

Best of Guatemala: Birding and Culture Species List | March 10 – 20, 2026 Tikal Extension | March 20 – 24, 2026 with Naturalist Journeys



Compiled by guide Stephen Grace with local guide Roland Rumm. Our clients included Betsy H, Betsy R, Dave, Trisha, Tony, Pete, Anne, Bill, Walter and Leslie.

Overview

This 15-day tour traversed a broad elevational and ecological gradient across Guatemala, from Pacific slope forests through highland pine–oak systems to the lowland tropical forests of the Petén. We recorded 336 species across 60 families. Key sites included Los Tarrales, Lake Atitlán, the Tecpán and Antigua highlands, and the lowland forests of Tikal National Park and Yaxhá.

Elevation-driven habitat turnover was the defining ecological pattern throughout the trip. At Los Tarrales, we birded across a compressed Pacific slope gradient spanning tropical dry forest, premontane forest, and cloud forest within a relatively small area. Additional transitions in the Atitlán and Tecpán highlands introduced pine–oak and montane cloud forest systems, while the final portion of the trip in the Petén shifted to extensive lowland tropical forest.

This range of habitats produced high species turnover and a diverse assemblage of birds, including regional endemics, range-restricted species, widespread Neotropical residents, and a consistent presence of North American migrants.

Highlights

Pacific Slope (Los Tarrales Gradient):

Turquoise-browed Motmot – seen well in lower-elevation dry forest.

Lesson’s Motmot – exceptional close-range encounter.

White-throated Magpie-Jay – common and conspicuous.

Yellow-naped Amazon – endangered species observed well.

Highland & Montane Species:

Pink-headed Warbler – prolonged, excellent views at Finca Chichavac.

Horned Guan – brief but diagnostic canopy encounter on Volcán Atitlán.

Resplendent Quetzal – observed at Mirador Rey Tepepul.

Wine-throated Hummingbird – late-season individual at high elevation.

Azure-rumped Tanager – multiple individuals in Pacific slope cloud forest; globally threatened.

Bar-winged Oriole – good views in montane habitat.
Gray-crowned Ground Sparrow – cooperative understory views.

Lake Atitlán & Highlands:

Blue-and-white Mockingbird – unusually cooperative individual.
Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush – seen well in the open.
Black-vented Oriole – localized species observed at Hotel Atitlán.

Antigua / Mid-elevation:

Blue-throated Motmot – extended views at Finca El Pilar.
Guatemalan Flicker – seen well after initial difficulty.
Green-throated Mountain-gem, Rufous Sabrewing, Rivoli's Hummingbird – excellent feeder activity.

Tikal & Lowland Forest:

Orange-breasted Falcon – distant but clear views perched on Temple IV.
Ocellated Turkey – multiple close encounters.
Ornate Hawk-Eagle – pair observed actively hunting.
Great Curassow (female) – seen well; regionally uncommon.
Purple-crowned Fairy – observed in natural forest conditions.
Red-capped Manakin – adult male seen well.
White-necked Puffbird – prolonged views.

Wetlands & Aquatic Species:

American Pygmy Kingfisher, Green Kingfisher, Belted Kingfisher – all observed at one site near Yaxhá.
Limpkin – feeding along wetland margins.
Northern Jacana – common in wetlands.
Least Grebe – seen well at Tikal.

Notable Observations

Summer Tanager observed handling bees and removing stingers prior to consumption.
Barred Antshrike pair engaged in vocal duetting behavior.
Ornate Hawk-Eagle predation event associated with alarm calls from multiple species.
Northern Potoo observed at day roost.
Green-breasted Mango attending nest.
Mixed-species flocks included both resident species and migratory warblers (e.g., Black-and-white Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler).

Habitat Summary

Birding occurred across four principal habitat types:

Pacific slope gradient (Los Tarrales): tropical dry forest through premontane to cloud forest
Highland pine–oak forest: Tecpán and Antigua region
Montane cloud forest: Volcán Atitlán and Mirador Rey Tepepul
Lowland tropical forest: Tikal and Yaxhá

The close spatial compression of these habitats allowed for rapid transitions between distinct bird communities and was a primary driver of overall diversity.

Summary

This tour produced a diverse species list with strong representation of regional endemics and conservation-significant birds. Key highlights included Horned Guan, Resplendent Quetzal, Azure-rumped Tanager, Pink-headed Warbler, and Orange-breasted Falcon.

The combination of habitat diversity, elevational range, and well-preserved sites resulted in a highly productive and efficient sampling of Neotropical bird communities across Guatemala.

BIRDS

336 species were recorded, of which 46 were heard only, 0 were country endemics, 3 were introduced, and 1 was guide only. Details are included below.

The eBird link below details the 336 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 | 11–24 Mar 2026 | eBird Trip Report](#)

Following is a list of the birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians and other taxa we were fortunate to observe during the trip. I = Introduced, H = Heard Only, G = Guide Only

TINAMOUS: Tinamidae — 2

Great Tinamou *Tinamus major* — (H) Tikal

A large, terrestrial bird of mature lowland tropical forest. Most often detected by its deep, haunting, fluted whistle—one of the defining sounds of the Neotropical dawn chorus. Rarely seen due to its secretive, ground-dwelling habits. Exhibits a polyandrous breeding system in which females lay eggs in multiple nests, and males perform all incubation and chick care.

Thicket Tinamou *Crypturellus cinnamomeus* — (H) Los Tarrales, Tikal

A smaller, more edge-associated tinamou, often inhabiting secondary growth, thickets, and drier forest. Voice is the primary identification cue: a series of clear, descending whistles. More tolerant of disturbed habitats than Great Tinamou but equally difficult to see.

DUCKS, GEESE, AND SWANS: Anatidae — 1

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis* — Lago Atitlán

A diving duck of open water, typically found on lakes and coastal bays. Males show a dark head with a subtle purplish sheen, pale gray back, and black chest; females are brown with a distinctive pale patch at the base of the bill. Feeds by diving for aquatic invertebrates and vegetation.

GUANS AND CURASSOWS: Cracidae — 6

Highland Guan *Penelopina nigra* — Los Tarrales, Mirador Rey Tepepul

A regional endemic montane specialist of cloud forest and pine–oak habitats. Glossy dark plumage with red throat skin; often quiet and elusive. Females browner and more cryptic.

Crested Guan *Penelope purpurascens* — Los Tarrales, Mirador Rey Tepepul, Tikal

A large, arboreal frugivore of humid forest. Identified by its dark plumage, subtle crest, and white streaking in body. Often travels in small groups; an important seed disperser. Larger than Highland Guan.

Horned Guan *Oreophaps derbianus* — Volcán Atitlán

A rare and highly localized cloud forest species found only in Chiapas, Mexico, and Guatemala, notable for its bright red horn-like casque. Endangered and dependent on intact high-elevation forest.

Great Curassow *Crax rubra* — Tikal

A large, ground-dwelling cracid of mature lowland forest. Males are glossy black with a curled crest and bright yellow cere; females are more intricately patterned and perhaps more visually striking. Increasingly rare in hunted areas but persists in protected sites like Tikal. We saw a female near the dump.

Plain Chachalaca *Ortalis vetula* — Tikal

A widespread and adaptable chachalaca of lowland forest, edges, and disturbed habitats. Loud, raucous calls are often the first indication of its presence. Typically seen in small groups moving through mid-level vegetation.

White-bellied Chachalaca *Ortalis leucogastra* — Los Tarrales

A Pacific slope endemic of dry forest and edge habitats. Similar in structure to Plain Chachalaca but more restricted in range. Noisy and social, often vocal at dawn and dusk.

NEW WORLD QUAIL: Odontophoridae —2

Buffy-crowned Wood-Partridge *Dendrortyx leucophrys* — (H) Mirador Rey Tepepul

A highland forest species of dense understory, most often detected by its rich, whistled calls at dawn and dusk. Typically remains well hidden; visual encounters are uncommon. Larger and more robust than typical quail, with a warm buff crown and gray underparts.

Singing Quail *Dactylortyx thoracicus* — (H) Volcán Atitlán

A secretive montane quail of cloud forest and dense vegetation. Best known for its distinctive, musical song that carries through the forest. Rarely seen; identification is almost always by voice. Tends to remain on the ground, moving quietly through thick cover. Heard beautifully at close range while hiking Volcán Atitlán but remained unseen.

OCELLATED TURKEY: Phasianidae —1

Ocellated Turkey *Meleagris ocellata* — Tikal

A striking, endemic gamebird of the Yucatán lowlands. Iridescent green and bronze body with distinctive blue head and orange nodules; tail marked with bold “eye spots”—ocelli. Often encountered walking through open forest and ruins, especially in protected areas.

PIGEONS AND DOVES: Columbidae —13

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia* — (I) Common on tour

An introduced urban species closely associated with human structures. Highly variable in plumage but typically gray with dark wing bars.

Scaled Pigeon *Patagioenas speciosa* — Tikal

A large forest pigeon with scaled-looking pattern on neck and upperparts. Typically found in lowland forest canopy; often detected by deep cooing calls.

Red-billed Pigeon *Patagioenas flavirostris* — Los Tarrales

A widespread lowland species with a bill that doesn't really look red. Common in dry forest and edge habitats.

Band-tailed Pigeon *Patagioenas fasciata* — Seen several places on main tour

A large, forest-associated pigeon of highlands. Identified by a pale band across the nape and yellow bill with dark tip. Often seen flying over or perched in canopy.

Short-billed Pigeon *Patagioenas nigrirostris* — Tikal

A forest pigeon of humid lowlands, best separated by voice and relatively shorter bill. Often inconspicuous in canopy.

Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* — (I) Seen often on tour

An introduced species now widespread. Pale gray with a distinctive black collar on the nape. Common in towns and agricultural areas.

Inca Dove *Columbina inca* — La Playa, Hotel Atitlán, Antigua

A small dove with scaled patterning and long tail. Often found in open areas and around human habitation.

Ruddy Ground-Dove *Columbina talpacoti* — Tikal, Yaxhá

A small, warm brown dove of open and disturbed habitats. Often seen on the ground or perched low.

Blue Ground-Dove *Claravis pretiosa* — Los Tarrales

A small forest dove; males show soft bluish plumage, females brown. Typically found in shaded understory, often near trails.

Maroon-chested Ground-Dove *Paraclaravis mondetoura* — (H) Los Tarrales

A scarce and local species of foothill forest. Usually detected by soft, low calls; visual encounters are uncommon. Males show rich chestnut underparts.

White-tipped Dove *Leptotila verreauxi* — Encountered often on main tour

A common dove of forest edge and semi-open habitats. Identified by white tips to tail and soft, mournful call.

White-faced Quail-Dove *Zentrygon albifacies* — Los Tarrales, Mirador Rey Tepepul

A secretive ground-dove of montane forest. Distinguished by bold facial pattern and rich chestnut body. More often heard than seen.

White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica* — Common on tour

A medium-sized dove of open and semi-open habitats. Notable for bold white wing patches visible in flight and as a narrow white line along the folded wing when perched. Gives a soft, rhythmic cooing call.

CUCKOOS: Cuculidae —3

Groove-billed Ani *Crotophaga sulcirostris* — Los Tarrales

A social cuckoo of open habitats and agricultural areas. Glossy black with a distinctive ridged bill. Often seen in small groups, foraging cooperatively and giving nasal, whining calls.

Pheasant Cuckoo *Dromococcyx phasianellus* — (H) Tikal

A secretive forest species more often heard than seen. Named for its long tail and pheasant-like shape. Known for its distinctive, ventriloquial whistled song that carries through dense forest.

Common Squirrel-Cuckoo *Piaya cayana* — Seen several times on main tour and at Tikal

A long-tailed, rufous cuckoo of forest and edge habitats. Moves squirrel-like through the canopy, occasionally gliding between branches. Feeds primarily on insects, including large caterpillars.

NIGHTJARS: Caprimulgidae —3

Lesser Nighthawk *Chordeiles acutipennis* — Los Tarrales

A crepuscular aerial insectivore of open and semi-open habitats. Often detected in flight at dusk, but this individual was remarkably found day-roosting while driving—well spotted by Eva. Slim profile with long pointed wings; cryptic plumage provides excellent camouflage when perched.

Common Pauraque *Nyctidromus albicollis* — (H) Los Tarrales

A widespread nightjar of forest edge and clearings. Typically seen on roads or trails at dusk or night, eyeshine often the first clue. Call is a repetitive, whistled *pauraque* that carries well through the night.

Mexican Whip-poor-will *Antrostomus arizonae* — (H) Volcán Atitlán

A montane nightjar more often heard than seen. Song is a rhythmic, repeated whistle, similar in structure to eastern whip-poor-wills. Inhabits pine-oak and cloud forest at higher elevations; cryptic and easily overlooked without vocal cues.

POTOOS: Nyctibiidae —1

Northern Potoo *Nyctibius jamaicensis* — Los Tarrales

A master of camouflage, typically found day-roosting upright on broken stumps or snags, perfectly mimicking a dead branch. Large-headed with enormous eyes adapted for nocturnal hunting. At night, gives a haunting, descending call; by day, relies almost entirely on crypsis to avoid detection.

SWIFTS: Apodidae —3

White-collared Swift *Streptoprocne zonaris* — Observed several places on main tour

A large, fast-flying swift with a bold white collar contrasting with dark body. Typically seen high overhead in groups, often over ridges and valleys. Strong, direct flight; rarely perches except at nesting sites behind waterfalls or on cliffs.

Vaux's Swift *Chaetura vauxi* — Seen several places on main tour

A small, cigar-shaped swift with rapid, fluttering flight. Often seen in loose flocks over forest and towns. Nests in hollow trees and chimneys; spends nearly all its life in the air.

Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift *Panyptila cayennensis* — Los Tarrales, Tikal

A distinctive, elegant swift with long, deeply forked tail and contrasting black-and-white pattern. Often flies lower than other swifts, over forest edges and clearings. Builds unique hanging nest structures attached to vertical surfaces.

HUMMINGBIRDS: Trochilidae —25

Long-billed Hermit *Phaethornis longirostris* — Tikal

A large hermit with a long, decurved bill and pale facial stripes. Typically found in shaded understory, visiting traplines of flowers. Flight is low and deliberate.

Stripe-throated Hermit *Phaethornis striigularis* — Tikal

A smaller hermit of dense understory. Distinguished by its size, shorter bill, and striped face. Often difficult to see well as it moves quietly through vegetation.

Purple-crowned Fairy *Heliodytes barroti* — Tikal

A striking hummingbird with a clean white underside, green back, and iridescent purple crown. Long-tailed and elegant in flight; typically seen in mid-level forest. Spectacular sighting by wetland at Tikal.

Green-breasted Mango *Anthracothorax prevostii* — Los Tarrales, Tikal, Yaxhá

A large hummingbird with a slightly decurved bill. Males show a dark central stripe bordered by green; females more patterned below. Often nests in exposed sites. Female led us to a nest at Tikal.

Rivoli's Hummingbird *Eugenes fulgens* — Finca Chichavac, Finca El Pilar

A large, highland species. Males show a dark head with iridescent crown and throat that flash in good light. Typically found at feeders and forest edges. Formerly part of Magnificent Hummingbird, now split, with Rivoli's occurring north of Costa Rica and Talamanca Hummingbird (*E. spectabilis*) to the south.

Long-billed Starthroat *Heliomaster longirostris* — Los Tarrales

A large hummingbird with a long straight bill and white stripe behind the eye. Often perches conspicuously; favors open habitats and edges. Seen nectaring on long-tubed Sierra Madere Lobelia at Los Tarrales.

Green-throated Mountain-gem *Lampornis viridipallens* — Mirador Rey Tepepul, Volcán Atitlán, Finca El Pilar

A highland species with glittering green throat and contrasting darker body. Often seen at feeders; fairly common in montane forest.

Amethyst-throated Mountain-gem *Lampornis amethystinus* — Finca Chichavac

A montane hummingbird with a rich amethyst throat in males. Typically inhabits cloud forest and forest edges.

Slender Sheartail *Doricha enicura* — La Playa, Hotel Bambú

A small hummingbird with elongated outer tail feathers. Occurs in open habitats and scrub; often perches prominently.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird *Archilochus colubris* — Los Tarrales

A North American migrant wintering in Central America. Males show a brilliant ruby-red throat; females are plain-faced. Despite its tiny size, undertakes an extraordinary migration, including non-stop flights of up to 500 miles across the Gulf of Mexico.

Wine-throated Hummingbird *Selasphorus ellioti* — Volcán Atitlán

A tiny highland hummingbird; males flash an iridescent wine-colored gorget when catching the light. This was a late-season individual.

Canivet's Emerald *Cynanthus canivetii* — Tikal

A small hummingbird of lowland forest and edge habitats. Males are bright emerald green; females are duller with pale underparts. Active and often conspicuous at forest edges and flowering shrubs.

White-eared Hummingbird *Basilinna leucotis* — Finca El Pilar

A distinctive hummingbird with bold white ear stripe and green body. Common in highland pine-oak habitats and at feeders.

Wedge-tailed Sabrewing *Pampa curvipennis* — Tikal, Yaxhá

A large hummingbird with a long tail. Often associated with forest understory and edges. Seen well at Yaxhá lunch venue on last day.

Rufous Sabrewing *Pampa rufa* — Finca El Pilar

A large hummingbird with rich rufous coloration and curved bill. Typically found in humid forest and at feeders.

Emerald-chinned Hummingbird *Abeillia abeillei* — Mirador Rey Tepepul

A small hummingbird with a bright emerald throat patch in males. Occurs in highland forest and edges.

Violet Sabrewing *Campylopterus hemileucurus* — (H) Los Tarrales

A large, dark hummingbird of humid forest. Named for its violet sheen; often heard rather than seen away from feeders.

Scaly-breasted Hummingbird *Phaeochroa cuvierii* — Tikal

A medium-sized hummingbird with scaled patterning on the underparts. Typically found in lowland forest and edges.

Very vocal.

Azure-crowned Hummingbird *Saucerottia cyanocephala* — Seen often on main tour

A widespread species with a bright blue crown. Common in a variety of habitats including gardens and forest edge.

Berylline Hummingbird *Saucerottia beryllina* — Los Tarrales, Finca El Pilar

A medium-sized hummingbird with metallic green body and rufous in wings and tail. Often common at feeders.

Blue-tailed Hummingbird *Saucerottia cyanura* — Los Tarrales

A lowland species with a distinctive blue tail. Often found in forest edge and second growth.

Cinnamon Hummingbird *Amazilia rutila* — Universidad Francisco Marroquín, Cocales, Los Tarrales

A warm rufous hummingbird of dry forest and open habitats. Often common in disturbed areas.

Rufous-tailed Hummingbird *Amazilia tzacatl* — Tikal, Yaxhá

A common and adaptable hummingbird of open and semi-open habitats. Aggressive at flowers and feeders.

White-bellied Emerald *Chlorestes candida* — Tikal

A small hummingbird with white underparts and green upperparts. Typically found in lowland forest edges.

Blue-throated Goldentail *Chlorestes eliciae* — Los Tarrales

A distinctive hummingbird with blue throat and contrasting golden-bronze tail. Often found in forest edge and semi-open habitats.

RAILS, COOTS, AND ALLIES: Rallidae —4

Russet-naped Wood-Rail *Aramides albiventris* — Tikal

A large, terrestrial rail of forest edges and wetlands. Boldly patterned with gray face, rufous nape, yellow bill, and long hot-pink legs. Often surprisingly conspicuous, giving loud, ringing calls.

Common Gallinule *Gallinula galeata* — Lago Atitlán, El Remate, Tikal

A widespread wetland species with dark plumage, red frontal shield, and white flank stripe. Often seen swimming or walking on vegetation.

American Coot *Fulica americana* — Lago Atitlán

A waterbird with white bill and lobed toes. Common on open water; often forms loose flocks.

Purple Gallinule *Porphyrio martinica* — El Remate

A striking wetland bird with iridescent purple and green plumage, red bill with yellow tip, and long yellow legs. Walks delicately across floating vegetation.

LIMPKIN: Aramidae —1

Limpkin *Aramus guarauna* — El Remate

A distinctive wading bird with a long, slightly decurved bill specialized for feeding on apple snails. Brown with white streaking; often seen alone in wetlands. Gives a loud, wailing call, especially at dusk.

JACANAS: Jacanidae —1

Northern Jacana *Jacana spinosa* — El Remate

A wetland specialist with extremely long toes that allow it to walk on floating vegetation. Boldly patterned with chestnut body and black head and neck. Known for polyandrous breeding, with males providing parental care.

SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES: Scolopacidae —1

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius* — Lago Atitlán

A small, teetering shorebird of lake edges and rocky margins. In nonbreeding plumage, plain brown above and white below; constantly bobs its tail. Often solitary and highly adaptable.

GULLS AND TERNS: Laridae —1

Laughing Gull *Leucophaeus atricilla* — El Remate

A coastal species occasionally found inland on large water bodies. In nonbreeding plumage shows a gray back, white head with smudging, and dark bill. Named for its distinctive, laughing call.

GREBES: Podicipedidae —2

Least Grebe *Tachybaptus dominicus* — Tikal, Yaxhá

A small, compact grebe of freshwater ponds and wetlands. Dark overall with bright yellow eye; often dives quickly when approached. Prefers vegetated margins.

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps* — El Remate

A chunky grebe with a thick, pale bill (dark band in breeding season). Often heard giving a hollow, gulping call. Excellent diver, frequently submerging rather than flying.

CORMORANTS: Phalacrocoracidae —1

Neotropic Cormorant *Nannopterum brasilianum* — El Remate, Yaxhá

A small, slender cormorant of inland waters. Long tail and narrow bill help distinguish it from larger species. Often seen perched with wings spread to dry after diving.

HERONS AND EGRETS: Ardeidae —5

Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea* — Lago Atitlán, El Remate, Tikal

A slender heron often seen in shallow wetlands. Adults are slate-blue; immatures entirely white, confusingly similar to egrets. Typically forages slowly, often alone.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula* — Lago Atitlán

A small white egret with black bill, black legs, and bright yellow feet. Active feeder, often stirring water with its feet.

Green Heron *Butorides virescens* — Yaxhá

A small, stocky heron of shaded wetland edges. Dark greenish back, chestnut neck, and a sharp, dagger-like bill. Often perches motionless before striking prey. Notable for using bait—such as feathers, insects, or small objects—to lure fish within reach.

Western Cattle Egret *Ardea ibis* — Seen while driving outside Guatemala City; common on extension

A widespread species often associated with livestock. White overall with buff tones in breeding plumage. Frequently seen in fields rather than wetlands.

Great Egret *Ardea alba* — Lago Atitlán, El Remate, Yaxhá

A large, elegant white egret with a long yellow bill and black legs. Typically forages in open water and wetland margins with slow, deliberate movements.

PELICANS: Pelecanidae —1

Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis* — Lago Atitlán, El Remate

A large coastal species occasionally found inland on large lakes. Recognized by its long bill with expandable pouch and gliding flight low over water. Feeds by plunge-diving for fish.

NEW WORLD VULTURES: Cathartidae —3

King Vulture *Sarcoramphus papa* — Tikal

A large, striking vulture with white body, black flight feathers, and vividly colored head. Soars high over forest; relies on other vultures to locate carrion due to limited sense of smell.

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus* — Common on main tour and extension

A compact, black vulture with short tail and broad wings. Often seen in groups; relies on sight and frequently follows

Turkey Vultures to carcasses.

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura* — Common on main tour and extension

A widespread scavenger with long wings held in a shallow V while soaring. Uses an acute sense of smell to locate carrion, allowing it to find food hidden from other vultures.

OSPREY: Pandionidae —1

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* — Lago Atitlán

A large fish-eating raptor often seen hovering or plunging feet-first into water. Long, narrow wings with a distinctive kink at the wrist. Cosmopolitan and highly migratory.

HAWKS, KITES, AND EAGLES: Accipitridae —12

Double-toothed Kite *Harpagus bidentatus* — Tikal

A small forest raptor often associated with monkey troops, capturing insects and small prey flushed by their movement. Compact with short wings and tail; typically seen perched quietly.

Plumbeous Kite *Ictinia plumbea* — Tikal, Yaxhá

A slender, long-winged kite of open forest and edges. Graceful, buoyant flight; feeds heavily on insects, often taken on the wing. Migratory in much of its range.

Snail Kite *Rostrhamus sociabilis* — El Remate

A specialized raptor with a strongly curved bill adapted for extracting apple snails. Typically found over wetlands, flying low and methodically.

Sharp-shinned Hawk *Accipiter striatus* — Finca Chichavac, Finca El Pilar

A small forest hawk with short rounded wings and long tail. Central American birds show pale underparts. Agile and fast, preying primarily on small birds.

Black Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus tyrannus* — Los Tarrales

A powerful forest eagle with bold black-and-white patterning. Typically seen soaring above canopy or perched in tall trees. Hunts birds and mammals.

Ornate Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus ornatus* — Los Tarrales, Tikal

A striking forest raptor with bold crest and barred underparts. Observed hunting; presence at Tikal was revealed by alarm calls of spider monkeys and Black-throated Shrike-Tanager. A top predator of mid-sized forest animals.

Great Black Hawk *Buteogallus urubitinga* — Los Tarrales

A large, all-dark raptor with broad wings and strong bill. Often associated with rivers and wetlands.

Roadside Hawk *Rupornis magnirostris* — Los Tarrales, Tikal

A common and adaptable small hawk of open and semi-open habitats. Often seen perched along roadsides; gives a distinctive, repetitive call.

Gray Hawk *Buteo plagiatus* — Outside Guatemala City, El Remate

A medium-sized hawk of open woodland. Pale gray with fine barring and a banded tail. Often seen perched conspicuously.

Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus* — Universidad Francisco Marroquín, Los Tarrales

A migratory forest hawk. Compact with broad wings and banded tail. Often seen soaring in groups during migration.

Short-tailed Hawk *Buteo brachyurus* — Seen several times on main tour and extension

A variable species with distinct light and dark morphs. Often soars high over forest with broad wings and a notably short tail. Frequently hunts from altitude, making sudden, steep stoops onto prey below.

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis* — La Playa, Finca El Pilar

A widespread large hawk. Variable plumage; most individuals show a reddish tail. Common in open habitats and edges.

BARN-OWLS: Tytonidae —1

American Barn Owl *Tyto furcata* — Antigua (cathedral ruins)

A pale, ghostly owl with a heart-shaped face and dark eyes. Typically roosts in buildings, ruins, and cavities by day. Hunts at night over open areas, using exceptional hearing to locate prey.

OWLS: Strigidae —4

Northern Pygmy-Owl *Glaucidium gnoma* — Finca Chichavac

A small, diurnal owl of montane forest. Often active by day, giving a series of tooting whistles. Guatemalan birds represent a distinct subspecies.

Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl *Glaucidium brasilianum* — Cerro de la Cruz, El Remate

A small, bold owl of open woodland and edge habitats. Active during the day; often mobbed by small birds. Notable for false “eye spots” on the back of the head.

Mottled Owl *Strix virgata* — (H) Tikal

A common forest owl, usually detected by its deep, rhythmic hooting calls at night. Inhabits a wide range of wooded habitats; typically well hidden by day.

Fulvous Owl *Strix fulvescens* — Volcán Atitlán

A highland cloud forest specialist with rich rufous-brown plumage and dark eyes. Two individuals seen well; typically uncommon and local in range. The song is a series of deep, resonant hoots, structurally similar to its close relative, the Barred Owl, but distinct in tone and cadence.

TROGONS: Trogonidae —5

Resplendent Quetzal *Pharomachrus mocinno* — Heard at Volcán Atitlán; seen at Mirador Rey Tepepul

An iconic cloud forest species with long, flowing upper tail coverts in males and rich green and red plumage. Guatemalan birds belong to the northern group, which is slightly smaller and tends to show shorter tail plumes compared to the Costa Rican population, which is often treated separately and averages longer-tailed with subtle plumage differences. Strongly tied to fruiting trees, especially wild avocados, which it swallows whole and disperses.

Slaty-tailed Trogon *Trogon massena* — Tikal

A large trogon of lowland forest. Males show a green head, red belly, and distinctive slate-gray tail; females browner. Typically perches quietly in mid-level forest.

Gartered Violaceous Trogon *Trogon caligatus* — Seen several places on main tour and extension

A smaller trogon of forest edge and second growth. Males show violet back, bright yellow belly, and yellow orbital ring; females gray back, dull yellow belly, and pale orbital ring. Often more active and vocal than other trogons.

Mountain Trogon *Trogon mexicanus* — Finca Chichavac

A highland species of pine–oak and cloud forest. Males show a green head and red belly with a white collar; tail has big white squares. Often perches quietly at mid-level.

Collared Trogon *Trogon collaris* — Los Tarrales, Finca El Pilar

A mid-elevation forest trogon. Males show a green head, red belly, and narrow white collar; females more muted. Often detected by soft, repetitive calls.

MOTMOTS: Momotidae —4

Tody Motmot *Hylomanes momotula* — Los Tarrales

A small, forest-interior motmot of dense understory. Often detected by its soft, repetitive calls; seen only fleetingly as it moves low and quietly through vegetation. Lacks the long racket-tipped tail typical of most motmots.

Blue-throated Motmot *Aspatha gularis* — Finca El Pilar

A highland specialist lacking racket-tipped tail feathers. Distinguished by its rich blue throat and more uniform tail. Seen exceptionally well by all in mid-elevation forest at Finca El Pilar.

Lesson’s Motmot *Momotus lessonii* — Los Tarrales, Finca El Pilar, Tikal

A widespread motmot of forest and edge habitats. Notable for its long tail with racket tips, created by the loss of barbs along the shaft. Seen exceptionally well at Los Tarrales; also, a shed racket-tipped feather was found at Los Tarrales.

Turquoise-browed Motmot *Eumomota superciliosa* — Cocalas (“Crazy Gas Station”)

A striking open-country motmot with bright turquoise eyebrow and long racketed tail. Often perches conspicuously on wires and fence posts in dry forest habitats.

KINGFISHERS: Alcedinidae —3

Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon* — Yaxhá

A large, widespread kingfisher of lakes and rivers. Blue-gray with shaggy crest; females show an additional rufous band across the chest. Often seen perched over water or hovering before diving.

Green Kingfisher *Chloroceryle americana* — Yaxhá

A small, compact kingfisher of quiet streams and ponds. Males show a rufous chest band; females green-streaked below. Typically perches low over water before diving.

American Pygmy Kingfisher *Chloroceryle aenea* — Yaxhá

A tiny, richly colored kingfisher of shaded forest streams. Rufous underparts and green upperparts; often perches low and close to water. A female was seen exceptionally well by all perched and diving for fish.

PUFFBIRDS: *Bucconidae* —2

White-necked Puffbird *Notharchus hyperrhynchus* — Tikal

A large, thick-billed puffbird of lowland forest. Black upperparts contrast with a bold white collar. Typically perches motionless for long periods before sallying out to capture large insects or small vertebrates.

White-whiskered Puffbird *Malacoptila panamensis* — Tikal

A smaller, understory puffbird with red eyes, stout bill, and distinctive white “whiskers.” Often sits quietly in shaded forest interior; more often heard than seen. Sallies out briefly to take insects.

JACAMARS: *Galbulidae* —1

Rufous-tailed Jacamar *Galbula ruficauda* — (H) Tikal

A slender, iridescent insectivore with long, straight bill and rich rufous tail. Typically perches on exposed branches, making short flights to capture flying insects. Often found along forest edges and clearings.

TOUCANS: *Ramphastidae* —3

Northern Emerald-Toucanet *Aulacorhynchus prasinus* — Seen several times on main tour; heard on Tikal extension

A small, primarily green toucanet of montane and foothill forest. Shows a relatively short bill with black and yellow markings. Often moves in small groups through canopy and mid-levels.

Collared Aracari *Pteroglossus torquatus* — Los Tarrales, Tikal

A medium-sized aracari with bold patterning and a serrated bill. Often travels in groups; observed at a nest cavity at Los Tarrales. Feeds on fruit and small animals.

Keel-billed Toucan *Ramphastos sulfuratus* — Common at Tikal; one at Yaxhá

A large, iconic toucan with a brightly colored, multihued bill. Typically found in lowland forest canopy, moving in small groups. Highly vocal and an important seed disperser.

WOODPECKERS: *Picidae* —10

Acorn Woodpecker *Melanerpes formicivorus* — Universidad Francisco Marroquín, Finca El Pilar

A social woodpecker of highland pine–oak habitats. Known for storing acorns in granary trees and communal nesting. Bold black-and-white pattern with red crown; often seen in groups.

Golden-fronted Woodpecker *Melanerpes aurifrons* — Common on tour and extension; nesting at Los Tarrales

A common lowland woodpecker with golden-yellow forehead and nape. Frequently nests in cavities; several observed at nest holes.

Ladder-backed Woodpecker *Dryobates scalaris* — (H) Yaxhá

A small woodpecker of dry and open habitats. Black-and-white barred back (“ladder” pattern); males show a red crown.

Hairy Woodpecker *Dryobates villosus* — Heard at Mirador Rey Tepepul; seen at Cerro Alux, Antigua

A medium-sized woodpecker with a long bill and clean white back. Central American birds are larger and darker than northern populations.

Smoky-brown Woodpecker *Dryobates fumigatus* — Los Tarrales

A small, uniformly brown woodpecker of humid forest. Often inconspicuous, moving quietly along trunks and branches.

Chestnut-colored Woodpecker *Celeus castaneus* — Tikal

A distinctive lowland species with rich chestnut plumage and shaggy blond crest. Typically found in forest interior, often associated with dead wood.

Lineated Woodpecker *Dryocopus lineatus* — Los Tarrales, Tikal, Yaxhá

A large, striking woodpecker with bold black-and-white facial stripes and red crest. Similar in structure to Pileated Woodpecker; inhabits a wide range of wooded habitats.

Pale-billed Woodpecker *Campephilus guatemalensis* — Yaxhá

A massive woodpecker with pale bill and bold black-and-white pattern. Closely related to the Ivory-billed Woodpecker; requires large tracts of mature forest.

Golden-olive Woodpecker *Colaptes rubiginosus* — Los Tarrales, Finca El Pilar; heard at Tikal

A medium-sized woodpecker with olive tones and barred back. Often forages on trunks and larger branches in forested habitats.

Guatemalan Flicker *Colaptes mexicanoides* — Finca Chichavac, Finca El Pilar, Cerro Alux

A highland flicker associated with pine–oak forest. Brownish with barred patterning; often forages on the ground as well as in trees.

FALCONS AND CARACARAS: Falconidae —7

Collared Forest-Falcon *Micrastur semitorquatus* — (H) Cerro Alux

A large, powerful forest falcon of dense interior habitats. Deep, resonant calls carry through the understory. Often remains unseen despite vocal activity.

Barred Forest-Falcon *Micrastur ruficollis* — (H) Tikal; briefly seen by guide only

A smaller, more secretive forest falcon with a rapid, accelerating call. Typically hunts from concealed perches in lowland forest.

Laughing Falcon *Herpetotheres cachinnans* — (H) Los Tarrales, Tikal

A snake-specialist with a distinctive loud, cackling call. Often perches conspicuously in open woodland or forest edge.

Crested Caracara *Caracara plancus* — Seen while driving outside Guatemala City; Los Tarrales (immature)

A large, terrestrial falcon often associated with open habitats. Unlike most falcons, frequently walks and scavenges; long-legged with striking facial skin.

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius* — Finca El Pilar, El Remate

A small, widespread falcon of open country. Often seen hovering or perched on wires; sexually dimorphic with males showing blue-gray wings.

Orange-breasted Falcon *Falco deiroleucus* — Tikal (Temple IV; perched and in flight)

A rare and highly sought-after Neotropical falcon of large forest tracts. Powerful, fast-flying predator; distinguished by rich orange underparts and bold facial pattern.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* — Universidad Francisco Marroquín

A cosmopolitan, high-speed aerial predator. Known for stoops exceeding 240 m/h; typically hunts birds in open airspace.

NEW WORLD PARROTS: Psittacidae —11

Barred Parakeet *Bolborhynchus lineola* — Los Tarrales (flyovers)

A small, highland parakeet often detected in fast-moving flocks overhead. Finely barred green plumage; typically gives high-pitched flight calls.

Orange-chinned Parakeet *Brotogeris jugularis* — Cocales (“Crazy Gas Station”), Los Tarrales

A small, social parakeet of lowland and edge habitats. Notable for orange patch on chin (often subtle) and constant chattering vocalizations.

Orange-fronted Parakeet *Eupsittula canicularis* — Los Tarrales

A dry-forest species with a distinctive orange forehead and yellowish eyeringace. Often seen in small flocks in open habitats.

Olive-throated Parakeet *Eupsittula nana* — Tikal

A common lowland parakeet of forest and edge. Green overall with a brownish breast and white eyering; noisy and often detected by calls.

Pacific Parakeet *Psittacara strenuus* — Los Tarrales

A large, long-tailed parakeet of Pacific slope forests. Typically seen in fast, vocal flocks moving between feeding areas.

Observed in nesting cavities in palms at Los Tarrales.

White-crowned Parrot *Pionus senilis* — Tikal

A stocky forest parrot with a pale crown and red undertail coverts. Often quiet and easily overlooked in canopy.

Brown-hooded Parrot *Pyrilia haematotis* — Tikal

A compact canopy parrot with a dark hood and contrasting pale face. Typically encountered in small, tight flocks in lowland forest.

White-fronted Amazon *Amazona albifrons* — Los Tarrales, Tikal, Yaxhá

A small Amazon with a white forehead, red face, and red shoulder patch. Often in noisy flocks; favors semi-open habitats and forest edge.

Yellow-naped Amazon *Amazona auropalliata* — Los Tarrales

A large, endangered Amazon distinguished by bright yellow nape. Highly vocal; subject to trapping pressure across much of its range.

Red-lored Amazon *Amazona autumnalis* — Tikal, Yaxhá

A widespread lowland Amazon with red forehead and lores. Common in forested habitats; often travels in pairs or small groups.

Mealy Amazon *Amazona farinosa* — Tikal

The largest Amazon in the region. Generally green with a pale, “mealy” wash and bluish crown; deep, powerful calls carry over long distances.

ANTBIRDS: *Thamnophilidae* —1

Barred Antshrike *Thamnophilus doliatus* — Los Tarrales, Cerro Alux

A common antbird of edges and semi-open habitats. Strong sexual dimorphism: males black-and-white barred, females warm rufous with barring. Pairs often give coordinated duets and remain low in dense vegetation.

ANTTHRUSHES: *Formicariidae* —1

Mayan Antthrush *Formicarius moniliger* — (H) Tikal

A secretive, ground-dwelling forest species. More often heard than seen, giving a clear, whistled song from the understory. Walks deliberately along the forest floor, flicking its tail; favors dense lowland forest. We worked hard to find this species when we heard it along the road to Tikal, yet it remained unseen.

OVENBIRDS AND WOODCREEPERS: *Furnariidae* —11

Middle American Leaf Tosser *Sclerurus mexicanus* — (H) Mirador Rey Tepepul

A secretive, terrestrial furnariid of montane forest. Typically heard giving clear, whistled notes from shaded slopes; forages by flipping leaf litter.

Scaly-throated Leaf Tosser *Sclerurus guatemalensis* — (H) Tikal

A lowland counterpart to the above, favoring humid forest floor. Distinguished by scaly throat pattern and slightly different vocalizations.

Olivaceous Woodcreeper *Sittasomus griseicapillus* — Tikal

A small, plain brown woodcreeper with a thin bill. Often moves with mixed flocks; climbs trunks in short, deliberate hops.

Ruddy Woodcreeper *Dendrocincla homochroa* — Tikal

A uniform rufous woodcreeper of forest interior. Frequently follows army ant swarms, taking flushed prey.

Tawny-winged Woodcreeper *Dendrocincla anabatina* — Tikal

A medium-sized woodcreeper with warm-toned wings. Also associated with ant swarms; slightly more patterned than Ruddy.

Northern Barred Woodcreeper *Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae* — Tikal

A large, heavily barred woodcreeper with a strong bill. Often climbs large trunks in mature forest.

Ivory-billed Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus flavigaster* — Los Tarrales, Tikal, Yaxhá

A common and widespread woodcreeper. Streaked brown with a long, pale, slightly decurved bill; frequently joins mixed-species flocks.

Spotted Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus erythropygius* — Volcán Atitlán

A montane species with bold spotting on underparts. Typically found in humid forest at mid to higher elevations.

Northern Plain Xenops *Xenops mexicanus* — (H) Tikal

A small, nuthatch-like furnariid. Often forages along small branches, probing bark and dead leaves; usually in mixed flocks.

Ruddy Foliage-gleaner *Clibanornis rubiginosus* — (H) Mirador Rey Tepepul

A skulking species of dense montane understory. Detected primarily by voice; probes dead leaves and epiphytes for insects.

Rufous-breasted Spinetail *Synallaxis erythrothorax* — (H) Los Tarrales

A small, long-tailed furnariid of dense vegetation. Gives sharp, accelerating calls; often remains hidden in tangles.

MANAKINS: Pipridae —3

Long-tailed Manakin *Chiroxiphia linearis* — (H) Los Tarrales

A lekking species of Pacific slope dry forest. Males perform coordinated courtship displays with synchronized movements and calls; exceptionally long central tail streamers.

White-collared Manakin *Manacus candei* — Heard at Tikal; seen at Yaxhá (lunch site)

A classic lekking manakin of lowland forest. Males snap their wings to produce sharp “clacks” during display; compact black-and-white pattern with bright yellow collar.

Red-capped Manakin *Ceratopipra mentalis* — Male seen along road to Tikal; female at Tikal

A small, forest-dwelling manakin. Male glossy black with vivid red cap; famous for rapid “moonwalk” display along horizontal branches.

TITYRAS AND BECARDS: Tityridae —4

Northern Schiffornis *Schiffornis veraepacis* — Tikal

A quiet, thrush-like bird of the forest understory and midstory. Often overlooked; best detected by its clear, whistled song—often rendered as “heeeey, riki!” Subtle olive-brown plumage with minimal contrast.

Black-crowned Tityra *Tityra inquisitor* — Tikal

A canopy species of lowland forest. Males pale overall with contrasting black crown; often seen in pairs or small groups, sometimes using old cavities.

Masked Tityra *Tityra semifasciata* — Los Tarrales, Mirador Rey Tepepul, Tikal, Yaxhá

A larger, more widespread tityra with males showing a bold black facial mask, red orbital skin, and red and black bill. Frequently perches conspicuously in mid to upper canopy; often near forest edge.

Rose-throated Becard *Pachyramphus aglaiae* — Los Tarrales, La Playa

A strongly sexually dimorphic species; males are gray with a pale pink throat patch, females warm brown. Builds large, hanging, globular nests suspended from branches, often over open areas or near forest edges, likely reducing access for predators.

ROYAL FLYCATCHERS AND ALLIES: Onychorhynchidae —1

Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher *Terentotriccus erythrurus* — Tikal

A small, unobtrusive forest bird of the lower understory. Warm rufous tail contrasts with a plain olive-brown body. Typically perches quietly and makes short sallies for insects. Despite its name, not a true tyrant flycatcher; now grouped with royal flycatchers and allies.

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS: Tyrannidae —35

Stub-tailed Spadebill *Platyrinchus cancrominus* — Tikal

A tiny, short-tailed forest flycatcher with a broad, flat bill. Often sits quietly in the understory; detected by soft, high-pitched calls.

Ochre-bellied Flycatcher *Mionectes oleagineus* — Tikal

A common forest interior species. Lacks strong wingbars; identified by soft whistled calls and ochre wash on belly.

Sepia-capped Flycatcher *Leptopogon amaurocephalus* — Tikal

A small, active flycatcher of midstory. Warm brown cap and grayish face with dark ear patch; often in mixed flocks.

Northern Bentbill *Oncostoma cinereigulare* — (H) Los Tarrales, Yaxhá; seen at Tikal

A distinctive small flycatcher with a slightly hooked bill. Gives a sharp, ringing call; often in dense vegetation.

Common Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum cinereum* — (H) Cocales; seen at Los Tarrales

A tiny, bright yellow flycatcher with a black mask and broad bill. Active and conspicuous in edge habitats; builds a hanging pouch nest.

Eye-ringed Flatbill *Rhynchocyclus brevirostris* — Tikal

A striking flatbill with bold white eyering. Typically sits still between sallies.

Yellow-olive Flatbill *Tolmomyias sulphureus* — Tikal

A vocal canopy species best identified by voice. Plain olive with yellowish wing edgings and pale underparts; often inconspicuous.

Yellow-bellied Tyrannulet *Ornithion semiflavum* — Tikal, Yaxhá

A small canopy tyrannulet. Small stubby bill, bold white eyebrow, yellowish below; active in mixed flocks.

Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet *Camptostoma imberbe* — Yaxhá

A small, gray tyrannulet of open and edge habitats, with a subtle bushy crown. Often detected by voice—a distinctive series of sharp, descending whistles, frequently rendered as “peet-peet-pee.”

Greenish Elaenia *Myiopagis viridicata* — Tikal, Yaxhá

A subtle canopy species that lacks wingbars and shows a faint whitish eyebrow. Often identified by its whistled call.

Mountain Elaenia *Elaenia frantzii* — Mirador Rey Tepepul

A highland elaenia of montane forest and edges, with a rounded head, thin pale eyering, and subtle whitish wing edging. Typically active in the midstory and canopy, often detected by voice.

Guatemalan Tyrannulet *Zimmerius villissimus* — Los Tarrales, Mirador Rey Tepepul, Volcán Atitlán

A highland endemic found in southern Mexico, Guatemala and western El Salvador. Small, with a small bill and whitish eyebrow.

Tufted Flycatcher *Mitrephanes phaeocercus* — Finca Chichavac

A distinctive montane flycatcher with pointed crest. Often perches conspicuously in shaded forest.

Olive-sided Flycatcher *Contopus cooperi* — Los Tarrales

A migrant of open perches. Large flycatcher with “vested” appearance; sallies for aerial insects.

Greater Pewee *Contopus pertinax* — Universidad Francisco Marroquín, La Playa

A large pewee with a peaked head and clear whistled “Jose Maria” song.

Northern Tropical Pewee *Contopus bogotensis* — Los Tarrales

A smaller pewee with subtle plumage differences from migratory Western Wood-Pewee and Eastern Wood-Pewee; often requires voice for confirmation.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher *Empidonax flaviventris* — Los Tarrales, Tikal, Yaxhá

A migrant empid with bright yellow underparts and bold eyering.

Least Flycatcher *Empidonax minimus* — Cocales, Los Tarrales, La Playa

A small grayish-olive empid with bold white eyering and small bill; gives sharp “che-BEK” call.

Hammond’s Flycatcher *Empidonax hammondii* — La Playa, Cerro Alux

An empid migrant with long primary projection and grayish tones; often silent in winter.

Pine Flycatcher *Empidonax affinis* — Finca Chichavac

A highland empid associated with pine–oak forest. Similar to Hammond’s. Identified by its call at Finca Chichavac.

Yellowish Flycatcher *Empidonax flavescens* — (H) Mirador Rey Tepepul

A cloud forest empid; bright yellow tones and distinctive vocalizations.

Vermilion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus* — El Remate

A striking open-country species. Males bright red with dark mask; often hawks insects from exposed perches.

Bright-rumped Attila *Attila spadiceus* — (H) Tikal, Yaxhá

A robust, secretive flycatcher of forest interior. Loud, far-carrying whistles; often heard more than seen.

Yucatán Flycatcher *Myiarchus yucatanensis* — Yaxhá

A regional Myiarchus with pale underparts and rufous tail edges; tied to Yucatán lowlands. Similar to Dusky-capped—best identified by voice.

Dusky-capped Flycatcher *Myiarchus tuberculifer* — Common on main tour and extension

A widespread forest-edge species with a distinctive mournful whistled *wheer* call.

Great Crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus crinitus* — Tikal, Yaxhá

A migratory *Myiarchus* with a bright yellow belly and rich rufous in the tail. Often detected by its loud, rising *queeEEEEP* call.

Brown-crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus tyrannulus* — Los Tarrales, Tikal, Yaxhá

A large *Myiarchus* of open and semi-open habitats; pale throat and strong bill.

Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus* — Common in lowlands

A bold, conspicuous species with loud *kis-ka-dee* call. Yellow belly and black-and-white head pattern.

Boat-billed Flycatcher *Megarynchus pitangua* — Universidad Francisco Marroquín, Los Tarrales, Mirador Rey Tepepul, Finca El Pilar

A large-headed flycatcher with an outsized, broad bill. Often confused with Great Kiskadee, but more forest-associated and lacking rufous in the wings and tail. Voice is distinctly different—typically a loud, abrupt *BREEEP!* rather than the familiar *kis-ka-dee* refrain.

Social Flycatcher *Myiozetetes similis* — Common on main tour and extension

A smaller kiskadee-like species with paler mask and smaller bill; often in pairs.

Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher *Myiodynastes luteiventris* — Los Tarrales (first of season), heard on extension

A migratory species with streaked underparts; often vocal.

Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus* — Common on main tour and extension

A ubiquitous open-country flycatcher with a pale gray head, dark upperparts, and bright yellow underparts. Long, slightly forked tail. Typically gives a sharp, rolling chatter; among the most conspicuous roadside and edge species.

Couch's Kingbird *Tyrannus couchii* — (H) Yaxhá

Very similar in structure and plumage to Tropical Kingbird and usually indistinguishable visually. Best separated by voice: a clear, whistled *kip!* or *kleeer*, lacking the chattering quality of Tropical.

Western Kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis* — Finca El Pilar

A migrant of open habitats. Paler overall, with a gray chest contrasting with a bright yellow belly, and white outer tail edges that flash in flight—useful field marks separating it from Tropical Kingbird.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus forficatus* — Seen while driving outside Guatemala City

A striking migrant with extremely long forked tail; favors open areas.

VIREOS: Vireonidae —11

Rufous-browed Peppershrike *Cyclarhis gujanensis* — (H) Los Tarrales; seen at Finca El Pilar

A robust bird of forest edge and canopy. Rich, varied song; often heard more than seen. Rufous eyebrow and strong bill distinctive.

Ochre-crowned Greenlet *Pachysylvia hypochrysea* — Tikal

A lowland forest greenlet with tawny crown and pale eye. Typically in midstory, often with mixed flocks.

Lesser Greenlet *Pachysylvia decurtata* — Los Tarrales, Tikal, Yaxhá

A small, active canopy species. Plain olive with subtle facial pattern; frequent in mixed-species flocks.

White-eyed Vireo *Vireo griseus* — Tikal, Yaxhá

A migrant vireo of scrub and edge habitats. Shows crisp white wingbars and bold yellow spectacles; adults have striking white irises (immatures darker-eyed). Song is a sharp, emphatic series of phrases on the breeding grounds; on the wintering grounds more often detected by short scolding calls.

Mangrove Vireo *Vireo pallens* — (H) Tikal

A localized lowland vireo, more often encountered in scrubby woodland, second growth, and brushy edges than in true mangrove habitat. Shows crisp white wingbars and a relatively plain face. Voice is distinctive—a series of nasal, twangy phrases.

Yellow-throated Vireo *Vireo flavifrons* — Los Tarrales, Cerro Alux, Tikal

A striking migrant with bold white wingbars and bright yellow throat and spectacles. Favors canopy and taller woodland.

Blue-headed Vireo *Vireo solitarius* — Finca El Pilar, Cerro Alux

A wintering migrant with blue-gray head and strong white spectacles. Typically in montane or mixed woodland.

Eastern Warbling Vireo *Vireo gilvus* — Los Tarrales

Recently split from Western Warbling Vireo; identification is difficult away from breeding grounds. Generally paler and more common in eastern populations reaching Central America.

Brown-capped Vireo *Vireo leucophrys* — Los Tarrales

A highland species with white eyebrow and brown cap. Often in pine–oak or montane forest; voice important for detection.

Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus* — Tikal, Yaxhá

A common migrant in lowland forest. Olive-green above with a gray crown bordered by dark and pale stripes, and a red iris in adults (duller in immatures). Typically quiet on the wintering grounds but famously a near-constant singer on the breeding grounds. Notably, the Tikal sighting was Roland’s first of the year.

Yellow-green Vireo *Vireo flavoviridis* — Los Tarrales, Tikal, Yaxhá

A widespread tropical breeder. Similar to Red-eyed but brighter and more yellow-toned; loud, repetitive song.

CROWS AND JAYS: Corvidae —4

White-throated Magpie-Jay *Calocitta formosa* — Cocales (“Crazy Gas Station”), Los Tarrales

A striking, long-tailed jay of dry forest and edge habitats. Bold blue-and-white pattern with an elongated tail and prominent crest; highly social and vocal.

Brown Jay *Psilorhinus morio* — Tikal

A large brown-and-white jay, often moving in noisy family groups. So big and long-tailed it can be mistaken at a glance for a small raptor. Highly adaptable and frequently encountered around forest edges, clearings, and archaeological sites. Immatures are especially striking, with bright orange bill and eyering. Notably, one immature perched on the railing at Mundo Perdido in Tikal.

Bushy-crested Jay *Cyanocorax melanocyaneus* — Seen several places on main tour

A highland jay with a pale yellow eye and rich blue-and-black plumage. Despite the name, it lacks a prominent crest. Typically moves in cohesive, vocal groups through montane forest and edges.

Steller’s Jay *Cyanocitta stelleri* — Finca Chichavac, Cerro Alux

Highland populations (Middle American subspecies) differ noticeably from northern birds: typically showing a reduced crest, white markings above the eye, and less extensive black on the head, resulting in a softer contrast between the blue body and darker head. Inhabits pine–oak forest and montane woodlands at higher elevations.

SWALLOWS AND MARTINS: Hirundinidae —6

Mangrove Swallow *Tachycineta albilinea* — El Remate

A sleek, glossy swallow of lowland wetlands. White underparts contrast with dark upperparts, and big white rump patch is distinctive. Often perches near water.

Purple Martin *Progne subis* — El Remate

A large swallow. Adult males are glossy purple-black; females and immatures are paler below and can resemble Gray-breasted Martin. Uncommon in this region; this sighting was a notable record.

Gray-breasted Martin *Progne chalybea* — Cocales (“Crazy Gas Station”), Flores Airport

A common martin of towns and open areas. Dark above with pale gray breast; often nests on buildings.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis* — Seen several places on main tour and extension

A plain brown swallow lacking strong markings. Often near water; subtle field marks make identification more about structure and behavior.

Black-capped Swallow *Atticora pileata* — Universidad Francisco Marroquín, Finca Chichavac, Finca El Pilar, Cerro Alux

A small highland swallow with crisp white underparts contrasting sharply with black upperparts and a long, forked tail. Typically forages in agile, buoyant flight over forested slopes, valleys, and above the canopy in montane habitats.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* — Tikal

A cosmopolitan migrant with a long, deeply forked tail and streamlined silhouette. Frequently seen hawking insects over open areas and water in swift, graceful flight.

LONG-TAILED TITS: *Aegithalidae* —1

Bushtit *Psaltriparus minimus* — Finca Chichavac

Highland birds (Middle American subspecies) differ from U.S. forms—males show bold black facial masks. Tiny, highly social, moving in constant flocks through pine–oak forest.

TREECREEPERS: *Certhiidae* —1

Brown Creeper *Certhia americana* — Finca Chichavac

A small, cryptic bark specialist that spirals up tree trunks. Highland populations resemble northern birds but occur in pine–oak forest; thin, decurved bill adapted for probing bark.

GNATCATCHERS: *Poliophtidae* —3

Long-billed Gnatwren *Ramphocaenus melanurus* — (H) Los Tarrales; seen at Tikal

A tiny, hyperactive understory species with an exceptionally long, fine bill. Moves rapidly through tangles, giving thin, insect-like calls and trilling song.

White-browed Gnatcatcher *Poliophtila bilineata* — (H) Tikal

A dry forest species with a bold white supercilium; males show a crisp black cap (reduced or absent in females). Typically active in pairs or small groups, often joining mixed-species flocks. Best detected by its sharp, nasal calls.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher *Poliophtila caerulea* — El Remate

Small, with long tail and soft gray-blue tones; constantly flicks tail while foraging.

WRENS: *Troglodytidae* —8

Southern House Wren *Troglodytes musculus* — Common on main tour; heard on extension

A widespread, adaptable wren of open and semi-open habitats. Plain brown with a bubbly, energetic song; split from Northern House Wren.

Rufous-browed Wren *Troglodytes rufociliatus* — Finca Chichavac; Cerro Alux

A highland species with a bold rufous face and breast and finely barred flanks. Often in dense vegetation; more retiring than House Wren. We worked hard to see this one and finally got decent looks at Cerro Alux.

Band-backed Wren *Campylorhynchus zonatus* — Encountered often on main tour

A large, boldly patterned wren with strong black-and-white barring. Loud, conspicuous, often in groups in forest edge and semi-open habitats.

Rufous-backed Wren *Campylorhynchus capistratus* — Los Tarrales

A dry forest specialist with rich rufous upperparts, pale underparts, and a bold white supercilium. Typically found in noisy, active groups, moving through thorny scrub and woodland; often detected by its loud, chattering song.

Spot-breasted Wren *Pheugopedius maculipectus* — Los Tarrales; heard at Tikal

A skulking, richly patterned wren with a finely spotted breast, streaked face, and bold white supercilium. Typically in pairs that give coordinated duets; favors dense understory and tangled vegetation.

Rufous-and-white Wren *Thryophilus rufalbus* — (H) Los Tarrales

A striking wren with clean white underparts, rich rufous upperparts, and a boldly striped face with a prominent white supercilium. Delivers a loud, ringing song; typically encountered in pairs in dry forest and scrub.

Cabanis's Wren *Cantorchilus modestus* — (H) Los Tarrales, La Playa

A skulking species of dense scrub and thickets, typically remaining low and concealed. Shows a bold white supercilium but is most reliably detected by voice—a series of clear whistled phrases and varied churring notes rather than a pure, ringing song.

White-bellied Wren *Uropsila leucogastra* — (H) Tikal

A tiny, lowland forest wren. Pale below with short tail; often in pairs moving through understory tangles.

MOCKINGBIRDS AND THRASHERS: *Mimidae* —3

Blue-and-white Mockingbird *Melanotis hypoleucus* — Seen at La Playa, Finca Chicivac, Cerro Alux; heard at Finca El Pilar

A highland species typically very skulky, favoring dense vegetation. An individual at La Playa gave unusually open, prolonged views. Deep blue upperparts contrast with clean white underparts.

Gray Catbird *Dumetella carolinensis* — (H) Tikal

A wintering migrant of dense understory. Slate-gray overall with black cap and rufous undertail; distinctive cat-like call.

Tropical Mockingbird *Mimus gilvus* — Finca Chichavac

An open-country mockingbird with pale gray tones and white wing flashes. Vocal and conspicuous; often perches prominently while singing.

THRUSHES: *Turdidae* —9

Eastern Bluebird *Sialia sialis* — Finca Chichavac

An open-country thrush of highland pine–oak areas. Males bright blue with rufous chest; often perches on exposed snags.

Brown-backed Solitaire *Myadestes occidentalis* — (H) Heard often on main tour

A highland forest specialist known for its ethereal, flute-like song. Typically remains hidden in dense montane vegetation.

Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus aurantiirostris* — heard at Los Tarrales; seen at La Playa

A richly colored thrush with bright orange bill and legs. Usually secretive, making an open perched view at La Playa notable.

Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus* — (H) Mirador Rey Tepepul; seen at Finca El Pilar

A migrant with buffy eye-ring and spotted breast. Distinct upward-spiraling song on breeding grounds.

Wood Thrush *Hylocichla mustelina* — Tikal

A declining Neotropical migrant, with long-term population decreases linked to habitat loss on both breeding and wintering grounds. Rich, flute-like song on the breeding grounds; shows bold black spots on clean white underparts and warm rufous-brown upperparts. Multiple birds observed bathing in a water feature at Tikal.

Black Thrush *Turdus infuscatus* — (H) Mirador Rey Tepepul

A highland thrush with dark, sooty plumage contrasted by a bright orange bill, legs, and eyering. Often elusive and best detected by voice; favors montane forest and edges.

Rufous-collared Robin *Turdus rufitorques* — Finca Chichavac, Finca El Pilar, Cerro Alux

A highland *Turdus* with a bold rufous collar contrasting with a gray body in the male; females are browner and less sharply marked. Often found in open areas, forest edges, and clearings.

White-throated Thrush *Turdus assimilis* — Los Tarrales, La Playa

A forest thrush with a white collar across the neck and pale chest contrasting with darker gray-brown upperparts. Often forages quietly on or near the ground in the understory, typically solitary or in pairs.

Clay-colored Thrush *Turdus grayi* — Common on main tour and extension; singing at Universidad Francisco Marroquín

A widespread and familiar species (the national bird of Costa Rica). Plain brown overall with subtle grayish tones. Known for its rich, melodious song, especially at dawn, and a wide repertoire of calls.

SILKY-FLYCATCHERS: *Ptiliogonatidae* —1

Gray Silky-flycatcher *Ptiliogonys cinereus* — Seen several places on main tour; excellent views at Cerro de la Cruz

A sleek, crested highland species with soft gray plumage. Often in small flocks; feeds heavily on mistletoe berries.

OLIVE WARBLER: *Peucedramidae* —1

Olive Warbler *Peucedramus taeniatus* — Finca Chichavac

A unique pine–oak forest specialist, the sole member of its family. Males with orange head and dark cheeks; forages methodically in conifers.

OLD WORLD SPARROWS: *Passeridae* —1

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* — (I) Common on main tour

A widespread introduced species closely associated with human habitation. Males with gray crown and black bib; highly adaptable.

FINCHES AND EUPHONIAS: *Fringillidae* —8

Elegant Euphonia *Chlorophonia elegantissima* — Los Tarrales, La Playa, Cerro de la Cruz

A highland euphonia with vivid blue hood and rusty underparts. Often in fruiting trees.

Blue-crowned Chlorophonia *Chlorophonia occipitalis* — Los Tarrales, Mirador Rey Tepepul

A striking canopy species with bright blue crown and green body. Typically found in humid montane forest.

Scrub Euphonia *Euphonia affinis* — Cocalas (“Crazy Gas Station”), Los Tarrales, Tikal (Mundo Perdido)

A dry forest and edge species. Males show a dark blue-black cap and throat contrasting with bright yellow underparts; females are duller, olive-toned. Often feeds on mistletoe berries and other small fruits.

Yellow-throated Euphonia *Euphonia hirundinacea* — Cocalas; El Remate

A common lowland euphonia. Males have a bright yellow throat and underparts with dark blue upperparts; females are olive above with yellowish underparts. Frequently encountered in pairs or small groups, often at fruiting trees.

Olive-backed Euphonia *Euphonia gouldi* — Tikal

A lowland forest species. Male with olive back and yellow forehead patch; more subdued than other euphonias.

Hooded Grosbeak *Coccothraustes abeillei* — (H) Los Tarrales, Mirador Rey Tepepul

A large, powerful-billed finch of montane forest. Typically in canopy; often detected by calls rather than seen.

Black-headed Siskin *Spinus notatus* — Antigua (city)

A highland finch with black head and yellow body. Often in small flocks in open pine–oak habitats.

Lesser Goldfinch *Spinus psaltria* — Finca El Pilar

A small finch of open areas. Males black-backed with yellow underparts; active and vocal.

NEW WORLD SPARROWS: *Passerellidae* —8

Common Chlorospingus *Chlorospingus flavopectus* — Mirador Rey Tepepul

A social, flocking highland species, typically a core member of mixed-species flocks. Drab olive above with a contrasting throat, grayish underparts, and a distinct facial pattern—bold white patch behind the eye. Moves actively through midstory and canopy, giving sharp contact calls.

Chestnut-capped Brushfinch *Arremon brunneinucha* — Mirador Rey Tepepul

A bold understory bird with striking head pattern—black face, white throat, and chestnut crown. Typically in dense vegetation.

Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis* — Seen several places on main tour

A widespread highland species. Gray face with bold black stripes and rufous collar; often in open habitats near human habitation.

Gray-crowned Ground-Sparrow *Melospiza kieneri* — Los Tarrales

A Pacific slope endemic recently split from White-eared Ground-Sparrow. Shows distinctive white ear patch and yellow eyebrow and neck patch; favors dry forest understory. Excellent views at Los Tarrales while we searched for Tody Motmot.

White-faced Ground-Sparrow *Melospiza biarcuata* — Los Tarrales, Hotel Atitlán

A striking ground-sparrow with bold black-and-white facial pattern and rusty cap. Typically in dense undergrowth; walked onto an open road at Los Tarrales.

Rusty Sparrow *Aimophila rufescens* — Mirador Rey Tepepul

A warm-toned sparrow of montane scrub and forest edge. Subtle facial pattern; often detected by song.

Spotted Towhee *Pipilo maculatus* — Finca Chichavac

A large, long-tailed sparrow of highland habitats from Canada to Guatemala. Black upperparts with white spotting, rufous flanks, white belly, and piercing red eye. Often forages on the ground.

White-naped Brushfinch *Atlapetes albinucha* — Finca Chichavac, Finca El Pilar

A highland brushfinch with a bright yellow throat and underparts, contrasting with a black head and a bold white nape. Typically encountered in pairs, moving through dense understory and brushy edges.

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: *Icteriidae* —1

Yellow-breasted Chat *Icteria virens* — Los Tarrales

A large, skulking migrant of dense shrubbery. Shows a bright yellow throat and breast with bold white spectacles and

olive upperparts. Noted for its varied, often mimic-rich vocalizations. Long a taxonomic puzzle, it is now placed in its own family.

NEW WORLD BLACKBIRDS: *Icteridae* —14

Eastern Meadowlark *Sturnella magna* — (H) El Remate

A grassland species detected by its clear, whistled song. Bright yellow underparts with bold black “V” on chest; often difficult to see in tall grass.

Montezuma Oropendola *Psarocolius montezuma* — Tikal

A large, colonial icterid with a rich chestnut body, bold facial pattern, and bright yellow tail. Sexes similar in plumage, but males are substantially larger. Males give distinctive bubbling display calls while bowing forward on branches. Long, pendulous nests were conspicuous at Tikal, some being parasitized by Giant Cowbirds.

Black-vented Oriole *Icterus wagleri* — Hotel Bambu, Hotel Atitlán

A localized highland oriole with bright yellow body and rump contrasting with black upperparts and a black vent; lacks wingbars. Typically found in montane forest edges and gardens around Lake Atitlán.

Bar-winged Oriole *Icterus maculialatus* — Los Tarrales, Lake Atitlán region, Finca El Pilar

A striking oriole with a bold white wingbar, black upperparts, and rich orange-yellow underparts. Typically found in montane forest edges, clearings, and shade coffee plantations, often in pairs or small groups.

Black-cowled Oriole *Icterus prothemelas* — Tikal

A lowland forest oriole with a black hood, throat, and upper back contrasting with bright yellow underparts and rump. Typically inhabits the canopy and forest edge, often moving in pairs or small groups.

Orchard Oriole *Icterus spurius* — Common on main tour and extension

A migrant; males chestnut and black, females greenish-yellow. Often in open habitats and edges.

Spot-breasted Oriole *Icterus pectoralis* — Seen several places on main tour

A distinctive oriole with spotted underparts and yellow-orange body. Often around human habitation.

Altamira Oriole *Icterus gularis* — Los Tarrales

A large oriole with bold black and orange pattern; white wingbar and orange shoulder patch. Builds long, hanging nests; favors open woodland.

Baltimore Oriole *Icterus galbula* — Common on tour and extension

A common migrant; bright orange and black males. Often in flowering or fruiting trees.

Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus* — (H) Tikal

A widespread marsh species. Males with red-and-yellow shoulder patches; often detected by call.

Bronzed Cowbird *Molothrus aeneus* — Seen several places on main tour

A brood parasite with glossy, iridescent dark plumage and a striking red eye. A male was observed giving display at San Juan La Laguna—puffing up, spreading wings and tail, and bowing while delivering low, gurgling vocalizations.

Giant Cowbird *Molothrus oryzivorus* — Tikal

An uncommon brood parasite observed parasitizing Montezuma Oropendola nests at Tikal. Large, long-tailed, with iridescent dark plumage.

Melodious Blackbird *Dives dives* — Common on main tour and extension

A highly adaptable species of open habitats and towns. Glossy black; rich, varied vocalizations.

Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus* — Common on main tour and extension

A large, ubiquitous grackle of open and urban areas. Males have an exceptionally long tail that is often held in a V- or keel-like shape, especially in display or flight. Highly social and opportunistic, frequently seen in noisy groups.

NEW WORLD WARBLERS: *Parulidae* —30

Worm-eating Warbler *Helmitheros vermivorum* — Tikal

A brown, ground-oriented warbler with prominent crown stripes. Forages in leaf litter; lacks wingbars.

Louisiana Waterthrush *Parkesia motacilla* — Tikal

A stream-associated warbler with a bold white supercilium and relatively clean underparts with streaking concentrated on the breast. Walks along shaded banks and rocks, frequently bobbing.

Northern Waterthrush *Parkesia noveboracensis* — Tikal

Similar but buffier overall, with a less distinct supercilium and heavier streaking extending below. More often in wetter, swampy habitats, though overlaps along forest edges.

Blue-winged Warbler *Vermivora cyanoptera* — Tikal

A bright yellow migrant with blue-gray wings and thin black eye-line.

Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia* — Common on main tour and extension

A distinctive trunk-creeping warbler with bold black-and-white striping; behaves like a nuthatch.

Crescent-chested Warbler *Oreothlypis superciliosa* — heard at Finca Chichavac; seen at Cerro Alux

A highland resident warbler with a gray head, bold white supercilium, and a distinctive rufous crescent on the upper breast. Typically forages actively in mixed-species flocks in montane forest.

Tennessee Warbler *Leiothlypis peregrina* — Common on main tour; one at Tikal

A migrant warbler with a greenish back, pale underparts, and a faint supercilium. Males often show a cleaner grayish head, while females are more yellowish overall. Typically forages actively in the canopy and midstory.

Nashville Warbler *Leiothlypis ruficapilla* — Los Tarrales

A small migrant with gray head, yellow underparts, and white eye-ring.

MacGillivray's Warbler *Geothlypis tolmiei* — Cerro Alux

A skulking migrant with gray hood and broken eye-ring; favors dense understory.

Kentucky Warbler *Geothlypis formosa* — (H) Los Tarrales, Tikal

A ground-dwelling warbler with bold facial pattern; often heard rather than seen.

Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas* — El Remate

A widespread species of marshy and edge vegetation; a migrant in Guatemala. Males show a bold black mask contrasting with a bright yellow throat and underparts; females lack the mask and are more uniformly olive-yellow.

American Redstart *Setophaga ruticilla* — Yaxhá

An active migrant; males black with orange patches, constantly fanning tail.

Northern Parula *Setophaga americana* — Tikal, Yaxhá

A small migrant warbler of forest edge and canopy. Males show bluish-gray upperparts, a yellow throat, and a variable dark-and-rufous chest band; females duller. Distinctive white eye arcs (above and below the eye) are a useful field mark. Frequently joins mixed-species flocks.

Tropical Parula *Setophaga pitayumi* — (H) Tikal

A resident counterpart to Northern Parula. Very similar in pattern but lacking eye arcs and breast band. Common in canopy and forest edge.

Magnolia Warbler *Setophaga magnolia* — Common in mixed flocks

A striking migrant with yellow underparts and bold streaking; distinct head pattern and white wing patch on breeding males.

Northern Yellow Warbler *Setophaga aestiva* — Los Tarrales, Hotel Atitlán, El Remate, Tikal

A widespread migratory warbler breeding in North America and wintering in Central America. Bright yellow overall; males often show reddish streaking on the breast. Recently split from Mangrove Warbler (*Setophaga petechia*), which represents the resident tropical form.

Chestnut-sided Warbler *Setophaga pensylvanica* — Tikal

A migrant with bold chestnut flanks and yellow crown; often in second growth.

Yellow-rumped Warbler *Setophaga coronata* — Tikal

A widespread migrant; yellow rump patch diagnostic. Often in open habitats.

Yellow-throated Warbler *Setophaga dominica* — Cerro de la Cruz, Yaxhá

A distinctive migrant with bright yellow throat, bold black-and-white facial pattern, and clean white underparts. Often forages high in trees, especially in open woodland and pine habitats.

Grace's Warbler *Setophaga graciae* — Cerro de la Cruz

A pine-oak specialist with yellow face and gray back; forages high in conifers.

Townsend's Warbler *Setophaga townsendi* — Common in mixed flocks on tour

A boldly patterned migrant with black and yellow face; often in montane forest.

Hermit Warbler *Setophaga occidentalis* — Finca Chichavac

A migrant with clean yellow head and gray body; lacks strong streaking.

Black-throated Green Warbler *Setophaga virens* — Common in mixed flocks

A migrant with greenish back and black throat; often in canopy.

Rufous-capped Warbler *Basileuterus rufifrons* — Volcán Atitlán

A highland resident with rusty cap, white eyebrow, and yellow bib; often in dense vegetation. Split from Chestnut-capped.

Chestnut-capped Warbler *Basileuterus delatirii* — Los Tarrales

A resident lowland forest warbler with chestnut crown and strong facial pattern; typically in understory. Split from Rufous-capped.

Golden-browed Warbler *Basileuterus belli* — Mirador Rey Tepepul, Finca Chichavac

A highland resident with rusty cheeks and cap and broad, bright yellow supercilium; active behavior in understory.

Golden-crowned Warbler *Basileuterus culicivorus* — Los Tarrales, Mirador Rey Tepepul, Finca Chichavac

A widespread tropical warbler with golden crown stripe and bold face.

Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla* — Common in mixed flocks

A bright yellow migrant; males with small black cap.

Pink-headed Warbler *Cardellina versicolor* — Finca Chichavac

A regional endemic of highland forest. Reddish body with head and underparts vivid pink; one of the most sought-after species of the tour.

Slate-throated Redstart *Myioborus miniatus* — seen at Mirador Rey Tepepul; heard at Volcán Atitlán

A striking highland warbler with slaty gray upperparts and yellow belly. Frequently fans tail to flush insects.

CARDINALS, GROSBEAKS, AND ALLIES: *Cardinalidae* — 11

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra* — seen several places on main tour and extension

Males of this migratory species are bright red; females yellowish to olive. Notably, a male at Universidad Francisco Marroquín was observed feeding on bees, skillfully removing stingers before consumption—a well-known behavior in this species.

Western Tanager *Piranga ludoviciana* — Seen several places on main tour

A striking migrant; males with orange head, yellow body, and black wings. Often in mid to upper canopy.

Flame-colored Tanager *Piranga bidentata* — Mirador Rey Tepepul

A highland species; males brilliant orange-red with dark wings. Typically in montane forest.

White-winged Tanager *Piranga leucoptera* — Universidad Francisco Marroquín, Los Tarrales

A canopy tanager with bold white wing patches. Males strikingly red, females yellow; often in pairs or small groups.

Red-crowned Ant-Tanager *Habia rubica* — (H) Tikal

A secretive forest bird of dense understory and midstory. Males are rich crimson-red; females duller, brownish to rufous-toned. Often detected first by voice rather than by sight.

Red-throated Ant-Tanager *Driophlox fuscicauda* — Tikal

A lowland forest species, often in pairs near the ground or in dense understory. Males show a red throat and darker body; females are browner and less striking. Best separated from Red-crowned Ant-Tanager by voice. Tends to forage lower in forest and gives lower-pitched vocalizations.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak *Pheucticus ludovicianus* — Common on main tour

A migrant with bold black-and-white pattern and red breast (males). Often in mixed flocks.

Blue Bunting *Cyanocopsa parellina* — (G) El Remate

A localized species; male deep blue with subtle facial contrast. Observed briefly from vehicle only by guides because they were sitting in position to see it.

Blue Grosbeak *Passerina caerulea* — Tikal, Yaxhá

A migrant of open and semi-open habitats. Males rich blue with chestnut wingbars.

Indigo Bunting *Passerina cyanea* — Los Tarrales, Tikal

A common migrant; males bright blue, often in edge habitats.

Painted Bunting *Passerina ciris* — Hotel Bambu

A spectacularly colored migrant; often in dense vegetation. Only encountered at Hotel Bambu on tour.

TANAGERS: *Thraupidae* — 12

Gray-headed Tanager *Eucometis penicillata* — Tikal

A lowland forest tanager often associated with army ant swarms. Gray head contrasts with olive body; moves in active understory flocks.

Black-throated Shrike-Tanager *Lanio aurantius* — (H) Tikal

A striking canopy species. Males show sharp black and yellow contrast; often joins mixed flocks serving as sentinel that gives sharp calls. Heard alarming at Tikal just before Ornate Hawk-Eagles appeared. Byron noted that this species may give exaggerated or deceptive alarm calls, possibly to disperse other birds and reduce competition while foraging.

Blue-gray Tanager *Thraupis episcopus* — Los Tarrales, Antigua (city center), El Remate

A common, adaptable tanager of open habitats. Pale blue-gray overall; often around gardens and towns.

Yellow-winged Tanager *Thraupis abbas* — Los Tarrales, Finca El Pilar, Tikal, El Remate

A common lowland tanager with lilac body and bright yellow wing patches.

Azure-rumped Tanager *Poecilostreptus cabanisi* — Los Tarrales

A globally threatened Pacific slope endemic. Bright turquoise-blue with darker head; highly localized to humid forest on the Pacific slope.

Red-legged Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes cyaneus* — Los Tarrales, Tikal, Yaxhá

A small, canopy species with decurved bill. Males bright blue with turquoise cap and black wings; red legs distinctive.

Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer *Diglossa baritula* — Cerro Alux

A highland species with a specialized hooked bill used to pierce flowers and rob nectar. Subtle plumage with warm cinnamon tones below.

Blue-black Grassquit *Volatinia jacarina* — Los Tarrales

A small seedeater of open habitats. Males glossy blue-black; display with short vertical jumps during breeding.

Morelet's Seedeater *Sporophila moreletii* — Cocales, Los Tarrales, Tikal, El Remate

A small, variable seedeater of grassy areas and edges. Males are black and white; females brown. Often feeds low or on the ground. Primarily a Mexico–Central America species, only rarely and locally breeding in extreme south Texas; one of only a couple of true tanagers (*Thraupidae*) that reach and occasionally breed in the United States.

Yellow-faced Grassquit *Tiaris olivaceus* — Los Tarrales

A small, finch-like tanager of grassy edges and low vegetation. Males show an olive body with a bright yellow face and throat; females are duller. Often feeds low or on the ground. Exceptional prolonged views of a perched, singing male at Los Tarrales.

Black-headed Saltator *Saltator atriceps* — Common at Los Tarrales

A large, thick-billed tanager with a bold black head and gray body. Shows a short white supercilium. Often in pairs or noisy groups. Voice is a variable series of phrases—burry and slurred.

Cinnamon-bellied Saltator *Saltator grandis* — (H) Los Tarrales

A large, robust tanager with warm cinnamon underparts and bold white eyebrow. Typically in dense vegetation; more often heard than seen, giving a rich, melodious series of whistled phrases.

MAMMALS (24 – including 12 bats identified by bioacoustics)

Central American Agouti *Dasyprocta punctata* — Los Tarrales, Tikal

A medium-sized, ground-dwelling rodent with a sleek, long-legged profile and reduced tail. Typically seen moving quickly through forest understory. Important seed disperser—known to cache large seeds, contributing significantly to forest regeneration. Habituated to humans at Los Tarrales.

Deppe's Squirrel *Sciurus deppei* — Antigua area

A small, relatively plain squirrel with a gray-brown body and less conspicuous markings than other regional species. Often overlooked. Prefers pine–oak and montane forests, frequently foraging along branches and trunks. Distinguished from similar species by its more uniform coloration and smaller size.

Red-bellied Squirrel (Mexican Gray Squirrel) *Sciurus aureogaster* — Los Tarrales, Atitlán area

A highly variable species in coloration, but typically large with a bushy tail and often a reddish or orange-toned

underside. Common in a range of habitats, including disturbed areas. Adaptable and often seen in human-modified landscapes. Larger and more robust than Deppe's Squirrel.

Variiegated Squirrel *Sciurus variegatoides* — Los Tarrales

A striking and highly variable squirrel, often showing contrasting dark and pale tones, sometimes with reddish or orange highlights. Larger and more conspicuous than other regional squirrels. Frequently seen in open or edge habitats. Its variability can make identification confusing, but size and bold patterning are key.

Yucatán Squirrel *Sciurus yucatanensis* — Tikal

A medium-sized squirrel with a grizzled gray appearance and bushy tail. Typically found in lowland forests of the Yucatán region. More uniform and less brightly colored than Variiegated Squirrel. Often seen moving quietly through mid-canopy.

Northern Tamandua *Tamandua mexicana* — Tikal

A rarely encountered, medium-sized arboreal anteater. Identified by its elongated snout, powerful forelimbs with large curved claws, and distinctive "vest" pattern in many individuals. Semi-arboreal, using a prehensile tail for balance. Feeds on ants and termites with a long, sticky tongue. Nocturnal and secretive—this sighting was exceptional.

Yucatán Black Howler Monkey *Alouatta pigra* — Tikal

Heavy-bodied primate known for its deep, resonant vocalizations, amplified by an enlarged hyoid bone. Often heard before seen. Moves more deliberately than spider monkeys and feeds primarily on leaves.

Central American Spider Monkey / Geoffroy's Spider Monkey / Mexican Spider Monkey *Ateles geoffroyi* — Tikal

Large, highly arboreal primate with extremely long limbs and a fully prehensile tail used as a fifth limb. Lacks a functional thumb, an adaptation for brachiation. Social and vocal; often detected high in the canopy. Important seed disperser. Habituated to humans at Tikal and easy to observe.

White-nosed Coati *Nasua narica* — Tikal

A raccoon relative with a long, flexible snout and a distinctive ringed tail often held upright. Diurnal and highly social, most often seen in bands of females and young moving together through the forest. Adult males, however, are typically solitary—these lone individuals are commonly referred to as "coatimundis," a term derived from Indigenous languages (often interpreted as "lone coati"). Forages on the ground for insects, fruit, and small vertebrates, using its sensitive snout to probe leaf litter and soil.

Gray Fox *Urocyon cinereoargenteus* — Los Tarrales, Tikal

A small fox notable for its ability to climb trees—unique among canids. Gray coat with reddish highlights. Typically crepuscular or nocturnal, making daytime sightings noteworthy. Exceptional sighting on a road at Los Tarrales.

Collared Peccary *Pecari tajacu* — Los Tarrales

A pig-like ungulate with a compact body and a pale shoulder collar. Moves in small groups and often detected by scent. Feeds on roots, fruit, and vegetation. This was the first sighting by Roland of this species at Los Tarrales.

White-tailed Deer *Odocoileus virginianus* — Los Tarrales, Tikal

Widespread and adaptable ungulate. Tropical individuals tend to be smaller than northern populations. Identified by the white underside of the tail, often flashed when alarmed.

Bats (Tentative Acoustic Identifications; Echo Meter Touch 2)

Lesser Dog-like Bat *Peropteryx macrotis* — Los Tarrales

A small emballonurid bat typically associated with forest edges and open understory. Identified acoustically by high-frequency, narrowband calls. Often roosts in hollow trees or small cavities.

Greater Dog-like Bat *Peropteryx kappleri* — Los Tarrales, Tikal

Larger than Lesser Dog-like Bat, with similar structure but lower-frequency calls. Typically associated with more intact forest habitats. Acoustic separation based on call structure and frequency range.

Northern Ghost Bat *Diclidurus albus* — Tikal

A distinctive white, fast-flying bat often foraging high above the canopy. Calls are relatively faint and can be difficult to detect. Unusual among bats for its pale coloration and aerial lifestyle.

Thomas's Shaggy Bat *Centronycteris centralis* — Los Tarrales, Tikal

A rarely detected forest species associated with intact tropical habitats. Emits faint, high-frequency calls and is seldom observed visually. Often considered an indicator of undisturbed forest.

Mexican Dog-faced Bat *Molossus rufus* — Los Tarrales, Tikal

A common free-tailed bat with robust build and relatively low-frequency calls. Often forages in open airspace above forest and edges. Adapted for fast, direct flight.

Velvety Free-tailed Bat *Molossus molossus* — Los Tarrales, Tikal

Smaller than Mexican Dog-faced Bat, with faster, higher-frequency call sequences. Common in disturbed habitats and around human structures.

Brazilian Free-tailed Bat *Tadarida brasiliensis* — Tikal

Highly aerial species capable of long-distance flight. Narrow wings adapted for speed and endurance. Calls typically strong and detectable in open airspace.

Mexican Free-tailed Bat *Tadarida brasiliensis mexicana* / regional form — Tikal

Closely related to Brazilian Free-tailed; often treated as part of the same species complex. Similar ecology and flight behavior.

Sinaloan Mastiff Bat *Eumops underwoodi* — Los Tarrales, Tikal

Large molossid with powerful flight and low-frequency calls. Typically forages high above canopy and open areas. Detection often limited to acoustic records due to flight height.

Promops Centralis *Promops centralis* — Tikal

Fast-flying, high-altitude species with distinctive call structure. Often overlooked without acoustic monitoring. Associated with open airspace above forest.

Underwood's Bonneted Bat *Eumops underwoodi* — Tikal

A large, fast-flying free-tailed bat associated with open airspace above forest and edge habitats. Identification within *Eumops* is challenging using acoustics alone due to overlap among species.

Brazilian Brown Bat *Myotis nigricans* — Tikal

Small vesper bat with broadband calls. Common in a variety of habitats, often near water or forest edges. Typically forages at lower heights than molossids.

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS (11)

Morelet's Crocodile *Crocodylus moreletii* — Tikal, Lago de Petén Itzá

A medium-sized freshwater crocodilian distinguished from American Crocodile by its broader snout and preference for inland waters. Typically inhabits lakes, rivers, and wetlands. Often seen basking or partially submerged; capable of remaining motionless for long periods before sudden movement.

Mesoamerican Slider *Trachemys venusta* — Tikal

A common freshwater turtle of Mesoamerica, often seen basking on logs. Olive to dark shell with yellow-striped head; lacks the red ear patch of Red-eared Slider. Omnivorous and tolerant of disturbed habitats.

Red-eared Slider *Trachemys scripta elegans* — Universidad Francisco Marroquín

A semi-aquatic turtle native to North America but widely introduced elsewhere. Recognized by the distinctive red patch behind the eye. Common in ponds and slow-moving water, often seen basking on logs. Highly adaptable and frequently associated with human-altered habitats.

Brown Basilisk *Basiliscus vittatus* — Los Tarrales, Yaxhá

A semi-arboreal lizard often found near water. Notable for its ability to run across the surface of water using rapid hind-leg movement ("Jesus Christ lizard"). Identified by its crest and striped patterning; juveniles especially bold in coloration.

Green Iguana *Iguana iguana* — Los Tarrales

Large, primarily arboreal herbivore with a long tail and prominent dorsal spines. Typically found in riparian zones and forest edges. Often seen basking high in trees. Juveniles bright green; adults may appear darker or more muted.

Black Spiny-tailed Iguana *Ctenosaura similis* — Los Tarrales, Tikal

A robust, fast-moving iguana adapted to drier habitats. Distinguished from Green Iguana by darker coloration, spiny tail, and terrestrial habits. Often seen basking on rocks or near structures. One of the fastest lizards in the world.

Bocourt's Emerald Spiny Lizard *Sceloporus smaragdinus* — Los Tarrales

A striking, bright green spiny lizard typically found in humid and semi-humid forest, often in edge habitats or secondary growth. Unlike arboreal alligator lizards (*Abronia*), this species is more often seen on trunks, fence posts, or low

vegetation rather than deep canopy. Males may show blue or turquoise ventral patches. Identified by its vivid green coloration, rough (spiny) scales, and alert, basking posture.

Teapen Rosebelly Lizard *Sceloporus teapenus* — Tikal

A small to medium spiny lizard typically found in open or edge habitats. Males may show colorful ventral patches. Often perches on low vegetation or ground.

Rainbow Ameiva *Holcosus undulatus* — Los Tarrales

A fast-moving, ground-dwelling lizard of open and semi-open habitats, often seen darting across trails and sunlit clearings. Typically patterned with dark lines and lighter spots or stripes, giving a subtly “rainbow” or iridescent impression in good light. Active forager, feeding on insects and other small invertebrates.

Asian House Gecko (I) *Hemidactylus frenatus* — Los Tarrales, Tikal

A widespread introduced species closely associated with human structures. Nocturnal, often seen around lights feeding on insects. Recognized by its somewhat translucent skin and adhesive toe pads. Highly adaptable and now common across much of the tropics. Frequently heard at night around lodges, giving sharp, repetitive chirping calls.

Giant Toad (Cane Toad) *Rhinella horribilis* — Atitlán

Large, terrestrial toad with warty skin and prominent parotoid glands that secrete toxins as defense. Active at night and often found near water or human habitation. Important predator of insects but also an invasive species in some regions, such as Australia.

BUTTERFLIES

Papilionidae (Swallowtails)

Cattleheart *Parides* sp.

A large swallowtail, typically black with bold red and white markings that warn predators. Larvae feed on pipevines (*Aristolochia*), whose toxins make them unpalatable. Often associated with forest edges and streams.

Pieridae (Whites, Yellows and Sulphurs)

Great Southern White *Ascia monuste*

A common, fast-flying white of open habitats. Mostly white with dark margins. Antennae with distinctive turquoise-blue clubs. Often abundant in disturbed areas; locally migratory and prone to movements.

Cloudless Sulphur *Phoebis sennae*

Bright yellow and strong-flying. Widespread and often migratory. Distinguished by its largely unmarked wings.

Apricot Sulphur *Phoebis argante*

Brighter orange-toned than Cloudless Sulphur, especially in males, which often show a dark forewing border; females variable. Occurs in sunny clearings and edges.

Yellow Angled-Sulphur *Anteos maerula*

Large sulphur with sharply angled wings and powerful flight. Common in open habitats and forest edges.

Lycaenidae (Gossamer-winged Butterflies – Blues, Coppers and Hairstreaks)

Mexican Azure *Celastrina echo gozora*

Small, pale blue butterfly with fine underside spotting. Weak, fluttering flight near shrubs and woodland edges.

Nymphalidae (Brush-footed Butterflies)

Heliconiines (Longwings)

A distinctive subfamily known for bright warning coloration and participation in Müllerian mimicry complexes. Unlike most butterflies, they feed on pollen as well as nectar. Pollen provides essential amino acids, allowing them to live much longer—often several months—and sustain ongoing reproduction. Their chemical defenses (cyanogenic compounds) are derived primarily from larval host plants (*Passiflora*), with pollen feeding helping maintain these defenses and overall metabolic function into adulthood.

Julia Heliconian *Dryas iulia* — Los Tarrales

Elongate, bright orange butterfly with fast, gliding flight. Common in open tropical habitats.

Mexican Longwing *Heliconius hortense* — Los Tarrales

Black with red and pale yellow markings. Distinguished from Postman by a pale yellow patch on the outer forewing and a red band near the wing base.

Red Postman *Heliconius erato* — Los Tarrales

Black with bold red and pale markings; differs from Mexican Longwing by a red patch on the outer wing and a pale band nearer the body. Named for its regular “trapline” foraging routes.

Tiger Heliconian *Heliconius hecale* — Los Tarrales

Large orange-and-black species with slow, deliberate flight typical of forest understory longwings.

Ismenius Tiger Heliconian *Heliconius ismenius* — Los Tarrales

A slightly smaller, more finely patterned orange-and-black longwing, typically showing narrower, more intricate banding. Widely distributed from southern Mexico through Central America, it is a member of the “tiger” Müllerian mimicry ring, resembling other toxic species that share similar striping.

Zebra Heliconian *Heliconius charithonia* — Los Tarrales

Striking black-and-white (or yellow) striped pattern. Slow, gliding flight; known for communal roosting.

Danainae (Milkweed Butterflies)

Queen *Danaus gilippus* — Los Tarrales

Orange-brown, typically darker and more uniform than Monarch, with reduced or absent black veining and small white spots on the forewings. Toxic and part of Müllerian mimicry systems. Common in open and semi-open habitats.

Monarch *Danaus plexippus* — Tikal

Bright orange with bold, well-defined black veins **and** white-spotted margins. Larger and more vividly patterned than Queen. A long-distance migrant in North America; in the tropics, often resident or locally dispersive. Chemically protected through milkweed-derived toxins.

Satyrinae (Satyrs and Browns)

White Satyr *Pareuptychia ocirrhoe*

Small, pale satyr of shaded forest understory. Weak, low flight and subtle patterning.

Herme Satyr *Hermeuptychia hermes*

Cryptic brown satyr resembling dead leaves. Often overlooked; common in grassy or disturbed areas.

Brassolinae (Owl Butterflies)

Pale Owl-Butterfly *Caligo telamonius* — Tikal

Large forest butterfly with prominent eyespots. Often active in dim light; underside pattern likely functions as a predator deterrent.

Nymphalinae (Crescents, Anglewings and Allies)

Ardys Crescent *Anthanassa ardys*

A small brown butterfly with intricate markings, often perching in sunny openings.

Orange-patched Crescent *Anthanassa drusilla*

Similar to other crescents but with brighter orange patterning. Fast, low flight in open habitats.

Banded Peacock *Anartia fatima* — Los Tarrales

A common tropical species with brown wings marked by white and red bands. Often found near water or in disturbed habitats.

American Lady *Vanessa virginiensis*

A widespread species with orange wings and underside eyespots. A strong flier, often migratory.

Karwinski's Beauty *Smyrna karwinskii*

A large, dark butterfly with orange and blue markings, typically seen basking in forested habitats.

Rusty-tipped Page / Cappuccino *Siproeta epaphus* — Los Tarrales

A large, striking butterfly with dark wings crossed by a broad white band and a distinctive rusty-orange tip on the forewing. Often glides along forest edges and clearings, frequently perching with wings open. Feeds on nectar, rotting fruit, and other organic sources.

Biblidinae (Tropical Brushfoots)

White-dotted Crescent *Castilia ofella* — Los Tarrales

A small, dark tropical brushfoot with pale spotting. Typically encountered along forest edges and openings, where it makes short, darting flights and perches briefly on vegetation.

Four-spotted Sailor *Dynamine postverta* — Tikal

A small, fast-moving butterfly of forest edges and clearings. Upperwings dark with a bold white transverse band and four small pale spots on the forewing that give the species its name. Often perches on leaves with wings spread; flight quick, darting, and erratic.

Anna's Eighty-Eight *Diaethria anna* — La Playa

Named for the "88" pattern on the hindwing underside. Often rests with wings closed; when it opens its wings, the dorsal side flashes iridescent blue with dark margins. Frequently visits rotting fruit or damp ground.

Variable Cracker *Hamadryas feronia* — Los Tarrales

Cryptically patterned; produces audible cracking sounds via wing-snapping. Often rests on tree trunks with wings open. Seen—and heard—chasing a Tropical Kingbird at Los Tarrales.

Limenitidinae (Admirals and Sisters)

Pithy Sister *Adelpha pithys* — La Playa

Forest species with bold white banding. Fast, skipping flight and brief perching behavior.

Charaxinae (Leafwings)

Daggerwing *Marpesia* sp.

Recognized by elongated, pointed hindwings. Fast, gliding flight; often perches with wings closed.

Ithomiinae (Clearwings or Glasswings)

Klug's Clearwing *Dircenna klugii*

Translucent pale orange wings with dark margins. Slow, floating flight in forest understory.

Morphinae (Morphos)

Blue Morpho *Morpho helenor*

Large, iconic butterfly with iridescent blue upper wings. Flashing flight alternates between bright blue and cryptic brown.

Hesperiidae (Skippers)

Brown Longtail *Urbanus procne*

Skipper with elongated tails and rapid, darting flight. Common along forest edges.

Orange-spotted Skipper *Atalopedes sallei*

Small, fast-moving skipper with white patches and orange spots on wings.

Riodinidae (Metalmarks)

Rusty Metalmark *Synargis mycone* — Los Tarrales

A small, warm orange to rusty-toned metalmark with fine dark markings and subtle metallic scaling. Typically perches on the undersides of leaves in shaded forest edges and understory, making short, quick flights when disturbed. Like many riodinids, easily overlooked unless carefully searched for at close range.

MOTHS

Erebidae (Tiger Moths and Allies)

Smicropus laeta — El Pilar

A striking yellow-and-black day-flying moth, superficially resembling a wasp or small butterfly in both coloration and behavior. Typically active in sunny openings and forest edges, where its bold pattern likely functions as a warning signal to predators. Unlike most moths, it is diurnal, often observed flying low and deliberately through vegetation.

Crambidae (Grass Moths and Allies)

Desmia bajulalis — Los Tarrales

A small crambid moth.

Geometridae (Geometer Moths)

White-tipped Black *Melanchroia chephise* — Los Tarrales

A distinctive black moth with crisp white forewing tips, often active by day. Despite its butterfly-like appearance and behavior, it is a geometer moth. Common in open and semi-open habitats, where it flies with a light, fluttering motion and frequently visits flowers.

OTHER ARTHROPODS

Hymenoptera (Bees, Wasps, Ants)

Narrow Stingless Bee *Tetragonisca angustula*

A small, social bee lacking a functional sting. Often nests in cavities and is an important pollinator in tropical systems. Observed at Los Tarrales.

Column-forming Army Ant *Eciton hamatum*

A nomadic ant forming large, organized foraging columns. Known for driving mixed-species bird flocks that follow swarms to capture flushed prey. Observed at Los Tarrales.

Leafcutter Ant *Atta* sp.

Among the most ecologically influential insects in the Neotropics, leafcutter ants harvest fragments of leaves not for direct consumption but to cultivate a specialized fungus (*Leucoagaricus gongylophorus*) within subterranean chambers. Workers meticulously process leaf material into a growth substrate for the fungus, which produces nutrient-rich structures (gongylidia) that serve as the colony's primary food source. This obligate mutualism is highly refined: ants actively weed out competing fungi, secrete antimicrobial compounds (including those produced by symbiotic bacteria), and maintain precise humidity and temperature conditions within the nest. Colonies may contain millions of individuals and vast underground networks, functioning as dominant herbivores and ecosystem engineers in tropical forests. Observed several times on tour.

Ghost Ant *Tapinoma melanocephalum*

Tiny, pale-bodied ant with dark head. Frequently associated with human structures; attracted to food and moisture, often appearing in kitchens and dining areas. Observed at Los Tarrales.

Shimmering Golden Sugar Ant (Golden Carpenter Ant) *Camponotus sericeiventris* — Los Tarrales

A large, conspicuous ant with a metallic golden sheen across the abdomen, often striking in sunlight. Common in tropical forests, where it forages along tree trunks and branches. Like other carpenter ants, it nests in wood—often in dead or decaying sections of trees—playing a role in decomposition and nutrient cycling.

Pompilidae (Spider Wasps)

Tarantula Hawk Wasp *Pepsis* / *Hemipepsis* sp. — Tikal

A large spider wasp (family Pompilidae) with metallic blue-black body and often with bright orange wings. Flies low while searching for tarantulas, which it paralyzes to provision its nest. Sting among the most painful of any insect. Species-level identification uncertain.

Hemiptera (True Bugs)

Widehead Froglet Cicada *Dorisiana* sp. — Los Tarrales

A cicada with a broad head profile and strong, resonant call. Often detected acoustically before being seen. Common in warm, forested environments.

Tropical Specklewing *Pacarina schumanni* — Los Tarrales

A Neotropical cicada often detected first by its loud, mechanical buzzing call. Typically associated with forest edges and semi-open habitats. Adults show mottled, “speckled” wings that provide camouflage against bark. Like other cicadas, spends most of its life underground as a nymph, emerging synchronously to molt and reproduce.

Coleoptera (Beetles)

Patent-leather Beetle *Passalus* sp.— Los Tarrales

Large, glossy black beetle with a thick, sculpted, leather-like exoskeleton. Typically found in decaying wood, where it lives in family groups and helps break down rotting logs. Members of this group are known for producing squeaking sounds (stridulation) used in communication.

Firefly sp. (family Lampyridae) — Volcán Atitlán

Bioluminescent beetles observed before dawn along forest edges, emitting intermittent flashes consistent with mate-signaling behavior.

Odonata (Dragonflies and Damselflies)

Calopterygidae (Broad-winged Damselflies)

Highland Rubyspot *Hetaerina cruentata* — Los Tarrales

A striking damselfly of forested streams, with males showing metallic bodies and vivid red patches at the base of the wings. Often perches on rocks or vegetation near flowing water, making short, fluttering flights along shaded stream corridors.

Scorpiones (Scorpions)

Slender Brown Scorpion *Centruroides gracilis*

A relatively slender species often found on walls or vegetation at night. Like many in the genus, it possesses medically significant venom but is generally not aggressive. In Pete’s room at Los Tarrales.

Araneae (Spiders)

Mexican Red Rump Tarantula *Tliltocatl vagans* — Tikal

A large, ground-dwelling tarantula with a distinctive reddish abdomen. Males wander in search of females, while females remain in burrows. Defensive hairs can be irritating if disturbed. Exceptional sighting on walkway on final night at Tikal.

FUNGI

Polypore shelf fungus *Polyporales* sp.

A bracket fungus growing on dead wood on the ground observed at Tikal. A key decomposer, breaking down lignin and returning nutrients to the forest system.

PLANTS

Gymnosperms (Conifers and Allies)

Pinaceae (Pine Family)

Guatemalan Fir *Abies guatemalensis* — Finca Chichavac.

A high-elevation fir endemic to Central America, occurring in cool, moist cloud forests. A classic relict of montane habitats and now threatened due to habitat loss and logging.

Cupressaceae (Cypress Family)

Mexican Cedar *Hesperocypris lusitanica* — Los Tarrales

A native conifer of montane regions. Despite the common name, not a true cedar (*Cedrus*), but a member of the cypress family. Occurs naturally in highland forests and is also widely planted.

Angiosperms (Flowering Plants)

Monocots (Grasses, Palms, Orchids, and Allies)

Orchidaceae (Orchid Family)

Narrow-leaf Equal-lip Orchid *Isochilus major* — Los Tarrales

An epiphytic orchid with slender leaves and tubular flowers, growing on trunks and branches in humid forest. Observed near lodge at Los Tarrales.

Pale Mule-ear Orchid *Trichocentrum ascendens* — Los Tarrales

An epiphytic orchid of seasonally dry tropical forest, characterized by thick, leathery, ear-shaped leaves and arching sprays of spotted yellow to brown flowers. Often grows on exposed branches where it endures high light and periodic drought. Like many orchids, relies on specialized pollinators and mycorrhizal fungi for germination and establishment.

Encyclia selligera — Volcán Atitlán

An epiphytic orchid of seasonally dry to subhumid forests, often growing on exposed branches with good airflow. Found from Mexico through Central America, including Guatemala, and occurs across a range of elevations that can extend into foothill and lower montane zones. Like other orchids, depends on mycorrhizal fungi for germination. Observed on Volcán Atitlán hike.

Rhynchostele stellata — Volcán Atitlán

An epiphytic orchid of montane cloud forest, growing on moss-laden trunks and branches in cool, humid conditions. Produces arching sprays of star-shaped flowers, typically white to pale with darker spotting. Characteristic of mid- to high-elevation forests in southern Mexico and Central America, including Guatemala. Observed on Volcán Atitlán hike.

Pine Pink *Bletia purpurea* — Flores

A terrestrial orchid of open, often seasonally dry or disturbed habitats, frequently found in sandy or limestone soils. Produces tall spikes of showy pink to purple flowers, often appearing after rains. Unlike many orchids, it grows from the ground rather than as an epiphyte. Widely distributed from Florida and the Caribbean through Central America.

Clamshell Orchid *Prosthechea cochleata* — Flores

An epiphytic orchid of lowland tropical forest, often growing on tree trunks and branches in humid conditions. Notable for its distinctive inverted flower, with the lip held uppermost like a shell or hood. Widely distributed from Florida and the Caribbean through Central America, including Guatemala.

Bromeliaceae (Bromeliad Family)

Neoregelia spp.

Tank bromeliads that hold water in leaf rosettes, creating microhabitats for insects and amphibians.

Tillandsia spp.

“Air plants” that absorb moisture and nutrients through leaf trichomes; no soil contact required.

Zingiberaceae (Ginger Family)

Red Ginger *Alpinia purpurata* — cultivated gardens

A showy ornamental (non-native, Southeast Asia) with bright red, waxy bracts. Common in tropical landscaping; not part of the native flora.

Costaceae (Spiral Ginger Family)

Spiral Ginger *Costus* sp. — wild and semi-natural areas

A native or naturalized understory plant with a distinctive spiral leaf arrangement and red cone-like bracts. Common in moist forest edges and often confused with true gingers (Zingiberaceae). A key nectar source for hummingbirds—especially hermits—which follow regular traplines linking flowering plants through the forest understory.

Heliconiaceae (Heliconia Family)

Heliconia spp.

Iconic Neotropical plants with pendant bracts. Strongly associated with hermit hummingbirds, which track flowering cycles—an example of tight coevolution between plant and pollinator.

Amaryllidaceae (Amaryllis Family)

Pink Rain Lily *Zephyranthes* sp. — Los Tarrales

A showy geophyte that flowers rapidly after rain. Native species occur locally; exact ID uncertain.

Asparagaceae (Asparagus Family)

Spineless Yucca *Yucca gigantea* (syn. *Y. elephantipes*) — Los Tarrales

A large, arborescent monocot with thick, cane-like stems and rosettes of flexible, spineless leaves. Native to Central America and widely cultivated. Like other yuccas, it has an obligate mutualism with specialized yucca moths (*Tegeticula* spp.), which pollinate the flowers while laying eggs—an iconic example of coevolution.

Angiosperms (Flowering Plants)

Eudicots (Broadleaf Plants)

Moraceae (Fig Family)

Fig Trees *Ficus* spp.

A keystone genus in tropical ecosystems. Figs produce enclosed inflorescences (syconia) that are pollinated by highly specialized fig wasps in an obligate mutualism. Because different fig species fruit asynchronously, they provide a critical, year-round food source for birds, bats, and mammals, sustaining diverse communities.

Ramón / Breadnut Tree *Brosimum alicastrum* — lowland and foothill forests

A large, long-lived tree of the fig family, historically and ecologically significant across Mesoamerica. The nutrient-rich seeds—often called “Maya nuts”—were an important food source for the ancient Maya and can be eaten roasted or ground into flour. The tree produces fleshy multiple fruits related to figs that support a wide range of wildlife, making it a keystone species in many forest systems. The leaves are also highly nutritious and were reportedly used by Spanish conquistadors as forage for their horses. Its ability to thrive in poor soils and drought conditions has renewed interest in its role in sustainable agriculture and reforestation.

Sapotaceae (Sapodilla Family)

Chicle Tree / Sapodilla *Manilkara zapota* — Tikal

A tropical tree valued historically as the source of chicle, a natural latex harvested from the bark and once used as the base for chewing gum. This practice supported a major regional industry prior to the advent of synthetic substitutes. The tree also produces edible fruit and is an important component of tropical forest ecosystems. We frequently saw the distinctive zigzag (“Z”) slash marks on the trunk from chicle extraction, designed to channel latex downward for collection without killing the tree.

Cactaceae (Cactus Family)

Queen of the Night *Weberocereus glaber* — Finca El Pilar

A climbing or epiphytic cactus with large, nocturnal, fragrant flowers, typically pollinated by bats or moths. Observed blooming at Finca El Pilar.

Bignoniaceae (Trumpet Vine Family)

Pink Trumpet Tree *Tabebuia rosea* — Los Tarrales

Seasonal mass flowering provides a significant nectar resource pulse for birds and insects.

Jacaranda *Jacaranda mimosifolia* — Antigua region

Not native (South America). Widely planted ornamental with purple-blue flowers.

Malvaceae (Mallow Family)

Ceiba (Silk-cotton Tree, Kapok) *Ceiba pentandra* — widespread; especially notable at Tikal

The sacred “Tree of Life” in Maya cosmology. A towering emergent with a massive, buttressed trunk supporting epiphytes and diverse canopy wildlife. Young trees bear prominent conical thorns. Produces silky floss (kapok) traditionally used by the Maya. Important nesting and roosting sites for large raptors such as Harpy Eagles and Hawk-Eagles.

Burseraceae (Torchwood / Frankincense Family)

Gumbo Limbo *Bursera simaruba*

Recognizable by peeling red bark. Drought-tolerant pioneer species common in dry and semi-deciduous forests. Observed often on tour.

Campanulaceae (Bellflower Family)

Sierra Madre Lobelia *Lobelia laxiflora* — Los Tarrales

A native species of montane and foothill habitats from Mexico through Central America, including Guatemala. Long tubular red flowers adapted to hummingbird pollination. Observed at Los Tarrales being used by Long-billed Starthroat—an excellent example of bill–corolla length matching and coevolution.

Verbenaceae (Verbena Family)

Purple Vervain *Verbena* sp.

A strong hummingbird attractant due to abundant nectar, accessible flower structure, and extended bloom period; also supports butterflies.

Nyctaginaceae (Four-o’clock Family)

Bougainvillea *Bougainvillea* sp. — ornamental

Not native (South America). The vivid color comes from papery bracts, not the small true flowers within.