

# Panama - Canopy Tower (plus El Valle extension)

Naturetrek Tour Report

23 April - 6 May 2008

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Grey-headed Tanager



White-faced Capuchin



Blue-crowned Motmot

Report compiled by Jose Soto

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## Day 1

Wednesday 23rd April

### Arrival

Everybody arrived at the same time, somewhere around 9.30. Then they took a 45 minutes ride to the Canopy Tower.

## Day 2

Thursday 24th April

### Semaphore Hill (AM) and Gamboa/Ammo Ponds (PM)

We started up at the CT observation deck from 6:30am to about 7:30am. Then we had breakfast. At 8:30 we started walking down Semaphore Hill until about 12pm. We had lunch and an afternoon nap to recharge batteries. At 3pm we're all ready to go. It was a 20 minute ride to Gamboa, where we birded until about 5:45pm, and then we headed back to CT. The weather was nice and sunny and the birding was absolutely great.

## Day 3

Friday 25th April

### Pipeline Rd (All Day)

We left at 6am. The weather was clear and humid. The morning was by far the best part of the day. We covered about 5 km of the road, enough distance to see lots of birds and to enjoy the wonderful tropical climate. By a unanimous decision we decided to head back to CT at 3pm.

## Day 4

Saturday 26th April

### Old Gamboa Rd/Summit Ponds (AM) and Summit Botanical Garden (PM)

Today we spent some time on the CT observation deck, before breakfast. Then we drove down to Old Gamboa Rd, a 1.5km flat trail, situated at about 3km from Canopy Tower. In the afternoon we visited Summit Botanical Garden and its educational Harpy Eagle enclosure and then we birded around the grounds for about two hours.

**Day 5****Sunday 27th April**

## Plantation Rd (AM) and Chagres River (PM)

After a short time on the CT observation deck and a good breakfast, we took a 10 minute drive to the Plantation Rd, a nice 6km road paralleling a stream. We walked about 2km, enjoying not just the striking birds but also the beautiful old and big forest. At 3pm we were ready to drive to the Gamboa. This time we walked along the historical and very important Chagres River, responsible for supplying the Panama Canal and half of the country's population with water - and also home to many of Panama's wonderful birds. The weather was 85°F, 80% humidity, with lots of sun and many many birds!

**Day 6****Monday 28th April**

## Tocumen Marsh (AM) and Cerro Azul (AM)

This was our longest and earliest start. We had breakfast at 5am and we were leaving by 5:30am. Our first stop was at the Tocumen Marsh area where we birded from about 6:30am to about 11am, I think it was getting a little bit hot by then. Somebody said: "I've never seen so many Crakes in one single place!". We got on the bus and we headed up to the mountains of Cerro Azul, located at about 800 metres above sea level, within the Chagres Nacional Park. It was a good combination of habitat between marshes and mountains.

**Day 7****Tuesday 29th April**

## Pipeline Rd (AM) and Visit to Panama Canal Locks (PM)

Day seven was our wrap up day. So we decided to go back to the Pipe Line Rd. to look for some species that we missed on our first visit to the area. It was worth it since we saw a lot of good birds. We took this last evening to learn more about the Panama Canal at the Miraflores Visitor Center, right at the miraflores locks.

**Day 8****Wednesday 30th April**

Part of the group departed to Canopy Lodge (El Valle de Antón for their extension to the tour) while the rest of the group went back home.

## Arrival at Canopy Lodge in El Valle for the Extension

As soon as we arrive, birds started showing up at the feeders. Flame-rumped and Crimson-backed Tanager, Red-legged Honeycreeper were some of the birds came out to greet us. After lunch we took a short walk from the lodge to Chorro El Macho to check out the hummingbird feeders and a secret spot for Mottle Owl.

## Day 9

Thursday 1st May

### La Mesa (AM) and Caraiguana Rd (PM)

(Due to weather conditions of rain and fog we actually decided to switch places and time). After a six thirty breakfast, we took a 10 minute ride up to La Mesa (some 100 ft. higher than C Lodge). Due to the fog, the visibility was poor, so we decided to drive down to Caraiguana Road.

Caraiguana is at a lower area and it has a scrubby kind of forest. We also visited a private house to see a Tropical Screech Owl. We birded until about noon, and then we went back to the Lodge for lunch and a nap.

We went out again at 3pm, this time the weather at La Mesa was much better so did some birding, which included Blue-throated Toucanet and Tawny-crested Tanager. On the way back we did a quick stop at el Chorro el Macho to see a White-tipped Sicklebill on its roosting spot.

## Day 10

Friday 2nd May

### La Samia Trail (Am) and Cerro Gaital (Pm)

Before going to La Samia Trail we spent some time at the canopy adventure grounds. We were told that a Rufous-crested Coquette was coming to feed at a near by bush-flower, so we stayed there until it finally showed up. Then we drove for about 10 minutes to La Samia where we spent the rest of the morning, but before going back to the Lodge we again visited the Screech Owl spot to try to get better pictures.

In the evening at about 4pm, after waiting for the rain to stop, we headed up to Cerro Gaital, which is located at about 900ft high and only 15 minutes away from the lodge. We birded there for about 2 hours.

## Day 11

Saturday 3rd May

### Altos del Maria (Am) and Las Minas Rd (Pm)

Another excellent day due to the quality of birds we saw, such as the rare Snowcap, Slate-colored Seedeater and Black-eared Wood-Quail. The view from the dirt road to Altos del Maria was majestic and the temperature was very pleasant. We got back in time for lunch.

After another great lunch, a shorter break, we were ready to do more birding at 2:30pm. This time we drove for about 30 minutes on a dirt and bumpy road named Las Minas. It was not an easy ride, nor an easy walk, but that didn't stop us from trying to find our targets, including a Barred Forest-falcon that drove us crazy for about half an hour until we finally resigned our self with a fly-by view.

## Day 12

Sunday 4th May

### El Chiru/Pacific Low Lands (Pm) and Sunday Market

On our last day of birding, we visited the pacific low dry-forest of El Chiru and Juan Hombron. This area is located southwest of the Canopy Lodge about an hours drive on the Pan-American Highway. It was by far our hottest day but definitely an excellent morning of birding. For lunch we could not have made a better choice, we went to Raul's beach-house in Santa Clara, which was on our way. We all enjoyed it and we also saw some seabirds. Our trip to El Valle de Anton could not be completed without a visit to the local Sunday market.

## Day 12

Monday 5th May

Departure back to the UK

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The Naturetrek Facebook page is now live: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Naturetrek-Wildlife-Holidays/9765181485>. Setting up a personal profile at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) is quick, free and easy. Do please pay us a visit!

## Species Lists

### Birds (Main trip to 30 April)

Great Tinamou	Brown Pelican
Neotropic Cormorant	Anhinga
Magnificent Frigatebird	Capped Heron
Great Blue Heron	Cocoi Heron
Great Egret	Little Blue Heron
Snowy Egret	Cattle Egret
Striated Heron	Green Heron
Boat-billed Heron	Black-crowned Night-Heron
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	Bare-throated Tigre-Heron
Rufescent Tiger Heron	White Ibis
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck	Blue-winged Teal
Black Vulture	Turkey Vulture
King Vulture	Osprey
Swallow-tailed Kite	White-tailed Kite
Double-toothed Kite	Mississippi Kite
White Hawk	Mangrove Black Hawk
Savanna Hawk	Gray Hawk *
Broad-winged Hawk	Short-tailed Hawk
Swainson's Hawk???	Zone-tailed Hawk
Bat Falcon	Peregrine Falcon
Gray-headed Chachalaca	White-throated Crake
Gray-necked Word-Rail	Sora
Purple Gallinule	Common Moorhen
Sunbittern	Wattled Jacana
Southern Lapwing	Greater Yellowlegs
Lesser Yellowlegs	Short-billed Dowitcher
Willet	Whimbrel
Solitary Sandpiper	Spotted Sandpiper
Black-bellied Plover	Black-necked Stilt
Black Skimmer	Laughing Gull
Ring-billed Gull	Caspian Tern
Pale-vented Pigeon	Short-billed Pigeon
Plain-breasted Ground-Dove	Ruddy Ground-Dove
White-tipped Dove	Gray-Chested Dove
Orange-chinned Parakeet	Blue-headed Parrot
Red-lored Parrot	Mealy Parrot
Squirrel Cuckoo	Greater Ani
Smooth-billed Ani	Pheasant Cuckoo
Spectacled Owl	Great Potoo
Common Potoo	White-collared Swift
Short-tailed Swift	Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift
Green Hermit	Long-billed Hermit
White-necked Jacobin	Rufous-crested Coquette
Violet-capped Hummingbird	Violet-headed Hummingbird
Violet-crowned Wood nymph	Violet-bellied Hummingbird
Sapphire-throated Hummingbird	Rufous-tailed Hummingbird
Blue-chested Hummingbird	Snowy-bellied Hummingbird
White-vented Plumeleteer	Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer
Purple-crowned Fairy	White-tailed Trogon
Violaceous Trogon	Black-throated Trogon
Black-tailed Trogon	Slaty-tailed Trogon
Ringed Kingfisher	Amazon Kingfisher
Green Kingfisher	Blue-crowned Motmot

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Rufous Motmot	Broad-billed Motmot
Great Jacamar	White-necked Puffbird
Pied Puffbird	Black-breasted Puffbird
White-whiskered Puffbird	Collared Aracari
Keel-billed Toucan	Chestnut-mandibled Toucan
Black-cheeked Woodpecker	Red-crowned Woodpecker
Cinnamon Woodpecker	Lineated Woodpecker
Crimson-crested Woodpecker	Pale-breasted Spinetail
Plain Xenops	Plain-brown Woodcreeper
Wedge-billed Woodcreeper	Northern Barred-Woodcreeper
Cocoa Woodcreeper	Black-striped Woodcreeper
Streak-headed Woodcreeper	Straight-billed Woodcreeper
Fasciated Antshrike	Barred Antshrike
Western Slaty Antshrike	Checker-throated Antwren
White-flanked Antwren	Dot-winged Antwren
Dusky Antwren	Jet Antbird*
Chestnut-backed Antbird	Bicoloured Antbird
Spotted Antbird	Brown-capped Tyrannulet*
Southern Beardless Tyrannulet	Forest Elaenia
Yellow Tyrannulet	Yellow-bellied Elaenia
Paltry Tyrannulet	Black-capped Pygmy-Tyrant
Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant	Common Tody-Flycatcher
Olivaceous Flatbill	Yellow-margined Flycatcher
Golden-crowned Spadebill	Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher *
Olive-sided Flycatcher	Southern Bentbill
Pale-eyed Pygmy-Tyrant	Black-faced Ant-thrush
Streak-chested Antpitta	Blue Cotinga
Purple-throated Fruitcrow	Goleen-collared Manakin
Lance-tailed Manakin*	Blue-crowned Manakin
Red-capped Manakin	Eastern Word-pewee
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	Dusky-capped Flycatcher
Panama Flycatcher	Great Crested Flycatcher
Lesser Kiskadee	Great Kiskadee
Boat-billed Flycatcher	Rusty-margined Flycatcher
Social Flycatcher	Streaked Flycatcher
Piratic Flycatcher	Tropical Kingbird
Eastern Kingbird	Gray Kingbird
Fork-tailed Flycatcher	Cinnamon Becard
Masked Tityra	Black-crowned Tityra
Gray-breasted Martin	Mangrove Swallow
Southern Rough-winged Swallow	Barn Swallow
Clift Swallow	Black-bellied Wren
Rufous-breasted Wren	Rufous and White Wren
Plain Wren*	Buff-breasted Wren
House Wren	White-breasted Word-Wren
Song Wren*	Tropical Mockingbird
Swainson's Thrush	Clay-coloured Robin
Long-billed Gnatwren	Tropical Gnatcatcher
Red-eyed Vireo	Yellow-green Vireo
Goleen-fronted Greenlet	Lesser Greenlet
Green Shrike-Vireo	Yellow Warbler
Chestnut-sided Warbler	Blackburnian Warbler
Northern Waterthrush	Canada Warbler
Rosy Thrush-Tanager*	Gray-headed Tanager
White-shouldered Tanager	White-lined Tanager
Red-throated Ant-Tanager	Crimson-backed Tanager
Lemon-rumped Tanager	Blue-gray Tanager

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Palm Tanager  
 Thick-billed Euphonia  
 Emerald Tanager  
 Blue Dacnis  
 Shining Honeycreeper  
 Blue-black Grassquit  
 Yellow-bellied Seedeater  
 Thick-billed Seed-Finch  
 Orange-billed Sparrow  
 Buff-throated Saltator  
 Blue-black Grosbeak  
 Eastern Meadowlark  
 Shiny Cowbird  
 Giant Cowbird  
 Yellow-backed Oriole  
 Yellow-rumped Cacique  
 Chestnut-headed Oropendola

Yellow-crowned Euphonia  
 Plain-coloured Tanager  
 Scarlet-thighed Dacnis  
 Green Honeycreeper  
 Red-legged Honeycreeper  
 Variable Seedeater  
 Urdí-breasted Seedeater  
 Yellow-faced Grassquit  
 Streaked Saltator  
 Slate-coloured Grosbeak  
 Dickcissel  
 Great-tailed Grackle  
 Bronzed Cowbird  
 Red-breasted Blackbird  
 Yellow-billed Cacique  
 Scarlet-rumped Cacique

### Birds recorded on the Canopy Lodge extension 30 April – 4 May

Brown Pelican  
 Great Egret  
 Snowy Egret  
 Black Vulture  
 Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture  
 Double-toothed Kite  
 White Hawk  
 Short-tailed Hawk  
 Swainson's Hawk  
 Yellow-headed Caracara  
 White Ibis  
 Black-eared Wood –Quail  
 Wattled Jacana  
 Greater Yellowlegs  
 Laughing Gull  
 Rock Pigeon  
 Rudy Ground-Dove  
 Brown-throated Parakeet  
 Red-lored Parrot (C Tower day 8<sup>th</sup>)  
 Squirrel Cuckoo  
 Groove-billed Ani  
 Tropical Screech-Owl  
 Pauraque  
 White-tipped Sicklebill  
 Band-tailed Barbthroat  
 Stripe-throated Hermit  
 White-necked Jacobin  
 Violet-headed Hummingbird  
 Garden Emerald  
 Snowy-bellied Hummingbird  
 Sapphire-throated Hummingbird  
 White-vented Plumeteer  
 Blue-crowned Motmot  
 Amazon Kingfisher  
 Blue-throated Toucanet  
 Keel-billed Toucan  
 Lineated Woodpecker

Magnificent Frigatebird  
 Little Blue Heron  
 Cattle Egret  
 Turkey Vulture  
 Swallow-tailed Kite  
 Tiny Hawk  
 Broad-winged Hawk  
 Savanna Hawk  
 Crested Caracara  
 Gray-headed Chachalaca  
 Glossy Ibis  
 Crested Bobwhite  
 Southern Lapwing  
 Ruddy Turnstone  
 Sandwich Tern  
 Scaled Pigeon  
 White-tipped Dove  
 Orange-chinned Parakeet  
 Mealy Parrot (C Tower day 8<sup>th</sup>)  
 Smooth-billed Ani  
 Rufous-vented Ground Cuckoo \*  
 Mottle Owl  
 White-collared Swift  
 Rufous-breasted Hermit  
 Green Hermit  
 Scaly-breasted Hummingbird  
 Veraguan Mango  
 Rufous-crested Coquette  
 Violet-crowned Woodnymph  
 Rufous-tailed Hummingbird  
 Snowcap  
 Tody Motmot  
 Rufous Motmot  
 Green Kingfisher  
 Collared Aracari  
 Red-crowned Woodpecker  
 Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner



Long-tailed Woodcreeper  
 Cocoa Woodcreeper  
 Straight-billed Woodcreeper  
 Great Antshrike  
 Southern Beardless Tyrannulet  
 Lesser Elaenia  
 Ochre-bellied Flycatcher  
 Northern Scrub-Flycatcher  
 Common Tody-Flycatcher  
 Olive-sided Flycatcher  
 Panama Flycatcher  
 Rufous Mourner  
 Great Kiskadee  
 Social Flycatcher  
 Tropical Kingbird  
 Fork-tailed Flycatcher  
 Thrush-like Schiffornis\*  
 Lance-tailed Manakin  
 Scrub Greenlet  
 Gray-breasted Martin  
 Bay Wren  
 Plain Wren  
 Long-billed Gnatwren  
 Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush  
 Clay-colored Robin  
 Blackburnian Warbler  
 Rufous-capped Warbler  
 Common Bush-Tanager  
 Rosy Thrush-Tanager  
 White-shoulder Tanager  
 White-lined Tanager  
 Crimson-backed Tanager  
 Blue-gray Tanager  
 Thick-billed Euphonia  
 Plain-colored Tanager  
 Bay-headed Tanager  
 Scarlet-thighed Dacnis  
 Red-legged Honeycreeper  
 Slate-colored Seedeater  
 Yellow-faced Grassquit  
 Black-striped Sparrow  
 Buff-throated Saltator  
 Red-breasted Blackbird  
 Shiny Cowbird  
 Yellow-billed Cacique

### Mammals

Mantled Howler Monkey  
 Geoffrey's Tamarin  
 White-nosed Coati

### Reptiles

Spectacled Cayman  
 American Crocodile

Wedge-billed Woodcreeper  
 Spotted Woodcreeper  
 Barred Antshrike  
 Dusky Antbird  
 Yellow-bellied Elaenia  
 Olive-striped Flycatcher  
 Paltry Tyrannulet  
 Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant  
 Tufted Flycatcher  
 Eastern Wood-Pewee  
 Yellow-bellied Flycatcher  
 Panama Flycatcher  
 Boat-billed Flycatcher  
 Streaked Flycatcher  
 Eastern Kingbird  
 White-winged Becard  
*Golden-collared Manakin*  
 Yellow-green Vireo  
 Black-chested Jay  
*Southern Rough-winged Swallow*  
 Rufous-breasted Wren  
 House Wren  
 Gray-breasted Wood-Wren  
 Pale-vented Thrush  
 Yellow Warbler  
 Bay-breasted Warbler  
 Bananaquit  
 Black-and-Yellow Tanager  
 Dusky-Faced Tanager  
 Tawny-crested Tanager  
 Red-crowned Ant-Tanager  
 Flame-rumped Tanager  
 Palm Tanager  
 Tawny-capped Euphonia  
 Silver-throated Tanager  
 Golden-hooded Tanager  
 Green Honeycreeper  
 Blue-black Grassquit  
 Thick-billed Seed-Finch  
 Orange-billed Sparrow  
 Streaked Saltator  
 Eastern Meadowlark  
 Great-tailed Grackle  
 Yellow-backed Oriole  
 Chestnut-headed Oropendola

White-faced Capuchin  
 Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth  
 Jaguarundi

Basilisk (Jesus Lizard)  
 Green Iguana