

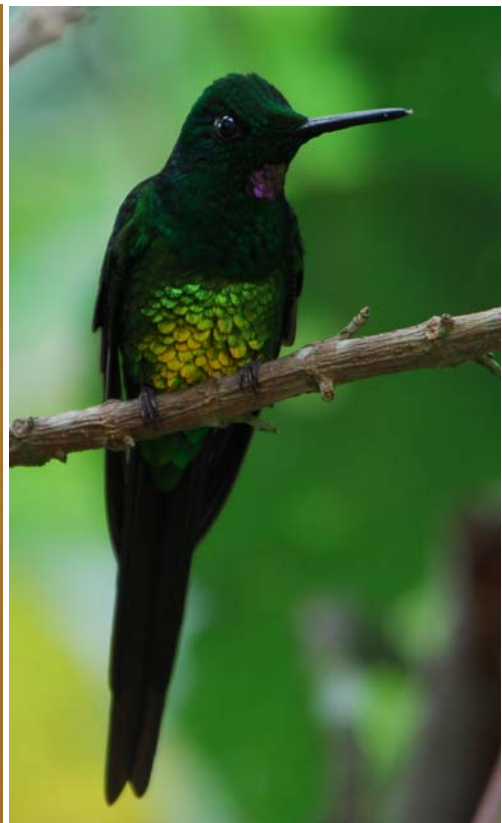
Trip Report: Ecuadorian Andes (part 2)

November 2006 (David Southall)



Andean Fox; Emma with Giant Earthworm

After a night in Quito we headed off early towards the Antisana volcano and the páramo at 3,500 to 4,000m altitude some two hours drive east of the city. The weather was cooperative and we saw a soaring Condor, spectacular, tiny Ecuadorian Hillstars, Andean Gulls (that live on lakes in the high Andes, not on the coast) and a host of other high altitude species. All set against the dramatic, snow capped volcanoes.



Ecuadorian Hillstar; Empress Brilliant



Glossy Flowerpiercer; Masked Flowerpiercer



Views at ca. 3,800m on the slopes of Antisana

From Antisana at ca. 4,000m we headed back down towards Quito and then climbed again up the Papallacta valley and across the watershed (stopping off to see Tawny Antpittas along the way). The afternoon rain ceased as we approached the highest elevations and eventually reached over 4,400m where we parked, then huffed and puffed our way uphill. In this cold, wet and misty landscape we saw Andean Foxes, Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe and a host of coral like red, green, silver and black plants covering almost every square inch. We then descended the eastern slope to the Guango Lodge to warm ourselves at a welcome open fire.



Páramo at ca. 4300m on Papallacta



Andean Gull; Páramo Ground-Tyrant

Morning walks there added Mountain Wren, Barred Becard, Grass-green Tanager and Hooded Mountain-Tanager, White-capped Dipper (feeding young in a riverside nest), Torrent Tyrannulet and a stunning family of Torrent Ducks variously swimming in the white water and basking on the mid-river rocks. Feeders were frequented by many hummingbirds, including Sword-billed Hummingbirds, and Masked Flowerpiercers.



Torrent Duck (male, female and juvenile)

After lunch we headed an hour further east to the very comfortable San Isidro Lodge where we saw more Antpittas on the trails at dusk (this time Chestnut-crowned and White-bellied) before enjoying a gourmet dinner and night views of the “San Isidro” owl (a new species, similar to the Black-banded Owl, known only from this location and one other in Peru).



“San Isidro” (Black-banded) Owl; Crested Quetzal

Our full day at San Isidro was highlighted by morning views of Sickle-winged Guans, Crested and Golden-headed Quetzals and various Hemispingus along the road, followed by a pleasant - if rainy and relatively quiet - forest hike. During the brighter afternoon we encountered a mixed flock along the road that included a large numbers of new flycatchers and, at dusk, a Slate-crowned Antpitta that had been calling in the roadside bushes.



Inca Jays

Our final morning in the field was spent on the very wet and windy Guacamayo ridge trail - which would undoubtedly justify more attention in better conditions - before our return to Quito via Papallacta. We finally

saw some of Quito that evening as we joined friends Mauricio and Maria del Carmen for an enjoyable sushi dinner, followed by drinks in their lovely house in the countryside near Quito.

Overall during this highly enjoyable first visit to Ecuador we identified some 191 confirmed species, of which 103 were new to us. The total included 6 Antpitta species and some 37 hummingbird species - proving that Ecuador really is an easy place to see a lot of hummingbirds! The birding/nature lodges we used were all excellent, with good food (outstanding at Guango Lodge and San Isidro Lodge). The various *transportistas* arranged through the lodges also proved an excellent way to travel between the lodges - good vehicles, cheaper than a full week's rental, no risk of getting lost on the back roads, good knowledge of the various reserves and sites to visit and even helpful knowledge of many of the birds that we saw together.



View at Dusk from Papallacta towards Antisana



At Tandayapa and Guango

Bird List: Ecuadorian Andes ¹

(Confirmed personal sightings only – excludes birds heard only; In order of appearance on the plates of Ridgely and Greenfield's Birds of Ecuador)

First location where species seen: A=Antisana; B=Bellavista; G=Guango; M=Mindo (ML=Mindo Loma); Mi=Milpe; P=Papallacta; Paz=Paz de las Aves; RB=Rio Blanco; S=Séptimo Paraiso; SI=San Isidro; T=Tandayapa; Y=Yanacoche

Cattle Egret (M)
Silvery Grebe (P)
Andean Teal (A) *

Torrent Duck (G) *
Andean Condor (A)
Black Vulture (S)
Variable Hawk (A)
Roadside Hawk (SI)
Broad-winged Hawk (M) *
Carunculated Caracara (A) *
American Kestrel (Y) *

Sickle-winged Guan (SI) *
Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe (P) *
American (Andean) Coot (A)
Andean Lapwing (A) *
Greater Yellowlegs (A) *
Andean Gull (A) *

Plumbeous Pigeon (T)
Ruddy Pigeon (M)
Eared Dove (A)
Black-winged Ground-Dove (A)

Barred Parakeet (T)
Speckle-faced (White-capped) Parrot (SI)
Scaly-naped Amazon (Y)

Squirrel Cuckoo (T) *
"San Isidro" (Black-banded) Owl (SI) *

Pauraque (Paz)
White-collared Swift (S)

White-whiskered Hermit (M) *
Tawny-bellied Hermit (T)
Wedge-billed Hummingbird (T)
Purple-bibbed Whitetip (T)
Speckled Hummingbird (Paz)
Green Thorntail (RB) *
Booted Racket-tail (T) *
Purple-throated Woodstar (T) *
White-bellied Woodstar (T) *
Green Violetear (T)
Sparkling Violetear (T) *
Fawn-breasted Brilliant (T) *
Green-crowned Brilliant (M) *
Empress Brilliant (Paz) *

Rufous-tailed Hummingbird (T)
Andean Emerald (T) *
Green-crowned Woodnymph (M) *
Western Emerald (T) *
Ecuadorian Hillstar (A) *
Shining Sunbeam (Y)
Great Sapphirewing (Y) *
Sword-billed Hummingbird (Y) *
Bronzy Inca (SI)
Brown Inca (T) *
Collared Inca (B) *
Buff-winged Starfrontlet (Y) *
Black-tailed Trainbearer (A) *
Long-tailed Sylph (G) *
Violet-tailed Sylph (T) *
Buff-tailed Coronet (Paz) *
Chestnut-breasted Coronet (G) *
Velvet-purple Coronet (Paz) *
Mountain Velvetbreast (G)
Sapphire-vented Puffleg (Y) *
Golden-breasted Puffleg (Y) *
Tyrian Metaltail (Y) *
Tourmaline Sunangel (G) *

Masked Trogon (T) *
Crested Quetzal (SI) *
Golden-headed Quetzal (Paz) *
Rufous Motmot (S) *
Andean (Highland) Motmot (SI)
Turquoise Jay (B) *
Green (Inca) Jay (G) *

Red-headed Barbet (S)
Toucan Barbet (T)
Crimson-rumped Toucanet (T) *
Collared (Pale-mandibled) Araçari (S)
Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan (ML) *
Chocó Toucan (M) *

Lineated Woodpecker (M) *
Powerful Woodpecker (T)
Crimson-mantled Woodpecker (T)
Golden-olive Woodpecker (ML)
Strong-billed Woodcreeper (S) *
Montane Woodcreeper (M) *
Azara's Spinetail (T)
Rufous Spinetail (G)
Pearled Treerunner (G)

¹ First sighting ever for us; * = photo available from trip

Stout-billed Cinclodes (A) *
 Bar-winged Cinclodes (A)
 Streaked Tuftedcheek (SI) *

Immaculate Antbird (T) *
Giant Antpitta (Paz) *
Moustached Antpitta (Paz) *
 Chestnut-crowned Antpitta (SI) *
White-bellied Antpitta (SI) *
Yellow-breasted Antpitta (Paz) *
Tawny Antpitta (P)

Streak-necked Flycatcher (SI)
Rufous-breasted Flycatcher (SI)
Torrent Tyrannulet (G)
Ornate Flycatcher (M) *
 Cinnamon Flycatcher (SI)
 White-throated Tyrannulet (Y)
White-banded Tyrannulet (Y) *
 Smoke-coloured Pewee (ML)
Flavescent Flycatcher (SI) *
Handsome Flycatcher (SI) *
Plain-capped (Paramo) Ground-Tyrant (A) *
Smoky Bush-Tyrant (SI)
Rufous-breasted Chat-Tyrant (Y)
Slaty-backed Chat-Tyrant (G)
 Black Phoebe (T)
 Olivaceous Piha (Paz)
 Tropical Kingbird (M)
 Golden-crowned Flycatcher (M)
Barred Becard (G) *
 Cinnamon Becard (M) *
 Black-and-white Becard (M) *

Green-and-black Fruiteater (Y)
Scaled Fruiteater (T) *
 Andean Cock-of-the-Rock (T) *

Golden-winged Manakin (T) *
Club-winged Manakin (Mi) *

Brown-bellied Swallow (A)
 Blue-and-white Swallow (SI)

Rufous Wren (Y)
 House Wren (S)
Mountain Wren (G)
 Gray-breasted Wood-Wren (T)
Black-billed Peppershrike (SI)
 Red-eyed Vireo (T)
 Brown-capped Vireo (T) *
White-capped Dipper (G) *

Swainson's Thrush (T) *
 Great Thrush (Y)
 Glossy-black Thrush (Y)
Ecuadorian Thrush (Paz)

Tropical Parula (T)

Blackburnian Warbler (M)
Canada Warbler (SI)
 Slate-throated Redstart (Whitestart) (Mi)
Spectacled Whitestart (Y) *
Olive-crowned Yellowthroat (S) *
Black-crested Warbler (G)
 Three-striped Warbler (T) *
Russet-crowned Warbler (B) *

Bananaquit (RB)
Cinereous Conebill (A)
 Blue-backed Conebill (Y)
Capped Conebill (G) *
 Bluish Flowerpiercer (G)
 Masked Flowerpiercer (Y) *
 Glossy Flowerpiercer (Y) *
Black Flowerpiercer (A)

Chestnut-breasted Chlorophonia (SI)
 Thick-billed Euphonia (RB) *
 Golden Tanager (RB)
Saffron-crowned Tanager (SI)
Flame-faced Tanager (ML)
Golden-naped Tanager (T)
 Beryl-spangled Tanager (M) *
 Blue-and-black Tanager (G)
 Black-capped Tanager (T)
Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanager (Y)
 Lacrimose Mountain-Tanager (G)
 Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager (T) *
Hooded Mountain-Tanager (Y) *
Grass-green Tanager (G)
 Blue-gray Tanager (S)
Flame(Lemon)-rumped Tanager (S)
Dusky-faced Tanager (Mi)
 Common Bush-Tanager (G)
Gray-hooded Bush-Tanager (G)
Black-capped Hemispingus (G) *
 Superciliated Hemispingus (Y)
Black-eared Hemispingus (SI)

Golden-bellied (Southern-yellow) Grosbeak (T)
Hooded Siskin (A) *
Variable Seedeater (RB)
Paramo Seedeater (A)
 Plumbeous Sierra-Finch (A) *

Pale-naped Brush-Finch (G) *
Yellow-breasted (Rufous-naped) Brush-Finch (Y)
Tricoloured Brush-Finch (M)
White-winged Brush-Finch (T)
Slaty Brush-Finch (G) *
 Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch (T)

Rufous-collared Sparrow (T)
(Northern) Mountain Cacique (G)
 Subtropical Cacique (SI)
 Russet-backed Oropendola (SI)

Total 191 confirmed species for trip, of which 103 new for me...