

# Christmas in Ecuador | Species List

## December 21 – 29, 2023 | with Naturalist Journeys



**Compiled by guide by Andrea Molina with participants Jennifer, Paul, Beverly, Kim, Yvonne, Sheila, Craig, and Mark.**

Experiencing Ecuadorian culture, staying in colonial haciendas, birding in National Parks and exploring the highlands, sometimes above 13,000 feet! This was a trip designed to introduce our guests to the wondrous beauty of Ecuador at Christmas. We birded on snowcapped volcanoes and high in the Andes and visited some very interesting indigenous markets and local workshops where beautiful and elaborate hand-made crafts including colorful embroideries, tapestries, purses and textiles were sold. All the while surrounded by the wholesome sounds and aromas of Ecuador.

This was not only a birding trip, yet we still managed to see 123 species plus four species of mammals and one frog that was heard quite often.

### **Birds (123):**

#### **DUCKS, GEESE, AND SWANS: Anatidae — (4)**

**Torrent Duck** *Merganetta armata* — Two ducklings showed up for just a few seconds on top of a rock in Papallacta River at Guango Lodge after we searched patiently around all the openings along the river.

**Yellow-billed Pintail** *Anas georgica* — By Limpiopungo Lake in Cotopaxi National Park, and later on San Pablo Lake and Antisana Ecological Reserve. Brownish plumage and its yellow bill were our field marks.

**Andean Teal** *Anas andium* — Very good views on Limpiopungo Lake in Cotopaxi National Park, where they were numerous.

**Andean Duck** *Oxyura ferruginea* — Present on all the lakes that were visited on our trip.

#### **GREBES: Podicipedidae — (1)**

**Pied-billed Grebe** *Podilymbus podiceps* — Seen on San Pablo Lake near the reed patch.

#### **PIGEONS AND DOVES: Columbidae — (3)**

**Rock Pigeon (I)** *Columba livia* — Well distributed especially in towns and villages.

**Black-winged Ground-Dove** *Metriopelia melanoptera* — A very local, high-elevation species, there were a couple not far from the car when we drove to the highest point in the Antisana Ecological Reserve.

**Eared Dove** *Zenaida auriculata* — Seen often on fences along gravel roads by the haciendas in Cotopaxi and Otavalo.

#### **SWIFTS: Apodidae — (1)**

**White-collared Swift** *Streptoprocne zonaris* — Seen the last day on the upper part of the Cayambe-Coca Reserve, further up Papallacta Hotsprings. Its large size has earned it the nickname “condor swift.”

#### **HUMMINGBIRDS: Trochilidae — (20)**

**Sparkling Violetear** *Colibri coruscans* — Seen often at feeders around the haciendas and very good views at the Tambocondor Restaurant. Probably the most territorial species seen on our trip, very vocal while perched.

**Tourmaline Sunangel** *Helianthus exortis* — Males and females seen at the feeders at Guango Lodge.

**Speckled Hummingbird** *Adelomyia melanogenys* — Visiting feeders at Guango Lodge.

**Long-tailed Sylph** *Agelaiocercus kingii* — Also coming to feeders at Guango Lodge, but the best views were when it was

feeding in the fuchsia flowers behind them.

**Ecuadorian Hillstar** *Oreotrochilus chimborazo* — Excellent views of a male at the Tambopaxi Restaurant in Cotopaxi National Park feeding in flowers and also nesting below the roof. Females were seen in Antisana, building a nest.

**Black-tailed Trainbearer** *Lesbia victoriae* — An emblematic species of high altitude, our best view was of a male at the hacienda San Agustin del Callo in Cotopaxi.

**Purple-backed Thornbill** *Ramphomicron microrhynchum* — A quick view of a subadult perched against the light on a pine tree in Cotopaxi National Park on the trail behind the Interpretation Center.

**Blue-mantled Thornbill** *Chalcostigma stanleyi* — Perched right in front of us for a long time in Cayambe-Coca Reserve in the las Antenas area.

**Tyrian Metaltail** *Metallura tyrianthina* — Seen in different locations its characteristic copper-colored tail helped to identify it easily as it wondered around the flowers.

**Viridian Metaltail** *Metallura williami* — Found in the upper part of Papallacta Hot Springs, part of the Cayambe-Coca Ecological Reserve.

**Shining Sunbeam** *Aglaeactis cupripennis* — First seen quickly visiting feeders at the Tambocondor Restaurant at Antisana, but the best views were around the rooms at the Papallacta Hot Springs.

**Collared Inca** *Coeligena torquata* — This elegant hummingbird was seen at Guango Lodge visiting feeders.

**Mountain Velvetbreast** *Lafresnaya lafresnayi* — Our first station for hummingbird feeders in Guango Lodge had a female feeding in flowers.

**Sword-billed Hummingbird** *Ensifera ensifera* — Spotted by Paul and seen by some participants while standing outside the reception of Papallacta Hotsprings.

**Great Sapphirewing** *Pterophanes cyanopterus* — A large hummingbird that was visiting the feeders at Tambocondor Restaurant a couple of times.

**Buff-tailed Coronet** *Boissonneaua flavescens* — The most common species at the Guango Lodge feeders.

**Chestnut-breasted Coronet** *Boissonneaua matthewsii* — Visiting the front feeders by the entrance of the restaurant at Guango Lodge.

**Fawn-breasted Brilliant** *Heliodoxa rubinoides* — Seen at the feeder station by the parking lot at Guango Lodge.

**Giant Hummingbird** *Patagona gigas* — Observed while we were having our lunch at the Tambocondor Restaurant in Antisana.

**White-bellied Woodstar** *Chaetocercus mulsant* — The tiniest species seen at Guango Lodge.

#### **RAILS, CRAKES, AND ALLIES: Rallidae — (2)**

**Virginia Rail** *Rallus limicola* — Seen at San Pablo Lake in Imbabura, it responded well to playback, coming into the open.

**Slate-colored Coot** *Fulica ardesiaca* — Seen the very first day in Cotopaxi National Park and later in several lakes that we visited.

#### **PLOVERS AND LAPWINGS: Charadriidae — (2)**

**Southern Lapwing** *Vanellus chilensis* — A pair were in the swampy area of San Pablo Lake in Imbabura.

**Andean Lapwing** *Vanellus resplendens* — Close views of a group in Cotopaxi National Park.

#### **SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES: Scolopacidae — (2)**

**Spotted Sandpiper** *Actitis macularius* — Nicely perched by the reeds at San Pablo Lake.

**Greater Yellowlegs** *Tringa melanoleuca* — After the rain in Limpiopungo Lake in Cotopaxi, there was one wondering around a patch of vegetation close to the water.

#### **GULLS AND TERNS: Laridae — (1)**

**Andean Gull** *Chroicocephalus serranus* — Seen at Cotopaxi National Park after lunch, and later at the Antisana Ecological Reserve.

### **CORMORANTS: Phalacrocoracidae — (1)**

**Neotropic Cormorant** *Nannopterum brasilianum* — A couple crossed in front of us at San Pablo Lake.

### **HERONS AND EGRETS: Ardeidae — (3)**

**Fasciated Tiger-Heron** *Tigrisoma fasciatum* — A juvenile was spotted on the Papallacta River from the bridge at Guango Lodge. Unusual to see this species in the higher elevations!

**Great Egret** *Ardea alba* — Nicely perched under a bridge when we were driving around San Pablo Lake.

**Western Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis* — **Seen, where else?**, by the cows along the roads of Imbabura Province.

### **IBISES AND SPOONBILLS: Threskiornithidae — (1)**

**Andean Ibis** *Theristicus branickii* — Excellent views on the side of the road at the highest point in the Antisana Ecological Reserve, a little group flew in front of us.

### **NEW WORLD VULTURES: Cathartidae — (2)**

**Andean Condor** *Vultur gryphus* — We saw four soaring as we arrived at Antisana Ecological Reserve. Then they perched and flew again, despite the distance, excellent views.

**Black Vulture** *Coragyps atratus* — Perched on signs and posts along the highways.

### **HAWKS, KITES, AND EAGLES: Accipitridae — (5)**

**Cinereous Harrier** *Circus cinereus* — Viewed from the van on our way to La Mica Lake in the Antisana Ecological Reserve.

**Sharp-shinned Hawk** *Accipiter striatus* — We were able to identify it from a photo taken at Cuicocha Lake, where the weather conditions were a bit difficult.

**Harris's Hawk** *Parabuteo unicinctus* — We got a quick view as we were leaving San Agustin del Callo Hacienda near Otavalo.

**Variable Hawk** *Geranoaetus polyosoma* — Two seen in Las Antenas in Cayambe-Coca Ecological Reserve.

**Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle** *Geranoaetus melanoleucus* — Seen in a few different spots in the high-altitude areas of Cotopaxi, Cuicocha and Antisana.

### **OWLS: Strigidae — (1)**

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus* — Seen perched on a log in the field outside San Agustin del Callo Hacienda.

### **TOUCANS: Ramphastidae — (1)**

**Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan** *Andigena hypoglauca* — Seen at a distance perched in a tree after a heavy rain at Guango Lodge.

### **WOODPECKERS: Picidae — (HO)**

**Crimson-mantled Woodpecker** *Colaptes rivolii* — One responded at Hacienda Cusin in Otavalo but unfortunately it didn't come in and we didn't see it.

### **FALCONS AND CARACARAS: Falconidae — (3)**

**Carunculated Caracara** *Daptrius carunculatus* — One was perched on a big rock in front of Cotopaxi Volcano, and we saw many more at Antisana.

**American Kestrel** *Falco sparverius* — Seen perched on posts and fences around the haciendas.

**Aplomado Falcon** *Falco femoralis* — A juvenile was perched on a eucalyptus tree spotted while we were driving.

### **ANTPITTAS: Grallariidae — (3)**

**Equatorial Antpitta** *Grallaria saturata* — Marc and Craig saw one on the trail behind the cabins at Papallacta Hot

Springs, the rest of the group could hear it, but it didn't come back into view.

**Tawny Antpitta** *Grallaria quitensis* — We saw one in the deep vegetation at Cotopaxi National Park. Later we had much better looks in the open at Cayambe-Coca Reserve where it was very vocal.

**Chestnut-crowned Antpitta** *Grallaricula ruficapilla* — Right at the beginning of the Cuicocha Lake trail one was very responsive and came to the open for a few seconds giving most of the participants a good view.

#### **TAPACULOS: Rhinocryptidae — (HO)**

**Blackish Tapaculo** *Scytalopus latrans* — Very vocal on the Cuicocha Lake Trail, but typical of tapaculos, it remained hidden.

#### **OVENBIRDS AND WOODCREEPERS: Furnariidae — (6)**

**Chestnut-winged Cinclodes** *Cinclodes albidiventris* — In the fields around the Tambopaxi Restaurant in Cotopaxi.

**Stout-billed Cinclodes** *Cinclodes excelsior* — Identified by its thicker and slightly curved bill, we had good looks in Antisana.

**Andean Tit-Spinetail** *Leptasthenura andicola* — Nicely seen in the Las Antenas area of the Cayambe-Coca Reserve where a pair was working on a nest.

**Many-striped Canastero** *Asthenes flammulata* — Very vocal, we saw it by La Mica Lake in Antisana and later in Las Antenas Cayambe-Coca.

**White-chinned Thistletail** *Asthenes fuliginosa* — This was our first bird in the lower part of Las Antenas, it came to the top of the bush and started singing.

**Azara's Spinetail** *Synallaxis azarae* — It required a bit of patience, but we eventually saw it at the beginning of the Cuicocha Lake Trail.

#### **COTINGAS: Cotingidae — (1)**

**Red-crested Cotinga** *Ampelion rubrocristatus* — Seen on our last day while we were looking for a tanager, this cotinga perched on top of a tree.

#### **TYRANT FLYCATCHERS: Tyrannidae — (13)**

**Southern Beardless-Tyrannulet** *Camptostoma obsoletum* — Found at the beautiful gardens of Hacienda Cusin in Otavalo.

**White-banded Tyrannulet** *Mecocerculus stictopterus* — Seen feeding in the bushes behind the hummingbird feeders at Guango Lodge.

**White-throated Tyrannulet** *Mecocerculus leucophrys* — Part of a mixed flock moving through pines on Paramo trail at Cotopaxi National Park.

**Tufted Tit-Tyrant** *Anairetes parulus* — First seen on the Paramo Trail in Cotopaxi, but we had better views in the living fence of San Agustin del Callo Hacienda.

**Subtropical Doradito** *Pseudocolopteryx acutipennis* — A local species found in the reed beds by lakes in Northern Ecuador, we found it at San Pablo Lake.

**White-crested Elaenia** *Elaenia albiceps* — Seen while walking around the entrance of San Agustin del Callo Hacienda.

**Smoke-colored Pewee** *Contopus fumigatus* — It took us a long time in the Hacienda Cusin gardens, but we eventually found one that was perched right in the open at Guango Lodge.

**Black Phoebe** *Sayornis nigricans* — We had a good view of a pair in a spot found by Paul near the Otavalo Market.

**Vermilion Flycatcher** *Pyrocephalus rubinus* — A female and later a male in the same place by the reeds of San Pablo Lake.

**Plain-capped Ground-Tyrant** *Muscisaxicola alpinus* — Found in the same place as the Andean Lapwing near the road in Cotopaxi National Park.

**Black-billed Shrike-Tyrant** *Agriornis montanus* — One was perched on top of the roof of the cabins at Tambopaxi Restaurant in Cotopaxi.

**Brown-backed Chat-Tyrant** *Ochthoeca fumicolor* — Very vocal but hard to see at Las Antenas. One eventually came into the open for us.

**Tropical Kingbird** *Tyrannus melancholicus* — Perched in the open behind Vermilion Flycatcher at San Pablo Lake.

### **CROWS AND JAYS: Corvidae — (2)**

**Turquoise Jay** *Cyanolyca turcosa* — Seen in a flock at the Guango Lodge during rain.

**Green Jay** *Cyanocorax yncas* — Traveling with the Turquoise Jays at Guango Lodge.

### **SWALLOWS AND MARTINS: Hirundinidae — (3)**

**Blue-and-white Swallow** *Pygochelidon cyanoleuca* — Seen regularly perched on wires and above the car.

**Brown-bellied Swallow** *Oreochelidon murina* — High altitude swallows that we saw at Cotopaxi, but we had better views at the Papallacta Hot Springs.

**Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica* — A huge group of migrants was seen flying near the San Agustin del Callo Hacienda.

### **WRENS: Troglodytidae — (2)**

**Mountain Wren** *Troglodytes solstitialis* — Seen on the last day before breakfast at the entrance of Papallacta Hot Springs.

**Grass Wren** *Cistothorus platensis* — We had glimpses of a calling bird at San Pablo Lake, but the best views were along the Cuicocha Lake trail.

### **DIPPERS: Cinclidae — (1)**

**White-capped Dipper** *Cinclus leucocephalus* — Seen by Mark and Craig when walking behind the cabins at Papallacta.

### **MOCKINGBIRDS AND THRASHERS: Mimidae — (1)**

**Tropical Mockingbird** *Mimus gilvus* — Seen in Otavalo by the market spot, and near the Cabañas del Lago Restaurant.

### **THRUSHES: Turdidae — (1)**

**Great Thrush** *Turdus fuscater* — Common and seen throughout the trip.

### **FINCHES AND EUPHONIAS: Fringillidae — (1)**

**Hooded Siskin** *Spinus magellanicus* — Seen quickly near San Pablo Lake, and later we had great views on the little patch of vegetation by Otavalo Market.

### **NEW WORLD SPARROWS: Passerellidae — (3)**

**Rufous-collared Sparrow** *Zonotrichia capensis* — Common, seen daily.

**Pale-naped Brushfinch** *Atlapetes pallidinucha* — Seen on our early morning bird walk before breakfast at the entrance road of Papallactas Hot Springs.

**Yellow-breasted Brushfinch** *Atlapetes latinuchus* — One of our first birds of the trip, seen along the Paramo Trail in Cotopaxi National Park, and later in other locations.

### **NEW WORLD BLACKBIRDS: Icteridae — (2)**

**Mountain Cacique** *Cacicus chrysonotus* — We saw a pair collecting nesting material in front of the restaurant in Guango Lodge.

**Shiny Cowbird** *Molothrus bonariensis* — Seen in Peguche village perched above a house.

### **NEW WORLD WARBLERS: Parulidae — (4)**

**Blackburnian Warbler** *Setophaga fusca* — Found around the gardens in Papallacta before breakfast the last day of our

trip.

**Black-crested Warbler** *Myiothlypis nigrocristata* — A vocal pair was seen while birding the entrance of San Agustin del Callo Hacienda.

**Canada Warbler** *Cardellina canadensis* — We had a quick view at the Machingara River spot close to Otavalo market.

**Spectacled Redstart** *Myioborus melanocephalus* — It was seen in Papallacta at the entrance road and on the trail behind the cabins.

### **CARDINALS AND ALLIES: Cardinalidae — (2)**

**Summer Tanager** *Piranga rubra* — Another migrant, we saw a male and female by the Machingara River near Otavalo.

**Golden Grosbeak** *Pheucticus chrysogaster* — This beautiful bird was seen along the Cuicocha Lake Trail, then we had much closer views at Hacienda Cusin.

### **TANAGERS AND ALLIES: Thraupidae — (15)**

**Hooded Mountain Tanager** *Buthraupis montana* — A large tanager seen at the entrance of Papallacta Hot Springs before breakfast.

**Scarlet-bellied Mountain Tanager** *Anisognathus igniventris* — Found on the Cuicocha Lake Trail, a very vocal tanager that gave us even better views later.

**Buff-breasted Mountain Tanager** *Dubusia taeniata* — Seen before breakfast in Papallacta along the entrance road.

**Blue-and-yellow Tanager** *Rauenia bonariensis* — A beautiful tanager found in the gardens at San Agustin del Callo.

**Blue-gray Tanager** *Thraupis episcopus* — A vocal pair was spotted by Paul near the Otavalo Market.

**Scrub Tanager** *Stilpnia vitriolina* — A very local species was a great find not far from the Otavalo Market.

**Cinereous Conebill** *Conirostrum cinereum* — Seen regularly in mixed flocks.

**Black Flowerpiercer** *Diglossa humeralis* — Found at high elevations, we saw it in several locations including Cotopaxi, Cuicocha, Antisana and Papallacta.

**Glossy Flowerpiercer** *Diglossa lafresnayii* — Just a quick view while we were walking down the road at Las Antenas at the Cayambe-Coca Reserve.

**Masked Flowerpiercer** *Diglossa cyanea* — Seen visiting feeders at Guango Lodge.

**Black-backed Bush Tanager** *Urothraupis stolzmanni* — A nice flock came right in front of us in the upper part of Papallacta Hot Springs, where it was one of our targets.

**Plumbeous Sierra Finch** *Geospizopsis unicolor* — Seen in Cotopaxi around the fields by the Tambopaxi Restaurant and later in Antisana and Papallacta.

**Ash-breasted Sierra Finch** *Geospizopsis plebejus* — An unexpected find in a neighborhood location where it was perched on a roof in Peguche.

**Black-and-white Seedeater** *Sporophila luctuosa* — Feeding in corn in Peguche Village.

**Plain-colored Seedeater** *Catamenia inornata* — Seen on the Cuicocha Lake Trail where we had good views of its yellow-pink bill.

### **WRITE-INS (10)**

**White-tailed Kite** *elanus leucurus* — Spotted by the gardens at the San Agustin del Callo Hacienda in Cotopaxi.

**Black-backed Grosbeak** *Pheucticus aureoventris* — Seen in the gardens at San Agustin del Callo Hacienda in Cotopaxi.

**Great Sapphirewing** *Pterophanes cyanopterus* — Visiting the feeders at Tambopaxi Restaurant in Antisana.

**Chiguanco Thrush** *Turdus chiguanco* — Right at the entrance of the San Agustin del Callo Hacienda, a pair posed nicely.

**Peruvian Meadowlark** *Leistes bellicosus* — Also seen at the entrance of San Agustin del Callo, perched on a wire while we were looking at an owl.

**Plumbeous Pigeon** *Patagioenas plumbea* — A flock crossed the Cuicocha Lake Trail and flew right into the clouds.

**White-tipped Dove** *Leptotila verreauxi* — Seen around Cotopaxi and Otavalo.

**Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe** *Attagis gayi* — Found on our adventure to the highest part of Las Antenas in Cayambe-Coca

Ecological Reserve at 13,000 feet!

**Masked Mountain Tanager** *Tephrophilus wetmorei* — On our last day we explored the upper part of the Papallacta Hot Springs looking for a few target species and found a nice mixed flock.

**Rainbow-bearded Thornbill** *Chalcostigma errati* — Another great find in the upper part of the Cayambe-Coca Reserve, a female that was constantly chased by another hummingbird.

**MAMMALS (4):**

**Andean Tapeti** *Sylvilagus andinus* — On the roads and trails at the Antisana Ecological Reserve and the main area of Papallacta Hot Springs

**Llama** *Lama glama* — A few groups seen in Cotopaxi and Antisana, not including the ones that came to the patio of San Agustin del Callos Hacienda.

**White-tailed Deer** *Odocoileus virginianus* — Seen in the paramo at the Antisana Ecological Reserve.

**Spectacled Bear** *Tremarctos ornatus* — A fabulous young male was spotted in the same area as the Andean condors where it was looking for food, moving fast.

**REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS: — (HO)**

**Andean Marsupial Frog** *Gastrotheca riobambae* — Heard from the hacienda's patios.

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