

# **SOUTHERN ECUADOR LIFEBIRD TRIP REPORT**

**JANUARY 21 – FEBRUARY 9, 2022**

**JAN 21 - INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL DAY: WE ARRIVE IN GUAYAQUIL, ECUADOR AND TRANSFERRED TO OUR COMFORTABLE NEARBY HOTEL**

**DAY 1 - JAN 22 - WE BEGAN THE FIRST DAY OF OUR TOUR WITH BIRDING CERRO BLANCO & FINISHED WITH LAGUNA PARK AND THE OUTSKIRTS OF GUAYAQUIL. WE HIKE THE BEAUTIFUL CERRO BLANCO PROTECTED FOREST. WE SAW THE FIRST OF MANY PERUVIAN PYGMY-OWLS. WE SAW PAIRS OF HOOKED-BILLED KITES, CRANE HAWKS AND COLLARED FOREST-FALCONS. SOME OTHER GOOD BIRDS INCLUDED COLLARED ANTSHRIKE, STREAK-HEADED WOODCREEPER, SLATY-CAPPED AND YELLOW-OLIVE FLYCATCHERS, SNOWY-THROATED KINGBIRD, ONE-COLORED BECARD, CRIMSON-BREASTED FINCH, GRAY-AND-GOLD WARBLER AND THE STRIKING WHITE-TAILED JAYS TO NAME A FEW.**



**DAY 2 - JAN 23 - WE PACKED UP OUR BAGS AND BEGAN OUR TRAVELS TO THE ANDES HIGHLANDS. ON OUR WAY WE STOPPED TO BIRD IN THE DRY SCRUB & WETLANDS OF MANGLARES CHURUTE NATIONAL PARK WITH A SHORT WALK ON THE LA FLORA TRAIL. WE FOUND HORNED SCREAMER, WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAIL, CROAKING AND ECUADORIAN GROUND DOVES, COMMON POTOO, COCOI HERON AND PERUVIAN MEADOWLARK TO START THE DAY OFF RIGHT. AS WE HEADED UP INTO THE HIGHER ELEVATIONS WE ADDED BLUE-CHESTED HUMMINGBIRD, PLUMBEOUS KITE, COLLARED ARACARI, WEDGE-BILLED WOODPECKER, YELLOW TYRANNULET, YELLOW-THROATED AND ASHY THROATED CHLOROSPINGUS, BAY-HEADED AND GOLDEN TANAGERS TO THE LIST.**

**DAY 3 – JAN 24 - WE STARTED WITH AN EARLY MORNING RIDE TO THE YUNGUILLA RESERVE WHERE WE WERE REWARDED WITH GOOD LOOKS AT A PAIR OF THE ENDANGERED ENDEMIC PALE-HEADED BRUSHFINCHES. THIS SMALL RESERVE WAS CREATED BY THE JOCOTOCO FOUNDATION TO PROTECT THE LAST REMAINING HABITAT FOR THIS SPECIES. THERE WERE OTHER GREAT BIRDS IN THIS RESERVE INCLUDING SPECKLED HUMMINGBIRD, RAINBOW STARFRONTLET, PURPLE-COLLARED WOODSTAR, LINE-CHEEKED SPINETAILED, TURQUOISE JAY, GRAY-BROWED BRUSHFINCH, RUSSET-CROWNED WARBLER, GOLDEN GROSBEAK AND FAWN-BREASTED TANAGER. AFTER A WELL DESERVED HOT LUNCH AT THE BEAUTIFUL DOS CHORRERAS LODGE WE HEADED TO THE EL CAJAS NATIONAL PARK FOR A NICE HIKE AROUND THE LAKE WHERE WE FOUND YELLOW-BILLED PINTAIL, ANDEAN TEAL, ANDEAN DUCK, ANDEAN GUAN, SLATE-CLORED COOT, ANDEAN GULL, GRAY-BREASTED MOUNTAIN-TOUCAN, SCARLET-BELLIED MOUNTAIN TANAGER, CINEREOUS CONEBILL AND BLACK FLOWERPIERCER.**



**DAY 4 - JAN 25 - THE DAY BEGAN WITH AN EARLY MORNING BIRDING SESSION OF THE LOVELY LODGE GROUNDS WHICH PRODUCED OUR TARGET VIOLET-THROATED METALTAIL SEEN BELOW, AS WELL MANY OTHER HIGHLAND SPECIALTIES.**



**LATER WE HEADED DOWN THE ANDES SLOPE TOWARDS SARAGURO MAKING MULTIPLE STOPS FOR BIRDING ALONG THE WAY. BIRDS SEEN INCLUDED SHINING SUNBEAM, RAINBOW STARFRONTLET, PURPLE-THROATED SUNANGEL, GLOWING PUFFLEG, LACRIMOSE MOUNTAIN Tanager, SCARLET-BELLIED MOUNTAIN TANGER, MASKED FLOWERPIERCER, AZARA'S SPINETAIL, BROWN-BACKED CHAT-TYRANT AND CHIGUANCO THRUSH.**

**DAY 5 – JAN 26 - THIS MORNING WE AGAIN HEADED INTO THE HIGHLANDS, THIS TIME WE TOOK THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD TO CERRO ARCOS IN HOPES OF SEEING THE RECENTLY DISCOVERED & ENDEMIC BLUE-THROATED HILLSTAR. THE ROAD INTO THE PARK BECAME IMPASSABLE FOR OUR VAN SO WE HAD TO WALK ABOUT 5 MILES AT 12,000 FT ELEVATION IN LIGHT RAIN, BUT WE WERE REWARDED WITH NICE LOOKS OF THIS BEAUTIFUL HUMMINGBIRD. ALTHOUGH CONDITIONS WERE NOT GOOD FOR PHOTOGRAPHY, GRETCHEN SCHRAMM WAS ABLE TO GET A SHOT. THE HAPPY GROUP WALKED THE 5 MILES BACK TO THE VAN WITH MUCH ELATION!**



**DAY 6 – JAN 27 - THIS MORNING WAS FILLED WITH GOOD BIRDING ALONG THE ROAD TO THE ACANAMA TOWERS, BIRDS SEEN INCLUDED BUFF-WINGED STARFRONTLET, GREAT SAPPHIREWING, BLACK-CHESTED BUZZARD-EAGLE, BLACKISH TAPACULO, PEARLED TREERUNNER, WHITE-CRESTED ELAENIA, RUFOUS WREN, SPECTACLED REDSTART, GOLDEN-CROWNED TANAGER, BLUE-BACKED CONEBILL, BLUISH FLOWERPIERCER, AND BLACK-HEADED HEMISPINGUS.**

**DAY 7 – JAN 28 - THE AM WAS DEDICATED TO BIRDING THE BEAUTIFUL PODOCARPUS NATIONAL PARK AND IT PRODUCED MANY NICE SPECIES INCLUDING LITTLE SUNANGEL, TYRIAN AND VIRIDIAN METALTAILS, COLLARED INCA, WHITE-RUMPED HAWK, MASKED TROGON, STRONG-BILLED WOODCREEPER, GREEN-AND-BLACK FRUITEATER, BARRED FRUITEATER, RED-CRESTED COTINGA, BLACK-THROATED TODY-TYRANT, SLATY-BAK CHAT-TYRANT, MOUNTAIN WREN, GLOSSY-BLACK THRUSH, BLACK-CRESTED WARBLER, WHITE-SIDED FLOWERPIERCER AND OUR FIRST BEARDED GUAN**



**DAY 8 – JAN 29 - IN THE AM WE BIRDED THE HIGHLANDS OF CERRO TOLEDO AND HAD QUICK LOOKS AT OUR TARGET ENDEMIC NEBLINA METALTAIL. THE AFTERNOON WE TRANSFERRED TO TAPICHALACA WITH ROADSIDE BIRDING ALONG THE WAY IN THE TEMPERATE AND ELFIN FOREST. WE MADE OUR WAY TO THE BEAUTIFUL CASA SIMPSON LODGE WHICH IS PART OF THE JOCOTOCO FOUNDATION THAT PROTECTS BIRDS AND THEIR HABITAT IN SEVERAL IMPORTANT AREAS OF SOUTHERN ECUADOR. THIS LODGE HAS VERY ACTIVE HUMMINGBIRD FEEDERS WHERE WE SAW MANY AMETHYST-THROATED SUNANGELS, LITTLE SUNANGELS, AND FAWN-BREASTED BRILLIANTS. BELOW ARE PHOTOS OF A COLLARED INCA AND CHESTNUT-BREASTED CORONET.**



**DAY 9 – JAN 30 - THIS DAY WE HIKED/BIRDED THE THE TRAILS OF TAPICHALACA/CASA SIMPSON RESERVE. WE VISITED THE FEEDING STATION OF THE FAMOUS JOCOTOCO ANTPITTA. WE WERE GIVEN A WONDERFUL CLOSEUP SHOW BY THIS GORGEOUS ANTPITTA AS IT FED ON WORMS.**



**WE SAW MANY OTHER FANTASTIC BIRDS INCLUDING THESE BEAUTIFUL ENDEMIC GOLDEN-PLUMED PARAKEETS**



**AND THIS LOVELY RUFOUS-CROWNED TODY-FLYCATCHER ON THE TRAIL.**



**WE HAD GREAT LOOKS AT THIS EQUATORIAL ANTPITTA WITH ITS CHICK WHO CAME OUT ON THE TRAIL LOOKING FOR WORMS.**



**OTHER NOTABLE BIRDS SEEN WERE ORANGE-BANDED FLYCATCHER, CHESTNUT-CAPPED BRUSHFINCH, CITRINE WARBLER, HOODED MOUNTAIN TANAGER AND BLUE-AND-BLACK TANAGER.**

**DAY 10 & 11 – JAN 31/FEB 1 -WERE SPENT BIRDING THE TAPICHALACA AND VALLADOLID VICINITY. WE SAW MANY TARGETS INCLUDING: AMETHYST-THROATED SUNANGEL, STRONG-BILLED WOODCREEPER, UNDULATED ANTPITTA, STREAKED TUFTEDCHEEK, FLAMMULATED TREEHUNTER, PLAIN-TAILED WREN, LACRIMOSE MOUNTAIN-TANAGER, PLUSHCAP, YELLOW-BREASTED BRUSHFINCH, BARRED FRUITEATER, PEARLED TREERUNNER, WHITE-BROWED SPINETAIL, RUFOUS-HEADED PYGMY-TYRANT, CINNAMON FLYCATCHER, SMOKE COLORED PEWEE, SPECTACLED REDSTART, OLIVE FINCH.**



**WE WERE HAPPY TO SEE THE ABOVE BEAUTIFUL WHITE-THROATED SCREECH-OWL ON THE GROUNDS OF CASA SIMPSON LODGE.**

**DAY- 12-14, FEB 2-4- WE TRAVELED TO OUR NEXT JOCOTOCO LODGE, THE LOVELY URRACA LODGE ON THE JORUPE RESERVE. HERE WE SPEND VERY PRODUCTIVE DAYS BIRDING THE MULTIPLE TRAILS.**



**THE ABOVE PALE-BROWED TINAMOU WOULD COME TO THE FEEDERS AT THE LODGE! ALSO SEEN ON ONE THE TRAILS WAS THE STUNNING RED-BILLED SCYTHERBILL.**



**THIS BLACK-CRESTED TIT-TYRANT WAS A BIG TEASE BUT WE EVENTUALLY GOT GOOD LOOKS AT IT!**



**DAY 15-19, FEB 5-8- WE HEADED TO OUR LAST JOCOTOCO LODGE, THE FAMOUS UMBRELLABIRD LODGE ON THE BUENAVENTURA RESERVE. ALONG THE WAY WE TICKED OFF SOME TARGET SPECIES THAT HAD ELUDED US EARLIER IN THE TOUR, SUCH AS THIS UNIQUE COMB DUCK.**



**THE UMBRELLABIRD LODGE WAS A GREAT GRAND FINISH FOR THE TOUR! THE LODGE IS BEAUTIFUL AND THE BIRDS ARE AMAZING! THE BUENAVENTURA RESERVE IS RENOWNED FOR BEING ONE OF THE RICHEST IN BIRD DIVERSITY IN THE ECUADORIAN ANDES. IT PROTECTS A NARROW AREA OF CLOUD FOREST HABITAT ON THE WEST SLOPE OF THE ANDES. THE LODGE HAS AN UMBRELLABIRD LEK NEARBY AND HENCE THE NAME. WE TOOK THE HIKE DOWN THE MOUNTAIN TO SEE THE FAMOUS LONG-WATTLED UMBRELLABIRD AND WERE REWARDED WITH GOOD LOOKS AT A MALE.**



**WE SAW MANY OTHER GREAT BIRDS AT THIS LODGE AND RESERVE INCLUDING THE ENDANGERED EL ORO PARAKEETS, RUFUS-CHESTED TANAGER, GOLDEN-WINGED, CLUB-WINGED AND WHITE-BEARDED MANAKINS, GOLDEN-FACED TYRANNULET, BLACK-AND-WHITE OWL, CHOCO AND YELLOW-THROATED TOUCANS.**



**BERYL-SPANGLED TANAGER**



**GREEN HONEYCREEPER**

**WE ENDED UP WITH SEEING 441 SPECIES OF BIRDS ON THIS AMAZING SOUTHERN ECUADOR TOUR! WE SAW 42 SPECIES OF HUMMINGBIRDS! THE GROUP, OUR GUIDES, THE LODGES AND THE FOOD WERE ALL WONDERFUL!**





**OUR GROUP OF HAPPY BIRDERS ABOVE AND BELOW OUR MOST COMMON OWL OF THE TOUR, THE PERUVIAN PYGMY-OWL. WE SAW 16 OF THEM!**

