

# HEATHERLEA TRIP REPORT

## BELIZE AND THE YUCATAN PENINSULA



SUNDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER – SATURDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2018



**Heatherlea Participants:** Richard Allan & Alison Holt, Chris Barrett, Doreen Brown, Colin & Ros Hedderwick, Pat Hogarth, Roslyn Knight and Lesley Raven.

**Heatherlea Guides:** Gabor & Andrea Orban, Scott O'Hara.

## **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> November**

Arrival in Cancun, Mexico.

## **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> November**

After an exhaustingly long day travelling out to Mexico, we opted for an 8am breakfast with no organised pre-breakfast walk, however several of the group did get out and explore the hotel's suburban surroundings at dawn of their own accord.

The pre-dawn light was accompanied by the sounds of Royal Tern calling over the sea, with a handful of Magnificent Frigatebird seen with them around sunrise. A couple of Caspian Tern were also spotted by a few, mixed in with the Royal Tern group.

Pat had taken a stroll along the beach itself and was alone in finding and photographing Killdeer, Black-bellied (Grey) Plover, Semi-palmated Plover and Least Sandpiper. At the pier she also found a Black-crowned Night-Heron and a Snowy Egret!

Instead of hitting the beach, Ros and Scott took a wander down the nearby streets looking for warblers in the gardens along from the hotel. Their first birds of the day were Great-tailed Grackle, Hooded Oriole and Tropical Mockingbird. Brown Pelican flew past, seen by those on the terrace and on the beach too.

In the trees and bushes lining the street Yellow-throated, Palm and Canada Warbler were seen, with Great Kiskadee perched on the flood lightings of the local technical school.

Breakfast began alongside a feeding frenzy on the sea as a fishing vessel approached the shore. The fish scraps allowed great views of Royal Tern, Magnificent Frigatebird, Brown Pelican and Laughing Gull. Not a bad start to the trip at all!

We reconvened after breakfast for a local day's birding in the woods around Ruta de Cenote. Here we drove down a narrow, rough track and very slowly walked the dirt road back the way we had come whilst looking and listening for birds.

As we jumped out of the bus we spotted a Grey Fox wondering down side track towards us, seemingly unaware of us. It wasn't long after this that we had a lone Olive-throated (Aztec) Parakeet, our first regional endemic of the trip: Orange Oriole, and tantalising glimpses of two Red-throated Ant-tanager, flitting around in deep cover.

Our first hummingbirds of the trip were spotted at this point, with Wedge-tailed Sabrewing and Fork-tailed (Canivet's) Emerald both being found on the walk.

We started walking the track, quickly picking up our first vireos: Yucatan and Yellow-throated, the latter being reasonably common throughout the day. A bird of stunning contrast, between its blue-black upper parts and its lemon yellow underparts, was then spotted high in the canopy: Yellow-throated Euphonia, what a beaut!

The Euphonia only stayed for a few seconds but another set of blue-black birds began feeding in front of the group, on the fringes of the track: a small flock of Blue Bunting! It was fantastic to see these birds so close, and for so long – they must have stayed for ten minutes or more, before we were distracted by trying to find the source of the loud song and shrill calls emanating from the dense woodland around us. The sounds came from two Spot-breasted Wren, although few of the group saw more than a flash of movement between the branches.

A mob of brightly coloured Yucatan Jay flitted across the path ahead of us, but were not seen again; although a lone Brown Jay parted itself from the high canopy above us and disappeared in the opposite direction.

Gabor's impersonation of a Ferruginous Pygmy Owl attracted several passerines including Black-throated Green Warbler, Rose-throated Tanager and Northern Bentbill, plus a Ferruginous Pygmy Owl, showing how good his impersonation was!

Just before leaving the woods a large, heavily barred raptor with rounded "butterfly-like" wings came into view, circling high above us. Debate raged on its identity, with it being called as a Black Hawk-Eagle to start with however our driver David (also an expert Central American birder) pinned it down as a Hook-billed Kite, with the assistance of some great photographs from Richard.

On route back to the hotel for lunch we stopped on the side of the road for, appropriately enough, a Roadside Hawk. While here we also spotted a lone Ruddy Ground-dove.

We took lunch back at the hotel, overlooking the white sands and turquoise waters. Far from being birdless, during lunch we had views of Royal Tern, Brown Pelican, Laughing Gull, Magnificent Frigatebird, Ruddy Turnstone and some brilliantly close views of another Yellow Warbler.

After a short siesta we headed back out to Ruta de Cenote, to walk another woodland trail. We really didn't get far along the track before we stopped, about 10 metres from the bus, surrounded by bird sounds from all directions.

Numerous warblers and vireos flitted through the canopy above us, with Black-throated Green and Magnolia Warbler, Northern and Tropical Parula, and Yellow-throated, White-eyed and Yucatan Vireo all seen from the same spot. The reason for so many warblers in one place was shown, when a Ferruginous Pygmy Owl passed overhead, pursued closely by several of these smaller birds.

Whilst watching the retreating owl an Olivaceous Woodcreeper was seen by some, although not everyone in the group saw it.

An area of open grassland, interspersed with a handful of trees and shrubs, opened up ahead of us. A Grey Hawk was seen as we exited the woodlands and an Eastern Wood-Pewee was seen perched in a dead tree in the background. A second Eastern Wood-Pewee was spotted flycatching nearby too.

Across the track from the pewee, a small flock of Yellow-faced Grassquit were spotted in a small bush and stayed for some time.

The woodland after the open section was incredibly productive, with Melodious Blackbird, Ruddy Ground-Dove, Red-billed Pigeon, Social Flycatcher and another Mangrove Vireo without trying!

Continuing through the woods, we added Fork-tailed (Canivet's) Emerald and Wedge-tailed Sabrewing for the walk along with Groove-billed Ani, Rose-throated Tanager (a few more females, and eventually a male) and another Ferruginous Pygmy Owl.

The owl departed as a Turkey Vulture cruised past overhead. Around the same time a large flock of Bronze Cowbird flew over us, looking for somewhere to roost. The passing of the vulture also added Vaux's Swift, with one flying over at the same time.

Re-entering the open areas, Gabor already had a female Masked Tityra perched near the Eastern Wood-Pewee, and slightly above another new species for us: Yucatan Woodpecker!

With one last stop on route back to the hotel we stopped to (unsuccessfully) look for Painted Bunting, however we ended the day with brilliant views of Hooded and Yellow-tailed Oriole, plus two stunning Keel-billed Toucan which flew in as we were getting back into the bus – a brilliant way to end the first day of the holiday!

## **Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> November**

Today was to be a travel day, with stops as time allowed. The half hour of daylight before breakfast had some of the group seeing Black-crowned Night-Heron and Ruddy Turnstone on the beach, with Magnificent Frigatebird, Laughing Gull, Royal Tern and Brown Pelican out at sea. In the land around the hotel Yellow, Wilson's and Golden-crowned Warbler were identified along with the ubiquitous Great-tailed Grackle, Tropical Mockingbird and, a touch of the Old World, Eurasian Collared Dove.

We got on the road as quickly as possible after breakfast and started down the highway, only to be diverted down several side streets due to celebrations which seemed to include displays of martial arts between trained fighters.

The journey was long and there weren't too many birds being easily identified from the moving bus, although we did see a couple of Roadside Hawk and plenty of Black and Turkey Vultures, lazily circling near the road.

More Tropical Mockingbird and Great-tailed Grackle were seen in some numbers from the bus too, but it wasn't until we were standing on the other side of the border (having been checked through into Belize) that we had anything new.

A few Tropical/Couch's Kingbird were spotted perched on the nearby fence line, and a couple of White-collared Seedeater were singing from a further set of barbed wire. Many vultures circled above us, up in the ether, and hundreds of Vaux's Swift and Northern Rough-winged Swallow hawked for insects in the middle distance.

Lunch was taken in by Corozal Bay at the 'Out of the Blue' café and restaurant. Here we were greeted by a Great Kiskadee and yet more Great-tailed Grackle, along with a Spotted Sandpiper at the edge of the water.

During our lunch Chris spotted three waders on the further pier which, once a 'scope was trained on them, turned out to be Semi-palmated Plover. Pat pointed out a Great Blue Heron sulking by the end of the same pier, like only herons are capable of; and a lone Laughing Gull was also seen, as was a close-by Magnificent Frigatebird.

The last stretch of driving took us along some tarmac and some dirt roads, the latter as we started to lose the light. Cattle Egret were spotted in numbers in the fields, appropriately, with cattle; and a lone Snowy Egret was seen wading in a pool by the road.

As dusk approached on the dirt track to La Milpa Eco-lodge we had some very close passes by several Common Pauraque in front of the bus. We lost these once we entered the woods but

spotted another Grey Fox on the road – probably the one which was then seen several times around the Eco-lodge grounds as we checked in and had dinner.

A long day, but necessary to get us to where we wanted to be and a few new birds for the trip wasn't to be sniffed at either!

### **Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> November**

Having been told by our hosts that 05:45 was “hummingbird time” a handful of the group were up in the pre-dawn to check out these must-see birds. Pat and Scott were the first up and about and were treated to views of several male Rufous-tailed Hummingbird defending their flower-territories fiercely against others. They piped at one another and actively chased away any interlopers, although there seemed to be less conflict around the nectar feeders hanging in the dining area.

The Eco-lodge grounds were wreathed in cloud, making visibility poor even once the sun was apparently up. In the mist we had our first views of the resident Ocellated Turkey, along with a few more distant Great Curassow – both black male and rusty brown female. It was hard to make out much more detail than this in the poor light, so we hoped for better views later.

As the cloud began to clear a little and others of the group started to appear, so did other birds; with Green Honeycreeper, Hooded Oriole, Olive-backed and Yellow-throated Euphonia all frequenting the fruit station.

Hooded, Magnolia, Yellow and Black-and-White Warblers were all seen in the trees surrounding the kitchen buildings, along with Summer Tanager and Spot-breasted Wren.

The nectar feeders were alive with hummingbirds of four species now: Rufous-tailed and Scaly-breasted Hummingbird, White-bellied Emerald and Wedge-tailed Sabrewing. Outside the dining area an Ochre-bellied Flycatcher was seen by some and Plain Chachalaca by others. At breakfast we spotted the resident Grey Fox and an Agouti, plus the now circling Turkey Vultures.

One of the Eco-lodge's resident Bird Guides, Melvis, took us for a short walk into the forest after breakfast along with, surprisingly to all involved, the Ocellated Turkey who had obviously taken a liking to the group and followed us closely all morning.

We were only a few metres into the forest when we heard the call of a White-breasted Wood Wren, but sadly it was never seen. Yellow-olive Flycatcher and a Blue-black Grosbeak, on the other hand, were.

Northern Schiffornis played hard to get for a while but eventually showed well, as did the Grey-headed Tanager seen further down the path. A Collared Aracari was seen briefly in the high canopy but flew before the whole group could get good views.

We took a small side-path to a compost dump where the vultures often fed. A few were indeed present, but only Turkey Vulture in this case. Despite their name, our Ocellated Turkey (named 'Beau' by Chris) didn't seem too fussed by them.

While we checked out the vultures a Smoky Brown Woodpecker began to drum and call intermittently. This went on for a while, but it never came any closer for us.

Continuing down the path we picked out Squirrel Cuckoo and several Red-throated Ant-Tanager, the former in the mid-canopy and the latter only just above the ground. We were happy to get the Ant-Tanager after being frustrated by two in Ruta de Cenota.

A White-eyed Vireo showed well and we managed to successfully 'scope a Black-headed Trogon – our first Trogon of the trip, a particularly desired bird of Chris'. An Ivory-billed Woodcreeper was seen by some of the group, but we hoped to still get better views as the trip continued. Two Northern Waterthrush were seen briefly, but spent most of the time "tick"ing from the dense vegetation.

At the furthest extent of the walk the group had a group of Spider Monkeys pass noisily through the forest before we spotted a Double-toothed Kite sat in the canopy, whilst what was probably a female Bat Falcon flew overhead. The walk back from here was much quicker but we still managed to add Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher and Grey-breasted Chat, although the latter was incredibly skulky and only seen by a handful of the group.

During lunch and our subsequent siesta, we spotted many of the species from our pre-breakfast session, plus Yellow-winged Tanager, Yellow-bellied Elaenia and Tropical Kingbird all of which were new, or newly confirmed in the case of the Kingbird. Yellow-eared Terrapin, Morelet's Crocodile and White-tailed Deer were also noted.

We then went for another walk with Melvis in the later afternoon where we spotted Northern Waterthrush at the pool, where Pat (who was staying behind) also added Wood Thrush to our growing trip list.

We walked part way along the entrance road to the Eco-lodge and birded as we went with Beau in tow once again; Yellow-olive Flycatcher being spotted a hundred metres from the start of the path, followed quickly by two King Vulture picked up by Andrea's sharp eye.

As we continued a Stub-tailed Spadebill was heard calling but wasn't seen, however we did pick out a group of Brown-hooded Parrot and Olive-throated (Aztec) Parakeet as they flew over the forest. Mealy Parrot was also noted.

Off the main track, we headed into the forest now, where the forest became deathly quiet until we arrived at a series of unexcavated Mayan ruins. We discussed the ruins and Mayan burial practices with Andrea until Melvis said he could hear a Tody Motmot, one of the more challenging birds to see in the forest due to its diminutive stature and well camouflaged colours. However, within a few minutes he had pinned down the bird and we all managed good views before it left, fantastic!

On the way back from the Mayan ruins we picked up six Dot-winged Antwren, a Sulphur-breasted Wren and Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher.

On the track we heard and then saw a male White-collared Manakin, who displayed at us in the gaps in the canopy. Although we had views of that bird the next Manakin was much harder – the Red-capped Manakin called several times then vanished.

A Black-faced Ant-thrush was heard as was a Vermiculated Screech Owl, however Squirrel Cuckoo, Collared Aracari and Ivory-billed Woodcreeper all showed very well.

As we re-entered the camp, the last bird heard was of a Great Tinaou, all in all, I would judge this day a great success!

## Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> November

Unlike yesterday morning most of the group were up and ready for some birding at 6am. This morning Melvis was going to take the group out to the archaeological site of La Milpa, but rather than explain the Mayan history in this area we would be birding – the explanations would come later.

We took the short drive along the road we had walked on yesterday morning before walking the remainder of the track, ascending the stairs to the Mayan plateau. In the short distance between the stairs and the open forest area we heard Slaty-tailed Trogon, Hooded Warbler, Ivory-billed Woodcreeper and Scaly-throated Leaf-tosser, the low clouds adding an extra level of difficulty to the birding.

Olivaceous Woodcreeper and Wood Thrush were seen however, and at close range. The misty forest was still alive with calls of White-breasted Wood Wren, Stub-tailed Spadebill, Pale-billed Woodpecker and Mealy Parrot.

Melvis spotted our first Barred Forest Falcon of the trip which was seen well in both binoculars and through the 'scopes a few times before it took flight away from the group. Black-cowled Oriole, Summer Tanager and a very good looking Red-capped Manakin were all seen well. On the way back to this bus we also spotted a couple of Keel-billed Toucan separating from the high canopy having been heard calling loudly.

After breakfast with the hummingbirds we headed back out to the archaeological site, this time to twin birding with learning some of the cultural history of the area. On the drive out to the site we came across one of the elusive Red-bracket Deer, a good mammal for our list.

On our arrival Andrea gave the group an interesting and thorough overview of the Mayan civilisation, some of its buildings and its hierarchical structure, leaving the specifics of this site to Melvis once we had re-climbed the stairs up to the ruins.

In the ancient plaza we spotted Tawny-winged Woodcreeper, often the first bird to find ant swarms, but in this instance it was not feeding. Above it in the canopy we also noted Black-and-White Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Lesser Greenlet, White-eyed Vireo, Spot-breasted Wren, Yellow-throated and Olive-backed Euphonia.

Melvis gave the group an in-depth history not only of the site when it had once been a great city of 20,000 inhabitants but also the recent history as a dig site itself, and how each discovery has added to or re-written what archaeologists believe about the site.

Distant Howler Monkeys interrupted Melvis' talk but they were sadly not seen. Once we had finished asking our questions, we went back to birding. A male American Restart along with Hooded and Black-throated Green Warbler were all added for the day, and we watched another (or possible the same) Tawny-winged Woodcreeper feeding on a nearby ant swarm, posing for photos between its dives into the ants.

The walk back to the bus added Rainforest Toad and Rainbow Amieva before we reached the stairs, with the group finding quite a good mixed flock of birds as we descended towards the bus. Purple-crowned Fairy was our new hummingbird for the day, plus Blue-winged and Golden-crowned Warbler, Black-throated Ant-tanager, Eye-ringed Flatbill, Chestnut-collared Woodpecker and Ivory-billed Woodcreeper all present in the flock.

On the road back, Lesley spotted a Wood Thrush on the road and once we arrived back to camp we spotted the resident Roadside Hawk once again perched on the back-board of the basketball hoop.

At lunch we were pleased to see the return of 'Beau' the Ocellated Turkey although it was suggested that after a night out in the forest alone he should be called 'Rambo' instead.

Throughout lunch and our afternoon siesta the fruit station continued to provide great views of at least two Green Honeycreeper, the male continually picking a fight with a Hooded Oriole. The bushes surrounding the fruit station were alive with birds with Olive-backed Euphonia, Magnolia Warbler, Yellow-bellied Elaenia, White-collared Seedeater and, at one point, a Squirrel Cuckoo all being spotted.

Pat managed to get photographs of a White-striped Basilisk, known as the Jesus Christ lizard due to its ability to run across the surface of the water, at the pond.

Melvis then took us out for another walk in the late afternoon, the route of which firstly took us into the archaeologists' camp which was currently not in use.

On one of the trees we spotted sixty or more strange looking black insects, all standing upright with their legs positioned at one end of their long bodies. Melvis told us they were called Peanut-headed Bugs and were in the grasshopper family, these 1-2cm long insects were freshly hatched but the adults are a pale grey-white and are up to 10cm in length, with a head like a peanut!

Also in the camp we managed to 'scope a female Lineated Woodpecker at close range, an amazing sight with her large red crest. A Grey Fox and a group of seven (roosting) White-lined Sac-winged Bats were also added to the list here.

Several of the group turned back as we entered the forest, noting that Melvis had his machete with him and worried about the vegetation and terrain to come – in actual fact we only had to deviate from the main track once due to fallen trees.

In the first section of the forest we heard a number of species but they refused to show: Stub-tailed Spadebill, Spot-breasted Wren, Tawny-crowned Greenlet, Golden-olive Woodpecker and Northern Schiffornis; however in the same area we did spot a couple of Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, Black-and-White Warbler, Tawny-winged and Olivaceous Woodcreeper.

The forest fell silent in the small path which connected with the main track into camp, but we did spot a couple of Owl Butterflies in passing.

The main dirt track into camp was far more open than the other trails we had been on which made spotting the birds a bit easier, and in this section we picked up Summer Tanager, White-bellied Emerald and Black-throated Shrike-tanager – the last of which was a particular highlight as this species had teased us several times before now.

A Collared Forest Falcon across the road ahead of us, passing over the canopy, whilst we were searching for what could have been a Least Flycatcher but sadly we weren't able to confirm it. However, a pair of Social Flycatcher, Red-throated Ant-tanager and an American Redstart all made appearances in the same area.

We all then had brief views of a White-whiskered Puffbird, a challenging bird to find in the forest due to its small size, camouflaged plumage and reasonably shy nature – definitely a success! From here we headed back to camp, hearing Great and Slaty-breasted Tinamou on route to pick up 'Rambo' from the archaeologists' camp where he was waiting for us.



## Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November

After our last breakfast at the Eco-lodge we waved goodbye to Melvis, Vladimir and the team, with our destination as Lamanai – another ancient Mayan site. Although we would be hearing about the history of the site we would primarily be birding here with another local guide: Maurica.

The journey to Lamanai was slow and on a lot of dirt tracks, but this meant we had a better chance of spotting and identifying any birds in the fields adjacent to the road.

Soon after leaving the Eco-lodge we were able to scan the wet fields on either side of the bus, picking up Great, Snowy and Cattle Egret, along with a few Little Blue Heron, Jabiru and Wood Stork. A great start to the day!

Groove-billed Ani were seen on many fence posts as we drove on, with Turkey Vulture and Roadside Hawk also common sightings. A small flock of White-winged Dove were spotted on a telegraph wire in a farmyard and a few American Kestrel hovered over the fields, both new birds for the trip.

A Laughing Falcon streaked over the bus and away over the fields, alighting in the distant forest; and the first Tropical Mockingbird in several days was seen as we passed through one of the villages. White-collared (Morelet's) Seed-eater were spotted in the bushes as we drove past with the somewhat less mistakable Vermilion Flycatcher also seen on a fence post.

On arrival at Lamanai we could hear a troop of Howler Monkeys welcoming us in to the site, bellowing and shouting through the canopy at distance. We headed on in, towards to the deep bass sound of the Howlers. By the toilet block and museum we spotted an Ivory-billed Woodcreeper, a handful of Brown Jay leaping from tree to tree and a White-eyed Vireo in the canopy beyond. We also managed to 'scope a Least Flycatcher very briefly before it vanished from sight.

Northern Waterthrush turned out to be common in the site and we dutifully checked them all for the more unusual, and very similar, Louisiana Waterthrush but none were forthcoming. On the edge of the water a Great Blue Heron was perched on the pier with several Mangrove Swallow circling and occasionally landing on the other handrail. A White-necked Puffbird called in the background.

White-crowned Parrot gave everyone a hard time trying to get views of them in the canopy, frustratingly jumping away from view every time we got in a better position, however an Eastern Wood-Pewee was more obliging in the same tree.

We walked further along the track, stopping for a tiny Deppe's Squirrel as it leapt through the trees and although few of the group saw the mammal, most people managed to get onto the Worm-eating and Hooded Warbler in the same area.

In the same section of track we also had a Yellow-olive Flycatcher, Spot-breasted Wren and a Grey Catbird, an oddity that it had been missed from the list so far!

We visited the first of the major temples at Lamanai, the Mask Temple – named for the four great stone sculptures of a masked face of the Mayan Rain God Chaac. While studying the temple from the shade of the forest we spotted two Chestnut-coloured Woodpecker and a Lesson's (Blue-diademed) Motmot. A lone Howler Monkey was also seen feeding above the group in the trees, great to have such a good view of these exceptionally loud primates.

Two Bat Falcons, a male and female, were seen streaking through the sky above the tree-tops whilst a Lesser Greenlet and Dusky-capped Flycatcher were being watched by the group.

Green Honeycreeper, Yellow-throated Euphonia and Slaty-tailed Trogon were all in view at the High Temple, the tallest of the temples at Lamanai.

At the Jaguar Temple a few of the group managed to get views of Red-legged Honeycreeper in the canopy above us, plus several Rose-bellied Lizards on the stones on the edge of the cleared area in front of the temple.

Lunch was taken in view of the water's edge, meaning Northern Jacana were viewable, along with more Northern Waterthrush, Little Blue Heron and Mangrove Swallow. An incredibly confiding Yucatan Squirrel had many photographs taken of it as it fed, hanging upside down on the bark of a tree.

After lunch we left the Mayan site but stopped by the ruins of the Spanish Church to check out the edge of the forest. Here we quickly had several of the usual suspects: Magnolia, Hooded, Black-and-White, Yellow and Yellow-throated Warbler, our first new bird came in the form of a juvenile Bay-breasted Warbler, closely followed by a Common Yellowthroat. The sun was really beating down and the birds were feeling it too, with many of the warblers not being as showy as usual and a Blue Bunting coming in to drink from a puddle in front of us.

The drive on from here to Crooked Tree, where we would be staying next, took us through the Mennonite homesteads where we did a spot of people watching as well as birding! Great-tailed Grackle and Bronze Cowbird made it onto the list for the first time in a few days here, plus new birds including Fork-tailed Flycatcher (seen by Pat) and two Red-winged Blackbird.

As we drove along beside the freshwater river complex we added brief views of Ringed and Green Kingfisher, plus Neotropic Cormorant, before arriving at our next accommodation at sunset.

### **Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> November**

The plan for today was a little different to usual with only a little fruit and caffeine to start the day and to keep us going until "proper breakfast" which was to be had mid-morning. This was to allow us to head out on a boat trip along the freshwater complex by Crooked Tree.

Once everyone was fully caffeinated we hopped aboard a small motorboat, skippered by local Bird Guide Michael. At first we simply cast-off and scanned the shore of the lake, here we found a couple of Spotted Sandpiper, five Least Sandpiper and a good handful of Northern Jacana. Alongside these smaller birds, we also had Great and Snowy Egrets, Little Blue Heron and a Limpkin, our first of the trip.

We started north along the near edge of the lake, spotting a pair of Bat Falcons perched high up in a dead tree, the female noticeably larger than the male; these birds had already been watched earlier by some of the group picking dragonflies out of the air and feeding on them in flight.

As we continued along Michael pointed out the Green Iguanas in the partly submerged bushes, the males huge and orange, the females dark with green striping. These would become a constant sight during our morning boat trip.

Belted and Ringed Kingfisher were both spotted in quick succession along the shore, perched in the bushes or in flight. Green Kingfisher followed soon after, looking rather petite by comparison to the previous kingfishers. A few American Coot were also seen early on, as were four Lesser Scaup – proving to us that Belize does indeed have at least one species of wildfowl! Mangrove Swallow flitted around the shallows feeding on the flies, and occasionally perching on wires or other man-made items. Snail Kite were seen in the bushes as well as cruising low over the lake like harriers looking for Apple Snails, their favoured food-stuff.

A small bird was spotted hopping around the tops of the bushes like a pale blue warbler, feeding as it went. This turned out to be our first Blue-grey Gnatcatcher of the trip; we watched the beautiful little bird until it went on its way through the scrub.

Along with the Neotropic Cormorant catching the early rays of sun, a couple of Anhinga were also seen in the tops of the bushes, their snaking necks ending with a long spear-like head.

At the far end of the lake we had great views of a White Ibis feeding with a Little Blue Heron, not far from another couple of Limpkin and a juvenile Bare-throated Tiger Heron. The Tiger Heron looking every bit its namesake with its slim orange and black colouration.

As we turned to pull away a Common Tody Flycatcher appeared in the bushes immediately beside the boat, treating us to very close views of this lovely bird.

From here we double-timed it back the way we had come before returning to our original sedate pace as we passed the accommodation. A lone Great Blue Heron waded in the shallows as small group of Groove-billed Ani sat in the trees beyond.

Continuing our route south Michael pointed out two Black-collared Hawk sat in the bushes beside a couple more Snail Kite, their black collars hardly their most striking feature when compared against their bold rufous plumage.

Yellow-billed Cacique, Mangrove Vireo and Rufous-breasted Spinetail were all heard calling and the first of several Osprey was noted. Red-winged Blackbird were heard calling at first but were seen soon after.

Green Heron started to be picked out by the group but they rarely stayed still long enough to be photographed, the same went for the Boat-billed Heron seen in the scrub. Both Black-crowned and Yellow-crowned Night Heron were spotted, but only one of the latter was seen and not very well.

Down another channel we very briefly had views of a Manatee! This glimpse was more than most people ever get in Belize, hopefully we hadn't used up all our luck on this rarely seen mammal though...

In the distance three Great Black Hawk circled each other, occasionally getting close enough to talon grapple one of the others. Sadly, we were only able to view these feisty raptors for a short time as they moved out of view behind the trees.

Lesley pointed out a couple of parrots flying over, luckily landing in a nearby tree. These turned out to be the critically endangered Yellow-headed Parrot! Our luck, it seems, was still in. They weren't easy to see, and even less so to photograph, but definitely worth the struggle. Continuing to prove our luck was still in was the appearance of a Tamandua (Collared Ant-eater), this beige and black hairy mammal is nocturnal and usually spends the day curled up sleeping rather than climbing trees as this one was, amazing!

As we drifted on, we could see a great number of vultures kettling in the distance, in amongst which Gabor spotted a King Vulture. In looking for this bird we picked out two Wood Stork. On route back we added three more birds to the trip list: Barred Ant-shrike, White-necked Puffbird and White-tipped Dove. Of the first two species we had really quite remarkable views, but sadly the dove was but a fly-past. Tri-coloured Heron was called by Michael but no one else managed to get onto the bird, but we all saw the Morelet's Crocodiles in the water and were definitely put off any ideas of swimming we had been toying with!

### **Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> November**

The group split for the early morning's birding out, with six going with Andrea and Michael on the boat once again and the other three staying with Gabor and Scott for some more terrestrial birding around Crooked Tree.

Before the boat departed everyone present managed to get great views of a Tri-coloured Heron, spotted by Pat, as it fished the shallows by the pier alongside a Great Blue Heron, Little Blue Heron and Snowy Egret. Seven Least Sandpiper and a couple of Spotted Sandpiper were also present on the shoreline.

Those doing a spot of terrestrial birding had a group of Lesser Scaup and American Coot swimming past a feeding Pied-billed Grebe. Yellow and Magnolia Warbler were spotted soon after, on the walk out towards the large Fig Tree.

Gabor then spotted another new bird for us, a Baltimore Oriole in the top of a nearby tree; this was followed by a Black-cowled Oriole and a Brown Jay. A cloud of Mangrove Swallow were feeding above the fields and with them were a handful of Northern Rough-winged Swallow.

We then had Golden-fronted Woodpecker in one of the near trees, followed by Doreen finding a Yucatan Woodpecker across the track – great as a comparison!

A Crane Hawk played hard-to-get in the shade of the trees by the end of the field but was eventually seen but chased off by noisy Brown Jay. From the same spot we also had views of Fork-tailed (Canivet's) Emerald, a Blue-grey Gnatcatcher and a pair of Mourning Doves.

Blue-grey Tanagers were seen in number around the Fig Tree, along with Social Flycatcher, Great Kiskadee, Yellow-olive Flycatcher and a flypast White Ibis.

When the other group came back from the boat they had travelled a different route out and picked up many of the amazing waterbirds we had seen yesterday, with better views of Boat-billed Heron to boot! Sadly only Michael managed to spot a Sungrebe before it disappeared but the group did manage to add Mangrove Cuckoo, Pale-vented Pigeon and Blue-winged Teal to the trip list.

On route through to the next site, out at Pine Ridge, we added Glossy Ibis next to the road as well as spotting the Neotropic Cormorant in the river and a few kingfishers perched on the telegraph wires.

The road took us across the wide open savannah-type habitats near the Belizean capital where we spotted many Turkey Vulture circling overhead before we headed up into the

wooded hills around Pine Ridge. We arrived at our new lodge in time for lunch which was served by their nectar feeders.

The feeders were well attended by hummingbirds, with many of our previously recorded species plus White-necked Jacobin, Long-billed Hermit and Violet Sabrewing which were new for most of the group.

The fruit station here was frequented by numerous Red-legged Honeycreeper and, surprisingly, a male Red-throated Ant-tanager! Baltimore Oriole was also spotted by a few of the group, the females on the fruit station and the males in a Tangerine Tree.

After lunch and a siesta we reconvened and took a walk down the entry track we had arrived on. In the top of the canopy we had good views of Olive-throated (Aztec) Parakeet; whilst nearer to the track we had Magnolia Warbler and White-eyed Vireo.

We were lucky enough to then come across a Pale-billed Woodpecker by its nest hole, a stunning bird particularly as the setting sunlight filtered through its bright red cockade.

The only new bird of this short walk came in the next section of the road, as the habitat adjacent to the track changed to open fields with seeding grasses. This had attracted in a mixed flock of Yellow-faced and Blue-black Grassquit, the latter being new for the trip.

On the walk back to the lodge we spotted a few passing parrots but were unable to properly identify them over such a distance; and from the forest Great Tinamou called loudly to signal dusk approaching.

Whilst awaiting dinner our driver Edwin spotted a Common Nighthawk flitting past the lodge, whilst a Potoo called from the forest nearby.

### **Monday 26<sup>th</sup> November**

Today we took an early morning walk up one of the nearby trails to look for Lesson's (Blue-diademed) Motmot amongst others. The trail took us towards Jim's house, on his instruction for the motmots which nest in his yard.

Before we set off we casually drank some coffee whilst the Red-legged and Green Honeycreepers fed on the fruit station with two Crimson-collared Tanager (a new bird for the group). A Grey Catbird was also noted in the bushes behind the fruit station and Red-lored Parrot were heard overhead but couldn't be seen due to the low clouds this morning.

On the walk up to Jim's house we heard a few Spot-breasted Wren calling and singing from cover, easier seen were the Magnolia Warbler and female American Redstart. As we approached Jim's gates we could see the Lesson's (Blue-diademed) Motmot in the mist, however it sadly flew off before we could get better views of the bird.

Despite the bird having flown, we stayed at the top of the road waiting patiently to see if anything else turned up in the bushes around the house. Some of the group headed back at this point so sadly they missed our best views of Squirrel Cuckoo so far, as one fed on the striped caterpillars the other side of the gate. We also added Black-headed Grosbeak, Band-backed Wren and a female Black-crowned Tityra (which has only been seen here four times in the last thirty years!).

Golden-fronted Woodpecker was also seen around the yard, with Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, American Redstart, White-eyed Vireo and White-collared Seedeater all seen on the walk back to the lodge.

After breakfast we headed out in the bus continuing on the rough dirt track we had driven to get to the lodge. This road would eventually take us out to 'Thousand-foot Falls' – a massive waterfall, actually measuring closer to 1600 feet in height!

On the road we had a few sightings of Melodious Blackbird and Groove-billed Ani before entering the nature reserve where the road surface gradually deteriorated from rough to about the same as the average British High Street. Thankfully Edwin was a highly experienced driver and kept us from feeling the worst of the lumps and bumps.

We pulled over to the side of the track when a woodpecker was spotted from the bus. This turned out to be our first Yellow-bellied Sapsucker of the trip! We watched this petite woodpecker-relative and even saw it pecking its small sap holes in the pine bark.

At the viewpoint for Thousand-foot Falls, after admiring the stunning view of the falls and the surrounding pine-clad hills, we spotted a Black-and-White Warbler, followed soon after by an Acorn Woodpecker, another new woodpecker for the trip. Gabor then spotted our target species: the globally threatened Orange-breasted Falcon and those nearby managed to see it reasonably well; thankfully for the rest of the group the falcon did come in close to the viewpoint buildings once more.

Black and Turkey Vultures were seen in numbers and at least three or four King Vulture were also spotted, better views than we had managed at La Milpa.

Around the viewpoint we also recorded Yellow-fronted Grassquit, Black-throated Green Warbler and American Redstart. A Grey Fox was seen at close quarters by some of the group and a Rufous-breasted Spinetail by Gabor and Chris only. White-collared Swift were seen in the valley below the viewpoint, numbering up to forty in the flock while we ate lunch.

Soon after starting lunch, the rain came on and in true tropical style the rain was intense and by the end of lunch it still wasn't showing signs of stopping. Thankfully we had a corrugated steel roof covering most of the building.

With the weather continuing to batter down on the hills around us, we opted to drive back down to the lodge earlier than planned to continue our birding there.

Some of the group jumped out at the end of the road and walked the short distance to the lodge; those who opted for this managed to get views of displaying Blue-black Grassquit and a tree full of Keel-billed Toucan and Red-lored Parrot, not bad going for a few minutes of walking!

We took a bit of a rest in the lodge and watched the hummingbirds at the feeders, with Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, White-bellied Emerald, Wedge-tailed Sabrewing, Violet Sabrewing, Scaly-breasted Hummingbird, Long-billed Hermit and White-necked Jacobin all being seen regularly.

Our afternoon walk took us the short circuit around the yard where we had a female Blue Bunting and another of the fairly ubiquitous Magnolia Warbler. At the end of the yard we stumbled upon a small flock of Ant-tanager, which got us excited as we were still to see Red-

crowned. It took us a few minutes but eventually a male hopped out on a branch and they were identified as Red-throated once again.

Those of us out on the walk saw a handful of Collared Aracari flying overhead, whilst those back at the dining area saw them land on the fruit station and begin to feed!

A single *Empidonax* flycatcher, a notoriously difficult group of birds, was feeding from various fence posts around the yard. We eventually managed to get photographs of the bird and heard it call, identifying it as a Least Flycatcher.

Up the track a little we had an Eastern Wood-Pewee flycatching from a nearby tree, whilst American Redstart and Yellow-winged Tanager foraged above us in another. A Golden-fronted Woodpecker flew in and flushed these two birds as it landed overhead. On the way back to the lodge we also noted Grey Catbird and Summer Tanager, and Ros told us that she'd had a Laughing Falcon near Jim's house.

## **Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> November**

As our pre-breakfast walk yesterday was so good we decided to try to repeat it. On our walk out to Jim's house we heard a few Spot-breasted Wren and saw a couple of Yellow-winged Tanager in passing. Red-throated Ant-tanager were seen around Jim's yard with a Keel-billed Toucan and several Red-lored Parrot flying past.

The first real excitement of the morning came with our first new species of the day, Passerini's (Scarlet-rumped) Tanager being spotted at the back of the garden in a Cecropia tree, it didn't stay for long but we managed to get decent views.

A small group of Band-backed Wren made themselves known, being seen and heard on the periphery of the garden for most of the time we were present allowing those who didn't get good views yesterday to have another go.

We heard a Pale-billed Woodpecker drumming nearby, so Gabor went over to 'drum' back using a stick on a tree and flushed a Common Pauraque from the undergrowth. Sadly we didn't manage to re-find the Pauraque or attract in the woodpecker. This was made up for by the arrival of a Black-cowled Oriole, Squirrel Cuckoo and Olive Sparrow in quick succession.

As we turned to leave a Buff-throated Saltator was seen in the canopy along with an Ivory-billed Woodcreeper, Black-headed Trogon and Grey Catbird.

After breakfast we opted to complete a circular walk through the rainforest, suggested to us by Jim. As we were about to head out on the walk we had both Green and Red-legged Honeycreeper on the fruit station, whilst a male Blue-black Grassquit was spotted displaying beyond.

The walk through the open area before reaching the rainforest allowed us views of Yellow-faced Grassquit, Cattle Egret and Great Kiskadee. We then turned back on ourselves into the rainforest; the first few hundred metres were relatively quiet but we soon came upon a mixed flock of birds, including Northern Schiffornis, American Redstart, Blue-winged Warbler and, on the edge of the group, a Gartered Trogon. We managed to get good views of this new Trogon, with many photographs being taken of it. Some of the group continued up the track which sadly meant they missed the Rufous Mourner, Blue-black Grosbeak and Clay-coloured Thrush.

Back at the lodge we had lunch before packing the bus, ready to travel on to the next base: Pook's Hill. There was, however, enough time to see Blue-grey Tanager, Black-cowled Oriole and, thanks to Doreen, great views of a female Rose-throated Becard.

We then headed on to Pook's Hill, where we arrived in enough time to have a short walk down by the stream on the off-chance of spotting a roosting owl. Sadly for us, the tracks were flooded and so we only got so-far before having to turn back due to the high water levels and the imminent storm approaching! That all said, we still managed to have views of Ovenbird, Roadside Hawk, Bat Falcon and a Waterthrush which looked suspiciously like a Louisiana but was only seen for a few seconds.

### **Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> November**

With breakfast organised for 7am there was just about enough time to go for a pre-breakfast stroll in the area of the lodge from 6am. Once we were caffeinated we had a look outside for an eager group of guests, but only Ros alone had got up to go birding. So, Mario, a local guide, Gabor, Andrea and Scott all headed off with Ros up the track.

As we left the lodge dining area, we could hear Red-lored Parrot flying over, out of sight, as well as the sounds of Collared and Barred Forest Falcon which were equally distant. At first we walked down to the bridge over the nearby stream where we heard, and then saw, our first Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner in the low shrubby vegetation near the steps. It only gave us fleeting views, but good enough to be identified.

Walking back through the camp we could hear distant Howler Monkeys doing what they do best, and in the Cecropia beside the cabins we spotted a Crimson-collared Tanager, along with a Keel-billed Toucan in the higher branches.

Black-faced Grosbeak called from the forest-edge and a Grey Catbird bounced along through the hedging.

Back in the Cecropia we noted a Summer Tanager, Magnolia Warbler and a Yellow-throated Warbler. White-breasted Wood Wren sang from the forest as we walked up the track, now accompanied by Chris. A tiny hummingbird flitted ahead of us which was identified as a Stripe-throated (Little) Hermit, which was a new bird for the trip.

Above the hedge in the low canopy was a Gartered (Violaceous) Trogon and two Yellow-winged Tanager. Still studying the Cecropia from a different angle brought us views of Blue-grey Tanager, American Redstart, Yellow-faced Grassquit and Slaty-tailed Trogon.

Still in these apparently magical trees we also added Black-cheeked Woodpecker, another new species, Passerini's (Scarlet-rumped) Tanager and Ruddy Ground-Dove.

On the way to breakfast we also added White-collared (Morelet's) Seed-eater whilst hearing a Pale-billed Woodpecker drumming and the call of an unseen White-crowned Pigeon. Not a bad start to the day, for some of the group!

After breakfast a few more of us headed out past the amazingly productive stand of Cecropia, picking out Black-cheeked Woodpecker, Keel-billed Toucan, Yellow-throated Warbler and Yellow-winged Tanager as we did so.



At the hedges lining the dirt track we noted White-collared (Morelet's) Seedeater, Yellow-faced Grassquit and Hooded Warbler in the hedge-line and an immature Magnolia Warbler foraging in the short grass nearby. Looking up, we had great views of Black-headed Trogon, Great Kiskadee and Eastern Wood-Pewee; whilst up the slope we spotted an Ivory-billed Woodcreeper, Northern Schiffornis and a handful of warblers (Hooded, Black-throated Green and American Redstart).

Up a side-track we heard both Pale-billed Woodpecker and Squirrel Cuckoo, while seeing Spot-breasted Wren and Stripe-throated (Little) Hermit.

Back on the main track again we managed to get brief but excellent views of an Eye-ringed Flatbill, a bird that some of the group had managed to see well at La Milpa but sadly not everyone. A huge flock of Red-lored Parrot were heard making a racket overhead but few were seen.

Above the canopy a Crane Hawk was spotted passing over the track, a new bird for a few of the group – with others having been out on the second boat trip at Crooked Tree. We then heard a Barred Forest Falcon repeatedly calling not far from the road; we eventually located the bird and managed to 'scope it for a short time before it flew off deeper into the rainforest, still calling.

A Yellow-olive Flycatcher was briefly spotted on the edge of the track whilst a Scaly-throated Leaf-tosser was heard near the trail, with a Northern Emerald Toucanet being heard by Scott deeper in the woods, sadly neither were seen.

We broke from the dirt track and took a smaller side trail off into the rainforest. After only a few metres we had a tiny (10cm) Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher bouncing around the branches only a metre or so overhead.

As we continued through the forest, we added Olive-backed Euphonia, Summer Tanager and Northern Bentbill to our list for the walk.

An Olivaceous Woodcreeper was spotted on the trunk of a tree near the path, which we watched – realising it was signalling the location of an ant swarm. Quickly we then found a Tawny-winged Woodcreeper, Blue-black Grosbeak, Slaty-tailed Trogon and Worm-eating Warbler, all getting in on the action.

The ant swarm and its associated birds seemed to disappear off into the rainforest, so we continued on, but saw few other birds as the day warmed up on our walk back to the lodge for lunch.

After lunch and a short siesta we reconvened with a plan to drive to the edge of the rainforest and walk back, using the bus for those having trouble with the undulating terrain.

The rainforest changed to open ground and plantation where we stopped the bus. Even though outside of the rainforest we could hear the call of a Northern Schiffornis at distance. A single Cattle Egret was the first bird spotted, following its cow around the edge of the plantation area; Ros then spotted a White-tipped Pigeon perched on a dead tree a 'scope-distance away.

As we walked through the rainforest we heard Stub-tailed Spadebill and Lineated Woodpecker whilst we watched a Pale-billed Woodpecker by its nest hole in a dead tree.

A small creek in the woods allowed us brief views of Ovenbird and Blue-winged Warbler, although only a handful saw either before they disappeared out of sight.

Another Eastern Wood-Pewee was seen flycatching from its favoured perch and a Lesser Greenlet was seen in the canopy beyond. Not far from here a flycatcher caused controversy by looking to have features intermediate or mixed between Dusky-capped and Yucatan, eventually it was put down as the former, but questions were still being asked later. Some of the last birds on this walk were two Ruddy Woodcreeper, which flitted between the trees, interested in a small ant swarm on the track but seemed unwilling to feed while we were watching.

### **Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> November**

With only time for a short pre-breakfast walk before we headed north, we opted to head into the rainforest along the stream and look for Spectacled Owl once more.

We descended the stairs onto the river-side path and took a quiet walk through the trees, our first birds of the walk were a small but noisy flock of Ant-thrushes, which we watched for a while, hoping to turn them into the species we were yet to see this trip: Red-crowned. Sadly, although they could be in mixed flocks, the individuals which we managed to see well were identified as Red-throated once more.

Grey Catbird was spotted while we were trying to pin down the Ant-thrush and Red-lored Parrot were heard calling in the distance. No owls were forthcoming but a couple of Buff-throated Saltator were spotted along with Yellow-throated Euphonia, Clay-coloured Thrush, Spot-breasted Wren and, excitingly, Yellow-billed Cacique.

Back at the lodge, Pat had photographed a Louisiana Waterthrush and had seen another Ovenbird and Black-headed Trogon.

The drive north through Belize gave us views of Glossy and White Ibis, Mangrove Swallow, Roadside Hawk and a few others.

After passing through the border once again we lunched at Bacalar by the beautiful blue and turquoise bay. With our lunch we had White-tipped and White-winged Dove, Great-tailed Grackle and a rather confiding Snail Kite perched upon a post by the pier.

From here we simply drove north, through surprisingly heavy rain, on to our new hotel which would put us within easy reach of Sian Kaan Biosphere Reserve tomorrow.

### **Friday 30<sup>th</sup> November**

With an early breakfast out of the way we headed off in the direction of Sian Kaan, an extensive area of rainforest which would take days to cover properly so we were opting to explore the edge of the Biosphere Reserve.

On the way out we added Tropical Mockingbird to our list for the first time in several days, along with Great-tailed Grackle, Eurasian Collared Dove and White-tipped Dove.

We got out of the bus at a cleared area between two newly constructed compounds, where the devastated forest habitat turned out to be rather productive for birding, with Rufous-browed Peppershrike being heard from the bus as we exited, with Eastern Wood-Pewee and Hooded Oriole being seen shortly afterwards.

Brown Jay called in the distance whilst we 'scoped our first (seen) Short-billed Dove. A pair of Altamira Oriole were also added to the trip list for the first time, which were also 'scoped but sadly flushed by a passing van.

Mourning Dove, Ruddy Ground-Dove and a passing White-bellied Emerald were also spotted as we walked on from the cleared area.

Further along the track we came upon a mixed flock of birds, which included at least six Yellow-throated Euphonia, Yellow-tailed Oriole, a Green Jay, Black-crowned Tityra, Rose-throated Becard, Black Catbird and Barred Ant-shrike.

Whilst a Grey-cheeked Thrush was being identified by some of the group, others were watching an Orange Oriole. Still in the same flock were Summer Tanager, Yellow-backed Oriole (another new species), American Redstart, Magnolia Warbler and a Tropical Gnatcatcher.

A Ferruginous Pygmy Owl was heard calling in reply to Gabor's impersonations, however this seemed to draw the flock away from the track, so we carried on.

At another gap in the forest we stopped as the islands of cover in the open section looked promising for attracting numbers of birds. We weren't wrong, as within minutes we had Yellow-bellied Elaenia, Social Flycatcher and both Grey and Black Catbirds. In the distance a small woodpecker was seen on a dead tree, this transpired to be the only one of the woodpeckers we were missing: Ladder-backed Woodpecker. At first, we could only see the male, but soon a female joined him and we watched them on and off, as they fly closer to the road – eventually being perched, drumming, in the trees nearest the road!

Black-headed Saltator, our third and final saltator species of the trip was then seen in the same tree as the Ladder-backed Woodpecker. A female Blue Bunting was seen in the scrubby bushes in the clearing at the same time as a Common Yellowthroat, an immature Northern Parula and two White-eyed Vireo.

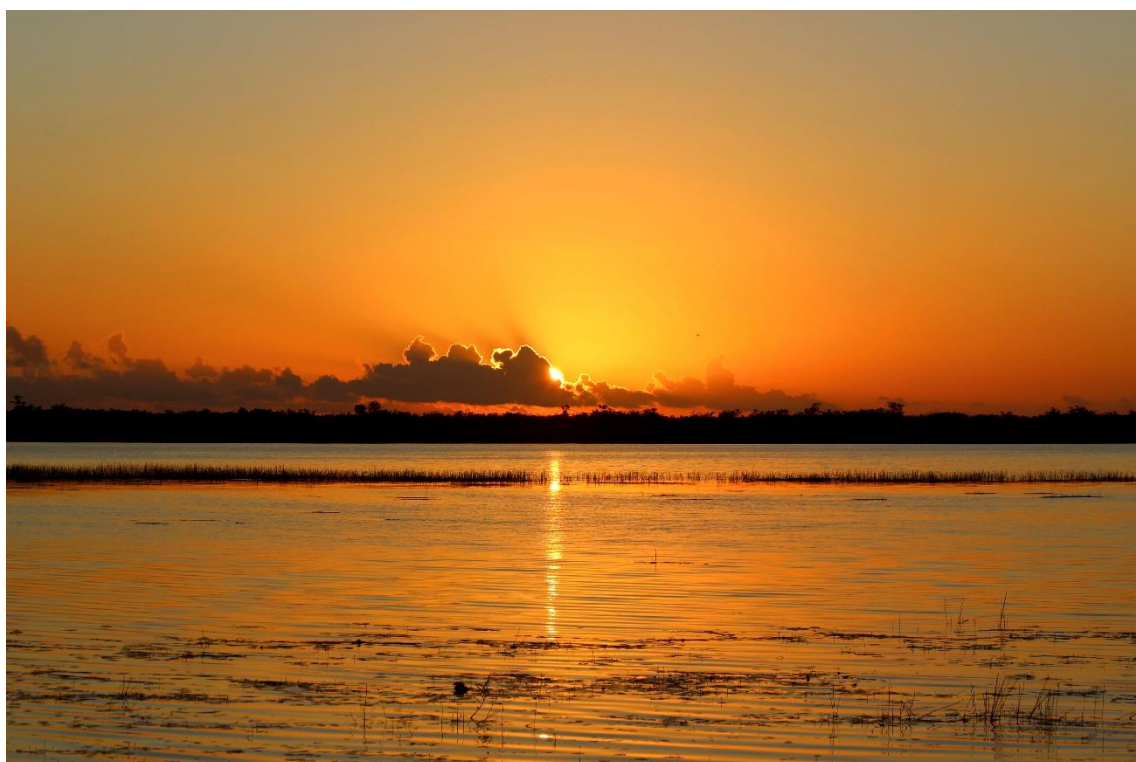
A couple of Great-tailed Grackle and a Bronze Cowbird perched in another dead tree, with a Fork-tailed (Canivet's) Emerald and a Wedge-tailed Sabrewing. We also, finally, confirmed Couch's Kingbird for the trip with two birds calling in the forest before flying into sight. Our last bird in the clearing was a single male Northern Cardinal, a bird missing from many of the group's lists this trip. He sat conspicuously in a dead bush, strikingly red and beautiful in the mid-morning light.

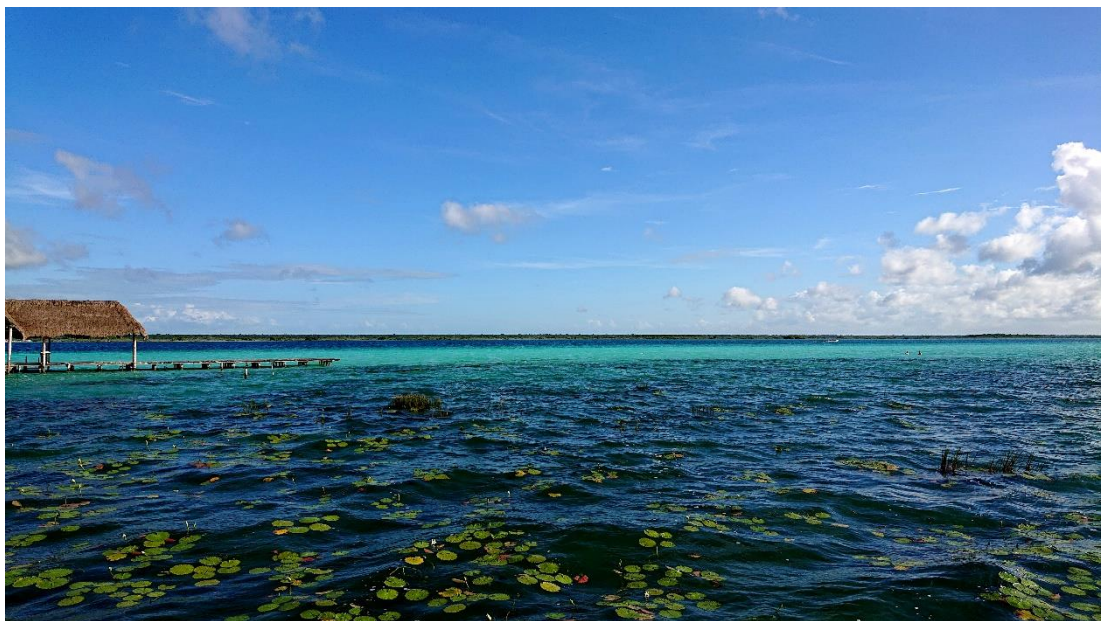
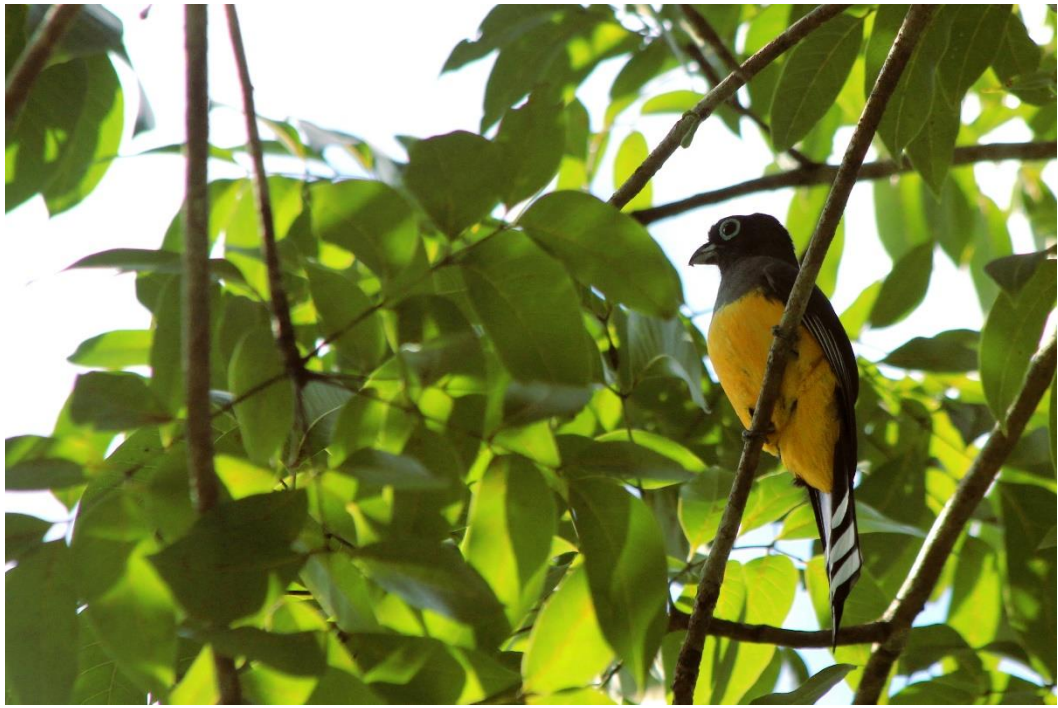
Before we left for lunch we walked back on ourselves, following Gabor, where we added Yellow Warbler for the day and Cinnamon Hummingbird for the trip, not a bad way to end the trip's birding!

After lunch we packed the bus and departed for the airport, wishing Gabor, Andrea and David the best of luck for the future and thanking them for a fantastic trip!

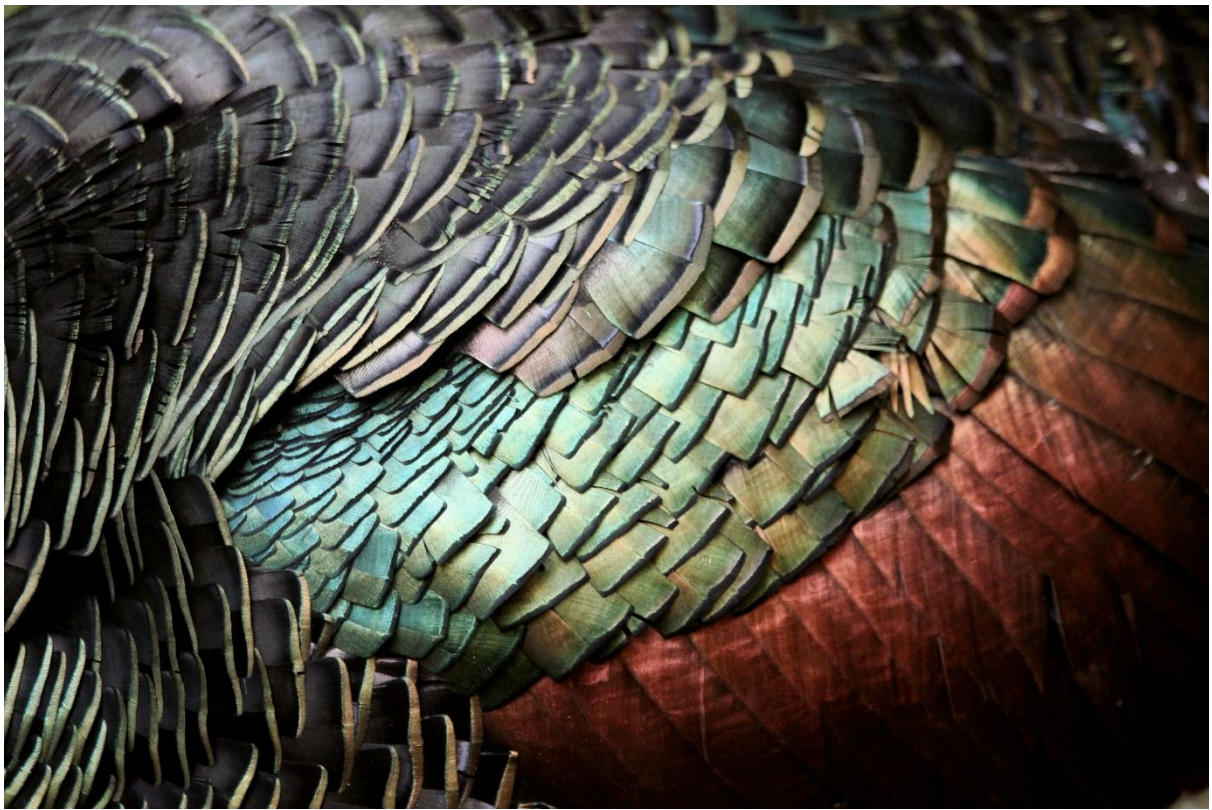
## Highlights

- Chris            The Trogons! Having missed Trogons on three other trips, this really made the trip. And who could forget 'Beau' the Turkey, what a character!
- Pat              The Hummingbirds were great, but particularly the good views of White-bellied Emerald, Violet Sabrewing and Long-billed Hermit.
- Ros              Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher, a what lovely bird!
- Lesley          The Rufous-browed Peppershrike, not an easy bird to see but we eventually did!
- Doreen         The Woodpeckers, with Black-cheeked a particular favourite of mine!
- Ros              The amazing male Red-legged Honeycreeper, such a stunning bird.
- Colin            Having seven Collared Aracari on the fruit station at Pine Ridge, such good views!
- Richard        The King Vulture at Thousand-foot Falls!
- Alison          The whole 'Rainforest Experience' but of course the rare Orange-breasted Falcon and odd-looking Limpkins were particularly special.
- Scott            Definitely the Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher, such close views of such a tiny bird; and the Hummingbird feeders at Pine Ridge!





















18	White-tipped Dove	<i>Leptotila verreauxi</i>							✓				✓	✓	✓
19	Gray-headed Dove	<i>Leptotila plumbeiceps</i>				✓									
20	White-winged Dove	<i>Zenaida asiatica</i>							✓					✓	
21	Mourning Dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>							✓	✓					✓
	<b>CUCULIFORMES: Cuculidae</b>														
22	Groove-billed Ani	<i>Crotophaga sulcirostris</i>		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
23	Squirrel Cuckoo	<i>Piaya cayana</i>				✓	✓		H		✓	✓	✓	✓	
24	Mangrove Cuckoo	<i>Coccyzus minor</i>								✓					
	<b>CAPRIMULGIFORMES: Caprimulgidae</b>														
25	Common Nighthawk	<i>Chordeiles minor</i>								✓					
26	Common Pauraque	<i>Nyctidromus albicollis</i>			✓							✓	✓		
	<b>CAPRIMULGIFORMES: Apodidae</b>														
27	White-collared Swift	<i>Streptoprocne zonaris</i>									✓				
28	Vaux's Swift	<i>Chaetura vauxi</i>		✓	✓										
	<b>CAPRIMULGIFORMES: Trochilidae</b>														
29	White-necked Jacobin	<i>Florisuga mellivora</i>					✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
30	Long-billed Hermit	<i>Phaethornis longirostris</i>								✓	✓	✓			
31	Stripe-throated Hermit	<i>Phaethornis striigularis</i>											✓		
32	Purple-crowned Fairy	<i>Heliothryx barroti</i>					✓								
33	Canivet's Emerald	<i>Chlorostilbon canivetii</i>		✓						✓					✓
34	Scaly-breasted Hummingbird	<i>Phaeochroa cuvierii</i>				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
35	Wedge-tailed Sabrewing	<i>Campylopterus curvipennis</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓
36	Violet Sabrewing	<i>Campylopterus hemileucurus</i>						✓		✓	✓	✓			
37	White-bellied Emerald	<i>Amazilia candida</i>				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
38	Rufous-tailed Hummingbird	<i>Amazilia tzacatl</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
39	Cinnamon Hummingbird	<i>Amazilia rutila</i>													✓
			18-Nov	19-Nov	20-Nov	21-Nov	22-Nov	23-Nov	24-Nov	25-Nov	26-Nov	27-Nov	28-Nov	29-Nov	30-Nov
	<b>GRUIFORMES: Rallidae</b>														
40	American Coot	<i>Fulica americana</i>							✓	✓					





	<b>ACCIPITRIFORMES: Accipitridae</b>													
78	Hook-billed Kite	<i>Chondrohierax uncinatus</i>	✓											
79	Black Hawk-Eagle	<i>Spizaetus tyrannus</i>				✓								
80	Black-collared Hawk	<i>Busarellus nigricollis</i>						✓	✓					
81	Snail Kite	<i>Rostrhamus sociabilis</i>						✓	✓				✓	
82	Double-toothed Kite	<i>Harpagus bidentatus</i>				✓								
83	Crane Hawk	<i>Geranospiza caerulescens</i>							✓				✓	
84	Great Black Hawk	<i>Buteogallus urubitinga</i>						✓						
85	Roadside Hawk	<i>Rupornis magnirostris</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
86	Gray Hawk	<i>Buteo plagiatus</i>	✓							✓	✓			
	<b>STRIGIFORMES: Strigidae</b>													
87	Middle American Screech-Owl	<i>Megascops guatemalae</i>				H				H				
88	Spectacled Owl	<i>Pulsatrix perspicillata</i>										✓		
89	Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl	<i>Glaucidium brasilianum</i>	✓											H
	<b>TROGONIFORMES: Trogonidae</b>													
90	Slaty-tailed Trogon	<i>Trogon massena</i>					H	✓					✓	
91	Black-headed Trogon	<i>Trogon melanocephalus</i>				✓						✓	✓	✓
92	Gartered Trogon	<i>Trogon caligatus</i>										✓	✓	
	<b>CORACIIFORMES: Momotidae</b>													
93	Tody Motmot	<i>Hylomanes momotula</i>				✓								
94	Lesson's Motmot	<i>Momotus lessonii</i>						✓			✓			
95	Turquoise-browed Motmot	<i>Eumomota superciliosa</i>	✓											
	<b>CORACIIFORMES: Alcedinidae</b>													
96	Ringed Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle torquata</i>						✓	✓	✓				
97	Belted Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle alcyon</i>							✓	✓				
98	Green Kingfisher	<i>Chloroceryle americana</i>						✓	✓	✓				
	<b>GALBULIFORMES: Bucconidae</b>													
99	White-necked Puffbird	<i>Notharchus hyperrhynchus</i>						H	✓					



100	White-whiskered Puffbird	<i>Malacoptila panamensis</i>					✓								
	<b>GALBULIFORMES: Galbulidae</b>														
101	Rufous-tailed Jacamar	<i>Galbula ruficauda</i>					H								
	<b>PICIFORMES: Ramphastidae</b>														
102	Northern Emerald-Toucanet	<i>Aulacorhynchus prasinus</i>											H		
103	Collared Aracari	<i>Pteroglossus torquatus</i>				✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		
104	Keel-billed Toucan	<i>Ramphastos sulfuratus</i>	✓				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	<b>PICIFORMES: Picidae</b>														
105	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	<i>Sphyrapicus varius</i>									✓				
106	Acorn Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes formicivorus</i>									✓				
107	Black-cheeked Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes pucherani</i>											✓	✓	
108	Yucatan Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes pygmaeus</i>	✓				H			✓					
109	Golden-fronted Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes aurifrons</i>	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
110	Ladder-backed Woodpecker	<i>Dryobates scalaris</i>													✓
111	Smoky-brown Woodpecker	<i>Dryobates fumigatus</i>					H								
112	Pale-billed Woodpecker	<i>Campephilus guatemalensis</i>							✓		✓		H	✓	
113	Lineated Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus lineatus</i>						✓	✓		✓			H	
114	Chestnut-colored Woodpecker	<i>Celeus castaneus</i>						✓	✓						
115	Golden-olive Woodpecker	<i>Colaptes rubiginosus</i>						H							
	<b>FALCONIFORMES: Falconidae</b>														
116	Barred Forest-Falcon	<i>Micrastur ruficollis</i>						✓						✓	H
117	Collared Forest-Falcon	<i>Micrastur semitorquatus</i>						✓						H	
118	Laughing Falcon	<i>Herpetotheres cachinnans</i>							✓	H		✓			
119	American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>							✓						
120	Bat Falcon	<i>Falco ruficularis</i>				✓			✓	✓	✓		✓		
121	Orange-breasted Falcon	<i>Falco deiroleucus</i>										✓			
	<b>PSITTACIFORMES: Psittacidae</b>														
122	Brown-hooded Parrot	<i>Pyrilia haematotis</i>				✓		✓	✓						









219	Northern Parula	<i>Setophaga americana</i>		✓											✓
220	Tropical Parula	<i>Setophaga pitaiyumi</i>		✓											
221	Magnolia Warbler	<i>Setophaga magnolia</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
222	Bay-breasted Warbler	<i>Setophaga castanea</i>						✓							
223	Yellow Warbler	<i>Setophaga petechia</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
224	Chestnut-sided Warbler	<i>Setophaga pensylvanica</i>								✓	✓				
225	Palm Warbler	<i>Setophaga palmarum</i>		✓											
226	Yellow-throated Warbler	<i>Setophaga dominica</i>		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
227	Black-throated Green Warbler	<i>Setophaga virens</i>		✓			✓			✓	✓				
228	Golden-crowned Warbler	<i>Basileuterus culicivorus</i>					✓								
229	Canada Warbler	<i>Cardellina canadensis</i>		✓											
230	Wilson's Warbler	<i>Cardellina pusilla</i>			✓			✓							
	<b>PASSERIFORMES: Cardinalidae</b>														
231	Rose-throated Tanager	<i>Piranga roseogularis</i>		✓											
232	Summer Tanager	<i>Piranga rubra</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
233	Red-throated Ant-Tanager	<i>Habia fuscicauda</i>		H		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	H
234	Northern Cardinal	<i>Cardinalis cardinalis</i>		✓											✓
235	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	<i>Pheucticus ludovicianus</i>							✓						
236	Gray-throated Chat	<i>Granatellus sallaei</i>				✓									
237	Blue-black Grosbeak	<i>Cyanoloxia cyanooides</i>				✓						✓	✓		
238	Blue Bunting	<i>Cyanocompsa parellina</i>		✓		✓		✓							✓
	<b>PASSERIFORMES: Thraupidae</b>														
239	Gray-headed Tanager	<i>Eucometis penicillata</i>				✓									
240	Black-throated Shrike-Tanager	<i>Lanio aurantius</i>				H	✓								
241	Crimson-collared Tanager	<i>Ramphocelus sanguinolentus</i>									✓	✓	✓		
242	Scarlet-rumped Tanager	<i>Ramphocelus passerinii</i>										✓	✓		
243	Blue-gray Tanager	<i>Thraupis episcopus</i>							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
244	Yellow-winged Tanager	<i>Thraupis abbas</i>									✓	✓	✓		
245	Red-legged Honeycreeper	<i>Cyanerpes cyaneus</i>								✓	✓	✓			
246	Green Honeycreeper	<i>Chlorophanes spiza</i>				✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			
247	Blue-black Grassquit	<i>Volatinia jacarina</i>									✓	✓	✓		

248	Morelet's Seedeater	<i>Sporophila moreletii</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
249	Yellow-faced Grassquit	<i>Tiaris olivaceus</i>		✓						✓	✓	✓	✓		
250	Buff-throated Saltator	<i>Saltator maximus</i>							✓			✓		✓	
251	Black-headed Saltator	<i>Saltator atriceps</i>													✓
252	Grayish Saltator	<i>Saltator coerulescens</i>							✓						