

**Trip Report: Birding Northern Peru  
1–14 July 2022**



Female Marañon Crescentchest (Dubi Shapiro)

**Participants:** Peggy Harger-Allen (Indiana), Rose Leach (Montana),  
Jenn Megyesi (Vermont), Cay Ogden (Oregon)

**Leaders:** Ramiro Yábar (Cuzco, Peru) and Jeff Marks (Portland, Oregon)

**Prepared by Jeff Marks  
Executive Director, Montana Bird Advocacy**

## Tour Summary

The tour began and ended in **Lima**, but all of our birding occurred far to the north of that huge city across a narrow range of latitudes and longitudes from 5.5°S near **Jaén** to 7°S just south of **Chiclayo**, and from 80°W near **Chiclayo** to 76°W near **Tarapoto**, during which time we visited the departments of **Lambayeque**, **Piura**, **Cajamarca**, **Amazonas**, and **San Martín** (see map on page 40). The weather was mostly sunny with scattered clouds in the lowlands and sunny to partly cloudy to completely overcast in the higher-elevation cloud forests. We had prolonged rainfall only at and around **Owlet Lodge**, although the rain did not put much of a damper on the birding. Our driver, **Baldo**, never failed to be helpful and skillful, and he made of us feel safe throughout the trip. The hotels and lodges generally were very nice, and we were the only people staying at most of the places we frequented. We detected 463 species of birds, 23 (5.0%) of which were heard-only given the challenges of birding in cloud forests. We managed to see 19 of the 26 Peruvian endemics (73%) that were possible to encounter given our itinerary. We did especially well with cracids (4 of 5 possible species seen, the other heard only), hummingbirds (52 species seen), owls (7 species seen, 3 species heard only), toucans and toucanets (7 species), antbirds and their allies (22 species), furnariids (15 species), tyrant flycatchers (51 species), wrens (10 species), and tanagers and their allies (67 species). We are grateful to our expert guide **Ramiro Yábar** and our driver **Baldo Vasquez Gevara**, who played a big part in the success of the trip. In the following narrative, English names followed by “(E)” denote Peruvian endemics.

### Day 1 (1 July), Lima to Chiclayo and Chaparrí Lodge

The group arrived in **Lima** early in the morning, and by 10:00 we were on a LATAM flight bound for the city of **Chiclayo** on Peru’s northwestern coast. The region is characterized by equatorial dry forest and scrub within the **Sechura Desert** along the coast and the **Tumbes-Piura Dry Forest ecoregion** a bit farther inland from the coastal desert. **Baldo** met us with the van at the airport, and we headed south to **Monsefú**, where we made several stops and picked up coastal species such as **Peruvian Thick-knee**, **Belcher’s Gull**, **Gray Gull**, **Gray-hooded Gull**, **Kelp Gull**, **Peruvian Tern (E)**, **Magnificent Frigatebird**, and **Cocoi Heron**. We also saw four species of overwintering Nearctic waders (**Black-bellied Plover**, **Sanderling**, **Greater Yellowlegs**, and **Ruddy Turnstone**) and two marshland specialists, the rather plain **Wren-like Rushbird** and the dazzlingly hued **Many-colored Rush-Tyrant**. Other species seen on or near the coast included **Croaking Ground Dove**, the very common **West Peruvian Dove**, **Puna Ibis**, **Variable Hawk**, **Burrowing Owl**, **Crested Caracara**, **Coastal Miner (E)**, **Blue-and-white Swallow**, the near-endemic **Tumbes Swallow**, **Long-tailed Mockingbird**, **Peruvian Pipit**, **Scrub Blackbird**, **Rufous-collared Sparrow**, and **Saffron Finch**.



Peruvian Thick-knee (Dubi Shapiro)



Belcher's Gull in basic plumage (Jeff Marks)



Many-colored Rush-Tyrant (D. Shapiro)



Burrowing Owl (Jenn Megyesi)

We left the **Monsefú** area at 15:15 and headed southeast to nearby **Rafán**. Our targets there were two Peruvian endemics found only in the northwestern portion of the country: **Peruvian Plantcutter** and **Cinereous Finch** (which recently was placed in the tanager family Thraupidae!). With a bit of work, we got great looks at two individuals of each species. We also flushed our first nightjar of the trip, a **Lesser Nighthawk**, and saw two gorgeous **Pacific Parrotlets** while we searched for the endemics.



Peruvian Plantcutter (E) (Miguel Alvan)



Pacific Parrotlet (Jaim Simoes Oliveira)

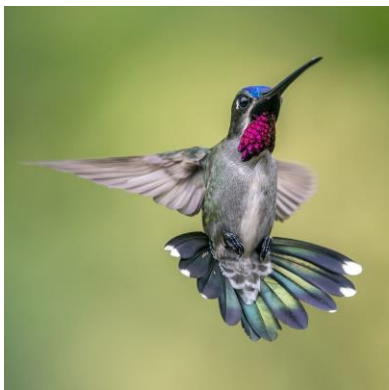


Cinereous Finch (E) (photographer unknown)

By 17:30, we were on the road for the nearly 3-hour drive to our home for the next two nights, the rustic but exceedingly lovely **Chaparrí Lodge**. The lodge is nestled on the edge of the **Reserva Ecológica Chaparrí**, which is a 34,000-ha private reserve that was established by the local community, in part to protect the IUCN *Vulnerable* **Spectacled Bear (*Tremarctos ornatus*)** and the IUCN *Endangered* Peruvian endemic **White-winged Guan**. The surrounding habitat is dominated by arid scrub on the flats and dry deciduous tropical forest on the slopes. Nearly 250 species of birds have been recorded at the reserve.

### Day 2 (2 July), Chaparrí Lodge

Before breakfast, we sat at a water feature where hummingbirds bathed. **White-winged Guans (E)** and **White-tailed Jays** were easily seen, and we also got decent looks at **Long-billed Starthroat**, **Short-tailed Woodstar**, **Purple-collared Woodstar**, **Tumbes Hummingbird**, **Collared Antshrike**, **Pale-legged Hornero**, **Baird's Flycatcher**, and **White-headed Brushfinch**. After breakfast, a short hike yielded more than 40 species, including a fly-by **King Vulture** and **Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle**, and forest species such as **Peruvian Pygmy-Owl**, **Scarlet-backed Woodpecker**, **Lineated Woodpecker**, **Golden-olive Woodpecker**, **Elegant Crescentchest**, **Streak-headed Woodcreeper**, **Necklaced Spinetail**, **Mouse-gray Flycatcher**, the near-endemic **Tumbes Tyrant**, **Fasciated Wren**, **Plumbeous-backed Thrush**, and **Gray-and-gold Warbler**.



Long-billed Starthroat (Pedro Lastra)



Collared Antshrike female (Kevin Berkoff)



Baird's Flycatcher (Bob Lewis)



White-winged Guan (E) (Jenn Megyesi)



Gray-and-gold Warbler (Nick Athanas)



Pale-legged Hornero (Cory Gregory)



White-headed Brushfinch (Jenn Megyesi)

After lunch, we walked through arid scrub on the road below the lodge. Bird diversity was lower here than in the lush forest by the lodge, but we encountered great species such as **Red-masked Parakeet**, **Amazilia Hummingbird**, **Gray-and-white Tyrannulet**, **Rufous Flycatcher (E)**, **White-browed Gnatcatcher**, **Superciliated Wren**, **Long-tailed Mockingbird**, **Tumbes Sparrow**, **Tropical Parula**, **Cinereous Finch (E)**, and **Parrot-billed Seed eater**.



Birding in arid scrub below Chaparrí Lodge (Jeff Marks)



Forest above Chaparrí Lodge (Jeff Marks)



Rufous Flycatcher (E) (Jenn Megyesi)



Long-tailed Mockingbird (Jenn Megyesi)

Accompanied by local guide **Daniel**, after dinner we walked a short distance from the lodge to where Daniel had found a **Peruvian Screech-Owl** for **Ramiro** and **Jeff** the night before. With a bit of work using playback, we heard two different owls and obtained a great look at one of them. Earlier in the day, we saw **Collared Peccaries** (*Dicotyles tajacu*), **Guayaquil Squirrels** (*Sciurus stramineus*), and **Sechuran Foxes** (*Lycalopex sechurae*) near the lodge. We also saw foxes at night while we looked for owls, and a few of them visited the dining area each night, no doubt seeking handouts.



*Dubi Shapiro*

Peruvian Screech-Owl (Dubi Shapiro)



Sechuran Fox (Jeff Marks)

### Day 3 (3 July), Chaparrí Lodge to Olmos

We ate an early breakfast, packed up, and drove out through the extensive scrub below the lodge, stopping several times for flocks of **Sulphur-throated Finches** and **Parrot-billed Seedeaters**. Other birds seen included a pair of **Aplomado Falcons**, a **Tumbes Sparrow**, and several **Peruvian Meadowlarks**.



*Dubi Shapiro*

Aplomado Falcon (Dubi Shapiro)





Along the road below Chaparrí Lodge (Jeff Marks)

We drove northeast for a while, climbing into foothills covered in dense scrub and then taller dry forest with lots of epiphytes, and finally lush forest with wet, narrow draws. Stopping several times, we logged lots of new trip birds, including **Gray-chinned Hermit**, **Savanna Hawk**, **Solitary Eagle**, **Ecuadorian Piculet** (feeding fledglings), **Chapman's Antshrike**, **Henna-hooded Foliage-gleaner**, **Gray-breasted Flycatcher**, **Fulvous-headed Pygmy-Tyrant**, **Smoke-colored Pewee**, **Sooty-crowned Flycatcher**, **Speckle-breasted Wren**, **Black-capped Sparrow**, **White-winged Brushfinch**, and **Three-banded Warbler**.



Ecuadorian Piculet (Nick Athanas)



Speckle-breasted Wren (Graham Montgomery)



Dry forest with epiphytes northeast of Chaparrí Lodge (Jeff Marks)



Lusher forest in foothills northeast of Chaparrí Lodge (Jeff Marks)



Solitary Eagle (Jenn Megyesi)

Next, we turned around and ascended from the foothills to **Reservorio de Tinajones**, where we birded while **Baldo** prepared our lunch. Species seen at and near the reservoir included **White-cheeked Pintail**, **Groove-billed Ani**, **Slate-colored Coot**, **Collared Plover**, **Gray-hooded Gull**, **Neotropic Cormorant**, **Cocoi Heron**, **Savanna Hawk**, **Ringed Kingfisher**, **Short-tailed Field Tyrant** (two individuals, with their ridiculously long legs), **Baird's Flycatcher**, **Blue-and-white Swallow**, **White-browed Gnatcatcher**, and **Shiny Cowbird**. We also had our first look at a **Pearl Kite**, which was perched along the road not far from the reservoir and which proved to be a lifer for nearly everyone on the trip.



Pearl Kite (Dorian Anderson)



Short-tailed Field Tyrant (Shailesh Pinto)



It was an adventure, the countryside was interesting (although much of the surrounding terrain was heavily modified by humans), and we saw some good birds. Our first stop, for breakfast, yielded many gems such as **White-winged Guan**, the trip's only **Harris's Hawk** (in very odd habitat for the species), **Ecuadorian Trogon**, **Whooping Motmot**, a stunning pair of **Guayaquil Woodpeckers**, **Slaty Becard**, **Mouse-colored Tyrannulet** (Tumbes form), **Tropical Pewee**, **Black-capped Sparrow**, **Rufous-browed Peppershrike**, **White-edged Oriole**, **Yellow-tailed Oriole**, and **Golden Grosbeak**.



Male Guayaquil Woodpecker (Ramiro Yabar)



Female Guayaquil Woodpecker (Ramiro Yabar)

As we continued on, not knowing what road conditions were in store, and the sky threatening rain, we birded very little. We managed to see several species overhead and along the roadside, including **White-tipped Dove**, **Chestnut-collared Swift**, **White-collared Swift**, **Great Thrush**, **Yellow-breasted Brushfinch**, **Band-tailed Seedeater**, and **Ash-breasted Sierra Finch**. We arrived at the **Hotel Urqu** in Jaén at 18:30, no worse for wear, during a steady rain. The **Urqu** had lovely rooms and great food, which most of us supplemented with a couple of Pisco Sours. Up to this point we had logged nearly 150 species of birds.



White-collared Swift (Oscar Ramirez Alan)



Yellow-breasted Brushfinch (Suzanne Labbe)



Happy group during our July 4th detour (Baldo Vasquez Gevara)

### Day 5 (5 July), Jaén to Huembo Lodge

We departed **Jaén** before sunrise and arrived at our first stop, **Bosque de Yanahuanca**, at 06:15. This private reserve is only 30 minutes north of **Jaén** and protects dry tropical forest in which several species of **Marañón-Chinchi** specialties flourish. We spent 4 hours here, during which time we detected more than 40 species of birds. Straight off we heard, but did not see, two **Tataupa Tinamous**. As **Baldo** worked on breakfast, we had scope views of the near-endemic and IUCN *Vulnerable* **Peruvian Pigeon** and a flyover **Lesser Nighthawk**. Several near-endemic **Spot-throated Hummingbirds** visited a feeder, and a flock of **Scarlet-fronted Parakeets** sailed overhead. A couple of **Pale-legged Horneros** stalked the grounds near our table, and a **Tropical Kingbird** twittered away from the top of a nearby tree.

After breakfast, we hiked through fields and forest-edge habitats. This area was quite birdy, despite much of the habitat being fairly heavily disturbed by humans. We had good views of **Blue Ground Dove**, **Striped Cuckoo**, **Squirrel Cuckoo**, **Northern Slaty-Antshrike** (Marañón form), the near-endemic **Marañón Crescentchest** (after a fair bit of work), **Rufous-fronted Thornbird**, the near-endemic **Marañón Spinetail**, **Chinchi Spinetail (E)**, **Southern Beardless Tyrannulet**, **Fulvous-headed Pygmy-Tyrant**, **Chivi Vireo**, **Tropical Gnatcatcher** (Marañón form), **Drab Seedeater**, the striking **Red-crested Finch**, the aptly named **Dull-colored Grassquit**, and **Streaked Saltator** (Marañón form). We also saw a distant pair of **Pearl Kites** perched in a treetop and soaring **Turkey Vultures** and a **Variable Hawk**.



Striped Cuckoo (Jenn Megyesi)



Chinchipe Spinetail (E) (Thibaud Aronson)

We left **Bosque de Yanahuanca** at 10:25, crossed the **Marañon River** for the first time, and then stopped along **Highway 5N** to search a patch of arid scrub for **Little Inca Finches (E)**. In the heat of the day, from 12:15 to 13:00, we scanned the tops of shrubs and cacti as we played songs of this snazzy endemic. Just as we turned back toward the van, having accepted failure, **Jeff** heard one sing, and each of us got a scope view of the single individual. Other species seen here were **Croaking Ground Dove**, **Groove-billed Ani**, **Black Vulture**, **Vermilion Flycatcher**, and **Long-tailed Mockingbird**.



Croaking Ground Dove (Kevin Groeneweg)



Little Inca Finch (E) (Nick Athanas)

We arrived at **Huembo Lodge** after a 1.5-hour delay for road construction. In the waning light, and between trips back and forth to the two sets of hummingbird feeders on the grounds, we managed to get looks at 11 species of hummingbirds: **Sparkling Violetear**, **Brown Violetear**, **Lesser Violetear**, **Speckled Hummingbird**, **Marvelous Spatuletail (E)**, **Bronzy Inca**, **Violet-fronted Brilliant**, **White-bellied Woodstar**, **Little Woodstar**, **Andean Emerald**, and **White-bellied Hummingbird**. We also saw two **Smoky-brown Woodpeckers**, fair numbers of the nearly ubiquitous **Rufous-collared Sparrow**, **Lesser Goldfinch**, and a singing **Slate-throated Redstart**.

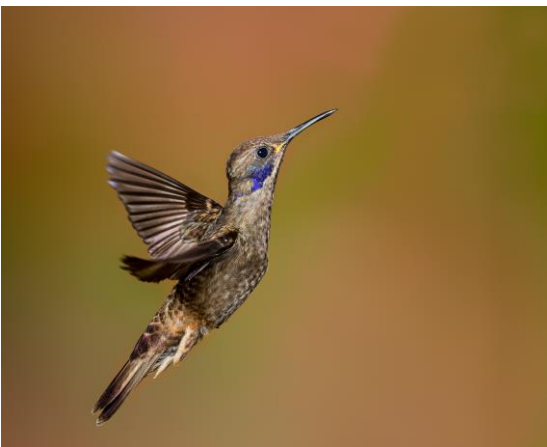
**Huembo Lodge** sits at about 2,050 m (6,725 feet) elevation, with cloud forest on the surrounding slopes and plenty of hummingbird feeders. The rooms are rustic but comfortable, the food is excellent, and the staff members are friendly and helpful. Although we had only one night here, we could easily have spent two or three nights and had plenty to do and see.



Marvelous Spatuletail (E) male (Dubi Shapiro)

### Day 6 (6 July), Huembo Lodge to Owlet Lodge and Abra Patricia Reserve

At breakfast, **Jenn** reported she'd heard a **Stygian Owl** in the night, and I later learned that the lodge manager, **Santos Montenegro**, had found a **Stygian Owl** nest near here in 2017. At the parking area, we found great birds such as **Andean Guan**, **Speckle-chested Piculet (E)**, **Buff-bellied Tanager**, **Blue-capped Tanager**, and **Silvery Tanager**. Next, we crossed the highway above the lodge and hiked a short distance into the forest to visit a lek of **Marvelous Spatuletails**. At the lek, we saw two **Marvelous Spatuletails**, including one adult male. **Jeff** noticed a well-spaced group of 6 **Lesser Violetears** singing from perches in what appeared to be an exploded lek. Other birds seen this morning included a **Southern Emerald Toucanet (Peggy only)**, **Sparkling Violetear**, **Brown Violetear**, **White-bellied Woodstar**, **White-bellied Hummingbird**, **Great Thrush**, and **Golden Grosbeak**.



Brown Violetear (Andy Morffew)



Little Woodstar (Roger Ahlman)





Birding on our last morning at Huembo Lodge (Jeff Marks)

We left **Huembo Lodge** at 10:05 for the rather short drive to our home for the next four nights: **Owlet Lodge** within the world-renowned **Abra Patricia Reserve**. This 10,120-ha reserve was established in 2005 in a collaborative effort by ECOAN (Asociación Ecosistemas Andinos) and the American Bird Conservancy (ABC), with the main purpose of protecting habitat for three species of Peruvian endemics: **Long-whiskered Owlet** (IUCN *Vulnerable*), **Ochre-bellied Antpitta** (IUCN *Endangered*), and **Yellow-tailed Woolly Monkey** (*Lagothrix flavicauda*; IUCN *Critically Endangered*). According to the ABC, bird diversity within the reserve “is among the highest on Earth.” Indeed, the **Owlet Lodge** eBird hotspot lists 527 species! The lodge sits at nearly 2,290 m (7,500 feet) and is surrounded by gorgeous cloud forest.

At 11:25, only 20 minutes before we arrived at **Owlet Lodge**, we stopped on the roadside and got scope views of a **White-sided Flowerpiercer**, which was the first of four species of *Diglossa* we tallied on the trip. Hanging out around the lodge shortly before and after lunch, we saw more than 20 species, including **Long-tailed Sylph**, **Collared Inca**, **Sword-billed Hummingbird**, **Chestnut-breasted Coronet**, **Montane Woodcreeper**, **Pearled Treerunner**, **Peruvian Tyrannulet**, **Pale-edged Flycatcher**, **Common Chlorospingus**, **Russet-crowned Warbler**, **Spectacled Redstart**, **Blue-capped Tanager**, **Grass-green Tanager**, **Yellow-throated Tanager**, **Yellow-scarfed Tanager (E)**, **Silvery Tanager**, **Blue-and-black Tanager**, **Beryl-spangled Tanager**, **Saffron-crowned Tanager**, **Flame-faced Tanager**, and **Drab Hemispingus**. Afternoon rain meant that birding was confined to the lodge area, where we continued to see great hummingbirds. Rain continued, and our local guide **Roberto Bazán** decided that we would not try for the **Long-whiskered Owlet** until tomorrow night.



Chestnut-breasted Coronet (Ramiro Yabar)



Sword-billed Hummingbird (Dubi Shapiro)



Yellow-scarfed Tanager (E) (Dubi Shapiro)



Grass-green Tanager (Ramiro Yabar)



Saffron-crowned Tanager (Peter Hawrylyshyn)



Blue-and-black Tanager (Ramiro Yabar)

### Day 7 (7 July), Owlet Lodge and Rio Mayo

Shortly after sunrise, **Roberto Bazán** took us to a feeding station for **Chestnut Antpittas (E)**, and we ended up with great looks at two of them. We then tried for **Rusty-tinged Antpitta (E)** at another feeding station, but a calling bird failed to show itself (we got it the next day, however!). While waiting in vain for the second antpitta species, a pair of **Golden-headed Quetzals** appeared in the trees nearby, to everyone's delight. Also seen this morning were a **Green-and-black Fruiteater**, a **Rufous-browed Peppershrike**, and several **White-collared Swifts** that passed overhead.



Chestnut Antpitta (E) (Jenn Megyesi)

After breakfast, we drove east on **Highway 5N** and eventually ended up along the **Rio Mayo** in the department of **San Martín**. Our first stop was at **Puente Sin Nombre**, which is a well-known locale for **Johnson's [Lulu's] Tody-Flycatcher (E)**. After a bit of effort we got great looks at two of them and also saw a **Roadside Hawk**, a **Rufous-capped Antshrike**, a **Sierran Elaenia**, two **Andean Solitaires**, and heard but did not see two **Masked Trogons**.

Continuing east, we stopped for two **White-capped Dippers** perched on a boulder in midstream and also found a flock of **White-collared Jays** in the forest nearby. A brief stop at the **Royal Sunangel Cliffs** yielded good looks at two **White-tipped Swifts** but no sunangels. Farther east, we stopped just after 10:00 for a mixed flock in the canopy that included two **Versicolored Barbets**, a **Gray-mantled Wren** (which looks and acts like a gnatcatcher!), two **Orange-bellied Euphonias**, two **Bronze-green Euphonias**, a **Slate-throated Redstart**, and a gorgeous **Vermilion Tanager**. Across the highway from the flock we called in two skulking **Gray-breasted Wood-Wrens**. Farther east, still along the **Rio Mayo**, we had a decent look at a male **Torrent Duck**, which proved to be our only sighting of this iconic Andean species during the entire trip.



Rufous-capped Antshrike (Luiz Moschini)



Johnson's Tody-Flycatcher (E) (D. Shapiro)



Vermilion Tanager (Carlos Calle)

We were back at **Owlet Lodge** by 14:15 and immediately found a small mixed flock near the dining area that contained a **Pearled Treerunner**, **Sierran Elaenia**, **Common Chlorospingus**, **Russet-crowned Warbler**, and two **Blue-and-black Tanagers**. Late in the afternoon before dinner, **Roberto** informed us that tonight was the night to make the trek below the lodge for the **Long-whiskered Owlet (E)**. We set out shortly after 15:00 for the 3-km hike. It was a slow but not difficult hike, which involved a bit of mud, a few loose rocks, a couple of stream crossings, maybe a steep drop off or two, and a bit of birding along the way. Also, it might have rained on us just a little bit; details are fuzzy. Some of us were rewarded with decent looks at a **Golden-headed Quetzal**, a pair of **Masked Trogons**, a **Streak-headed Antbird** and a **Flavescent Flycatcher**, and a pair of **Maroon-belted [Slaty-backed] Chat-Tyrants**.



On a stroll for Long-whiskered Owlets (Jeff Marks)

We arrived at some covered benches—the official spot where birders wait for the owls—shortly before dark. Across the creek, high up on a cliff that was draped with lush vegetation, we heard a flock of **White-eyed Parakeets** but just couldn't find them in binoculars. We also heard but did not see a **Bat Falcon**. The first owlet called shortly after sundown. And then another, and then another, until we were certain we had heard three different individuals. **Jeff's** friend and colleague, **Gary Graves**, co-discovered the species in 1976 about 10 km from where we sat. It was so distinctive it was placed in its own genus, *Xenoglaux*, which is Greek for “strange owl” owing to “its greatly exaggerated facial whiskers and intense, staring, amber-orange eyes that make it a true stranger among owls” (*Auk* 94: 412). After several attempts to find an owlet in **Roberto's** spotlight, we had a decent look at one at around 20:00.



The Long-whiskered Owlet (E) we saw (Ramiro Yabar)

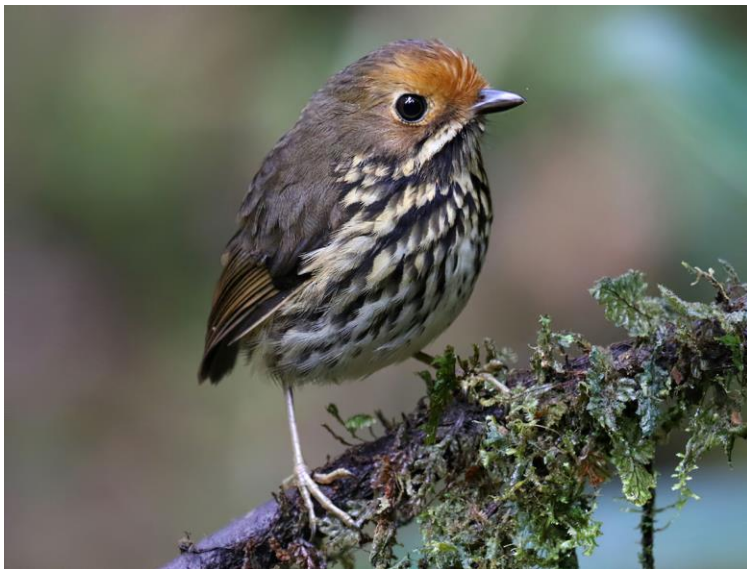


Long-whiskered Owlet (Dubi Shapiro)

We headed back up the trail shortly after our triumph. The vanguards arrived at the lodge at 21:15, with the rest of the group not far behind. Some went straight to bed; others had a bite to eat and a Pisco Sour (or two) to celebrate having made the long hike to successfully tick one of the world's best owls.

### Day 8 (8 July), Owlet Lodge and Rio Mayo

In the morning we again searched for antpittas with **Roberto**. We revisited the second feeding station and got excellent looks at a **Rusty-tinged Antpitta (E)**. Next, we walked a short way into the forest, where **Roberto** got us on our main target, an **Ochre-fronted Antpitta (E)**. Also here we saw **Montane Woodcreeper**, **Streaked Xenops**, **Spotted Barbtail**, **House Wren**, and **Gray-breasted Wood-Wren**.



Ochre-fronted Antpitta (E) (Noah Strycker)



Spotted Barbtail (Gerald Friesen)

After breakfast, **Cay** and **Peggy** stayed at the lodge while **Ramiro**, **Jeff**, **Jenn**, and **Rose** set out in intermittent rain for a saunter of 3+ hours on the **Grallaria Loop Trail**, which included a brief stop to climb an observation tower that got us into the canopy. Our walk was pleasant, at a relaxed pace, and produced some great birds that included a pair each of **Variable Antshrikes**, **Uniform Antshrikes**, and **Rufous Spinetails**, a **Rufous-vented Tapaculo (E)** that was seen well only by **Jeff** and **Ramiro**, **Cinnamon Flycatcher**, **Sulphur-bellied Tyrannulet**, **Black-throated Tody-Tyrant**, **Sharpe's Wren**, **Russet-crowned Warbler**, **Spectacled Redstart**, **Yellow-scarfed Tanager (E)**, and **Saffron-crowned Tanager**.



Sharpe's Wren (Ian Davies)



Russet-crowned Warbler (Priscilla Burcher)

After lunch we again drove east on **Highway 5N**, this time headed to a small reserve called **Alto Nieva**, which has a bank of hummingbird feeders and a small sheltered seating area. We spent only an hour and a half here, but the birding was superb. Coming into the feeders were **Speckled Hummingbird**, **Long-tailed Sylph**, **Greenish Puffleg**, **Bronzy Inca**, **Booted [Peruvian] Racket-tail**, **Green-backed Hillstar**, **Fawn-breasted Brilliant**, **Violet-fronted Brilliant**, and **White-bellied Woodstar**. Non-hummingbirds seen included **Mottle-cheeked Tyrannulet**, **Green Jay**, **Black-faced Tanager**, a flock of at least six noisy and quite spectacular **White-capped Tanagers**, and two **Deep-blue Flowerpiercers**.



Long-tailed Sylph (Dubi Shapiro)



Booted Racket-tail (Ramiro Yabar)



Fawn-breasted Brilliant (Tom Munson)



White-capped Tanagers (Nick Athanas)

### Day 9 (9 July), Owlet Lodge and Surroundings

We began by driving east on **Highway 5N** in a steady rain, hoping to find a mixed flock along the road. The rain failed to let up, so **Ramiro** decided to backtrack west to a tiny reserve called **La Llantería**, which has a bank of hummingbird feeders, lots of **porterweed (*Stachytarpheta* sp.)**, and a covered viewing area accessed by a slippery trail. It was an excellent decision. Not only did we see lots of hummers, a mixed flock passed by, and we got to watch a pair of dapper **Ornate Flycatchers** building a nest.



Wire-crested Thorntail in porterweed (Jenn Megyesi)



Ornate Flycatcher (Ramiro Yabar)



In about two and a half hours at **La Llantería** our list of species that we saw well included **Green Hermit**, **Wire-crested Thorntail**, **Ecuadorian Piedtail**, **Booted [Peruvian] Racket-tail**, **Violet-headed Hummingbird**, **Fork-tailed Woodnymph**, **Many-spotted Hummingbird**, **Golden-tailed Sapphire**, **Sapphire-spangled Emerald**, a pair of **Andean Cocks-of-the-rock**, **Olive-striped Flycatcher**, **Ornate Flycatcher**, **House Wren**, **Gray-breasted Wood-Wren**, **Yellow-throated Chlorospingus**, **Slate-throated Redstart**, **Orange-eared Tanager**, **Bay-headed Tanager**, and **Bananaquit**.



Orange-eared Tanager (Stefan Hirsch)



Bay-headed Tanager (Dorian Anderson)

On the drive back to **Owlet Lodge** we stopped several times for roadside birds that included **Smooth-billed Ani**, **Tawny-bellied Hermit** (the only one for the trip), **Social Flycatcher**, **Russet-backed Oropendola**, **Spotted Tanager**, **Blue-necked Tanager**, and **Beryl-spangled Tanager**. After lunch, **Baldo** spotted a **Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan** that had flown in and landed not far from the dining area and was seen well by all.



Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan (Jon Irvine)

After an hour's rest at the lodge, we headed back to **Alto Nieva** for another go at the hummingbird feeders. Our hummingbird list was the same as the day before except that we added **Chestnut-breasted Coronet**, which is quite common at **Owlet Lodge**. Again, we saw **White-capped Tanagers** and also had **Yellow-throated Tanager**, **Deep-blue Flowerpiercer**, and **Masked Flowerpiercer**. On the drive back to the lodge we stopped in the wind and light rain at **Royal Sunangel Cliffs** and this time lucked into three **sunangels**, including scope views of a gorgeous male. We also got great looks at several **Blue-winged Mountain Tanagers** when a flock landed in a tree at our parking spot.



Royal Sunangel (Dubi Shapiro)



Blue-winged Mountain Tanager (Ian Davies)

### Day 10 (10 July), Owlet Lodge to Waqanki Lodge

We departed **Owlet Lodge** early and headed east in relatively clear weather. One of the first birds we saw as the sun came up was a **Sickle-winged Guan** on the side of the road. Farther down the road we pulled off into a parking area when **Baldo** noticed some largish birds in the trees, which turned out to be a small flock of **Scarlet-rumped Caciques**. We arrived at our first stop, **Reserva Arena Blanca**, at around 07:00. This 3-ha reserve and eBird hotspot (with 469 bird species) is located at 1,145 m (3,755 feet) elevation near the pueblo of **Aguas Verdas** in the department of **San Martín** and protects a patch of wet tropical forest. The grounds contain a feeding station for tinamous, lots of hummingbird feeders, and extensive flowering shrubs such as **porterweed** that attract hummingbirds. From the feeding-station blind we had excellent looks at a **Little Tinamou** and an **Orange-billed Sparrow**. Other birds seen on the grounds included **White-necked Jacobin**, **Blue-fronted Lancebill**, **Brown Violetear**, **Wire-crested Thorntail**, **Rufous-crested Coquette**, **Amethyst Woodstar**, **Gray-breasted Sabrewing**, **Fork-tailed Woodnymph**, **Many-spotted Hummingbird**, **Golden-tailed Sapphire**, **Zimmer's Antbird**, **Purple-throated Euphonia**, **Golden-bellied Euphonia**, **White-lined Tanager**, **Blue-gray Tanager**, **Palm Tanager**, **Bananaquit**, and **Buff-throated Saltator**. We also heard but did not see an **Orange-breasted Falcon**.

As we were walking back to the vehicle we heard two **Fiery-capped Manakins**. **Ramiro** lured them in with playback, but not everyone got a decent look at one. We stopped on the access road on the way out from the reserve and had great looks at a **Black-and-white Hawk-Eagle** soaring in the distance. In the vegetation along the road we also saw a pair of **Barred Antshrikes**, a **Yellow-bellied Elaenia**, several **Black-bellied Tanagers (E)**, a **Paradise Tanager**, and a **Bay-headed Tanager**.



Many-spotted Hummingbird (D. Shapiro)



Rufous-crested Coquette (Jenn Megyesi)



Black-and-white Hawk-Eagle (John Cahill)



Little Tinamou (João Quental)

Our next stop was along the highway at **Aguas Verdes** within the **Bosque de Proteccion Alto Mayo**, which has lush forest at about 945 m (3,100 feet) elevation. Very shortly after we emptied out of the van, **Ramiro** had found our main target: a pair of **Lanceolated Monklets**. We also lucked into a mixed flock that yielded **Yellow-margined Flycatcher**, **Chivi Vireo**, **Yellow-throated Chlorospingus**, **Yellow-crested Tanager**, **Spotted Tanager**, **Blue-necked Tanager**, **Green-and-gold Tanager**, and **Guira Tanager**.

Heading farther east and having dropped down out of the forest and into a wide valley with lots of agriculture and wetlands, we stopped in the hot sun when we noticed swifts and raptors overhead. We didn't spend enough time here to get good counts of individuals, but we saw multiple **White-collared Swifts**, **Gray-rumped Swifts**, **Black Vultures**, **Turkey Vultures**, **Swallow-tailed Kites** (at least 20), and **Plumbeous Kites** (at least 5), the latter a new species for the trip. Continuing east, we had multiple sightings of **Ruddy Ground Doves** and **Fork-tailed Palm Swifts**. We also scanned the skies in an attempt to pick out a **Greater Yellow-headed Vulture** among the many **Turkey Vultures** but failed to find that species. As we neared **Moyobamba**, we spotted a family of **Burrowing Owls** along the highway.

We arrived at **Waqanki Ecolodge**, our home for the next two nights, at about 13:00, unpacked, and had lunch. Then we climbed a small hill to an observation platform surrounded by hummingbird feeders. The action was nonstop, and in no time we'd tallied 11 hummingbird species: **White-necked Jacobin**, **Great-billed Hermit**, **Black-throated Hermit**, **Brown Violetear**, **Black-throated Mango**, **Rufous-crested Coquette**, **Long-billed Starthroat**, **Gray-breasted Sabrewing**, **Fork-tailed Woodnymph**, **Golden-tailed Sapphire**, and **Sapphire-spangled Emerald**. On the lodge grounds we found the hanging nest of a **Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift** and saw **Lettered Aracari**, **Yellow-tufted Woodpecker**, **Olivaceous Woodcreeper**, **Boat-billed Flycatcher**, **Short-crested Flycatcher**, **Black-billed Thrush**, and **Russet-backed Oropendola**. Afternoon birding on the grounds yielded more new species for the day that included **Rufous-breasted Hermit**, **Violet-headed Hummingbird**, **White-chinned Sapphire**, **Bluish-fronted Jacamar**, **Thick-billed Euphonia**, **Turquoise Tanager**, **Paradise Tanager**, and **Black-bellied Tanager (E)**.



White-necked Jacobin (Pedro Lastra)



Violet-headed Hummingbird (Tal Pipkin)



Lettered Aracari (Alfredo Begazo)



Yellow-tufted Woodpecker (Lou Hegedus)

After dinner **Ramiro, Baldo, Rose, Peggy,** and **Jeff** drove west through **Moyobamba** and into an area of open fields to scan powerlines for hunting **Striped Owls**. In less than half an hour, somewhat to the surprise of all of us, we found an owl, and **Ramiro** got several photos of it! We returned to **Moyobamba** proper and visited several places where **Baldo** had seen **Stygian Owls** in the past, right in the city, but we struck out. We returned to the lodge after 21:00 and heard a couple of distant **Common Paraques** calling and also a **Band-bellied Owl** that sounded like it was quite close. The owl would not respond to broadcasted calls, however, perhaps because it had heard many calls emitted by birders over the years.



The Striped Owl we saw (Ramiro Yabar)



The Band-bellied Owl we wish we'd seen (Andres Vasquez Noboa)

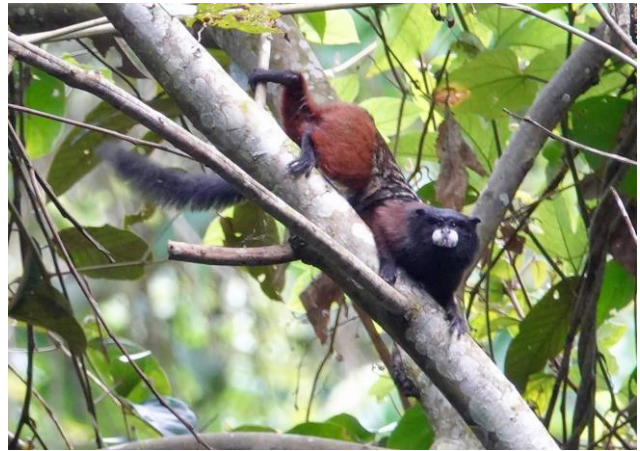
### Day 11 (11 July), Waqanki Lodge and Río Tonchima Rice Fields

In the morning, we walked up the **Quebrada Mishquiyaquillo** trail for several hours. This area of lovely wet tropical forest was quite birdy, but many of the birds were distant and could not be lured into view. On the lodge grounds before we hit the trail we saw multiple **Ruddy Ground Doves**, **Yellow-tufted Woodpeckers**, and **Black-billed Thrushes**, the latter being quite common here. Among the heard-only birds along the trail were **Speckled Chachalaca**, **Rufous-breasted Wood-Quail**, **Broad-billed Motmot**, **Fasciated Antshrike**, **Plain Antvireo**, and **Black-faced Antthrush**. Birds seen along the trail included **Blue-crowned Trogon**, **White-fronted Nunbird**, **Chestnut-eared Aracari**, **Golden-collared Toucanet**, **Lafresnaye's Piculet**, **Plain-winged Antshrike**, **Peruvian Warbling-Antbird**, **Spot-winged Antbird**, **Olivaceous Woodcreeper**, **Wing-barred Piprites**, **Slaty-capped Flycatcher**, **Common Tody-Flycatcher**, **Yellow-margined Flycatcher**, **Mishana Tyrannulet (E)**, **Euler's Flycatcher**, **Crowned Slaty Flycatcher**, **Turquoise Tanager**, **Paradise Tanager**, **Black-faced Dacnis**, **Blue Dacnis**, **Guira Tanager**, and **Buff-throated Saltator**. **Jenn** and **Peggy** left the hike early and walked back with **Baldo**, lucking into a trailside sighting of a **Tataupa Tinamou** and a troop of **7 Saddleback Tamarins** not far from the lodge grounds!

After lunch we drove west of **Moyobamba** to the **Río Tonchima Rice Fields**. Just a short way west of the city we stopped at a small pond known as **Humedal de Indañe (Indañe Wetland)**, where we saw several **Masked Ducks** and **Common Gallinules** and a juvenile **Purple Gallinule**. Also here were **Rufous-fronted Thornbirds** and a pair of **Black-capped Donacobiuses**. In a bit more than an hour at the rice fields new trip birds seen included **Limpkin**, **Southern Lapwing**, **Wattled Jacana**, **Snail Kite**, **Yellow-headed Caracara**, **Dark-breasted Spinetail**, **Pale-eyed Blackbird**, **Red-capped Cardinal**, **Blue-black Grassquit**, **Chestnut-bellied Seedeater**, and **Black-billed Seed-Finch**.



Peruvian Warbling-Antbird (Claudia Brasileiro)



Saddleback Tamarin (Jenn Megyesi)

On the way back from the rice fields we drove into **Morro de Calzada** to try for owls before dinner. This small reserve is centered around an isolated hill covered in lowland evergreen forest and second-growth forest. Some 475 species of birds have been detected here. Straight away **Baldo** spotted a branched young **Stygian Owl**, and **Jeff** found a second brancher moments later. **Jeff** stayed until dark to record the fledglings' food-begging vocalizations and hopefully witness an adult feeding the young. Time ran out, however, and he reluctantly left the fledglings without seeing an adult. Heard but not seen here were a **Tropical Screech Owl**, a **Band-bellied Owl**, and a **Black Caracara**.



Stygian Owl fledgling (Ramiro Yabar)



Black-billed Seed-Finch (Nick Athanas)

### Day 12 (12 July), Waqanki Lodge to Tarapoto

At sunrise a **Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl** was calling near our rooms. Unlike many individuals of this species **Jeff** has seen, this one seemed to have no interest in showing itself (although **Jenn** had glimpsed it the day before). After breakfast we returned to **Morro de Calzada**. Straight off we saw at least eight **Saddleback Tamarins** in the trees surrounding the parking lot. The fledgling owls were gone, but an adult **Stygian Owl** flew in and landed where the fledglings had been, giving us great scope views of this marvelous species. Birding was good in the parking lot and along the trail that winds up the mountain

from the visitor center. Among the species we saw in two hours of birding were **Blue-crowned Trogon**, **Swallow-winged Puffbird**, **Channel-billed Toucan** (distant scope views), a flyby flock of **Cobalt-winged Parakeets**, **Golden-headed Manakin** (Jenn only), **Southern Mouse-colored Tyrannulet**, **Streaked Flycatcher**, **Southern Rough-winged Swallow**, **Tropical Parula**, **Paradise Tanager**, **Swallow Tanager**, and **Green Honeycreeper**. On the drive out of the reserve, we stopped in an area of open trees and fields and saw two **Lettered Aracaris**, a clan of five **Yellow-tufted Woodpeckers**, a couple of **Social Flycatchers**, two **Purple-throated Euphonias**, and two **Yellow-browed Sparrows**.



Adult Stygian Owl (Ramiro Yabar)



Swallow Tanager (Dubi Shapiro)

Having packed the van after breakfast, we headed east from **Morro de Calzada** to our first stop along the route to our final destination at **Tarapoto**: the famous **Oilbird** nesting colony at **Cañon Quiscarrumi**. We peered down into the narrow canyon and saw at least 60 of these bizarre caprimulgiforms that subsist entirely on fruit and use echolocation to navigate during their nightly flights to find food.



Oilbird (photographer unknown)



Two of the Oilbirds we saw (Rose Leach)

Other birds seen near the **Oilbird** colony were **Black Vultures**, **White-eyed Parakeets**, **Russet-backed Oropendolas**, and **Yellow-rumped Caciques**.

We arrived in **Tarapoto** at midday and had a great meal of fresh fish, salad, and local fruit juices at **La Patarashca Restaurante**. After lunch we drove south of the city and stopped to bird at several places with wetlands, wet meadows, and agricultural fields, where we saw species such as **Ruddy Ground Dove**, **Purple Gallinule**, **Limpkin**, **Yellow-headed Caracara**, **Social Flycatcher**, **Black-capped Donacobius**, and **Solitary Black Cacique**. We then headed west a short distance to **Laguna Ricuricocha**, where we birded along the lakeshore on the grounds of the **Hacienda El Águila** resort and at a smaller wetland along the access road just east of the resort. We counted more than 60 **Comb Ducks** on the lake and also saw the only **Least Grebe** for the trip. Also seen on or adjacent to the lake were **Smooth-billed Ani**, **Black-throated Mango**, **Blue-tailed Emerald**, **Sapphire-spangled Emerald**, **Wattled Jacana**, **Neotropic Cormorant**, **Blue-and-white Swallow**, and **Gray-breasted Martin**. On the drive in we had a great look at a **Gray-cowled Wood-Rail** at the smaller wetland. On the way out we parked and walked the road along the wetland and adjacent forest. The most unexpected find was the group of five **Hoatzins** that appeared. These peculiar birds look like Dr. Seuss characters and subsist almost entirely on leaves. Unique to all bird species, digestion begins in their crops, aided by microbes that live there.



Two of five Hoatzins seen near Laguna Ricuricocha (Jenn Megyesi)

Birding was surprisingly good along the road, considering it was late in the day. Flyovers included flocks of five **Wood Storks** and 30 **White-eyed Parakeets**. Among the forest birds seen were **Blue-crowned Trogon**, **Pearly-vented Tody-Tyrant**, **Olive-faced [Yellow-breasted] Flycatcher**, and **Purple-throated Euphonia**. We returned to **Tarapoto** and checked in at the **Hotel Vuelo 78**, which is a clean, modern hotel located a short distance from the local airport.



### Day 13 (13 July), Tarapoto and Surroundings

We left the hotel early and headed south to an area of dense forest known as **Quebrada Upaquihoa**. On the way in we saw a small flock of **Violaceous Jays**. We birded along the road while **Baldo** assembled breakfast and then walked a little-used side road into the forest. Birding was excellent, and with patience we saw secretive birds in the understory and a few canopy specialists. The morning list included **Golden-tailed Sapphire**, **Black-fronted Nunbird**, **Chestnut-eared Aracari**, **Northern Slaty Antshrike**, **Stripe-chested Antwren**, **Rusty-winged Antwren**, **White-browed Antbird**, **Chestnut-tailed Antbird**, **Plain-crowned Spinetail**, **Sulphur-bellied Tyrant-Manakin**, **Band-tailed Manakin**, **White-bellied Pygmy-Tyrant**, **Streaked Flycatcher**, **Green Jay**, and **Coraya Wren**. We also heard **Dusky Titi Monkeys**.



Black-fronted Nunbird (Dubi Shapiro)



White-browed Antbird (Dubi Shapiro)

Next, we drove through **Tarapoto** and headed up the eastern spine of the **Andes** into an area known as the **Cordillera Escalera**. The mountains here are low, with many passes at less than 1,110 m elevation. We ate lunch at **El Mono y La Gata**, where we obtained our first sighting of **Koepcke's Hermit (E)** and saw several **Swallow-tailed Kites** and a tame **Red Howler Monkey** that got friendly with **Jenn** (see p. 37). As we continued east, we stopped for mixed flocks wherever **Baldo** found a safe parking spot. Highlights were another **Black-and-white Hawk-Eagle**, **Chestnut-tipped Toucanet**, **Slaty-capped Flycatcher**, **Cliff Flycatcher**, **Crowned Slaty Flycatcher**, **Slaty-capped Shrike-Vireo**, **Bronze-green Euphonia**, **Carmioli's Tanager**, **Silver-beaked Tanager**, **Black-faced Dacnis**, **Purple Honeycreeper**, and **Green Honeycreeper**.

### Day 14 (14 July), Koepcke's Hermit Reserve, Return to Lima

We began the day by returning to **Cordillera Escalera** and driving farther east of yesterday's trip until we arrived at the **Asociación para La Conservación de Aves y La Biodiversidad Koepcke's Hermit**, or **ACONABIKH**. This private reserve protects 30 ha of montane rainforest within which more than 430 species of birds have been documented. Before we arrived at the reserve, we stopped along the highway shortly after sunrise and picked up a few species that included **Silver-beaked Tanager**, **Masked Tanager**, and **Chestnut-bellied Seed-Finch**. At the car park for the reserve we saw **Speckled Chachalacas** and **Gray-fronted Doves**. **Baldo** prepared a wonderful breakfast, and then we sat at the hummingbird feeders for a spell before heading out on a hike through the forest, accompanied by a local guide. The feeders were active and yielded multiple sightings of **White-necked Jacobin**, at least three **Koepcke's Hermits (E)**, **Blue-fronted Lancebill**, **Gould's Jewelfront**, **Gray-breasted Sabrewing**, **Fork-tailed Woodnymph**, **Golden-tailed Sapphire**, and **Sapphire-spangled Emerald**.



Koepcke's Hermit (E) (Jesse Huth)



Blue-fronted Lancebill (Tino Mitzen)



Gould's Jewelfront (Peter Hawrylyshyn)



Sapphire-spangled Emerald (Niall Perrins)

On the hike the birding continued to be excellent, with sightings of **Green-backed Trogon**, **Blue-headed Parrot**, **White-flanked Antwren**, **Peruvian Warbling-Antbird**, **Elegant Woodcreeper**, **Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner**, and **Andean Cock-of-the-rock**. We turned around where the trail connected with an active lek of **Golden-headed Manakins** where three males were displaying.



Green-backed Trogon (Sam Woods)



Golden-headed Manakin (Andres Vasquez Noboa)

We had arrived back at the hummingbird feeders for one more look at the hermits and jewelfronts when a mixed flock appeared that included **Lafresnaye's Piculet**, **White-shouldered Tanager**, **Palm Tanager**, **Turquoise Tanager**, **Paradise Tanager**, **Opal-crowned Tanager**, and **Blue Dacnis**. Back at the building near the entrance, we also saw a **Fiery-capped Manakin** (Rose and Ramiro), **White-lored Tyrannulet**, **Short-crested Flycatcher**, **Green-and-gold Tanager**, **Short-billed Honeycreeper** (Jeff and Ramiro), and **Green Honeycreeper**.



Opal-crowned Tanager (Melissa Hafting)



Paradise Tanager (Jory Teltser)

Two unusual species we encountered along the trail at **ACONABIKH** were a **Three-striped Poison Frog** (family Dendrobatidae) and a **Peruvian Fern Stick Insect**. Unlike most other stick insects, this one is not cryptically colored. Not surprisingly, it produces a chemical irritant that deters predators.



Three-striped Poison Frog (Jeff Marks)



Male Peruvian Fern Stick Insect (Jeff Marks)

In **Tarapoto** we had another great lunch at **La Patarashca Restaurante**. Then we headed south of the city and birded along the **Via de Evitamiento**, where we saw **Smooth-billed Ani**, **Squirrel Cuckoo**, and a rather unexpected **Dark-billed Cuckoo**. We also obtained scope views of a **Chestnut-bellied Seed eater**.

Our return flight to **Lima** departed from **Tarapoto** at 21:00. We spent the night at a hotel near the **Lima** airport and left in the morning for our return flights to the US.

### Top 10 List of Bird Species Seen

Species	Cay	Jeff	Jenn	Peggy	Rose
White-winged Guan E			X		
Squirrel Cuckoo			X	X	
Oilbird	X			X	
Koepcke's Hermit E		X			
Wire-crested Thorntail	X	X	X		
Rufous-crested Coquette	X				
Marvelous Spatuletail E			X	X	X
Hoatzin	X		X	X	
Peruvian Thick-knee	X				
Pearl Kite		X		X	
Long-whiskered Owl E	X				X
Burrowing Owl			X		
Stygian Owl	X	X		X	X
Guayaquil Woodpecker			X		
Collared Antshrike	X				
Chestnut Antpitta E			X		
Ochre-fronted Antpitta E		X			X
Golden-headed Manakin				X	
Peruvian Plantcutter E		X			X
Andean Cock-of-the-rock	X			X	
Many-colored Rush Tyrant				X	
Johnson's Tody Flycatcher E					X
Cliff Flycatcher			X		
Ornate Flycatcher		X			
Rufous Flycatcher E		X			
Gray-mantled Wren		X			
Long-tailed Mockingbird			X		
Grass-green Tanager	X			X	
Yellow-scarfed Tanager E					X
Green-and-gold Tanager					X
Swallow Tanager					X
White-capped Tanager		X			
Little Inca-Finch E					X



Jenn and friend, El Mono y La Gata (Jeff Marks)



The boys at Huembo Lodge (Rose Leach)



Lunch at La Patarashca, Tarapoto (Jeff Marks)



Alto Nieva (Jeff Marks)



Grallaria Loop, Owlet Lodge (Jeff Marks)



Peggy and Rose at Owlet Lodge (Jeff Marks)



Jenn at Chaparrí Lodge (Jeff Marks)



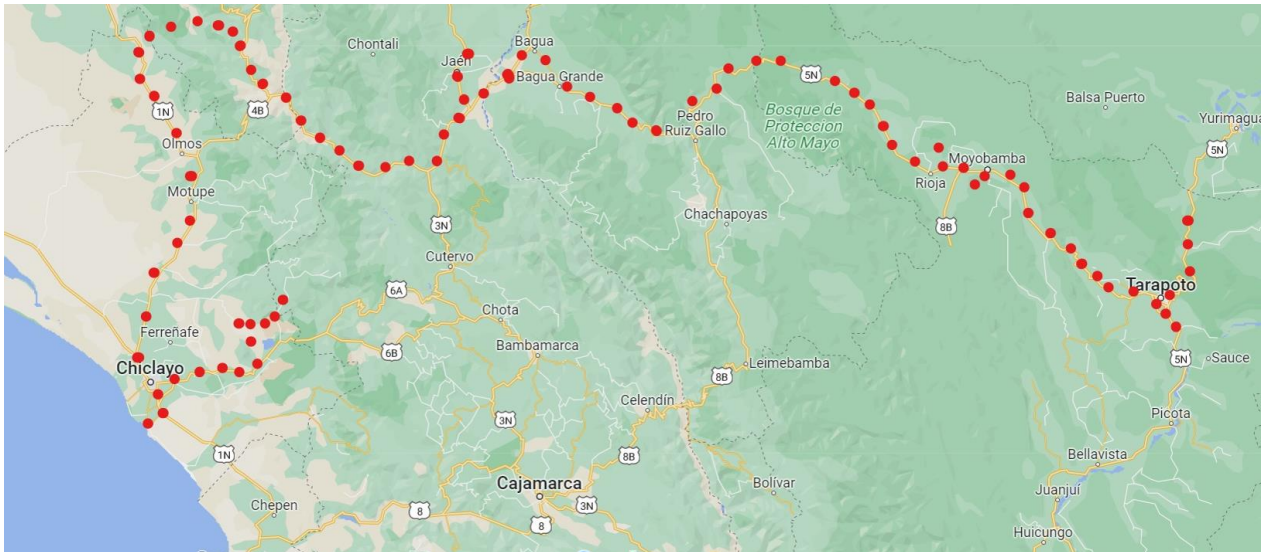
Rose and Cay at Owlet Lodge (Jenn Megyesi)



Ramiro at La Patarashca, Tarapoto (Jeff Marks)



Best photo of the trip, 4 July 2022



Our approximate route, from Chiclayo to Tarapoto