

# The Broadwing



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Montclair, NJ  
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## Message from the Editor January 2024

Dear Members and Friends,

Thank you to everyone who nominated a 2024 Bird of the Year. On page 2, you will find the winner.

Not having a December *Broadwing*, there was a lot to catch up on this month.

Virtual Bird Walks will resume in January. The theme will be “Cold.” As usual, the interpretation is in your hands.

I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season with an appropriate amount of toys and cookies.

Sandy

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**Next club meeting: Wednesday, January 10, 2024**  
**Virtual Bird Walk: Thursday, January 18, 2024**

# Montclair Bird Club

## 2024 Bird of the Year

### Limpkin

Linn. Trans. Vol. XII. Tab. 1. p. 24.



On his travels in the southeastern corner of North America, William Bartram encountered a strange bird, a bird so remarkable, in fact, that he “could not determine what genus of European birds” it might belong to. Bartram was forced to use the Creek name *ephouskyca*, “crying bird.” Even fifty years after Bartram’s return to Philadelphia, Benjamin Barton could add no more, in spite of several years of trying to obtain a specimen from native Americans. In 1815, however, he was able to publish a drawing of the bird, prepared and presented to him by William Bartram.

What neither Bartram nor Barton knew was that the bird we know as the limpkin had in fact been “discovered” by European naturalists in the early seventeenth century, in Brazil. The German traveler William Marcgrave described and illustrated the bird in detail in his *Natural History of Brazil*, published posthumously in 1648. Marcgrave added a piquant detail: the limpkin “has quite good meat, which I have often eaten.” Three hundred years later, it

remained a favorite of a certain class of gourmand; Roger Tory Peterson observed that “Florida ‘crackers’ still comment on the excellent favor of roast limpkin.” Nowadays, most limpkins, at least in their US range, manage to avoid the oven.

That range has exploded in the past three years. In 2022 alone, eleven states and provinces recorded their first occurrence of the species, and New Jersey was not far behind, with a single bird discovered in Monmouth County in November 2023. With global warming and the northward spread of apple snails, the species’ exclusive food, we can expect to see many more at our latitude in 2024.

Rick Wright



**This bird hasn't been seen in 38 years.  
Its song may help track it down.**



Scientists are eavesdropping on a South American forest in search of the purple-winged ground dove.

**Bioacoustics may help scientists find the long-missing purple-winged ground dove  
PAINTING BY PAULINE DE COURCELLES KNIP, 1811**

**By Meghie Rodrigues**

How do you look for an animal you don't even know exists anymore?

The last sighting of the purple-winged ground dove (*Paraclaravis geoffroyi*)—a small bamboo-loving dove native to the South American Atlantic Forest in Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay—was in 1985. But, researchers wondered, was it possible to capture the elusive bird's sound in the wild to find out if any individuals were left?

It's not an unheard-of idea. Scientists have used bioacoustics—a subfield of ecology that relies on sound to make environmental analyses—for everything from recording dolphins' communication patterns to studying bats from afar to avoid virus spillover from humans. With artificial intelligence, it is now possible to use large audio datasets to train algorithms to spot different animal sounds within the cacophony of a natural background. But the problem is that recordings of the purple-winged ground dove singing are as rare as the bird itself.

**The full story in *ScienceNews*: [Purple-winged ground dove.](#)**

**Migrant Trap**  
**by Æneas Faber**  
**X**

I arrived back at the shop just in time to help Dorothy close up. She looked, as usual, stunning, and no one could have guessed that she'd been in the field over twenty hours the day before. As I opened the door, she looked up, straight into the low evening sunlight, and smiled: first the friendly, public smile I had seen her so often bestow on customers, and usually to such profitable effect; then, her hands shading her eyes, that warmer smile mixed with feigned exasperation that, I suddenly realized, I had been looking forward to all afternoon. "Shoes, Andy, shoes! Our customers may be birders, but they still don't want to walk through whatever you've brought in with you from the sewage beds. Take off your boots and sit down; I'll just finish the cash drawer and you can tell me where you've been and what you've seen today."

Nothing as lovely as Do, that was certain. The harsh light still pouring through the shop windows softened as it struck her face and hair, and what had been the glare of sunset became the glow of a cool spring evening; for a moment it seemed as if Dorothy were herself the source of the light that surrounded her.

"One ten, twenty, thirty, forty, forty-two, forty-three, forty-four, forty-four fifty, forty-four fifty-five. A hundred back in the drawer, and the day's take comes to the princely sum of forty-four dollars and fifty-five cents. A Sibley, a used Peterson, ten Lavinia County ticklists. We're getting low on those; shall I ask Anne to print us up another lot? Andy?"

I suppose I was still standing there, entranced by Do, the light, the kingbirds beginning their evensong from the wire outside. Ticklists? "No, let's see if we can't get by until the next AOU supplement."

Somewhere deep in Faber and Co.'s back rooms was a very large box containing *one hundred thousand* county checklists, beautifully engraved on the creamiest of expensive creamy white paper, a deluxe edition designed by my father, in an uncharacteristically grand gesture, to commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Averno Bird Club. Unfortunately, that jubilee fell in May of 1973, just days before the taxonomic massacre that rendered every last card obsolete; to the end of his days, my father mourned the pigeon hawk and the myrtle warbler, and I remain firmly convinced that his death of a sudden heart attack on the very day that the AOU re-split the Baltimore oriole was no coincidence. "If we're lucky, they'll resurrect Shufeldt's junco and we can just break into the really old stock."

"Don't be sarcastic, Andy. How was your day? Were you out early? You must be exhausted."

"No, not really. I mean yes, I was up early, but I'm not all that tired. I ran into Tuck first thing, and we headed out towards Fordham about noon; Les's phalaropes were still there, a



couple of lingering golden-plover, pretty good birding all around. Then he dropped me off at Phoebe's." I thought I should break the sad news gently, but of course it turned out that Do already knew about Phoebe's illness, her prospects, and her worries, and she fell immediately into a business-like bustle when I told her what Phoebe had asked us to do.

"The appraisal will certainly take you more than an afternoon, Andy. Why don't you let me stay late this evening and get started on assembling the original receipts, and you can go straight to Phoebe's tomorrow morning."

"I'd really hoped that you might be able to come with me, Do. It won't hurt to close the shop for an afternoon, and between the two of us we should be able to get all of Phoebe's books catalogued in four or five hours."

"Maybe, but I still think it would make better sense for us to be working in parallel, me here and you there; we can meet back here at the shop afterwards and compile our results."

Afterwards? My father, a great theoretician—if perhaps somewhat less successful a practitioner—of efficiency, had always impressed on me the importance of making the best possible use of my time and resources, and it occurred to me now, solely in the interest of said efficiency, that perhaps we should put the finishing touches on Phoebe's report over dinner. Do locked the cash drawer in the back while I closed the shades, and I convinced her to meet me at 7 the next evening not at the store but at Agapornis, the new Greek restaurant on Main Street. Fortunately, Do is an efficiency fan, too.



*To be continued*

# New Montclair Bird Club Members 2023

## 2023

### January

Monica Cardoza                      Ridgewood, NJ  
Susan & Michael Monaghan      Montclair, NJ  
Anil & Seema Nerurkar            Wayne, NJ

### February

Karen Nickeson                      Edgewater, NJ

### March

Grace Friend                        Montclair, NJ  
Camille Gutmore                  Nutley, NJ  
Christie Morganstein              Randolph, NJ

### April

Hillary Leonard                      Montclair, NJ  
Kathrine McCaffery                Maplewood, NJ  
Kathy & Bob Wilson                Newton, NJ

### May

Michael Yellin                        Montclair, NJ  
Amanda & A. J. Tobia              Rockaway, NJ

### June

Vicki Seabrook                      New York, NY

### July

Michael Davenport                Succasunna, NJ  
Eileen Diaz                          Upper Montclair, NJ  
Victor Go                              Bloomfield, NJ  
Liz Hillyer  
Marc Holzapfel  
John Smallwood                      Randolph, NJ

### August

Eric Knies                            Clifton, NJ  
Diane Louie                         Madison, NJ  
Roland Straton                      Montclair, NJ  
Susan Sheldon                        Seattle, WA  
Peter Rosario  
Mary Conroy                         Montclair, NJ

### September

### October

Jimma Byrd                         TX

### November

Diane Holsinger                    VA  
Lauri Carlotti                        Belleville, NJ  
Lisa Kroop                          Berkely Heights, NJ

### December

Eva DeAngelis                      NJ

This list includes new members,  
returning members, and  
additions from our Friends  
roster.

## Field Trips

**Saturday, January 13, 9:30 am**  
**Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge**  
***A birder's meetup***  
**Snow date January 20**

Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge is a 7,000-acre refuge in suburban Morris County. It has a variety of habitats, including hardwood swamp, marsh, upland deciduous woods, fields, and open water, all of which support a wide diversity of bird life year-round. For January, eBird lists 106 species that have been seen at Great Swamp, including the American tree sparrow, rusty blackbird, and winter wren. We hope to see a variety of waterfowl, raptors, sparrows, and other passerines.

Meet at the Helen C. Fenske Visitor Center, 32 Pleasant Plains Road, Harding Township, NJ. Bring binoculars, a snack, and something to drink. Dress warmly.

Driving directions: [tinyurl.com/MBCGreatSwamp](https://tinyurl.com/MBCGreatSwamp).

If you plan to come, be sure to email [mbcoutings@gmail.com](mailto:mbcoutings@gmail.com) so that you can be notified of inclement weather or road closures.





**Friday, January 26 at 9:30 am**  
**Richard W. DeKorte Park**  
***A birder's meetup, in conjunction with Leaderless Walks***  
**Snow date January 27**

DeKorte Park features 3.5 miles of level paths through the Hackensack Meadowlands, past wetlands that host wintering waterfowl including canvasbacks, northern pintail, mergansers, and gadwall. Sparrows are often seen along the park's edges and in the Lyndhurst Nature Reserve, and if we're lucky, we may catch sight of northern harriers and other hawks hunting the slopes of the abandoned landfills. DeKorte is one of the birdier winter locations in the area; eBird lists 127 species recorded there in January over the past years.

Meet in the parking lot by the Meadowlands Environmental Center at 8:00 am. There is a porta-san there. We'll walk the trails around the Shorebird Pool, then from Lyndhurst Nature Reserve to Saw Mill Flats. If time allows, we'll drive to the AMVETS carillon to scan the Teal Pool and surrounding area. If any rarities have been reported, we'll try to find them. Expect cold and wind, so dress warmly. Bring binoculars and a scope if you have one, water, and a snack. We should finish by 1:00 pm.

Park map and brochure: [s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/njmc/pdfs/general/dekorte-trail-guide-11-2016-lr.pdf](https://s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/njmc/pdfs/general/dekorte-trail-guide-11-2016-lr.pdf)

Driving directions: [www.njsea.com/directions/](http://www.njsea.com/directions/)

From the Montclair area, take Route 3 east to the Polito Avenue / Orient Way exit. Continue straight onto Polito Avenue. At the stop sign, turn left onto Valley Brook Avenue. Follow Valley Brook approximately 1.5 miles to the end. Cross the railroad tracks and enter the park on your left. Bear right at the little guard house into the parking lot.

Write Beni at [mbcoutings@gmail.com](mailto:mbcoutings@gmail.com) for further information.



## Field Trip Reports

**Troy Meadows**  
**October 21, 2023**  
**by Evan Cutler**

Troy Meadows in Parsippany is one of those places you pass by on the highway going 65 mph and wonder if it might be any good for birding. In fact, if you live in northern New Jersey, odds are you've passed right by there hundreds of times over the years. Located between Routes 80 and 280, Troy Meadows is legendary for attracting a huge variety of rarities, as well as what we found on our latest visit—a dependable assortment of sparrows in mid-October.

The weather for our Montclair Bird Club field trip was less than ideal. After two days of steady rain, the heavy stuff drifted to the south, and when we arrived at 8:30 a.m., we were met with a manageable drizzle, which cleared up by the time we were done at 11:30. Our plan for the morning was to walk into the meadows at the end of Troy Meadow Road, across from the gas pipeline, where the road becomes impassible unless you have an ATV or a large truck or, in our case, a canoe. We were immediately met by dozens of song sparrows, followed by dozens of dozens (at least 144?) of yellow-rumped warblers. There was also one Lincoln's sparrow mixed in, along with a bunch of white-throated sparrows calling incessantly to one another. We guessed it was their form of breakfast conversation. A pileated woodpecker called in the distance, but even though we heard the bird several times throughout the morning, we were never lucky enough to see it.

As we headed east along the dirt road and into the meadows, dozens of yellow-rumped warblers seemed to follow our path. We continued to scare up sparrows—mostly song and white-throated—until we got to the end of the road, where we had to duck under a rope across the path (I'm guessing to keep vehicles from going any farther). It was here that we hit sparrow pay dirt, adding swamp, field, Savannah, and Lincoln to our list. We also scared up a kestrel, which turned out to be a merlin. At first glance, with its fanned tail and pointy wings, along with its small size, I assumed it had to be an American kestrel. But as soon as it landed in a tree we were able to see the dark striping and beefier shape of a merlin.

We finally hit a dead end at Troy Brook and decided to circle back, passing the beehives and getting another really good look at the merlin as it cruised past us at eye level. By this time, the rain had stopped and bird activity had slowed down. In the parking area, we added a few more species, bringing our total to 25. The weather sure looked iffy when we began, but it turned out to be a busy and fun morning of birding, with the rain hardly a factor at all. Troy Meadows really is a special place—even on a dark and soggy morning.

1. Wood duck	14. White-breasted nuthatch
2. Mallard	15. Carolina wren
3. Mourning dove	16. American robin
4. Red-bellied woodpecker	17. Field sparrow
5. Downy woodpecker	18. Dark-eyed junco
6. Hairy woodpecker	19. White-throated sparrow
7. Northern flicker	20. Savannah sparrow
8. Pileated woodpecker	21. Song sparrow
9. Merlin	22. Lincoln sparrow
10. Eastern phoebe	23. Swamp sparrow
11. Blue jay	24. Red-winged blackbird
12. Tufted titmouse	25. Yellow-rumped warbler
13. Ruby-crowned kinglet	



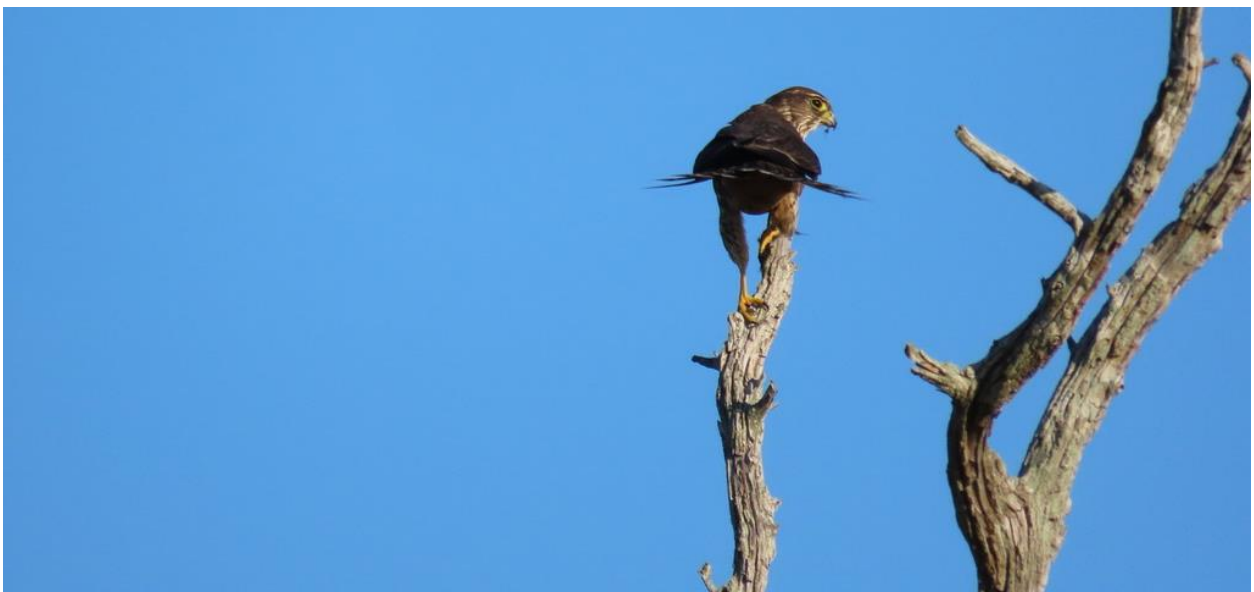
**Sandy Hook**  
**October 28, 2023**  
**by Alex Bernzweig**

After several days of southerly winds without any cold fronts to push down new birds, our group of ten birders kept our expectations for new migrants low. But there were still some great birds to be seen around the Hook.

Our first stop was the Spermaceti Cove boardwalk, to check for sparrows and shorebirds. We did not see many shorebirds because of the high tide, and Nelson and saltmarsh sparrows both eluded us, but we were treated to an excellent look at a merlin picking apart a small dragonfly in a dead tree right in front of us.

Our next stop was the very top of the Hook, Lot M, where we walked the long Fisherman's Trail to the northwestern corner. Our main target here was a long-continuing western flycatcher, a very rare bird for the state and a lifer for many. Getting eyes on the bird in its sumac grove required some patience, as it would sporadically dart out from the dense tangle, catch insects, and then hide again for long stretches; but eventually, everyone saw the bird, and a few of us also got photos. Other birds seen on the walk included multiple hermit thrushes, dozens of golden-crowned kinglets, eastern phoebes, and a calling winter wren.

By noon, it felt like we had taken a time machine back two months into the past, with temperatures in the mid-80s and crowds of people at every turn. After a lunch break, we returned to Spermaceti Cove to check for shorebirds while the tide was lower and more sandbars exposed. We had better luck this time, finding a single American golden plover in a flock of 90 black-bellied plovers, 25 red knots, and a few dunlin and sanderling. Watching a peregrine falcon fly overhead to chase the shorebird flock around the bay was a fitting finale to the day. We ended the trip with a total of 59 species.



Brant	Peregrine falcon
American black duck	Western flycatcher
Red-breasted merganser	Eastern phoebe
Red-throated loon	American crow
Rock pigeon	Common raven
Mourning dove	Black-capped chickadee
American oystercatcher	Ruby-crowned kinglet
Black-bellied plover	Golden-crowned kinglet
American golden plover	Winter wren
Red knot	Carolina wren
Sanderling	European starling
Dunlin	Gray catbird
Herring gull	Northern mockingbird
Laughing gull	Hermit thrush
Great black-backed gull	American robin
Forster Tern	Cedar waxwing
Royal Tern	House sparrow
Double-crested cormorant	House finch
Great egret	American goldfinch
Great blue heron	Chipping sparrow
Turkey vulture	Field sparrow
Black vulture	Swamp sparrow
Osprey	Dark-eyed junco
Northern harrier	White-throated sparrow
Cooper hawk	Song sparrow
Red-tailed hawk	Red-winged blackbird
Downy woodpecker	Yellow-rumped warbler
Northern flicker	Pine warbler
Yellow-bellied sapsucker	Northern cardinal
Merlin	

**November 4, 2023**  
**Bee Meadow Park/Brickyard Field**  
**Hanover, New Jersey**

This 89-acre town park was a new birding location for most of us. The park’s facilities include a small football field, a swimming pool, a historic brick kiln, and acres of ponds, open wetlands, and woodlands. Despite the racket of multiple leaf mowers, massive numbers of robins (we estimated 90 individuals) and cedar waxwings were busy devouring the berries of the invasive honeysuckle and bittersweet.

We spotted a raven in a nearby tree, tossing leaves out of a squirrel’s drey (nest: thank you, Janet, for this new term). It flew off with a small pink mass in its beak. No adult squirrel sounded an alarm. Perhaps the red-tailed hawk we saw farther down the trail had had its own squirrel breakfast?

31 species of birds and 1 additional taxon were seen or heard:

Canada goose	Tufted titmouse
Mute swan	White-breasted nuthatch
Mallard	Ruby-crowned kinglet
American black duck	European starling
Mourning dove	Northern mockingbird
Black vulture	Hermit thrush
Turkey vulture	American robin
Red-tailed hawk	Cedar waxwing
Belted kingfisher	House finch
Red-bellied woodpecker	Chipping sparrow
Downy woodpecker	Dark-eyed junco
Eastern phoebe	White-throated sparrow
Blue jay	Song sparrow
Crow sp.	Red-winged blackbird
Common raven	Common grackle
Black-capped chickadee	Northern cardinal



## Mill Creek Marsh Photo Trip November 11, 2023

Canada goose	7	Marsh wren	1
Mallard	10	European starling	X
Green-winged teal	200	Northern mockingbird	6
Rock pigeon (feral pigeon)	10	Hermit thrush	1
Mourning dove	6	American robin	4
Greater yellowlegs	1	Cedar waxwing	10
Ring-billed gull	X	House sparrow	X
Herring gull	X	House finch	20
Double-crested cormorant	12	American goldfinch	5
Great blue heron	2	Fox sparrow	1
Northern harrier	2	White-throated sparrow	10
Red-tailed hawk	1	Savannah sparrow	1
Belted kingfisher	1	Song sparrow	20
Yellow-bellied sapsucker	1	Swamp sparrow	8
Downy woodpecker	3	Red-winged blackbird	100
Northern flicker	1	Yellow-rumped warbler	4
American crow	2	Northern cardinal	2
Ruby-crowned kinglet	1		

We had hoped that good sunlight and low tides would welcome us to the Mill Creek Marsh Photo Walk. The tide was high and going out, and the sun was photographically ideal, positioned over our shoulders for most of the walk. The morning drive at sunrise, going east on Route 3, was a little difficult, as it attempted to blind all the drivers heading to New York and maybe a few going to the marsh. But we all made it, and no one spent an inordinate amount of time lost on the turnpike after missing the mall exit. Nine of us, eight with cameras, arrived shortly before the scheduled start of 8:00 am.

Hardly had we started along the marsh path when we saw the first green-winged teal. The estimate of 200 teal for the day is on target, but quite a bit lower than the hundreds seen later in the year. The group progressed to the “magic” locust tree, where the path curves to the right shortly after the marsh entrance. In short order, house finches, a purple finch, and a goldfinch made appearances in the tree. Yellow-rumped warblers were in the trees across from the locust, and a hermit thrush meandered back and forth across the path.

Not much farther along the trail, we saw a bright red circle perched in a juniper tree. It was a newly emerged red admiral with beautiful colors and perfect wings. Continuing, we followed the 1.25-mile trail around the marsh. Ring-billed and herring gulls were plentiful, and sparrows



popped up periodically. Raptors were limited to two northern harriers and one red-tailed hawk. Two great blue herons were seen by the water, and a belted kingfisher was heard.

The total of 35 species is a respectable number for a chilly day in November. The light was excellent if you were shooting to the west, and the pictures from the day turned out quite well. Four hours later we were back at the entrance; it was much warmer than our cold start. And we then did what birders do: we went to lunch.





## The North Shore and Allentown December 5, 2023

The mere thought of a December visit to New Jersey's North Shore is enough to make me shiver. This time, though, the doughty three of us, assembled at the end of Broadway in Point Pleasant Beach, found ourselves birding beneath bright blue skies, the seas calm and the air—by seasonal standards, at least—warm. Standing on the jetty, often enough a brutal test of wind and will, was downright pleasant, and made all the more so by the hordes of northern gannets and Atlantic brant passing by on their way south. Common loons were numerous, and dark-winged scoters were continuously in sight, almost all of them too far out on the hazy horizon for species-level identification. The “big three” winter gulls were joined by good numbers of lingering laughing gulls, while two or three adult Bonaparte gulls picked and flitted at the mouth of the inlet.

Suspecting that we had seen most of what there was to see, we made the quick drive south to Old Sam's Pond, now known formally as Lake of the Lilies (just in case there weren't already enough lily-named lakes in New Jersey). American wigeon and ruddy ducks were common and often close enough for good photographs. Most impressive was the flock of hooded mergansers, more than seventy birds actively feeding in a tight flock.

Rumors of rarities drew us west. The Allentown ponds were singularly unexciting, but acting on a kind, if muddled, tip from a local, we drove into town to check through the geese on the mill pond. Lots and lots of geese, but no Old World strays in the hour or so we spent scoping the flock. Divertisement was provided by a few other waterfowl species—hooded mergansers, ruddy ducks, mallards, American black ducks, ring-necked ducks—and, especially, by two bellicose belted kingfishers, noisily chasing each other around the lake, pausing to perch on nearby sticks, and at times driving each other into the water, where they bobbed for a moment like shaggy-headed penguins before resuming their aerobatics.

All in all, it was a splendid “opening day” for the coastal birding season, and I look forward to seeing more of us out on the North Shore as the winter sets in in earnest.

Rick Wright, ventbird.com

*Forty-eight species tallied by three observers*

Brant	Great black-backed gull
Canada goose	Common loon
Mute swan	Red-throated loon
American wigeon	Northern gannet
Mallard	Great cormorant
American black duck	Double-crested cormorant
Northern pintail	Great blue heron
Ring-necked duck	Great egret
Lesser scaup	Black vulture
Surf scoter	Turkey vulture
Black scoter	Sharp-shinned hawk
Long-tailed duck	Bald eagle
Bufflehead	Red-tailed hawk
Hooded merganser	Belted kingfisher
Red-breasted merganser	Northern flicker
Ruddy duck	American kestrel
Pied-billed grebe	Blue jay
Feral pigeon	Northern mockingbird
Mourning dove	European starling
American coot	American robin
Bonaparte gull	House sparrow
Laughing gull	House finch
Ring-billed gull	Song sparrow
Herring gull	Boat-tailed grackle



**Fall at Panama's Canopy Tower**  
**October 21–28, 2023**

**with Rick Wright and Igua Jimenez**



The view from the Canopy Tower. Photo Rick Wright

There is no bad time to bird the American tropics, but late fall brings with it the peculiar pleasure of watching many of what we think of as “our” birds consorting with outlandishly colorful tropical specialties. Eastern Wood-Pewees, Bay-breasted Warblers, and Swainson’s Thrushes—in descending order of apparent abundance—we had with us always, often enough sharing the same tree with a Blue Dacnis, a pair of Green Honeycreepers, or a gang of noisy Brown-hooded Parrots. Looking up, we could never know whether to expect a curious Yellow-headed Caracara or a pulse of hundreds of southbound Swainson’s Hawks; out in the marshes, Green Herons and Purple Gallinules rubbed shoulders with Wattled Jacanas and sneaky White-throated Crakes. Great Crested Flycatchers and Social Flycatchers, Barn Swallows and Mangrove Swallows, Great Blue Herons and Cocoi Herons were just some of the unusual feathered constellations we enjoyed over what felt like too far short a week at the Canopy Tower.

Our visit began in Panama City, with staggered arrivals October 20 from different US airports. Most of us gathered the next morning, October 21, for breakfast and the 45-minute transfer to the Tower, where we arrived with plenty of time to settle in and get to know some of the local birds

before our first delicious lunch. The feeders were busy with dazzlingly colorful hummingbirds (and more subtle but equally appealing hermits of two species), and the heavily fruiting melastome in the parking lot drew a steady parade of tanagers, warblers, and dacnises. After lunch, we had our first outing with Igua, whose skilled eyes and ears quickly had us enjoying birds ranging from the big, brash Cinnamon Woodpecker to the discreet and lovely Velvety Manakin. Rain began to fall just as we returned to the Tower, a relaxing backdrop to our first checklist session and dinner together.



The Canopy Tower deck. Photo Rick Wright

Next morning, October 22, our numbers complete with the arrival of the last two of our party, we began with one of the most remarkable experiences in American birding: the early morning parade of canopy specialists past the decks of the Canopy Tower. As soon as the sun illuminated the treetops, new bird followed new bird almost without cease—not just new species, but for many of us new families in the form of toucans, puffbirds, and most impressive of all, cotingas. Even those of us who had seen the Blue Cotinga before were nearly bowled over (a dangerous state atop the tower) by the appearance first of a glowing adult male, followed by a speckled immature male, followed by a demurely attractive female, all of them at virtually arm's reach just off the Tower deck. This, it was clear, would be a hard morning to follow.



Panama Rainforest Discovery Center tower. Photo Rick Wright

Follow it, though, we did, with an afternoon visit to the nearby Ammo Dump Ponds, where we were welcomed by an unusual number of unusually confiding Rufescent Tiger Herons, a fine female Black-throated Mango, and maddeningly noisy, maddeningly invisible White-throated Crakes. A spectacular male Barred Antshrike inspected us with crazy white eyes, and our first Southern Rough-winged Swallows perched on the razor wire surrounding one of the ponds. It was here, too, that we saw our first Lesser Kiskadee and Yellow-rumped Caciques, while flocks of migrant raptors passed overhead.

Already the days felt like they were speeding away. After another early morning lookout from the Tower deck on October 23, we set off for the first of two visits to the world-famous Pipeline Road. Built to service an oil pipeline that was never used, this 10-mile-long track takes birders deep into some of the finest accessible rainforest anywhere, and we took full advantage of the day, enjoying snacks and lunch in the field lest we waste time driving back and forth. Four species of trogons, two motmots, and three puffbirds left no doubt as to where we were.



Green Iguana. Photo Rick Wright

We started out the next morning, October 24, with a repeat visit to the Ammo Dump Ponds, where the rare crakes were just as noisy and just as stubborn in declining to show themselves to eager eyes. Another walk along Pipeline Road, this time covering the mile and a half from the beginning of the road to the Rainforest Discovery Center. It was a good hawk morning, with a few tardy Broad-winged Hawks among the hundreds of Swainson's migrating overhead. Fine views of a pair of Bright-rumped Attilas were outdone only by a pair of countersinging Song Wrens, one of which perched up in plain view to utter its otherworldly whistles. Even those beauties, though, were overshadowed by two of the rarest birds we would see on our trip, a Green-and-rufous Kingfisher (only the second I had ever seen) and a Speckled Mourner (a "leader lifer"). The aptly named Great Potoo discovered by Alex at the end of the day was almost too much, our minds and memories filled with so many new experiences and impressions from our two visits to one of the best-known birding roads in the world.

That afternoon was the only time that the weather interfered with our activities. Rain began just as we arrived back at the Tower for lunch, and all predictions to the contrary, it not only persisted but grew heavier for the next two hours. The break wasn't entirely unwelcome as we caught up with our notes or took a quick nap, and as soon as the rain stopped, we were back out on the Tower deck for some relaxed birding on what had turned into a refreshingly cool late afternoon.





Crimson-crested Woodpecker. Photo Rick Wright

October 25 found us all enjoying the continuing pleasant weather on a small boat on Lake Gatun. Limpkins, Snail Kites, and a nice variety of long-legged waders recalled an especially good day in Florida, but Cocoi and Striated Herons and Greater Anis left us in no doubt that we were a good bit farther south than that. The clear highlight of a very exciting trip was the amazing sight of a light-morph adult Collared Forest Falcon flashing across a narrow channel, landing very briefly in the low marsh vegetation before moving on into the forest. We would hear this species and the smaller Slaty-backed Forest Falcon a number of times, but to get even the most fleeting glimpse of this large, boldly patterned jungle raptor was a genuine thrill.



Violet-bellied Hummingbird. Photo Rick Wright

After another fine lunch at the Tower, we paid a visit to the bird-rich Gamboa Forest Reserve, where we met up with several species we had not seen before. A Rufous-tailed Hummingbird fed in the flowering mimosas, and Flame-rumped Tanagers, of the yellow-marked population formerly known as the Sulphur-rumped Tanager, explored the greenhouse plants. A gentle-looking Cinnamon Becard checked us out as we crossed into the forest, where we ran across several antbirds, including the gorgeous White-bellied and the dapper little Spotted. For the second time, we heard, and one member of our group was so fortunate as to see, the rare and highly sought-after Rosy Thrush-Tanager—but we would have much better luck with that species a couple of days on.



Long-billed Hermit. Photo Rick Wright

Most of our days began at a relatively humane hour, but we rose earlier on October 26 to be atop the Rainforest Discovery Center's tower before the day grew too warm. The view 177 steps above the forest floor was, in the sense those of my generation still recall, awesome, and would have been so even had there not been so many fine birds to see in the canopy. Three species of toucans were in the treetops, and one of them, a fine Collared Aracari, interrupted the work of a nearby pair of Crimson-crested Woodpeckers to inspect, a bit sinisterly, the cavity they were excavating. A Crane Hawk, neither common nor invariably easy to see in the region, warmed itself in the morning light before flying past the tower where we watched. Scaled Pigeons and Blue-headed Parrots, with their distinctively strong, deep wingbeats, were also aloft that morning, and a Piratic Flycatcher haunted the treetops before setting off on its migration. What was perhaps the best bird of the day, though, drew our attention on the entrance road. We had heard Streak-chested Antpittas earlier on Pipeline Road, but this time the singer allowed itself to be seen, and we all had excellent views of this sweet-faced hermit of the jungle floor as it moved from song perch to song perch, seemingly undisturbed by our presence.

We selected that evening for a drive down Semaphore Hill Road and out the highway in the direction of Gamboa. Nocturnal birds were scarce, a loudly begging but invisible Mottled Owl and a young Boat-billed Heron feeding on a rain pool. The mammal show was excellent, however, topped by a large Rothschild's Porcupine moving through the trees high above the road.



Metropolitan Nature Park. Photo Rick Wright

We were up early again the next morning, October 27, our last full day of birding together. First light found us in Panama City's Metropolitan Nature Park, one of the most impressively and beautifully wild places preserved in any city anywhere. Some of the birds we enjoyed here were already familiar from our preceding outings, but we also had excellent luck in finding and watching Lance-tailed Manakins, an Olivaceous Woodcreeper, Brown-chested Jays, and a pair of Rufous-and-white Wrens, species we saw nowhere else during our tour. We also watched a fine Northern Tamandua feeding in the treetops; of all the "good spots" made during the trip, from carefully concealed trogons to camouflaged caimans, this one would rank nearly as high as the captivating little arboreal anteater was in the dense canopy.



Red-capped Manakin. Photo Rick Wright

There was some concern that Friday road closures might trap us in Panama City, so we tore ourselves away from this paradisaic slice of wilderness for the quick drive back to the Tower. The timing was beyond reproach: not only did we avoid any traffic problems, but it was just as we sat down to a final lunch at the Tower that the skies opened, the thunder roared, and the rain poured down for the better part of an hour. Miserable as it would have been for us to be in the field, the storm simply added to the pleasure of our planned break, and it was over by the time we set out again for the Gamboa Botanical Garden.



Crested Caracara. Photo Rick Wright

Most of the time, the last afternoon of a tour tends to the wistful. Not in Panama, though, as we continued to add new species and better looks to our already overflowing checklists. Another brief shower was the chance to watch—dry beneath the porch roof of one of the buildings—a Greenish Elaenia, a Crested Caracara, and numbers of the other birds we had not just seen but, in a measure, got to know over the days before.

A final moment of ornithodrama was provided by two Great Black Hawks, an adult and a ravenous immature bird. The adult, obviously having had experience with humans before, quickly vanished into the forest edge, but the young bird had found a caecilian, one of those weird, worm-like amphibians of the tropics, and we watched for many minutes as it fussed and tore at the slippery creature. Finally it managed to rip its prey into manageable pieces (“dismember” would not be quite the right word for a caecilian), and we turned to leave as full of the experience as the hawk was.

*Victor Emanuel Nature Tours offers a full program of Panama tours: [ventbird.com](http://ventbird.com)*

**October 21:** transfer to Canopy Tower, arriving 10:00 am. Humid, warm, occasional light sprinkles. Feeder watching and parking lot birding until 12:30 pm. Lunch at Tower. Feeder watching, followed by Semaphore Hill Road 3:00–4:45. Humid, warm, pleasant breeze, followed by sprinkles and then steady rain beginning at 5:00 pm. Checklist at 6:30, dinner at Tower 7:00 pm. Rain stopped about 8:00, noticeable clearing, nice south breeze.

**October 22:** Tower deck 6:00–7:35 am, breakfast 7:35–8:00. Humid, warm, mostly clear, fog in the valleys, light breeze. Assembly at 8:30 for walk down Semaphore Hill Road; back at

Tower at 12:10 pm. Humid, warm, partly to mostly cloudy, not much of a breeze. Lunch at 12:30 followed by break until 3:00 pm. Ammo Dump Ponds 3:20–5:30 pm; warm, humid, nice breeze, partly cloudy. At Tower 5:50 pm, checklist and drinks at 6:30 followed by supper. Night walk down Semaphore Hill 8:00–8:50; high overcast, beautiful quarter moon.

**October 23:** Tower deck 6:00–6:30 am. Breakfast, then departure at 7:15 for Pipeline Road. Humid, warm, mostly clear, light breeze. Pipeline Road 7:50 am to 3:45 pm; clear to mostly cloudy, with a brief sprinkle. Mid-morning snack and lunch in the field. At Tower 4:25 pm. Mostly clear, calm. Checklist and drinks at 6:30 followed by supper at 7:00 pm.

**October 24:** Tower deck 6:00–6:20 am; clouds followed by fog followed by mist followed by rain. Breakfast then 7:20 am departure for Ammo Dump Ponds; clear, bright, light breeze. Ammo Dump Ponds 7:40–8:10 am. Pipeline Road 8:15 am to 12:25 pm; clear, then partly cloudy, then cloudy as we left. Lunch at Tower 1:00 pm; rain. Break at Tower, followed by some birding on the deck, checklist, and supper.

**October 25:** Tower deck 6:00–7:05 am; partly cloudy, fog below, relatively cool, pleasant breeze. Breakfast. Departure for Lake Gatun boat tour 7:45 am. Lake Gatun and a small stretch of the canal 8:20–11:55 am. Mostly cloudy, pleasant out on the water. Lunch at Tower. Leave Tower 3:05 pm. Gamboa Resort grounds 3:25–5:45 pm. Cloudy, humid, occasional very light sprinkles. At hotel 6:05 pm. Checklist and dinner 6:30–7:45 pm.

**October 26:** breakfast at Tower at 5:30, departure at 6:30 am for Rainforest Discovery Center. Clear, with heavy fog below. Rainforest Discovery Center (RFDC) and tower 7:15–11:45 am. Mostly clear, calm. Back at Canopy Tower 12:20 pm. Lunch at Tower; cloudy, thunder, light rain turning to very heavy rain with wind before 2:00 pm. Heavy rain continued until 3:00, tapering off to drizzle and finally coming more or less to an end just before 4:00 pm. Afternoon free time. Checklist and dinner 6:30 pm. Night drive 7:50–9:25 pm; cooler, cloudy and lightly foggy, lots of rain drips.

**October 27:** breakfast at Tower at 4:45, departure 5:30 am. Pleasantly cool, clear and starry. Metropolitan Natural Park 6:20–11:40 am. Clear, followed by high overcast. Light rain on the drive back to the Tower, where we arrived at 12:20 pm. Lunch; heavy rain for half an hour, followed by partly cloudy skies. Thunder beginning about 2:15 pm. Clear on our departure at 3:00 pm. Wilson Botanical Garden 3:20–5:40 pm; cloudy, with a short period of heavy drizzle about 4:00. At Tower 5:55 pm. Checklist and dinner 6:30–8:10. Heavy, steady rain beginning at 8:30 pm, with thunder and lightning.

**October 28:** breakfast at 4:30 am, clear and calm; departure for Tocumen airport 5:00 am. Tour ends at airport at 5:55 am.

## BIRDS

### TINAMOUS—TINAMIDAE

**Great Tinamou, *Tinamus major*:** Among the most secretive of tropical forest birds, Great Tinamous were heard from the Tower October 22 both morning and evening. Very close and loud from the Tower October 25. As we left the Tower early in the morning of October 26, three of this chicken-like forest dwellers got sloppy and crossed the road (why . . . ?), giving us lingering views before the somber-plumed birds vanished into the undergrowth.

**Little Tinamou, *Crypturellus soui*:** several heard at Gamboa Resort October 25. Even harder to see than the Great Tinamou, these tiny forest-dwellers have a higher-pitched, more urgent song of slightly ascending, accelerando whistles.

#### WATERFOWL—ANATIDAE

**Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, *Dendrocygna autumnalis*:** fifteen or so at Ammo Dump Ponds October 24, flying and perching at close range. Two dozen at Lake Gatun October 25. Twenty or so at Ammo Dump Ponds as we drove by October 26. Several along our route to Metropolitan Park October 27. This species has increased greatly throughout its range, and is pushing inexorably north in the US, now breeding as far north as the northern Great Plains.

**Blue-winged Teal, *Spatula discors*:** fifty or more on Lake Gatun October 25. Cinnamon Teal are also present in Panama in very low numbers.

#### GUANS—CRACIDAE

**Gray-headed Chachalaca, *Ortalis cinereiceps*:** about four at Botanical Garden October 27. The cracids—guans and curassows—include some of the most dramatically imperiled birds in the New World, but a few chachalaca species, including this one, appear to be holding their own in tropical forests. Like tinamous, chachalacas tend to be more distinctive in voice than in plumage, but unlike tinamous, their calls and songs are ear-splitting rackets of croaks and quacks, often given in chorus in the tropical dawn.

#### PIGEONS—COLUMBIDAE

**Rock Pigeon, *Columba livia*:** one as we left Panama City. Feral pigeons and their descendents are far less common in the tropics than they are in cities of the temperate zones.

**Pale-vented Pigeon, *Patagioenas cayennensis*:** a dozen flyovers at the Ammo Dump Ponds October 22; about four there October 24. Two flybys from the Tower October 25. A perched individual giving good views at Botanical Garden October 27. This is the common large pigeon of the Central American lowlands, often heard (“don’t hit the foul”—or is it “fowl”?) and frequently seen flying to and from the roost, but good looks at perched birds are infrequent.

**Scaled Pigeon, *Patagioenas speciosa*:** three distant perched birds from the Tower October 22. A perched individual and half a dozen in flight at RFDC October 26. Unlike the Pale-vented, this very large pigeon is closely bound to forest habitats, where it prefers the tallest, densest vegetation.

**Ruddy Ground Dove, *Columbina talpacoti*:** several in Panama City and on the road out. At least four at Gamboa Resort October 25. One in Gamboa October 26. Ruddy Ground Doves are far brighter in the southern parts of their range than in the north, and the bright birds of Panama are a pleasant shock to those of us more familiar with the paler, grayer doves occasionally seen in the southwestern US.



**White-tipped Dove, *Leptotila verreauxi***: one flew across the road at the Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. Heard at Lake Gatun October 25. Very well seen at Gamboa Resort October 25. This retiring pigeon is quite common throughout its very extensive tropical American range, but is far less frequently seen than is heard its low-pitched, hollow song.

**Gray-chested dove, *Leptotila cassinii***: one seen well by a couple of us on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. Widespread but relatively uncommon in humid Central American lowlands.

#### CUCKOOS—CUCULIDAE

**Greater Ani, *Crotophaga major***: fifteen, including one group of 13, at Lake Gatun October 25. These huge, floppy cuckoos have one of the most complicated breeding systems of any American species, the females in a colony often laying eggs in each other's nests. See

**Smooth-billed Ani, *Crotophaga ani***: a dozen or more at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22, with a few drive-by birds there October 23 and 26. Three or four at Lake Gatun October 25.

**Squirrel Cuckoo, *Piaya cayana***: one heard on Semaphore Hill Walk October 21; one seen from the Tower October 22, and another heard on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. One seen from the Tower and one seen on Pipeline Road October 23. Excellent views of two, one carrying a large katydid, from the Tower October 25. A couple at RFDC October 26, and several at Metropolitan Park October 27. Its attenuated shape, rufous plumage, and scansorial habits make this an unusually well-named bird.

#### POTOOS—NYCTIBIIDAE

**Great Potoo, *Nyctibius grandis***: on at roost in a tall tree on Pipeline Road October 23. Grayer and much larger than the Common and Northern Potoos, Great Potoos are said to still be an object of superstition when their ghostly shapes are seen flying around at night or their otherworldly calls echo from the forest edge.

#### SWIFTS—APODIDAE

**Chimney Swift, *Chaetura pelagica***: a few dozen in flocks around the Tower October 21. Similar numbers October 22. A few here and there October 25. Scores over RFDC October 26. Common October 27. Not until the 1940s was the wintering range of this familiar species discovered, far to the south in Peru.

**Short-tailed Swift, *Chaetura brachyura***: several over Botanical Garden October 27. The identification of *Chaetura* swifts remains a significant challenge to the birder, but this species typically shows a “pinched-in” inner wing, unlike the more evenly sickle-shaped wings of some of its congeners.

**Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift, *Panyptila cayennensis***: one over Semaphore Hill Road October 22, seen only by the leader. A nest discovered by Igua on Pipeline Road October 24 was unoccupied, as was apparently one at RFDC October 26. Igua tells us that these nests are

eagerly collected for use in the production of love charms, a practice presumably related to the similar use of hummingbird skins in Mexico.

## HUMMINGBIRDS—TROCHILIDAE

**White-necked Jacobin, *Florisuga mellivora*:** several of these shockingly big and beautiful hummingbirds at the Tower feeders October 21 and October 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27; multiple individuals at RFDC October 26. The English name refers to the male's hood, resembling the cowl, apparently, of a Jacobin friar. An interesting recent discovery is that not all male-plumaged birds of this species are in fact males; a percentage of females of all ages wear the same plumage. See [nature.com/articles/d41586-022-02789-3](https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-022-02789-3).

**Long-billed Hermit, *Phaethornis longirostris*:** at least one regularly visiting the Tower feeders October 21 and 22, 23, 25, 27, and at RFDC October 26. This is one of the few hermit species to accept sugar water, most others preferring to spend all their time in the forest, where they build their nests on the undersides of large leaves.

**Stripe-throated Hermit, *Phaethornis strigularis*:** at least one regularly visiting the Tower feeders October 21 and 22, 23, 25, 27. This very tiny species is often difficult to see when it feeds from flowers in the jungle, but like the Long-billed, Stripe-throated Hermits eagerly take advantage of feeders.

**Black-throated Mango, *Anthracothorax nigricollis*:** a perched female at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. Two perched males at Metropolitan Park October 27. Though mangos as a genus are quite distinctive, their identification to species is difficult; many areas are home to only a single species, but mangos sometimes stray, even as far as the southern United States, and determining just which species is feeding in a south Florida garden can be a significant challenge.

**Purple-crowned Fairy, *Heliathryx barroti*:** seen by some at the Tower October 25 and at RFDC October 26. The English “fairy” for this slender, long-tailed bird is the relic of a naming system devised in the 1850s by Ludwig Reichenbach, who classified the hummingbirds into several groups bearing the names of mythical forest creatures; see [birdaz.com/blog/2013/12/19/nymphs-and-gnomes-fairies-and-sylphs/](https://birdaz.com/blog/2013/12/19/nymphs-and-gnomes-fairies-and-sylphs/).

**White-vented Plumeleater, *Chalybura buffoni*:** two males and a female at the Tower feeders October 21; a female there October 22, 24, 25, 26. One at Metropolitan Park October 27. This is a large, heavy, fairly uncommon hummingbird, rarely visiting feeders anywhere but Panama. The conspicuous white triangle of the vent and under tail coverts is shared by the rarer Bronze-tailed Plumeleater, which differs from the White-vented in its pink feet.

**Crowned Woodnymph, *Thalurania colombica*:** at least three female-plumaged birds at RFDC October 26. This species was long known as the Green-crowned Woodnymph. On the name “nymph,” see [birdaz.com/blog/2013/12/19/nymphs-and-gnomes-fairies-and-sylphs/](https://birdaz.com/blog/2013/12/19/nymphs-and-gnomes-fairies-and-sylphs/).

**Blue-chested Hummingbird, *Polyerata amabilis*:** several at the Tower feeders and on Semaphore Hill Road October 21; usually the most common hummingbird there, but notably

outnumbered this time by Violet-bellied Hummingbirds. A few at the Tower feeders and on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. A few at the Tower feeders October 23, 24, 25, 27. Four or five at RFDC October 26. This species is often said to be bland (at least by hummingbird standards), but as we had ample opportunity to see for ourselves, the glittering green crown and, in males, the softly iridescent blue throat and upper breast are striking when seen well. As if to make up for their subtle plumage, males can be very aggressive, jealously guarding feeders and chasing off hummingbirds far larger than they are. In spite of their ferocity, these hummingbirds have what may be the most positive of all scientific names, meaning “the lovable lovely one.”



Blue-chested Hummingbird. Photo Rick Wright

**Snowy-bellied Hummingbird, *Amazilia edward*:** at least three at the Tower feeders October 21, where this species is relatively infrequent. Two from the Tower October 22; at least two at the feeders. At least one at the Tower feeders October 23, 24, 25, 27. This dazzling bird, green-headed and bronze-backed with a blindingly white lower breast and belly, is more typically seen at somewhat higher elevations; it is possible that some adults move to lower sites in the fall.

**Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, *Amazilia tzacatl*:** a couple feeding in bougainvillea at Gamboa Resort October 25. One at Metropolitan Park October 27. Very widespread in the tropics, and often more common than this in our area.

**Violet-bellied Hummingbird, *Chlorestes julie*:** amazing numbers at the Tower feeders October 21, six or ten always in sight, including many breathtaking adult males. Abundance continued October 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, seen from the Tower, at the feeders, and on Semaphore Hill Road. This beautiful little hummingbird has in the past been placed in the genus *Juliomyia*; that name and the species epithet were coined by Jules Bourcier in honor of Anne-Julie Roncheval, wife of the French ornithologist Martial Etienne Mulsant.

#### **RAILS—RALLIDAE**

**Purple Gallinule, *Porphyrio martinicus*:** one at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. Another seen there as we drove past October 23. Five, including two immature birds, at Lake Gatun October 25. Like other rails, this large, colorful species is often very secretive, but we were fortunate to have good looks on our outings.

**White-throated Crake, *Laterallus albigularis*:** at least four heard at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. At least two singing loud and close there October 24. This small and extremely furtive rail is likely present in most similar habitats in the region, but prefers to spend nearly its entire life concealed in the marsh vegetation.

#### **LIMPKINS—ARAMIDAE**

**Limpkin, *Aramus cayanensis*:** two at Lake Gatun October 25. Traditionally considered an exclusively tropical specialty, and long known in the US only from Florida, this ibis-like swamp bird has undergone a population explosion at the northern edges of its range in the past two or three years, and multiple individuals are being found throughout the eastern and midwestern US, where they find the introduced apple snail easy pickings.

#### **PLOVERS—CHARADRIIDAE**

**Southern Lapwing, *Vanellus chilensis*:** one as we approached Ammo Dump Ponds October 24, and three in the same place October 26. This abundant and widespread plover arrived in Panama from the south in the 1930s, and several individuals of unknown origin have been found in the US in the past twenty years (see [aba.org/rare-bird-alert-july-1-2022](http://aba.org/rare-bird-alert-july-1-2022)).

#### **JACANAS—JACANIDAE**

**Wattled Jacana, *Jacana jacana*:** common at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22, with one family of four half-grown chicks. Several as we drove past October 23; a dozen there October 24 and 26. Common at Lake Gatun October 25. A few roadside birds October 27. The breeding system of this bizarre-looking shorebird is said to incorporate the ultimate in avian “sex-role reversal”; see the abstract at [sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0003347204002271](http://sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0003347204002271) for an introduction.

## SANDPIPERS—SCOLOPACIDAE

**Spotted Sandpiper, *Actitis macularius*:** four or five at Lake Gatun October 25. Common and familiar to most of us on its mid-latitude breeding grounds, this species winters as far south as southern South America.

## GULLS AND TERNS—LARIDAE

**Laughing Gull, *Larus atricilla*:** two adults on the Canal October 22. Most species of gull spending part of their year in the tropics are notably darker than their more northerly counterparts, a phenomenon easily observed in the deep slate-blue upper parts of this abundant species.

**Royal Tern, *Thalasseus maximus*:** one on the Canal October 22, along with four other unidentified terns. One on the Canal October 25. This “tropical” species in fact nests as far north as New Jersey.

**Sandwich Tern, *Thalasseus sandvicensis*:** eight on the Canal October 25. Most authorities—though not the AOS—now consider the Sandwich Tern to comprise two species; see [pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/19348954/](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/19348954/). The New World species is known as the Cabot’s Tern, *Th. acutifluidus*.

## FRIGATEBIRDS—FREGATIDAE

**Magnificent Frigatebird, *Fregata magnificens*:** seven or eight soaring high above the Canal and Lake Gatun October 25. Most were white-breasted females or immature birds.

## CORMORANTS—PHALACROCORACIDAE

**Neotropic Cormorant, *Nannopterum brasilianum*:** two or three as we left our Panama City hotel October 21. One at Lake Gatun October 25. One from the RFDC tower October 26. This is another bird on the climate-change move, and the pronounced northward expansion of the Neotropic Cormorant’s range over the past forty years has made the species an almost regular visitor to the northern Great Plains and southeastern Atlantic area.

## ANHINGAS—ANHINGIDAE

**Anhinga, *Anhinga anhinga*:** half a dozen at Lake Gatun.

## PELICANS—PELECANIDAE

**Brown Pelican, *Pelecanus occidentalis*:** four at the Canal October 25.

## HERONS—ARDEIDAE

**Rufescent Tiger-Heron, *Tigrisoma lineatum*:** seven at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22, many seen outstandingly well. At least four there October 24, two of them catching and swallowing startlingly large fish. One there as we drove past October 26. Both the English name and the scientific genus name refer to the boldly barred plumage of the juveniles.



Rufescent Tiger Heron. Photo Rick Wright

**Cocoi Heron, *Ardea cocoi*:** a nice surprise was a single bird flying at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. One hunting at Lake Gatun October 25. This handsome heron seems far less prone than many others to wander, and it is rarely seen out of its tropical range. “Cocoi” is said to be a Native American name for this bird.

**Great Blue Heron, *Ardea herodias*:** one from the Tower October 23. One hunting at Lake Gatun October 25.

**Cattle Egret, *Bubulcus ibis*:** bizarrely, none were seen on any of our outings, though the expected numbers were present on our arrival at the airport October 28. The early history of this species in the New World is familiar: after flying from Africa to northern South America in the 1940s, these colonizers and their descendants spread rapidly north and south, arriving in Panama in 1954 and quickly becoming abundant. The last twenty years have seen dramatic declines in the numbers present in eastern North America, though the species remains

common in the Midwest and west. Some taxonomic authorities now recognize two species, the Western and the Eastern Cattle Egrets; see [avibase.bsc-eoc.org/species.jsp?avibaseid=AB1CB2161CDC177A](http://avibase.bsc-eoc.org/species.jsp?avibaseid=AB1CB2161CDC177A).

**Great Egret, *Ardea alba*:** three at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22, one there October 23. Two at Lake Gatun October 25. A few roadside birds October 27. At the moment, most taxonomies treat the American Great Egret as conspecific with Great Egrets from the Old World. Old World birds, however, have dark bills and pink tibiae in breeding condition, quite unlike the yellow and black of the American Great Egret; given the apparent significance of the signaling function of these “soft parts” in heron courtship and pair maintenance, it seems likely that this difference would prevent interbreeding and put these populations on the path to speciation.

**Snowy Egret, *Egretta thula*:** eight overhead at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. This species occurs over much of the New World; its Old World counterpart, the Little Egret, has become a regular visitor to the Caribbean and to the east coast of the United States, and can be expected to begin to breed in our area.

**Little Blue Heron, *Egretta caerulea*:** a total of fifteen or more at Lake Gatun October 25. While we did see a few slaty-bodied, purple-necked adults, most were white immature birds, identified by their stout, slightly drooping bills and dull yellow tarsi. In the course of changing to dark adult plumage, Little Blues are patchy black and white, giving them the familiar name “Calico Heron.”

**Green Heron, *Butorides virescens*:** an adult at Ammo Dump Ponds October 24. This colorful little heron is the northern counterpart of the Striated Heron; unlike that species, it is restricted to the New World. In the field, adult Green Herons appear mostly dark blue and rusty, but the adult’s back feathers are broadly edged oily greenish.

**Striated Heron, *Butorides striata*:** three at Lake Gatun October 25. This tropical counterpart of the Green Heron, with which it has at times been considered conspecific, is very widespread in South America, Africa, and Asia. Birds of intermediate appearance are occasionally found; they may be hybrids and backcrosses, or representatives of a poorly known “brown morph” of the Striated.



Boat-billed Heron. Photo Rick Wright

**Black-crowned Night Heron, *Nycticorax nycticorax*:** one seen by some along the Canal on our way to Metropolitan Park. This familiar species is very widespread in the Old World and the New, and may be moving north in western Europe.

**Boat-billed Heron, *Cochlearius cochlearius*:** at least three beautifully seen at Summit Ponds. An older immature hunting a rain pond at the bottom of Semaphore Hill on our night drive October 26.

#### **NEW WORLD VULTURES—CATHARTIDAE**

**Black Vulture, *Coragyps atratus*:** very common, with hundreds rising from the roosts as we left Panama City our first morning and virtually omnipresent thereafter.

**Turkey Vulture, *Cathartes aura*:** several on the road from Panama City and over the Tower October 21. Two or three on Semaphore Hill Road October 22, and half a dozen at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22; a similar number on Pipeline Road October 23. Total of a couple of dozen October 24, and similar numbers October 25. Some hundreds passing the Tower over lunch October 26. The “birds” that shut down the Panama City airport as most of us were attempting to leave were probably a flock of migrating Turkey Vultures and Swainson’s



Hawks. In good views, resident Turkey Vultures can be distinguished from northern migrants by the narrow white collar, a feature absent in birds nesting in the US and Canada.

#### **OSPREY—PANDIONIDAE**

**Osprey, *Pandion haliaetus*:** a total of seven at Lake Gatun October 25. Taxonomic note required.

#### **HAWKS, EAGLES, AND KITES—ACCIPITRIDAE**

**Black Hawk-Eagle, *Spizaetus tyrannus*:** one heard by Igua on Semaphore Hill Road October 22.

**Double-toothed Kite, *Harpagus bidentatus*:** a juvenile bird, unfortunately not seen by all, flushed from the roadside as we approached RFDC October 26.

**Mississippi Kite, *Ictinia mississippiensis*:** one adult over Pipeline Road October 24, seen only by the leader. This species is an absurdly abundant migrant through Panama in early September, but scarce by the date of our visit.

**Crane Hawk, *Geranospiza caerulescens*:** a distant perched bird eventually made a close flyby as we watched from the RFDC tower October 26. Both the English name and the scientific genus name refer to this species' long, thin tarsus, orange to bright red and usually conspicuous in the field; the individual we saw, however, managed to perch facing directly away from us, its long tail entirely concealing the feet for most of the time we watched. The dramatic tail pattern and the narrow white band across the primaries were nicely visible when the bird eventually flew past the tower.



Great Black Hawk with prey. Photo Rick Wright

**Great Black Hawk, *Buteogallus urubitinga*:** amazing views of two, an adult and an immature bird, in Gamboa Botanical Garden October 27. The immature had captured (or at least found) a caecilian, which it slowly dissected and ate from the ground as we watched from nearby.

**Snail Kite, *Rhostramus sociabilis*:** a good seven or eight males, including birds perched very close at snail-eating stations, were among the total of fifteen or more at Lake Gatun October 25. Formerly known in the US as the Everglade Kite, this wide-ranging tropical raptor was nearly extinct in Florida just fifty years ago, but has increased to be once again fairly common in that state's grassy southern marshes, where its numbers are likely buoyed by the presence of at least one recently arrived species of invasive apple snail.

**Gray-lined Hawk, *Buteo nitidus*:** heard by Igua at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. This species was recently re-split from the more familiar Gray Hawk, *Buteo plagiatus*, which nests north to Texas and Arizona.

**Broad-winged Hawk, *Buteo platypterus*:** about six over Pipeline Road October 24, juveniles and adults. Like the Mississippi Kite, this species migrates in vast numbers over Panama somewhat earlier in the autumn.

**Short-tailed Hawk, *Buteo brachyurus*:** one over Pipeline Road October 23. Another tropical species on the move, now found regularly not just in its historical Florida range but in Texas and Arizona as well. I had expected to see this common species more often than we did this trip. The names notwithstanding, the length of the tail is unremarkable, but the wing shape and pattern, somewhat recalling a stumpy Swainson's Hawk's, are distinctive.



Swainson's Hawks. Photo Rick Wright

**Swainson's Hawk, *Buteo swainsoni*:** a couple of hundred in bursts over the Tower October 21. Two with the vultures over Pipeline Road October 23. A good five hundred leaving the roost near the Ammo Dump Ponds October 24, with smaller numbers off and on that morning over Pipeline Road. A large stream of southbound birds from the Tower dining room October 27. The flock of "birds" that delayed some of our flights as we attempted to leave Panama City was probably a large pulse of migrating Swainson's Hawks and Turkey Vultures.



Snail Kite. Photo Rick Wright

#### OWLS—STRIGIDAE

**Mottled Owl, *Strix virgata*:** an apparent begging juvenile responded to the local leader's calls on our night drive October 26.

**Black-and-white Owl, *Ciccaba nigrolineata*:** a single roosting bird on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. One of the most beautiful owls in the Americas and in the world, this fairly common species can sometimes be found in city parks, but seeing it perched high in the jungle canopy is a truly "tropical" experience.

#### TROGONS—TROGONIDAE

**Black-tailed Trogon, *Trogon melanurus*:** excellent looks at a female bird on Pipeline Road October 24. This is the less common of the big, dark-tailed trogon species in the area, distinguished from the more abundant Slaty-tailed by, among other characters, the dull yellow bill.

**Slaty-tailed Trogon, *Trogon massena*:** one male on Pipeline Road October 23. Another there October 24. One at Metropolitan Park October 27. This large trogon is readily identified by

its deep orange bill. We had excellent looks at this sometimes retiring species each time we encountered it. The species epithet commemorates François Victor Masséna, Duke of Rivoli (as in the hummingbird); his wife, Anna, is memorialized in the name of another hummingbird.

**White-tailed Trogon, *Trogon chionurus*:** at least five, of both sexes, along Pipeline Road October 23, and similar numbers there the next day. This small trogon is a common bird in most of its range, but usually somewhat difficult to find in the jungle mid-story; we were very fortunate to have fine views of several of the birds we met with.

**Gartered Trogon, *Trogon caligatus*:** a female well seen (and astonishingly well spotted) at Gamboa Resort October 25. One heard at RFDC October 26. This is a member of the old Violaceous Trogon complex, now split into several species.



Northern Black-throated Trogon. Photo Rick Wright

**Northern Black-throated Trogon, *Trogon tenellus*:** a male on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. A male on Pipeline Road October 23. At least three seen well at RFDC October 26. It is hard to choose a favorite among the quetzals and trogons, dazzling birds all, but the green, blue, black, and yellow of the male Black-throated is hard to match; the female is equally attractive with her discreet brown cowl. This species has at times been considered

conspecific with the Choco Black-throated Trogon, the Amazonian Black-throated Trogon, and the Atlantic Black-throated Trogon, but all have recently been restored to full species status.

#### **MOTMOTS—MOMOTIDAE**

**Whooping Motmot, *Momotus subrufescens*:** one feeding on the ground at Gamboa Resort October 25. Another seen by some October 27 at Metropolitan Park. The old Blue-crowned Motmot complex is now recognized as comprising several species. Two occur in Panama, the Whooping and the Lesson's Motmot; in addition to vocal differences, the Whooping Motmot lacks the fine black border edging the crown of the otherwise very similar Lesson's.

**Rufous Motmot, *Barythengus martii*:** heard on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. Two seen moderately well, and others heard, along Pipeline Road October 23. Singing at the Tower the early morning of October 25. This great hulking bird outnumbered any other motmot over most of its extensive range, but it is surprisingly uncommon in the immediate area of the Canopy Tower; it also visits feeders at many sites, but for some reason ignores the bananas offered here.



Broad-billed Motmot. Photo Rick Wright

**Broad-billed Motmot, *Electron platyrhynchum*:** two heard on Semaphore Hill October 21, and three seen there October 22. Heard, and one seen nicely, along Pipeline Road October 23. Heard and seen at extremely close range at RFDC October 26. Excellent views at the mirador of Metropolitan Park October 27. This is the commonest and most conspicuous motmot in this part of Panama, and by far the easiest to see; we had repeated splendid views of the bird, letting us appreciate the heavy, very broad-based bill, with which it dispatches anything of a swallowable size that dares reveal itself to this very patient hunter.

#### **KINGFISHERS—ALCEDINIDAE**

**Ringed Kingfisher, *Megaceryle torquata*:** one perched on the wire near the Ammo Dump Ponds October 26. This is usually a can't-miss species all through the area, easily seen and almost constantly heard in the right habitats, but this was the only individual we saw all week. Even

more bizarrely, we missed the little Green Kingfisher entirely, which is probably the most abundant alcedinid in the Americas.

**Green-and-rufous Kingfisher, *Chloroceryle inda*:** amazing scope views of this rarely seen bird on Pipeline Road October 24. The Green-and-rufous is the most sought-after kingfisher in most tropical American destinations, and this individual was only the second I had ever seen. It may be more common in central Panama than observations suggest, but its habit of perching quiet at mid-level above streams and ponds makes it difficult to detect.



Green-and-rufous Kingfisher. Photo Rick Wright

**Amazon Kingfisher, *Chloroceryle amazona*:** very good views at Summit Ponds October 24. Another perched, somewhat uncharacteristically, on a fence alongside the Canal October 26. In recent years, this dashing kingfisher has become a rare but regular visitor to sites along the lower Rio Grande in Texas, and it can be expected to become more common.

#### **PUFFBIRDS—BUCCONIDAE**

**White-necked Puffbird, *Notharchus hyperrhynchos*:** one on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. One on Pipeline Road October 23. Two together at Gamboa Resort October 25. This very large, bold puffbird is the most frequently seen over its range, habitually perching high in



leafless trees to survey for insects. The huge, heavy bill (*hyperrynchos!*) allows this bird to take prey as large as (unusually incautious) hummingbirds, though most of its diet comprises invertebrates.



Black-breasted Puffbirds off the Tower deck. Photo Rick Wright

**Black-breasted Puffbird, *Notharchus pectoralis*:** spectacular views of two from the Tower October 22. One on Pipeline Road October 24. Less ostentatious and probably less common than the larger White-necked, this handsome puffbird is usually difficult to see in the forest, and the close, prolonged views we were so fortunate as to have were unprecedented.

**White-whiskered Puffbird, *Malacoptila panamensis*:** great views of this often sneaky species on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. A pair giving fine views on Pipeline Road October 23. This is probably a common bird throughout its range, but because it prefers dense understory over the exposed perches commonly taken by the black and white puffbirds, it is much more infrequently seen. While the White-necked and Black-breasted Puffbirds are simply big, this species is truly puffy, even shaggy on the loosely feathered head and neck. As the species name *panamensis* suggests, the White-whiskered was first made known to western science from a Panamanian specimen.



White-whiskered Puffbird. Photo Rick Wright

## **TOUCANS—RAMPHASTIDAE**

**Collared Aracari, *Pteroglossus torquatus*:** two on Pipeline Road October 24. Two very close to the Tower deck October 25. One seen from the RFDC tower October 26 was investigating, probably with nefarious intent, a cavity being excavated by an apparently unconcerned pair of Crimson-crested Woodpeckers. Two at Botanical Garden October 27. The English “aracari” is borrowed from the Portuguese transcription of the Tupian name, “araçari”; that name is related to the parrot names “ara” and “arara,” so beloved of crossword makers; the scientific genus name *Pteroglossus* means “feather-tongue,” a reference to the finely fringed, almost baleen-like tongue.



Collared Aracari. Photo Rick Wright

**Yellow-throated Toucan, *Ramphastos ambiguus*:** one heard and poorly seen Pipeline Road October 23. Another seen from the RFDC tower October 26. The northern populations of this species were formerly known as the Chestnut-mandibled Toucan; this and the former Black-mandibled Toucan of the Andes are now considered conspecific.

**Keel-billed Toucan, *Ramphastos sulfuratus*:** five or six from the Tower October 22. One or two heard at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. A few from the Tower October 23 and 24, with two or three on Pipeline Road on the latter date. Three from the Tower October 25, and heard later that day at Gamboa Resort. Several heard and seen at RFDC October 26. Half a dozen at Metropolitan Park October 27. The absurdly colorful bills of this and the other ramphastids were a prized gift in Renaissance Europe.

#### **WOODPECKERS —PICIDAE**

**Olivaceous Piculet, *Picumnus olivaceus*:** one excavating at Summit Ponds October 24. The smallest woodpeckers in the world, piculets are hard to find and hard to see, and the prolonged scope views we had of this one of this one as it dug its nest in a small tree trunk were certainly a highlight of the tour, not soon to be repeated.



Olivaceous Piculet. Photo Rick Wright

**Black-cheeked Woodpecker, *Melanerpes pucherani*:** one from the Tower October 22. Two from the Tower October 25. This beautiful woodpecker is usually more common and more conspicuous, but the birds we did see were extremely obliging, perching close and patient for us to admire. Jacques Pucheran, for whom the great picidologist Malherbe named this bird, was one of the naturalists on board the *Astrolabe* on the Antarctic expedition of 1837–1840.

**Red-crowned Woodpecker, *Melanerpes rubricapillus*:** one in the parking lot of our Panama City hotel October 21. Two near Ammo Dump Ponds October 24. Excellent views at Gamboa Resort October 25. One or two at Metropolitan Park and at Botanical Garden October 27. The genus *Melanerpes* includes dramatically patterned birds such as the Black-cheeked and the Lewis's Woodpeckers on the one hand and zebra-backed birds such as the

Red-crowned and the Red-bellied Woodpeckers on the other. The Red-crowned is a common bird of open, often residential habitats, as we found.

**Crimson-crested Woodpecker, *Campephilus melanoleucus*:** a male on Pipeline Road October 23. A female at Summit Ponds October 24. A pair busy working on a new cavity from the RFDC tower October 26; remarkably, a Collared Aracari came in to investigate, entering the still unfinished excavation several times, probably in search of eggs or nestlings to devour—the woodpeckers seemed unperturbed. After that, the excellent views afforded by a male at Metropolitan Park October 27 seemed almost humdrum. Among the most flamboyant of New World woodpeckers, this species is in the same genus as the extinct Ivory-billed and Imperial Woodpeckers; unlike those two, it appears to be nicely holding its own wherever forest persists.

**Lineated Woodpecker, *Dryocopus lineatus*:** a female on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. One on Pipeline Road October 24.

**Cinnamon Woodpecker, *Celeus loricatus*:** one on Semaphore Hill Road October 21, one from the Tower October 22 and one on Semaphore Hill Road the same morning. At least three seen along Pipeline Road October 23, and at least five there October 24. Great views of a bird perched in the open from the Tower October 25. The genus *Celeus*, named for the Cretan miscreant turned into a woodpecker by a wrathful Zeus, comprises a dozen lavishly crested woodpeckers, each of them a serious contender for most beautiful bird of the entire family.

#### FALCONS AND CARACARAS—FALCONIDAE

**Slaty-backed Forest Falcon, *Micrastur mirandollei*:** heard from the Tower the morning of October 22. Loud and close, but invisible, along Pipeline Road October 23; also heard there October 24.

**Collared Forest Falcon, *Micrastur semitorquatus*:** an unhoped-for view of a pale-morph adult flying across a narrow channel at Lake Gatun October 25, briefly perching very low before flying around the corner and disappearing. Heard at close range, and seen by Igua, at RFDC October 26. This was a lifebird for me, and an unforgettable one.

**Crested Caracara, *Caracara plancus*:** two seen by some over the Chagres River the morning of October 24. Great views of a perched bird, crop distended with a recent meal, at Botanical Garden October 27. Once restricted in the US to Florida, Texas, and Arizona, Crested Caracaras have recently established a clear pattern of regular vagrancy from coast to coast and north nearly to Canada. This widespread species has at times been split into two, the Crested and the Southern Caracaras, but the two were remerged in 2021.

**Yellow-headed Caracara, *Daptrius chimachima*:** two at our Panama City Hotel, two or three on the road, and three at the Tower October 21. Four at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. One coming up from the road with a bit of carrion October 24. Two at Summit Ponds October 24. Half a dozen or more at Lake Gatun October 25. Three roadside birds October 26. A few roadside birds and two close adults at Botanical Garden October 27. Smaller and less

aggressive than the Crested, the Yellow-headed Caracara scavenges and hunts small invertebrates; one juvenile we saw along Lake Gatun was busily attempting to remove the apparently inedible spines from a big caterpillar.

**Peregrine Falcon, *Falco peregrinus*:** a very distant southbound bird from the RFDC tower October 26.

#### NEW WORLD PARROTS—PSITTACIDAE

**Orange-chinned Parakeet, *Brotogeris jugularis*:** heard passing over Semaphore Hill Road October 21. A flock heard over Pipeline Road October 23. Two briefly seen over Ammo Dump Ponds October 24. A dozen flying over at Lake Gatun October 25. Two flying repeatedly to a tree cavity at Gamboa Resort October 25. Fine views of a few perched birds, out of a total of something like ten, at Botanical Garden October 27, showing not only the brownish “shoulder” but the small orange chin patch as well.

**Brown-hooded Parrot, *Pyrilia haematotis*:** outstanding views of seven from the breakfast table October 23. This is an uncommon bird, easily missed on any Panama visit, and we were very fortunate to have these birds perched so close for so long.



Brown-hooded Parrot. Photo Rick Wright

**Blue-headed Parrot, *Pionus menstruus*:** three flybys from the RFDC tower October 26. Five or six, some perched, at Metropolitan Park October 27. One of the prettiest of American parrots and one of the most difficult to get good looks at; in flight, the deep, strong wing beats immediately distinguish *Pionus* parrots from the *Amazon* species with their shallow, trembling strokes. The scientific name *menstruus* is Linnaeus at what he probably thought was his most uproariously funny; see [birdaz.com/blog/2018/08/26/parrot-of-the-month](http://birdaz.com/blog/2018/08/26/parrot-of-the-month).

**Red-lore Parrot, *Amazona autumnalis*:** half a dozen from the Tower October 22. Three or four from the Tower October 23. Four flybys from the Tower October 24. Two dozen or more heading to roost at Summit Ponds October 24. A few flying at the Tower and a dozen or so at Gamboa Resort October 25. Ten or fifteen flybys from the RFDC tower October 26. Some 20 flying over in pairs at Metropolitan Park October 27, with half a dozen later in the day at Botanical Garden.

**Yellow-crowned Parrot, *Amazona ochrocephala*:** Eric picked two out overhead at Metropolitan Park.

**Mealy Parrot, *Amazona farinosa*:** four from the Tower October 22. Also seen by some October 24. Our sightings neatly reflect the relative abundance of the two *Amazona* parrots seen at the Canopy Tower; we were fortunate to have very nice scope views of the species there, letting us clearly see the big, diffuse eye rings and lack of red on the lore and forehead.

#### MANAKINS—PIPRIDAE

**Lance-tailed Manakin, *Chiroxiphia lanceolata*:** at least four at Metropolitan Park October 27, high in the canopy but eventually affording very good views.

**Velvety Manakin, *Lepidothrix velutina*:** one female at the Tower and one male on Semaphore Hill Road October 21. Two males and a female on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. A male and two females along Pipeline Road October 23. A fine male near the feeders at RFDC October 26. Formerly considered conspecific with the Blue-capped Manakin, *L. coronata*, of South America, under the English name Blue-crowned Manakin.

**Golden-collared Manakin, *Manacus vitellinus*:** a female, an immature male, and an adult male at Summit Ponds October 24. Five or six at RFDC October 26, including breathtakingly colorful males in their faintly comical display. The snapping sounds made by many male manakins in display are percussive, produced by striking the dense bones of the wing against each other. For a recent introduction to the complex sonic and social behaviors of this endlessly fascinating family, have a look at Schlinger, *The Wingsnappers*.

**Red-capped Manakin, *Ceratopipra mentalis*:** fine views of a male and later of a female on Semaphore Road October 21; a male there October 22. A male from the Tower October 25. A male at RFDC October 26. Two at Metropolitan Park October 27.

#### COTINGAS—COTINGIDAE

**Purple-throated Fruitcrow, *Querula purpurata*:** excellent views of seven or eight along Pipeline Road October 23, including one bird huddled down on a stick nest. A similar number there October 24. Big and noisy, these birds can be hard to see in the jungle canopy, but we had leisurely looks at both males and females; only the adult male has the eponymous throat patch, which is flared in display.



Blue Cotinga. Photo Rick Wright

**Blue Cotinga, *Cotinga nattereri*:** spectacular close views of an adult male, an immature male, and a female from the Tower October 22. There is little to say about this bird that would add to the astonishing sight of the implausibly colored male; that sight is typically through a scope at a distance of a mile, but on this visit, the birds—possibly a family group—flew in to the leafless twigs just off the Tower deck, lingering unconcerned as we watched from a few feet away. The Austrian naturalist Johann Natterer was an important figure in early Neotropical ornithology; see [birdaz.com/blog/2021/08/13/natterer-returns](https://birdaz.com/blog/2021/08/13/natterer-returns).

#### **TITYRAS AND ALLIES—TITYRIDAE**



**Masked Tityra, *Tityra semifasciata*:** two from the Tower October 22. One seen at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. A very obliging pair from the Tower October 23. Two at Ammo Dump Ponds October 24. One seen by some October 25. Two from the RFDC tower October 26. Visually striking as these birds are, their odd, nasal calls are just as remarkable; we heard them just a couple of times.

**Speckled Mourner, *Laniocera rufescens*:** amazing views of one on Pipeline Road October 24. This is a scarce bird anywhere in its range, and to have scope views at close range as we did makes for a red-letter day. Mourners have at times been considered cotingas, at times tyrant flycatchers; stay tuned for further taxonomic revisions.



Speckled Mourner. Photo Rick Wright

**Cinnamon Becard, *Pachyramphus cinnamomeus*:** this attractive, warm-colored bird is one of the commonest members of its family, and we enjoyed great looks at one at close range at Gamboa Resort October 25.

#### **TYRANT FLYCATCHERS—TYRANNIDAE**

**Golden-crowned Spadebill, *Platyrinchus coronatus*:** a very patient individual allowing leisurely good looks on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. This tiny flycatcher is probably fairly common; more birders have seen their first on Semaphore Hill Road than anywhere else throughout its range.

**Ochre-bellied Flycatcher, *Mionectes oleaginus*:** one from the Tower October 22 and another at RFDC October 26. One at Metropolitan Park October 27. Often more abundant and more cooperative, but all had reasonably good views of this species eventually.

**Black-capped Pygmy Tyrant, *Myiornis atricapillus*:** As usual, it took considerable patience to finally get good views of one, very high on Pipeline Road October 24. Part of the challenge with this and the other pygmy tyrants is composing a helpful “search image”: the birds are so inconceivably tiny that they are easily overlooked as nothing more than swelling on the branch they are perched on. The English name of this species is slightly misleading, too, as the face and cap of the bird are at best dark gray. Surprisingly, the Black-capped nests at lower levels in the forest, but virtually all feeding is conducted very high in the canopy. In the past, this bird has been lumped with the South American Short-tailed Pygmy Tyrant, *M. ecaudatus*. The two species are among the tiniest passerines in the world.

**Southern Bentbill, *Oncostoma olivaceum*:** one heard and briefly seen by some on Semaphore Hill Road October 21; two heard there October 22. Seen very well on Pipeline Road October 24. The roaring call of this bird is out of all proportion to its physical size, and the weird pale eyes and crooked bill are even stranger.

**Common Tody Flycatcher, *Todirostrum cinereum*:** three or four giving fine views at Gamboa Resort October 25, even perching on telephone wires.

**Olivaceous Flatbill, *Rhynchocyclus olivaceus*:** very nice looks at one on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. One or two along Pipeline Road October 23.

**Yellow-olive Flatbill, *Tolmomyias sulphurescens*:** good looks for most of the group at one at Botanical Garden October 27. Formerly known simply as “flycatchers,” the *Tolmomyias* tyrants are now called flatbills to reflect their close relationship with other flatbills; perhaps only incidentally, the new name also helps birders keep the muddling diversity of bill shapes among the flycatchers a bit straighter.

**Brown-capped Tyrannulet, *Ornithion brunneicapillus*:** one or two from the Tower October 22; one there October 23, and at least one singing there October 24. This attractive little bird of the forest canopy can be hard to see, but its cheerful whistled song is hard to overlook.

**Forest Elaenia, *Myiopagis gaimardii*:** one on Pipeline Road October 24. This and the Greenish (and plenty of other elaenias!) are very similar, but the clearer wing pattern and darker crown help distinguish this species.

**Greenish Elaenia, *Myiopagis viridicata*:** nice scope views of a very active bird at Botanical Garden October 27.

**Mistletoe Tyrannulet, *Zimmerius parvus*:** one from the Towder October 23. This is part of the old Paltry Tyrannulet complex. While its new English name is an improvement, the scientific name this little bird has ended up with is unfortunate if taken literally; see [academia.edu/69618682/An\\_Unfortunate\\_Name\\_With\\_a\\_Nebraska\\_Twist](http://academia.edu/69618682/An_Unfortunate_Name_With_a_Nebraska_Twist).

**Eastern Wood Pewee, *Contopus virens*:** one or two at the Tower October 21 and October 22, half a dozen on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. Common October 23 and 24 on Pipeline Road and at Summit Ponds. Two or three from the Tower October 25. Common at Lake Gatun and at Gamboa Resort October 25 and at RFDC October 26. Common at Metropolitan Park and at Botanical Garden October 27. Far and away the most abundant and the most conspicuous migrant passerine of the entire trip, almost never out of sight or hearing. All vocalizing birds were Easterns, but Western Wood Pewees are also known from the area, so silent individuals—especially those with duller median covert tips or darker bills—are best recorded as Eastern/Western.

**Acadian Flycatcher, *Empidonax virescens*:** two on Semaphore Hill Road October 21; at least three on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. One probably of this species on Pipeline Road October 23. One at Metropolitan Park October 27.

**Bright-rumped Attila, *Attila spadiceus*:** great looks at two at the beginning of Pipeline Road October 24. Full of noisy personality, the attilas share their blustering good nature with the bulbuls of the genus *Bleda*; see [birdaz.com/blog/2013/07/18/huns-and-their-beards-huns-and-their-birds](http://birdaz.com/blog/2013/07/18/huns-and-their-beards-huns-and-their-birds).

**Rufous Mourner, *Rhytipterna holerythra*:** seen by some October 23.

**Dusky-capped Flycatcher, *Myiarchus tuberculifer*:** heard and briefly seen on Pipeline Road October 23. One heard at RFDC October 26. One at Metropolitan Park October 27. This common tropical flycatcher ranges north to the southwestern US; the crown is darker on southern birds, and is truly dusky on those found in Panama.

**Great Crested Flycatcher, *Myiarchus crinitus*:** two from the Tower October 22, with two or three more on Semaphore Hill Road that same morning. One from the Tower and two along Pipeline Road October 23; like numbers October 24. One from the Tower October 25. One at RFDC October 26 and one at Metropolitan Park October 27.

**Lesser Kiskadee, *Pitangus lictor*:** four at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. The various stripe-headed flycatchers can be difficult to identify, but the Lesser Kiskadee's long, narrow bill is distinctive when it is visible. The birds we saw were perching on low rocks along a shallow ditch, uncharacteristic behavior for a species more often seen on the edge of wooded ponds.

**Great Kiskadee, *Pitangus sulphuratus*:** one roadside bird on the way out of Panama City October 21. One roadside bird October 22. One heard at Lake Gatun October 25. Several at Botanical Garden October 27. In recent years, Great Kiskadees have appeared in several midwestern states, suggesting a northward expansion of this handsome and noisy species' range.

**Boat-billed Flycatcher, *Megarhynchus pitangua*:** two at Pipeline Road October 24. Seen by some at Botanical Garden October 27. Very like a dull-colored kiskadee, this species is unmistakable when its canoe-shaped upper mandible can be seen. The striped head and face occur in flycatchers across several genera, but wing pattern, bill shape, and in some cases subtle differences in the crown pattern help to distinguish them.

**Rusty-margined Flycatcher, *Myiozetetes cayanensis*:** at least two at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. Excellent views of four from the RFDC tower October 26. Several at Botanical Garden October 27. Very similar to the Social Flycatcher, the Rusty-margined has more obvious reddish on the outer vanes of the remiges and more uniformly colored wing coverts.

**Social Flycatcher, *Myiozetetes similis*:** seven or eight at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. Two at Lake Gatun October 25. The somewhat duller head pattern, more uniformly colored secondaries, and whitish covert tips distinguish this species from the very similar Rusty-margined. This is a bird to watch for anywhere in North America, though so far vagrants have been identified only in south Texas.

**Streaked Flycatcher, *Myiodynastes maculatus*:** one at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. Two at Metropolitan Park October 27. The two *Myiodynastes* flycatchers in the region are very similar, but the Streaked is paler beneath and colder-toned above; the bill is sometimes said to have more pink on the lower mandible, but this is either variable or sometimes invisible. The easiest field mark to assess is probably the incomplete, relatively pale lateral throat stripe, which is much less distinct than the long, broad, blackish mark of the Sulphur-bellied. There are both resident and migratory populations of Streaked Flycatchers, and representatives of the latter have been recorded in the US. Some progressive taxonomies consider this bird, the Northern Streaked Flycatcher, a species distinct from the Austral Streaked Flycatcher, *M. solitarius*, of South America.

**Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher, *Myiodynastes luteiventris*:** one from the Tower October 22. The seasonal movements of this species are slightly mysterious; while it leaves its US breeding grounds early, most winterers seem not to arrive in the tropics until later in the autumn. This species is less likely a vagrant to other parts of the US than the Streaked.

**Piratic Flycatcher, *Legatus leucophaeus*:** one from the RFDC tower October 26; it is said that most birds of this species have already left Panama by October. Another in the group of stripe-headed flycatchers, this species “piratically” expropriates the nests of oropendolas, becards, and other weavers of pendant homes.

**Tropical Kingbird, *Tyrannus melancholicus*:** common in Panama City and along the roadsides October 21. A few at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22 and as we drove past October 23. One there October 24. Three or four at Summit Ponds October 24. Two at Lake Gatun October 25. A few at Gamboa Resort October 25 and in the Gamboa area the next day. Common October 27. Some progressive taxonomies split this species, making the Panamanian bird the Middle American Kingbird, *Tyrannus satrapa*.

**Eastern Kingbird, *Tyrannus tyrannus*:** one, unfortunately not seen by all, at Botanical Garden October 27.

#### TYPICAL ANTIBIRDS—THAMNOPHILIDAE

**Barred Antshrike, *Thamnophilus doliatus*:** a great view of a singing male at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. The female, which we did not manage to see, is strikingly different from the zebra-striped male; see [tinyurl.com/RWrightAntshrikes](http://tinyurl.com/RWrightAntshrikes).

**Black-crowned Antshrike, *Thamnophilus atrinucha*:** at least two females and, more briefly, at least on male seen on Semaphore Hill Road October 21. A female from the Tower October 22, followed by at least one female and two males on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. Heard and at least two nicely seen along Pipeline Road October 23. Several heard and one male seen well at RFDC October 26. This pretty bird was formerly known as the Western Slaty Antshrike; that bird has been found to comprise at least six distinct species, of which this is the northernmost.

**Great Antshrike, *Taraba major*:** heard at Summit Ponds October 24.

**Fasciated Antshrike, *Cymbilaimus lineatus*:** wonderful views of a pair on Pipeline Road October 23. One at Summit Ponds October 24. Fine looks at a male and a female at RFDC October 26. A female busily hunting at Metropolitan Park October 27. This is a big, powerful bird, with intimidating red eyes and a bill that puts even the Barred Antshrike's to shame. Unlike in the *Thamnophilus* antshrikes, Fasciateds of both sexes show largely the same plumage pattern, with the female's pinkish rust replaced by white in the male.

**Spot-crowned Ant-Vireo, *Dysithamnus puncticeps*:** heard by Igua on Pipeline Road October 23. Like chickadees in the north, this species often forms the core of roving feeding flocks.

**Checker-throated Stipplethroat, *Epinecrophylla fulviventris*:** about three seen reasonably well on Semaphore Hill Road October 21. Poor views of a couple there October 22. Unprecedentedly wonderful looks at a pair on Pipeline Road October 24. Good looks at two at RFDC October 26. Once known as the Checker-throated Antwren; the name change appears to have been utterly unmotivated.

**Moustached Antwren, *Myrmotherula ignota*:** a female seen, only by the leaders, high in the canopy on Semaphore Hill Road October 22.

**White-flanked Antwren, *Myrmotherula axillaris*:** one male, not seen by all, on Semaphore Hill Road October 21. Another at the same locality October 22. One or two along Pipeline Road October 23. One pair and a further male giving fine looks along Pipeline Road October 24. A couple at RFDC October 26, including one preening male perched for scope views. White-flankeds, as we discovered, are often seen in loose association with the very similar Dot-winged Antwren, but the short tail and blurry whitish sides are easy distinctions.

**Dot-winged Antwren, *Microrhophias quixensis*:** four or five, males and females, on Semaphore Hill Road October 21. Half a dozen on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. Four or so along Pipeline Road October 23, with at least that many there October 24. A pair from the Tower October 25. At least two at RFDC October 26. A pair at Metropolitan Park October 27. The natty male is outshone by the cinnamon-bellied female, one of the most attractive of all antbirds.

**Dusky Antbird, *Cercomacroides tyrannina*:** excellent looks at a very loud male, and poor glimpses of a female, on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. Very good looks at a pair on Pipeline Road October 24. A pair at Metropolitan Park October 27. We had unusually good

luck in the high quality of our sightings; this species does not join flocks, and pairs are often audible and barely visible in the forest undergrowth.

**Jet Antbird, *Cercomacra nigricans*:** heard and poorly seen at Summit Ponds October 24. The Summit Ponds are probably the best place anywhere to see this bird, but even there it is uncommon and, as we found, very secretive.

**White-bellied Antbird, *Myrmeciza longipes*:** This ground-loving species is difficult to see even by antbird standards, and we were very fortunate to have repeated and astoundingly good views of a female, and decent looks at a male, at Gamboa Resort October 25.

**Bicolored Antbird, *Gymnopithys bicolor*:** well seen on Pipeline Road October 23. One seen by some at Gamboa Resort October 25. Common but retiring, this is sometimes a challenging bird to see; our views on Pipeline Road were of a bird in the deep shade, but even there the strikingly white underparts and blue skin at the eye were apparent.

**Spotted Antbird, *Hylophylax naeviodes*:** seen by some on Semaphore Hill Road October 21. Great views of a female and, less well, of a male on Pipeline Road October 23. One seen by some at Gamboa Resort October 25. This beautiful antbird combines two un-antbird-like but very welcome qualities: it is strikingly patterned, and it is fairly easy to see.

#### ANTPITTAS—GRALLARIIDAE

**Streak-chested Antpitta, *Hylopezus perspicillatus*:** two heard on Pipeline Road October 23. Splendid looks at a singing bird on the way to RFDC October 26. This is probably Panama's commonest antpitta, but like of the Central American members of the family, this species is normally no more than a taunting voice in the forest. At the Rainforest Discovery Center, though, Eric was able to locate a singing bird nearby, and all of the group eventually had fine views at close range. In spite of the English name, the most striking plumage feature of this bird is the big pale eye ring, as the scientific species epithet ("spectacled" suggests).

#### ANTTHRUSHES—FORMICARIIDAE

**Black-faced Antthrush, *Formicarius analis*:** one heard on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. Commonly heard along Pipeline Road October 23 and 24. Fine looks at one at RFDC October 26. The whistled "three-blind-mice" phrase of this species is a characteristic sound of the rainforest, but because antthrushes are so stubbornly terrestrial, they are rarely seen. The bird we found at the Rainforest Discovery Center not only allowed itself to be watched on the forest floor, but at one point strolled calmly across the path, twitching and flicking its tail like a rallid or half-grown chicken.

#### OVENBIRDS AND WOODCREEPERS—FURNARIIDAE

**Olivaceous Woodcreeper, *Sittasomus griseicapillus*:** one in the parking lot at Metropolitan Park October 27. Small, quiet, and inconspicuous, this is an easy bird to overlook, but our Metropolitan Park individual gave great views as it crept up the substantial trees surrounding

one of the parking lots. There are probably several species of “Olivaceous Woodcreeper”; if so, the Panamanian bird would be known as the Grayish Woodcreeper, *S. griseus*.

**Plain-brown Woodcreeper, *Dendrocincla fuliginosa*:** three at Gamboa Resort October 25. One at RFDC October 26. Unfairly named, this medium-large woodcreeper has a more distinctive face pattern than most, comprising a strong lateral throat stripe and a broad pale cheek patch. We had good looks at both Gamboa and the RFDC.



Northern Barred Woodcreeper. Photo Rick Wright

**Northern Barred Woodcreeper, *Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae*:** close views of two cooperative birds on Pipeline Road October 24. Another at RFDC October 26. This is a somberly handsome woodcreeper, often hard to see well and at close range; the Pipeline Road birds proved a notable exception, giving all of us good looks at very little distance.

**Cocoa Woodcreeper, *Xiphorhynchus susurrans*:** a couple heard but not seen on Semaphore Hill Road October 21. One seen there by some October 22. One seen nicely from the breakfast table October 23; several heard along Pipeline Road October 23, and several heard and seen there October 24. At least three at Summit Ponds October 24. One heard at Lake Gatun October 25, and a couple seen that same day at Gamboa Resort. Two or three at RFDC October 26. Several at Metropolitan Park October 27. This is the region’s commonest and

most conspicuous—at least vocally most conspicuous—woodcreeper, and its clear laughter became a familiar part of the forest soundscape. We wound up having nice looks at several over the course of our visit, seeing well the creamy neck streaking and long, rather slender bill.

**Black-striped Woodcreeper, *Xiphorhynchus lachrymosus*:** wonderful views of this most attractive of the woodcreepers on Pipeline Road October 23. Hard as it might have been to believe, we had even better, closer views of two there October 24. The English name is appropriate, if unimaginative; the scientific species name refers to the pale teardrops that make up the conspicuous streaks on the back and head ([biodiversitylibrary.org/item/54888#page/499/mode/1up](https://biodiversitylibrary.org/item/54888#page/499/mode/1up)).

**Plain Xenops, *Xenops minutus*:** excellent views of this “strange-faced” bird on Semaphore Hill Road October 21. Three performed even more generously at Metropolitan Park October 27. What is depicted in the field guides as a white jaw stripe is in fact an odd silver color; we saw that very well on a couple of the Metropolitan Park birds. Some progressive taxonomies treat the xenops of southeast Brazil as a separate species, the White-throated, requiring the renaming of the Plain Xenops as *X. genibarbis*.

#### VIREOS—VIREONIDAE

**Green Shrike-Vireo, *Vireolanius pulchellus*:** heard distantly on Semaphore Hill Road October 21; at least four or five persistent and invisible singers from the Tower October 22 and similar numbers on Semaphore Hill Road. Four or five heard from the Tower and two or three along Pipeline Road October 23 and 24. Three heard from the Tower October 25. Two heard at Lake Gatun October 25. Three or four, invisible, at RFDC October 26. At least one heard at Metropolitan Park October 27. Though these birds occasionally visit bare trees off the Tower deck, our frustration was the more frequent experience; just one more reason to return to Panama.

**Lesser Greenlet, *Pachysylvia decurtatus*:** one seen uncharacteristically low at the Tower October 21. Three or four from the Tower October 22, with two or three on Semaphore Hill Road. Similar numbers each morning at the Tower. Heard at RFDC October 26. Three at Metropolitan Park October 27, two of them violently tussling over something. One at Botanical Garden the same day. These small vireos are well camouflaged in green and gray for life in the forest canopy, but their presence is revealed by their constant singing, a fast, high-pitched, conversational whistle.

**Yellow-throated Vireo, *Vireo flavifrons*:** heard by Igua from the Tower deck October 22.

**Red-eyed Vireo, *Vireo olivaceus*:** one in the parking lot at the Tower October 21. At least one on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. A couple along Pipeline Road October 23 and 24.

#### JAYS AND CROWS—CORVIDAE

**Black-chested Jay, *Cyanocorax affinis*:** at least three at Metropolitan Park October 27.



## SWALLOWS—HIRUNDINIDAE

**Mangrove Swallow, *Tachycineta albilinea*:** small numbers at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22, with at least two there October 24. Small numbers at Lake Gatun October 25. Superficially like a longer-tailed Tree Swallow, this species is easily identified by the large square rump patch; in close views, such as those we had at Lake Gatun, the tiny white line between eye and bill is a distinctive character.



Mangrove Swallow. Photo Rick Wright

**Bank Swallow, *Riparia riparia*:** at least one at Lake Gatun October 25. The first clue of this species' presence in a mixed flock is usually its markedly small size; the sandy brown back, paler than the wings, is often more easily seen than the precise details of the brown and white face and throat patterns.

**Southern Rough-winged Swallow, *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*:** half a dozen or more at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22, perched and in flight, an experience repeated October 24. Though the Southern and the Northern Rough-wingeds are closely related, they are rather different visually. The Southern is smaller and more colorful, with a pale rump and an orange-tinged, sometimes strongly orange-tinged, throat. Unfortunately, chances to compare the two are infrequent.

**Gray-breasted Martin, *Progne chalybea*:** along the road as we left Panama City October 21. Three over Semaphore Hill Road October 22. A couple of hundred at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. High over Pipeline Road October 23. Very common at Ammo Dump Ponds and high over Pipeline Road October 24. Common at Lake Gatun October 25 and near the Ammo Dump Ponds October 26. Fairly common overhead October 27. This species is abundant in most open habitats, even in towns, but high-soaring birds are often seen through gaps in the forest canopy, too.

**Barn Swallow, *Hirundo rustica*:** several in Panama City and two or three at the Tower October 21. Four from the Tower October 22. Fifteen or so at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. A few from the Tower October 23. A few at Ammo Dump Ponds October 24. Abundant at Lake Gatun October 25, with a total of 150 or more. Only half a dozen or so October 26. Breeding widely over the Northern Hemisphere, Barn Swallows in the New World winter a far south as South America.

#### GNATCATCHERS—POLIOPTILIDAE

**Long-billed Gnatwren, *Ramphocaenus melanurus*:** several heard along Pipeline Road October 23. Fine views of three at Metropolitan Park October 27. The long tail and bill make this bird an absurd caricature of a forest-dwelling insectivore. It can be hard to see when it is foraging actively in the canopy; even when they descend to a more reasonable height, gnatwrens often stay deep in the dark interior of clustered lianas. When, as is increasingly the case, the widespread gnatwren of the tropics is considered specifically distinct from South American birds, the Panama bird is known as the Northern Gnatwren, *R. rufiventris*.

**White-browed Gnatcatcher, *Polioptila bilineata*:** one from the Tower October 22. One seen on Pipeline Road October 23 and another by some October 24. Most gnatcatcher species are much of a sameness, but the face pattern of the White-browed differs from that of any similar species. This bird is very fond of the forest canopy, making the fine views to be had from the Tower deck exceptional.

#### WRENS—TROGLODYTIDAE

**House Wren, *Troglodytes aedon*:** one at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. One at Botanical Garden October 27. The taxonomic history of this bird reveals a frequent alternation between indiscriminate lumping and willy-nilly splitting; at the moment, the most reasonable view seems to be that there are three species, the familiar Northern House Wren, the Mexican Brown-throated Wren, and in Central and South America, the Southern House Wren, *Tr. musculus*. It is certainly the case that House Wrens in the tropics have much more varied, sweeter songs than the rough grumblings of birds in the US.

**Black-bellied Wren, *Pheugopedius fasciatoventris*:** excellent and prolonged views of this often secretive species on Pipeline Road October 23. The bicolored under parts recall an antbird or, in a far-fetched way, a dipper.

**Bay Wren, *Cantorchilus nigricapillus*:** one at the beginning of Pipeline Road October 23. This widespread tropical species combines good looks with an outstanding song—the latter

sometimes more easily appreciated than the former. The English name preserves an old color adjective that now survives almost exclusively in fossilized form in the names of plants and animals.

**Rufous-breasted Wren, *Pheugopedius rutilus*:** at least one invisible singing bird on Semaphore Hill Road October 21 and October 22. Heard on the way to Pipeline Road and at Summit Ponds October 24 and at RFDC October 26. Good looks at one at Metropolitan Park October 27. Another very pretty wren with a loud, musical voice, this species is even more reclusive than the Bay Wren, and we were fortunate to have good views, especially of the strange but appealing black and white face.

**Rufous-and-white Wren, *Thryophilus rufalbus*:** close views of a pair at Metropolitan Park October 21; we also saw an old nest in a bull's horn acacia. In spite of its large size and vividly colored plumage, this is a hard bird to find, and our views were unusually good, if not especially prolonged.

**White-breasted Wood Wren, *Henicorhina leucosticte*:** heard on Semaphore Hill Road October 21 and 22. One on Pipeline Road October 23 gave views of a quality rarely to be had, perching high and near and vocalizing loudly as we admired it. Similar wrens are widespread from Mexico well into South America, and several species are sometimes recognized; under that scheme, Panama's bird would be the Middle American Wood Wren, *H. prosthaleuca*.

**Song Wren, *Cyphorhinus phaeocephalus*:** two heard and one seen very well at the beginning of Pipeline Road October 23. This is an amazing bird, in appearance and in vocal ability. The bluish facial skin is very unusual in a wren, and the song is no less remarkable: rather than the rollicking trills and triplets of most wrens, this bird sings in clear whistles, sometimes interspersed with more classically wren-like rattles.

#### MIMIC THRUSHES—MIMIDAE

**Tropical Mockingbird, *Mimus gilvus*:** one or perhaps two at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22, with one there October 24. This species is said to have been unintentionally introduced to southern Central America from Colombia in the 1930s.

#### THRUSHES—TURDIDAE

**Gray-cheeked Thrush, *Catharus minimus*:** one on Pipeline Road October 24 and one at RFDC October 26. Two at Metropolitan Park October 27.

**Swainson's Thrush, *Catharus ustulatus*:** four on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. One on Pipeline Road October 23 and two there the following day. A total of about five at Metropolitan Park October 27. All seemed to be of the Olive-backed Thrush type, sometimes separated at the species level as *C. swainsoni*. With the Eastern Wood Pewee and the Bay-breasted Warbler, this was the most abundant northern passerine we saw during our visit.

**Clay-colored Thrush, *Turdus grayi*:** two at Summit Ponds October 24. At least four at Gamboa Resort October 25. Common at Botanical Garden October 27. The past fifty years have seen

a remarkable northward push in this common tropical species, and it now breeds in numbers well into Texas; it has also recently been recorded in Arizona.

#### OLD WORLD SPARROWS—PASSERIDAE

**House Sparrow, *Passer domesticus*:** one, not seen by all, at our Panama City hotel October 21. Central American populations of this species are often said to have their origin in the spread of birds introduced to the US in the nineteenth century, but it seems very unlikely that independent releases and escapes did not occur in the larger cities, especially the port cities, of Latin America. On the political import of bird introductions, see [birdaz.com/blog/tag/otto-kleinschmidt](http://birdaz.com/blog/tag/otto-kleinschmidt).

#### FINCHES—FRINGILLIDAE

**Yellow-crowned Euphonia, *Euphonia luteicapilla*:** a pair at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. Outnumbered on this visit by what is often the less common Fulvous-vented Euphonia. The English and genus names are mysterious, given that no euphonia has even a remotely pleasing song.

**Fulvous-vented Euphonia, *Euphonia fulvicrissa*:** three or four from the Tower October 22. A pair there October 24. A male from the RFDC tower October 26. Quite similar to the Yellow-crowned, males of this blue and yellow finch have a darker, duller crissum and white tail spots.

#### THRUSH-TANAGER—RHODONOCICHLIDAE

**Rosy Thrush-Tanager, *Rhodinocichla rosea*:** heard at Summit Ponds October 24, and a female seen by only the leader. The next day, heard again, at Gamboa Resort, and a female seen by one of the group. Spectacular scope views of a singing male at Metropolitan Park October 27, with a female giving slightly less good looks. A great many birders have tried and failed repeatedly to find this bizarrely beautiful bird, and our views at Metropolitan Park were the best I had ever had. It has been suggested that the South American thrush-tanager is a different species, making the bird we saw the Panama Thrush-Tanager, *Rh. eximia*; it might be a good idea to learn more about this family's (?) relationship to other tanager-like birds before setting about splitting the species.

#### NEW WORLD SPARROWS—PASSERELLIDAE

**Orange-billed Sparrow, *Arremon aurantirostris*:** seen by some at Metropolitan Park October 27.

#### ICTERIDS—ICTERIDAE

**Scarlet-rumped Cacique, *Cacicus uropygialis*:** great views of three from the Tower October 22. One at the Tower and a group of half a dozen on Pipeline Road October 23. Six or seven on Pipeline Road October 24. One from the Tower October 25. The field marks first noticed

on this bird are usually not the rump but the pale yellow bill and powder-blue eye; the rump, though it is truly scarlet, can be thoroughly invisible when the bird is perched and the wings folded, only to be revealed in a dazzling flash when the cacique takes off.



Scarlet-rumped Cacique. Photo Rick Wright

**Yellow-rumped Cacique, *Cacicus cela*:** one played hard to get at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22, but most of us eventually saw it at least in flight. A bird with Scarlet-rumped on Pipeline Road October 23 was far more cooperative, giving all of us a great look at this dramatically plumaged blackbird. Heard October 24.

**Yellow-backed Oriole, *Icterus chrysater*:** one on Pipeline Road and three at Summit Ponds October 24. Several heard at Gamboa Resort October 25. This species, which ranges no farther north, is as good a marker as any for the “South American” character of birding in central Panama.

**Baltimore Oriole, *Icterus galbula*:** four or five from the Tower October 22. An adult male at Botanical Garden October 27.

**Great-tailed Grackle, *Quiscalus mexicanus*:** common in Panama City and along the road as we left the city October 21. A couple at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22 and there as we passed

on our way to Pipeline Road October 23. A few at Lake Gatun October 25. Hundreds of roadside birds October 27, most of them in female-like plumage.

#### NEW WORLD WARBLERS—PARULIDAE

**Northern Waterthrush, *Parkesia noveboracensis*:** one noisily chipping at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. Two or three along Pipeline Road October 23. One there October 24. Three at Lake Gatun October 25.

**Prothonotary Warbler, *Protonotaria citrea*:** great views of a single bird at Lake Gatun October 25. Another, less orange individual at Metropolitan Park October 27. The popular stories purporting to trace the origin of this bird's odd name to the garments of papal employees were fabricated probably no more than a century ago; see [birdaz.com/blog/2013/03/07/the-prothonotary-warbler-you-sure-about-that/](http://birdaz.com/blog/2013/03/07/the-prothonotary-warbler-you-sure-about-that/).

**Tennessee Warbler, *Leiothlypis peregrina*:** a window-kill at our Panama City hotel. One (alive) from the Tower October 23. One (also alive) at Botanical Garden October 27. This was a surprisingly low total for what in other Central American regions can be among the most abundant of winter birds.

**Bay-breasted Warbler, *Setophaga castanea*:** common at the Tower October 21, the total a dozen or so. Three or four from the Tower October 22 and half a dozen on Semaphore Hill Road. A couple from the Tower and two or three along Pipeline Road October 23. Two on Pipeline Road and one or two at Summit Ponds October 24. Two from the Tower October 25. Three at RFDC October 26. Ten or so at Metropolitan Park October 27. Several of us remarked that our week's total far exceeded the number we had seen all year in the US.

**Blackburnian Warbler, *Setophaga fusca*:** two nicely seen from the Tower October 23, one quite bright and the other slightly less so. This is one of the few birds named for a woman to be named with her last name rather than her first; on Anna Blackburne's connection to this bird, see [birdaz.com/blog/2013/06/28/blackburnian](http://birdaz.com/blog/2013/06/28/blackburnian).

**Yellow Warbler, *Setophaga petechia*:** three at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. Three at Botanical Garden October 27. All we saw well were apparently northern-type birds, sometimes separated at the species level from the Mangrove Warbler and then named American Yellow Warbler, *S. aestiva*.

**Chestnut-sided Warbler, *Setophaga pensylvanica*:** one from the Tower October 22 and another at Summit Ponds October 24. One at Metropolitan Park October 27.

**Chestnut-capped Warbler, *Basileuterus delatirii*:** one seen by some at Summit Ponds October 24. In 2021, the AOS recognized this bird, ranging from Mexico to northern South America, as a different species from the more northerly Rufous-capped Warbler, *B. rufifrons*, which has recently established itself as a breeding bird in Arizona.

**Canada Warbler, *Cardellina canadensis*:** one high in a tree on Semaphore Hill Road October 21, and another there October 22. One in the Tower melastome October 24.

## CARDINAL GROSBEAKS—CARDINALIDAE

**Summer Tanager, *Piranga rubra*:** two females and a male at the Tower October 21. Two on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. One on Pipeline Road October 23 and another October 24. One or two at Gamboa Resort October 25. Three at Botanical Garden October 27.

**Scarlet Tanager, *Piranga olivacea*:** at least two males and two females at the Tower October 21. One from the Tower October 22. Two on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. One from the Tower and one or two along Pipeline Road October 23.

**Red-throated Ant-Tanager, *Habia fuscicauda*:** one along Pipeline Road October 24. Heard and fleetingly seen at Summit Ponds October 24. Common and noisily conspicuous at Metropolitan Park October 27. Northern and southern populations of this handsome tanager are sometimes split as distinct species; the Panama bird would then be the Cabanis's Ant Tanager, *H. fuscicauda*. On the pronunciation of "Cabanis," see [birdaz.com/blog/2016/12/11/how-do-you-pronounce-cabanis](http://birdaz.com/blog/2016/12/11/how-do-you-pronounce-cabanis).



Red-throated Ant Tanager. Photo Rick Wright

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak, *Pheucticus ludovicianus*:** two from the Tower October 22, one a female, the other an adult male. As in most cardinal grosbeaks, males of this species can

easily be aged by looking at the wing: first-cycle birds have brown remiges contrasting with dark coverts, while in adults the remiges and coverts are equally dark.

**Blue-black Grosbeak, *Cyanoloxia cyanooides*:** a pair heard and the female seen, though not by all, on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. A well-seen pair engaged in courtship feeding near the beginning of Pipeline Road October 23. This species is sometimes placed in the genus *Cyanocompsa*.

**Dickcissel, *Spiza americana*:** at least seven at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. On the English names of this bird, see [birdaz.com/blog/?s=dickcissel](http://birdaz.com/blog/?s=dickcissel).

#### TANAGERS—THRAUPIDAE

**Gray-headed Tanager, *Eucometis penicillata*:** one seen by some at Gamboa Resort October 25. This species is more dependent on food provided by army ant swarms than are some antbirds. Gray-headed Tanagers breeding from Mexico to Colombia may be specifically distinct from those farther south, in which case the Panama bird would be named the Northern Gray-headed Tanager, *E. spodocephalus*.

**White-shouldered Tanager, *Tachyphonus luctuosus*:** three on Semaphore Hill Road October 21. Two on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. Three along Pipeline Road October 23. Two on Pipeline Road October 24. Eight or more at Metropolitan Park October 27. Unusually for the true tanagers, the male and female of this species are very different in plumage; females look much like miniature Gray-headed Tanagers, but are easily identified by the company they keep.

**Flame-rumped Tanager, *Ramphocelus flammigerus*:** at least four at Gamboa Resort October 25; this species is uncommon in this area, and it was exciting to have very good looks at a male and at least three female-plumaged birds. The nominate subspecies, found in Colombia, has a truly flame-colored rump, while the more widespread *icteronotus*, ranging from Panama to northernmost Peru, is yellow there and has been known as the Lemon-rumped Tanager.

**Crimson-backed Tanager, *Ramphocelus dimidiatus*:** a very pretty male at Summit Ponds October 24, followed by much better views of a male at Gamboa Resort October 25. A fine male at Metropolitan Park October 27. This is a common and often insistent feeder visitor in many places.

**Blue-gray Tanager, *Thraupis episcopus*:** two at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. Several October 25. Half a dozen at Metropolitan Park October 27. Middle American Blue-gray Tanagers, sometimes recognized as a distinct species *Th. cana*, have a plainer wing than birds found in Amazonian South America. On the odd tradition of assigning tanagers ecclesiastical rank, see [birdaz.com/blog/2015/07/18/ecclesiastical-tanagers](http://birdaz.com/blog/2015/07/18/ecclesiastical-tanagers).

**Palm Tanager, *Thraupis palmarum*:** two at the Tower October 21. Four from the Tower October 22. Two at the Tower October 23. A couple at the Tower October 24. Two at the Tower October 25, one eager to join us for breakfast. A couple more at Gamboa Resort



October 25. One from the RFDC tower October 26. Small numbers in Metropolitan Park and at Botanical Garden October 27. These fairly large, fairly dull-plumed tanagers are among the most confiding of their family, often perching within a couple of feet of humans or even entering houses through open windows.

**Golden-hooded Tanager, *Stilpnia larvata*:** one at the Tower October 21. Two from the Tower October 22 and one on Semaphore Hill Road that morning. One in the Tower parking lot and another at Gamboa Resort October 25. One at Metropolitan Park October 27.

**Plain-colored Tanager, *Tangara inornata*:** one from the Tower October 22. One from the Tower October 22. Two at Gamboa Resort October 25. A couple in Metropolitan Park October 27. This is not an especially common bird, and its subtle plumage and preference for feeding in the higher strata of the forest make it easy to overlook; it also resembles both the Blue-gray and Palm Tanagers, with which it is often found. Our best views were from the Tower deck, where we were able to take good note of the short tail and short bill, which immediately distinguish it from the more powerful-looking Palm Tanager.

**Blue Dacnis, *Dacnis cayana*:** five or six in the fruiting melastome in the Tower parking lot October 21. Similar numbers from the Tower October 22. Two or three from the Tower and at least one along Pipeline Road October 23. A pair from the Tower October 25. This is one of the most gem-like of tropical American birds, and no matter how often they are seen, both the dramatically blue and black male and the green, blue-headed female are a guaranteed distraction from whatever else happens to be sharing the tree with them. They are sometimes hard to see from the ground, making the Tower deck the ideal lookout.

**Red-legged Honeycreeper, *Cyanerpes cyaneus*:** one male in Metropolitan Park October 27. The long bill, powder-blue crown, and deep red tarsi distinguish this bird from the similar Blue Dacnis and Shining Honeycreeper.

**Green Honeycreeper, *Chlorophanes spiza*:** a female at the Tower October 22. A male and at least one female at the Tower October 23. A pair giving prolonged close views at the Tower October 24, and perhaps the same pair performing just as well there the next morning. A male from the RFDC tower October 26. This is a dazzling bird, both the lime-green female and the emerald male unmistakable and un-ignorable. In some places, Green Honeycreepers swarm feeders and fruiting trees; we experienced what I suspect are more normal densities.

**Blue-black Grassquit, *Volatinia jacarina*:** a male seen by some at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. This is the famous “johnny jump-up,” so called for the male’s vertical display. One discovered in Arizona this summer furnished a first record for the US; be alert.

**Variable Seedeater, *Sporophila corvina*:** about four at Ammo Dump Ponds October 22. Good looks at three or so at Gamboa Resort October 25. Half a dozen at Botanical Garden October 27. In Central Panama, two different “flavors” of Variable Seedeater meet and interbreed; they are sometimes considered distinct species, the Hicks’s Seedeater (*Sp. ophthalmica*) and the Black Seedeater (*Sp. corvina*). The males giving us good views were intermediate in plumage, darker than a typical Hicks’s and with more white than a Black Seedeater.

**Buff-throated Saltator, *Saltator maximus*:** two or more at Gamboa Resort October 25. These towhee-like tanagers are usually more abundant than we found them on this trip.

**Slate-colored Grosbeak, *Saltator grossus*:** splendid views of this species on Semaphore Hill Road October 21. Three seen and at least two more heard on Semaphore Hill Road October 22. This medium-sized saltator is a difficult bird to see, not because it is somehow reclusive but rather because it is dumpy and slow-moving; it also keeps fairly high in the trees, where strong light and shadow can make a blue-gray bird difficult to detect, that huge red bill notwithstanding.

## MAMMALS

**Unidentified Opossum, *Didelphis sp.*:** a road-killed individual.

**Central American Woolly Opossum, *Caluromys derbianus*:** one visited the bananas during our Tower dinners most evenings.

**Northern Tamandua, *Tamandua mexicana*:** this arboreal anteater is always exciting to see, and we enjoyed good views in Metropolitan Park.

**Hoffman's Two-toed Sloth, *Choloepus hoffmanni*:** this is the less common of the area's sloths, but we enjoyed fine views of one above the road October 25 and of three (equivalent to one six-toed sloth) on our October 26 night drive.

**Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth, *Bradypus variegatus*:** we saw this odd mammal nearly every day, including small young sloths on Semaphore Hill Road and at Summit Ponds.

**Proboscis Bat, *Rhynchonycteris naso*:** no fewer than thirteen of these medium-sized bats, two of them still-dependent young, were at roost in the lee of a tree trunk at Lake Gatun. I leave it to you whether the name "proboscis" for this forest-loving animal is a pun.

**Greater White-lined Bat, *Saccopteryx bilineata*:** at roost beneath the deck at the Rainforest Discovery Center.

**Brazilian Free-tailed Bat, *Molossus molossus*:** regularly hunting the dining room, morning and evening.

**Seba's Short-tailed Bat, *Carollia perspicillata*:** roosting at RFDC.



Geoffroy's Tamarin. Photo Rick Wright

**Common Tent-making Bat, *Uroderma bilobatum*:** hanging from leaves at Gamboa Botanical Garden.

**Geoffroy's Tamarin, *Saguinis geoffroyi*:** this attractive monkey was a daily feature at the Tower and on our excursions. At Summit Ponds, we watched at least five come down from the trees to bound across the road like so many white-footed tabbies with triple-length tails.

**White-faced Capuchin, *Cebus capucinus*:** seen October 24 and 25, with the best views at Lake Gatun.



White-faced Capuchin. Photo Rick Wright

**Western Night Monkey, *Aotus lemurinus*:** one at the bananas the evenings of October 22 and 24 and two in a dimly lit roost tree at Metropolitan Park

**Mantled Howler Monkey, *Alouatta palliata*:** seen and, of course, heard nearly everywhere, but especially noticeable at the Tower during what could otherwise have been sleeping hours. Among those at Lake Gatun October 25 was an immature eating leaves at eye level.



Mantled Howler Monkey. Photo Rick Wright

**Red-tailed Squirrel, *Sciurus granatensis*:** one on Semaphore Hill Road October 21.

**Variegated Squirrel, *Sciurus variegatoides*:** one fleeing the drizzle in Botanical Garden October 27.

**Rothschild's Porcupine, *Couendou rothschildi*:** one on our October 26 night drive.

**Central American Agouti, *Dasyprocta punctata*:** common, seen every day everywhere.

**Kinkajou, *Potos flavus*:** at least one most evenings at the Tower bananas. On our last evening, two came in and unceremoniously evicted an Olingo, which dropped from the fruit into the foliage below.

**Allen's Olingo, *Bassaricyon alleni*:** one at the Tower bananas most evenings.

**White-nosed Coati, *Nasua narica*:** two on Semaphore Hill Road October 22, with a pack of seven or more there October 25 and at least four October 27.

## **REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS**

**American Crocodile, *Crocodylus acutus***



American Crocodile. Photo Rick Wright

**Spectacled Caiman, *Caiman crocodilus***

**Boa Constrictor, *Boa constrictor*:** a five-foot individual on the road, chased to safety by Iguana.

**House Gecko, *Hemidactylus frenatus***

**Yellow-headed Gecko, *Gonatodes albogularis***

**Green Iguana, *Iguana iguana***

**Anole sp., *Anolis sp.***

**Central American Whiptail, *Ameiva festiva***

**Common Basilisk, *Basiliscus basiliscus***

**Fer de Lance, *Bothrops asper*:** a small, nearly invisible individual coiled up in the hollow of a tree root at RFDC. This may be the most dangerous snake in the Americas, and is certainly one of the most beautiful.



Fer de lance. Photo Rick Wright

**Red-eared Slider, *Trachemus scripta***

**Talamanca Rocket Frog, *Allobates talamancae***

**Green-and-black Poison Dart Frog, *Dendrobates auratus***

**Red-eyed Treefrog, *Agalychnas callidryas***

**Leaf Toad, *Rhaebo haematiticus***

**Caecilian sp., *Caecilia* sp.:** one hapless individual being eaten by a Great Black Hawk.

## **FISH**

**Marbled Swamp Eel, *Synbranchus marmoratus*:** one in a puddle on Pipeline Road.



Long-tailed Skipper. Photo Rick Wright



## Virtual Bird Walks

### 2020

July	1	Local Birding
August	2	Backyards and a Marsh
September	3	Backyards and Trips
October	4	Member Birding
November	5	Member Birding
December	6	Member Birding

### 2021

January	7	International Birding and New York City
February	8	International Birding
March	9	Member Birding
April	10	Shore Birds
May	11	Local Birding
June	12	Member Birding
July	13	Birding Costa Rica
August	14	Identify a Bird by Its Eyes
September	15	Birds and Water
October	16	Birds with Masks
November	17	Winter Birds

### 2022

January	18	Personal Choice
February	19	Color
March	20	Signs of Spring
April	21	Birds Eating or Black & White Birds
May	22	Local Birds
September	23	My Summer
November	24	Bird Pairs
December	25	A Trip

### 2023

January	26	Winter
February	27	A Month in a Birder's Life
March	28	Egrets, Herons, and Wading Birds
April	29	Woodpeckers
May	30	Small Birds
June		Members Meeting, no Virtual Bird Walk
September	31	What I Did on My Summer Vacation
October	32	Black & Orange

## Montclair Bird Club Meeting History

### 2020

May	An Online Quiz, with Rick Wright.
June	A Walk on Pipeline Road, by Sandy Sorkin.
July	The Real James Bond, by Jim Wright.
August	An Online Quiz, with Rick Wright.
September	Manakins and Microbes, by Jennifer Houtz.
October	Bizarre Breeding Behaviors of Tropical Cuckoos, by Christine Riehl.
November	Dispersal in Young Peregrine Falcons, by Elise Morton.
December	An MBC Story Slam, by Pamela Olsen.

### 2021

January	Modern-Day Exploration in the Tropics, by Dan Lane.
February	Winter Raptors, by Giselle Smisko.
March	Damselflies and Dragonflies: The Other White Meat, by George Nixon.
April	Wolf Natural History and Tourism in Yellowstone, by Paul Brown.
May	Sandhills and Saw-whets, by Matthew Schuler.
June	Magnificent Namibia, by Linda Woodbury.
September	Raptors, by Wayne Greenstone.
October	Watershed, by Hazel England.
November	Build-a-Bird, with Rick Wright.

### 2022

January	A Tale of Many Penguins, by Ardith Bondi.
February	Oh! Canada, by Chris Sturm.
March	Tracking the Migration of New Jersey Birds Using the Motus Network, by Cailin O'Connor.
April	Spotlighting Voices in Bird Conservation, by Mardi Dickinson.
May	101 Great Birds from Around the World, by Mark Garland.
June	Members Meeting.
September	Exploring the Big Bend in Southwest Texas, by Donna Traylor.
October	Build-a-Bird II, with Rick Wright.
November	On Safari: Botswana and South Africa, by Ric Cohn.

## 2023

January	America's Iconic Birdman: Frank Chapman, by James Huffstodt.
February	A Bird Club in San Diego, by Rick Wright.
March	The Peregrine Project, by Wayne Quinto Greenstone.
April	Piping Plovers on the Rockaway Peninsula, by Chris Allieri.
May	Basic Ornithology, by Phil Echo.
June	Members Meeting.
September	Build-a-Bird III, with Rick Wright.
October	Finding W. H. Hudson, The Writer Who Came to Britain to Save the Birds, by Conor Mark Jameson
November	Attracting Screech Owls, by Jim Wright
November	Birding and Conservation in Italy, by Marcos Valtriani

### **2023–2024 Officers and Executive Board**

#### **OFFICERS**

President	Donna Traylor
Vice President	Evan Cutler
Secretary	Pat Sanders
Treasurer	Sandy Sorkin

#### **EXECUTIVE BOARD**

Bill Beren  
Ric Cohn  
Wayne Greenstone  
Don Traylor  
Rick Wright

## Upcoming VENT Tours

[VentBird.com](http://VentBird.com)

<b>Nebraska</b>	Sandhill Cranes and Prairie Chickens	March 15–22, 2024; March 17–24, 2025
<b>Alabama</b>	The Gulf Coast and Dauphin Island	April 15–21, 2024; April 14–20, 2025
<b>Scotland</b>	Wild Scotland	May 26 – June 7, 2024
<b>Colorado</b>	A Summer Stay in Estes Park	June 17–23, 2024; June 15–21, 2025
<b>Colorado</b>	Northeast Colorado	June 23–26, 2024; June 21–24, 2025
<b>Spain</b>	Birds and Art in Asturias	August 28 – September 6, 2024
<b>France</b>	Birds and Art in Provence	May 1–9, 2025
<b>Scotland</b>	Scotland in Style	May 10–19 2025
<b>Germany</b>	Birds and Art in Berlin and Brandenburg	September 19–28, 2025
<b>France</b>	Brittany in Fall	October 1–9, 2025

**VICTOR  
EMANUEL  
NATURE  
TOURS**

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- Page 9: Ruddy duck (SS)
- Page 11: Yellow-rumped warbler (myrtle) (SS)
- Page 12: Peregrine falcon
- Page 15: Cedar waxwing, mute swan, American robin, tree sparrow by Ric Cohn (RC)
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- Page 20: Belted kingfisher (SS)

### From the Editor's Desk

Please feel free to email any items you would like included in future issues of *The Broadwing*. Please include pictures and any other news that will entertain or educate our members.

Sandy

**[MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com](mailto:MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com)**



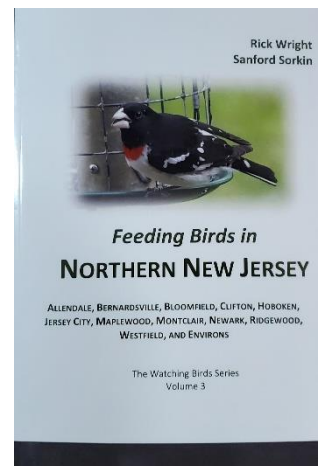
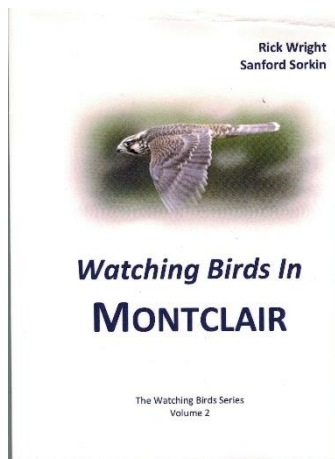
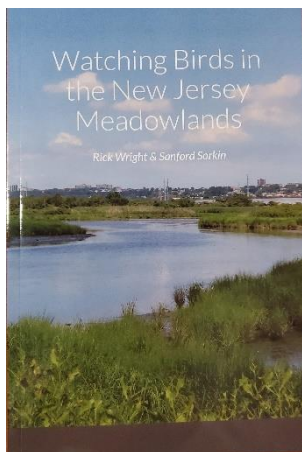
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# The MBC Bulletin Bird

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**The *Broadwing* Editor  
and Photographer .....Sandy Sorkin**

## THE BROADWING

The *Broadwing* is published ten times a year:  
We vacation during July and August.

Send photos, field notes, or articles to Sandy at  
[MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com](mailto:MontclairBirdClub100@gmail.com).

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