

Northwest Argentina w/ Iguazu Falls Extension Species List | March 4 – 21, 2024 with Naturalist Journeys



Compiled by guide Greg Butcher with local guides Mario Mosqueira and Marcos Sosa and participants Diane, Mark, Ruth, David, Trudy, Cecilia, Noel, Libby, Alberto, and Shannon

Eight people joined Naturalist Journeys March 4 for an expedition to northwest Argentina, including Jujuy, Salta, and Tucuman Provinces. Seven of them, plus two new adventurers, flew to Misiones Province to see Iguazu Falls and the birds of northeastern Argentina.

In Buenos Aires, Costanera Sur was closed, but we saw 37 species in an afternoon walk along the sidewalk next to the park. After a great steak dinner that night, we flew off to Salta the next day and quickly went birding at Parque del Bicentenario, where we picked up a nice variety of 64 species in just two hours. Unfortunately, we encountered heavy rains at Reserva del Huaico, limiting us to only 18 species. (Imagine, rain in the Yungas Cloud Forest!) We picked up quite a few species in San Lorenzo, a suburb of Salta, in between raindrops, including Yungas Guan. One of our favorite birds at Hotel Selva Montana was the tiny Slender-tailed Woodstar. On March 7, we took the long drive north to Humahuaca, enjoying birds, mountain scenery, and a good lunch along the way. The next day we drove to 14,000 feet at Hornocal and arrived to find an Andean Condor soaring below us against a dramatic mountainscape. The day after that we drove to Laguna de los Pozuelos for three species of flamingo and two plovers: Andean Lapwing and Puna Plover. We returned to Salta (finding a pair of Red-legged Seriemas just before leaving Jujuy Province), but passed it by to continue on to Coronel Moldes. We saw two pairs of Spot-backed Puffbirds just across the street from one of our favorite restaurants. The Moldes area produced two pairs of Black-legged Seriemas. Then we were back in the Andes and condors, plus Olive-crowned Crescentchest and good looks at Zimmer's Tapaculo. We ended the day with good looks at Sandy Gallito. We started the next day with gorgeous views of snow-covered Nevado de Cachi. We were rewarded with a flock of Tawny-throated Dotterels and a couple of Least Seedsnipe. Not only did we have a condor, but also a Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle. We came to a screeching halt for a pair of very cooperative Elegant Crested-Tinamous. The next day we visited the memorable Quilmes Ruins in Tucuman Province. It was Burrowing Parakeet day -- they were everywhere, in big flocks!

After our drive back to Salta, we flew to Misiones to see the incomparable Iguazu Falls! We saw Chestnut-eared Aracari, Spot-billed Toucanet, and Toco Toucan -- a great trio! We had Surucua and Atlantic Black-throated Trogons. Our group was mesmerized by the hummingbird garden, with nine species including Black Jacobin and Swallow-tailed. We visited twice and got some great photos. We saw a lot of good birds near the falls, but nothing to compare to the one thousand Great Dusky Swifts swirling around in the evening and swooping behind the falls to spend the night. Due to a rainstorm in Buenos Aires, we got an extra day birding around our Hotel Selva de Laurel, where Red-rumped Cacique was my favorite bird. Then we were off to Buenos Aires and

home.

BIRDS: 349 species were recorded in Buenos Aires, Jujuy, Salta, Tucuman, and Misiones Provinces. Details are included in the eBird link below. If you're new to eBird, be sure to click "Show All Details" on the right side of the list to expand the report and reveal where and when each of the birds were seen and how many.

[Northwest Argentina with Iguazu Falls Extension | March 4 - 21, 2024 | eBird Trip Report](#)

Following is a list of the mammals, reptiles, and amphibians we were fortunate to observe during the trip.

Family or Species Common Name Scientific Name:

MAMMALS: — (13)

Armadillo *Dasyops sp.* – We drove by an unknown species of Armadillo in Los Cardones National Park in southern Salta Province.

Azara's Agouti *Dasyprocta azarae* — We found our first agouti in Iguazu Falls National Park on the trail behind the falls.

Common Yellow-toothed Cavy *Galea musteloides* – Cavies are small rodents related to Guinea Pigs. This species was found in the Andes of Jujuy, en route to Hornacal on one day and en route to Laguna de Pozuelos the next.

Southern Mountain or Dwarf Cavy *Microcavia australis* – We found this species in the Andes Mountains in southern Salta and in Tucuman Province.

Brazilian Guinea Pig *Cavia aperea* — This was the species in Iguazu Falls National Park.

Highland Tuco-tuco *Ctenomys opimus* – This small mammal produced the large collection of burrows at Laguna de Pozuelo in Jujuy Province. It is ecologically similar to North American pocket gophers, but tuco-tucos are in a separate family.

European Hare *Lepus europaeus* — We saw one European Hare en route to Hornacal. We were lucky we didn't see more; they are over-abundant pests in some places.

Nutria or Coypu *Myocastor coypus* – This was the only mammal we saw at Costanera Sur in Buenos Aires, swimming nearby in the wetland.

Vicuna *Vicugna vicugna* — We also saw our first vicunas en route to Hornacal in Jujuy Province. The first herd had 8, then 15, and then 10. We saw them the next day en route to Laguna de Pozuelos and then later in Los Cardones National Park, where the guanacos were more abundant. Some of the vicunas were mixed in with domestic llamas, which are descended from vicunas.

Guanaco *Lama guanicoe* — Guanacos are larger than vicunas, with a larger nose and darker face. We first saw them on the way back from Laguna de Pozuelos. We saw many of them in Los Cardones National Park in southern Salta Province. I don't remember seeing any alpacas, which are the domesticated version of guanacos.

Culpeo or Red Andean Fox *Lycalopex culpaeus* — We found this species six days in a row in southern Salta Province and in Tucuman Province. It was surprisingly tolerant of our presence.

Black Capuchin *Sapajus nigritus* — There were several troops of capuchins moving through the trees above the path to the back of the falls in Iguazu National Park. They moved slowly enough that we got good binocular views.

South American Coati *Nasua nasua* — The coatis were common and tame throughout Iguazu Falls National Park. I got a close-up photo with my iPhone and almost got runover by my subject.

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS: — (7)

Broad-snouted Caiman *Caiman latirostris* — We had a large caiman in the pond near the hotel near Iguazu Falls, but it didn't deter the women from bathing and washing nor the boys from playing in the pond.

Side-necked River Turtle *Suborder Pleurodira* — We had a number of side-necked turtles at Costanera Sur in Buenos Aires. There are 60 species of side-necked turtles in three different families, so it's hard to say which species we saw.

Western Collared Spiny Lizard *Tropidurus catalanensis* — We found these lizards in several places within Iguazu Falls National Park.

Four-toed Tegu or Whip-tailed Lizard *Teius teyou* — This was the medium-sized greenish lizard that was thin with a long tail. We saw it in the open near Coronel Moldes.

Red Tegu *Salvator rufescens* — We had a good-sized tegu near Cabra Corral Reservoir in southern Salta Province.

Liolaemus sp. — We saw a lizard of this genus in southern Salta Province. Related to iguanas, there are 225 or more species in this genus.

Cane Toad *Rhinella marina* — We saw several Cane Toads in Tucuman Province and also in Iguazu Falls National Park.