

Trip Report: Panama Canal Zone
(Including PN Soberanía, PN Metropolitana and Cerro Azul)

June 30th – July 5th 2011

During my first Neotropical birding trip of 2011 - and my first visit to Panama - I spent five nights at the Canopy Tower lodge located in the Parque Nacional Soberanía, some 45 minutes drive north-west of Panama City. The good accommodation, food and enthusiastic guests at the lodge, combined with excellent forest trails and canopy towers in the area made for an extremely enjoyable long weekend.

A converted radar tower perched on the highest hill within the park, the Canopy Tower (www.canopytower.com) is a unique birding location providing 360° eye-level views of the surrounding canopy, plus distant glimpses of the Panama Canal and the high-rise skyline of Panama City. In addition to dawn and dusk birding from the roof, four days were sufficient to sample some of the best Canal Zone birding sites, including two days along the renowned Pipeline Road that bisects the mostly secondary lowland forest in the Parque Nacional Soberanía; a morning at the Parque Natural Metropolitana in Panama City; and a full day searching for foothill species at Cerro Azul. I relied exclusively on transportation provided by the Canopy Tower and was guided each day by the excellent Alexis. Low season tourist numbers resulted in pleasantly small group sizes and although we did experience a couple of the heavy rainstorms typical of the 'green' (rainy) season whilst out on the trails, these only briefly interrupted our birding.



Stripe-cheeked Woodpecker [Cerro Azul]; Streak-chested Antpitta calling from its low perch [PN Soberanía]

Personal highlights included: securing close-up views of the endemic Stripe-cheeked Woodpecker; seeing six Blue Cotingas (including four males) in one tree during a dawn visit to the 32m high canopy tower at the Panama Rainforest Discovery Centre; experiencing a steady flow of forest birds during our full day on the Pipeline Road and an army ant swarm (with its attendant obligate antbirds and many woodcreepers) on a trail at Cerro Azul; visiting a garden filled with perhaps 50 individual hummingbirds at Cerro Azul; and securing excellent views of the birds and mammals 'dripping' from the trees outside the Canopy Tower windows.

During the trip I identified a total of 194 bird species, including 16 raptors, 13 hummingbirds, four trogons, three motmots, four puffbirds, six woodpeckers, 14 antshrike/bird/wren/pittas, four manakins, 14 tanagers and four euphonias. Sixty-one of these species were lifers. Mammals were also well represented, and included good views of three monkey species and a kinkajou. Photography was aided by Alexis' guiding and identification skills, which freed me up to spend more time focused on my camera and tripod rather than binoculars and resulted in some pleasing images, several of which are included in this report along with a trip list and details of the various sightings. Hopefully I will soon have an opportunity to make a follow-up visit to Panama to see and photograph other Canal Zone species that I missed this time around, plus visit other regions of the country with their different complement of species...



Collared Araçari; Black Hawk-Eagle [both PN Soberanía]



Red-legged Honeycreeper [Cerro Azul]; Red-capped Manakin [PN Soberanía]



Streak-chested Antpitta; Spot-crowned Antwren [both PN Soberanía]



Bi-colored Antbird [Cerro Azul]; Spotted Antbird [PN Soberanía]



Army ants carrying larvae to new bivouac [PN Soberanía]; Spider and eggs hiding from army ant swarm [Cerro Azul]



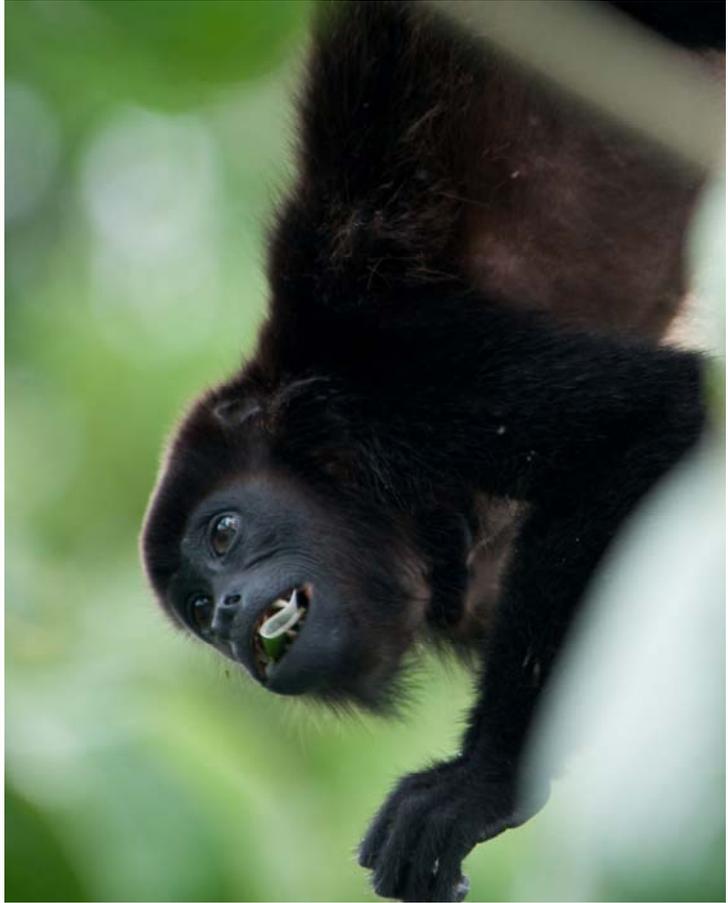
Fasciated Antshrikes (female and male building a nest) [PN Soberanía]



Blue-chested Hummingbird [PN Soberanía]



Violet-crowned Woodnymph [Cerro Azul]; Violet-bellied Hummingbird [PN Soberanía]



Panamanian (Western) Night Monkeys; Mantled Howler Monkey [both PN Soberanía]



Geoffroy's Tamarin; Kinkajou [both PN Soberanía]



Long-billed Hermit; Blue Cotinga (female) [both PN Soberanía]



Black-throated Trogon (female); White-whiskered Puffbird [both PN Soberanía]



A presumed Thoas Swallowtail (Heraclides thoas) [PN Soberanía]



Plain-colored Tanager [PN Soberanía]

1. Bird Trip List¹

Confirmed personal sightings only for DJS – excludes birds heard only unless otherwise indicated. As field guide I used ‘The Birds of Panama: A Field Guide’ by George R. Angehr and Robert Dean, 2010 - which contained all of the species encountered. Some names have been updated since this guide was published, so birds in the trip list are identified as per ‘The Clements Checklist of Birds of the World’, Cornell, 2007 with updates through December 2010 (online version 6.5).

Locations where species seen in sequence of travel:

CT = Canopy Tower (at ca. 300m altitude), including sightings from the roof platform (early morning and late evening each day from dawn on July 1st through July 5th, plus lunch-time on July 1st and 3rd) and along the 2km access road climbing up Semaphore Hill through the Parque Nacional Soberanía (morning of July 5th).

PR = Pipeline Road through the Parque Nacional Soberanía (at ca. 50 to 150m altitude), including the Panama Rainforest Discovery Center with 32m high observation tower, trails and Lago Calamito (morning of July 1st); the 4WD road through the park (full day July 2nd); and forest edges near the navigation markers on the hillside at the entrance to the Pipeline Road (afternoon of July 3rd).

G = Gamboa village area (at ca. 50m altitude), including trails and forest edge near to the Gamboa Rainforest Resort (July 1st), canal and roadside vegetation and ponds whilst travelling between the Canopy Tower, Gamboa and the Pipeline Road (morning and afternoon of July 1st and 2nd and afternoon of July 3rd) and along the banks of the Río Chagres (afternoon of July 3rd).

PC = Panama City (at ca. 50m altitude), including Parque Natural Metropolitana (morning of July 3rd) and roadside vegetation whilst travelling between Canopy Tower and Cerro Azul (morning and afternoon of July 4th).

CA = Cerro Azul area (at ca. 600 to 800m altitude), including a 4WD track through the elfin forest towards the ‘Xenornis Trail’ in the Cerro Jeffe Conservation Area and Parque Nacional Chagres (morning of July 4th), followed by a slightly lower altitude forest trail and residential garden with hummingbird feeders (afternoon of July 4th).

Great Tinamou (*Tinamus major*) * [CT; PR]: Ethereal calls were a common early morning sound in the forest around the Canopy Tower and elsewhere in PN Soberanía. As we left at dusk after a full day’s birding, one seen in the forest next to the Pipeline Road, where it froze for over a minute a few yards into the dark forest, permitting a few high ISO photos before it walked off into the gloom.

Little Tinamou (*Crypturellus soui*) [CT; PR; G]: A common early morning sound in the forest around the Canopy Tower and elsewhere in PN Soberanía. A pair was well seen mid-afternoon on a trail near to the Gamboa Rainforest Resort when they ran towards us to investigate Alexis’ calls. Another was briefly seen calling in a patch of forest near to the start of the Pipeline Road.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) [PR; G]: Several seen around the banks of the Río Chagres and also at the Lago Calamito close to the Discovery Center.

Gray-headed Chachalaca (*Ortalis cinereiceps*) [CT; G; CA]: Seen briefly crossing the road at the base of Semaphore Hill as we left the Canopy Tower one morning, also in roadside vegetation at Gamboa and finally best seen in roadside vegetation at Cerro Azul.

Least Grebe (*Tachybaptus dominicus*) [G]: Two juveniles, with black-and-white striped head and neck, on the Río Chagres.

Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) [G]: One seen flying along the canal.

Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*) [G; PR]: A couple of individuals well seen from the tower at the Discovery Center as they flew over the forest.

Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*) [G]: A pair seen flying along the canal.

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) [G]: One seen near Gamboa and others near to Panama City.

Striated Heron (*Butorides striata*) [G]: One seen flying across the Río Chagres.

Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*) [G; PR]: Groups seen along roadside near to Gamboa and soaring near to the forest.

Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*) [PR; G; CT]: Individuals regularly seen as they soared over all habitats.

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) [G]: One seen perched along the Río Chagres.

Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*) * [CA]: A pair and later a flock of five or more seen elegantly floating over the hillside at Cerro Azul.

Double-toothed Kite (*Harpagus bidentatus*) * [PR; PC]: One seen perched along the Pipeline Road and another seen swooping through the forest to catch an insect in the Parque Natural Metropolitana.

Plumbeous Kite (*Ictinia plumbea*) [PR; CA]: Best seen when a large flock of 10+ individuals floated over the hillside at Cerro Azul.

Snail Kite (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*) [PR; G]: Several individuals seen around the banks of the Río Chagres and also at the Lago Calamito.

¹ First sighting ever for DJS; **E** = Panama endemic species; * = photo available

Crane Hawk (*Geranospiza caerulescens*) [G; PR]: Several individuals seen around the banks of the Río Chagres and also at the Lago Calamito.

Semiplumbeous Hawk (*Leucopternis semiplumbeus*) [PR]: One seen perched along the Pipeline Road. Just as we arrived at the scope it flew from its initial perch and took some calling and searching by Alexis to finally relocate in the canopy.

Common Black-Hawk (*Buteogallus anthracinus*) [PR]: One seen through Alexis' scope as it perched during our early-morning visit to the canopy tower at the Discovery Center.

Zone-tailed Hawk (*Buteo albonotatus*) [PR]: One seen flying over the forest during our early-morning visit to the canopy tower at the Discovery Center.

Short-tailed Hawk (*Buteo brachyurus*) [CA]: One seen mid-morning flying high over the hillside in the company of a pair of Swallow-tailed Kites.

Black Hawk-Eagle (*Spizaetus tyrannus*) * [G]: Mid-afternoon, one individual flew into a roadside tree as we drove from the Canopy Tower towards Gamboa, then flew to a second roadside tree where we were able to get close-up photographs from the open-top vehicle.

Collared Forest-Falcon (*Micrastur semitorquatus*) **heard only** [CT]: Heard calling at dusk from trees near to the Canopy Tower, but remained frustratingly hidden from view despite searches from all floors of the building.

Yellow-headed Caracara (*Milvago chimachima*) [G; CA]: A couple of individuals, including juveniles, seen along roads.

Bat Falcon (*Falco rufifigularis*) * [PR; G]: One individual seen perched mid-afternoon along the Pipeline Road and a pair late-afternoon near to the canal in Gamboa.

Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*) [PR; G]: Several seen around the banks of the Río Chagres and also at the Lago Calamito.

Southern Lapwing (*Vanellus chilensis*) [G]: A pair seen on the railway tracks at the bridge over the Río Chagres.

Wattled Jacana (*Jacana jacana*) [PR; G]: Several seen around the banks of the Río Chagres and also at the Lago Calamito.

Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*) [PC]: Many seen along the roads in Panama City.

Short-billed Pigeon (*Patagioenas nigrirostris*) * [PR]: One individual well seen as it perched nearby during our early-morning visit to the canopy tower at the Discovery Center.

Pale-vented Pigeon (*Patagioenas cayennensis*) [PR, CT]: Several seen flying over the forest and perched in the canopy.

Scaled Pigeon (*Patagioenas speciosa*) * [PR; CA; CT]: Several of these very attractive pigeons seen flying over the forest and perched in the canopy.

Ruddy Ground-Dove (*Columbina talpacoti*) [G; CA]: A couple of individuals seen along roads.

Blue Ground-Dove (*Claravis pretiosa*) [G]: One seen along a trail in Gamboa.

White-tipped Dove (*Leptotila verreauxi*) [G; CA]: A couple of individuals seen along roads.

Orange-chinned Parakeet (*Brotogeris jugularis*) [G; PC]: Large flocks (many tens of birds) seen roosting in trees at Gamboa, whilst other small and noisy flocks were seen flying over the canopy or perched.

Brown-hooded Parrot (*Pyrrhula haematotis*) [PR; CT]: Pairs and small flocks seen flying over the canopy.

Blue-fronted Parrotlet (*Touit dilectissimus*) [CA]: Alexis found one individual perched on a mossy trunk behind a bromeliad high in a tall tree, where we saw glimpses through his scope of the parrotlet's head, complete with red cheek patches, and square tail.

Blue-headed Parrot (*Pionus menstruus*) [PR; CA]: Several pairs seen and heard flying over the canopy.

Red-lored Parrot (*Amazona autumnalis*) [PR; CT]: The most common parrot, with several pairs and small flocks seen on several occasions, both flying over the canopy and perched in tall trees.

Mealy Parrot (*Amazona farinosa*) [PR, CT]: A couple of pairs seen perched in the canopy.

Yellow-crowned Parrot (*Amazona ochrocephala*) [PC]: A small flock seen flying in the early morning over the Parque Natural Metropolitana.

Squirrel Cuckoo (*Piaya cayana*) [PR]: Several individuals seen at various levels in the forest.

Pheasant Cuckoo (*Dromococcyx phasianellus*) **heard only** [PR]: Mid-morning, one heard calling low down in the forest shortly after we had descended from canopy tower at the Discovery Center. Despite Alexis' calls we were unable to coax the bird into view and after a couple of minutes it fell silent.

Smooth-billed Ani (*Crotophaga ani*) [G]: Seen in scrub vegetation along the canal.

Short-tailed Swift (*Chaetura brachyura*) [CT; PR]: Chunky, smooth flying swift frequently seen in small numbers flying over the canopy.

Band-rumped Swift (*Chaetura spinicaudus*) [CT; PR; CA]: Agile swifts frequently seen in small numbers flying over the canopy. Tail band well seen when viewed from above on the Canopy Tower roof.

Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift (*Panyptila cayennensis*) [CA]: Several seen mid-morning flying over the forest in the company of other swifts.

Green Hermit (*Phaethornis guy*) [CA]: Several individuals seen along forest trails.

Long-billed Hermit (*Phaethornis longirostris*) * [PR]: Regularly encountered on forest trails, including one individual well seen as it sang from a perch near to the Discovery Center. A regular visitor to feeders.

Stripe-throated Hermit (*Phaethornis striigularis*) [PR]: Encountered several times on forest trails. An infrequent visitor to feeders.

White-necked Jacobin (*Florisuga mellivora*) [PR; CA]: Encountered several times on forest trails. A frequent visitor to feeders.

Violet-crowned Woodnymph (*Thalurania colombica*) [PR; CA]: Small numbers seen only at feeders.

Violet-bellied Hummingbird (*Damophila julie*) * [PR; CA]: Small numbers seen only at feeders.

Violet-capped Hummingbird (*Goldmania violiceps*) [CA]: Small numbers seen only at feeders.

Snowy-bellied Hummingbird (*Amazilia edward*) * [CA]: Small numbers seen only at feeders.

Rufous-tailed Hummingbird (*Amazilia tzucatl*) * [PR; CA]: Large numbers seen only at feeders where they aggressively defended their territory.

Blue-chested Hummingbird (*Polyerata amabilis*) * [CT; PR]: Small numbers seen attending flowers and feeders.

White-vented Plumeleteer (*Chalybura buffoni*) * [PR; PC]: Small numbers seen in the forest and at feeders.

Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer (*Chalybura urochrysis*) * [CA]: Small numbers seen only at feeders. They really do have pink feet!

Purple-crowned Fairy (*Heliothryx barroti*) [CA]: One seen near the feeders.

White-tailed Trogon (*Trogon chionurus*) [PR]: One pair well at lunchtime along the Pipeline Road.

Gartered Trogon (*Trogon caligatus*) * [PR; G]: This most commonly encountered trogon species was recently split from the Violaceous Trogon described in the 'Birds of Panama' field guide.

Black-throated Trogon (*Trogon rufus*) * [PR; CA]: Several females and one male seen along various trails.

Slaty-tailed Trogon (*Trogon massena*) * [PR]: One pair well seen early-morning along the Pipeline Road.

Rufous Motmot (*Baryphengus martii*) [CT; CA]: These large motmots well seen both in the forest surrounding Canopy Tower and in the forest bordering a garden in Cerro Azul.

Broad-billed Motmot (*Electron platyrhynchum*) * [G; PR]: On individual particularly well seen at lunchtime along the Pipeline Road.

Whooping Motmot (*Momotus subrufescens*) * [G; PC]: This most commonly encountered motmot species was recently split from the Blue-crowned Motmot described in the 'Birds of Panama' field guide. Seen on several occasions, with the best views being early-morning in the Parque Natural Metropolitana where several individuals visited a fruiting tree. The damaged tail feathers on some of these individuals (no well developed paddles on the tail) may represent damage related to entering nest-holes in the nearby sandy banks.

Ringed Kingfisher (*Megaceryle torquata*) [G]: One seen perched after flying over the Río Chagres.

White-necked Puffbird (*Notharchus hyperrhynchus*) [PR]: A pair perched in the canopy was well seen from the tower during our early-morning visit to the Discovery Center. Also near to the start of the Pipeline Road.

Black-breasted Puffbird (*Notharchus pectoralis*) [PR]: One pair seen perched high in a tree near to the Pipeline Road.

Pied Puffbird (*Notharchus tectus*) [PR]: Several pairs perched in the canopy were well seen as we walked the Pipeline Road.

White-whiskered Puffbird (*Malacoptila panamensis*) * [PR]: One confiding individual photographed on a mid-storey branch near to a trail at the Discovery Center. A second individual seen pursuing an insect to the floor and then sitting quietly on a low branch as we crept through the forest towards a calling Streak-chested Antpitta. Photographs indicate that both were brightly patterned males.

Great Jacamar (*Jacamerops aureus*) **heard only** [CT]: Heard calling at dusk from trees near to the Canopy Tower, but remained frustratingly hidden from view despite searches from all floors of the building.

Collared Araçari (*Pteroglossus torquatus*) * [CT]: During a rainy lunch break, a pair with juvenile came to feed in the *cecropia* trees adjacent to the Canopy Tower providing close-up, eye level views from the dining room.

Keel-billed Toucan (*Ramphastos sulphuratus*) * [CT; PR; CA]: The more common toucan, with several individuals and small groups seen each morning perched in the canopy. Occasionally seen during the day feeding in fruit trees.

Chestnut-mandibled Toucan (*Ramphastos swainsoni*) [PR; G]: Individuals and pairs seen on a couple of mornings perched in the canopy.

Black-cheeked Woodpecker (*Melanerpes pucherani*) * [PR; CA]: One seen at dawn below Cerro Azul in trees where similar sized Red-crowned and Black-cheeked Woodpeckers were also encountered.

Red-crowned Woodpecker (*Melanerpes rubricapillus*) [G; CA]: Several seen in open habitat at Gamboa, then again at dawn below Cerro Azul in trees where similar sized Black-cheeked and Stripe-cheeked Woodpeckers were also encountered.

Stripe-cheeked Woodpecker (*Piculus collopertus*)  * [CA]: A key target bird for the Cerro Azul trip, this was the only Panamanian endemic I encountered. We were fortunate to find one immediately on our arrival at dawn near Cerro Azul, where it responded to playback. Similar sized Black-cheeked and Red-crowned Woodpeckers also frequented the area. During our morning walk along a 4WD track we found a male that provided excellent views and photographic opportunities as it perched adjacent to the trail on well illuminated trees.

Cinnamon Woodpecker (*Celeus loricatus*) * [PR; CT]: Very attractive, medium-sized woodpecker. A pair was well seen from the canopy tower at the Discovery Center after being heard calling and responding to playback. During breakfast at the Canopy Tower on my final morning a male flew in to a *cecropia* outside the dining room window providing point-blank views. Unfortunately I tried to photograph it from above on the roof-deck, which proved to be a strategic error as it stayed lower in the trees and I ended up without any images!

Lineated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus lineatus*) [PR; CA]: Large woodpecker seen in the forest on a couple of occasions.

Crimson-crested Woodpecker (*Campephilus melanoleucus*) * [PR; PC]: The most commonly seen large woodpecker in the lowlands forests.

Plain Xenops (*Xenops minutus*) [PR; CA]: Seen several times a day, often in small mixed flocks.

Plain-brown Woodcreeper (*Dendrocincla fuliginosa*) * [PR; CA]: Seen on several occasions, most memorably a pair seen amongst five different woodcreeper species foraging above an army ant swarm at Cerro Azul.

Ruddy Woodcreeper (*Dendrocincla homochroa*) [CA]: One of five different woodcreeper species foraging above an army ant

swarm at Cerro Azul.

Northern Barred-Woodcreeper (*Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae*) * [CA]: I missed seeing this species when one was located by Alexis along the Pipeline Road, but fortunately we encountered a pair amongst five different woodcreeper species foraging above an army ant swarm at Cerro Azul.

Cocoa Woodcreeper (*Xiphorhynchus susurrans*) [PR; PC]: By far the most common woodcreeper in the lowlands, being seen and heard several times each day.

Black-striped Woodcreeper (*Xiphorhynchus lachrymosus*) * [PR; CA]: An attractive woodcreeper best seen when encountered amongst five different woodcreeper species foraging above an army ant swarm at Cerro Azul.

Spotted Woodcreeper (*Xiphorhynchus erythropygius*) * [CA]: An attractive woodcreeper seen early-morning at Cerro Azul where it responded to Alexis' calls by flying right past my head. Also encountered amongst five different woodcreeper species foraging above an army ant swarm at Cerro Azul.

Fasciated Antshrike (*Cymbilaimus lineatus*) * [PR]: A pair provided excellent views as they built a nest along a trail at the Discovery Center. Also seen on several other occasions.

Great Antshrike (*Taraba major*) [G]: A male was eventually located as it called in the late-afternoon from a tree at Gamboa.

Western Slaty-Antshrike (*Thamnophilus atrinucha*) * [PR; G; CT; CA]: The most common of the skulkers, regularly heard calling in the forest from dawn onwards. Seen on several occasions, including a pair building a nest at Cerro Azul.

Spot-crowned Antvireo (*Dysithamnus puncticeps*) * [PR]: Heard several times, but well seen only once when a pair gave excellent views as they foraged low in vegetation along the Pipeline Road.

Checker-throated Antwren (*Myrmotherula fulviventris*) [PR]: Heard several times, but well seen only once, when participating in a mixed flock along the Pipeline Road.

Dot-winged Antwren (*Microrhopias quixensis*) [PR]: A seemingly omnipresent member of mixed flocks along the Pipeline Road, where the female's chestnut belly was an attractive and distinctive feature.

Dusky Antbird (*Cercomacra tyrannina*) * [PR; PC]: Pairs regularly heard and occasionally seen foraging in trailside vegetation.

Chestnut-backed Antbird (*Myrmeciza exsul*) [PR]: Heard on a couple of occasions and well seen early in the morning on our full day along the Pipeline Road.

White-bellied Antbird (*Myrmeciza longipes*) [PC]: A pair and juvenile seen close to a trail at the Parque Natural Metropolitana.

Spotted Antbird (*Hylophylax naevioides*) * [PR; CA]: Well seen on two occasions – a pair and juveniles low to the ground along the Pipeline Road and then at least one male foraging above an army ant swarm at Cerro Azul.

Bicolored Antbird (*Gymnophylax leucaspis*) * [CA]: At least four seen foraging around an army ant swarm at Cerro Azul. Extremely confiding, they essentially ignored us as they perched low to the ground along the trail only a few feet away from us, with their focus firmly on potential prey fleeing ahead of the ants.

Ocellated Antbird (*Phaenostictus mcleannani*) [CA]: At least two of these lovely skulkers were seen foraging around an army ant swarm at Cerro Azul. In contrast to the Bicolored Antbirds, the much larger Ocellated Antbirds were shy and avoided perches on the edge of the trail. As a result I had to rely on binocular views and was unable to take any photographs.

Black-faced Anthrush (*Formicarius analis*) [G; PR]: Heard calling in the forest on several occasions and well seen mid-morning when one was coaxed to approach through the vegetation along the Pipeline Road.

Streak-chested Antpitta (*Hylopezus perspicillatus*) * [PR]: Heard on several occasions calling in the forest. Mid-afternoon on our full day along the Pipeline Road we stealthily made our way about 100 yards into the forest and found one individual patiently calling from a vine just above the ground. We enjoyed watching from close proximity for more than ten minutes before it hopped away. Despite the low and deteriorating light conditions I was able to take some good photographs of the calling bird - thanks to my tripod. Some of the best images (such as page 1 of this trip report) utilized almost 1 second shutter speeds, resulting in interesting combination of sharp eyes and a blurry chest as it sings away! A highlight of the trip.

Brown-capped Tyrannulet (*Ornithion brunneicapillus*) [PR; CA]: Our best views of this small, short-billed and eye-browed species were of one individual early in the morning whilst we were enjoying the best mixed-flock of the trip.

Southern Beardless-Tyrannulet (*Camptostoma obsoletum*) [PR]: One individual seen in an early morning mixed-flock.

Forest Elaenia (*Myiopagis gaimardii*) [PC]: One individual seen at the Parque Natural Metropolitana.

Greenish Elaenia (*Myiopagis viridicata*) [CT]: One individual seen near to the Canopy Tower.

Yellow-bellied Elaenia (*Elaenia flavogaster*) [CA]: One individual seen late-morning.

Olive-striped Flycatcher (*Mionectes olivaceus*) [CA]: One individual seen early-morning as we found our first mixed flock.

Paltry Tyrannulet (*Zimmerius vilisimus*) * [PR]: Seen on a couple of occasions, with the best views being of an individual perched below the tower at the Discovery Center.

Black-capped Pygmy-Tyrant (*Myiornis atricapillus*) * [PR]: The world's second smallest passerine - a mini, gray ping pong ball with no tail - was heard by Alexis at lunchtime along the Pipeline Road and he subsequently coaxed it into view. Its small size and propensity to stay in the mid- to upper-levels of the forest made for challenging photography!

Common Tody-Flycatcher (*Todirostrum cinereum*) * [G; PC]: Seen on several occasions in open and forest edge areas. Our best views were of a pair weaving a nest at Gamboa.

Royal Flycatcher (*Onychorhynchus coronatus*) **heard only** [PR]: I arrived too late to see the individual that Alexis had located on the trail behind the Discovery Center.

Yellow-olive Flycatcher (*Tolmomyias sulphurescens*) [PR; PC]: Individuals seen on several occasions.

Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher (*Terentotriccus erythrurus*) [PR]: One individual well seen mid-morning as it perched near eye-level.

Black-tailed Flycatcher (*Myiobius atricaudus*) [PR]: One hyper-active individual, moving from perch to perch and flashing its tail was seen late-afternoon at eye-level in a forest patch near to the start of the Pipeline Road.

Rufous Mourner (*Rhytipterna holerythra*) [PR]: One seen silently perched in the mid-levels of the forest during our picnic lunch along the Pipeline Road.

Dusky-capped Flycatcher (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) [PR; CA]: Individuals seen on a couple of occasions.

Lesser Kiskadee (*Philohydor lictor*) [G]: Small numbers seen late-afternoon at Gamboa.

Great Kiskadee (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) [G]: Small numbers seen late-afternoon at Gamboa.

Social Flycatcher (*Myiozetetes similis*) [G]: Family groups seen late-afternoon at Gamboa.

Streaked Flycatcher (*Myiodynastes maculatus*) [PR; G; CA]: Several individuals seen in a variety of open habitats.

Piratic Flycatcher (*Legatus leucophaeus*) * [PR; G; PC; CA]: Several individuals seen in a variety of habitats.

Tropical Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) [G; CA]: Several individuals seen in a variety of open habitats.

Southern Bentbill (*Oncostoma olivaceum*) * [PC; PR]: After considerable effort we finally tracked down one individual early-morning in the Parque Natural Metropolitana, where it moved through the mid- and upper-levels. Much better, eye-level views and photographs were obtained of another individual during our mid-afternoon visit to the start of the Pipeline Road.

Black-crowned Tityra (*Tityra inquisitor*) [G]: A pair seen late-afternoon in Gamboa.

Blue Cotinga (*Cotinga nattererii*) * [PR; CT]: Another key target species for the Parque Nacional Soberanía, we were fortunate enough to enjoy good views of four spectacular males in the company of two females on our early-morning visit to the canopy tower at the Discovery Center. On my final morning a lovely female landed in a *cecropia* next to the Canopy Tower and provided a close-up opportunity to admire and photograph her fine speckled pattern and the faint blue wash on her wings and back.

Purple-throated Fruitcrow (*Querula purpurata*) * [PR]: Noisy groups of two or more individuals were well seen on several occasions as they moved through the canopy of the forest. The best views were when they visited *cecropia* trees at the Discovery Center.

Golden-collared Manakin (*Manacus vitellinus*) [PR]: A male and female were well seen in the forest near to the start of the Pipeline Road, but proved to be too elusive to photograph.

White-ruffed Manakin (*Corapipo altera*) [CA]: A female was seen on our morning walk and a male was encountered just before we encountered the army ant swarm at Cerro Azul.

Blue-crowned Manakin (*Pipra coronata*) * [PR]: A couple of females were seen along the Pipeline Road and a male was very well seen near to the bridge at the Río Frijoles, although the light was poor as the clouds threatened afternoon rain.

Red-capped Manakin (*Pipra mentalis*) * [PR; CT]: Males had proven to be a nemesis bird both in Honduras and for most of this trip and it was not until my final morning on the Semaphore Hill access road to the Canopy Tower that Alexis finally found one whilst we were admiring a troop of Geoffroy's Tamarins. Earlier in the trip a couple of females were also seen along the Pipeline Road.

Tawny-crowned Greenlet (*Hylophilus ochraceiceps*) * [CA]: One of these attractive and uncommon greenlets flew in whilst we were watching the birds attending the arm ant swarm at Cerro Azul.

Golden-fronted Greenlet (*Hylophilus aurantifrons*) [PC]: One seen early-morning in the Parque Natural Metropolitana.

Lesser Greenlet (*Hylophilus decurtatus*) [PR]: A couple of individuals seen in mixed flocks.

Green Shrike-Vireo (*Vireolanus pulchellus*) [PR; PC, CT]: Another target bird that inhabits the forest upper storey that was heard on several occasions and well seen thanks, in particular, to the canopy overview provided by the tower at the Discovery Center.

Gray-breasted Martin (*Progne chalybea*) [G]: Common along the canal.

Black-bellied Wren (*Thryothorus fasciatoventris*) [PR; PC]: Particularly well seen in the undergrowth in the Parque Natural Metropolitana.

Rufous-breasted Wren (*Thryothorus rutilus*) [PC]: Seen noisily feeding in the undergrowth in the Parque Natural Metropolitana.

Rufous-and-white Wren (*Thryothorus rufalbus*) * [PC]: Two individuals seen busily building messy looking nests in the Parque Natural Metropolitana.

Plain Wren (*Thryothorus modestus*) [CA]: Seen as it called from a well hidden perch in a small bush during our first early-morning stop below Cerro Azul.

House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*) [CA]: Seen during our first early-morning stop below Cerro Azul.

Scaly-breasted Wren (*Microcerculus marginatus*) **heard only** [PR]: Heard on several occasions along the Pipeline Road.

Song Wren (*Cyphorhinus phaeocephalus*) **heard only** [PR; CA]: Heard on several occasions, most notably when we first arrived at the army ant swarm at Cerro Azul.

Tawny-faced Gnatwren (*Microbates cinereiventris*) [CA]: One individual was amongst the first birds identified when we arrived at the army ant swarm at Cerro Azul.

Long-billed Gnatwren (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*) [PR]: Individuals seen in mid-levels of the forest on a couple of occasions.

Tropical Gnatcatcher (*Poliophtila plumbea*) [PR; CA]: Pairs seen regularly as they worked through the mid- to upper-levels of the forest.

Pale-vented Thrush (*Turdus obsoletus*) [CA]: One of the few birds seen in the elfin forest of the Parque Nacional Chagres at the end of our morning walk at Cerro Azul towards the 'Xenornis Trail'. Approached close by in response to Alexis' calls.

Clay-colored Thrush (*Turdus grayi*) [PR; G; PC; CA]: Individuals seen regularly in a variety of habitats.

Tropical Mockingbird (*Mimus gilvus*) [G; PC]: Individuals seen on a couple of occasions in open habitat.

Black-and-yellow Tanager (*Chrysoblyps chrysomelas*) [CA]: A very attractive tanager that we found early-morning in our best mixed flock of the trip.

Rosy Thrush-Tanager (*Rhodinocichla rosea*) **beard only** [PC]: Heard calling from undergrowth in the Parque Natural Metropolitana.

Gray-headed Tanager (*Eucometis penicillata*) [PR]: Individuals seen on a couple of occasions along the Pipeline Road.

White-shouldered Tanager (*Tachyphonus luctuosus*) [PR; PC]: One of the more common tanagers in the forest, with both males and distinctively coloured females seen on several occasions.

Crimson-backed Tanager (*Ramphocelus dimidiatus*) * [G; PC; CA]: The most common tanager in open habitat. Very attractive in good light.

Flame-rumped Tanager (*Ramphocelus flammigerus*) [PR; G]: Individuals seen on several occasions in both forest and open habitat.

Blue-gray Tanager (*Thraupis episcopus*) * [CT; G; PC; CA]: Individuals and pairs seen regularly in a variety of habitats, including attending the *cecropias* at the Canopy Tower.

Palm Tanager (*Thraupis palmarum*) * [CT; G; PC; CA]: Individuals and pairs seen regularly in a variety of habitats. Almost omnipresent in the *cecropias* at the Canopy Tower.

Plain-colored Tanager (*Tangara inornata*) * [CT; PR; G]: Seen infrequently, with best views when attending the *cecropias* at the Canopy Tower.

Emerald Tanager (*Tangara florida*) [CA]: A very attractive tanager. We found a couple of individuals early-morning in the best mixed flock of the trip.

Speckled Tanager (*Tangara guttata*) [CA]: A couple of individuals found early-morning in the best mixed flock of the trip.

Bay-headed Tanager (*Tangara gyrola*) [CA]: A couple of individuals found early-morning in the best mixed flock of the trip.

Rufous-winged Tanager (*Tangara lavinia*) [CA]: One individual found early-morning in the best mixed flock of the trip, where its yellow hind-neck was a clear differentiator from the Bay-headed Tanagers also in the flock.

Golden-hooded Tanager (*Tangara larvata*) [CT]: Individuals and pairs seen regularly as they visited the *cecropia* trees around the Canopy Tower.

Blue Dacnis (*Dacnis cayana*) [PR; CT; PC]: Pairs and individuals seen regularly, principally from the various canopy lookouts.

Green Honeycreeper (*Chlorophanes spiza*) [CT; PR]: Pairs and individuals seen occasionally, principally from the various canopy lookouts.

Shining Honeycreeper (*Cyanerpes lucidus*) [CT]: My final lifer of the trip, when a male and four females perched early-morning in the canopy near to the Canopy Tower.

Red-legged Honeycreeper (*Cyanerpes cyaneus*) * [G; CA]: A male was very well seen when it perched and sang from a low branch in a garden at Cerro Azul.

Bananaquit (*Coereba flaveola*) [CA]: One individual seen early-morning in the best mixed flock of the trip.

Streaked Saltator (*Saltator striatipectus*) [G]: A couple of individuals seen in open habitat.

Buff-throated Saltator (*Saltator maximus*) [PC; PR]: A couple of individuals seen in a variety of habitats.

Blue-black Grassquit (*Volatina jacarina*) [G]: One male seen jumping around on a twig close to the 'Ammo Ponds' at Gamboa.

Variable Seedeater (*Sporophila corvina*) [G; CA]: Large numbers of males and females seen in open roadside habitat.

Yellow-bellied Seedeater (*Sporophila nigricollis*) [G]: Several males seen close to the ammo ponds at Gamboa.

Thick-billed Seed-Finch (*Oryzoborus junereus*) * [CA]: Two males seen calling from exposed perches alongside the 4WD track through the elfin forest.

Yellow-faced Grassquit (*Tiaris olivaceus*) * [CA]: Several males and females seen in a variety of habitats at Cerro Azul.

Black-striped Sparrow (*Arremonops conirostris*) * [PC]: One seen chasing an insect onto an open grassy area near to a forest patch in the Parque Natural Metropolitana.

Red-crowned Ant-Tanager (*Habia rubica*) * [PC]: Several males and females seen in a forest patch in the Parque Natural Metropolitana.

Red-throated Ant-Tanager (*Habia fuscicauda*) * [PR]: Several males and females heard and seen foraging low to the ground in the forest.

Carmioli's Tanager (*Chlorothraupis carmioli*) [CA]: Referred to by some as the 'Olive Tanager', a couple of individuals were seen early-morning in the best mixed flock of the trip.

Blue-black Grosbeak (*Cyanocompsa cyanooides*) [G; CA]: Pairs seen foraging close to the ground along the rails at the Discovery Center and also near to flowering *heliconias* on the lower slopes of Cerro Azul.

Shiny Cowbird (*Molothrus bonariensis*) [PC]: One seen at the roadside as we drove via Panama City towards Cerro Azul.

Great-tailed Grackle (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) [G; PC]: Common in open and urban habitat throughout the Canal Zone.

Yellow-backed Oriole (*Icterus chrysater*) **beard only** [PC]: Heard calling from a Parque Natural Metropolitana forest patch.

Yellow-tailed Oriole (*Icterus mesomelas*) [G]: One seen during our late-afternoon visit to Gamboa.

Scarlet-rumped Cacique (*Cacicus uropygialis*) * [PR; CT]: Seen each day in the Canal Zone, both in forest and forest edge habitat. Nests at the Canopy Tower had been recently abandoned, but we saw more nest building activity close to the start of the Pipeline Road.

Yellow-rumped Cacique (*Cacicus cela*) [G]: One seen during our late-afternoon visit to Gamboa.

Chestnut-headed Oropendola (*Psarocolius wagleri*) [CT; G]: Small flocks seen on a few occasions, principally from the Canopy Tower roof.

Thick-billed Euphonia (*Euphonia lanirostris*) [CA]: A pair seen in a garden at Cerro Azul.

Fulvous-vented Euphonia (*Euphonia fulvicrissa*) [CT]: A pair and juvenile seen from the Canopy Tower roof.

White-vented Euphonia (*Euphonia minuta*) * [CA]: A pair and juvenile seen in the elfin forest at Cerro Azul.

Tawny-capped Euphonia (*Euphonia annae*) [CA]: A male seen in an excellent mixed flock at Cerro Azul.

Combined total: 194 (186 seen, 8 heard only), with 61 of these confirmed as “first time ever” species for DJS

2. Mammal Trip List

Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth (*Bradypus variegatus*) [CT]: One seen sleeping in a *cecropia* at the Canopy Tower.

Geoffroy's Tamarin (*Sanguinus geoffroyi*) * [CT]: Seen daily in the forest and around the Canopy Tower.

Panamanian (Western) Night Monkey (*Aotus zonalis*) * [PR]: Family group of 4 or 5 seen peering out from their day roost.

Mantled Howler (*Alouatta palliata*) * [CT; PR]: Seen and heard daily in the forest and around the Canopy Tower.

Central American Agouti (*Dasyprocta punctata*) * [G; PR; CT]: Seen on several occasions crossing open ground.

White-nosed Coati (*Nasua narica*) [G]: One seen crossing the road.

Kinkajou (*Potos flavus*) * [CT]: A single, late-evening visitor feeding on the *cecropia* next to the Canopy Tower.



Dawn vista from the Canopy Tower roof towards Panama City and the Panama Canal



Pipeline Road through Parque Nacional Soberanía; Elfin Forest in Parque Nacional Chagres (Cerro Azul)