

# Peru: Cusco to Manu National Park | Species List October 6 – 24, 2023 | with Naturalist Journeys



**Compiled by: Naturalist Journeys Host Greg Butcher for Peruvian Guide  
Extraordinaire Percy Avendano, Juan Cardenas of Neblina Forest Peru, and  
participants Donald and Linda and Greg's wife Linda**

**Summary:** An incredible journey with Peruvian guide extraordinaire Percy Avendano, organized by Naturalist Journeys and Neblina Forest Peru. We started along the coast south of Lima, then flew to Cusco to bird the ornithology-famous Manu Road for eight days to Atalaya, stopping at four lodges along the way. At Atalaya, we boarded a boat for a seven-hour ride down the Madre de Dios River with four nights at a beautiful lodge (with wonderful food) adjacent to the river. We continued on to Puerto Maldonado and flew back to Cusco, where we took a mototaxi, a van, a train, and a bus to world-famous Machu Picchu. It was the trip of my dreams! Some highlights included Humboldt Penguin, Darwin's Nothura, two pairs of Razor-billed Curassows, Lyre-tailed Nightjar, 46 species of hummingbirds, the incomparable Hoatzin and Sunbittern, Golden-headed Quetzal, 17 species of parrots, including 5 species of macaws, 21 species of antbirds, a lek with 6 Andean Cocks-of-the-Rock visible at once, 65 species of flycatchers (!), the endemic Inca Wren (a Machu Picchu specialty), and 60 species of tanagers. Did I mention that it was a special trip? The beds and the food were excellent everywhere.

We had 200 sea lions, 7 species of monkeys, two tayras, an hour with 5 giant otters checking us out, a close view of a male red brocket deer, two species of peccaries, several caimans and lizards and turtles and frogs, only a few snakes and tarantulas, and very few mosquitoes.

Our guide Percy has great ears and great eyes, he had friends at every stop, and he excelled at helping us see the birds well. Nonetheless, about 50 species on this list were heard only by Percy (as noted).

Thanks to Juan Cardenas Carrasco, who organized all the details, and to Peg Abbott, who took the trip last year and worked with Juan to iron out any glitches she encountered to ensure we had a smooth trip.

Did I mention all that we learned a lot about the Incas and the Spaniards from 500 years ago? Percy knows all those stories too!

The eBird Link to our 2023 Peruvian Journey (575 species!): <https://ebird.org/tripreport/167874>

## **MAMMALS: — (22 species)**

**Common Opossum** *Didelphis marsupialis* – Tambo Blanquillo and the Madre de Dios River produced a lot of mammal species, including this opossum, which is closely related to the Virginia Opossum of North America.

**White-mantled Tamarin** *Saguinus weddelli* — We first saw this small species in the tropical forest along the Madre de Dios River and again on our last day in Puerto Maldonado, also near the river.

**Emperor Tamarin** *Saguinus imperator* — Percy saw this species at our stop along the Madre de Dios, but they quickly moved away, and I didn't get a view.

**Toppin's Titi** *Plecturocebus toppini* — It was tamarin and titi day along the Madre de Dios, and these were among the small monkeys in the trees near the river.

**Common Woolly Monkey** *Lagothrix lagothricha* — We had long and good binocular views of a troop of Woolly Monkeys moving through the trees just across the river near the Cock of the Rock lek. It made me think of the old Tarzan movies to see them easily move from tree to tree using their long arms. The size variety within the troop was impressive.

**Bolivian Red Howler Monkey** *Alouatta sara* — Our first day cruising down the Madre de Dios River was great for monkeys, including howlers. Although we heard them every day along the river, we only saw them once.

**Brown Capuchin** *Sapajus apella* — We saw capuchins on four different days, first near Cock-of-the-Rock Lodge and last near Tambo Blanquillo along the Madre de Dios River.

**Black-capped Squirrel Monkey** *Saimiri boliviensis* — We saw squirrel monkeys on five different days, first near Manu Bio Lodge (formerly Villa Carmen) and last along the Madre de Dios River.

**Guinea Pig or Cavy** *Cavia porcellus* — Guinea Pigs are on the menu in Cusco, but also frequently seen in the wild nearby, as we did.

**Amazon Bamboo Rat** *Dactylomys dactylinus* — At each dinner at Tambo Blanquillo near the Madre de Dios River, we would hear the shrill cries of a bamboo rat, but try as we might, we never got to see it.

**Brown Agouti** *Dasyprocta variegata* — We had an agouti (a medium-sized tropical rodent) near Cock-of-the-Rock Lodge.

**Mountain Viscacha** *Lagidium viscacia* — We saw this odd mammal inside the ruins at Machu Picchu.

**Capybara** *Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris* — We had a fleeting view of a capybara (a huge tropical rodent) from the boat along the Madre de Dios River.

**Amazon Dwarf Squirrel** *Microsciurus flaviventer* — These tiny squirrels were first seen near Cock-of-the-Rock Lodge and later near Tambo Blanquillo near the Madre de Dios River. We also saw small squirrels near Machu Picchu, which may be the same species.

**Southern Amazon Red Squirrel** *Sciurus spadiceus* — Much larger than their dwarf cousins, these squirrels were seen on two different days on Tambo Blanquillo trails near the Madre de Dios River.

**Long-nosed Bat?** — We had what we were calling Long-nosed Bats at Tambo Blanquillo, but I'm not sure exactly what scientific name applies to this species.

**Tayra** *Eira barbara* — We found two tayras, one at Cock-of-the-Rock Lodge and one near Tambo Blanquillo near the Madre de Dios River. Tayras are a tropical weasel. They are both an efficient predator and an omnivore eating fruits and insects.

**Giant Otter** *Pteronura brasiliensis* — Oh, my goodness! We had a wonderful morning on Cocha Blanco, an oxbow lake near the Madre de Dios River, floating along with a family of Giant Otters. At first, they were at binocular length, but eventually they approached us, and we had long leisurely close-up views.

**South American Sea Lion** *Otaria byronia* — On our first day, we took a boat to offshore islands south of Lima, and one of our major rewards was a huge group of perhaps 200 sea lions, mostly basking on the nearby rocks.

**Common Red Brocket (Deer)** *Mazama americana* — Along the trails near Tambo Blanquillo near the Madre de Dios River, we ran across a small brocket deer.

**Collared Peccary** *Pecari tajacu* — Manu Bio Lodge (formerly Villa Carmen) produced a Collared Peccary for us along one of its many trails.

**White-lipped Peccary** *Tayassu pecari* — An early morning snort was our first sign that we had scared up a White-lipped Peccary along one of the trails near Tambo Blanquillo near the Madre de Dios River.

**REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS: — (7 species)**

**Yellow-headed Sideneck (Turtle)** *Podocnemis unifilis* — We saw this species on at least 3 days along the Madre de Dios River.

**Spectacled Caiman** *Caiman crocodilus* — Caimans are part of the alligator family. This species is much smaller than the next, but still a good-sized predator that we saw in the Madre de Dios River.

**Black Caiman** *Melanosuchus niger* — We saw this giant twice in the Madre de Dios River.

**Tortoise?** — We saw a tortoise near the Madre de Dios River, but I'm not sure which species it was.

**Brown-eared Anole** *Anolis fuscoauratus* — We had an anolis lizard near the Madre de Dios River, but I can't be sure it was this species.

**Whipsnake or Brown Sipo** *Chironius fuscus* — We saw this three-foot-long green snake in the middle of the road near Wayqecha Cloud Forest Research Station.

**Cane Toad** *Rhinella marina* — We ran into Cane Toads on at least four different days.