

Best of Guatemala: Birding and Culture Species List | January 21 - February 4, 2026 with Naturalist Journeys



Compiled by guide Greg Butcher along with local guide extraordinaire Roland Rumm. Our clients included Mary Emma, Marria, Diana, Mike, Thomas, Richard and Spring, Pamela and Garrett, and Linda

For most of us, Guatemala brings to mind an exotic place. It is closely identified with the Mayan culture and all the archeological work to uncover the structures they built. And the national bird is the Resplendent Quetzal! The main tour was focused on the Western Highlands, which shares both birds and a Mayan history with Chiapas, Mexico. The extension covered the Peten lowlands, which shares both birds and the Mayan culture with both Belize and the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico. In the winter, Guatemala also shares many migratory birds that breed in the United States and Canada, in addition to the tropical resident species. Throughout, we mixed birding with cultural touring, learning about the Mayans and the birds simultaneously or alternately.

BIRDS:

The eBird link below details the 294 species of birds our group observed during the tour. 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.

[Best of Guatemala: Birding and Culture | January 21 - February 4, 2026 | eBird Trip Report](#)

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

Family, Species or Common Name *Scientific Name*

MAMMALS: (8 species)

Central American Agouti *Dasyprocta punctata* — We saw agoutis three days in a row at our first lodge, Los Tarrales, and once at our last, Jungle Lodge.

Deppe's Squirrel *Sciurus deppei* — We had this squirrel three separate days near Lake Atitlan and near Antigua.

Yucatan Squirrel *Sciurus yucatanensis* — This was the squirrel we saw on our second day at Tikal.

Yucatan Black Howler Monkey *Alouatta pigra* — We heard the lion-like roars daily in Tikal and got brief looks on two different days.

Central American Spider Monkey *Ateles geoffroyi* — These monkeys showed well for us every day in Tikal. It was so fun to watch them brachiating through the trees. I counted 20 in one group.

White-nosed Coati *Nasua narica* — We had our first coati at Los Tarrales. When we were climbing down from Cerro Paquisis, I heard Cruz say "pizote", then I thought I heard him say "agouti", which confused me when he pointed high into a tree. But pizote is a Spanish word for coati, which made a lot more sense. At the entrance to Tikal, I was surprised to see a large troop of coatis; I counted 30.

Gray Fox *Urocyon cinereoargenteus* — Some of us caught a glimpse of one at Yaxha.

White-tailed Deer *Odocoileus virginianus* — We saw these every day at Los Tarrales. At least one was attracted to the bird feeders.

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS: (4 species)

Morelet's Crocodile *Crocodylus moreletii* — We saw what appeared to be a large crocodile intimidated by a Least Grebe at Tikal. We must have been mistaken, but then we tried to pique the interest of a large crocodile at lunch at El Sombrero (near Yaxha) and failed. What does it take to get the interest of a crocodile in Guatemala?

Asian House Gecko (I) *Hemidactylus frenatus* — We had geckos in and near our rooms in Los Tarrales.

Central American Slider *Trachemys venusta* — We saw these at a pond in Tikal.

Giant Toad *Rhinella horribilis* — Formerly known as Cane Toads, we had these near Lake Atitlan.