tremendous variety of flycatchers. All good stuff but it was so dry that bird vocalisation died down shortly after dawn and we made our way to Cano Ajies where we arranged the first of many boat trips; a pleasant excursion that rewarded us with Scarlet Ibis, Black-collared and Common Black Hawks and small numbers of Velvet-fronted Grackles but alas not the hoped for Rufous Crab Hawk. We had to wait for that one.



The almost luminescent Scarlet Ibis (Eustace Barnes).



At the Cueva de los Guacharos (Isabelle Deschenes)

We picked our way along narrow country roads on our way to Caripe and arrived in good time to witness the exodus of Oilbirds from the Cueva de los Guacharos just below Sabana de la Piedra. What a spectacle and surely one of the great wonders of the avian world. The forests around the cave entrance are still intact but much of the surrounding country is stripped of forest and now carpeted with useless rank grassland: a serious problem for the endemic taxa of the region as well as farmers, townsfolk and all else who live there. The severe drought also meant that the burning season was much extended and for most of the time in the north it rained ash and we could smell smoke as we travelled through a charred landscape. There is no control of burning in Venezuela and many fires simply run out of control destroying large areas.



Red-crowned Woodpecker (Eustace Barnes)

Our first day in the area was plagued with logistical hassles; our antique Toyota expired before we even got into it and then our bus exploded after climbing a couple of shallow inclines. We limped back to the Oilbird cave where we enjoyed a superb walk through the labyrinthine caves. The caves are magnificent in themselves but when occupied by thousands of Oilbirds growling and clicking around your head it is transformed into an absolutely unforgettable experience. While we wandered through the caves Oscar and Leo were back on logistics duty to find a more robust vehicle to get us up Cerro Turumiquiere and another bus to get us to the delta which they did and without disrupting our birding for one minute!



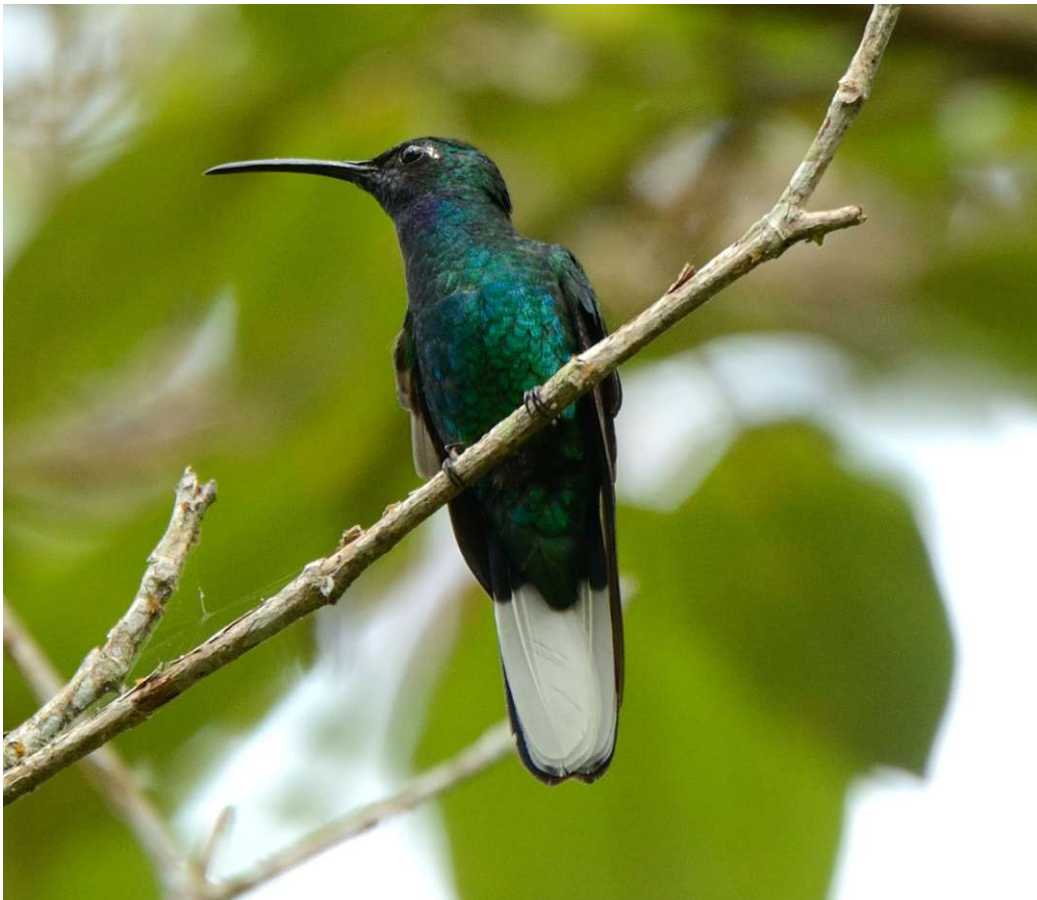
The very rare Venezuelan Sylph (Gary Howard)

Departing from the Oilbird caves we retraced our steps to Sabana de Piedra where we took the National park sign to Cerro Negro. We then walked up through the shade coffee plantations searching for the many and various endemics. It was somewhat quiet but we managed a few Venezuelan Parakeets and a small party of Ochre-breasted Brush-finches but little else until we reached 1450m. At which point the relentless use of the Pygmy Owl lure started to bring in the hummers. A Rufous-shafted Woodstar appeared and eventually three of them. Some sharp ticks and a very skittish White-tailed Sabrewing was rocketing towards us followed very quickly thereafter by a couple of Venezuelan Sylphs. These birds then remained all around us to be joined by several Green-tailed Emeralds and provided us with a highly memorable and very enjoyable session. We had point blank views of the Sylph and Sabrewing and eventually had to leave them behind, thoroughly traumatised although probably relieved there was no pygmy owl.



'Is that breakfast?' It is but that is not the accommodation (Eustace Barnes)

The next morning Rafael duly arrived at 4am for the tortuous ascent of Cerro Turumiquiere. We left San Augustin on the country road, north of the river that heads west, passing a very visible antenna on the edge of town, and drove almost to the end of the road. We then took another concrete road to the right for a couple of kilometres that gives way to boulders and an otherwise deeply rutted muddy track and climbs to about 1250m in a shade coffee plantation. We were on site at dawn and another meagre breakfast scraped together from whatever was available after queuing for hours. Still, luckily, we were not on a more food orientated tour which was just as well. Oscar had managed to get hold of some Casabe (somewhat like reinforced cardboard) which could be used as a rough non-slip surface onto which could be placed various rather more edible items. Rafael was a little unhappy at having had to climb such a 'road' in his magnificent machine but he was placated with breakfast and a few more dollars.



A magnificent White-tailed Sabrewing (Paul Matson).

We climbed up as quickly as possible from 1250m to the ridge top at 1450m where there is a farmstead on your left. We followed an overgrown track behind the farm for a few hundred meters to some disused antennas at 1600m. It passes through regenerating secondary forest interspersed with patches of primary forest. I believe this is the site called Piedra e' Mole. There is also a wide rough track that works up slope on your right although we did not have time to explore forest patches in that direction. This track may well go to some more antennas higher still. Directly in front of you as you reach the ridge top there is a narrow trail that enters tall forest. From this point looking west you can see what must be thousands of hectares of primary forest and surely the most extensive forest remaining in the whole region. We birded the forests up to the old antennas, easily finding White-throated Barbtail and a pair of Grey-headed Warblers; the latter one of our major targets at this site. Very satisfying! We also found several pairs of Venezuelan Sylphs and more White-tailed Sabrewings. At the top in the open scrubby habitat we only saw a couple of Ochre-breasted Brush-finches and a Green-tailed Emerald but no Venezuelan Flowerpiercer. As time was pressing we descended to explore the other forests available to us from the farmstead. It was a shame we did not have the time to explore the primary forests to the west but the time we had was very rewarding. Again, deploying the Pygmy-Owl lure was very effective. We drew in a pair of Venezuelan Flowerpiercers and a pair of the endemic *mandelli* sub-species of Rusty Flowerpiercer. This is very rarely seen bird that surely deserves specific status. We were very fortunate to find this bird and it was certainly not one I was expecting at all. Dave Willis had seen it to the north in drier habitat at a lower elevation. We also saw the more familiar, Sylphs and Sabrewings in surprising numbers. We also attracted a Fulvous-headed Tanager, the endemic form of Blue-capped Tanager, Yellow-legged Thrushes and more Ochre-breasted Brush-finches. We were totally surrounded by an ever changing mix of birds as we worked through our list of target species. Unfortunately, having suffered logistical mishap the day before, we did not have a full day in the area, as planned, and we had to descend to get to the Orinoco Delta some distance away by 3pm! (That's a Latin 3pm of course). Luckily this excursion gave Leo time to sort out bags, gasoline and lunch, which he did. Anyway, it was great to see the forest is still intact and find all of the endemic taxa apart from the as yet undescribed *Scytalopus*. This was previously considered to be part of Caracas Tapaculo but I think David Ascanio and other field workers are describing it as a separate species that will then be another critically endangered taxon from the area. I must thank Chris Sharpe and Dave Willis who found the site and gave me access information.



The now critically endangered Grey-headed warbler (Gary Howard)

We drove down into the Delta region to be greeted with by thick pall of smoke and innumerable huge fires burning across the savannas. A distressing and somewhat unpleasant sight made all the worse by the much extended dry season caused by El Nino; a phenomena that brings rain to the west coast of South America and drought to the regions east of the Andes from Bolivia to Venezuela. Meteorological digressions aside we arrived at the quayside at 4pm and being in Latin America this was a perfectly acceptable sort of 3pm. They had said 1pm but that was impossible and so a flexi-3pm was negotiated. We got to the lodge in time to chill out with celebratory Caipirinhas; what a great drink and what a great day. We then determined where we were and what we might be able to do the following day. Not quite what I had hoped as we were some considerable distance from the sites in the south delta.



Blue and yellow Macaws (Eustace Barnes)

Up pre-dawn for a full day in the delta we headed north towards Pedernales in the mouth of the northern Orinoco delta. It was all we could manage as the south delta was too distant to reach in a day. Always great, boat trips take you through some magical places where the abundance of life is truly staggering. The gallery forests were full of parrots, macaws and Venezuelan Red Howlers. A riot of life tarnished only by the periodic smog that obscured all view of trees, birds and monkeys. The river was home to Grey and Pink River Dolphins which we saw on several occasions during the course of the day along with good numbers of Large-billed Terns.

We did work a number of suitable looking gallery forests in search of our target species but to no avail. We did find several groups of Crimson-hooded Manakins, Yellow-crowned Elaenias and a couple of Sunbitterns during such sessions but no furnarids. We also picked up a number of other commoner species including Black-chinned and Silvered Antbird, Black-crested Antshrike and a few Striped Woodcreepers. Entering Morichal Largo we found the pre-historic looking Horned Screamer (Sorry for the cliché but it is a remarkable species) and a couple of roosting Great Potoos. Our very competent boatman then arranged lunch for us in an indigenous community that involved his frying some very tasty fish that was presented on the readily available Venezuelan cardboard, aka Casabe.



A Great Potoo roosting just above our heads (Eustace Barnes).



Rufous Crab Hawk; it just sat calling to its mate (Eustace Barnes)

The afternoon saw us heading down river towards Pedernales where we found good numbers of Scarlet Ibises, reasonable numbers of Blue and yellow Macaws and a superb Rufous Crab Hawk. This was a big target for this section of the tour and good to see. In the late afternoon we made for a well forested river island which is or at least was an important roost site for Festive and Orange-winged Amazons. We circled the island and another area of tall forests that the amazons appeared to be using. I suppose we may have seen 200 or so Orange-winged Amazons and a single Festive Amazon. I remember when this area was populated by thousands of Orange-winged and hundreds of Festive Amazons and to see their numbers so drastically reduced was thoroughly depressing. The *bodini* form of Festive Amazon is so reduced throughout its range it must be considered at least vulnerable. Likewise the Blue and yellow Macaw numbers only survive in tiny numbers rather than the hundreds that were here, but a few years ago.



Scarlet Ibises glowing in the late afternoon light (Eustace Barnes)

The next morning we packed and readied ourselves for departure en route to El Palmar on the western edge of the Imataca forest. We did briefly stop at Parque Cachamay in Puerto Ordaz only to find it was closed. We were told a Puma had escaped from the zoo and had been seen in the park. Apparently it was far too dangerous for us and no amount of careful persuasion could open that gate. We said to the unarmed guard that he might feel safer if we were with him an hour or so and that we would really like to see the Puma anyway, but to no avail. As it was, not far away there was a hole in the fence and in we went to see the Black-collared Swallows on the, but no Puma. This park was very dry but we nevertheless saw a good number of Black-collared Swallows. We also saw Cocoi and Capped Herons, Great and Snowy Egrets, Anhinga and large numbers of Neotropic Cormorants but little else.



Anhinga adopting sculpturesque pose (Eustace Barnes)

We headed on to El Palmar and the Parador Taguapire where it was clear change was in the air. Stofekm (Stoffy) had died and his daughter had taken over the business which was sad but nevertheless service much improved. Stoffy had run the old place for as long as I can remember and countless birders have stayed at this somewhat rustic place. Without his accommodation there would have been nowhere to stay. Our very reliable and pleasant local guide, Javier, was still working although there had been very few birding groups in the last couple of years. Still he was there and that was good news. However, we discovered that the Rio Grande forest reserve had been abandoned by the logging companies and the whole area illegally settled by miners and landless peasants. It had been a rich forest maintained for thirty years under careful management and seemingly now lost in a moment, forever. No escape now chaos and greed reaches those green retreats I used to invest with hope.

I did not appreciate quite how dramatic the devastation would be but the following day revealed the full horror. It will certainly come as a terrible shock to most birders and naturalists but all the time chaos reigns in Venezuela nothing can be done. We visited Rio Grande and were told by our petrified drivers that La Planada had been razed to the ground and only charred stumps remained over vast areas peppered with 'malarious' mining pits. The northbound road from the old camp was indeed lined with recent clearings and the smouldering remains of once tall forest. No one was in sight but we had the distinct impression we were being watched as radios swung from makeshift shacks and cooking utensils lay steaming in a number of clearings. We decided to leave.

Our first day at the Harpy Eagle site was great and we were rewarded with the unbelievable spectacle of a fully fledged near adult bird flying from tree to tree around us. It was one of the best experiences with this species I have had. On arrival the bird was sat in a distant tree but very soon it came to have a closer look at the upright primates wandering the edge of its clearing. Pretty soon we were able to watch the bird close up as it flew around us. Thankfully we were not considered edible as those talons could do some damage.



Harpy Eagle near El Palmar (Eustace Barnes)

Another area we visited, far away from Rio Grande and a second Harpy Eagle site also proved quite productive although it did not hold the white sand forest species. We walked a wide ride through tall forest finding good numbers of parrots and macaws. We had scope views of Caica and Red-fan Parrots, Orange-winged, Yellow-crowned and Southern Mealy Amazons as well as Painted Parakeet and Black-headed Parrot. The best sighting however, was of a large flock of Lilac-tailed Parrotlets that landed and then fed in a fruiting fig by the tracking affording great scope views; a very unusual experience with this often difficult genus. We also saw Crane hawk, Paradise Jacamar and a pair of Guianan Puffbirds along with a fine Red-necked Woodpecker. This area also had tall forest and good understorey flocks which gave us our first taste of lowland rainforest birding. Entering the forest we immediately connected with a nice flock that held Cinereous and Dusky-throated Antshrikes along with Grey, Long-winged and Brown-bellied Antwrens and a pair of Olivaceous Flatbills. A little further along and after a bit of a tussle we extracted a fine male Black-throated Antshrike from a dense thicket and a little later a pair of Rufous-bellied Antwrens. We walked the entire forest patch and picked up a pair of Ferruginous-backed Antbirds and a nice pair of Rose-breasted Chats in the scrub around the farm house. It was an excellent days birding if not the one I had planned for.

We had no site for Blue-cheeked Amazon or Pompadour Cotinga along with many other Guianan rainforest species which are best looked for in Guyana or Brazil.



Guianan Puffbird (left and Laughing Falcon (right) (Eustace Barnes)

As Rio Grande was a good as destroyed we elected to bird the old road south from El Palmar, exploring the wide range of dry forests and open country on our way to Las Claritas and KM88. This road is good for White-bellied Piculet although I don't know anyone else who sees it here. We found several pairs along the length of the road as well as Venezuelan Flycatcher, Northern White-fringed Antwren and Scrub Greenlets. Apart from these species we found a wide variety of common open country species we had not yet recorded but otherwise it was a travel day. We could not bird the Anacoco road as it too was overrun by miners and considered dangerous. We did stop at the Caroni River and found a family group of Brown Jacamars while we had lunch. It was 40 degrees!



Venezuelan Flycatcher (Eustace Barnes)



White-bellied Piculet near El Palmar (Eustace Barnes)

So Las Claritas was to be our base for the next few nights but as Barquilla de Fresa is closed we stayed at KM 88 in the Hotel El Pilonero. Actually this worked out well as the hotel owner allowed Leo and Oscar to use the kitchen where they managed to put together some excellent field breakfasts and lunches. Las Claritas is the one place in Venezuela where there are no shortages and one can buy more or less anything, if at a price. It is the most ghastly town you can possibly imagine; lawless, drowning in refuse with red waters running down the street. The military have retreated to a safe distance and just allow the inhabitants to get on with whatever they want to do. The streets are piled high with rubbish and packed with vehicles of every size creating the most extraordinary permanent traffic jam. The general impression is that you are on set for a Mad Max movie where life is less than pleasant shall we say. However, while this may be true the economy functions as the state exercises none of its controls here.

As the forests along 'Capuchinbird' road have also been destroyed and the Capuchinbirds with them we concentrated our efforts on the Escalera and a patch of lowland forest to the east of a town called Araima. This indigenous settlement is north of Las Claritas at about KM704. It is hard to tell which kilometre it is as most of the kilometre markers have been stolen. The Escalera was terrific and since the endemics on this road are the main reason for visiting this region we enjoyed some great birding. Also, the rains had just started and the birds were very active.



Olive-backed Tanager (left) Gary Howard and Tepui Brush-Finch (right) (Eustace Barnes)

Birding on the Escalera is focused on three well defined sections of the highway. If you find yourself wandering along the road in the hope of bumping into the endemics you will be disappointed. In compensation the scenery is great and there are no miners. Working the primary sites we slowly found an impressive number of endemics starting with Golden-tufted Mountain Grackles which were very common this year. Tepui Brush-Finch and Olive-backed Tanagers were also common and we saw them every day. One of the first surprises was finding a male Rose-collared Piha so quickly to be followed by at least four others not far away. The Ruddy Tody-Flycatchers, Streak-backed Antshrikes and Tepui Foliage-gleaners were all in their usual spots along with a few pairs of Tepui Whitestarts. Concealing ourselves in a patch of tall mossy forest we taped in a Tepui Antpitta and a pair of Roraiman Barbtails. A very well marked species that is always a real pleasure to see. We then regrouped for a mega breakfast prepared by our field crew. With Coffee!



Rose-collared Piha (Eustace Barnes)

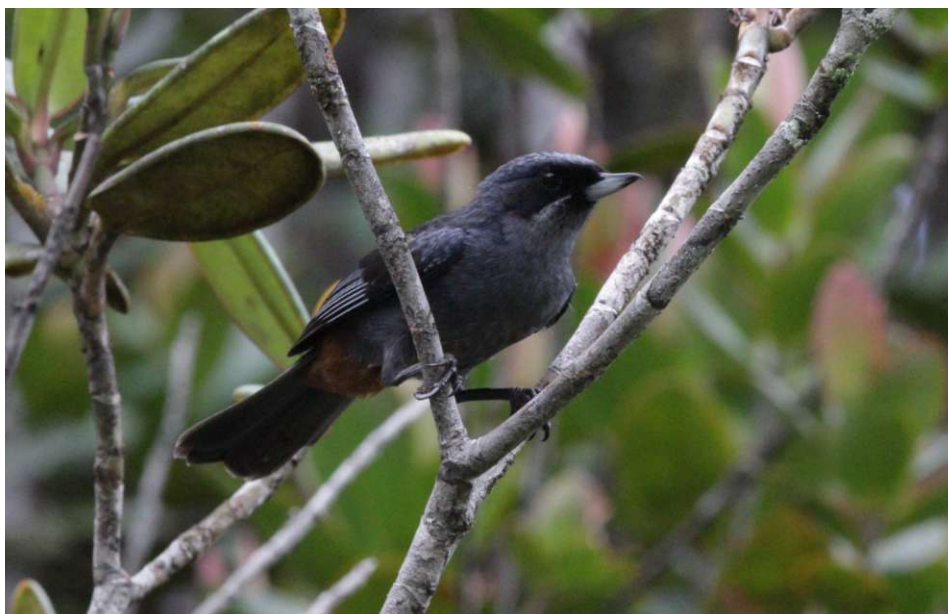


Tepui Foliage-Gleaner (Eustace Barnes)

Another very precise stop produced, after a short wait, the very rarely seen Tepui Tinamou. I had to work out where this one was but it all worked out for the best and the bird ended up running around us no more than a few meters from our feet. The hummers were thin on the ground but we did find a couple of Rufous-breasted Sabrewings and several Velvet-fronted Brilliants much to Joan's relief. Joan had been to the area before with Gary Rosenberg and missed the Brilliant so it was good to patch that gap on her list.



Tepui Tinamou (Paul Matson)

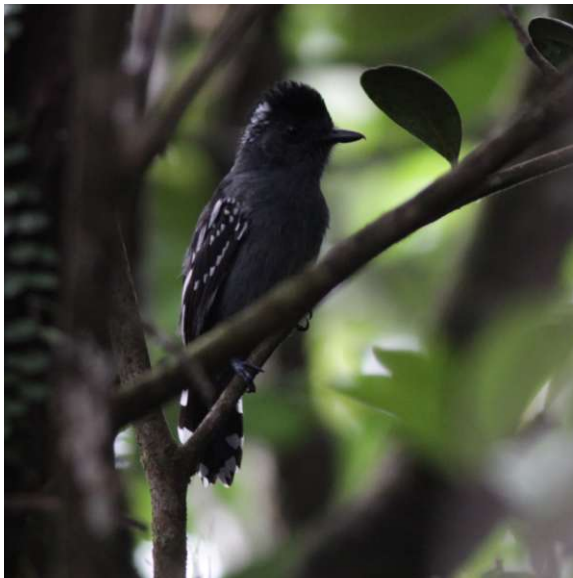


Greater Flowerpiercer on the Escalera (Eustace Barnes)

A second area was easier and quickly gave us Tepui Spinetail, Roraiman Antwren and Tepui Vireo in reasonable numbers. The forests here are a little taller and good for Red-banded Fruiteater which we found after a short wait. A Flutist Wren began to sing and soon enough we had all seen this delightful denizen of the misty forests picking about in the mossy interior. A short blast of Roraiman Antbird and a male was singing at our feet. Too close to photograph or even focus our bins! A similar approach to McConnell's Spinetail had the same effect and we watched a pair clambering about in a vine tangle above us. At this site we also found Peacock Coquette after searching for a flowering tree. It is usually in this area but can take some finding. At both sites we saw both Tepui Swift in good numbers and Fiery-shouldered Parakeets with brief views of perched birds on one occasion. This area is very good for Bellbirds and while enjoying a splendid field lunch we were treated to the deafening chorus of both Bearded and White Bellbirds which we saw at several locations thereafter.



Ruddy Tody Flycatcher; this little devil kept us waiting a while (Eustace Barnes)



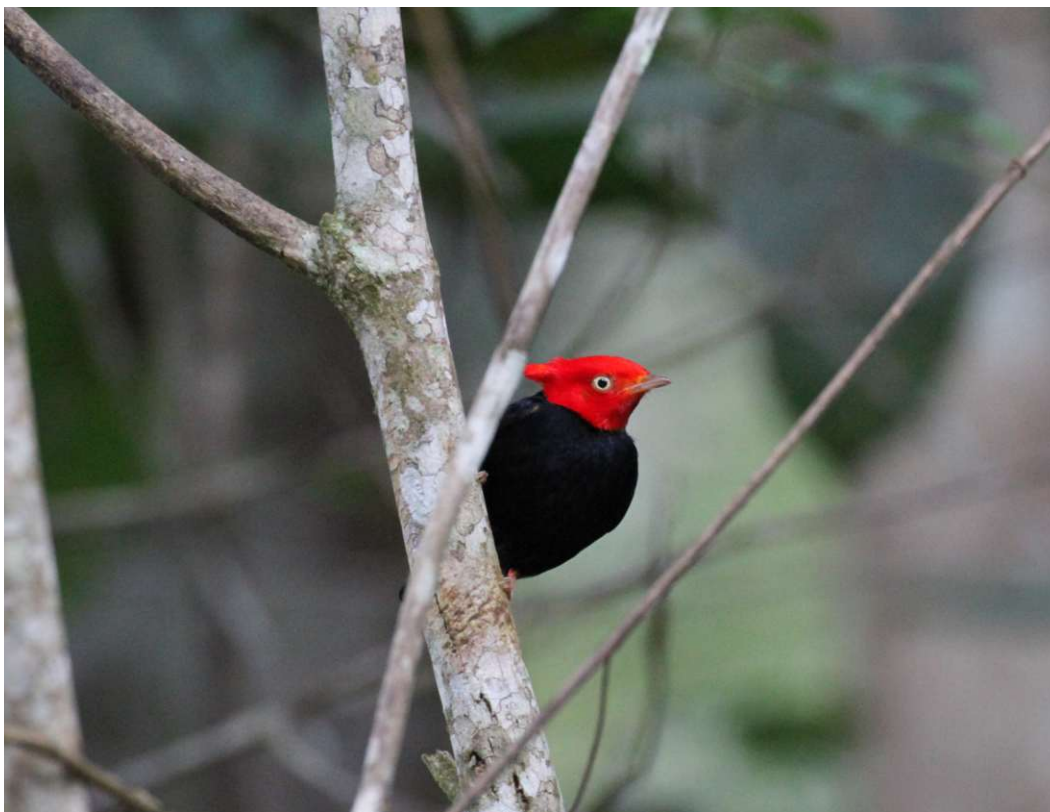
Streak-backed Antshrike (left) (Eustace Barnes) and Roraiman Antbird (right) (Gary Howard).

A somewhat lower site also took up a good deal of time. We searched for the recently split Whiteley's Toucanet which eventually gave itself up but it was a struggle; a great bird to find and probably the one that gave us the biggest challenge. We also found Roraiman Warbler at this site and taped in another Flutist Wren which came and perched on the crash barrier; quite extraordinary. We had to make a couple of visits to see a group of Guianan Cock-of-the-Rock near their lek; a superb species and one well worth devoting time to. We watched them messing about a while before the rains kicked in.



Guianan Cock-of-the-Rock (Eustace Barnes).

These lower elevations are good for multi-level mixed flocks of more widely distributed species and they can be very rewarding. We did connect with such a mega-flock, which started off slowly enough with Cinereous and Dusky-throated Antshrikes in the understorey accompanying Plain Antvireos, White-flanked and Grey Antwrens, Olivaceous Flatbill and several Roraiman Warblers. Guianan Warbling Antbirds had originally caught my attention and they too were caught up briefly in this activity. In close attendance were a couple of female plumaged Orange-bellied Manakins and a single female White-crowned Manakin working the fruiting melastomes. A little higher in the tangles Wedge-billed, Buff-throated and Chestnut-rumped Woodcreepers and Plain Xenops followed them together with a pair of Eastern Woodhaunters. This flurry of activity was then increased dramatically with the sudden appearance of the very dapper Fulvous Shrike Tanager; a flock leader which corals the canopy component of this flock through the forest. We quickly picked out a furtive Squirrel Cuckoo, plus Slaty-capped Shrike Vireo, Rufous-browed Peppershrike, Buff-cheeked Greenlet, Long-billed Gnatwren, Slate-throated Whitestart, American Redstart and White-shouldered Tanager. Isabelle then spotted a rather sluggish Sharpbill which blundered about at the back of the flock and was thereafter a very visible part of the assemblage. In a thick vine tangle a Fasciated Antshrike called loudly but was only glimpsed and a Grey Antbird called but we had no time to look for him in the frantic activity. After some work we picked out Ash-winged Antwren in the high canopy in the company of Yellow-crowned and White-lored Tyrannulets, Zimmer's Flatbill and Wing-barred Piprites and a number of Turquoise, Paradise, Speckled and Bay-headed Tanagers and a pair of Orange-bellied Euphonias. The tree tops also hosted a pair of Yellow-throated Flycatchers that called loudly. Working higher branches we picked out first Golden-collared and then the more widespread Golden-olive Woodpecker as well as a pair of Golden-spangled Piculets. As we continued to search the flock we picked up Purple, Red-legged and Green Honeycreepers and the ever present Bananaquit and a few Tropical Parulas. The flock began to swirl back past us and so we had another look through the flock adding Roraiman Antwren, Sepia-capped Flycatcher, Black-fronted Tyrannulet, White-winged Becard and even a Helmeted Pygmy Tyrant. Finally, chuntering away in the undergrowth, a group of Coraya Wrens were added to an already long list of flock attendants giving us a final tally of 50 species! No doubt we missed some as well. Luckily the group were all experienced birders as such flocks can be overwhelming for the Neotropical novice. Only in South America can you see a mixed flock of this size and complexity.



Scarlet-horned Manakin (Gary Howard)

On another occasion near this site we searched for the *roraimae* form of Foothill/Napo Screech Owl. Now of all the forms in this difficult complex this one is less tricky. This was just as well since no one was up for a night of wandering about in the dark. We stopped the bus, walked a few meters until a suitable spot was identified, played the tape and the bird fell out of the black and onto the predetermined branch for us all to see. It took nearly two minutes and that is the kind of night birding we all like, especially Jonathan!



Great Jacamar (Paul Matson)

We also visited a nice area of lowland rainforest to the north of Las Claritas owned by a Native Community called Araima. You can't miss it, it is identified by a sign four meters by one meter and, as such, is visible from the highway a few clicks north of KM704 on the west side of Troncal 10. Ask the local people for permission to visit their forest and they will direct you past the graveyard and across the power line firebreak to a great trail through good forest. It has been intensively hunted but those species smaller than an Aracari remain common.



'No I am definitely not talking to you today' Yellow-billed Jacamars (Paul Matson).

We found numerous understorey antbird flocks which are always entertaining. Unfortunately I had played that trick already. So it was on to Black-faced Hawk, Yellow-billed and Great Jacamars and a few understorey Antbirds including the very handsome Spot-backed and Scale-backed Antbirds. The forest is very tall here and although Todd's and Spot-tailed Antwrens, Painted Tody Flycatcher and Lemon-chested Greenlets are common by voice you do need to use a bit of imagination to connect the dots flitting between the canopies above you with the relevant vocalisation to get the birds. Lower in the forest we did find Tiny Tyrant Manakin and had great views of it thanks to Gary who spotted it sat motionless. There are also Capuchinbirds here according to the locals but we found none. Maybe they display more actively in June or July but that was no good to us. We were set to move on to Kaimoran on the Gran Sabana; a different landscape with great views of the tepuis lining the grassy savannas of the plateau.



The landscape on the Gran Sabana can be spectacular (Eustace Barnes)

Then there was the Gran Sabana; one of the more stunning grasslands in South America. The Goldenthrout did not put in an appearance, despite a concerted effort looking for it. The search for Giant Snipe in a sub-optimal grassland next to the highway only produced the putatively rarer South American Snipe. There seemed to be no Copper-tailed Hummingbirds around either and we guessed both our hummingbird targets were at higher elevations as well as the snipe. Possibly this had been exacerbated by the extreme drought and maybe they were indeed erratic in their movements as per Steve Hilty's description of this species behaviour. He is usually right and reading his text carefully one can usually work out where birds are and why it might be that you can't find them. This certainly applied to Roraiman Flycatcher. Is it on the Escalera? I think not. I guess the phrase 'there might not be the sufficient elevation to support this species on the Sierra de Lema' gives the game away. We did not find it anyway.



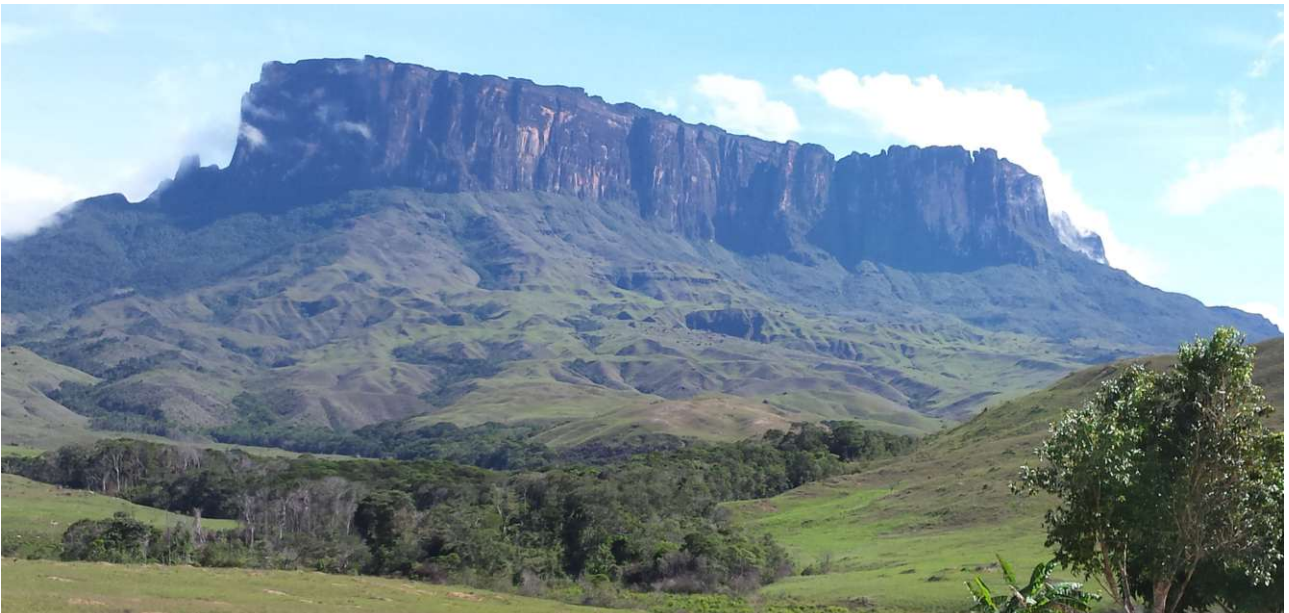
*Pearly-vented Tody-Tyrant of the form *ayantepui* (Gary Howard)*



Brown Violetear (Eustace Barnes)

The Gran Sabana is stunning but it is not a natural habitat. It has been burnt out of a previously forested landscape by generations of Pemon Indians. It has no endemic grassland species and has only been colonised by a rather small selection of open country species from further north. In conversation with local people over many years it is clear that the forests and grasslands are burnt for three reasons. One; it is boring living in the middle of nowhere and huge fires are fun to watch. Two; they are terrified of snakes and the sight of one precipitates the immediate burning of any vegetation nearby. Three; the ash from the fires apparently lands in rivers and makes for good fishing. Can that be right? Well no, but the forests are burnt and continue to retreat at an alarming rate. If you ever thought the forests of South America were always going to be there and the Phillipines or Indonesia should done first better think again; South American forests across the continent are going up in smoke, being cleared or the fragments simply drying out.

That was the end of the main tour and so we said our farewells as Leo ferried much of the group back to Puerto Ordaz for their homeward flights.



Mount Roraima on a sunny morning (Eustace Barnes)

Time for the Roraima extension and what an amazing opportunity! I guess this is the first commercial tour to Roraima which, given how easy it is seems rather surprising. As usual I suppose, Birdquest are first in the field. Detractors and copyists will no doubt follow in our foot steps which is no bad thing. Leaving Kaimoran and heading south across the Gran Sabana we made for the Pemon village of Paraitepuy from where all trips to Roraima start. On the way we saw Stripe-tailed Yellow-Finches and a good number of Least Nighthawks as well as our first White-tailed Nightjars. The Pemon are a very warm and welcoming people and it was great fun being in their care for a few days. Nothing was too much for them to do for us and they genuinely appeared to be having the time of their lives working together for our comfort. Leaving the village, the first section is done on quad bikes to the Tek River cutting out quite a substantial walk. Once there you ford that river (it would be called a stream in Britain) and walk to the Kukenan river which is larger and definitely a river. However, the 'ferryman' here can take you across in a canoe.



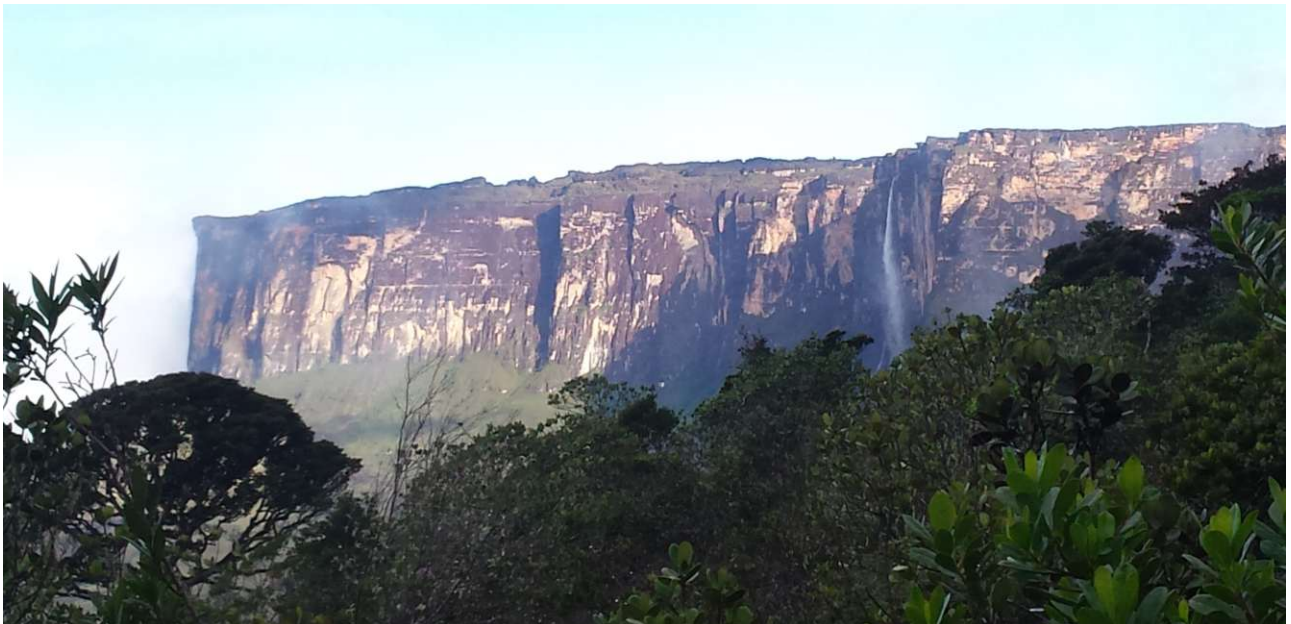
Mount Roraima from the Kukenan River (Eustace Barnes)

From the Kukenan River it is a four to five hour walk to base camp, with some interesting species to look for on the way. We easily did it in time for lunch. Base camp lies beneath the wall of the great tepui and is an extraordinary place to be let alone stay. Our camp was well appointed and we were very well taken care of with a dining tent and all the necessary equipment provided with all our bags carried, leaving us to go birding. The walk up from base camp to the summit is tough but one can take a whole day to do it through the mossy forests packed with endemics. On the summit you stay in caves the locals call hotels. These are all amazing places to visit and quite magical to stay in and all located across the undulating rocky surface of the Tepui which is covered in insectivorous plants and extraordinary rock formations. The walk is considerably easier than I thought it would be and one of the most rewarding and exciting hikes I have ever done. The forests on the skirt of the Tepui and the landscape on the summit certainly exceeded my expectations and is something you have to see.



Great Elaenia is common on Roraima above 1600m (Eustace Barnes)

Unfortunately the lower forests have all been cleared. The nearby Kukenan Tepui recently lost thousands of hectares of forest on its lower slopes and the burning continues apace. The constitution of the park as in many others the world over allows indigenous people to carry on traditional practices however destructive. One wonders if cannibalism were practised if such acceptance would extend to that practice as well. If you want to go, better do so soon otherwise it will all be gone. I think it really needs some birding groups to go and make the point that the forests are as special as the summit and encourage the Pemon to stop burning!



Kukenan Tepui seen from Roraima (Eustace Barnes)

Exploring the area around base camp and nearby forest we easily found a pair of Great Elaenias. Tepui Wrens started at about 1950m and Roraiman Barbtail, White-throated Foliage-Gleaner and Tepui Whitestart were common in the lower mossy forests. As one climbs up through the forests Great Elaenia, Tepui Wren and Greater Flowerpiercer become progressively commoner. The latter is abundant on the summit but we did not see the Elaenia on the summit, although it probably gets up there. We found Red-banded Fruiteater in most mossy forests and had repeated good looks at them. Paramo seedeater is not uncommon. The form *duncani* does have a very distinctive song and birds did not respond to recordings of Andean birds on two occasions. Not a valid data set but an interesting start. We also found Blue-fronted Lancebill up to 2200m, contra Hilty in Birds of Venezuela. The form here, *guianensis*, is also likely a distinct species. At the elevations given for both Roraiman Flycatcher and Chapman's Bristle-Tyrant there is no forest left but with some exploration of the area no doubt we will access suitable forest.



*Tepui Wren; a huge bright rufous almost *Thryothorus*-like species (Eustace Barnes)*



Greater Flowerpiercer was abundant on Roraima (Eustace Barnes)

The summit was fascinating botanically with a numerous spectacular insectivorous plants. We also found the endemic 'Cart wheeling' frog/toad *Oreophrynella quelchii* to be abundant.



Pitcher Plant Helianphora nutans (Eustace Barnes)



The flora on the summit of Roiraima was dominated by insectivorous plants (Eustace Barnes)



Mossy forest beneath the wall on Roraima (Eustace Barnes)

Over the summit huge numbers of Tepui Parrotlets were constantly crossing between feeding and breeding grounds. They are confined to the Tepui summits at this time of year. You might see one lower down at this time but it would be like seeing a Swallow in Scotland in January; possible but unlikely. Tepui, White-chinned and White-collared Swifts constantly shot across the skies and we had good views of these species during our stay. The Tepui wall is home to a pair of Orange-breasted Falcons that presumably feed on the Parrotlets and Blue and white Swallows. We saw them on our descent with ease along with a pair of Bat Falcons. This cryptic pairing benefits the Orange-breasted Falcon as its prey may assume it is a Bat Falcon and therefore no threat. The Bat Falcon benefits as they may be mistaken for an Orange-breasted Falcon and not a primary predator or too big to mob or chase off. A fascinating morphological convergence found in many species pairings the world over.



Tepui (Band-winged) Nightjar (Eustace Barnes)

Once on the summit the lads were detailed to go and find a roosting Band-winged Nightjar which they did in less time than it takes to drink a cup of coffee. The form found on the tepuis has a very distinctive vocalisation and is clearly a separate species. It was lucky we did not have to try and tape one in as it rained all night and well past dawn.



Rock forms and pools on the summit (left) and our path to the summit 'The Ramp' (right) (Eustace Barnes)

Our night birding sessions at base camp were also ruined by rain that started at dusk and did not stop until well after dawn. As such we missed Roraiman Nightjar which may be found some distance below camp. However, we did have great views of Giant Snipe at a breeding area where there were several calling birds and therefore a lek nearby. As we had seen one bird well we did not look for that. We had heard Roraiman Screech Owl during our first night at base camp which we would have gone for on the second night had it not been raining so hard and we had seen it on the Escalera.

The walk down the following morning was surprisingly productive. We found Copper-tailed Hummingbird in good numbers between 1800 and 1500m. This is just above the elevation of the Sierra de Lema and having not found them there we hoped they would be higher up. We eventually found Tepui Goldenthrout giving us 40 out of the 42 endemics I had targeted! The Goldenthrout was not at the Soldiers Monument and is only there with any regularity during the wet season. As such this is another endemic that is more reliably found on Roraima at this time of year and especially this year with the extended dry season.



While waiting for the 'ferryman' along the Kukenan River I heard and then taped in a pair of Finsch's Euphonias which are not frequently recorded in Venezuela. There are no records of this species in the area, although it looks perfect for them; a good find! We then began our walk back to the Tek River and in the rather sparse grasslands I heard a displaying Bearded Tachuri which provided an outstanding finale to a very special tour.



Finsch's Euphonia at the Kukenan river (Eustace Barnes)



Bearded Tachuri on territory (Eustace Barnes)

In summary we had problems with transport, food availability, site destruction, extended drought and security but managed to get to most places we needed to, found sufficient food to keep us well, found new sites, stuck to the script and dug out even the most inactive of species and did not run into any unpleasantness! In the context of continuous daily challenges posed by all of the above it may come as a surprise that we found nearly all of the endemics and possibly a higher proportion of them than any previous tour! I think we can claim success in every respect. The tour highlights were many and varied and speak of a very diverse range of habitats and experiences in a very special country. This was at least my twentieth trip to Eastern Venezuela but, sadly, maybe the last for some time.



The sodden summit of the lost world (Eustace Barnes).

TOP TEN (Main tour).

Harpy Eagle

Tepui Tinamou

Guianan Cock-of-the-Rock

Tepui Antpitta

Roraiman Barbtail

Rufous Crab Hawk

Scissor-tailed Hummingbird

White Bellbird

Rose-collared Piha

Lilac-tailed Parrotlet



The magnificent Harpy Eagle is probably best seen in Venezuela (Eustace Barnes)

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

Species which were heard but not seen are indicated by the symbol (H).

Species which were only recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (LO).

Species which were not personally recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (NL).

Species marked with the diamond symbol (◊) are either endemic to the country or local region or considered 'special' birds for some other reason (e.g. it is only seen on one or two Birdquest tours; it is difficult to see across all or most of its range; the local form is endemic or restricted-range and may in future be treated as a full species).

Great Tinamou *Tinamus major* (H)

Little Tinamou *Crypturellus soui* (H)

Tepui Tinamou ◊ *Crypturellus ptaritepui* Walk away views of a very confident bird.

Least Grebe *Podiceps dominicus* A few pairs with chicks in the Llanos de Monagas 11th April.

Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis*

Neotropic Cormorant (Olivaceous C) *Phalacrocorax brasilianus*



Tepui Tinamou (Eustace Barnes)

Anhinga *Anhinga anhinga*

Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens*

Horned Screamer *Anhima cornuta* A few along Morichal Largo.

Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors* A large flock seen in the Cano Ajies.

White-faced Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna viduata*



Immature Rufescent Tiger Heron (Eustace Barnes)

Rufescent Tiger-Heron *Tigrisoma lineatum* One along Morichal Largo.
Cocoi Heron (White-necked H) *Ardea cocoi*
Great Egret *Ardea alba*
Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*
Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea*
Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*
Striated Heron *Butorides striatus*
Whistling Heron ♦ *Syrigma sibilatrix*
Capped Heron *Pilherodius pileatus* Noted at a couple of places.
Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*
Buff-necked Ibis *Theristicus caudatus* Very rare in the eastern Llanos.
Green Ibis *Mesembrinibis cayennensis*



Scarlet Ibis at Pedernales (Eustace Barnes)

Scarlet Ibis *Eudocimus ruber* Seen in the Cano Ajies and the north delta near Pedernales.
Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*
Wood Stork *Mycteria americana*
Maguari Stork *Euxenura maguari* A few in the delta and the Llanos de Monagas.
King Vulture *Sarcoramphus papa*
Black Vulture (American B V) *Coragyps atratus*
Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*
Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture *Cathartes burrovianus*
Greater Yellow-headed Vulture *Cathartes melambrotus*
Western Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*
Grey-headed Kite *Leptodon cayanensis* A superb adult near El Palmar scoped up.
Swallow-tailed Kite (American S-t K) *Elanoides forficatus*
Pearl Kite *Gampsonyx swainsonii*
White-tailed Kite *Elanus leucurus*
Double-toothed Kite *Harpagus bidentatus*
Plumbeous Kite *Ictinia plumbea*
Crane Hawk *Geranospiza caerulescens*

White Hawk *Leucopternis albicollis*

Black-faced Hawk ◊ *Leucopternis melanops* A single bird seen near Araima.

Savanna Hawk *Buteogallus meridionalis*

Rufous Crab Hawk *Buteogallus aequinoctialis* One seen and others heard in the north delta.

Common Black-Hawk *Buteogallus anthracinus* A few along Cano Ajies.

Great Black-Hawk *Buteogallus urubitinga*

Black-collared Hawk *Busarellus nigricollis*

Grey-lined Hawk *Buteo nitidus*

Roadside Hawk *Buteo magnirostris*

Short-tailed Hawk *Buteo brachyurus*

Zone-tailed Hawk *Buteo albonotatus*

White-tailed Hawk *Buteo albicaudatus* Common in open habitats.

Harpy Eagle ◊ *Harpia harpyja* An awesome experience!

Black-and-white Hawk-Eagle *Spizastur melanoleucus* One Cerro Turumiquiere.

Black Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus tyrannus*

Ornate Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus ornatus* An aggressive male seen north of Caripe.

Black Caracara *Daptrius ater*

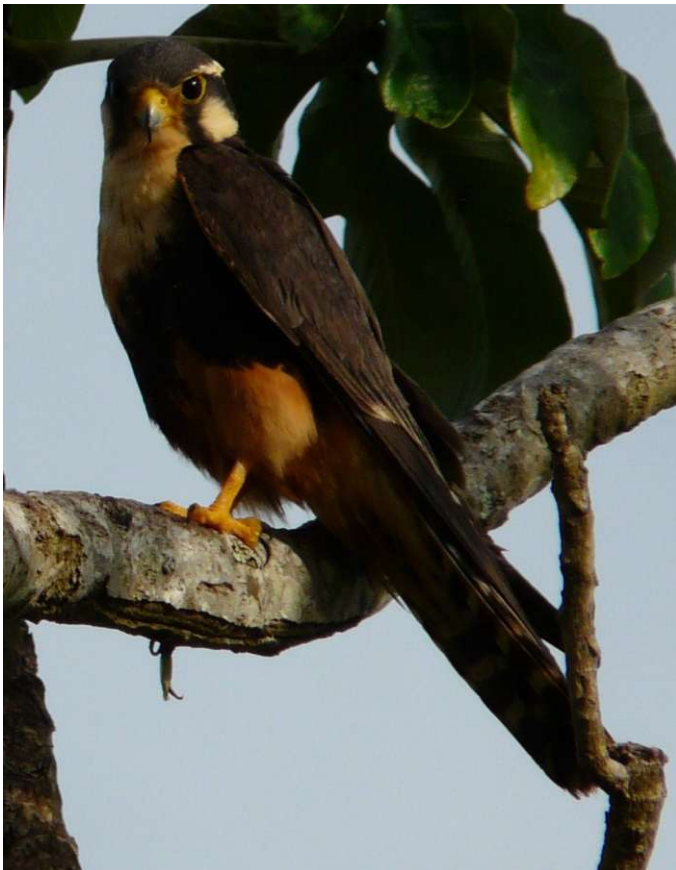
Red-throated Caracara *Ibycter americanus*

Northern Crested Caracara *Caracara cheriway*

Yellow-headed Caracara *Milvago chimachima*

Laughing Falcon *Herpetotheres cachinnans*

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius*



Aplomado Falcon (Eustace Barnes)

Aplomado Falcon *Falco femoralis* Seen in the Llanos de Monagas and on the Gran Sabana.

Bat Falcon *Falco ruficularis* Small numbers at several sites.

Rufous-vented Chachalaca *Ortalis ruficauda* North of the Orinoco.
Little Chachalaca ◊ *Ortalis motmot* South of the Orinoco.
Spix's Guan *Penelope jacquacu* One crossing the road on the Escalera was a surprise.
Crested Bobwhite *Colinus cristatus*
Marbled Wood-Quail *Odontophorus gujanensis* (H)
Russet-crowned Crane ◊ *Laterallus viridis* (H) Heard at the Soldiers monument.
Grey-necked Wood-Rail *Aramides cajanea*
Purple Gallinule (American P G) *Porphyryla martinica*
Common Gallinule (Laughing Moorhen) *Gallinula galeata*
Sunbittern *Eurypyga helias* A couple in the Delta.
Southern Lapwing *Vanellus chilensis*
Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus*
Wattled Jacana *Jacana jacana*
Solitary Sandpiper *Tringa solitaria*
Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularia*
South American Snipe (Paraguayan S) *Gallinago paraguaiiae* These are also quite uncommon.



Large-billed Tern (Eustace Barnes)

Large-billed Tern *Phaetusa simplex*
Black Skimmer *Rynchops nigra*
Rock Pigeon (R Dove, Feral P) *Columba livia*
Band-tailed Pigeon *Patagioenas fasciata roraimae* Very uncommon. We only saw a couple.
Scaled Pigeon *Patagioenas speciosa* Seen at several sites in the south.
Pale-vented Pigeon *Patagioenas cayennensis*
Ruddy Pigeon *Patagioenas subvinacea*
Plumbeous Pigeon *Patagioenas plumbea*
Eared Dove *Zenaida auriculata*
Scaled Dove *Scardafella squammata* Small numbers seen south of the Orinoco.
Common Ground-Dove (Scaly G-D) *Columbina passerine*

Plain-breasted Ground Dove *Columbina minuta* (LO)
 Ruddy Ground-Dove *Columbina talpacoti*
 White-tipped Dove *Leptotila verreauxi*
 Lined Quail-Dove ◊ *Geotrygon linearis trinitatis* A couple glimpsed on Cerro Humo.



Blue and yellow Macaws (Eustace Barnes)

Blue-and-yellow Macaw *Ara ararauna* Small numbers noted in the Orinoco delta
Red-and-green Macaw (Green-winged M) *Ara chloroptera* Small numbers near El Palmar and on La Escalera.
Red-bellied Macaw *Orthopsittaca manilata*
Red-shouldered Macaw *Diopsittaca nobilis* seen in the delta and on the Gran Sabana.
Scarlet-fronted Parakeet *Aratinga wagleri*
White-eyed Parakeet *Aratinga leucophthalmus*
Brown-throated Parakeet *Aratinga pertinax*
Painted Parakeet *Pyrrhura picta* A few near El Palmar.
Venezuelan Parakeet ◊ *Pyrrhura emma* Quite numerous around Caripe.
Fiery-shouldered Parakeet ◊ *Pyrrhura egregia* common on the Sierra de Lema.
Green-rumped Parrotlet *Forpus passerinus*
Golden-winged Parakeet *Brotogeris chrysopterus*
Lilac-tailed Parrotlet ◊ *Touit batavica* One of the tour highlights. A large flock found feeding in a fruiting tree.
Black-headed Parrot *Pionites melanocephala*
Caica Parrot ◊ *Pionopsitta caica* Great views of a few near El Palmar.
Blue-headed Parrot *Pionus menstruus*
Red-billed Parrot *Pionus sordidus*

Dusky Parrot ◊ *Pionus fuscus*

Festive Amazon ◊ *Amazona festiva bodini* One seen very poorly. Reduced to tiny numbers in the delta now.

Yellow-crowned Amazon *Amazona ochrocephala*

Orange-winged Amazon *Amazona amazonica* Much reduced in number throughout Venezuela.

Southern Mealy Amazon *Amazona farinosa* A few noted at El Palmar.

Red-fan Parrot (Hawk-headed P) *Derophtus accipitrinus* A few near El Palmar.

Dark-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus melacorhyphus*

Squirrel Cuckoo *Piaya cayana*

Greater Ani *Crotophaga major*

Smooth-billed Ani *Crotophaga ani*

Groove-billed Ani *Crotophaga sulcirostris*

Striped Cuckoo (American S C) *Tapera naevia* (H)

Rufous-winged Ground-Cuckoo ◊ *Neomorphus rufipennis* (H) One heard near the river at Rio Grande did not show.



Hoatzin; surely the most bizarre of birds? (Eustace Barnes)

Hoatzin *Opisthocomus hoazin*

Roraiman Screech-Owl ◊ (Foothill S-O) *Megascops napensis roraimae* One seen near Las Claritas.

Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl *Glaucidium brasilianum* (H)

Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia* Distressingly numerous where rainforest once stood.

Oilbird ◊ *Steatornis caripensis* Hundreds at the Cueva de los Guacharos.

Great Potoo *Nyctibius grandis* A couple of roosting birds found.

Pauraque (Common P) *Nyctidromus albicollis*

White-collared Swift *Streptoprocne zonaris*

Chestnut-collared Swift *Cypseloides rutilus* A pair seen on Cerro Turumiquiere; very rare in the north east.

Tepui Swift ◊ *Cypseloides phelpsi* Abundant on the Gran Sabana and Mt Roraima.

White-chinned Swift *Cypseloides cryptus* Smaller numbers seen.

Short-tailed Swift *Chaetura brachyura*
Vaux's Swift *Chaetura vauxi* A few on Cerro Humo.
Band-rumped Swift *Chaetura spinicauda*
Grey-rumped Swift *Chaetura cinereiventris*
White-tipped Swift *Aeronautes montivagus*
Neotropical Palm-Swift (Fork-tailed P-S) *Tachornis squamata*
Rufous-breasted Hermit (Hairy H) *Glaucis hirsuta*
Green Hermit *Phaethornis guy* A few on Cerro Turumiquiere.
Eastern Long-tailed Hermit ◊ (Long-tailed H) *Phaethornis superciliosus*
Sooty-capped Hermit ◊ *Phaethornis augusti*
Reddish Hermit *Phaethornis ruber*
Little Hermit ◊ (Longuemare's H) *Phaethornis longuemareus* Found in the delta. Not a common species.
Grey-breasted Sabrewing *Campylopterus largipennis*



Rufous-breasted Sabrewing (Gary Howard)

Rufous-breasted Sabrewing *Campylopterus hyperythrus* Several found on the Escalera.
White-tailed Sabrewing ◊ *Campylopterus ensipennis* Common on Cerros Humo, Negro and Turumiquiere.
Brown Violetear *Colibri delphinae*
Green Violetear *Colibri thalassinus* Seen on Cerro Negro.
Green-throated Mango *Anthracothorax viridigula* Seen along the Cano Ajies in the mangroves.
Black-throated Mango *Anthracothorax nigricollis*
Ruby-topaz Hummingbird ◊ *Chrysolampis mosquitus* One female in the delta.
Tufted Coquette ◊ *Lophornis ornata* One bird on Cerro Humo.



Peacock Coquette (Paul Matson)

- Peacock Coquette** ◇ *Lophornis pavoninus* Several on the Escalera
Blue-chinned Sapphire *Chlorestes notatus*
Blue-tailed Emerald *Chlorostilbon mellisugus*
Green-tailed Emerald ◇ *Chlorostilbon alicia* Noted on Cerros Negro and Turumiquiere.
Fork-tailed Woodnymph *Thalurania furcata*
Golden-tailed Sapphire *Chrysuronia oenone*
White-chested Emerald ◇ *Amazilia chionopectus*
Versicoloured Emerald *Amazilia versicolor*
Glittering-throated Emerald *Amazilia fimbriata*
Copper-rumped Hummingbird ◇ *Amazilia tobaci* Very numerous in the north east.
Velvet-browed Brilliant ◇ *Heliodoxa xanthogonys* Maybe a dozen seen on the Sierra de Lema.
Scissor-tailed Hummingbird ◇ *Hylonympha macrocerca* Two males and a female found on Cerro Humo.
Venezuelan Sylph ◇ *Agelaiocercus berlepschi* Common on Cerros Negro and Turumiquiere.
Black-eared Fairy *Heliothryx aurita*
Rufous-shafted Woodstar ◇ *Chaetocercus jourdanii* A few noted on Cerros Negro and Turumiquiere.
White-tipped Quetzal ◇ *Pharomachrus fulgidus* A superb male on Cerro Humo.
Amazonian White-tailed Trogon *Trogon viridis*



Green and rufous Kingfisher (Eustace Barnes)

Collared Trogon *Trogon collaris*
Masked Trogon *Trogon personatus*
Black-throated Trogon *Trogon rufus* A pair near El Palmar.
Guianan Trogon *Trogon violaceus*
Ringed Kingfisher *Megaceryle torquata*
Amazon Kingfisher *Chloroceryle amazona*
Green Kingfisher *Chloroceryle Americana*
Green-and-rufous Kingfisher *Chloroceryle inda* One adult noted in the delta.



Brown Jacamars (Gary Howard)

Brown Jacamar *Brachygalba lugubris* Three Caroni river and others on the Gran Sabana.
Yellow-billed Jacamar *Galbula albirostris* A pair at Araima.
Rufous-tailed Jacamar *Galbula ruficauda*
Green-tailed Jacamar ◊ *Galbula galbula*
Paradise Jacamar *Galbula dea*
Great Jacamar *Jacamerops aureus* A pair at Araima.
Guianan Puffbird ◊ *Notharchus macrorhynchos*
Two-banded Puffbird ◊ *Hypnelus bicinctus*
Black Nunbird ◊ *Monasa atra*
Swallow-winged Puffbird (Swallow-wing) *Chelidoptera tenebrosa*
Black-spotted Barbet ◊ *Capito niger*
Groove-billed Toucanet ◊ *Aulacorhynchus sulcatus* Common on Cerro Humo.



Golden-spangled Piculet (Gary Howard)

Whitely's Toucanet ◊ *Aulacorhynchus whitelianus* One heard and then seen on the Sierra de Lema.

Black-necked Aracari *Pteroglossus aracari*

Green Aracari *Pteroglossus viridis* A few seen near El Palmar.

Channel-billed Toucan *Ramphastos vitellinus*

White-throated Toucan *Ramphastos tucanus*

Golden-spangled Piculet *Picumnus exilis*

Black-dotted Piculet ◊ *Picumnus nigropunctatus* common north delta and Cano Ajies.

White-bellied Piculet *Picumnus spilogaster* Common south east of El Palmar.

Golden-olive Woodpecker *Piculus rubiginosus*



Cream-coloured Woodpecker (Eustace Barnes)

- Cream-coloured Woodpecker** *Celeus flavus*
Lineated Woodpecker *Dryocopus lineatus*
Yellow-tufted Woodpecker *Melanerpes cruentatus* (see note)
Red-crowned Woodpecker *Melanerpes rubricapillus*
Little Woodpecker *Veniliornis passerinus*
Golden-collared Woodpecker *Veniliornis cassini*
Crimson-crested Woodpecker *Campephilus melanoleucos*
Red-necked Woodpecker *Campephilus rubicollis*
McConnell's Spinetail ◇ *Synallaxis macconnelli* A few on the upper Escalera.
Pale-breasted Spinetail *Synallaxis albescens*
Stripe-breasted Spinetail ◇ *Synallaxis cinnamomea*
Yellow-chinned Spinetail (Yellow-throated S) *Certhiaxis cinnamomea*
Crested Spinetail ◇ *Cranioleuca subcristata* Found around Caripe.
Tepui Spinetail ◇ *Cranioleuca demissa* Common the Escalera.
Plain Thornbird (Northern T) *Phacellodomus inornatus*
Roraiman Barbtail ◇ *Roraimia adusta* Seen on the Sierra de Lema.
White-throated Barbtail ◇ *Premnoplex [tatei] pariae* A single bird found on Cerro Humo.
White-throated Barbtail ◇ *Premnoplex [tatei] tatei* A bird found on Cerro Turumiquiere.



McConnell's Spinetail (*Eustace Barnes*)

- Eastern Striped Woodhaunter (Eastern W) *Hyloctistes subulatus***
Tepui Foliage-gleaner (White-throated F-G) *Automolus roraimae* A pair on the Sierra de Lema.
Cinnamon-rumped Foliage-Gleaner *Phylidor pyrrhodes* (H)
Olive-backed Foliage-Gleaner *Automolus infuscatus* (H)
Plain Xenops *Xenops minutus*
Grey-throated Leaf-tosser (G-t Leafscraper) *Sclerurus albigularis* A few on Cerro Humo.
Plain-brown Woodcreeper *Dendrocincla fuliginosa*
Wedge-billed Woodcreeper *Glyphorhynchus spirurus*
Strong-billed Woodcreeper *Xiphocolaptes promeropirhynchus* (H)
Straight-billed Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus picus*
Striped Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus obsoletus*
Chestnut-rumped Woodcreeper (H) *Xiphorhynchus pardalotus*
Buff-throated Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus guttatus*
Cocoa Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus susurrans*
Streak-headed Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*
Red-billed Scythebill *Campylorhamphus trochilirostris* A very responsive bird on Cerro Humo.
Fasciated Antshrike *Cymbilaimus lineatus* (H)
Black-throated Antshrike (H) *Frederickena viridis* A superb male found near El Palmar.
Great Antshrike *Taraba major*
Black-crested Antshrike *Sakesphorus canadensis*
Barred Antshrike *Thamnophilus doliatus*
Mouse-coloured Antshrike *Thamnophilus murinus* (H)
Guianan Slaty Antshrike (H) *Thamnophilus punctatus*
Streak-backed Antshrike (H) *Thamnophilus insignis* One at the usual spot on the Sierra de Lema made us wait.
Plain Antwren *Dysithamnus mentalis*
Dusky-throated Antshrike *Thamnomanes ardesiacus*
Cinereous Antshrike *Thamnomanes caesius*
Pygmy Antwren *Myrmotherula brachyura* (H)

Rufous-bellied Antwren ◊ *Myrmotherula guttata* A pair found near El Palmar.
 Brown-bellied Antwren ◊ *Myrmotherula gutturalis* A pair in most understory flock in the lowlands.
 White-flanked Antwren *Myrmotherula axillaris*
 Long-winged Antwren *Myrmotherula longipennis*



Tepui Foliage-Gleaner (Eustace Barnes)

Grey Antwren *Myrmotherula menetriesii*
 Spot-tailed Antwren ◊ *Herpsilochmus sticturus* (H) Way, way up in the high canopy seen flitting about.
 Todd's Antwren ◊ *Herpsilochmus stictocephalus* (H) Also way, way up in the high canopy.
 Roraiman Antwren ◊ *Herpsilochmus roraimae* Common on the Sierra de Lema.
 Northern White-fringed Antwren ◊ *Formicivora intermedia*
 Ash-winged Antwren *Terenura spodioptila* A pair found on the lower Escalera.
 Grey Antbird *Cercomacra cinerascens*
 Guianan Warbling Antbird ◊ *Hypocnemis cantator*
 Black-chinned Antbird *Hypocnemoides melanopogon* A delta species.
 Spot-backed Antbird *Hylophylax naevia* A very smart Antbird.
 Common Scale-backed Antbird *Willisornis poecilinotus* Another smart antbird.
 Roraiman Antbird ◊ *Schistocichla saturatus* One male on the Sierra de Lema in his usual spot.
 Silvered Antbird *Sclateria naevia*
 White-bellied Antbird *Myrmeciza longipes* Glimpsed around El Palmar.
 Ferruginous-backed Antbird ◊ *Myrmeciza ferruginea* A stunning pair found near El Palmar.
 Black-throated Antbird *Myrmeciza atrothorax*
 Rufous-throated Antbird ◊ *Gymnopithys rufigula* A pair at Araima.
 Black-faced Antthrush *Formicarius analis* One popped out to see us on Cerro Humo.
 Short-tailed Antthrush *Chamaeza campanisona* A stunning bird seen on the Escalera.
 Scaled Antpitta *Grallaria guatimalensis* (H)
 Tepui Antpitta ◊ *Grallaria simplex* A couple on the Escalera. One right by our feet.
 Sucre Antpitta ◊ *Grallaricula cumanensis* A very pretty Antpitta we found on Cerro Humo.



Sooty-headed Tyrannulet (Eustace Barnes)

- Sooty-headed Tyrannulet** *Phyllomyias griseiceps*
- Coopman's Tyrannulet** ◊ *Zimmerius minimus* Common in the north-east.
- Guianan Tyrannulet** *Zimmerius acer* A few noted in the south.
- Southern Beardless Tyrannulet** *Camptostoma obsoletum*
- Mouse-coloured Tyrannulet** *Phaeomyias murina*
- Yellow-crowned Tyrannulet** *Tyrannulus elatus*
- White-lored Tyrannulet** *Ornithion inerme*
- Forest Elaenia** *Myiopagis gaimardii*
- Yellow-crowned Elaenia** ◊ *Myiopagis flavivertex* Common in the delta.
- Greenish Elaenia** *Myiopagis viridicata* Numerous in the north-east
- Yellow-bellied Elaenia** *Elaenia flavogaster*
- Plain-crested Elaenia** *Elaenia cristata* Common on the Gran Sabana
- Mountain Elaenia** *Elaenia frantzii* A few found in the north-east.
- Tepui Elaenia** *Elaenia olivina* Common on the Escalera.
- Northern Scrub-Flycatcher (Scrub F)** *Sublegatus arenarum* Common near El Palmar
- White-throated Tyrannulet** *Mecocerculus leucophrys* Seen on Cerro Turumiquiere and Mt Roraima.
- Yellow Tyrannulet** *Capsiempis flaveola* Found around El Palmar.
- Olive-striped Flycatcher** *Mionectes olivaceus* Seen in the north-east.
- Ochre-bellied Flycatcher** *Mionectes oleagineus*
- Sierra de Lema Flycatcher** ◊ *Mionectes roraimae* Seen on the lower Escalera.
- Slaty-capped Flycatcher** *Leptopogon superciliaris* (H)
- Sepia-capped Flycatcher** *Leptopogon amaurocephalus* Seen on Cerro Humo.
- Black-fronted Tyrannulet** ◊ *Phylloscartes nigrifrons* Common on upper Escalera.
- Helmeted Pygmy-Tyrant** *Lophotriccus galeatus*
- Pale-eyed Pygmy-Tyrant** *Lophotriccus pilaris* Numerous near El Palmar.
- Pearly-vented Tody-Tyrant** *Hemitriccus margaritaceiventer auyantepui* Several noted on the Gran Sabana.
- Ruddy Tody-Flycatcher** ◊ *Poecilotriccus russatus* A pair on the Sierra de Lema on one of their territories.
- Slate-headed Tody-Flycatcher** *Poecilotriccus Sylvia*



Sepia-capped Flycatcher (Paul Matson)

Common Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum cinereum*

Painted Tody-Flycatcher ◇ *Todirostrum pictum* One seen at Araima.

Olivaceous Flatbill *Rhynchocyclus olivaceus* Seen in mixed flocks around El Palmar.

Yellow-olive Flatbill (Y-o Flycatcher) *Tolmomyias sulphurescens*

Zimmer's Flatbill (Z Flycatcher) *Tolmomyias assimilis*

Grey-crowned Flatbill (G-c Flycatcher) *Tolmomyias poliocephalus* (H)

Ochre-lored Flatbill (O-l Flycatcher) *Tolmomyias flaviventris*

White-crested Spadebill *Platyrinchus platyrhynchos*

White-throated Spadebill *Platyrinchus mystaceus* One seen.

Cinnamon Flycatcher *Pyrrhomyias cinnamomea* Not uncommon on Cerro Humo.

Tropical Pewee *Contopus cinereus*

Smoke-coloured Pewee *Contopus fumigatus* Seen in the north-east.

Eastern Wood-pewee *Contopus virens* A few seen together near Caripe.

Euler's Flycatcher *Lathrotriccus euleri* (H) A number found on Cerro Humo.

Fuscous Flycatcher *Cnemotriccus fuscatus*

Cliff Flycatcher *Hirundinea ferruginea*

Long-tailed Tyrant *Colonia colonus* Seen on the return journey to Puerto Ordaz after the extension.

Cattle Tyrant *Machetornis rixosus*

Pied Water-Tyrant *Fluvicola pica*

White-headed Marsh-Tyrant *Arundinicola leucocephala*

Bright-rumped Attila *Attila spadiceus* (H) Heard on Cerro Humo.

Cinnamon Attila *Attila cinnamomeus* (H)

Greyish Mourner *Rhytipterna simplex* A few seen around El Palmar.

Dusky-capped Flycatcher *Myiarchus tuberculifer* (H)

Short-crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus ferox*

Brown-crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus tyrannulus*

Venezuelan Flycatcher ◇ *Myiarchus venezuelensis* A pair found near El Palmar in tall dry woodlands.

Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus*
 Lesser Kiskadee *Philohydor lictor*
 Boat-billed Flycatcher *Megarynchus pitangua*
 Social Flycatcher *Myiozetetes similis*
 Rusty-margined Flycatcher *Myiozetetes cayanensis*
 Yellow-throated Flycatcher ◊ *Conopias parva*
 Streaked Flycatcher *Myiodynastes maculatus*
 Golden-crowned Flycatcher *Myiodynastes chrysocphalus*
 Piratic Flycatcher *Legatus leucophaeus*



Orange-bellied Manakin (Gary Howard)

Variegated Flycatcher *Empidonomus varius*
 Sulphury Flycatcher *Tyrannopsis sulphurea* Seen in the delta.
 Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus*
 Fork-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus savana*
 Olivaceous Schiffornis *Schiffornis olivacea* One at Araima. Seen very well Jonathan's bird of the trip.
 Wing-barred Piprites (W-b Manakin) *Piprites chloris* Seen near El Palmar.
 Screaming Piha *Lipaugus vociferans*
 Rose-collared Piha ◊ *Lipaugus streptophorus* Several birds found on the Sierra de Lema.
 Cinereous Mourner *Laniocera hypopyrra* Seen at Araima.
 White-winged Becard *Pachyramphus polychopterus*
 Cinereous Becard *Pachyramphus rufus*
 Chestnut-crowned Becard *Pachyramphus castaneus* Seen near Caripe.
 Black-tailed Tityra *Tityra cayana*
 Sharpbill *Oxyruncus cristatus* A couple found on the lower Escalera.
 Handsome Fruiteater ◊ *Pipreola formosa pariae* Several pairs found on Cerro Humo
 Red-banded Fruiteater ◊ *Pipreola whitely* Found on the Sierra de Lema.
 Spangled Cotinga *Cotinga maynana* One male near El Palmar.
 Bearded Bellbird ◊ *Procnias averano* Common on the upper Escalera.
 White Bellbird ◊ *Procnias alba* A good number found
 Purple-throated Fruitcrow *Querula purpurata*

Guianan Cock-of-the-Rock *Rupicola rupicola* Up to four on the lower Escalera and one near the Alcabala.
Olive Manakin ◇ *Chloropipo uniformis* A few on the Escalera.
Crimson-hooded Manakin ◇ *Pipra aureola* Common in the delta.
Scarlet-horned Manakin ◇ *Pipra cornuta* Numerous on the upper Escalera.
Golden-headed Manakin *Pipra erythrocephala*
White-crowned Manakin *Dixiphia pipra*
Orange-bellied Manakin ◇ (Tepui M) *Lepidothrix suavisissima* A few noted.
Tiny Tyrant-Manakin ◇ *Tyranneutes virescens* A single bird found at Araima.
Rufous-browed Peppershrike *Cyclarhis gujanensis*
Slaty-capped Shrike-Vireo *Vireolanius leucotis* One seen in a huge mixed flock on the Escalera.
Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus*
Brown-capped Vireo *Vireo leucophrys*
Tepui vireo ◇ *Vireo sclateri* Common on the upper Escalera.
Scrub Greenlet *Hylophilus flavipes* Common in the drier areas.
Grey-chested Greenlet *Hylophilus semicinereus* A bird responding to song near Pedernales in the delta (See note).
Lemon-chested Greenlet *Hylophilus thoracicus* (H)
Golden-fronted Greenlet *Hylophilus aurantiifrons* Common in the north-east
Buff-cheeked Greenlet ◇ *Hylophilus muscicapinus* Seen around El Palmar.
Tawny-crowned Greenlet *Hylophilus ochraceiceps*
Cayenne Jay ◇ *Cyanocorax cayanus* A few at Araima.
Inca Jay *Cyanocorax yncas* Not uncommon on Cerro Negro.
Brown-chested Martin *Progne tapera*
Grey-breasted Martin *Progne chalybea*
White-winged Swallow *Tachycineta albiventer*
Blue-and-white Swallow *Notiochelidon cyanoleuca*
Black-collared Swallow *Atticora melanoleuca* We stopped at Parque Cachamay to see this species.
Southern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*
Tawny-headed Swallow *Alopochelidon fucata* Common on the Gran Sabana.
Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* A few in the delta.
Black-capped Donacobius *Donacobius atricapillus* (H)
Bicoloured Wren ◇ *Campylorhynchus griseus*
Stripe-backed Wren *Campylorhynchus nuchalis*
Coraya Wren *Thryothorus coraya* Surprisingly vocal on the Escalera.
Rufous-breasted Wren *Thryothorus rutilus* Seen on Cerro Humo.
Buff-breasted Wren *Thryothorus leucotis*
Rufous-and-white Wren *Thryothorus rufalbus* Seen on Cerro Humo.
House Wren *Troglodytes aedon*
Flutist Wren ◇ *Microcerculus ustulatus* A couple taped in on the Escalera.
Long-billed Gnatwren *Ramphocaenus melanurus*
Tropical Gnatcatcher *Polioptila plumbea*
Rufous-brown Solitaire ◇ *Cichlopsis leucogenys* A few found on the Escalera.



Coraya Wren (Eustace Barnes)

Yellow-legged Thrush *Platycichla flavipes* Common on Cerro Turumiquiere.

Bare-eyed Thrush (B-e Robin, Yellow-eyed T) *Turdus nudigenis*

Black-billed Thrush *Turdus ignobilis*

Pale-breasted Thrush *Turdus leucomelas*

Tropical Mockingbird *Mimus gilvus*

Yellowish Pipit *Anthus lutescens* (LO) Seen on the Gran Sabana.

Tropical Parula *Parula pitiayumi*

Blackburnian Warbler *Dendroica fusca*

American Redstart *Setophaga ruticilla* A few noted on Cerro Negro.

Northern Waterthrush *Seiurus noveboracensis* A couple in the delta.

Canada Warbler *Wilsonia canadensis*

Slate-throated Whitestart (S-t Redstart) *Myioborus miniatus* Seen on Cerros Turumiquiere and the lower Escalera.

Paria Whitestart ◊ *Myioborus pariae* Several pairs on Cerro Humo.

Tepui Whitestart ◊ (T Redstart) *Myioborus castaneocapillus* Seen on the upper Escalera.

Roraiman Warbler ◊ *Basileuterus roraimae* A few in mixed flocks on the lower Escalera.

Golden-crowned Warbler *Basileuterus culicivorus* (H)

Grey-headed Warbler ◊ *Basileuterus griseiceps* A pair found on Cerro Turumiquiere.

Rose-breasted Chat ◊ *Granatellus pelzelni* A pair found near El Palmar.

Bananaquit *Coereba flaveola*

Chestnut-vented Conebill *Conirostrum speciosum* A pair along the old road south from El Palmar

Black-faced Tanager *Schistochlamys melanopis*

Maggie Tanager *Cissopis leveriana*

Fulvous-headed Tanager *Thlypopsis fulviceps* A male found on Cerro Turumiquiere.

Guira Tanager *Hemithraupis guira*

Hooded Tanager *Nemosia pileata*

Olive-backed Tanager ◊ *Mitrospingus oleagineus* Common on the Escalera.

Fulvous Shrike-Tanager *Lanio fulvus* Several in a huge mixed flock on the lower Escalera.

White-lined Tanager *Tachyphonus rufus*

Red-shouldered Tanager ◊ *Tachyphonus phoenicius* Seen on the Gran Sabana.
White-shouldered Tanager *Tachyphonus luctuosus*
Highland Hepatic-Tanager (Tooth-billed T) *Piranga lutea*
White-winged Tanager *Piranga leucoptera* Seen on Cerros Negro and Turumiquiere.
Silver-beaked Tanager *Ramphocelus carbo*
Blue-grey Tanager *Thraupis episcopus*
Palm Tanager *Thraupis palmarum*
Blue-capped Tanager *Thraupis cyanocephala subcinerea* Found on Cerro Turumiquiere.
Blue-capped Tanager *Thraupis cyanocephala buesingi* A few seen on Cerro Humo.
Golden-rumped Euphonia *Euphonia cyanocephala*



Tepui Brush-Finch (Gary Howard)

Thick-billed Euphonia *Euphonia lanirostris*
Violaceous Euphonia *Euphonia violacea*
Orange-bellied Euphonia *Euphonia xanthogaster* Not uncommon on the Escalera.
Trinidad Euphonia *Euphonia trinitatis*
Purple-throated Euphonia *Euphonia chlorotica*
Golden-sided Euphonia ◊ *Euphonia cayennensis* A single bird found at Rio Grande.
White-lored Euphonia (Golden-bellied E) *Euphonia chrysopasta*
Blue-naped Chlorophonia *Chlorophonia cyanea*
Black-headed Tanager ◊ *Tangara cyanoptera* Seen on Cerro Negro
Black-headed Tanager ◊ *Tangara cyanoptera whitleyi* Seen on the Sierra de Lema.
Burnished-buff Tanager *Tangara cayana*
Turquoise Tanager *Tangara mexicana*
Paradise Tanager *Tangara chilensis*
Speckled Tanager *Tangara guttata*
Yellow-bellied Tanager *Tangara xanthogastra* Surprisingly common on the Escalera.
Bay-headed Tanager *Tangara gyrola*
Blue Dacnis *Dacnis cayana*
Green Honeycreeper *Chlorophanes spiza*

Purple Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes caeruleus*
Red-legged Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes cyaneus*
Venezuelan Flowerpiercer ◊ *Diglossa venezuelensis* A single bird seen on Cerro Turumiquiere.
Rusty Flowerpiercer ◊ *Diglossa sittoides mandelli* A pair seen on Cerro Turumiquiere; a very rare taxon.
Great Flowerpiercer ◊ *Diglossa major* A pair on the Escalera.
Swallow-Tanager *Tersina viridis*
Orinoco Saltator *Saltator orenocensis* Common near the Orinoco bridge.
Southern Greyish Saltator *Saltator coerulescens*
Buff-throated Saltator *Saltator maximus*
Streaked Saltator *Saltator striatipectus*
Southern Yellow Grosbeak *Pheucticus chrysogaster*
Blue-black Grosbeak *Cyanocompsa cyanoides* (H)
Yellow-green Grosbeak *Caryothraustes canadensis* Seen around El Palmar.
Red-capped Cardinal *Paroaria gularis*
Blue-black Grassquit *Volatinia jacarina*
Chestnut-bellied Seed-Finch *Oryzoborus angolensis*
Grey Seedeater *Sporophila intermedia*
Yellow-bellied Seedeater *Sporophila nigricollis*
Ruddy-breasted Seedeater *Sporophila minuta*
Saffron Finch *Sicalis flaveola*
Grey Pileated-Finch ◊ *Coryphospingus pileatus* Seen day one at the new bridge.
Ochre-breasted Brush-Finch ◊ *Atlapetes semirufus* A few on Cerros Negro and Turumiquiere.
Tepui Brush-Finch ◊ *Atlapetes personatus*
Paria Brush-Finch ◊ *Buarremon phygas* (H) Unfortunately only heard on Cerros Humo and Turumiquiere.
Pectoral Sparrow *Arremon taciturnus* (H)
Grassland Sparrow *Ammodramus humeralis*
Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis* Seen on the Gran Sabana and on Mt Roraima.
Wedge-tailed Grass-Finch *Emberizoides herbicola*



Eastern Meadowlark (Eustace Barnes)

Eastern Meadowlark *Sturnella magna*
Red-breasted Blackbird *Sturnella militaris* Very few seen.
Velvet-fronted Grackle ◇ *Lamprosar tanagrinus* Abundant in the delta.
Golden-tufted Mountain-Grackle ◇ *Macroagelaius imthurni* Very numerous on the Escalera.
Carib Grackle *Quiscalus lugubris*
Shiny Cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis*
Giant Cowbird *Molothrus oryzivora*
Moriche Oriole *Icterus chryscephalus* Seen in the delta.
Venezuelan Troupial ◇ *Icterus icterus* A few seen near El Palmar.
Yellow Oriole *Icterus nigrogularis*
Orange-crowned Oriole *Icterus auricapillus*
Oriole Blackbird *Gymnomystax mexicanus*
Yellow-rumped Cacique *Cacicus cela*
Red-rumped Cacique *Cacicus haemorrhous*
Crested Oropendola *Psarocolius decumanus*
Green Oropendola *Psarocolius viridis*
House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

THE EXTENSION

A selection of the species recorded on the extension. This includes those not seen on the main tour plus any Tepui endemic and other records of interest.

Orange-breasted Falcon *Falco deiroleucus* A pair on Mt Roraima.
Ocellated Crake *Micropygia schomburgkii* (H) Heard distantly on Mt Roraima.
Giant Snipe ◇ *Gallinago undulata undulata* Always good to see this rare bird. Northern populations may be distinct.
Tepui Parrotlet ◇ *Nannopsittaca panychlora* Abundant on Mt Roraima.
Roraiman Screech-Owl ◇ *Megascops napensis rorimae* (H) Heard near camp.
Least Nighthawk *Chordeiles pusillus* Seen near Paraitepuy.
Tepui (Band-winged) Nightjar *Caprimulgus longirostris roraimae* A roosting bird found. Surely a separate species?
White-tailed Nightjar ◇ *Caprimulgus cayennensis* A few near Paraitepuy.
Tepui Swift ◇ *Cypseloides phelpsi* Abundant on the Gran Sabana and Mt Roraima.
White-chinned Swift *Cypseloides cryptus* Seen on the summit of Mt Roraima



Tepui Foliage-Gleaner (Eustace Barnes)

Blue-fronted Lancebill ◊ *Doryfera johannae guianensis* Several birds found along streams above base camp
Rufous-breasted Sabrewing ◊ *Campylopterus hyperythrus* Fairly common on lower slopes.
Peacock Coquette ◊ *Lophornis pavonina* One near camp.
Tepui Goldenthrout ◊ *Polytmus milleri* One along Rio Kukenan
Copper-tailed Hummingbird ◊ *Amazilia cupreicauda* Surprisingly common beneath camp at 1600m.
Tepui Spinetail ◊ *Cranioleuca demissa* Numerous above camp.
Roraiman Barbtail ◊ *Roraimia adusta* Quite numerous in mossy forest above camp.
Tepui Foliage-gleaner ◊ *Automolus roraimae* Several seen above camp.
Sharp-tailed Streamcreeper *Lochmias nematura* (H) Heard along the stream near camp.



Great Elaenia (Eustace Barnes)

Streak-backed Antshrike ◊ *Thamnophilus insignis* Quite numerous on the forested slopes.
Tepui Antpitta ◊ *Myrmothera simplex* Seen without tape bouncing about on the main path.
Great Elaenia ◊ *Elaenia dayi* Common.
Tepui (Sierran) Elaenia ◊ *Elaenia olivine* Very common.
Bearded Tachuri *Polystictus pectoralis* A superb male found displaying near the Tek river.
Rufous-tailed Tyrant *Knipolegus poecilurus* A single bird found in the stunted forest above camp.
White-throated Kingbird *Tyrannus albogularis* A pair seen in San Francisco de Yuruani.
Red-banded Fruiteater ◊ *Pipreola whitelyi* Several seen and it seemed common below the wall.
Bearded Bellbird ◊ *Procnias averano* (H) Heard in forest patches below camp.
Tepui Wren ◊ *Troglodytes rufulus fulvicularis* Quite numerous above 1950m. A notably varied species.
Black-hooded Thrush *Turdus olivater* Common around camp and in the mossy forests.
Tepui Whitestart ◊ *Myioborus castaneocapillus* Several pairs found.
Yellow-backed Tanager *Hemithraupis flavicollis* One in a small forest patch at 1500m.

Masked Tanager *Tangara nigrocincta* Found near Paraitepuy at 1450m well above given elevation limit of 950m.
Olive-backed Tanager ◊ *Mitrospingus oleagineus* A few found in lower mossy forests.
Red-shouldered Tanager ◊ *Tachyphonus phoenicius* A couple in the open savanna below camp.
Finsch's Euphonia *Euphonia finschii* A pair found along the Kukenan river. A surprise but recorded from nearby.
Black-headed Tanager ◊ *Tangara cyanoptera whitelyi* Common on lower slopes.
Greater Flowerpiercer ◊ *Diglossa major* Abundant.
Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis macconnelli* Common on the summit where this form endemic.
Paramo Seedeater *Catamenia homochroa duncani* A few pairs noted high on Mt Roraima.
Stripe-tailed Yellow-Finch *Sicalis citrina* Seen in on rocky slopes on the Gran Sabana.
Tepui Brush-Finch ◊ *Atlapetes personatus* Abundant.



Tepui Wren high on Mount Roraima (Eustace Barnes)

MAMMALS

Common Opossum (Black-eared O) *Didelphis marsupialis* A couple noted.

Long-nosed Bat *Rynchonycteris naso*

Lesser Bulldog Bat *Noctilio albiventris*

Wedge-capped Capuchin Monkey (Weeping C M) *Cebus olivaceus* Found in a few places

Venezuelan Red Howler Monkey *Alouatta seniculus* Remarkably numerous on this tour.

Guianan Squirrel *Sciurus aestuans*

Norway Rat (Brown R) *Rattus norvegicus*

NOTES TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST

The most up to date referenced taxonomic list referred to in the Tour Report is that of the IOC World Bird Names. Gill, F and Donsker, D (Eds). 2012. IOC World Bird Names (v2.11). Available at <http://www.worldbirdnames.org>

Foothill Screech-Owl *Otus roraimae*

This species was formerly (together with Chocó Screech-Owl *O. centralis* which was formerly called Vermiculated Screech-Owl *O. vermiculatus*), lumped in Middle American (or Guatemalan) Screech-Owl *O. guatemalae*, with the name Vermiculated Screech-Owl being used for the enlarged species. Some authors further split Foothill Screech Owl into Roraima (or Roraiman or Tepui) Screech-Owl *O. roraimae* and Rio Napo (or Napo) Screech-Owl *O. napensis*. Note that HBW 5 (followed in the new Clements checklist) lumps *napensis* and *roraimae* in what they call *O. vermiculatus*. However the name *vermiculatus* has been shown to be invalid, referring to birds from an unknown locality in Costa Rica, birds in this country being vocally identical to birds further north in Central America (true *O. guatemalae*).

Band-winged Nightjar *Caprimulgus longirostris*

The form found in Pantepui; *roraimae*, deserves full species status on account of plumage and vocal differences from the Andean forms.

Yellow-tufted Woodpecker *Melanerpes cruentatus*

The birds here lack any yellow tuft. They were originally named a separate species and may well warrant recognition although at present only considered a 'black morph'.

Long-winged Antwren *Myrmotherula longipennis*

The nominate form of the Guianas probably deserves specific recognition owing to vocal differences.

Northern White-fringed Antwren *Formicivora intermedia*

This form was formerly lumped in Southern White-fringed Antwren *F. grisea*, with the name White-fringed Antwren being used for the enlarged species.

Guianan Warbling Antbird *Hypocnemis cantator*

Hilty simply refers to this species as Warbling Antbird but it has been renamed following the splitting off of several forms as separate species. The SACC split the original Warbling Antbird into six different allopatric species (*H. peruviana* Peruvian Warbling-Antbird, *H. subflava* Yellow-breasted Warbling-Antbird, *H. ochrogyna* Rondonia Warbling-Antbird and *H. striata* Spix's Warbling-Antbird are the other four).

Common Scale-backed Antbird *Willisornis poecilionotus*

This form was previously lumped in Xingu Scale-backed Antbird *Willisornis vidua* with the enlarged species named Scale-backed Antbird *Willisornis poecilionota*.

Roraiman Antbird *Schistocichla saturatus*

Hilty lumps this form in Spot-winged Antbird *S. leucostigma*, but it has recently been shown that it is specifically distinct.

Sucre Antpitta *Grallaricula cumanensis*

Hilty lumps this form in Slate-crowned Antpitta *G. nana*, but it has recently been shown that it is specifically distinct.

Coopman's Tyrannulet *Zimmerius minimus*

This form was previously lumped in Golden-faced Tyrannulet *Zimmerius chrysops*

Guianan Tyrannulet *Zimmerius acer*

The form *acer* was formerly lumped in Slender-footed Tyrannulet *Zimmerius gracilpes*.

Tepui (Sierran) Elaenia *Elaenia olivine*

This form was previously lumped in Sierran Elaenia *Elaenia pallantangae*

Sierra de Lema Flycatcher *Mionectes roraimae*

This form was previously lumped in McConnell's Flycatcher *Mionectes Mcconnellii*.

Pearly-vented Tody-Tyrant *Hemitriccus margaritaceiventer auyantepui*

The form concerned *auyantepui* is probably best considered a separate species.

Guianan (Olivaceous) Schiffornis *Schiffornis olivacea*

This species was formerly lumped in Thrushlike Schiffornis *Schiffornis turdinus*. However this species is likely comprised of several closely related allospecies; both vocal and mitochondrial molecular characters justify the recognition of several species. These are as follows: *S. veraepacis* (**Brown Schiffornis**) from Mexico to northwest Peru (including the following taxa, *S. t. dunicola*, *S. t. acrolophites* and *S. t. rosenbergi*), *S. stenorhyncha* (**Slender-billed Schiffornis**) in the lowlands of eastern Panama to northern Colombia and northwest Venezuela (thus including *S. t. panamensis*, which was not directly sampled by the study), *S. olivacea* (**Guianan or Olivaceous Schiffornis**) from southeast Venezuela and the Guianas south across northern Amazonia (including *S. t. wallacii* and part of the range formerly attributed to *S. t. amazona*), *S. aenea* (**Foothill Schiffornis**) in the east-slope foothills of the Andes in Ecuador and northern Peru (monotypic), *S. amazona* (Amazonian Schiffornis) over western Amazonia (including *S. t. steinbachi*), and *S. turdina* (**Thrush-like Schiffornis**) in southeast Amazonia and the Atlantic Forest of eastern Brazil (including part of the range formerly attributed to *S. t. amazona*, and *S. t. intermedia*).

Grey-chested Greenlet *Hylophilus semicinereus*

A bird responding to song near Pedernales in the delta was clearly this species. Well out of range but in precisely the right habitat for this species. In Brazil referred to as Igapo. Thick bushes and trees with vines tangles overhanging water in gallery forests. Scrub Greenlet is in range but it did not cross my mind at the time as the vocalisation was wrong. This would need confirming but if is *Hylophilus semicinereus* then it could be a new sub-species.

Roraiman Warbler *Basileuterus roraimae*

This form, endemic to the tepui region, is often lumped in Two-banded Warbler *B. bivittatus*.

Black-headed Tanager *Tangara cyanoptera*

The tepui form *whitelyi* may represent a distinct species.

Rusty Flowerpiercer *Diglossa sittoides mandelli*

The form found in the north east of Venezuela is likely a separate species. Given morphological differences and a highly disjunct range in an area of high endemism this taxon is a clear candidate for elevation to species level recognition.