

Ecuador's Mammals

(with Napa Wildlife Center extension 21st-25th November)

Naturetrek Tour Report

13th – 21st November 2023

Tour report by Robert Cedeño



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Tour participants: Robert Cedeño (leader) with four Naturetrek Clients.

Day 1

Monday 13th November

We met up at the Mercure Hotel at 5.30am and drove towards the Yanacocha reserve for about ninety minutes. We made some stops along the way, at hummingbird feeding stations and along a trail at 3500m (where we found an excellent flock). By 11.00am we were driving towards the old Nono-Tandayapa road, with further birding stops, and by 1.00pm we arrived at the Guaycapi restaurant where we had a very tasty meal and watched lots of hummers and other birds on the feeders. After lunch we drove to Bellavista Cloud Forest Lodge, arriving at 4.30pm. We settled in to our accommodation, and then had dinner, when we had the chance to observe our first mammal, a Kinkajou. After dinner we went for a night walk, at the end of our (busy) first day.

Selected bird highlights: White-whiskered Hermit, Fawn-breasted Brilliant, Crowned Woodnymph, Andean Emerald, Golden-headed Quetzal, Red-faced Spinetail, Golden-bellied Flycatcher, Tricolored (Choco) Brushfinch, Flame-rumped (Lemon-rumped) Tanager, Golden-naped Tanager, Golden Tanager.

Day 2

Tuesday 14th November

We started our day at 6.00am with some birding in the gardens of Bellavista: a great list of birds included the very rare White-faced Nunbird. We had breakfast at 8.00am, looking out for Tyras, but with no luck. Later we drove to Sachatamia Lodge to look for the Central America Agouti, but there we also saw a great many birds (31 species), including 13 hummingbirds. We drove down to Los Bancos for our lunch (the weather now a little cloudy), and then we drove to San Tadeo where we found new tanagers and hummingbirds. In the middle of the afternoon, we drove back to Bellavista for dinner, and we had the chance to see Olinguito, Western Red-tailed Squirrel and Central American Agouti.

Selected bird highlights: White-throated Daggerbill, Gorgeted Sunangel, Empress Brilliant, Barred Hawk, White-faced Nunbird, Streaked Tuftedcheek, Striped Treehunter, Turquoise Jay, Dusky Chlorospingus, Tricolored Brushfinch, Blackburnian Warbler, (Western) Black-eared Hemispingus, Blue-winged, Mountain Tanager (Bellavista); Purple-bibbed Whitetip, Purple-throated Woodstar, Red-headed Barbet, Choco Toucan, Ecuadorian Thrush (Sacahtamia Lodge).

Day 3

Wednesday 15th November

We left Bellavista Cloud Forest lodge at 5.00am, and drove for about an hour to Angel Paz Reserve, where we had great views of Andean Cock-of-the-Rock, five species of Antpitta, and Toucan Barbet. We also enjoyed a very tasty breakfast! By 11.30am we left the western slopes and drove to Papallacta Pass, stopping in Mitad del Mundo valley to have lunch. After lunch we stopped in the paramo of Papallacta to look for bears, but sadly had no luck. We arrived at Guango Lodge at 5.40pm, in plenty of time for dinner and a good rest.

Selected bird highlights: Crested Guan, White-booted Racket-tail, Rufescent Screech-Owl, Toucan Barbet, Crimson-rumped Toucanet, Giant Antpitta, Moustached Antpitta, Chestnut-crowned Antpitta, Yellow-breasted Antpitta, Ochre-breasted Antpitta, Andean Cock-of-the-rock.

Day 4

Thursday 16th November

Today we had a full day in Antizana National Park. We left Guango Lodge at 8.00am and drove to the Papallacta area where we were lucky to find a Mountain Tapir. We looked for bears all morning, again without luck, then we drove to Pintag town and on to Tambo Condor, where we had the chance to see hummingbirds like the Giant Hummingbird and the Black-tailed Trainbearer. We had lunch in Tambo Condor and went yet again to look for Spectacled Bears: and we found one! We returned to Guango Lodge with everyone very happy indeed.

Selected bird highlights: Mountain Velvetbreast, Tawny Antpitta, Great Thrush, Scarlet-bellied Mountain Tanager (Papallacta); Black-tailed Trainbearer, Tyrian Metaltail, Shining Sunbeam, Great Sapphirewing, Giant Hummingbird, Cinereous Conebill (Tambo Condor); Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe, Chestnut-winged Cinclodes, Stout-billed Cinclodes, White-chinned Thistletail (Papallacta site 2).

Day 5

Friday 17th November

We left the hotel at about 8.00am and drove to La Virgen near the Papallacta antennas to look for mammals and birds: we got great looks at Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe. We drove back to Guango Lodge for lunch, and in the afternoon, we drove to the Papallacta hot springs and made it in to the National Park, where we had a great walk.

Selected bird highlights: Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe, Chestnut-winged Cinclodes, Stout-billed Cinclodes, White-chinned Thistletail.

Day 6

Saturday 18th November

We left the lodge after breakfast and went to Antizana National Park. The sky was totally clear, and we had great views of the volcanoes. We saw many White-tailed Deer, two Andean Condors, Andean Ibis, and many other birds. We looked again for bears, without luck, and had lunch at Tambo Condor again. We started our drive back to Guango and on the way found *three* bears, a mother with two cubs! We watched them for more than an hour, which made a great end to a busy day.

Day 7

Sunday 19th November

We left Guango lodge after breakfast, making successful stops to look for Torrent Duck and White-capped Dippers. We arrived for lunchtime at San Isidro Lodge, where we had a chance to find the Black Agouti and the Eastern Red Squirrel. We also enjoyed birding from the porch and got a good list of hummers and other birds including Green Jay and Masked Trogon.

Selected bird highlights: Torrent Duck, Chestnut-breasted Coronet, Torrent Tyrannulet, Green Jay, White-capped Dipper, Canada Warbler, Masked Flowerpiercer (near Guango Lodge); Geoffroy's Daggerbill, Speckled Hummingbird, Russet-backed Oropendola, Slate-throated Redstart (San Isidro).

Day 8**Monday 20th November**

We started birding at 6.00am on the dining room porch, enjoying excellent birding. We drove on to Las Caucheras, and while the weather was a little rainy, we got a few nice species of birds like Andean Potoo and Southern Lapwing. We drove back to San Isidro for lunch and had a very nice afternoon birding from the porch or waking around the compound.

Day 9**Tuesday 21st November**

Transfer to Napo Wildlife Center.

Day 13**Saturday 25th November**

We picked up the clients from the airport and drove them to the San Jose de Puembo hotel for lunch. From there, it was a short drive to the airport, ready for the journey back home.

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