



THE BRAZILIAN AMAZON

13 June – 2 July 2019



Ocellated Crake (*Micropygia schomburgkii*) © Bob Rodrigues

trip report by Bradley Davis (bradley@agaminature.com)
www.agaminature.com

Introduction: This tour to the Brazilian Amazon was a combination of two of our favourite Amazonian itineraries. We took our Heart of the Amazon itinerary that covers the Manaus area, compressed it slightly, and combined it with parts of our Southwest Amazon itinerary to cover the Inambari centre of endemism (the area south of the Amazon and west of the Madeira river out of Porto Velho) and the bamboo-laden forest of eastern Acre, Brazil's southwesternmost state bordering Peru and Bolivia. Some of the group had birded the south-eastern Amazon with us years before, covering the Cristalino, Rio Azul and Thaimaçu lodges, respectively, so we opted to skip the Tabajara area and its great selection of Madeira-Tapajós endemics to avoid trying to do too much.

June is a transitional month between the wet and the dry season in the Manaus area, so we did quite well to avoid losing any really significant time to rain during the first leg of the trip (we lost most of an afternoon at Novo Airão, but otherwise the bulk of the rain we encountered came either during drives between sites, or in the wee hours of the morning before we headed out into the field). Once south of the Amazon, we had no further problems with the weather, although the tracks in the Porto Velho still hadn't really dried out yet and made for one or two interesting drives out of birding sites.

Birdwise the tour was a tremendous success, and we connected with the majority of the trip's top targets. We saw some of the most-wanted birds, and some of the least-known birds of the Amazon rainforest. During the trip we recorded 606 species of birds, with just a short list of the highlights including Harpy Eagle (twice), Ocellated Crake (see cover photo), Crimson Topaz, White-throated Jacamar, Collared Puffbird, Rufous-necked Puffbird, Semicollared Puffbird, Lemon-throated Barbet, Curl-crested Aracari, Varzea Piculet, Rufous-headed Woodpecker, Red-fan Parrot, Blue-headed Macaw, Parker's Spinetail, Hoffmanns's Woodcreeper, Zimmer's Woodcreeper, Long-billed Woodcreeper, Black-throated Antshrike, Undulated Antshrike, Glossy Antshrike, Pearly Antshrike, Rondonia Bushbird, Cherrie's Antwren, Manu Antbird, Rufous Twistwing, Buff-cheeked Tody-Flycatcher, Acre Tody-Tyrant, Guianan Cock-of-the-Rock, Guianan Red-Cotinga, Capuchinbird, Black-faced Cotinga, Pompadour Cotinga, White-throated Manakin, Wire-tailed Manakin, Campina Jay, Musician Wren, Wing-banded Wren and Black-masked Finch.

Throughout the tour, though, we were reminded of what is at stake when it comes to the development of the Amazon. From the days spent in the metropolis of Manaus with its large industrial district, to the grain port at Itacoatiara, to the reservoirs created in the damming of the Madeira river near Porto Velho, to the extensive cattle ranches of western Rondônia and eastern Acre, during our trip we were witness to the ongoing destruction of the natural environments of the region. During the time it has taken me to complete this trip report, the situation has not improved. Indeed, several forest sites we visited during this tour are no longer forested, having been cleared to make way for farms, pastures, and mechanized agriculture. Until arguments can be made to convince stakeholders in Brazil of the economic advantages – in explicit, dollars and cents terms – that are intrinsic to ecosystem conservation, it will be a long road before anything changes.

Itinerary:

June 12th: Arrivals in Manaus.

Night at Nobile Suites Hotel in Manaus, Amazonas.

June 13th: Full day at Adolpho Ducke Reserve north of Manaus, including owling.

Night at Nobile Suites Hotel in Manaus.

June 14th: Morning birding at canopy tower at Manaus Botanical Gardens. Afternoon drive to Itacoatiara.

Night at Hotel Cleia Cirino in Itacoatiara, Amazonas.

June 15th: Varzea forests on the north bank of the Amazon river at the Furo de Miracoera. Afternoon drive to Presidente Figueiredo.

Night at Hotel Um Lugar in Presidente Figueiredo, Amazonas.

June 16th: Morning birding *terra firme* and *campinarana* at Cachoeira da Onça reserve.

Afternoon birding the trail in tall forest behind our hotel, staying out late for owling.

Night at Hotel Um Lugar in Presidente Figueiredo.

June 17th: Early morning on the trail behind our hotel. Mid-morning to mid-afternoon birding at Marí Marí.

Late afternoon visit to rocky *campina* at Lajes Reserve, interrupted by rain.

Night at Hotel Um Lugar in Presidente Figueiredo.

June 18th: Morning birding tall forests at the Ramal do Tucumanduba. Afternoon return to Manaus.

Night at Novotel in Manaus, Amazonas.

- June 19th:** All day birding successional white water island habitats at Marchantaria Island in the Solimões river.
Night at Novotel in Manaus.
- June 20th:** Morning birding disturbed *terra firme* forests north of Manaus at Ramal do Pau Rosa. Drive to Novo Airão on the west bank of the Rio Negro, and afternoon birding in forests south of town.
Night at Amazonia Park & Suites Hotel in Novo Airão, Amazonas.
- June 21st:** Birding the flooded forests of the river island archipelago in Anavilhanas National Park. Afternoon birding the Igarapé Najatuba, a creek on the west bank of the Rio Negro.
Night at Amazonia Park & Suites in Novo Airão.
- June 22nd:** Morning birding *terra firme* forests of the Ekobé reserve south of Novo Airão. Afternoon birding the dump track at KM 13 south of town, staying out late for owling.
Night at Amazonia Park & Suites in Novo Airão.
- June 23rd:** Boat trip into the flooded forests of the Anavilhanas National Park. Afternoon drive to Manaus and evening flight to Porto Velho.
Night at Slaviero Essential Hotel in Porto Velho, Rondônia.
- June 24th:** Morning birding Linha C-01 on the west bank of the Madeira river. Afternoon birding Linha C-30, also on the west bank of the Madeira.
Night at Slaviero Essential Hotel in Porto Velho.
- June 25th:** Morning birding the savannas of the Ramal das Campinas ca. halfway between Porto Velho and Humaitá. Drive to Humaitá and afternoon birding the *varzea* forests on the east bank of the Madeira along the Transamazônica highway.
Night at Hotel Macedônia in Humaitá, Amazonas.
- June 26th:** Morning birding the excellent *terra firme* forest of the Ramal Novo Horizonte. Afternoon drive to Jaci-Paraná, with a short stop en route at Linha C-30 for Humaitá Antbird.
Night at Hotel Fama in Jaci-Paraná, Rondônia.
- June 27th:** Birding *terra firme* with stands of slender bamboos along the Rio Branco south of Jaci-Paraná for Rondônia Bushbird. Afternoon birding the Linha do IBAMA, also south of Jaci-Paraná.
Night at Hotel Fama in Jaci-Paraná.
- June 28th:** Short morning birding session in *campinarana* on the Ramal da Prainha west of Jaci-Paraná. Most of the rest of the day spent driving to Rio Branco, arriving in mid-afternoon.
Night at Ibis Hotel in Rio Branco, Acre.
- June 29th:** Full day birding the disturbed bamboo forests on the Ramal do Noca west of Rio Branco.
Night at Ibis Hotel in Rio Branco.
- June 30th:** Full day birding the disturbed bamboo forests on the Ramal do Noca west of Rio Branco.
Night at Ibis Hotel in Rio Branco.
- July 1st:** Morning birding on the Ramal do Noca. Afternoon at Andirá river north of Rio Branco.
Night at Ibis Hotel in Rio Branco.
- July 2nd:** Drive from Rio Branco to Porto Velho to catch outbound flights.
Night at Slaviero Essential Hotel in Porto Velho / End of tour.

Summary:

June 13th: We started the tour before dawn on the 13th, heading for the Adolpho Ducke Forest Reserve, a reserve encompassing 10,000 hectares of excellent *terra firme* forest on the northern edge of Manaus. The reserve is named in honour of Adolpho Ducke, a botanist and entomologist who was one of the pioneers of scientific research in the Brazilian Amazon. During his work in the early 20th century Ducke described some 900 species of trees. Standing 6'6", Ducke was literally a giant in the field, and he apparently once remarked that it seemed only natural to dedicate his life to the study of the forest giants of the Amazon basin. We arrived to the Ducke reserve under overcast skies just after first light, spying a couple of **Black Nunbirds** in the parking lot, the first Guianan Shield endemic of the trip. After signing the visitor log, we started down the main trail. As is often the case in the Manaus area, the *terra firme* was fairly quiet first thing in the morning, yet slowly but surely birds started to appear: a **Chestnut-rumped Woodcreeper** popped up for views in the dim forest, and a couple of **Dusky-throated Antshrikes** soon followed. We tried to see one of a handful of White-fronted Manakins that were calling nearby to no avail, with just a **Wedge-billed Woodcreeper** to show for our efforts. A bit farther down the main trail, a large cotinga flashed through the subcanopy, providing just the briefest of glimpses. I had an impression as to what it had been, though, and some work with the tape proved my suspicion correct when an ochre-coloured **Capuchinbird** came in and hopped around in the subcanopy for some time, playing a bit of hide-and-seek at first, but eventually showing well for all. This really got the ball rolling, and in short order we found **White-necked Thrush**, a male **Golden-headed Manakin**, **Guianan Warbling-Antbird**, and had good, clear views of a patient **White-fronted Manakin**. We heard a calling **Lined Forest-Falcon** nearby, and it took just a short bit of playback to bring the bird in close, and it sat down low long enough for us to see it through the scope. Our good fortune continued with nice views of a trio of **Red-necked Woodpeckers**, a massive woodpecker of good quality Amazonian rainforests. A quick view of **Cinereous Mourner** followed soon thereafter, before we were distracted by the arrival of a small group of four raucous **Red-throated Caracaras**. Turning back, we found a nice **Golden-green Woodpecker** of the "Bar-throated" *capistratus* race, along with a **Squirrel Cuckoo**, a pair of **Mouse-coloured Antshrikes**, and another sighting of what was presumably the same **Lined Forest-Falcon** we had seen a little while earlier. Back near the beginning of the track we worked on a singing **White-eyed Tody-Tyrant** for quite some time, only really getting the briefest of glimpses as it zipped around in the subcanopy. A **McConnell's Flycatcher** at lower levels was much more co-operative. Just before we reached the small stream near the reserve mess hall, a commotion in the understorey drew our attention to a **Tiny Hawk** which had apparently just captured a large woodcreeper and was setting about tearing it apart, while a handful of passerines zoomed back and forth in its vicinity, voicing their concerns.



Tiny Hawk (*Accipiter superciliosus*) © Bradley Davis

Even though the weather was overcast, the humidity was taking its toll and we were about ready to head back to Manaus for lunch, but first I wanted to look for one more species. We walked along the stream near the reserve kitchen to look for **Spot-winged Antbird** (and we had good views of a pair), when the calls of some agitated **Brown-backed Bearded Sakis** drew us further down the trail. Strangely, the monkeys weren't budging in reply to tape – they are normally responsive... I noticed some movement in the canopy and lifted my binoculars, thinking I had found one of the monkeys, when a massive **Harpy Eagle** lifted out of the subcanopy and flapped off down the stream a short distance! The monkeys fled quickly, and we forgot about them as we worked to track down the Harpy, eventually finding the bird, an immature female, perched in the canopy, calling hoarsely. This young bird had been born at a nest site not far from the reserve headquarters, but as it had fledged several months earlier, we hadn't planned to visit the eyrie since the chances of encountering it at the nest weren't particularly good. What a great way to close out the first morning of our trip!



Harpy Eagle (*Harpia harpyja*) © Bradley Davis

Upon returning to Manaus, I headed over to the airport to pick up Bob, who was finally arriving two days later than he had expected, thanks to shoddy service from his inbound airline. After a nice lunch at our hotel and a short break, we returned to the Ducke Reserve in the late afternoon. We spent some time in the main headquarters clearing to start things off, seeing **White-thighed Swallows**, a couple of **Fork-tailed Palm-swifts** chasing a pair of **Golden-winged Parakeets**, a **Guianan Tyrannulet** through the scope, and best of all, a trio of **Waved Woodpeckers** that flashed back and forth over the clearing a few times before they finally settled in an emergent tree at the edge of the clearing. We invested a fair amount of time in a Guianan Puffbird that sang intermittently near the administration buildings, but simply couldn't find the bird. We

headed into the forest to get into position to try for Rufous Potoo, seeing a **Black-banded Woodcreeper** while we waited for dusk to arrive. Unfortunately, there was no sign of the potoo (possibly unresponsive as the birds wouldn't start to breed for another couple of months), so we ended up working quite a long time on a singing **Tawny-bellied Screech-Owl**, finally getting a couple of brief but very good views before calling it a day.



Guianan Toucanet (*Selenidera piperivora*) © Bob Rodrigues

lucky with a flock when I heard the song of **Guianan Woodcreeper**. We called a pair of these smartly patterned woodcreepers in close for good views right beside the tower, but it soon became clear that no other birds were traveling with the woodcreepers (at least not yet). The “Guianan” theme continued with a fabulous trio of **Guianan Toucanets**, and a handsome **Guianan Puffbird** in a leafless tree to the north of the tower. By now we had been joined atop the tower by another birding group – the upper platform of the canopy tower can comfortably accommodate more than 20 people at a time – just in time for everyone to enjoy the next bird. I decided to put the scope on an interesting-looking blob out on the horizon, and was delighted to find our second **Harpy Eagle** in less than 24 hours! This one was an adult, and once we trained the scopes on the bird everyone on the tower was able to enjoy it, even though it was a bit distant. “Just another Harpy Eagle”, though, so we got right back to it, calling in a male **Glossy-backed Becard**, along with a becard look-alike in **Todd’s Sirystes**, three of them in fact. The action continued with a nice **Black-necked Aracari**, the endemic **Black-spotted Barbet**, and a very showy pair of **Black-bellied Cuckoos** that wowed everyone. A mixed group of **Guianan Brown Capuchins** and **Brown-backed Bearded Sakis** provided a bit of a mammalian interlude. Finally, a canopy flock put in an appearance: **Buff-cheeked**

June 14th: The next morning we started early with a light breakfast before dawn at our hotel. From there it was only a 20-minute drive to the Manaus Botanical Garden, a 100-hectare reserve administered by the Museu da Amazonia (The Amazon Museum) which is contiguous with the much larger Adolpho Ducke Reserve. A short, easy walk down a wide, flat trail had us at the base of the sturdy galvanized steel tower in just a couple of minutes. We climbed right to the top (42 metres above the ground) and marveled at the views out over uninterrupted mature *terra firme* rainforest to the north, east, and west, and the skyscrapers of Manaus in the distance to the south. As we considered our great good fortune to simply be in such a place, we soon took note of the birds around us. A couple of large flocks of **Golden-winged Parakeets** whirled around the tower; a fabulous group of five **Red-fan Parrots** popped up distantly, first for scope views, but soon enough they flew much closer to the tower to give us much better views. An immaculate **Gray-lined Hawk** sat up in the canopy in the lovely early morning light, and a couple of more distant **White-throated Toucans** were also up for scope views. Canopy flocks are always an important feature of any visit to a tower, and I thought we might get

Greenlet, Paradise Tanager, Ash-winged Antwren, Spot-backed Antwren, Spotted Tanagers, Fulvous-crested and Flame-crested Tanagers, Chivi Vireo, Yellow-margined Flycatcher, and Guianan Tyrannulet all showed themselves, some of them at point blank range in the branches just below us, while one or two species only popped up briefly. This flurry of activity ebbed away as the morning heated up, and after scoring fly-by views of **Mealy Parrots**, we decided it was time to call it a morning.

After another tasty lunch at our hotel, we checked out and departed for the drive to Itacoatiara, the port town located downstream from Manaus on the Amazon river. The drive took quite a while, partly due to some truly poor stretches with more potholes than asphalt, but we did manage to make a couple of quick late afternoon stops. The first stop, a quick break to stretch our legs at the Urubu river, provided our first encounter with **Little Chachalaca**, in addition to a very photogenic **Roadside Hawk**. A short foray down a forested side road closer to Itacoatiara was fairly quiet, though we did find a nice little flock containing **Golden-collared Woodpecker, Northern Slaty-Antshrike, White-shouldered and Flame-crested Tanagers**, and a pair of **Golden-bellied Euphonias**. Our last stop came just as we were arriving to Itacoatiara, when Steve announced that he had just seen “a couple of huge birds” in a roadside wetland. We quickly pulled off to enjoy this family of **Horned Screammers** (a pair with at least three young), and a collection of other wetland species including a single **Hoatzin, Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks, Greater Ani**, almost a dozen **Wattled Jacanas**, a handful of **Striated Herons**, a single **Capped Heron**, and a couple of **Black-collared Hawks**. We scoped a distant **Bare-necked Fruitcrow** and also watched a flock of **Blue-headed Parrots**, approximately 80 of them, streaming through en route to a roost area.

June 15th: An early start had us motoring upstream on the Amazon river under clear skies, for which we were thankful. The thunderous arrival of a ferocious storm in the wee hours of the morning had put our morning’s birding in doubt, but by the time we had finished our breakfast in the local market – accompanied by a few revelers closing out their Friday night – the clouds had mostly rolled out and the weather looked good. We headed upstream on the Amazon river, hugging the north bank as we headed for the Miracoera area. En route we passed a number of massive barges loaded with containers and a large grain ship being loaded from a modern-looking terminal. Since the late 1990s, Itacoatiara has been an important port for the shipping of grain exports out of central-west Brazil. Soybeans and other grains grown in the powerhouse agricultural state of Mato Grosso are shipped 1,500 kilometres west to grain terminals at the city of Porto Velho on the Madeira river; the grains are then loaded onto container-carrying barges and towed downstream another 1,000 kilometres to Itacoatiara. Here, the terminal can load a Panamax-grade vessel in 4 days before it sails another 900 kilometres downstream to the mouth of the Amazon, then across the Atlantic to European ports, or around the northern coast of South America to cross to the Pacific using the Panama Canal, en route to Asia. While we might prefer a different reality for the modern-day Amazon, there is no denying the fact that Brazil views it as an economic resource and treats it thusly. From the days spent in the metropolis of Manaus with its large industrial district, to the grain port at Itacoatiara, to the reservoirs created in the damming of the Madeira river near Porto Velho, to the extensive cattle ranches of western Rondônia and eastern Acre, during our trip we were witness to the ongoing destruction of the natural environments of the region. Until arguments can be made to convince stakeholders in Brazil of the economic advantages – in explicit, dollars and cents terms – that are intrinsic to ecosystem conservation, it will be a long road before anything changes.



As we headed upriver we saw many **Large-billed Terns** over the water, and quite a few **Ringed Kingfishers** along the way, particularly near spots where the river banks formed towering bluffs where the birds must have been nesting. **Yellow-headed Caracaras** scavenged along the shore, with **Lesser Yellow-headed Vultures** teetering on dihedrals as they dipped low over rafts of floating vegetation. As we reached the narrower Furo de Miracoera, a side channel on the north bank of the Amazon, we started to see **Great Black** and **Black-collared Hawks**, our first **Festive Parrots**, and a steady stream of **Greater Anis**, more than 100 strong, accompanying us along the first two or three hundred metres of the channel. Other sightings here included our only **Toco Toucans** of the whole trip, two handsome birds perched up on a snag bathed in lovely early morning light. We had quick views of a **Blue-chinned Sapphire**, saw a singing **House Wren**, and then one of the two major targets of the morning appeared when a **Varzea Piculet** crept in silently to check us out, allowing clear albeit somewhat brief views.

A short foray into the flooded forest yielded great studies of the always stonking **Long-billed Woodcreeper** (3 birds), a couple of **Streaked Flycatchers** and a **Variegated Flycatcher** with them, and a couple of **White-throated Kingbirds** amongst the more numerous **Tropical Kingbirds**. Our progress into the flooded



forest was blocked by some extremely dense vine tangles, so we decided to try another creek. Back out at the main Miracoera channel, a terrific family group of **Green-tailed Jacamars** (*pictured left*) entertained us for a bit, and better yet, another **Varzea Piculet** popped up, this one showing much better than the first bird we had seen! Nearby we had a nice pair of **Short-tailed Parrots** in the canopy of a large *munguba* tree (*Pseudobombax munguba*). Into the flooded forest again, this time along a narrow creek that is kept open seasonally by local residents: **Straight-billed Woodcreeper**, **Blue-tailed Emerald**, **Black-tailed Trogon** and **White-eyed Attila** were all nice to see, and finally the **Scaled Spinetail** we sought deigned to reply, coming in quite close and showing extremely well in the very same thicket where we had seen the species on a previous tour almost a year earlier. A pair of **Leaden Antwrens** joined the fun for a while, bouncing around in the same tangle as the spinetail. A **Varzea Schiffornis** showed itself nearby, even posing fairly calmly for a photo or two. We also found **Black-crowned Tityra**, a couple of **Three-striped Flycatchers**, the endemic **Glossy Antshrike**, a striking **Spotted Puffbird**, and a pair of

Klages' Antwrens up in the canopy. A **Yellow-crowned Elaenia** toyed with us for a while before eventually showing itself to all parties, and we also had views of a **Yellow-olive Flycatcher** of the vocally distinct *insignis* race hanging out with the elaenia.

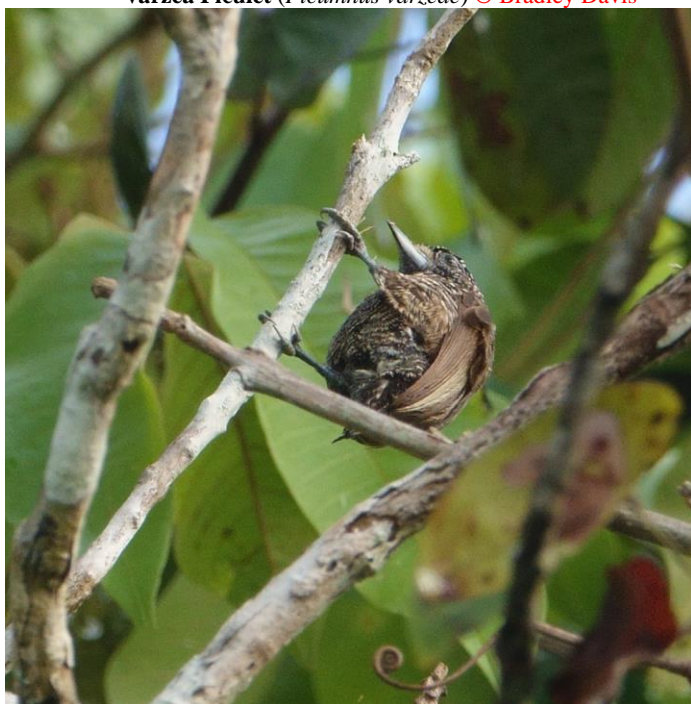


Spotted Puffbird (*Bucco tamaria*) © Bradley Davis



Varzea Schiffornis (*Schiffornis major*) © Bradley Davis

Varzea Piculet (*Picumnus varzeae*) © Bradley Davis



winged Parrots streaming overhead on their way to a nearby roost area, and a trio of **Red-and-green Macaws** headed in the opposite direction. We had dinner at the hotel, where a long wait was rewarded with an extremely hearty, quite delicious meal.

June 16th: We arose before dawn to find an amazing breakfast spread laid out, complete with fresh fruit and three types of juice, scrambled eggs, cakes, cold cuts, freshly baked *pão de queijo* and hot fried *coxinhas*, a delicious savoury pastry filled with chicken. A great way to start the day! Once we felt adequately stuffed, we drove a short distance to the nearby Cachoeira da Onça reserve, a lovely patch of privately-owned *campinarana* forest set along a beautiful blackwater stream. We had a tough beginning along the main trail in the reserve, with a pair of Rufous-throated Antbirds that darted in wide circles around us, without showing a single feather. A Black-faced Hawk which didn't want to play ball followed, and after that a Fulvous Shrike-Tanager flew away as soon as I tried to call it in with tape. We noticed that we weren't the only ones doing some "birding" – we spied a **Tiny Hawk** sitting down low and staring intently at something in the lower growth. Perhaps this was part of the reason why nothing wanted to show itself to us? A nice **Cinnamon-throated Woodcreeper** was a bit more co-operative once the hawk left. A fast-moving mixed

With the two major targets – the localized lower Amazon endemics, **Scaled Spinetail** and **Varzea Piculet** – under our belts, we needed to head back to Itacoatiara to pack up and start on the long drive to Presidente Figueiredo. A great pair of **Tui Parakeets** perched up in the mid-morning sun was a nice way to close things out. Returning to town, we packed up, checked out of our little hotel and departed on the pot-holed highway back to Manaus (first ticking off a pair of **Chestnut-bellied Seedeaters** at the gas station in Itacoatiara). Heavy thunder showers increased the degree of difficulty of the drive, delaying us a bit and nixing any plans we had of birding along the way. We arrived at our pleasant hotel in the small town of Presidente Figueiredo, 100 kilometres north of Manaus, in the late afternoon. As we checked in and unpacked the vehicle, we noted a few birds around the cabins including a half dozen **Fork-tailed Flycatchers**, at least 60 **Orange-**

flock had **Dusky-throated Antshrikes** in the understorey, and **Ash-winged**, **Spot-backed** and **Pygmy Antwrens** in the canopy, while we had **Chestnut-rumped** and **Spot-throated Woodcreepers** in the mid-levels, along with **Plain Xenops** and a handful of birds we couldn't clap eyes on. As usual, patience through a slow start began to pay dividends, in the form of a singing male **Black-headed Antbird** that played hard to get but finally showed itself in the dark understorey. A bit further on, an excited **Rufous-capped Antthrush** settled down and strutted along a fallen log, even sitting and singing long enough to watch it through the scope! A singing Riverbank Warbler didn't approach, so we switched gears and worked on the resident **Capuchinbirds** instead, one of which we managed to scope as it sang in the subcanopy, one of at least three individuals that crossed the river to have a look at us. A nest-building **Whiskered Flycatcher** was also hanging around. With the Sunday tourists starting to trickle along the trail in the direction of the waterfall, we ducked into a quieter stretch of forest off the main track. This paid off in spades, as soon enough we were mesmerized by the beautiful but haunting song of the Amazon's most famed songster, the **Musician Wren**. The wren, known as the *uirapuru* in Brazilian Portuguese, inhabits Amazonian folklore and was even the inspiration for a ballet written by Heitor Villa-Lobos, one of the most influential composers in South American history. This particular wren approached boldly and sang with abandon the moment it detected our presence (no playback necessary!), taking up a favoured stage and putting on a spectacular performance. We watched, transfixed, marveling as much at the bird's fearlessness as at its complex, musical song. Eventually it melted away into the forest understorey. As we turned to continue our walk, I noticed a couple of well-spaced introductory notes at some distance – the song of the **Wing-banded Wren**! This bird took a bit more work as it would zip in to challenge my whistled imitations, but just as quickly it would back off a bit to circle us, teasing us with a series of rasps and whistled notes before it would suddenly belt out an explosive series of ringing musical notes. Everyone was thoroughly impressed; everyone except for the Musician Wren, that is, who returned to the scene and started to chase the smaller interloper, trying to run him off at every turn.



Musician Wren (*Cyphorhina arada*) © Bob Rodrigues

Working our way back toward the main trail, we hit a mixed flock which had both **Dusky-throated** and **Cinereous Antshrikes**, **Grey Antwren**, **Wing-barred Piprites**, **Long-billed Gnatwren**, and a frustratingly elusive **Collared Gnatwren**. Back across the river, a calling female **Guianan Red-Cotinga** came in and

showed well in the canopy for nice views of this target bird. While we were hanging around hoping it might return, we noticed some commotion in the canopy, that turned out to be the squabbles of three male **Pompadour Cotingas** all interested in the same female. On the way back to the parking lot we had three **Yellow-throated Flycatchers**, and a male **Guianan Trogon** to close out our visit.

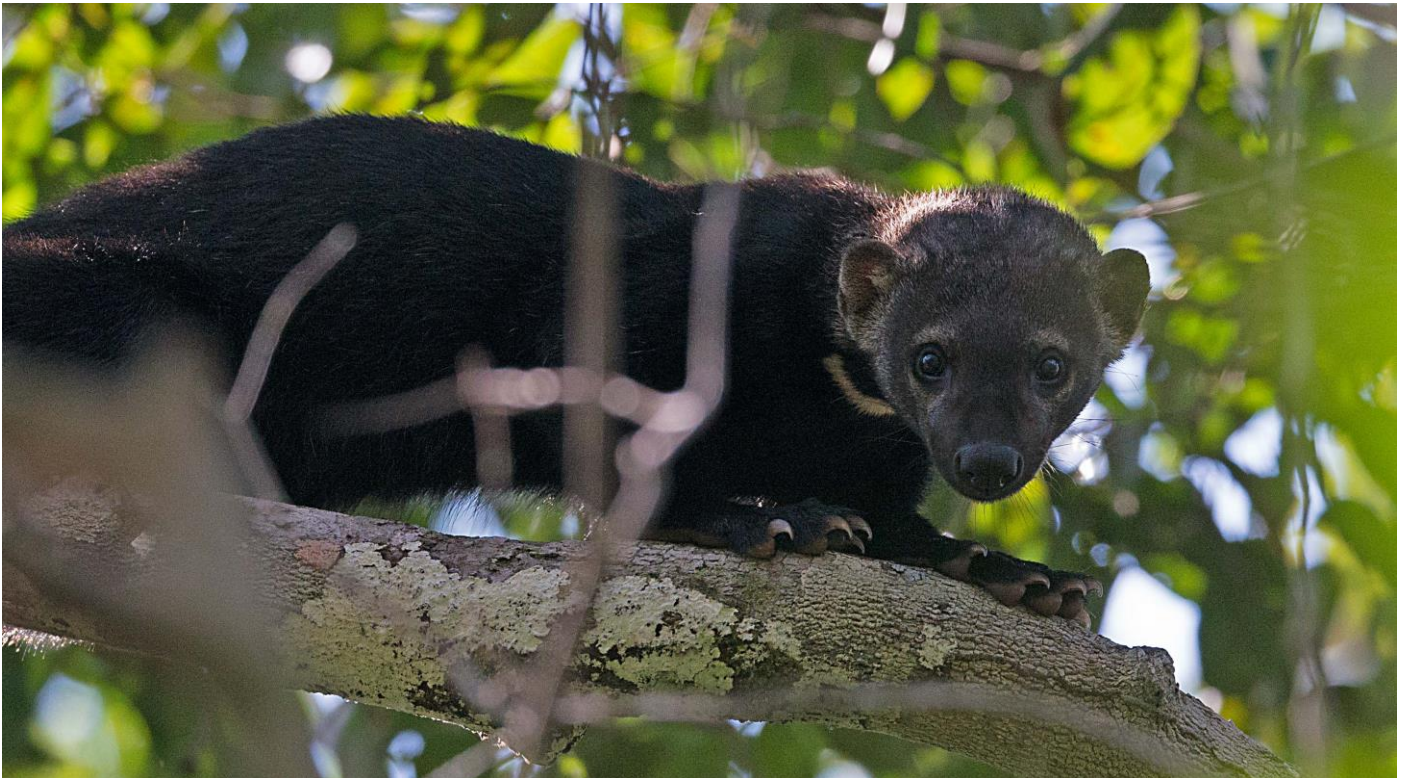
We stopped in the town of Presidente Figueiredo itself to have lunch – a delicious *tambaqui* fish roasted over an open fire – at an open air restaurant by the popular Urubuí rapids. Then it was back to the hotel for a short break, during which there was a perfectly-timed, short but heavy rain shower. We spent the afternoon birding the hotel grounds and fish ponds, seeing some species typical of open habitats including **Common** and **Ruddy Ground-Doves**, a couple of nice **Chestnut-bellied Seedeaters**, **Cinereous Becard**, **Yellow-browed Sparrow**, and a **Black-throated Mango** frequenting a patch of flowering passionfruit vines. Around the fish ponds we saw several **Collared Plovers**, a trio of **Pied Lapwings** that proved to be the only ones we would see all trip, two **Black-necked Stilts**, and plenty of **Wattled Jacanas**. There were many swallows hawkwing insects low over the ponds, including a good number of **White-winged Swallows**, a few **Southern Rough-winged Swallows**, **Grey-breasted Martins**, and **Blue-and-white Swallows**.

We headed into the forest to check out the hotel's trail through good quality *terra firme*, but it was predictably rather quiet after the afternoon's rain. A **Guianan Warbling-Antbird** was a catch-up bird for Bob since he had missed our first morning's birding. A lone **Grey-winged Trumpeter** ahead of us in the trail slipped away as soon as it noticed our presence, and no amount of sneaking up the trail or use of tape could convince it to return. A **Black-throated Antshrike** answered tape weakly, approaching a couple of times in the dim understorey to show itself briefly, but only in silhouette. We resolved to try again for him the following day. We stayed out until past dusk, hoping to find potoos or owls, but a Common Potoo singing distantly was the only candidate. So it was back to the hotel, where we had another nice dinner.

June 17th: After another splendid early breakfast, we ventured into the tall forest behind the hotel. At the trailhead we called an **Amazonian Barred-Woodcreeper** out to the forest edge, where it showed well after a while, even allowing Bob to snap a few photos in the dim light. Singing Black-banded and Cinnamon-throated Woodcreepers also chimed in with their contributions to the dawn chorus, adding to the voices of Mouse-coloured Antshrike, Rufous-throated Antbird, Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner and Plumbeous Pigeons. Two different groups of raucous *Amazona* parrots – **Mealy Amazon** and **Orange-winged Amazon**, respectively – were perched up in the canopy over the trail. A **Ferruginous-backed Antbird** was singing in the understorey – this was a bird which we were keen to see, having been unable to get views of singing birds on two previous dates. It took a fair amount of patience, but eventually we had nice looks at a male of this spectacular species as it hopped about on and near the forest floor just a few metres in front of us. Reaching the spot where we had encountered the Black-throated Antshrike the previous afternoon, we stepped off the trail into an area surrounded by small palms to see if the bird was still in the area. I started playing the tape, and less than a minute later a palm stalk to our right shook violently, indication that the bird had just flown. It was the same skittish male **Black-throated Antshrike** from yesterday, and he circled us several times, singing occasionally and generally maintaining a wary distance. A couple of times the hulking antshrike popped up at close range in front of us, but its shy nature meant that it refused to stay in one place for very long, particularly when it was visible and in the open. A short distance further down the trail we managed to call in a hyperactive **Brown-bellied Antwren**. As we worked to get views of the antwren, a curious **Straight-billed Hermit** came in to see what we were up to. At one point we stopped in a small clearing to try for Amazonian Pygmy-Owl, in the process stirring up interest from a handful of small birds, including **Gray-breasted Sabrewing**, **Fork-tailed Woodnymph**, a **Black-eared Fairy** or two, several **Purple** and **Red-legged Honeycreepers**, two female **Golden-headed Manakins**, a **Whiskered Flycatcher**, and a **Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher**. A pygmy-owl even sang a bit in the distance, but it apparently wasn't interested enough to come much closer. Since we had another site to visit this morning, we turned back toward the hotel. On the way back, however, we encountered a nice mixed flock with a handful of good birds in it: **Rufous-tailed Xenops**, **Slaty-capped Shrike-Vireo**, **Long-winged** and **Spot-backed Antwrens**, **Wing-barred Piprites**, **Fasciated Antshrike**, a pair of **Yellow-throated Woodpeckers** and both **Tawny-crowned** and **Buff-cheeked Greenlets**. We also heard Olive-green Tyrannulet and Ash-winged Antwren, but couldn't find either of them in the chaotic mix of birds that surrounded us. Back at the forest edge we found

two pairs of **Red-and-green Macaws** feeding in the canopy, along with a nice pair of **Opal-rumped Tanagers** nearby. From the hotel itself we saw a soaring **Short-tailed Hawk** and a perched **Gray-lined Hawk**.

By mid-morning we were driving east of Presidente Figueiredo to the lovely Marí Marí reserve, where we would spend the next few hours birding white sand forests and enjoying a tasty lunch in their open-air restaurant. Upon arrival at Marí Marí we found a few common birds up near the cabins, including several **Mouse-coloured Tyrannulets**, **Rusty-margined Flycatcher**, **Chivi Vireos** and **Palm Tanagers**. I had the briefest of glimpses of a female **Racket-tailed Coquette** visiting the last wilting flowers of a cashew tree beside the restaurant, but a prolonged vigil before and during lunch was unsuccessful in re-finding the bird. Beto told us that the *apuim* had been around recently, so we walked over to the stand of *Mauritia flexuosa* palms beside the restaurant and searched carefully amongst the hanging clumps of fruits until we found a single **Sapphire-rumped Parrotlet** feeding discreetly. The parrotlets of the *Touit* genus are notoriously difficult to observe, with most views coming of high-flying flocks that usually appear as little more than tiny dark specks in the sky, so to be able to observe one at length as it fed quietly was a rare treat. Pleased with that, we stepped into the stunted white sand *campinarana* forest on the opposite bank of an idyllic creek, keen to look for a few specialties before lunch. We hadn't walked far along trail when a sudden movement in the canopy revealed the presence of not one, but two **Tayras**! One of the large weasel-like animals even stayed put long enough for Bob to snap a few photos (see below).



Tayra (*Eira barbara*) © Bob Rodrigues

In the stunted forest we heard an Olivaceous (Guianan) Schiffornis, but no amount of effort could get it to sit still for more than a fraction of a second when it came in. A couple of **Bronzy Jacamars** were far more cooperative, and we enjoyed nice views of the pair as they perched at mid-levels. With only a short time left to go before lunch, we focused on a vocalizing **Pelzel's Tody-Tyrant**. It shut up after a little while, but knowing that they like to come in silently to check things out, we held our position and waited. After a while, Steve spotted it in the subcanopy, and soon enough we were all on the bird as it flitted occasionally, sallying out to glean a prey item off foliage before alighting on a different branch (often in a different crown entirely) and sitting still for a short while. That took us up to lunch time, so we walked back to the restaurant where a freshly-prepared meal of delicious local dishes awaited us.

After our hearty lunch we returned to the forest, this time heading a short distance down a narrow trail to an



Guianan Cock-of-the-Rock (*Rupicola rupicola*) © Bob Rodrigues

area of particularly stunted forest. We settled in to wait for the stars of the show, as we were sitting just metres from an arena where male Guianan Cocks-of-the-Rock lek on a daily basis. Since the peak lek activity at this site is typically from July through early October, we were slightly apprehensive as the minutes passed without any sign of the birds. Still, in hindsight it really didn't take too long before we heard the bandsaw-like call of the **Guianan Cock-of-the-Rock**, as the first male arrived to perch just a few centimetres off the ground over a small patch of bare forest floor, his own personal display arena. As we waited, a few more birds gradually arrived – as many as six individuals were visible at once – and while they were mostly fairly lethargic, occasionally there would be a chase scene if one male felt another was too close, or perhaps looking a bit too handsome. A visit in September might have been more active, but we were quite pleased with our opportunity to watch these fascinating orange apparitions at such close distance. The convenience of the lek being located just a short, easy walk away from the lodge restaurant also cannot be beat!

We still had other birds to look for, so we headed north of Presidente Figueiredo to the Lajes Reserve for a late afternoon visit in hopes of finding White-naped Seedeater. We spent the final hour and a half of daylight at the reserve, staking out the rocky outcroppings where the species used to be fairly reliable. Unfortunately, we had no luck with the seedeater, but we did have several **Red-shouldered Tanagers**, **Campina Thrush**, a **Rufous-crowned Elaenia**, **Green-tailed Goldenthrout**, good scope views of **Scaled Pigeon**, and just as we were about to leave, a nice pair of the scarce **Plumbeous Euphonia**.

June 18th: For our final morning in the Presidente Figueiredo area, we drove about 45 minutes from our hotel to the Ramal do Tucumanduba, a little-used track through lovely, tall *terra firme* forest to the east of the town. A slight delay at the hotel meant we arrived to the site a bit later than I had hoped, but that didn't keep us from enjoying a relaxed morning's birding along the quiet, flat road. In the short time that birders have been visiting the site (since just the middle of 2016, as far as we can tell), Tucumanduba has yielded a number of great birds including some real scarcities such as Dusky Purpletuft, Crimson Fruitcrow, and Blue-backed Tanager. As luck would have it, we didn't cross paths with any of those, but we nevertheless enjoyed a few productive hours in the forest, although activity slowed significantly once the sun came out and the temperatures started to soar into the 30's. To name just some of the new birds, we had **Marail Guan**, a covey of four **Marbled Wood-Quails**, a couple of **Straight-billed Hermits**, **Plumbeous Pigeon**, **Green Aracari**, **Pied Puffbird**, a couple of **Yellow-billed Jacamars**, and at least three **Paradise Jacamars**. In truth, there were quality birds throughout the morning, and we racked up a nice list including the likes of **Blackish Nightjar**, **Straight-billed Hermit**, **Black-eared Fairy**, **Green Aracari**, a small group of four **Caica Parrots**, great views of a flock of eight **Painted Parakeets**, a nice trio of woodpeckers (**Waved**, **Yellow-throated**, and **Yellow-tufted**), **Painted Tody-Flycatcher**, **Guianan Red-Cotinga**, **White-throated Manakin**, **Black-bellied Cuckoo**, **Plumbeous Pigeon**, **Yellow-green Grosbeak**, **Black-faced Dacnis** and more! A soaring **King Vulture** late in the morning was nice, while a female **Racket-tailed Coquette** was unfortunately seen by Brad only.

After lunch in town, we returned to Manaus, making just a single roadside stop on the way to check out a couple of **Wing-barred Seedeaters** that were joined by an **Orange-fronted Yellow-Finch**. We arrived at

our hotel in the industrial district in the late afternoon, and found that the hotel was to host a ‘folklore’ dinner and show, meaning it was quite a bit more crowded than we might have liked.

June 19th: Today was our day to seek out the specialties of the river islands in the Solimões river upstream from Manaus. A wide range of birds utilize the successional habitats found on Amazonian river islands, and indeed some of them are found only in particular micro-habitats on these islands. We were up early once again, and in confidence I may say here that I was feeling rather ill during breakfast, but was certain that things would brighten up once we hit the water. We met my friend Herculano and his wife and their trusty motor launch at the CEASA port, and soon we were heading upstream on the Solimões river to the area known as Marchantaria. The air was thick and soupy after a torrential downpour that had fallen in the pre-dawn hours. With the water levels on the Solimões being very high at this time of year, we focused our efforts on the downstream end of the large Marchantaria island, rather than heading for one of the much smaller, newly-formed river islands we might otherwise bird when water levels are lower – those islands were all still underwater! On the way upstream we noted a couple dozen **Nacunda Nighthawks**, some **Large-billed Terns**, hundreds of **Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks** and at least 50+ **Brazilian Teal**, along with a variety of widespread water birds such as **Striated** and **Cocoi Herons**, **Great, Cattle**, and **Snowy Egrets**, and a nice collection of raptors including **Black-collared Hawk**, a couple of **Crane Hawks**, our first **Savanna Hawk**, and a **Plumbeous Kite**. There were a few parrots about, and we had a pair of **Festive Parrots**, a few dozen **White-winged Parakeets**, and a couple of **Short-tailed Parrots** and **Tui Parakeets**. Upon arrival in the flooded successional growth, we got right to work amongst the willows, *Tessaria* shrubs, and canebrakes, looking for island specialists. We quickly found a few **River Tyrannulets**, a single **Lesser Wagtail-Tyrant**, and both **Little** and **Spot-breasted Woodpeckers**. Soon the spinetails started to fall into place, with great views of **Dark-breasted Spinetail**, **Red-and-white Spinetail**, **White-bellied Spinetail**, and **Rusty-backed Spinetail**, while a dozen **Oriole Blackbirds** added a splash of colour to the proceedings. Once we located an area with a decent stand of *Gynerium* cane, it didn’t take long to call out a couple of pairs of **Parker’s Spinetails**. We found a couple of dapper **Black-and-white Antbirds** in an area dominated by young *Cecropia* trees, and soon also added both **Lesser Hornero** and **Wing-banded Hornero**, **Riverside Tyrant**, **Fuscous Flycatcher** and **Chestnut-crowned Becard**. A bit deeper into the taller flooded forest, we found **Castelnau’s Antshrike**, a **Zimmer’s Woodcreeper**, and after sorting through a dozen or more **Bicoloured Conebills**, we finally found a **Pearly-breasted Conebill**. I was once again feeling rather unsteady, and with the temperature soaring, gently suggested we head for somewhere a bit cooler. On the way to the Janauari lake, we birded amidst rafts of floating grasses where we had **Lined Seedeaters**, a couple of **Red-capped Cardinals**, **Masked Yellowthroat**, and a flock of **Yellow-hooded Blackbirds** that numbered more than 100 strong. I must have been positively green by the time we reached Janauari, as after a short walk on the boardwalk there the group took pity on me and kindly suggested we skip the afternoon and return to Manaus. We had already seen the majority of our targets for the area, particularly since we had already covered the flooded forests at Itacoatiara, and our morning’s birding had been quite successful.

AGAMI NATURE TOURS
TRIP REPORT: THE BRAZILIAN AMAZON



Dark-breasted Spinetail (*Synallaxis albigularis*)
© Bradley Davis



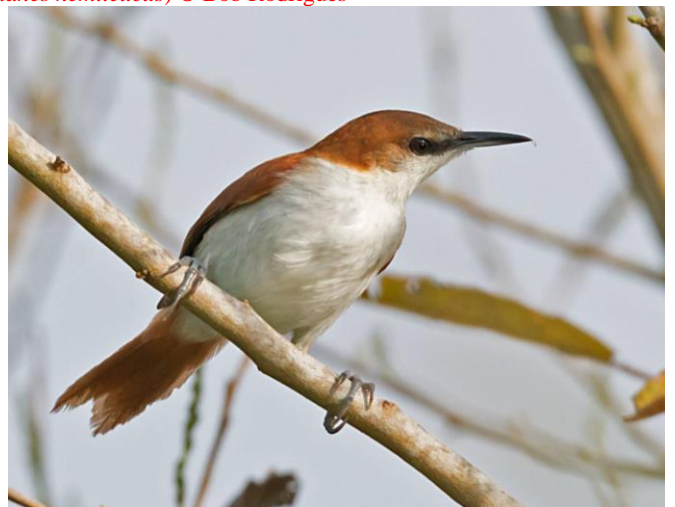
Castelnau's Antshrike (*Thamnophilus cryptoleucus*)
© Bob Rodrigues



Black-and-white Antbird (*Myrmochanes hemileucus*) © Bob Rodrigues



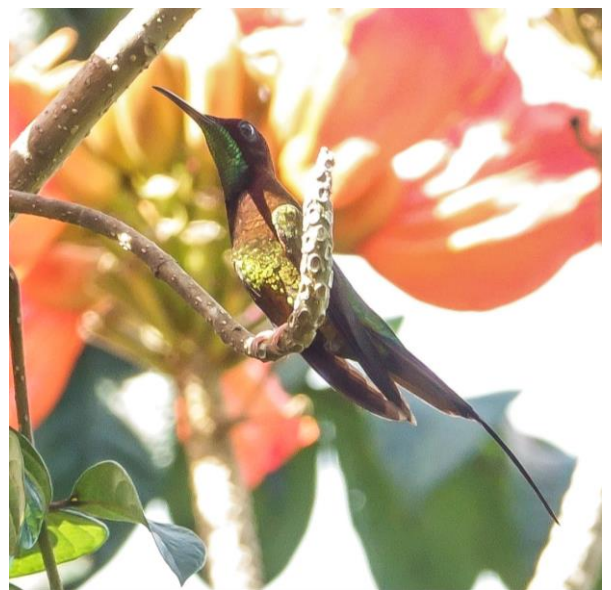
Oriole Blackbird (*Gymnomystax mexicanus*)
© Bob Rodrigues



Red-and-white Spinetail (*Certhiaxis mustelinus*)
© Bob Rodrigues

June 20th: With most of the group feeling a little unsteady this morning, presumably as a result of the same bug that affected me the previous day, we were a little bit slower to get moving, but still began with breakfast at 5 at our hotel. We then crossed Manaus to head north to the Pau Rosa area, a slight change of plans from the original itinerary, in hopes that we might track down a Crimson Topaz or one or two of the Guianan Shield specialties which had managed to elude us up to now. Things were pretty quiet when we arrived – no sign of the Crimson Topaz at a regular territory, but we did see a nice **Black-eared Fairy** here, along with a big flock of more than 30 **Golden-winged Parakeets**, a family group of **Yellow-tufted Woodpeckers** and a fruiting tree with a sparkling **Spangled Cotinga** male, a pair of **Turquoise Tanagers**, and a few **Opal-rumped Tanagers**. Giving up on the topaz, we walked back a short distance along the track, careful to step off to the side every once in a while as the occasional vehicle passed slowly (today was Corpus Christi, a national holiday in Brazil). A **Paradise Jacamar** was perched up over the road, while other birds in the canopy included females of both **Golden-bellied** and **Plumbeous Euphonias** (the latter being something of a surprise at this site), **Fulvous-crested Tanagers**, **Spotted Tanagers**, and perhaps best of all, a very responsive pair of **Pink-throated Becards**. A shy pair of **Coraya Wrens** skulked low in a brushy roadside thicket, occasionally hitching up higher to sneak a disdainful glance in our direction before diving back down into cover.

By now it was mid-morning and already getting quite hot. As such, we decided to return to the beginning of the Pau Rosa road to stop at a roadside café where flowering trees normally attract a number of hummingbirds. No sooner did we have our coffees in hand when the first **Gray-breasted Sabrewings** drew our attention as they squabbled over the scarlet flowers of an exotic African tulip tree (*Spathodea campanulata*). A couple of **Black-throated Mangos** joined the fray, as did a female **Fork-tailed Woodnymph**. Best of all, though, was a splendid male **Crimson Topaz** which arrived soon thereafter, taking up a preferred perch in the canopy. The Topaz would alternate between feeding the flowers and trying to run off its various competitors, managing to bully most, though most of its disputes with the bulky Sabrewings seemed to be stalemates. Well-satisfied with our Topaz sighting, we hopped into the car and started back to Manaus, aiming to arrive in Novo Airão in time for a late lunch.



Crimson Topaz (*Topaza pella*) © Bradley Davis

We drove through the late morning and mid-day, traversing the upscale Ponta Negra neighbourhood before crossing the impressive bridge over the Rio Negro. The usual signs of the ongoing expansion of Manaus, Latin America's largest jungle metropolis, were ever present in the form of many freshly cleared areas alongside the highway, complete with signs advertising future housing developments and gated communities. Manaus, it seems, is meant to spill across the Rio Negro and expand to the west. The road to Manacapuru was also undergoing an upgrade, an ominous sign as there are plans to build a bridge at Manacapuru over the Amazon river itself, to connect Manaus to the rest of Brazil by road. Such a development would have catastrophic environmental implications, but there are indications that these plans are going on "full steam ahead".

Turning north just before Manacapuru, we took a much quieter highway to its terminus, the small town of Novo Airão. After checking in at our pleasant hotel on the outskirts of the town, we had a light lunch and took a short break during the hottest part of the day. Those who were feeling up to it joined me for a short afternoon session to disturbed *terra firme* forests to the south of town. After stopping to check out a little flock of 5 **Red-fan Parrots** at the roadside, we pulled off at the "dump track" and stopped the car. The forest was predictably quiet, and we started with a difficult **Black-faced Antbird** which only gave up the briefest of views. In a small clearing a bit of speculative work with the tape did the trick in attracting a flock of six **Ivory-billed Araçaris**, all of which eventually landed in a well-lit leafless tree for great views. Some

White-tipped Doves crossed the track, a calling **White-cheeked Antbird** refused to show itself, and a singing **Thrush-like Antpitta** also kept its distance. Back by the car we had nice views of an **Olivaceous Woodcreeper**, and a **Reddish Hermit** fed at small white flowers for quite some time, but otherwise there wasn't much around. Rain soon arrived, and we decided to call it a day and head back to our lodgings, where we had a very tasty dinner.

June 21st: We had an early start today, up before dawn to enjoy a nice breakfast spread at our hotel. Walking from the rooms to the dining area, we spotlighted a vocal **Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl** in a tree beside the parking lot, staring sternly into the flashlight. After breakfast we met with our boat and river pilot for this morning's trip into flooded forests amidst the ancient river islands of the Anavilhanas National Park. As we motored into the complex of river islands, we noted a flock of **Sand-coloured Nighthawks**, perhaps a dozen or so, flying downstream in what was likely a migratory movement. The species is rarely encountered in the Anavilhanas archipelago given its preference for beaches and sandbars, typically in white water rivers. A **Slate-coloured Hawk** perched up in the canopy of a large island was a nice early start. We cruised into a shallow lake within the islands as **Short-tailed** and **Chapman's Swifts** swirled above us. Flocks of **Festive Parrots** were in full attendance this morning and we counted approximately 110 individuals during the first



Festive Parrot (*Amazona festiva*) © Bob Rodrigues

two hours of the morning. The parrot spectacle was joined by a lovely flyover pair of **Blue-and-yellow Macaws**, a handful of **Dusky Parrots** and a foursome of **Orange-cheeked Parrots**, a longtime nemesis bird for Rolph. As is often the case in this area, woodpeckers were in evidence and we saw two or three **Ringed Woodpeckers**, a **Spot-breasted Woodpecker** and a **Little Woodpecker** around the edges of the lake, and later inside the forest we also found **Cream-coloured Woodpecker** and **Yellow-throated Woodpecker**. At the far end of the lake, we motored slowly along in stunted, shrubby vegetation where we found our principal target here, the striking black-and-white striped **Cherrie's Antwren**. In the same area we also saw **Red-capped Cardinal**, **Black-throated Mango**, **Yellow-bellied Dacnis**, **Turquoise Tanager**, **Amazonian Tyrannulet**, **Spotted Tody-Flycatcher** and **Black-crested Antshrike**. A trio of **Muscovy Ducks** flushed from in front of us on one or two occasions, while a **Pale-vented Pigeon**, a gang of **Greater Anis**, and a **Ringed Kingfisher** were also present. As the morning began to heat up a bit, we headed into a narrow channel inside the flooded forest to seek out some of the specialty species of this habitat. We were not disappointed with the likes of **Ash-breasted Antbird**, **Black-chinned Antbird**, **Long-billed Woodcreeper** and **Cinnamon Attila**. An active mixed flock had **Speckled Spinetail**, **Spot-winged Antshrike**, **Snethlage's Tody-Tyrant**, **White-shouldered Tanagers**, **Striped Woodcreeper**, **Klages's Antwrens** singing all over the place, and a **Blackish-gray Antshrike** that didn't want to show much more than its undersides. **Black-fronted Nunbirds** were fairly common here, representing our first sightings of the trip for this species that replaces Black Nunbird in the flooded forests and to the west of the Rio Negro. Cruising along the channel we came to a slightly wider spot where there was an active **Streak-throated Hermit** lek. We also saw a pair of **Pied Puffbirds** in the canopy here. We pulled into an area where we expected to find the local **Wire-tailed Manakins** at their lek, but for some reason the birds weren't around, though we heard one call a couple of

times deeper into the flooded forest. While we waited to see if the manakins would show, we noted a **Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth** in the canopy. After a while it was apparent the manakins weren't going to perform, so we made plans to return later on, and started to work our way back to our hotel for lunch.

In the afternoon we headed downstream on the Rio Negro for about a half hour before pulling into the Igarapé Najatuba, a forested creek on the west bank of the river. As is often the case in this region, the afternoon was fairly quiet, but we still managed to find a few interesting birds including a pair of **Brown-banded Puffbirds**, a male **Spangled Cotinga**, a responsive pair of **Great Jacamars**, **Crimson-crested Woodpecker**, and **Buff-throated Woodcreeper**. The weather threatened rain for a while and the humidity was intense, but eventually things cleared up by the end of the afternoon. As we turned back to return to town at the end of the day, we noted dozens of **Band-tailed Nighthawks** coursing over the water with their bouncy, butterfly-like flight, a typical spectacle of the Anavilhanas region and certainly one I never tire of seeing.

June 22nd: Today started out well, as between our rooms and breakfast at the hotel we stopped to spotlight a beautiful **Spectacled Owl** that was perched at the edge of the parking lot, belting out its low, booming song into the still pre-dawn twilight. The Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl we had seen yesterday was wisely staying quiet this morning! Having found that one of the best sites for *terra firme* forest birding near the town of Novo Airão had been burned very recently and closed to access, this morning we visited a new site for me, the small Ekobé Reserve located a few kilometres south of town. The morning was clear and dry following heavy overnight rains, but there was almost no bird activity early on. The main trail at Ekobé is a good loop covering about two kilometres through mature secondary forest, and a good sign of the quality of the forest came early on, when a Collared Puffbird responded to some speculative tape. We spent quite a while working on the puffbird, but just couldn't spot it as it sang high in the subcanopy above our heads. A nearby Mealy Parrot was making quite a racket, and Buff-throated, Amazonian Barred, and Black-banded Woodcreepers all sang during our first half hour in the forest. The first bird we actually laid eyes on, though, was a very good one: a pair of **Pearly Antshrikes** popped up. Both the male and female circled around us, posing occasionally on the stems of small palms or atop tangles of vines, peering down at us with their penetrating pale irises. A flythrough **Needle-billed Hermit** made an appearance, and we added a couple more hummingbirds near a small abandoned homestead at the forest edge, where a **White-necked Jacobin** and at least three **Rufous-throated Sapphires** came in to investigate my pygmy-owl imitations. A male **Green-backed Trogon** was in the same area. Returning to the forest interior, we managed to call in a shy male **Yellow-browed Antbird** for reasonable views, following that up with **White-shouldered Antshrike** and **Screaming Piha**. Near a small stream bed in the forest we found **Blue-crowned Manakin** and **White-crowned Manakins** together, and a short distance further on a small swarm of army ants had **White-cheeked Antbirds**, **Black-faced Antbird** and a Common Scale-backed Antbird that only I saw. We finally found a patch of decent activity back toward the forest edge, where we saw **Paradise Jacamar**, **Gilded Barbet**, **Yellow-browed Tody-Flycatcher**, **Chestnut-eared Aracari**, **White-lored Tyrannulet**, **Forest Elaenia**, **Yellow-throated Flycatcher**, **Rufous-bellied Euphonia** and **Pompadour Cotinga**. Unfortunately we didn't manage to spot a calling Black-headed Parrot as it screeched above our heads just before blasting away from us at canopy height.

After lunch a thunder shower decided it would stick around for a few hours in the form of heavy rain, meaning the best we could do for birding was a bit of watching from the balconies of our rooms (for those who opted not to take a nap). These token efforts produced **Pale-breasted Thrush** and **Green Honeycreeper** amongst a handful of other widespread birds.

The rain cleared by the very end of the afternoon, so we decided to drive out to a site south of town to try for White-winged Potoo. There was no moon to speak of, and the cloud cover was still heavy. We had no luck with the potoo, but did see **Short-tailed Nighthawk**, a couple of **Blackish Nightjars**, and heard a Common Potoo singing distantly.

June 23rd: Today was to be mostly a travel day, but there was still enough for time for a shortened morning session. As such, we were up before dawn again and headed off by boat into the Anavilhanas archipelago river islands once again. We didn't have much left in terms of targets for the area, but we did want to get better views of Blackish-gray Antshrike and Wire-tailed Manakin, so we took the boat into a narrow channel inside the flooded forest to look for those. Before we reached the channel, we saw more **Greater Anis**, a **Squirrel Cuckoo**, **White-necked Jacobin** and a flock of at least thirty **Festive Parrots** (really nice views of these). Inside the forest, a male **Blackish-gray Antshrike** was once again a bit reticent, but he finally popped up into full view for all to enjoy. A little bit further along the creek we had **Scale-breasted Woodpeckers**, a **Bat Falcon** perched up in the back, and finally, a couple of fantastic **Wire-tailed Manakin** males near their lek site. Other birds seen this morning included **Black-chinned Antbirds** and **Black-crested Antshrike** again, **Chivi Vireo**, **Short-crested Flycatcher**, **Purple-throated Euphonia**, and **Giant Cowbird**.

We returned to Novo Airão to check out and thank our hosts for a pleasant stay. The drive back to Manaus was uneventful in spite of a few light showers, and we arrived at the airport in plenty of time to check in for our evening flight. After an early dinner at the airport, we boarded and took the hour and a half flight to Porto Velho, the capital of the state of Rondônia, and starting point for the second leg of our journey, through the southwestern Brazilian Amazon. We checked in to the comfortable Slaviero Essential Hotel near the airport for the first night of a two-night stay.

June 24th: After breakfast at our hotel, we drove out of Porto Velho, crossing the bridge over the Madeira river to its west bank, eager to get started on a new set of birds. We were now south of the Amazon river and would spend the next two days birding sites on the west bank of the Madeira river, starting in on the so-called Inambari endemics of the south-west Amazon. Our destination this morning was a track through tall but disturbed terra firme forest near Porto Velho. Not long after arriving we got off to a good start with a group of four **Brown-mandibled Araçari**, and soon thereafter, a steady stream of **Curl-crested Araçarís** (14 in total!). A rapid fly-through of a flock of **Bonaparte's Parakeets** didn't satisfy the crowd, but we had better participation from a few birds in the undergrowth at the road's edge, including **Ruddy Spinetail**, **Peruvian Warbling-Antbird**, **Black-faced Antbird**, a female **Silvered Antbird**, and best of all, a singing male **Undulated Antshrike** that showed itself begrudgingly and allowed us to complete the rare *Frederickena* double! In the same area we found **White-fronted Nunbird**, while flowering *Heliconia* plants in the area were attracting **Needle-billed**, **Great-billed** and **Reddish Hermits**. Some pygmy-owl imitations drew a few curious onlookers including **Fork-tailed Woodnymph**, **White-necked Jacobin**, **Golden-bellied Euphonia**, **Paradise Tanager**, **Flame-crested Tanager**, **Blue Dacnis** and **Purple Honeycreeper**. We continued down the track a ways to try for Black Bushbird in an area where we sometimes find them, but had nary a response from within the bamboo thickets where the birds live. In the same area we did find nesting **Double-toothed Kite**, and we also finally saw our first **Amazonian Pygmy-Owls** of the trip (two of them) after having heard the species on at least a half a dozen different dates up to then. A singing **Chestnut-winged Foliage-gleaner** responded well to playback and showed itself in the canopy several times – it was a bit odd to find this species away from a canopy flock, but it was certainly quite territorial. The morning was heating up quickly, and is often the case at this site, that meant the activity would drop accordingly. We didn't connect with any of the massive mixed canopy flocks that one sometimes encounters here, and instead rounded out the morning with some bits and pieces including **Scaled Pigeon**, **Squirrel Cuckoo**, **Chestnut-eared Aracari**, **Yellow-tufted Woodpecker**, **Golden-winged Parakeet**, **Blue-headed Parrot**, and a lovely **Short-tailed Pygmy-Tyrant** low at the roadside. A couple of late highlights included the first **Inambari Woodcreeper** of the trip, a really quite attractive woodcreeper only described to science in 2013, and an **undescribed tody-tyrant** of the Snethlage's group that is found on the west bank of the rio Madeira south of the Amazon.



Campina Jay (*Cyanocorax hafferi*) © Bob Rodrigues

We returned to Porto Velho for a buffet lunch at a nice *churrascaria*, followed by a short break at the hotel during the hottest part of the day. We met again around 3:30 PM and once again crossed the bridge over the Madeira river to its west bank, this time heading for a site some 50 kilometres from Porto Velho. The Linha C-30 is a quiet track that runs through seasonally flooded grassland and waterlogged *campinarana* forests on white sandy soils. As usual, it was very hot and deathly silent when we arrived. A **Plain-breasted Ground-Dove** and few **Yellow-chevroned Parakeets** near the beginning of the road were new for the trip. The skies seemed to be threatening rain, and the short time we spent working the taller forest was fruitless. We tried for Humaitá Antbird at a known territory, but received no reply. Moving on, we reached a stretch of more stunted forests where we hoped to find our primary target at the site, the Campina Jay. We noted a few birds here, seeing our first **Peruvian Warbling-Antbirds** of the trip. Better still was a **Predicted Antwren** that showed itself in the outer branches of the canopy of stunted *campinarana* forest, saving us from having to search for it in much taller forest later

in the trip. The star birds at C-30 are the Campina Jays, though, and we worked slowly along the stretch of the track where the birds typically show up in the late afternoons. The birds were on time, and we were delighted to encounter not one, but two different flocks, numbering six and fourteen individuals, respectively! The jays flew back and forth across the track a few times, and at the very end of the afternoon they even dropped down to the gravel road to ingest tiny pebbles and grit, putting on a real show.

June 25th: With an earlier start today, having grabbed only a coffee from the machine at the hotel to tide us over until our field breakfast, we zipped along the highway between Porto Velho and Humaitá in the murky pre-dawn twilight. Our destination this morning was a large patch of savanna habitat adjacent to the Matinguari National Park. While the prevalent notion of the Amazon is that of an uninterrupted tropical forest, it is instead a much more complex mosaic of ecosystems, a number of which we visited during this tour. The southern reaches of the Amazon are occupied in places by a patchwork of natural savanna habitats ranging from undisturbed open grasslands to brushy Cerrado-like environments. The birds found in these

areas are a fascinating mix of Amazonian species that are well-adapted to open country, and Cerrado species with isolated populations in the Amazon. We reached our birding site for the morning, the Ramal das Campinas (90 kilometres from Porto Velho), a little after 6 AM. Since this was to be our day in the savannas, we drove past the nice patches of disturbed, taller forest at the beginning of the track (stopping briefly to check out a pair of **Spix's Guans**) and headed for the open country, noting several **Pale-vented Pigeons** and a couple of **Toco Toucans** as we arrived.

Our primary target for the morning was the Ocellated Crake, a tiny speckled phantom of a crake that is extremely elusive across most of its range. They are particularly numerous at this location, however, and we spent the first hour and a half of our morning working these birds; after a couple of false starts with birds that weren't very cooperative (although the second bird dashed across a gap in front of us mere seconds after we had decided to try another, just after I retrieved my portable speaker), I set about creating a small opening between a couple of tussocks of grass near where we had heard a third bird. I was heading back to my pack to grab my playback equipment when Steve, Bob and Rolph motioned to me, "the crake is right there!" They were pointing at the gap I had just created: apparently the **Ocellated Crake** had decided not to wait for me to play the tape, and had just paraded across in front of everyone! Someone hadn't seen the bird too well, so we decided to call it back and proceeded to enjoy prolonged point-blank views of an extremely cooperative individual (see the cover of this trip report) as it marched around before us for another ten minutes or so.

Pleased with our success with the crake, we returned to the track and birded the brushy grasslands where we found **Swallow-tailed Hummingbird**, **Yellow-chevroned Parakeet**, **Yellow-bellied Elaenia**, **White-eared Puffbird**, **Rusty-backed Antwren** and **Black-faced Tanager**. At a point where a small stream crossed the road we found a number of **Red-bellied Macaws** and a pair or two of **Peach-fronted Parakeets**, **Fork-tailed Palm-Swifts** overhead, and in dense tangles near the water a spritely **Stripe-necked Tody-Tyrant** flitted around us for a couple of minutes before everyone finally got a good look. An area of flooded grasslands had a **Jabiru** and at least a dozen **Wood Storks**, along with a big flock of **Red-breasted Meadowlarks** that joined a couple of **Common Ground-Doves** and a pair of **Gray Monjitas** that were hunting alongside a small pond. In drier, open grasslands we found a striking male **Black-masked Finch**, a threatened species rarely seen in the Amazon basin. The same area also had **White-tailed Hawk**, **Wedge-tailed Grass-Finch**, flyover **Dusky-headed Parakeets**, and a mix of **Plumbeous Seedeaters**, **Double-collared Seedeaters**, **Grassland Sparrows**, and **Blue-black Grassquits** at the roadsides. By late morning the heat was already intense, so we turned around and headed for the forest we had bypassed first thing.

We stopped by a rickety bridge where things were, unsurprisingly, rather quiet, but we did find a **Moustached Wren**, a **Bluish-fronted Jacamar** that took some work to finally spot through a gap in the vegetation, and a **Dusky-chested Flycatcher** that popped up in the canopy. Bob and I spent some time working on a **Cinereous Mourner** that eventually showed pretty well, and that was that. We returned to the highway and backtracked a few kilometres to have lunch at a roadside restaurant.

After lunch we continued towards Humaitá, making one or two roadside stops where we picked up **Brazilian Teal**, **Muscovy Duck**, **Pearl Kite**, **Savanna Hawk**, and **White-headed Marsh-Tyrant** in addition to some of the usual fare. Upon arriving in Humaitá we checked in at our fairly simple hotel (our normal choice was fully booked well in advance for an event related to the nearby military base) before driving over to the ferry landing on the banks of the Madeira river.

We crossed the ferry to the east bank of the Madeira to bird the seasonally flooded várzea forests found along the first couple of kilometres of the Transamazônica highway. Even though it was already past 4 PM, it was still very hot and humid for the first half hour here, but we got right down to business in tracking down our primary target here, the **Plain Softtail**, which we quickly found in a roadside tangle of vines not far from the ferry landing. Working our way along the road, occasionally stepping aside to shelter from the dust lifted by passing vehicles on their way to the ferry, we saw a variety of the expected birds here including **Thrush-like Wren**, **Orange-backed Troupial**, **Glossy Antshrike**, **Blue-chinned Sapphire**, and **Rufous-tailed Jacamar**. There were a few **Tui Parakeets** around, and we also saw a trio of **Festive**

Parrots, another specialty of flooded forests, and one for which its range south of the Amazon is still poorly known. A pair of **Slate-coloured Hawks** was around, and in the same area we pulled in a few birds with pygmy-owl imitations: **White-winged Becard**, **Ashy-headed Greenlet**, a male **Wing-barred Seedeater**, our first **Boat-billed Flycatchers** of the trip, a few **Chestnut-vented Conebills**, and loads of **Hooded Tanagers**. At the wooden bridge over the Igarapé Joari we scanned over a more extensive wetland filled with **Striated Herons**, a few **Wattled Jacanas**, a couple of **Great Black Hawks** and a **Black-collared Hawk**, along with **Black-capped Donacobius**, **Yellow-chinned Spinetails**, and a singing Rufous-sided Crake in the back of the swamp. A singing Varzea Thrush at the very end of the afternoon was a notable heard-only, but the bird was way back in the flooded forest and didn't show much interest in playback. It was already quite dim inside the forest, and we had to rush back to the landing to catch the ferry anyway.

June 26th: After another 5 AM breakfast we were soon zipping west along the only smoothly paved section of the Transamazônica highway, the thirty kilometres from Humaitá to the junction with the BR-319 highway which heads north to Manaus. Another ten kilometres along a dusty road brought us to the tiny village of Ipixuna, the turn-off to our morning birding site, the track known as Ramal Novo Horizonte. We carefully crossed the log bridge over the Igarapé Santa Julia, listening to White-browed and White-throated Antbirds singing as we did. A male **Blue-crowned Trogon** in the overgrown orchard at the trailhead was the first bird of the morning. Eager to get into the forest interior, we pressed onward through the tall dewy grass and reached the woods... to encounter deafening silence. Perhaps an overstatement, but it was certainly very quiet inside the forest. Undaunted, we walked on down the well-maintained trail through tall forest with an understorey rich in small palms including *Astrocaryum* spp. and *Lepidocaryum tenue*. We'd not been walking long when we encountered a good flock in the middle storey to get us going: **Cinereous Antshrikes**, a black-throated male **Gray Antwren**, two **White-flanked Antwrens**, a pair of **Rufous-tailed Foliage-gleaners**, a **Rufous-rumped Foliage-gleaner** and an **Olivaceous Woodcreeper** worked through at mid-levels, while higher up in the subcanopy and canopy we saw **Dusky-capped Greenlet**, **Sclater's Antwren**, **Spot-winged Antshrike** and **Inambari Woodcreeper**. Nearby we called in a co-operative **Brown-winged Schiffornis**, while a **Needle-billed Hermit** zoomed around in the upper mid-levels, where it appeared to be checking spider webs for tiny insects. A couple of birds remained heard-only for the time being, **Elegant Woodcreeper**, **Plain Xenops** and **Mouse-coloured Antshrike** amongst those. Farther along a male **Blue-cheeked Jacamar** made us work hard before we finally managed to spot the bird through the dense palms in the understorey. A singing Hairy-crested Antbird approached quite closely but didn't show itself before it lost interest in us and moved off in search of army ants. The faint song of a *Malacoptila* puffbird emanated from a tangle in the back, and a single blast of tape brought a **Rufous-necked Puffbird** to attention, snapping up onto a branch about 3 metres off the ground in front of us! We were able to enjoy the puffbird at length through the scope, even taking advantage of the opportunity to snap some photos of this shy and retiring species of the *terra firme* understorey.



Collared Puffbird (*Bucco capensis*) © Bradley Davis



Rufous-necked Puffbird (*Malacoptila rufa*) © Bob Rodrigues

The braying calls of a pair of **Golden-collared Toucanets** enticed us to continue a bit farther down the trail. After a bit of work we spotted not just one, but two pairs of the toucanets feeding in a fruiting trees in a small gap in the forest canopy. A few other species were also in the vicinity, including **Paradise, Opal-rumped** and **Yellow-backed Tanagers**, **Short-billed** and **Purple Honeycreepers**, and a **Black-eared Fairy**. Some imitations attracted a curious **Amazonian Pygmy-Owl** (and it, in turn, attracted the ire of the tanagers). Back below the canopy once more, we did well to find a very smart **Collared Puffbird** that responded to a bit of speculative playback. Once the bird settled onto a perch above us that it found to be acceptable, it quite calmly sat in the upper reaches of the middle storey, allowing us to enjoy scope views and complete an enviable duo of forest interior puffbirds (with the Rufous-necked before it) on the morning's walk. As we admired the puffbird, an **Amazonian Trogon** piped up nearby, and the male we found sitting above the trail was our first sighting for the trip. We also found **Cinereous Mourner** in the middle storey, and on the walk back along the main trail we finally connected with another of our targets, the hyperactive **Madeira Stipple-throated Antwren**. In the same dense patch of *Lepidocaryum* palms, we also encountered a shy pair of **White-throated Antbirds** and a male **Common Scale-backed Antbirds** that was much more accommodating of our presence.

After having a late lunch in town, we departed Humaitá to return in the direction of Porto Velho. The blazing heat seemed to be building as dark clouds gathered in the distance, a sign of impending rain. Indeed, we drove through a couple of showers along the way back to Porto Velho. Birdwise there wasn't much going on aside from a swirling flock of **Red-bellied Macaws** at a roadside palm swamp near KM 100. We planned to make a late afternoon stop at Linha C-30 to try for Humaitá Antbird again, and upon arrival at the site we found that the rough dirt track had received a fair bit of rain; we nearly got stuck on the way in to the antbird territory. Parking the truck in a muddy patch of uncertain depth, we hopped out and started to play tape for the antbird. Eventually we got a reply, and before long Steve had spotted a dapper male **Humaitá Antbird** sitting on a log and singing loudly in the dark forest understorey, vindication after having been ghosted by the bird a couple of days earlier.

With our target bird in the bag, we carefully extricated the vehicle from the rather sticky parking spot I had chosen and dodged the deeper ruts in the road heading back to the highway. From Linha C-30 we zipped back to Porto Velho, crossing the city during rush hour and continuing another hour south-west to the small town of Jaci-Paraná, where we checked in and had dinner at the Hotel Fama.

June 27th: Another early start today, and after a nice breakfast at the hotel we met up with our local guide

Erivelton. We drove south out of Jaci-Paraná through cattle country, reaching the Branco river around just after 6 AM. Here two motorized canoes awaited us for the short ride downstream to our morning birding site. A vocal pair of **Barred Antshrikes** tried to hold us up, but we loaded into the canoes and soon were put-putting downriver, bushbirds on our minds. Good numbers of **White-banded Swallows** coursed low over the water, three species of kingfishers hunted along the river edges, and a few **Chestnut-fronted Macaws** and **Dusky-headed Parakeets** flew overhead. Steve spotted a **Hauxwell's Thrush**, our first of the trip.

Upon arrival at our destination, we traversed a recently-opened homestead and had a quick word with the landowner. He waved us into the forest, and soon we were standing in a dense bamboo thicket, waiting patiently for any response from one of the trip's major target birds. It took a little while, but eventually a male **Rondonia Bushbird** (*photo below* © Bob Rodrigues) started to sing its slow, whistled song from the back of the thicket. And then suddenly there it was, perched crosswise on a dead bamboo stalk, peering at us inquisitively. I was grateful that everyone got onto the bird quickly, as the dim lighting and dense nature of its habitat can make it a difficult bird to see. We were able to enjoy it for several minutes as it worked its way through the tangles, apparently having decided we weren't worth much attention as it tapped at dead bamboos, searching for food.



With the top target in the bag, the pressure was off and we were able to spend the rest of our morning birding along the forest trail. In the same bamboo as the bushbird we had a sighting of the lovely **Rose-breasted Chat**, as well as a flighty **Amazonian Grosbeak**. Farther down the trail we found a few nice antbirds including **Rondonia Warbling-Antbird**,

Chestnut-tailed Antbird, and **White-eyed Stipplethroat** and **Dot-winged Antwrens** accompanying a small mixed flock. Other good sightings included **Rondonia Scythebill**, **Elegant Woodcreeper**, **Reddish Hermit**, a pair of **Yellow-throated Woodpeckers**, and **Slender-billed Xenops** and a pair of **Gray Elaenias** in a canopy flock that also included at least a half dozen **Paradise Tanagers**. We also had our only **Santarem Parakeets** of the trip. The elusive Tapajós Antpitta remained heard only, as did, somewhat surprisingly, a singing Scaly-breasted Wren.

We returned to Jaci-Paraná for lunch, seeing our first **Swallow-tailed Kites** of the trip over cattle pastures with scattered Brazil Nut trees, and also a couple of **Grassland Sparrows** on fences.

In the afternoon we headed to a respectably-sized forest fragment on the Linha do IBAMA track. Things were pretty quiet here to begin with, and we started slowly with a couple of **Gray Antbirds**, a **White-lored Tyrannulet** in the canopy, and a little flock of passerines that came in to check out pygmy-owl imitations, a group that included **White-lored Euphonia**, **Opal-rumped Tanager**, **Green Honeycreeper**, **Sepia-capped Flycatcher**, and a couple of **Fork-tailed Woodnymphs** that joined them. Several **Spix's Guans** were up in fruiting *Cecropia* trees along the track, joined by a **White-throated Toucan** or two. After a bit of work, we managed to spot a **Natterer's Striolated Puffbird** up in the canopy. As the afternoon progressed, we also called in another **Rondonia Warbling-Antbird**, a surprise **Rufous-necked Puffbird**, and perhaps best of all, the endemic **Hoffmanns's Woodcreeper**. As dusk fell, we managed to tease a singing **Rufous-faced**

Antbird to the edge of the road, but by the time it was visible, it was almost too dark to see anything in the deep gloom of the roadside thicket. Back by the vehicle, we called in a singing **Tawny-bellied Screech-Owl** for great views, and we also saw a few **Short-tailed Nighthawks** and **Common Pauragues**, while a singing **Ocellated Poorwill** remained heard only.

June 28th: Having cleaned up on our river island targets near Manaus earlier in the trip, we opted against doing a boat trip to islands in the Madeira near Jaci-Paraná. Instead, after having an early breakfast at the hotel we headed west to an area of stunted *campinarana* forests on white sandy soils at the Ramal da Prainha. Traffic was light along the flat, wide track, and we enjoyed a nice couple of hours birding at this site. Upon arrival we noted some decent parrot activity in the form of flyover birds heading from roosting areas to feeding sites, including **Mealy Parrot**, **Dusky-headed Parakeet**, **Blue-headed Parrot**, and **Red-bellied Macaw**, while Red-shouldered Macaw was heard only, while a flyover **Capped Heron** wasn't a parrot, but it was just as nice. We spent most of our time at the site along a short stretch of road in dense *campinarana* where we had a few hummingbirds including **Green-tailed Goldenthrout**, **White-chinned Sapphire**, **White-necked Jacobin** and **Fork-tailed Woodnymph**. Some speculative playback pulled in a pair of **White-fringed Antwrens**, the only ones we would see during the tour. A pair of **Black-throated Antbirds** were characteristically skulky, but eventually the male showed very well. In the same general area we also found a nice **Citron-bellied Attila**, the *Myiarchus* impostor **Pale-bellied Mourner**, **White-bearded Manakin**, and a handful of tanagers and the like, including **Red-shouldered Tanager**, **Blue Dacnis**, **Red-legged Honeycreeper**, and **White-vented Euphonia**. The main reason for visiting the Ramal da Prainha was to look for the rare and little-known Buff-cheeked Tody-Flycatcher, a diminutive flycatcher endemic to the region between the Madeira and Tapajós rivers. The bird has a remarkable backstory, one that illuminates just how little ornithological exploration has taken place in the Brazilian Amazon. It was first discovered and collected in 1830 by Natterer, but was not seen again until 163 years later when it was rediscovered near the type locality at Borba. As it turns out, however, the species is actually fairly common in stunted *campinarana* forests on white sands, and also in seasonally flooded forests along many of the tributaries of the Madeira river. Its discreet habits and unassuming insect or frog-like "song" meant it went overlooked for decades, and only now that its voice is known have the sampling gaps in its range begun to be filled in. It didn't take long for us to located a calling bird this morning. As is often the case, though, we needed to step inside the forest and wait patiently for the bird to come in and check us out, which it did before long – at one point the **Buff-cheeked Tody-Flycatcher** even nearly landed on Steve's head, bailing in favour of a nearby branch at the last minute! With the rarest bird of the day in the bag, we returned to the track and worked our way back to our truck, stopping to work through a small mixed flock on the way, seeing **Forest** and **Gray Elaenias**, **Mouse-coloured Tyrannulet**, and a few more **Blue Dacnes** and the like. A darling little **Short-tailed Pygmy-Tyrant** had a nest just a couple of feet off the ground right at the edge of the road (typical for this species), and Bob took advantage of the bird's frequent visits to have a short photo session from a respectful distance. Just before we reached the vehicle, Steve spotted a **King Vulture** soaring over the road.

The rest of the day was spent on the long drive to Acre, Brazil's westernmost state. Unfortunately, most of eastern Acre's forests have been cut over and replaced with cattle pastures, so we didn't see much of interest along the way. While waiting for the ferry at the crossing of the Madeira river at Abunã, we noted **Collared Plover**, **Large-billed Tern**, and **Amazonian River Dolphins**. This would be the last of our tours to use the ferry here, as the bridge over the Madeira has since been completed. We reached the state capital Rio Branco in the late afternoon, checking into the well-organized Ibis Hotel for the first of four nights there.

June 29th – July 1st: We spent the bulk of our time in Acre at the amazing Ramal do Noca, an unassuming dirt road through heavily disturbed forest with extensive stands of *Guadua* bamboo, located about 50 kilometres west of the state capital of Rio Branco. Since we first discovered the site during a birding tour in 2015, nearly 500 species have been recorded here, and the site has become the consensus "must-visit" birding site in the state of Acre. We spent two full days here with packed lunches (returning to Rio Branco in the mid to late afternoon), and a further full morning on July 1st, then returning to town for a sumptuous buffet lunch at a traditional Brazilian *churrascaria*. Each day, by late morning and into the afternoon, the hot sun would make shade a scarce commodity, but we typically found a decent spot to eat our packed lunches and have a short rest, for those who were so inclined. For many of the bamboo specialties here, one has to

make a choice: do you try to wriggle your way into their habitat, knowing that a bird might respond and perch right overhead but still out of view, or showing its least-flattering angle? Or do you try to tease the birds out to the edge, luring them into a gap you've chosen beforehand, and either feeling elated when they pop out where they are supposed to, or frustrated when they carefully flit around the gap, sticking to cover? For the most part we stuck to the road itself, though we did make a few forays down some of the narrow trails into the bamboo thickets. In the end I'd say we made a good run on the specialties of the southwestern Amazon and the bamboo forests of eastern Acre over our three visits, seeing **White-throated Jacamar**, **Yellow-billed Nunbird**, **Semicollared Puffbird**, **Western Striolated Puffbird**, **Lemon-throated Barbet**, **Black-throated Toucanet**, **Rufous-breasted Piculet**, **Fine-barred Piculet**, **Rufous-headed Woodpecker**, **Black-capped Parakeet**, **Blue-headed Macaw**, **Chestnut-crowned Foliage-gleaner**, **Brown-rumped Foliage-gleaner**, **Red-billed Scythebill**, **Bamboo Antshrike**, **Bluish-slate Antshrike**, **Manu Antbird**, **Riparian Antbird**, **Yellow-breasted Warbling-Antbird**, **White-lined Antbird**, **Goeldi's Antbird**, **Bamboo Antwren**, **Acre Tody-Tyrant**, **Long-crested Pygmy-Tyrant**, **Rufous Twistwing**, **White-rumped Sirystes**, **Dusky-tailed** and **Large-headed Flatbills**, **Black-faced Cotinga**, **Sulphur-bellied Tyrant-Manakin**, **Yellow-cheeked Becard** and **Opal-crowned Tanager**, to name just the more localized species.



White-throated Jacamar (*Brachygalba albogularis*)



Semicollared Puffbird (*Malacoptila semicincta*)

The supporting cast included **Speckled Chachalaca**, **King Vultures**, **Swallow-tailed Kite**, a nest-building **Slate-colored Hawk**, **Blue Ground-Dove**, **Gray-fronted Dove**, **Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl**, quite a few **Little Cuckoos**, **Pale-rumped Swift**, **Rufous-breasted** and **Reddish Hermits**, **Blue-chinned Sapphire**, a few **Sapphire-spangled (Spot-vented) Emeralds**, **Blue-crowned Trogon**, **Bluish-fronted Jacamar**, **White-necked Puffbird**, **Black-fronted Nunbird**, **Curl-crested Aracari**, **Little Woodpecker**, **Lineated** and **Crimson-crested Woodpeckers**, **Cobalt-winged Parakeet**, **Dusky-headed Parakeet**, **Cinnamon-throated Woodcreeper**, **Streaked Xenops**, **White-browed Antbird**, **Yellow Parakeet**, **Black-crowned Tityra**, **Hauxwell's Thrush**, **Black-billed Thrush**, **Southern Nightingale Wren**, **Buff-rumped Warbler**, **Magpie Tanager**, **Turquoise**, **Paradise**, **Masked**, and **Swallow Tanagers**, **Black-faced Dacnis**, **Buff-throated** and **Grayish Saltators**, and more.

On the afternoon of July 1st, we opted to bird the riparian forests at the Andirá river north of Rio Branco. We arrived to find that the road had been improved somewhat since my last visit, meaning that traffic, albeit light, was moving a lot faster along the road than I had been used to. For safety's sake, we mostly stuck to the area around the high, very rickety bridge over the narrow river itself, where vehicles were forced to slow down before bumping across the bridge's loose planks. Even by late afternoon, it was still very hot, humid, and quiet, and we didn't end up adding much aside from a male **Amazonian Streaked Antwren** and a flock of five **Velvet-fronted Grackles** that showed up at the bridge as we were returning to our vehicle. Other bits and pieces here included **Long-billed** and **Inambari Woodcreepers**, **Paradise Jacamar**, and **Drab Water-Tyrant**. A singing Plumbeous Antbird did its very best in eluding us by the bridge, and before too long it was too dark to have been able to see much of anything anyway.

July 2nd: After a bit of a lie-in, we packed up for the long drive back to Porto Velho, where we checked in for a short night at the Slaviero Hotel, as most everyone's outbound flights were scheduled for the wee hours of the morning.

Species Accounts:

TINAMOUS (TINAMIDAE)

*** Gray Tinamou** *Tinamus tao*

Heard only on the afternoon of the 27th near Jaci-Paraná.

*** Great Tinamou** *Tinamus major*

Heard only, on two dates on the west bank of the Rio Negro near Novo Airão.

*** White-throated Tinamou** *Tinamus guttatus*

A couple of individuals heard on the west bank of the Madeira outside Porto Velho on the morning of the 24th.

*** Cinereous Tinamou** *Crypturellus cinereus*

Heard on six dates, all to the west of the Madeira river in the Porto Velho and Humaitá areas, and heard daily at the Ramal do Noca east of Rio Branco.

*** Little Tinamou** *Crypturellus soui*

Heard on the 26th west of Humaitá at the Ramal Novo Horizonte, and on the 30th at the Ramal do Noca.

*** Brown Tinamou** *Crypturellus obsoletus*

One heard in the bamboo-dominated forest where we saw Rondonia Bushbird along the Jaci river on the 27th. This species has a fairly wide distribution, but two of its subspecies are endemic to the lowlands of southern Brazilian Amazon. Both of these rarely-seen subspecies appear to be genuinely rare to locally uncommon at best; the bird we heard along the Rio Jaci would belong to the *hypochraceus* race, at least by range.

*** Undulated Tinamou** *Crypturellus undulates*

Heard on three dates in or near seasonally flooded forests. Several birds heard singing on the afternoon of the 25th in the Humaitá varzeas on the east bank of the Rio Madeira.

*** Brazilian Tinamou** *Crypturellus strigulosus*

Heard on two dates: June 24th on the west bank of the Madeira; and June 27th near Jaci-Paraná.

*** Variegated Tinamou** *Crypturellus variegatus*

Heard on four dates.

*** Black-capped Tinamou** *Crypturellus atricapillus*

Heard on a daily basis along the Ramal do Noca in Acre.

*** Small-billed Tinamou** *Crypturellus parvirostris*

Heard on the 25th and 26th in the Humaitá area, where it is locally common in open grassland habitats.

*** Red-winged Tinamou** *Rhynchotus rufescens*

Heard on the 25th in the savannas between Humaitá and Porto Velho.

SCREAMERS (ANHIMIDAE)

Horned Screamer *Anhima cornuta*

A family group of five birds seen in flooded pastures just outside Itacoatiara on the afternoon of the 14th was our only sighting. We also heard the deep trumpeting duet of a pair from the platform overlooking the giant water lilies at the Janauari lake on the 19th.

DUCKS, GEESE & SWANS (ANATIDAE)

White-faced Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna viduata*

A flock seen along the drive from Rio Branco back to Porto Velho on July 2nd was our only sighting of the trip.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna autumnalis*

Seen on a few dates, mostly in small numbers in wetland habitats near rivers. We saw them numbering into the hundreds during our day trip into the successional river islands in the Solimões river out of Manaus on the 19th.

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata*

Seen on five dates, usually in singles or pairs.

Brazilian Teal *Amazonetta brasiliensis*

Seen on four dates. We had more than 50 birds on the morning of the 19th, mostly in a single flock of 40+ on the muddy shore of a large river island in the Solimões near Manaus.

GUANS & ALLIES (CRACIDAE)

Speckled Chachalaca *Ortalis guttata*

Seen on two dates on the Ramal do Noca in Acre.

Little Chachalaca *Ortalis motmot*

Recorded on three dates, including sightings on the 14th (en route from Manaus to Itacoatiara) and the 18th (on the Ramal do Tucumanduba). Sometimes called Variable Chachalaca.

Marail Guan *Penelope marail*

A single bird seen on the 18th at the Ramal do Tucumanduba turned out to be our only sighting of this Guianan Shield endemic.

Spix's Guan *Penelope jacquacu*

Seen on three dates south of the Amazon between Humaita and Porto Velho, near Jaci-Paraná, and at the Ramal do Noca.

NEW WORLD QUAILS (ODONTOPHORIDAE)

Marbled Wood-Quail *Odontophorus gujanensis*

We had quick views of a covey of four birds at the roadside along the Ramal do Tucumanduba on the 18th.

GREBES (PODICIPEDIDAE)

Least Grebe *Tachybaptus dominicus*

I saw one in a roadside pond between Manaus and Itacoatiara on the afternoon of the 14th, but I'm not sure anyone else was awake at the time to see it!

STORKS (CICONIIDAE)

Wood Stork *Mycteria americana*

Numerous in the seasonally flooded grasslands along the highway between Porto Velho and Humaitá, and along the nearby Ramal das Campinas. Also seen on a couple of dates around Rio Branco.

Jabiru *Jabiru mycteria*

One seen standing majestically in an area of flooded, short-grass savanna along the Ramal das Campinas on the 25th was our only sighting of this massive stork.

IBIS & SPOONBILLS (THRESKIORNITHIDAE)

* **Buff-necked Ibis** *Theristicus caudatus*

Heard only, on the 19th during our trip along the Solimões river upstream from Manaus.

* **Green Ibis** *Mesembrinibis cayennensis*

Surprisingly heard only, and surprisingly only on the 19th during our trip on the Solimões upstream from Manaus.

Roseate Spoonbill *Platalea ajaja*

Seen at the ferry crossing of the Madeira river at Abunã on the 28th as we traveled from Rondônia to Acre.

HERONS & EGRETS (ARDEIDAE)

Rufescent Tiger-heron *Tigrisoma lineatum*

Seen on just three dates.

Black-crowned Night-heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Seen only on the 25th in the varzeas opposite Humaitá.

Striated Heron *Butorides striata*

Seen on seven dates.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

Seen on thirteen dates. Particularly common in agricultural areas south of the Amazon around Porto Velho and in eastern Acre.

Cocoi Heron *Ardea cocoi*

Seen on five dates.

Great Egret *Ardea alba*

Seen on twelve dates.

Capped Heron *Pilherodius pileatus*

We saw this elegant heron in small numbers on six dates.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*

Seen on seven dates.

CORMORANTS (PHALACROCORACIDAE)

Neotropical Cormorant *Phalacrocorax brasilianus*

Seen on just four dates, with a high count of five birds seen on the Solimões on the 19th.

DARTERS (ANHINGIDAE)

Anhinga *Anhinga anhinga*

Surprisingly, seen only on the 19th, a single bird along the Solimões river upstream from Manaus.

NEW WORLD VULTURES (CATHARTIDAE)

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*

Common and widespread, and seen on thirteen dates.

Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture *Cathartes burrovianus*

Less common than the preceding species. Only recorded on five dates, typically over or near water.

Greater Yellow-headed Vulture *Cathartes melambrotus*

Seen on eight dates, usually in small numbers, and almost always over forested areas.

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus*

The most common scavenger in the Amazon basin. Abundant and seen on a daily basis during the tour.

King Vulture *Sarcoramphus papa*

Two seen over the Ramal do Tucumanduba east of Presidente Figueiredo on the 18th; also seen over the Ramal da Prainha on the morning of the 28th, and on both the 29th and 30th over the Ramal do Noca.

OSPREY (PANDIONIDAE)

Western Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

One seen over the Solimões on the 19th turned out to be the only sighting of the trip. Given the date, it seems probable that this individual was a young bird, as many Ospreys apparently don't leave their overwintering areas until their second (or even their third) spring. Remarkably, approximately 60 – 75% of juvenile Ospreys don't survive their first southbound migration.

HAWKS, KITES & EAGLES (ACCIPITRIDAE)

Pearl Kite *Gampsonyx swainsonii*

One seen sitting on a utility wire alongside the highway between Porto Velho on the 25th was our only record.

Grey-headed Kite *Leptodon cayanensis*

One seen at Ramal do Noca on the 29th.

Swallow-tailed Kite *Elanoides forficatus*

Seen on just two dates.

Harpy Eagle *Harpia harpyja*

We had an exciting encounter with an immature bird near the dining hall of the Ducke Reserve outside of Manaus just before noon on the first day of the trip, the 13th. A group of Brown-backed Saki Monkeys had been calling in agitation while we worked to see a pair of Spot-winged Antbirds, and once we saw the antbirds I thought I should try to call in the monkeys. I was surprised that they stopped vocalizing and refused to budge from their positions, as the saki monkeys are typically fairly responsive. The sudden movement of a large raptor in the canopy not far from the monkeys revealed the presence of the Harpy Eagle, though, and the reason for the monkeys' reluctance was suddenly crystal clear! This young bird was born at a nest site less than one kilometre from where we found him, a site that a pair of Harpy Eagles has been using for a number of years now. I was a bit worried that Bob had missed what would certainly prove to be one of the best birds of the trip due to his travails in arriving to Manaus. However, this concern proved

to be unfounded, as not only had Bob seen Harpy before, but the following day we spotted an adult from the MUSA canopy tower in Manaus! While the bird was much more distant, we had reasonable views of it through the scope, and were even able to share it with another birding group that arrived atop the tower shortly after we did. These two sightings are testament to the quality of the *terra firme* forests still extant in the Manaus area, and the importance of the Ducke Reserve and its much smaller neighbour, the Manaus Botanical Garden.

*** Ornate Hawk-Eagle** *Spizaetus ornatus*

Heard on the 18th along the Ramal do Tucumanduba.

Double-toothed Kite *Harpagus bidentatus*

Seen on a couple of dates near Manaus, heard on two dates around Presidente Figueiredo, and also seen near Porto Velho on the west bank of the Madeira on the morning of the 24th.

Tiny Hawk *Accipiter superciliosus*

We had fabulous views of a bird perched at low levels along the main trail in the Ducke Reserve, where it had just captured a large woodcreeper (either a *Xiphorhynchus* or *Dendrocolaptes* sp.) and was starting to pick it apart, while a host of small passerines edged in close as they dared to voice their displeasure at its presence. It was something of a surprise to see another individual a few days later at the Cachoeira da Onça reserve in Presidente Figueiredo, as the species can be quite inconspicuous and is easily missed on most tours.

Plumbeous Kite *Ictinia plumbea*

A single bird seen on the 19th at Marchantaria island was our only sighting.

Black-collared Hawk *Busarellus nigricollis*

Seen on four dates in riverine habitats – outside Itacoatiara, along the Solimões / Amazon river, and in the varzeas east of Humaitá.

Snail Kite *Rostrhamus sociabilis*

Singles seen on two dates in the Itacoatiara area.

Crane Hawk *Geranospiza caerulescens*

Seen on two dates, including two birds in the Marchantaria area on the 19th.

Slate-coloured Hawk *Buteogallus schistaceus*

One seen in the Anavilhanas archipelago on the 21st, a pair encountered in the varzeas near Humaitá on the 25th, and a nest-building adult seen along the Ramal do Noca on the morning of the 29th.

Savanna Hawk *Buteogallus meridionalis*

One seen on the 19th in the Marchantaria area.

Great Black-Hawk *Buteogallus urubitinga*

Seen in singles or pairs on six dates.

Roadside Hawk *Rupornis magnirostris*

The most frequently encountered raptor during this trip, with records on sixteen dates.

White-tailed Hawk *Geranoaetus albicaudatus*

Singles seen in open country on the 25th and the 30th.

*** Black-faced Hawk** *Leucopternis melanops*

Heard calling at a regular site for the bird at the Cachoeira da Onça reserve in Presidente Figueiredo, but surprisingly the bird refused to come closer to check us out.

Grey-lined Hawk *Buteo nitidus*

Seen on five dates.

Short-tailed Hawk *Buteo brachyurus*

One seen on the 17th at our hotel in Presidente Figueiredo turned out to be our only sighting.

RAILS & ALLIES (RALLIDAE)

Ocellated Crake *Micropygia schomburgkii*

Seen on the 25th in the savanna habitat between Porto Velho and Humaita. We saw two individuals and heard perhaps three or four more in the same area. The first sighting was extremely brief, coming immediately after we had given up on trying to lure a singing bird out into a small gap in the native grasses (the bird popped out behind my back as I returned from retrieving my speaker). After trying another bird without success, we chose another spot and prepared a small arena for the crake to perform. This time the crake emerged from the grasses even before I could play the tape! It hung around for quite some time, strutting brazenly in the open as it defended its territory vigorously. The Amazonian savannas on the west bank of the Madeira between Porto Velho and Humaita must rate as one of the best places in the world to actually see this gorgeous little crake, which is rarely observed across its extensive range.

*** Russet-crowned Crake** *Laterallus viridis*

Heard only, on the afternoon of the 17th at the Lajes Reserve in Presidente Figueiredo.

*** Rufous-sided Crake** *Laterallus melanophaius*

Two birds heard calling in the flooded meadows along the Transamazonica highway through the varzeas on the east bank of the Madeira river opposite Humaitá.

Gray-cowled Wood-rail *Aramides cajanea*

Seen on the 29th and 30th on the Ramal do Noca.

Purple Gallinule *Porphyrio martinica*

Seen on the afternoon of the 14th near Itacoatiara. Also seen on the 19th in the flooded habitats at Marchantaria island in the Solimões, where we counted five birds.

TRUMPETERS (PSOPHIDAE)

Grey-winged Trumpeter *Psophia crepitans*

A single bird seen on the forest trail at Hotel Um Lugar in Presidente Figueiredo on the 16th unfortunately slipped away once it saw us, and not everyone got a look at the bird.

LIMPKIN (ARAMIDAE)

Limpkin *Aramus guarauna*

Seen on six dates.

PLOVERS & SANDPIPERS (CHARADRIIDAE / SCOLOPACIDAE)

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus*

Two birds seen at the fish ponds at Hotel Um Lugar in Presidente Figueiredo on the afternoon of the 16th.

Southern Lapwing *Vanellus chilensis*

Recorded on 14 dates.

Collared Plover *Charadrius collaris*

Seen in small numbers on three dates, with a high count of 7 birds at Hotel Um Lugar.

Pied Plover *Hoploxypterus cayanus*

A trio seen in the fish ponds at Hotel Um Lugar on two dates were the only birds we encountered.

Wattled Jacana *Jacana jacana*

Seen on 11 dates.

GULLS & TERNS (LARIDAE)

Black Skimmer *Rynchops niger*

Seen only on the very last day of the trip, July 2nd, as we returned from Rio Branco to Porto Velho. We counted about 40 birds in an extensively flooded area (the result of the Madeira river's over-running its old banks thanks to construction of a massive hydroelectric dam) during a stop at a lane closure where the highway was undergoing repairs.

Yellow-billed Tern *Sternula superciliaris*

Recorded on three dates.

Large-billed Tern *Phaetusa simplex*

Recorded on seven dates.

PIGEONS & DOVES (COLUMBIDAE)

Feral Pigeon *Columbia livia*

Seen on 9 dates in urban areas.

Scaled Pigeon *Patagioenas speciosa*

Seen on the 17th at the Lajes Reserve in Presidente Figueiredo, in the *campinarana* forest along Linha C-30 on the 24th, and heard on the 27th near Jaci-Paraná. For my money, the best looking pigeon in the Americas.

Picazuro Pigeon *Patagioenas picazuro*

Seen only on the 24th and the 26th, along the BR-319 between Porto Velho and Humaitá.

Pale-vented Pigeon *Patagioenas cayennensis*

Seen or heard on seven dates. Most numerous along the Transamazonica in the varzea forests on the east bank of the Madeira, but also seen in good numbers in the gallery forests amongst the savannas between Porto Velho and Humaitá.

Plumbeous Pigeon *Patagioenas plumbea*

Seen or (mostly) heard on six dates. Actually only seen on the 18th, a single bird at Tucumanduba east of Presidente Figueiredo.

*** Ruddy Pigeon** *Patagioenas subvinacea*

Heard on four dates, but surprisingly we never managed to see one.

Common Ground-Dove *Columbina passerina*

The common ground-dove (well-named, it would seem!) in open areas and second growth in and around Manaus, Presidente Figueiredo and Novo Airão. We also saw them around Porto Velho and Humaitá, but it was mostly absent in Acre.

Plain-breasted Ground-Dove *Columbina minuta*

Small numbers seen between Porto Velho and Humaita on the 24th and 26th.

Ruddy Ground-Dove *Columbina talpacoti*

Seen on eleven dates, including on a daily basis in the southern Amazon from Porto Velho onward to Acre (and common in Acre).

Blue Ground-Dove *Claravis pretiosa*

A male seen in the early afternoon on the 29th along the Ramal do Noca.

White-tipped Dove *Leptotila verreauxi*

Singles or pairs seen on three dates.

Grey-fronted Dove *Leptotila rufaxilla*

Heard on a couple of dates, and finally seen on the 30th at the Ramal do Noca.

HOATZIN (OPISTHOCOMIDAE)

Hoatzin *Opisthocomus hoazin*

A distant bird seen during a roadside stop in late afternoon just outside of Itacoatiara on the 14th, and heard the following day at the Furo de Miracoera. Finally seen again much later in the trip, when we had at least four birds on the Rio Jaci on the morning of the 27th.

CUCKOOS (CUCULIDAE)

Greater Ani *Crotophaga major*

Seen on six dates in riverine habitats, often in the dozens or even more. We saw more than 100 birds at the Furo de Miracoera on the morning of the 15th, where the constant stream of these large, glossy coucal-like birds made for a remarkable sight.

Smooth-billed Ani *Crotophaga ani*

Common and widespread, albeit found almost exclusively in open areas and in edge habitats. Seen on almost every day of the trip, with only a couple of exceptions.

*** Striped Cuckoo** *Tapera naevia*

A bird heard on the 25th turned out to be our only record of the species.

*** Pavonine Cuckoo** *Dromococcyx pavoninus*

Heard only, on the morning of the 29th along the Ramal do Noca, where it only sang once or twice from deep within the bamboo forest.

Little Cuckoo *Coccyzina minuta*

Seen only on the 29th and 30th, with at least 6 birds on the 29th, at the Ramal do Noca. Also heard in riverine habitats in other locations on a couple of dates.

Squirrel Cuckoo *Piaya cayana*

Seen or heard on nine dates.

Black-bellied Cuckoo *Piaya melanogaster*

Seen or heard on four dates, typically in the canopy of *terra firme* forests. Our best sighting came during our visit to the MUSA tower on the morning of June 14th, when we had fabulous views of a showy pair right beside the tower (we even had rare top-down views of this secretive species).



Black-bellied Cuckoo (*Piaya melanogaster*) © Bob Rodrigues

*** Dark-billed Cuckoo** *Coccyzus melacoryphus*

A bird heard at the beginning of the Ramal do Noca on the 30th didn't show itself, and we were soon distracted (lured away, in fact) by the calls of a nearby Acre Tody-Tyrant.

TYPICAL OWLS (STRIGIDAE)

Tawny-bellied Screech-Owl *Megascops watsonii*

We saw one on the evening of June 13th at the Ducke Reserve near Manaus. Also heard two individuals singing on the evening of the 22nd in *terra firme* near Novo Airão on the west bank of the Rio Negro.

(Southern) Tawny-bellied Screech-Owl *Megascops watsonii usta*

One seen extremely well on the evening of the 27th in tall forest at the Linha do IBAMA near Jaci-Paraná was our only sighting, though we also heard one on July 1st in Acre. The *usta* race of the Tawny-bellied Screech-Owl is found to the south of the Amazon river, whereas the nominate form (see previous species account) occurs to the north of the Amazon. Some taxonomic authorities split *usta* based on vocal differences and some minor morphological differences, calling it either Southern Tawny-bellied Screech-Owl or Austral Screech-Owl.

*** Crested Owl** *Lophotrix cristata*

Heard only on the 13th at the Ducke Reserve.

Spectacled Owl *Pulsatrix perspicillata*

We saw one at our hotel in Novo Airão before dawn on the morning of the 22nd. A pair of these hulking owls have resided at the hotel for a number of years now.

Amazonian Pygmy-Owl *Glaucidium hardyi*

Seen or heard (mostly heard) on ten dates. The only pygmy-owl found in areas of continuous *terra firme* forests across most of the Amazon, although both it and the following species are present together in eastern

Acre at the Ramal do Noca, for example. After hearing the birds on almost a daily basis in the Manaus / Presidente Figueiredo area, we didn't actually see the species until we reached Porto Velho, where we worked hard to eventually get scope views of a singing pair in the tall forest along the road at Linha C-01. We saw another bird two days later at the Ramal Novo Horizonte near Humaitá.

Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl *Glaucidium brasilianum*

Although it is widespread and common across much of the lowlands of South America, this species is restricted to riverine and second-growth habitats in the Amazon basin, where it is replaced in extensive areas of upland forest by the preceding species. We recorded it on six dates, including in the Anavilhanas archipelago on the Rio Negro (where we first saw it on the grounds of our hotel in Novo Airão on the 21st); also in the várzeas near Humaita, and in the bamboo forests along the Ramal do Noca in Acre.

Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia*

Seen on five dates in Rondonia and Acre states.

POTOOS (NYCTIBIIDAE)

*** Common Potoo** *Nyctibius griseus*

Potoos were a source of great disappointment during the tour, as we struck out on the two specialty species we often see on this itinerary (Rufous and White-winged), and we even failed to see this far more widespread bird. Heard only, on three dates.

NIGHTJARS (CAPRIMULGIDAE)

Nacunda Nighthawk *Podager nacunda*

A flock of about 20 birds seen early in the morning on an exposed sandbar by a large river island in the Solimões river on the 19th; we also saw one or two at the airport in Porto Velho when we arrived from Manaus on the night of the 24th.

Sand-coloured Nighthawk *Chordeiles rupestris*

A flock of about a dozen birds flying downstream over the islands of the Anavilhanas archipelago early in the morning on the 21st was a bit of a surprise. We also saw at least ten (but likely many more were present) birds in the flooded area at what was once the confluence of the Cutia and Madeira rivers (but is now just an extensively flooded area, thanks to the huge hydro-electric dams on the Madeira) along the BR-364 between Porto Velho and Rio Branco on July 1st.

Short-tailed Nighthawk *Lurocalis semitorquatus*

Seen or heard on just three dates.

Band-tailed Nighthawk *Nyctiprogne leucopyga*

We had at least 40 individuals appear as dusk began to fall over the Najatuba stream along the Rio Negro downriver from Novo Airão on the 21st. The sudden appearance of so many of these delicate birds coursing over the water with their erratic, butterfly-like flight is always a wonderful moment at the end of a long day cruising on the dark and mysterious waters of the Rio Negro.

Blackish Nightjar *Nyctipolus nigrescens*

We saw a single bird that we frightened off a roadside roost during the daytime at Tucumanduba on the 18th, and at least two birds out actively hunting for insects on the evening of the 22nd at the dump track near Novo Airão.

Pauraque *Nyctidromus albicollis*

Surprisingly seen or heard on just four dates.

*** Ocellated Poorwill** *Nyctiphrynus ocellatus*

Heard on the evening of the 27th at the Linha do IBAMA near Jaci-Parana.

SWIFTS (APODIDAE)

Band-rumped Swift *Chaetura spinicaudus*

Seen on three dates around Manaus and Novo Airão.

Pale-rumped Swift *Chaetura egrégia*

A trio seen on the 29th was our only sighting of the species.

Grey-rumped Swift *Chaetura cinereiventris*

Seen on just a couple of dates.

Chapman's Swift *Chaetura chapmani*

Seen on five dates north of the Amazon on the Guianan Shield and along the Rio Negro near Novo Airao.

Short-tailed Swift *Chaetura brachyura*

Seen on five dates.

Neotropical Palm Swift *Tachornis squamata*

Recorded on seven dates.

HUMMINGBIRDS (TROCHILIDAE)

**** Rufous-breasted Hermit** *Glaucis hirsutus*

Leader-only, and seen by me on three dates, but always as rapid fly-thrus, mostly at the edge of forest.

*** White-bearded Hermit** *Phaethornis hispidus*

Glimpsed on the 29th at the Ramal do Noca, and heard singing in the same area the following day.

Great-billed Hermit *Phaethornis malaris*

Seen only on the morning of the 24th, at the Linha C-01 near Porto Velho, on the west bank of the Madeira.

Needle-billed Hermit *Phaethornis philippii*

Seen on three dates, including a nice sighting on the 26th at Ramal Novo Horizonte when we were able to watch a bird feeding in mid-levels by probing spider's webs in search of small insects and / or spiders.

Straight-billed Hermit *Phaethornis bourcieri*

One seen briefly in the forest at the Hotel Um Lugar on the 17th, and two birds seen along the Ramal do Tucumanduba on the 18th were our only encounters during the trip.

Streak-throated Hermit *Phaethornis rufurumii*

We saw this species at a lek in flooded forest in the river islands of the Anavilhanas archipelago on the morning of the 21st – we probably saw between 6 and 8 individuals at this spot.

Reddish Hermit *Phaethornis ruber*

Seen on five dates.

Grey-breasted Sabrewing *Campylopterus largipennis*

Seen on two dates, including at least a couple of individuals feeding at a flowering *Spathodea campanulata* tree (African Tulip tree) at a roadside café to the north of Manaus on the 20th.

Swallow-tailed Hummingbird *Eupetomena macroura*

A single bird seen in the savannas along the Ramal das Campinas between Porto Velho and Humaita on the

morning of the 25th was our only sighting. In the Amazon this species is restricted to these natural savanna areas, and is much less common than in more open country of eastern South America.

White-necked Jacobin *Florisuga mellivora*

Recorded on five dates.

Black-throated Mango *Anthracothonax nigricollis*

Seen on just three dates.

Crimson Topaz *Topaza pella*

We saw a single male of this spectacular species, the largest hummingbird in Brazil, on the morning of the 20th at a stakeout north of Manaus. The male defended a particular perch in a flowering African Tulip tree (*Spathodea campanulata*), an exotic species with fabulous bright orange-red flowers that the Topazes seem to love. Before lodge owners and Brazilian bird enthusiasts rush to plant *Spathodea*, however, it is worth noting that the tree is believed to be toxic to local native bee species, though there is some debate on the topic.

**** Racket-tailed Coquette** *Discosura longicaudus*

A female seen briefly only by me at Mari Mari was the only sighting of the trip. We watched the flowering cashew tree near the restaurant where I had seen it for a while before and after lunch, but the bird didn't re-appear.

Blue-chinned Sapphire *Chlorestes notata*

Males seen on five dates, almost always in seasonally flooded or bamboo-dominated forests.

Blue-tailed Emerald *Chlorostilbon mellisugus*

Seen only on the 15th at the Furo de Miracoera.

Fork-tailed Woodnymph *Thalurania furcata*

As is often the case, this was the most frequently encountered hummingbird in forested habitats throughout the trip. We saw it on nine dates.

Rufous-throated Sapphire *Hylocharis sapphirina*

Three birds seen in a small clearing (an abandoned homestead) at the property boundary of the Ekobé Reserve in *terra firme* south of Novo Airão on the morning of the 22nd.

White-chinned Sapphire *Hylocharis cyanus*

A male seen in *campinarana* forest west of Jaci-Paraná on the morning of the 28th.

Green-tailed Goldenthrout *Polytmus theresiae*

This hummingbird is distributed locally across the Amazon basin, always occurring in areas with white sandy soils. Seen on three dates: on the 17th at the Lajes reserve north of Presidente Figueiredo; at Linha C-30 on the west bank of the Madeira about 50 km from Porto Velho on the 24th; and on the 28th along the Ramal da Prainha west of Jaci-Paraná.

Versicoloured Emerald *Amazilia versicolor*

Seen only on the 15th at Miracoera.

Glittering-throated Emerald *Amazilia fimbriata*

Recorded on four dates.

Sapphire-spangled Emerald *Amazilia lactea bartletti*

Seen on two dates at the Ramal do Noca in eastern Acre. Some authorities (HBW for example) split Sapphire-spangled Emerald into two species: the nominate form endemic to E Brazil (Sapphire-spangled)

and the *bartletti* race of the south-western Amazon (Spot-vented Emerald), while also suggesting that the *zimmeri* race of the tepuis in S Venezuela could also be a full species-level taxon (Tepui Emerald). The birds we saw in Acre are ssp. *bartletti*, so keep your eyes open for Spot-vented Emerald in future updates to your favourite listing programs.

Black-eared Fairy *Heliothryx auritus*

We saw this canopy-dwelling hummingbird on four dates.

TROGONS (TROGONIDAE)

Black-tailed Trogon *Trogon melanurus*

Recorded on six dates, mostly heard but seen on the 15th in varzea forest at the Furo de Miracoera, and on the 20th at the Ramal do Pau Rosa north of Manaus.

Green-backed Trogon *Trogon viridis*

The most widely encountered trogon during the trip, with records on fifteen dates.

Amazonian Trogon *Trogon ramonianus*

A male seen on the morning of the 26th on the Ramal Novo Horizonte near Humaitá was our only sighting, though we did hear the species on two subsequent dates. Formerly a part of the Violaceous Trogon complex, which was split into three species (Amazonian / Guianan / Gartered Trogons) a while back.

Guianan Trogon *Trogon violaceus*

We had nice views of a male on the 16th at the Cachoeira da Onça reserve in Presidente Figueiredo.

Blue-crowned Trogon *Trogon curucui*

Recorded on four dates. Most numerous at the Ramal do Noca, where we had three and four individuals on two dates respectively.

*** Black-throated Trogon** *Trogon rufus*

Heard at the Hotel Um Lugar in Presidente Figueiredo on the 17th.

*** Collared Trogon** *Trogon collaris*

Heard on four dates (including daily at the Ramal do Noca in eastern Acre), but surprisingly not seen.

KINGFISHERS (ALCEDINIDAE)

*** Green-and-rufous Kingfisher** *Chloroceryle inda*

Heard on the 29th.

Green Kingfisher *Chloroceryle americana*

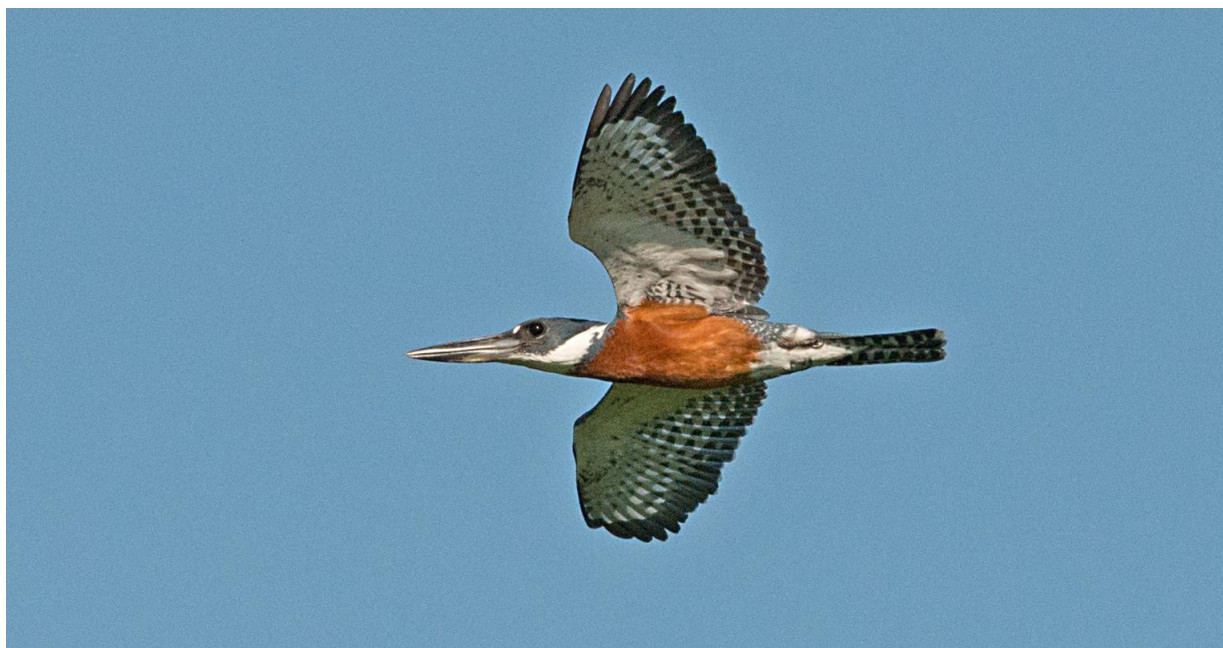
Recorded on five dates.

Amazon Kingfisher *Chloroceryle amazona*

Seen on ten dates.

Ringed Kingfisher *Megaceryle torquata*

Seen on ten dates. Particularly numerous along the Solimões / Amazon river, where we had at least 15 birds on the 15th during our trip to the Furo de Miracoera (most of those birds concentrated around a stretch of riverbank with high bluffs just upstream from Itacoatiara), and 30+ birds on the 19th during our trip to Marchantaria island upstream from Manaus.



Ringed Kingfisher (*Megaceryle torquata*) © Bob Rodrigues

MOTMOTS (MOMOTIDAE)

* **Amazonian Motmot** *Momotus momota*

Heard on a daily basis at the Ramal do Noca in eastern Acre.

Broad-billed Motmot *Electron platyrhynchum*

Recorded on four dates, and seen on the 29th at the Ramal do Noca.

JACAMARS (GALBULIDAE)

White-throated Jacamar *Brachygalba albogularis*

Always a major target on any of our trips visiting Acre. We saw them on the 29th and 30th at the Ramal do Noca, with a count of seven birds on the 29th. Several family groups can be readily found at this location, often perching on the utility wires strung along the road. The species is restricted to a relatively small area in the southwest Amazon basin in eastern Peru, western Brazil and a small corner of northwestern Bolivia.

Yellow-billed Jacamar *Galbula albirostris*

A pair seen on the 18th at the Ramal do Tucumanduba east of Presidente Figueiredo was our only sighting.

Blue-necked Jacamar *Galbula cyanicollis*

It took a fair bit of searching, but we finally spotted a male sitting down low in behind a curtain of vegetation along the trail at the Ramal do Novo Horizonte on the morning of the 26th. Replaces the above species south of the Amazon river.

Rufous-tailed Jacamar *Galbula ruficauda*

Seen just once, on the afternoon of the 25th in the varzea forest on the east bank of the Madeira opposite the town of Humaitá.

Green-tailed Jacamar *Galbula galbula*

We had at least six individuals on the morning of the 15th in the flooded forests at the Furo de Miracoera near Itacoatiara. Also heard in the Anavilhanas archipelago on the 21st.

Bluish-fronted Jacamar *Galbula cyanescens*

One seen in a forest patch near along the Ramal das Campinas halfway between Porto Velho and Humaitá on the morning of the 25th. Also recorded on four more dates subsequently, including a few sightings along

the Ramal do Noca in eastern Acre.

Bronzy Jacamar *Galbula leucogastra*

A pair seen at the Mari Mari reserve near Presidente Figueiredo on the 17th was our only sighting.

Paradise Jacamar *Galbula dea*

Widespread in *terra firme* forests and seen or heard on ten dates.

Great Jacamar *Jacamerops aureus*

Two birds seen in late afternoon along the Igarapé Najatuba, a forested creek downstream from Novo Airão on the west bank of the Rio Negro.

PUFFBIRDS (BUCCONIDAE)

White-necked Puffbird *Notharchus hyperrhynchus*

Seen on the 29th at the Ramal do Noca.

Guianan Puffbird *Notharchus macrorhynchos*

One seen from the MUSA canopy tower in Manaus on the 14th, and heard on two subsequent dates in Presidente Figueiredo.

Brown-banded Puffbird *Notharchus ordii*

We called a pair into a large emergent at the water's edge along the Igarapé Najatuba, a forested creek downstream from Novo Airão on the west bank of the Rio Negro, on the afternoon of the 21st. Once considered to be rare and local, better coverage by birders and ornithologists in the Amazon has found that the species is typically fairly common in areas where poor, sandy soils predominate.

Pied Puffbird *Notharchus tectus*

Pairs seen at the Ramal do Tucumanduba (on the 18th) and in the Anavilhanas archipelago (on the 21st).

Spotted Puffbird *Bucco tamatia*

We saw a pair in flooded forest at the Furo de Miracoera near Itacoatiara on the 15th. The species is typically quite common in forests on depauperate soils such as those found around Manaus and Presidente Figueiredo, but since we saw the species so early in the trip, we didn't stop anywhere else to try to call them out, and undoubtedly overlooked them at a number of locations.

Collared Puffbird *Bucco capensis*

We heard a singing bird early in the morning of the 22nd at the Ekobé reserve outside Novo Airão, but in spite of a good amount of effort, could not see it. We had better luck a few days later near Humaitá, where we tracked down a responsive individual in the good *terra firme* along the Ramal Novo Horizonte on the 26th.

White-eared Puffbird *Nystalus chacuru*

Seen only on the 25th in the savannas between Porto Velho and Humaita.

(Natterer's) Striolated Puffbird *Nystalus striolatus*

A pair seen on the afternoon of the 27th at the Linha do IBAMA track. The 2013 Special Volume of the Handbook of the Birds of the World suggested that the Striolated Puffbird be split into three species; the nominate form, which is largely restricted to the interfluvium between the Madeira and the Tapajós rivers, would be called Natterer's Striolated Puffbird. None of the major taxonomic authorities have followed that recommendation, however, preferring to treat the nominate form and the *torridus* ssp. as Eastern Striolated Puffbird.

Western Striolated Puffbird *Nystalus obamai*

A pair seen on our final morning at the Ramal do Noca on July 1st.

Semicollared Puffbird *Malacoptila semicineta*

We had great views of a responsive bird deep inside a bamboo thicket at the Ramal do Noca on July 1st.

Rufous-necked Puffbird *Malacoptila rufa*

We saw this unobtrusive puffbird of the lower and middle strata of *terra firme* forests on the 26th (Ramal do Novo Horizonte) and the 27th (Linha do IBAMA). Like most of the *Malacoptila* puffbirds, this species is often overlooked as its voice is easy to mistake for an insect noise.

Black Nunbird *Monasa atra*

A specialty of the Guianan Shield. Seen or heard on five dates in the Manaus and Presidente Figueiredo areas.

Black-fronted Nunbird *Monasa nigrifrons*

Recorded on nine dates.

White-fronted Nunbird *Monasa morphoeus*

Seen only on the morning of the 24th, when we saw three birds in disturbed tall forest along Linha C-01 outside of Porto Velho.

Yellow-billed Nunbird *Monasa flavirostris*

Seen on three dates in bamboo-dominated forests on the Ramal do Noca in eastern Acre.

Swallow-winged Puffbird *Chelidoptera tenebrosa*

Recorded on eleven dates.

BARBETS (CAPITONIDAE)

Black-spotted Barbet *Capito niger*

We saw one in the canopy of *terra firme* forest from the MUSA canopy tower in Manaus on the 14th. Also heard on a couple of dates in the Presidente Figueiredo area. A specialty of the Guianan Shield.

Gilded Barbet *Capito auratus*

Seen or heard on five dates, including a pair at the Ekobé reserve in Novo Airão on the 22nd. Replaces the previous species to the west of the Rio Negro and south of the Amazon on the west bank of the Rio Madeira.

Lemon-throated Barbet *Eubucco richardsoni*

We had three of these striking barbets at the Ramal do Noca on the 29th. This species is relatively poorly known in Brazil, with records from only a handful of localities across the southwestern Brazilian Amazon. It is much more frequently encountered in neighbouring countries.

TOUCANS (RAMPHASTIDAE)

Black-throated Toucanet *Aulacorhynchus atrogularis*

A pair seen at the roadside at the Ramal do Noca on the 30th was our only sighting. The birds were restless and not overly co-operative, but we did manage to get them in the scope for a short time (thanks to a nice piece of spotting by Steve to get them the first time). Formerly part of the Emerald Toucanet complex, *atrogularis* is still not recognized as a full species-level taxon by some authorities (Clements / eBird, for example), and those still include it in Southern Emerald Toucanet *A. albivitta*. In Brazil the species' range limits are poorly understood, though it appears to occur as far east as the Rio Madeira itself.

Green Aracari *Pteroglossus viridis*

Seen on two dates north of Manaus: on the 18th at the Ramal do Tucumanduba; and on the 20th at Ramal do

Pau Rosa.

Ivory-billed Aracari *Pteroglossus azara*

Steve and I saw a group of six birds near the municipal dump outside of Novo Airão on the afternoon of the 20th. The taxonomic treatment of this taxon is confusing: Clements (and eBird) treat nominate *azara*, *flavirostris* and *mariae* as a single species (Ivory-billed Aracari *P. azara*), whereas the IOC list splits *mariae* (Brown-mandibled Aracari), and the Handbook of the Birds of the World recognizes all three taxa as full species (Ivory-billed, Brown-mandible, and Yellow-billed Aracari *P. flavirostris*). In the latter interpretation, the nominate Ivory-billed Aracari would be a Brazilian endemic, restricted to the area between the middle and lower Rio Negro and middle Rio Solimões (N bank of the Amazon, W of the Negro).

Brown-mandibled Aracari *Pteroglossus mariae*

Everyone saw the four birds we encountered at the edge of tall forest at Linha C-01 outside of Porto Velho on the west bank of the Madeira on the morning of the 24th. As discussed above, *P. mariae* is variably treated as a full species, or as a subspecies of the Ivory-billed Aracari. It replaces *azara* and *flavirostris* to the south of the Amazon.

Black-necked Aracari *Pteroglossus aracari*

Seen only on the 14th from atop the MUSA canopy tower in Manaus.

Chestnut-eared Aracari *Pteroglossus castanotis*

Seen on four dates.

Curl-crested Aracari *Pteroglossus beauharnaesii*

Seeing a group of fourteen birds at Linha C-01 on the morning of the 24th was a remarkable sight – they just kept on coming! We also saw a smaller group of four birds at Ramal do Noca on the 29th.

Guianan Toucanet *Selenidera piperivora*

Three seen from the MUSA canopy tower in Manaus on the 14th turned out to be our only record of the species. We did have tremendous views of them, though, as a pair perched just below our position on the upper platform of the tower.

Golden-collared Toucanet *Selenidera reinwardtii*

It took quite a bit of work, but we finally managed good views of a pair at the Ramal Novo Horizonte near Humaitá on the 26th.

Channel-billed Toucan *Ramphastos vitellinus*

Seen or heard on seven dates.

White-throated Toucan *Ramphastos tucanus*

Widespread; recorded on 16 dates. The birds seen from the MUSA canopy tower in Manaus on the 13th are nominate *tucanus*, which is treated as a full species-level taxon by the Handbook of the Birds of the World, though none of the other major taxonomic authorities have gone this far. HBW uses the English name Red-billed Toucan for the nominate form of the Guianas (and also E Amazonian Brazil).

Toco Toucan *Ramphastos toco*

A pair seen perched up on a dead snag alongside the Furo de Miracoera on the 15th was our only sighting.

WOODPECKERS (PICIDAE)

Bar-breasted Piculet *Picumnus aurifrons*

One seen (and another two birds heard calling) in *campinarana* at the Ramal da Prainha to the west of Jaci-Paraná on the morning of the 28th.

Varzea Piculet *Picumnus varzeae*

We had great views of two birds at the edge of flooded forest in the Furo de Miracoera near Itacoatiara on the 15th. This handsome piculet is endemic to the *varzeas* of the lower Amazon in Brazil, and while it very occasionally shows up near Manaus it is much more reliably found from Itacoatiara and the mouth of the Madeira, and along the Amazon to the east.

Rufous-breasted Piculet *Picumnus rufiventris*

Two birds seen on the 29th at the Ramal do Noca, and heard on both subsequent dates at that site. In eastern Acre, the species is restricted to bamboo-dominated forests such as those found at Noca.

Fine-barred Piculet *Picumnus subtilis*

Seen at the Ramal do Noca on the 30th. Until relatively recently, this species was considered an endemic of SE Peru, but recent records (a specimen collected in 1998, finally followed by observations in 2007 and then more regularly from 2015 onward) have found the species to be at least patchily distributed in Acre, and occurring as far east as Rio Branco itself.

Yellow-tufted Woodpecker *Melanerpes cruentatus*

We recorded this gregarious and widespread Amazonian woodpecker on nine dates.

Little Woodpecker *Veniliornis passerinus*

Seen or heard on five dates. In the Amazon this species is confined to riverine habitats, flooded forests, and bamboo-dominated forests. It is replaced in *terra firme* forests by the two congeners to follow in this list.

Red-stained Woodpecker *Veniliornis affinis*

A pair seen in *terra firme* at Ramal Novo Horizonte near Humaitá on the 26th.

Golden-collared Woodpecker *Veniliornis cassini*

Our only sighting came in the afternoon on the 14th, during an exploratory drive down a side road into disturbed *terra firme* forest near Itacoatiara.

Yellow-throated Woodpecker *Piculus flavigula*

Singles or pairs seen on four different dates, mostly accompanying mixed species flocks.

Golden-green Woodpecker *Piculus chrysochloros*

One seen in *terra firme* at the Adolpho Ducke Reserve near Manaus on the 13th. A taxonomic review of the species published by Brazilian ornithologists in 2013 suggest that Golden-green Woodpecker should be split into as many as six different species, a treatment that has been followed by the Brazilian Ornithological Records Committee, but not by any of the major international checklists to date. The taxon we observed near Manaus was ssp. *capistratus*, which the CBRO calls Bar-throated Woodpecker, though HBW suggests the more cumbersome Guianan Golden-green Woodpecker as a possible name.

Spot-breasted Woodpecker *Colaptes punctigula*

Seen or heard on five dates, mostly in river island or other riverine habitats.

Waved Woodpecker *Celeus undatus*

Seen on four dates in Guianan Shield forests in and around Manaus, Itacoatiara and Presidente Figueiredo. Recently published research has suggested that Waved Woodpecker should be lumped with the following species.

Scaly-breasted Woodpecker *Celeus grammicus*

A pair seen in the Anavilhanas archipelago on the 23rd was our only sighting. Also heard in forest near Humaitá on the 26th.

Cream-coloured Woodpecker *Celeus flavus*

A male seen in the river islands of the Anavilhanas archipelago on the 21st was our only record.

Rufous-headed Woodpecker *Celeus spectabilis*

This striking woodpecker is always one of the principal targets when we visit Acre. We had a pair on the afternoon of the 29th near the far end of the Ramal do Noca, in the disturbed bamboo-dominated forests that they prefer.

Ringed Woodpecker *Celeus torquatus*

A trio seen on the 21st in the Anavilhanas archipelago was our only sighting, though we also heard the species on two subsequent dates.

Lineated Woodpecker *Dryocopus lineatus*

Only recorded twice, which is remarkable given that this widespread bird is usually the most frequently encountered of the larger Amazonian woodpeckers. Our only sighting came on the 30th.

Red-necked Woodpecker *Campephilus rubricollis*

Great views of three birds along the main trail at the Adolpho Ducke Reserve in Manaus on the 13th. Also seen on the final birding day of the tour, a pair seen at the Riozinho do Andirá in eastern Acre.

Crimson-crested Woodpecker *Campephilus melanoleucos*

Seen or heard on eight dates.

FALCONS & CARACARAS (FALCONIDAE)

Black Caracara *Daptrius ater*

Seen only on two dates.

Red-throated Caracara *Ibycter americanus*

A group of four seen at the Ducke Reserve on the 13th. Also seen near Humaita on the 26th, at Jaci-Paraná on the 27th, and the Ramal do Noca on July 1st.

Southern Caracara *Caracara plancus*

Seen on nine dates. Common in the agricultural landscapes found between Porto Velho and Humaitá, and Porto Velho and Rio Branco.

Yellow-headed Caracara *Milvago chimachima*

Seen on nine dates.

*** Laughing Falcon** *Herpetotheres cachinnans*

Heard on a couple of dates, but not seen during the tour.

Lined Forest-falcon *Micrastur gilvicollis*

Great views between two different encounters (possibly of the same bird) of this secretive denizen of the forest interior along the main trail at the Ducke Reserve on the 13th.

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius*

Seen on two dates in transit between Porto Velho and Rio Branco.

Bat Falcon *Falco ruficularis*

Seen on just three dates.

NEW WORLD PARROTS (PSITTACIDAE)

Sapphire-rumped Parrotlet *Touit purpuratus*

After we heard them on a couple of dates at Manaus and Presidente Figueiredo, we had terrific views of a single bird feeding on the fruits of *Mauritia flexuosa* palms beside the restaurant at the Mari Mari lodge on the 17th.

Tui Parakeet *Brotogeris sanctithomae*

Seen on three dates, all in riverine habitats (river islands or varzeas) along white water rivers.

White-winged Parakeet *Brotogeris versicolurus*

Seen on the 15th at the Furo de Miracoera (a pair), and again during our trip into the Marchantaria river islands on the 19th (30+ birds).

Yellow-chevroned Parakeet *Brotogeris chiriri*

Seen on three dates in the savannas between Porto Velho and Humaitá. This species is mostly found in the *cerrado* and open country that dominates central Brazil, but populations are also found in the enclaves of native grasslands scattered across the southwestern Amazon.

Cobalt-winged Parakeet *Brotogeris cyanopectus*

Seen daily in decent numbers during our visits to the Ramal do Noca in eastern Acre.

Golden-winged Parakeet *Brotogeris chrysoptera*

Seen or heard on eight dates. Typically encountered in terra firme forests.

Orange-cheeked Parrot *Pyrilia barrabandi*

Just one sighting: four birds seen in flight over the Igarape Najatuba near Novo Airão on the 21st.

Caica Parrot *Pyrilia caica*

We had nice views of a flock of eight birds from the MUSA canopy tower in Manaus on the 14th. Also a flock of four birds at the Ramal do Tucumanduba on the 18th.

Dusky Parrot *Pionus fuscus*

Seen or heard on five dates.

Blue-headed Parrot *Pionus menstruus*

Widespread; recorded on thirteen dates, with a high count of 80+ birds seen on the afternoon of the 14th during a late afternoon stop outside of Itacoatiara.

Short-tailed Parrot *Graydidascalus brachyurus*

Surprisingly we only had this species on the 15th during our visit to flooded forests at the Furo de Miracoera near Itacoatiara, where we counted at least 20 birds shortly after we arrived. Normally we also encounter the species in river islands of the Solimões, and the *varzeas* at Humaitá (where the species also roosts in the town itself).

Festive Amazon *Amazona festiva*

Seen or heard on five dates, always in flooded forests such as in the Anavilhanas archipelago where we had our highest count (110 birds on the morning of the 21st).

Yellow-crowned Amazon *Amazona ochrocephala*

Recorded in small numbers on five dates.

Mealy Amazon *Amazona farinosa*

Recorded on ten dates, with a high count of ten birds on the 29th at the Ramal do Noca. The IOC checklist has split the species into Northern Mealy Amazon *A. guatemalae* (occurring from Mexico south to western Panama) and the Southern Mealy Amazon *A. farinosa* (from east Panama south into most of South America).

Orange-winged Amazon *Amazona amazonica*

Seen on three dates, with a high count of about 60 birds seen flying over our hotel in Presidente Figueiredo in the late afternoon of the 15th, just after we had arrived.

*** Black-headed Parrot** *Pionites melanocephalus*

Heard only on the 22nd at the Ekobé reserve near Novo Airão. Unfortunately, we were beneath the closed canopy when the birds streaked overhead.

*** White-bellied Parrot** *Pionites leucogaster*

Heard on the 24th in tall forest at Linha C-01 outside of Porto Velho.

Red-fan Parrot *Deropytus accipitrinus*

We saw five birds from the MUSA canopy tower in Manaus on the morning of the 14th. The birds of the Guianan Shield and elsewhere north of the Amazon are the nominate form. HBW notes that the nominate and *fuscifrons* races of the species might be better treated as two sister species.

Painted Parakeet *Pyrrhura picta*

Seen on the 18th at the Ramal do Tucumanduba east of Presidente Figueiredo, where we had great views of a flock of eight birds at the roadside.

Santarem Parakeet *Pyrrhura amazonum*

We struggled a bit, but did manage to get reasonable views of a small flock of four birds in the forest canopy in the Bushbird forest on the 27th. The birds we saw were the *snethlageae* subspecies, which is perhaps better treated as a full species, the Madeira Parakeet.

Bonaparte's Parakeet *Pyrrhura lucianii*

We had a brief view of a flock of six birds as they flew over the road as we birded Linha C-01 on the west bank of the Madeira near Porto Velho on the 24th.

Black-capped Parakeet *Pyrrhura rupicola*

Seen only on July 1st, when we encountered a flock of eight birds at the Ramal do Noca in the morning, and three more individuals in the afternoon at the Riozinho do Andirá. Sometimes called Rock Parakeet.

Peach-fronted Parakeet *Eupsittula aurea*

A pair seen on the 25th at the Ramal das Campinas between Porto Velho and Humaitá.

Dusky-headed Parakeet *Aratinga weddellii*

Seen on a daily basis on the west bank of the Madeira.

Red-bellied Macaw *Orthopsittaca manilatus*

We saw this specialist of *Mauritia* palm groves on six dates.

Blue-headed Macaw *Primolius couloni*

Fabulous views of the species on the Ramal do Noca on the 30th, when we counted twelve birds. This specialty of the southwestern Amazon is always a top target when we visit Acre, where it is usually encountered without difficulty.

Blue-and-yellow Macaw *Ara ararauna*

Although it is fairly widespread and frequently encountered (or perhaps for this very reason), for my money this is the best parrot in all of South America. We saw these charismatic macaws on four dates: twice in Presidente Figueiredo, and on a couple of dates in the Anavilhanas archipelago (where Bob took the lovely photo attached below).



Blue-and-yellow Macaw (*Ara ararauna*) © Bob Rodrigues

Scarlet Macaw *Ara macao*

Seen or heard on six dates.

Red-and-green Macaw *Ara chloropterus*

We had good views of four birds perched as they fed in a large emergent at the trailhead of the forest trail at Hotel Um Lugar in Presidente Figueiredo on the 17th.

Chestnut-fronted Macaw *Ara severus*

Seen on three dates, with a high count of 16 birds at the Ramal do Noca on the 30th.

White-eyed Parakeet *Psittacara leucophthalmus*

Seen on six dates.

OVENBIRDS (FURNARIDAE)

Lesser Hornero *Furnarius minor*

A pair seen at Marchantaria island on the Solimões river upstream from Manaus on the 19th.

Band-tailed Hornero *Furnarius figulus*

Seen at Marchantaria island on the 19th, and heard at the port in Itacoatiara on the 15th.

Dark-breasted Spinetail *Synallaxis albigularis*

We saw a pair (and heard several others) in successional habitats on small river islands upstream from Manaus on the morning of the 19th.

*** Cinereous-breasted Spinetail** *Synallaxis hyospodia*

Heard on the 25th along the Ramal das Campinas between Porto Velho and Humaitá.

Ruddy Spinetail *Synallaxis rutilans*

A skittish bird seen alongside the main track at Linha C-01 on the morning of the 24th.

White-bellied Spinetail *Synallaxis propinqua*

A couple of birds seen, and at least eight individuals recorded during our morning at Marchantaria island and younger, neighbouring islands on the 19th. The White-bellied Spinetail is a specialist of early growth on newly-formed islands on white water rivers in the Amazon basin. This species was recently moved into its

own genus, *Mazaria*, based both on morphological differences (particularly its longer bill than the classic *Synallaxis* spinetails), and on phylogenetic analyses that have shown it to be most closely related to the Chotoy Spinetail *Schoeniophylax phryganophilus*.

Plain-crowned Spinetail *Synallaxis gujanensis*

Heard near Humaitá on the 25th, and one seen at the brushy edges of pasture land near the beginning of the Ramal do Noca on July 1st.

Rusty-backed Spinetail *Cranioleuca vulpina*

Pairs seen on the 19th (Marchantaria island) and the 25th (varzeas at Humaitá).

Parker's Spinetail *Cranioleuca vulpecula*

Two pairs seen in successional growth with many small willows and stands of *Gynerium* cane on a river island near Marchantaria upstream from Manaus on the 19th. Another specialist of white water river islands in the Amazon basin.

Speckled Spinetail *Cranioleuca gutturata*

Seen on the 21st in the river islands of the Anavilhanas archipelago, and also heard on two subsequent dates.

Scaled Spinetail *Cranioleuca muelleri*

It took us a little while to finally track it down, but we had excellent views of a cooperative bird in flooded forest off the Furo de Miracoera on the morning of the 15th. The species is endemic to the lower Amazon river; the spinetail and the Varzea Piculet are the two key species found at Itacoatiara.

Yellow-chinned Spinetail *Certhiaxis cinnamomea*

We saw at least two birds (and heard several others) in the varzea forest along the Transamazonica highway on the east bank of the Madeira river opposite Humaitá on the afternoon of the 25th.

Red-and-white Spinetail *Certhiaxis mustelinus*

Yet another river island specialist! Like the others before, we saw this species on the 19th in the river islands upstream from Manaus.

Plain Softtail *Thripophaga fusciceps*

One seen near the ferry landing on the east bank of the Madeira river opposite Humaitá on the afternoon of the 25th. The taxon seen here is the *obidensis* ssp., a form restricted to the lower Amazon and its whitewater tributaries. Some taxonomic authorities suggest that the Plain Softtail should be split into two or three different species, and *obidensis* is a prime candidate to be split and become a Brazilian endemic.

*** Point-tailed Palmcreeper** *Berlepschia rikeri*

Heard along the Ramal das Campinas at one of the ribbons of *Mauritia flexuosa* palms that cross the road amidst the native grassland habitat.

*** Chestnut-winged Hookbill** *Ancistrops strigilatus*

Heard in the bushbird forest along the Rio Branco near Jaci-Paraná on the 27th.

Rufous-tailed Foliage-gleaner *Philydor ruficaudatum*

A pair seen with a mixed flock along the Ramal Novo Horizonte on the 26th.

Rufous-rumped Foliage-gleaner *Philydor erythrocerum*

One seen with a mixed species flock along the Ramal Novo Horizonte on the 26th.

Chestnut-winged Foliage-gleaner *Philydor erythropterum*

We had a very responsive individual loosely associating with a passing mixed flock along Linha C-01 on the west bank of the Madeira outside Porto Velho on the 24th.

*** Cinnamon-rumped Foliage-gleaner** *Philydor pyrrhodes*

One heard on the main trail at the Cachoeira da Onça reserve in Presidente Figueiredo on the 16th.

Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner *Automolus ochrolaemus*

Heard on a couple of dates, and one finally seen at the Ramal do Noca on July 1st.

Brown-rumped Foliage-gleaner *Automolus melanopezus*

One seen by one of the first small wooden bridges at the Ramal do Noca on July 1st, at the same spot where we had heard the species (likely the same bird) two days earlier. This skulking foliage-gleaner is restricted to the western Amazon, where it is largely a bamboo specialist.

Chestnut-crowned Foliage-gleaner *Automolus rufipileatus*

Seen on the 29th and 30th at the Ramal do Noca.

LEAFTOSSERS (SCLERURIDAE)

*** Short-billed Leaf Tosser** *Sclerurus ruficularis*

Heard on the 27th in the bushbird forest near Jaci-Paraná.

XENOPSES (XENOPIDAE)

Rufous-tailed Xenops *Microxenops milleri*

One seen accompanying a mixed flock in the canopy of *terra firme* along the forest trail at Hotel Um Lugar in Presidente Figueiredo on the 17th. While the species is monotypic, there are two distinct vocal types corresponding to populations on the north and south bank of the Amazon, and there may well be two different species of *Microxenops* lurking within!

Slender-billed Xenops *Xenops tenuirostris*

We managed to pull a bird out of a fast-moving flock and convince it to hang around for a little while, long enough for everyone to get decent views (even briefly through the scope!) in the nice *terra firme* forest along the Rio Branco upstream from Jaci-Paraná (the bushbird forest) on the morning of the 27th.

Plain Xenops *Xenops minutus*

Seen on the 16th at the Cachoeira da Onça and heard on the 26th.

Streaked Xenops *Xenops rutilans*

One seen on the 30th at the Ramal do Noca.

WOODCREEPERS (DENDROCOLAPTIDAE)

Plain-brown Woodcreeper *Dendrocincla fuliginosa*

One seen on the 13th at the Ducke Reserve in Manaus turned out to be our only record of this army ant-following woodcreeper (indicative of our lack of success in encountering any decent antswarms). The birds on the Guianan Shield are the nominate form, which HBW suggests could represent (grouped together with other races from the eastern and southern Amazon) a separate species, Line-throated Woodcreeper.

*** Long-tailed Woodcreeper** *Deconychura longicauda*

Heard on the 27th in the *terra firme* along the Rio Branco, the so-called “Bushbird forest”.

Spot-throated Woodcreeper *Certhiasomus stictolaema*

We had one moving together with a busy mixed-species flock at mid-levels in the *campinarana* forest at the Cachoeira da Onça reserve in Presidente Figueiredo on the 16th. Formerly placed in the genus *Deconychura*.

Olivaceous Woodcreeper *Sittasomus griseicapillus*

Recorded on eleven dates. Seen on the 17th in Presidente Figueiredo (ssp. *axillaris*), the 20th near Novo Airão (ssp. *amazonus*), and on the 26th near Humaitá (also ssp. *amazonus*). A variable species both with respect to plumage and vocalizations. HBW Alive (now defunct, to be subsumed into the Cornell Birds of the World project starting April 1st 2020) split the Olivaceous Woodcreeper into Western and Eastern Olivaceous Woodcreepers, with the former species occurring west of the Andes and north into Central America and Mexico. The latter species occupies South America east of the Andes south as far as northern Argentina and Uruguay; however, it is worth noting that HBW still suggests a number of further splits to both of the new species – the birds observed during our tour would all fall under the *amazonus* group, which is tentatively called Amazonian Woodcreeper in HBW Alive.

Wedge-billed Woodcreeper *Glyphorhynchus spirurus*

Seen or heard on six dates.

Long-billed Woodcreeper *Nasica longirostris*

Recorded on five dates, but only seen on the 15th in flooded forest at the Furo de Miracoera, where we saw at least four individuals. A classic species of flooded forests in the Amazon, and a truly stonking bird to boot!

Cinnamon-throated Woodcreeper *Dendrexetastes rufigula*

Seen on the 16th at the Cachoeira da Onça in Presidente Figueiredo, and on the 29th at the Ramal do Noca in Acre. Also heard on three other dates.

Amazonian Barred Woodcreeper *Dendrocolaptes certhia*

One seen on the 17th at the Hotel Um Lugar in Presidente Figueiredo.

Hoffmann's Woodcreeper *Dendrocolaptes hoffmannsi*

We scored at the last possible minute with this one, calling in a bird just before dusk along a quiet track through *terra firme* forest at the Linha do IBAMA on the afternoon of the 27th. This Brazilian endemic is restricted to the Madeira – Tapajós interfluvium, and thus was really only a possibility for this itinerary on the 27th, our day out of Jaci-Paraná.

Black-banded Woodcreeper *Dendrocolaptes picumnus*

Seen at the Ducke Reserve in Manaus on the 13th, and heard on a couple of other dates.

Straight-billed Woodcreeper *Dendroplex picus*

Seen or heard on seven dates. Typically fairly common in flooded forests and other habitats near water, and certainly one of the woodcreepers which best tolerates altered environments.

Zimmer's Woodcreeper *Dendroplex kienerii*

Recorded on three dates, all in flooded forests. We saw two birds on the 19th along the boardwalk behind a floating restaurant at the Lago Janauari.

Striped Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus obsoletus*

Another specialty of flooded forests in the Amazon basin, with a preference for blackwater rivers. We saw it on the 19th at the Lago Janauari, and on the 21st in the Anavilhanas archipelago.

Elegant Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus elegans*

One seen on the 27th.

Chestnut-rumped Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus pardalotus*

Recorded on five of six dates in the Manaus and Presidente Figueiredo area.

Buff-throated Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus guttatus*

A pair seen from the boat, in the Igarapé Najatuba on the west bank of the Rio Negro, on the afternoon of the 21st. Also heard on three other dates.

Guianan Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes albolineatus*

We saw a pair from the MUSA canopy tower in Manaus on the 14th, and another bird on the 18th along the Ramal do Tucumanduba east of Presidente Figueiredo. This and the two species that follow resulted from the split of the Lineated Woodcreeper complex.

Inambari Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes fatimalimae*

A pair seen on the 24th in *terra firme* at Linha C-01 west of Porto Velho, on the 26th at the Ramal Novo Horizonte, and on July 1st at the Ramal do Noca (where also heard on the two preceding dates). As mentioned above, this species resulted from the split of the Lineated Woodcreeper complex (into 5 species, depending on how one regards the *fuscicapillus* / *layardi* pair); *fatimalimae* is widespread in the Southern Amazon west of the Rio Madeira.

Rondonia Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes fuscicapillus*

One seen on the 27th in the Bushbird forest along the Rio Branco near Jaci-Paraná. Another species that arose from the split of the Lineated Woodcreeper complex; *fuscicapillus* is endemic to the interfluvium between the Madeira and Tapajós rivers in the south-central Amazon.

Red-billed Scythebill *Campylorhamphus trochilirostris*

Seen on two dates on the Ramal do Noca.

Rondonia Scythebill *Campylorhamphus probatus*

One seen and at least two others heard in stands of slender bamboos in the Bushbird forest along the Rio Branco near Jaci-Paraná on the 27th. The species arose from a split of the Curve-billed Scythebill complex as published in the HBW special new species edition in 2013; it is endemic to the interfluvium between the Madeira and Tapajós rivers in the south-central Amazon.

TYPICAL ANTBRIDS (THAMNOPHILIDAE)

Fasciated Antshrike *Cymbilaimus lineatus*

Recorded on five dates, but only seen on the 17th, in *terra firme* along the forest trail at the Hotel Um Lugar in Presidente Figueiredo, where we observed a male foraging in the subcanopy as it accompanied a mixed-species flock.

Bamboo Antshrike *Cymbilaimus sanctamariae*

One seen at the roadside along the Ramal do Noca on the 29th. We heard at least five other territorial birds singing on the same date, and recorded multiple birds by voice on two next two dates at the site. This species is a bamboo specialist (does the name give that away?) that occurs mostly in the extreme SW Amazon, although it occurs patchily as far east as the Roosevelt river. Interestingly, *Guadua* bamboo species are absent at the latter location, and the antshrike occupies dense vine tangles instead.

Black-throated Antshrike *Frederickena viridis*

After hearing one and glimpsing its silhouette on the afternoon of the 16th, we had better luck with the same bird the following morning, though it was never particularly cooperative. Seen on the forest trail at the Hotel Um Lugar in Presidente Figueiredo.

Undulated Antshrike *Frederickena unduligera*

In my experience it is quite difficult to complete the *Frederickena* double on any given tour, so I was quite pleased when we found a singing male of this species on the morning of the 24th at Linha C-01, on the west bank of the Madeira outside of Porto Velho. Like its congener (see above), this particular individual wasn't exactly showy, but we did get a few decent looks as it moved back and forth around us, causing small trees to sway wildly when it landed and clung horizontally to their stalks.

*** Great Antshrike** *Taraba major*

Heard on three dates at the Ramal do Noca, but not encountered elsewhere during the trip. We didn't actually spend any time trying to see any of the birds we heard.

Black-crested Antshrike *Sakesphorus canadensis*

Pair seen on the 21st and 23rd during our trips into the river islands of the Anavilhanas archipelago (and many others heard during these same trips). A spectacular inhabitant of flooded forests on the north bank of the Amazon.

Glossy Antshrike *Sakesphorus luctuosus*

One seen on the 15th in flooded forest at the Furo de Miracoera, and at least three birds seen in the varzeas of the Madeira opposite Humaitá on the afternoon of the 25th. This species replaces the preceding species to the south of the Amazon for the most part, though in some places it has managed to cross to the north bank of the Amazon, such as at Itacoatiara where we had our first sighting.

Barred Antshrike *Thamnophilus doliatus*

Great views of a lovely pair found by our vehicle as we returned from our Rondonia Bushbird outing, in late morning of the 27th. Also heard each day we visited the Ramal do Noca.

Blackish-grey Antshrike *Thamnophilus nigrocinereus*

Quite common in the river islands on the Rio Negro in the Anavilhanas archipelago (at least eight birds recorded on the 21st, for example), but it wasn't until our second boat trip into the islands that we finally managed to get very good views of a male. This species is a specialist of river islands in black- and clear-water rivers in the Amazon basin.

Castelnau's Antshrike *Thamnophilus cryptoleucus*

Seen only on the 19th, when we had two different males in successional river island habitats on islands near Marchantaria, upstream from Manaus on the Solimões river. One of the key river island specialists we look for in these islands, and a species which can sometimes be difficult to track down if access to its particular micro-habitat is limited due to water levels being either too high or too low.

White-shouldered Antshrike *Thamnophilus aethiops*

We saw a male on the 22nd in the forest at the Ekobé Reserve near Novo Airão. Also heard on three other dates.

Plain-winged Antshrike *Thamnophilus schistaceus*

Seen on the 22nd and heard on two other dates.

Mouse-coloured Antshrike *Thamnophilus murinus*

A pair seen on the 13th at the Adolpho Ducke reserve near Manaus, and on the 16th at the Cachoeira da Onça reserve in Presidente Figueiredo. Heard on three other dates.

Northern Slaty Antshrike *Thamnophilus punctatus*

Seen on the 14th near Itacoatiara, and a pair seen on the 17th in the forest near the Cock-of-the-Rock lek at the Mari Mari reserve.

*** Natterer's Slaty Antshrike** *Thamnophilus stictocephalus*

Heard only, a distant bird singing in *campinarana* forest along the Ramal da Prainha on the 28th.

Pearly Antshrike *Megastictus margaritatus*

A pair seen (though the male made only a brief appearance) in best stretch of *terra firme* forest on the loop trail at the Ekobé Reserve near Novo Airão on the morning of the 22nd. Although rather widespread in the Amazon (at least west of the Rio Negro on the north bank, and west from the Tapajós to the south of the

Amazon), this species is typically scarce and its presence is usually an indicator of decent forest quality.

Rondônia Bushbird *Clytoctantes atrogularis*

This was certainly one of the principal target birds of the entire trip, so we were tickled pink to connect with a male at the site along the Rio Branco south of Jaci-Paraná on the morning of June 27th. As usual, it took a little while to elicit a reply from the bird, but eventually it came in and showed well, and in its typical fashion it quickly lost interest in us and went about its business, foraging by cracking open dead bamboo stalks in search of ants and other insects. The Bushbird was only discovered in 1986, after which it ‘went missing’ for another 20 years or so. It has since been found at a handful of localities in the upper Madeira-Tapajós interfluvium, but the southern reaches of its range have been ravaged by deforestation since the initial discovery of the species. As I finish up this trip report in 2022, I’m sad to report that the site where we saw the bird in 2019 is being destroyed as I write this. We have since located sites where the species’ future is likely more secure, but one cannot help but wonder what other species of birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians, insects or plants might well have gone undiscovered in this region before falling victim to the chainsaws and tractors of human progress?

Dusky-throated Antshrike *Thamnomanes ardesiacus*

Recorded on four dates in the Guianan Shield forests around Manaus and Presidente Figueiredo, where the species is a leader of mixed-species flocks that travel through the understory.

Cinereous Antshrike *Thamnomanes caesius*

A pair seen at the Cachoeira da Onça in Presidente Figueiredo on the 16th, and also at Ramal Novo Horizonte near Humaitá on the 26th. Also heard on several other dates. Like the above species, Cinereous Antshrikes are almost always found with mixed-species flocks in the lower and middle strata of the forest, where they act as flock leaders. The *Thamnomanes* spp. behave as sentinels for the flocks, and can often be seen sitting still, in their typical upright posture, while various other antshrikes, antwrens, foliage-gleaners, woodcreepers and flycatchers forage frenetically nearby. *Thamnomanes* spp. emit a variety of alarm vocalizations to alert the flock to the presence of any predators; they also direct the movement of the flock, and give rallying calls to assemble “the gang” when the time comes to forage together.

Bluish-slate Antshrike *Thamnomanes schistogynus*

A pair seen on the 30th inside forest at the Ramal do Noca.

Spot-winged Antshrike *Pygiptila stellaris*

We saw at least four birds on the 21st in the Anavilhanas archipelago, including a pair that must have been near a nest as they were both carrying juicy food items into a dense tangle above our heads as we navigated a narrow channel inside the flooded forest. A pair also seen with a mixed flock at the Ramal Novo Horizonte on the 26th.

Brown-bellied Antwren *Epinecrophylla gutturalis*

One seen inside *terra firme* forest along the main trail at the Hotel Um Lugar on the morning of the 17th. This Guianan Shield specialty is fairly easy to overlook given its discreet habits and high-pitched vocalizations.

White-eyed Antwren *Epinecrophylla leucophthalma*

We saw a pair in the lower growth of *terra firme* in the Bushbird forest along the Rio Branco near Jaci-Parana on the 27th.

Madeira Stipple-throated Antwren *Epinecrophylla amazonica*

A male seen at low levels along the trail at Ramal Novo Horizonte turned out to be our only record of the species. This taxon was described as a new species in the 2013 special volume of the Handbook of the Birds of the World. The Clements checklist (and eBird) have adopted the use of the name “Stipplethroat” for all of the members of the old Stipple-throated Antwren complex, meaning this bird would be called Madeira Stipplethroat in Clements.

Ornate Antwren *Epinecrophylla ornata*

Seen on the 30th at the Ramal do Noca in eastern Acre. The subspecies at this location is *meridionalis*, which the Handbook of the Birds of the World treated as part of “Western Ornate Antwren” – HBW split the Ornate Antwren into two species, treating the form found between the Madeira and Tapajós rivers as a species-level táxon. In Clements and eBird, this is now called Ornate Stipplethroat.

*** Rufous-bellied Antwren** *Isleria guttata*

We flushed a male of this species from in front of us on the narrow trail at Mari Mari. However, I believe I was the only one who actually managed to see the bird.

*** Pygmy Antwren** *Myrmotherula brachyura*

Surprisingly not seen, and perhaps even more surprising was the fact that we only heard it on three dates.

Amazonian Streaked Antwren *Myrmotherula multostriata*

A male seen at the Riozinho do Andirá north of Rio Branco on the final birding afternoon of the trip.

Klages’s Antwren *Myrmotherula klagesi*

A pair seen in flooded forest at the Furo de Miracoera near Itacoatiara on the 15th. Also heard during our boat trips into the river islands of the Anavilhanas archipelago, where the species was quite common.

Cherrie’s Antwren *Myrmotherula cherriei*

We had fabulous views of a pair of this species in the Anavilhanas archipelago on the 21st. Cherrie’s Antwren is largely restricted in range to the Rio Negro drainage, though it has also recently been found in northeastern Peru. The species prefers shrubby edges of white-sand forests, and in the Anavilhanas archipelago it is restricted to shrubs at the edges of blackwater lagoons and larger lakes found within the river islands (apparently almost never along the banks of the river itself).



Sclater’s Antwren *Myrmotherula sclateri*

One seen in the canopy of tall *terra firme* forest at the Ramal Novo Horizonte west of Humaitá on the 26th.

White-flanked Antwren *Myrmotherula axillaris*

We had a pair with a big mixed flock at the Ramal Novo Horizonte west of Humaitá on the 26th.

Long-winged Antwren *Myrmotherula longipennis*

One seen on the 17th with a mixed flock along the forest trail at Hotel Um Lugar in Presidente Figueiredo.

*** Ihering's Antwren** *Myrmotherula iheringi*

Heard at the Ramal do Noca, but not seen. The form found in the bamboo forests in eastern Acre is *M. iheringi oreni*, which was described as a new species to science in 2013 in the HBW new species special volume, but most taxonomic authorities seem to treat it as a subspecies.

Grey Antwren *Myrmotherula menetriesii*

Seen on the 16th and on the 26th.

Leaden Antwren *Myrmotherula assimilis*

We saw this specialist of Amazonian flooded forests on the 15th at the Furo de Miracoera.

Predicted Antwren *Herpsilochmus praedictus*

One seen in stunted *campinarana* forest at Linha C-30 on the afternoon of the 24th. Described in 2013 by Mario Cohn-Haft and Gustavo Bravo in the Special Volume of the Handbook of the Birds of the World, the English name for the species was gleaned from the fact that ornithologists had supposed that a black-capped *Herpsilochmus* antwren was likely to occur in the southwest Amazon west of the Madeira river, as most other Amazonian interfluvia had a similar species. As it turned out, the species occupies a fairly large range between the Madeira and Juruá rivers, although throughout its range it shows a general preference for forests on poor soils.

Spot-backed Antwren *Herpsilochmus dorsimaculatus*

Seen or heard on four dates (seen well from the MUSA tower) in and around Manaus, and also heard on the 22nd near Novo Airão.

Dot-winged Antwren *Microrhophias quixensis*

A pair seen in the Bushbird forest near Jaci-Paraná on the 27th.

Southern White-fringed Antwren *Formicivora grisea*

A fast-moving pair seen at the edge of dense *campinarana* along the Ramal da Prainha west of Jaci-Paraná on the morning of the 28th. The IOC splits White-fringed Antwren into Northern (*F. intermedia*) and Southern (*F. grisea*), but Clements, eBird and the Handbook of the Birds of the World retain the two taxa as a single species.

Rusty-backed Antwren *Formicivora rufa*

We saw a pair in the native grasslands at the Ramal das Campinas (the entrance road to the Mapinguari National Park) on the morning of the 25th. The bulk of this species' range lies in the *cerrado* grasslands of central-eastern South America, but there are isolated populations in Amazonian savannahs in Amapá and Pará, and in the savannas in the southern Amazon to the west and east of the Madeira river.

*** Striated Antbird** *Drymophila devillei*

Heard on the 30th at the Ramal do Noca.

Ash-winged Antwren *Euchrepomis spodioptila*

One seen rather briefly as it moved quickly with a canopy flock at the MUSA tower in Manaus on the 14th; another bird heard singing, but only glimpsed in silhouette, in the canopy of *campinarana* forest at the Cachoeira da Onça in Presidente Figueiredo on the 16th.

Grey Antbird *Cercomacra cinerascens*

Two birds seen clambering about in a dense vine tangle at the roadside along the Linha do IBAMA near Jaci-Parana on the afternoon of the 27th was our only sighting. I noted heard birds on at least four other

dates.

*** Blackish Antbird** *Cercomacra nigrescens*

Heard only, on just a couple of dates.

Riparian Antbird *Cercomacra fuscicauda*

Seen on the 29th and 30th at the Ramal do Noca, and heard there the following day. This species was split from Blackish Antbird in 2014 on the basis of its distinctive vocalizations and plumage differences, mostly between the females of the two species.

*** Black Antbird** *Cercomacra serva*

Heard on the 24th at Linha C-01 on the west bank of the Madeira river.

Manu Antbird *Cercomacra manu*

We saw this bamboo specialist on the 30th at the Ramal do Noca, and heard there on the 29th and July 1st.

White-browed Antbird *Myrmoborus leucophrys*

Seen on the 29th and 30th at the Ramal do Noca.

Ash-breasted Antbird *Myrmoborus lugubris*

It took a bit of work to actually find it, but we ended up having great views of a male in flooded forest in the river islands of the Anavilhanas archipelago on the 21st. Also heard there again two days later. The race seen during our trip was ssp. *stictopterus*, one of the forms in which the females have dark masks.

Black-faced Antbird *Myrmoborus myotherinus*

Males seen on the 22nd at the Ekobé Reserve near Novo Airão (ssp. *ardesiacus*), and the 24th at Linha C-01 (ssp. *proximus*), respectively. Also heard on three other dates.

Guianan Warbling-Antbird *Hypocnemis cantator*

We saw males on the 13th at the Ducke Reserve in Manaus, and on the 16th at the Hotel Um Lugar in Presidente Figueiredo. Also heard on two other dates during our time spent birding the Guianan Shield forests in the Manaus and Presidente Figueiredo areas.

Peruvian Warbling-Antbird *Hypocnemis peruviana*

A pair seen on the 24th at Linha C-01 on the west bank of the Madeira near Porto Velho (and two or three other pairs heard there), and at least two pairs heard on the 26th near Humaitá. Like the above species, this species arose from a seven-way split of the Warbling Antbird complex.

Yellow-breasted Warbling-Antbird *Hypocnemis subflava*

Seen on the 29th and 30th at the Ramal do Noca in eastern Acre, and heard there on July 1st as well.

Rondonia Warbling-Antbird *Hypocnemis ochrogyna*

Seen on the 27th in the Bushbird forest along the Rio Branco near Jaci-Parana. Like the three species preceding it on this list, this species arose from a seven-way split of the Warbling Antbird complex. The Rondonia Warbling-Antbird is endemic to a relatively small area in the Brazilian Amazon between the Madeira and Ji-Paraná rivers in Rondonia and Mato Grosso states, also sneaking across the border into northern Bolivia.

Yellow-browed Antbird *Hypocnemis hypoxantha*

One seen (and another bird, presumably its mate, heard) near a small stream in *terra firme* forest along the loop trail at the Ekobe Reserve in Novo Airão on the west bank of the Rio Negro on the 22nd.

Black-chinned Antbird *Hypocnemoides melanopogon*

Seen on the 21st and 23rd in the river islands of the Anavilhanas archipelago.

Black-and-white Antbird *Myrmochanes hemileucus*

We saw at least four of these fabulous little antbirds in the early successional growth vegetation dominated by young *Cecropia* sp. trees and vine-covered shrubs on a young river island in the Solimões upstream from Manaus on the 19th. These specialists of new river islands in white water rivers in the Amazon are always one of the top targets during our visits to such habitats.

Silvered Antbird *Sclateria naevia*

A female seen in a roadside gully at Linha C-01 on the morning of the 24th turned out to be our only record.

Black-headed Antbird *Percnostola rufifrons*

After a bit of work stalking a singing bird as it skulked along the forest floor, we finally all had great views of a male along the main trail at the Cachoeira da Onça reserve in Presidente Figueiredo. We also heard at least two other pairs at the same site.

White-lined Antbird *Percnostola lophotes*

A male seen and at least five other birds heard on the 29th (and heard on the next two dates) in bamboo forests at the Ramal do Noca in eastern Acre.

Spot-winged Antbird *Schistocichla leucostigma*

A pair seen along a forest stream in the Ducke Reserve in Manaus on the 13th, just before we found a Harpy Eagle! Spot-winged Antbird was split into five different species in 2007; the nominate *leucostigma* taxon from the former superspecies retained the English name of Spot-winged Antbird.

Humaitá Antbird *Schistocichla humaythae*

Although we nearly got our vehicle stuck while driving in to reach the right spot, we were successful in seeing a singing male (great spotting by either Bob or Steve, I can't remember who saw it first) on the 26th as we drove from Humaitá to Jaci-Paraná. This species was previously part of the Spot-winged Antbird superspecies. Like other members of the complex, it shows a strong preference for forest streams within *terra firme* forest.

Rufous-faced Antbird *Schistocichla rufifacies*

A calling bird responded fairly weakly, but still approached us along a streambed alongside the road at the Linha do IBAMA on the 27th. Unfortunately, the bird was rather shy about coming to the edge for the most part, though in the end it did approach closely enough to be seen, but by then it was nearly dusk, and the bird could barely be seen in the deepening gloom.

Ferruginous-backed Antbird *Myrmoderus ferruginea*

After hearing the species at the Ducke Reserve in Manaus and at the Cachoeira da Onça in Presidente Figueiredo, we finally saw a male along the forest trail at the Hotel Um Lugar on the morning of the 17th. Previously included in the super-genus *Myrmeciza*, it was moved into *Myrmoderus*, together with the Scalloped, Squamate and White-bibbed Antbirds of south-east Brazil, upon the publication of a phylogenetic analysis of *Myrmeciza*.

Chestnut-tailed Antbird *Schiaphylax hemimelaena*

A male of the *pallens* race seen in the Bushbird forest near Jaci-Parana on the 27th. Heard on at least two dates at the Ramal do Noca, where we didn't see the species. The Brazilian Ornithological Committee (CBRO) treats *pallens* as a separate species, which they call the Eastern White-bellied Antbird. This is a terrible choice for an English name, since there is already a White-bellied Antbird *Myrmeciza longipes*, a bird which isn't very closely related to *S. hemimelaena pallens*. None of the major international checklists recognize *pallens* as a full species.

Black-throated Antbird *Myrmophylax atrothorax*

A pair seen at the Ramal da Prainha west of Jaci-Parana on the 28th. Also heard on the two following dates at

the Ramal do Noca. Like the preceding species, this was also previously included in the *Myrmeciza* genus.

Goeldi's Antbird *Akletos goeldii*

We saw this chunky antbird, a specialty of the southwestern Amazon on the 30th at the Ramal do Noca, and heard at least five individuals at the same site on the 29th, too.

*** Plumbeous Antbird** *Myrmelastes hyperythrus*

Heard on our final afternoon of birding, near the bridge over the Andirá river north of Rio Branco.

*** Rufous-throated Antbird** *Gymnopathys rufigula*

Heard on two consecutive dates at *terra firme* forest sites in Presidente Figueiredo. Remarkably, we didn't encounter a single army ant swarm during the trip, considerably reducing our chances of seeing the *Gymnopathys*, *Pithys*, *Rhegmatorhina*, or *Phlegopsis* spp., all of which habitually accompany raiding columns of army ants, principally the large *Eciton burchelli* army ant.

White-cheeked Antbird *Gymnopathys leucaspis*

We saw two birds through gaps in dense vegetation along the loop trail at the Ekobé Reserve in Novo Airão on the 22nd. Formerly lumped together with the Bicoloured Antbird *G. bicolor*, which occurs west of the Andes in northwestern South America, and north to Honduras in Central America.

White-throated Antbird *Gymnopathys salvini*

We had quick views of a pair in a dense *caranaí* (a small monotypic palm, *Lepidocaryum tenue*) thicket on inside *terra firme* forest at the Ramal Novo Horizonte on the 26th.

*** Hairy-crested Antbird** *Rhegmatorhina cristata*

Heard only on the 26th at the Ramal Novo Horizonte, where we had a promising initial response from a singing bird, but it soon melted away and fell silent.

Common Scale-backed Antbird *Willisornis poecilinotus*

One seen only by me at the Ekobé Reserve on the 22nd, and a nice male seen well by all on the 26th at Ramal Novo Horizonte near Humaitá.

*** Black-spotted Bare-eye** *Phlegopsis nigromaculata*

Heard on the 29th at the Ramal do Noca.

ANTTHRUSHES (FORMICARIIDAE)

Rufous-capped Antthrush *Formicarius colma*

Seen extremely well (even through the scope!) on the 16th at the Cachoeira da Onça in Presidente Figueiredo. Also heard on at least four subsequent dates.

*** Black-faced Antthrush** *Formicarius analis*

Heard only, on the 29th at the Ramal do Noca.

ANTPITTAS (GRALLARIDAE)

*** Amazonian Antpitta** *Hylopezus berlepschi*

Heard on the 30th at the Ramal do Noca.

*** Thrush-like Antpitta** *Myrmothera campanisona*

Heard on five dates.

*** Tapajos Antpitta** *Myrmothera subcanescens*

We heard at least four different birds during our morning's birding in the Bushbird forest near Jaci-Parana on

the 27th. Recently split from Thrush-like Antpitta, which it replaces east of the Madeira river in the southern Amazon.

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS (TYRANNIDAE)

Wing-barred Piprites *Piprites chloris*

Seen with mixed flocks on the 16th and 17th in Presidente Figueiredo, and heard on four or five other dates.

Yellow-crowned Tyrannulet *Tyrannulus elatus*

One seen in the river islands of the Anavilhanas archipelago on the 21st. Heard on four other dates.

Forest Elaenia *Myiopagis gaimardii*

Recorded on nine dates.

Grey Elaenia *Myiopagis caniceps*

A pair seen in the canopy of *terra firme* at the Bushbird site near Jaci-Parana on the 27th, and a male seen with a small mixed flock in *campinarana* along the Ramal da Prainha on the 28th.

Yellow-crowned Elaenia *Myiopagis flavivertex*

One seen well at lower levels of flooded forest at the Furo de Miracoera on the 15th, an inquisitive bird which would approach discreetly and perch near to us before flitting away again, over and over. We also heard this specialist of riverine habitats at Marchantaria island and in the *varzea* on the east bank of the Madeira opposite Humaitá.

Yellow-bellied Elaenia *Elaenia flavogaster*

At least four birds seen on the 25th at the Ramal da Campinas between Porto Velho and Humaitá.

Rufous-crowned Elaenia *Elaenia ruficeps*

One popped up at the Lajes Reserve in Presidente Figueiredo while we waited (in vain, as it turns out) for the White-naped Seedeater to appear.

White-lored Tyrannulet *Ornithion inerme*

Seen or heard on six dates.

Southern Beardless Tyrannulet *Camptostoma obsoletum*

Seen only on the 25th, which was something of a surprise for such a common, widespread bird!

River Tyrannulet *Serpophaga hypoleuca*

Several seen in early stage successional growth on a young river island in the Solimões upstream from Manaus on the 19th.

Mouse-coloured Tyrannulet *Phaeomyias murina*

One seen at the Ramal da Prainha on the 28th; also heard on two other dates.

Yellow Tyrannulet *Capsiempis flaveola*

Seen daily at the Ramal do Noca.

Lesser Wagtail-Tyrant *Stigmatura napensis*

We saw one on a young river islands in the Solimões upstream from Manaus on the 19th. HBW Alive had split this species into Lesser and Bahia Wagtail-Tyrants, with the former subspecies being restricted to Amazonian river islands, and the latter found in the arid *caatinga* of north-east Brazil. With HBW Alive being subsumed into Cornell's new Birds of the World project, I believe that none of the big checklists now recognize that split. However, it seems likely that Lesser Wagtail-Tyrant will eventually be split, perhaps even into three different species as the birds found in the Orinoco basin are vocally distinct from both the

Amazonian and *caatinga* forms.

Slender-footed Tyrannulet *Zimmerius gracilipes*

Seen on the 21st in the Anavilhanas archipelago.

Guianan Tyrannulet *Zimmerius acer*

Seen or heard on five dates in the Guianan Shield forests of Manaus and Presidente Figueiredo.

Ochre-bellied Flycatcher *Mionectes oleagineus*

Seen on the 17th and 18th in Presidente Figueiredo.

McConnell's Flycatcher *Mionectes macconnelli*

One seen at the Ducke Reserve in Manaus on the 13th, and seen again at the Cachoeira da Onça on the 16th.

Sepia-capped Flycatcher *Leptopogon amaurocephalus*

Seen over the trail in the Bushbird forest on the 27th, and two birds seen at the Ramal do Noca on the 29th.

Plain Inezia *Inezia inornata*

One seen on the 30th at the Ramal do Noca. Also sometimes called Plain Tyrannulet.

Amazonian Inezia *Inezia subflava*

A spritely pair seen in flooded shrubby edges in the Anavilhanas archipelago on the 21st. Sometimes called Amazonian Tyrannulet.

Snethlage's Tody-Tyrant *Hemitriccus minor*

Seen on the 21st inside flooded forest amidst the river islands of the Anavilhanas archipelago in the Rio Negro. The subspecies seen there is ssp. *pallens*, a vocally distinct taxon which is likely to be elevated as a full species-level taxon in the future.

undescribed Tody-Tyrant *Hemitriccus* sp. nov.

We saw this taxon, an undescribed species in the *Hemitriccus minor* complex, on the 24th at Linha C-01. The taxon occurs south of the Amazon on the west bank of the Madeira river. It is being described by Mario Cohn-Haft of INPA in Manaus, whose knowledge of the genus (and its close relatives) is unsurpassed.

Acre Tody-Tyrant *Hemitriccus cohnhafti*

After hearing several birds along the Ramal do Noca on the 28th, we invested more time on the bird the following day, managing good views of a vocalizing bird at low levels in dense tangles near the beginning of the track. Another recently-described species whose description was published in the New Species Special Volume of the Handbook of the Birds of the World in 2013.

White-eyed Tody-Tyrant *Hemitriccus zosterops*

An extremely flighty bird that only surrendered the briefest of views as it zoomed back and forth well above our heads, nearly in the subcanopy of *terra firme* along the main trail at the Ducke Reserve on the 13th. Also heard on the 22nd at the Ekobé Reserve, but the two calling birds melted away as soon as I called the group over to have a look at them.

*** Zimmer's Tody-Tyrant** *Hemitriccus minimus*

Heard only on the 27th while birding to the south of Jaci-Paraná.

Stripe-necked Tody-Tyrant *Hemitriccus striaticollis*

One seen on the 25th in shrubby vegetation bordering a palm swamp at the Ramal das Campinas.

Pelzeln's Tody-Tyrant *Hemitriccus inornatus*

We saw one in the stunted *campinarana* forest at the Mari Mari reserve in Presidente Figueiredo on the 17th.

A rare and poorly known endemic that is restricted to the Rio Negro basin. It was first discovered in the 1830s, but not described to science for another 40 years, by which time the bird was “lost” again. It was finally rediscovered in 1992 less than 50 kilometres north of Manaus, the largest city in the Amazon basin. Now that its voice is known, it has been shown to be an uncommon but extremely unobtrusive resident of stunted forests on white sands on the right bank of the Rio Negro (including as close as just 20 kilometres north of downtown Manaus!).

Short-tailed Pygmy-Tyrant *Myiornis ecaudatus*

Seen or heard on three dates, including a nest-building bird seen low at the side of the road along the Ramal da Prainha near Jaci-Paraná on the 28th. Tied for the title of the world’s smallest passerine.

*** Long-crested Pygmy-Tyrant** *Lophotriccus eulophotes*

Heard on two dates at the Ramal do Noca, but not seen.

Helmeted Pygmy-Tyrant *Lophotriccus galeatus*

One seen in the Bushbird forest on the 27th.

Buff-cheeked Tody-Flycatcher *Poecilotriccus senex*

We saw this poorly-known species in the dense, stunted *campinarana* along the Ramal da Prainha west of Jaci-Paraná on the 28th, but only once we pushed our way a short distance into the forest as the bird refused to come out to the edge. This species is restricted to the Madeira – Tapajós interfluvium in the Brazilian Amazon, where it shows a strong preference for stunted forest on sandy soils, and similarly structured flooded *igapó* forest along blackwater rivers. Remarkably, the species was “lost” for more than 160 years after it was first discovered in 1830 by J. Natterer, before being re-found in the early 1990s at the type locality. Further fieldwork between the Madeira and Tapajós has found the species at a number of locations.

Rusty-fronted Tody-Flycatcher *Poecilotriccus latirostris*

Seen on the 29th at the Ramal do Noca, and heard there on the two following dates.

Spotted Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum maculatum*

Seen or heard on nine dates.

Painted Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum pictum*

After hearing them on three dates in Manaus and Presidente Figueiredo, we finally saw a pair of these lovely little canopy flycatchers in the tall forest along the Ramal do Tucumanduba on the 18th.

Yellow-browed Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum chrysocrotaphum*

One seen on the 22nd in *terra firme* near Novo Airão.

Rufous Twistwing *Cnipodectes superrufus*

Seen well on the 29th in a stand of *Guadua* bamboo along a dry stream bed on the Ramal do Noca. This odd flycatcher has quite an interesting history: first collected in 1990, it went unidentified until noticed in 2002 sitting in a drawer in a museum in Peru, when a researcher realized that it must be an undescribed species. Five years later the Rufous Twistwing was officially described. Upon reading the description, an ornithologist based in Acre realized that he had mist-netted the Rufous Twistwing at least nine times from 1998 to 2006 in a forest patch in the state capital, Rio Branco!

*** Olivaceous Flatbill** *Rhynchocyclus olivaceus*

Heard in Presidente Figueiredo on the 17th.

Yellow-olive Flycatcher *Tolmomyias sulphureus*

Sometimes called Yellow-olive Flatbill. We saw the *insignis* race, a specialist of riverine habitats in the Amazon basin, on the 15th at the Furo de Miracoera. Two days later we observed one of the Guianan forms (either *cherriei* or *duidae*) on the 17th at Hotel Um Lugar in Presidente Figueiredo. This widely distributed

flycatcher is quite variable across its range, and the vocal and plumage differences suggest that more than one species is involved.

Yellow-margined Flycatcher *Tolmomyias assimilis*

Singles seen on the 14th at the MUSA tower in Manaus, and on the 18th at the Ramal do Tucumanduba. The IOC checklist splits *Tolmomyias assimilis* into two species: with *Tolmomyias flavotectus* of NW South America and Central America retaining the English name Yellow-margined Flycatcher, and the Amazonian *Tolmomyias assimilis* being called Zimmer's Flatbill. The Handbook of the Birds of the World, on the other hand, suggests that the Central American birds should be called Yellow-winged Flycatcher, with the Amazonian forms remaining as Yellow-margined Flycatcher.

*** Grey-crowned Flycatcher** *Tolmomyias poliocephalus*

Heard on a couple of dates, but not seen.

White-crested Spadebill *Platyrinchus platyrhynchos*

One seen inside the forest at the MUSA reserve in Manaus on the 13th. Heard on three subsequent dates.

Euler's Flycatcher *Lathrotriccus euleri*

Seen on the 30th at the Ramal do Noca.

Fuscou Flycatcher *Cnemotriccus fuscatus*

One seen on Marchantaria island on the 19th, heard on two other dates.

Amazonian Black-Tyrant *Knipolegus poecilocercus*

A female seen briefly inside dense flooded forest in the Anavilhanas archipelago on the 23rd.

Riverside Tyrant *Knipolegus orenocensis*

It took a bit of searching, but we did find a male on a young river island in the Solimões on the 19th.

Drab Water-Tyrant *Ochthornis littoralis*

At least a half dozen birds seen along the Rio Branco on our way to the Bushbird forest on the 27th, and a pair seen at the Andirá river north of Rio Branco (the capital of the state of Acre, not to be confused with the river mentioned above) on the afternoon of July 1st.

Grey Monjita *Xolmis cinereus*

Two birds seen on the 25th in the native grasslands along the Ramal das Campinas.

White-headed Marsh-Tyrant *Arundinicola leucocephala*

Two pairs seen at a roadside marsh between Porto Velho and Humaitá on the 25th.

Long-tailed Tyrant *Colonia colonus*

Three birds seen on the 29th on the Ramal do Noca.

*** Piratic Flycatcher** *Legatus leucophaeus*

Heard on the 14th, our only record.

Rusty-margined Flycatcher *Myiozetetes cayanensis*

Widespread; recorded on ten dates.

Social Flycatcher *Myiozetetes similis*

Seen on six dates.

Dusky-chested Flycatcher *Myiozetetes luteiventris*

One seen on the 25th was our only record of the species.

Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus*
Recorded on fourteen dates.

Lesser Kiskadee *Philohydor lictor*
Seen only on two dates.

Yellow-throated Flycatcher *Conopias parvus*
Seen or heard on nine dates.

Three-striped Flycatcher *Conopias trivirgatus*
Seen on the 15th in flooded forest at the Furo de Miracoera. Also heard on July 1st in Acre.

Streaked Flycatcher *Myiodynastes maculatus*
Seen or heard on eight dates.

Boat-billed Flycatcher *Megarynchus pitangua*
Seen or heard on four dates, including a pair seen well on the 25th in the *varzea* forest opposite Humaitá.

Sulphury Flycatcher *Tyrannopsis sulphurea*
One seen on the 20th at a small palm swamp alongside the road on the Ramal do Pau Rosa north of Manaus turned out to be our only sighting of the species.

Variegated Flycatcher *Empidonomus varius*
Recorded on eight dates.

Crowned Slaty Flycatcher *Griseotyrannus aurantioatrocristatus*
Seen on four dates. This species has the distinction of having the longest scientific name of all the birds.

White-throated Kingbird *Tyrannus albogularis*
We had small numbers of these on the 15th and the 19th, the two dates we spent birding the flooded forests along the Solimões / Amazon river. The species typically winters in significant numbers in the central Amazon, where they show a preference for young river islands, floating meadows, and other open wetland habitats.

Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus*
Common, widespread, and recorded on every day of the tour.

Fork-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus savana*
Seen on four dates in small numbers.

Greyish Mourner *Rhytipterna simplex*
Recorded on seven dates. Mostly heard, but seen on the 18th at the Ramal do Tucumanduba.

Pale-bellied Mourner *Rhytipterna immunda*
We saw this scarce specialist of white sand forests in the dense *campinarana* along the Ramal da Prainha to the west of Jaci-Paraná on the 28th.

White-rumped Sirystes *Sirystes albocinereus*
A pair seen at the Ramal do Noca on the 29th, and heard there the two following dates. In the past, there was just a single monotypic *Sirystes* genus, but there are now four different species of sirystes recognized. This species occurs in the western Amazon to the base of the Andes, from Venezuela south to northern Bolivia.

Todd's Sirystes *Sirystes subcanescens*

Three birds seen from the MUSA canopy tower in Manaus on the 14th. This species is restricted to the Guianan Shield.

Short-crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus ferox*

Seen or (mostly) heard on six dates.

Brown-crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus tyrannulus*

One seen on the 28th at the Ramal da Prainha.

Large-headed Flatbill *Ramphotricon megacephalum*

We recorded this bamboo specialist on two dates at the Ramal do Noca, where we saw a single on the 30th.

Rufous-tailed Flatbill *Ramphotricon ruficauda*

Great views of a pair at the Ekobe Reserve in Novo Airão on the 22nd.

Dusky-tailed Flatbill *Ramphotricon fuscicauda*

One seen and at least four others heard on the 29th at the Ramal do Noca, where we heard the species on each of the following two dates. This specialist of bamboo thickets and forest with dense vine tangles is patchily distributed across the southern Amazon. It is easy to overlook if you don't know its voice!

Cinnamon Attila *Attila cinnamomeus*

Two birds seen in the flooded forest in river islands of the Anavilhanas archipelago on the 21st.

Citron-bellied Attila *Attila citrineiventris*

We had really excellent views of a responsive bird in the *campinarana* along the Ramal da Prainha on the 28th, where we also heard two other individuals.

White-eyed Attila *Attila bolivianus*

It took a little while, but eventually we managed to call in a vocalizing bird in the flooded forest at the Furo de Miracoera near Itacoatiara on the 15th. Also heard on the 19th along the boardwalk at Lago Janauari.

*** Bright-rumped Attila** *Attila spadiceus*

The most common and widespread Attila during the tour. Heard on nine dates, but we actually never made a significant effort to see one, as it wasn't a target bird for anyone in the group.

COTINGAS (COTINGIDAE)

Guianan Cock-of-the-Rock *Rupicola rupicola*

We saw a half dozen males at the well-known lek site the Marí Marí in Presidente Figueiredo after lunch on the 17th. Activity at the lek really doesn't ramp up to full speed until August and September, so we were well pleased with the great views we had of the birds lounging around the lek arena in the "off season".

Guianan Red-Cotinga *Phoenicircus carnifex*

We saw a female not far from the footbridge on the main trail at the Cachoeira da Onça on the 16th. Two days later we saw at least two individuals, and heard one or two others, along the track at the Ramal do Tucumanduba in Presidente Figueiredo.

Spangled Cotinga *Cotinga cayana*

Two male seen at a fruiting tree at the Ramal do Pau Rosa north of Manaus on the morning of the 20th, and another male seen on the afternoon of the 21st along a blackwater tributary of the Rio Negro downstream from Novo Airão. Also heard in Acre.

Screaming Piha *Lipaugus vociferans*

Certainly one of the most memorable and evocative voices of the Amazon. We recorded the species (mostly

by voice, but seen on at least two dates) on twelve dates.

Black-faced Cotinga *Conioptilon mcilhennyi*

Recorded daily at the Ramal do Noca near Rio Branco, where we saw at least five individuals on the 29th. Restricted to the southwestern Amazon in Acre and adjacent SE Peru and N Bolivia. Quite common in eastern Acre at the Ramal do Noca and several other sites.

Pompadour Cotinga *Xipholena punicea*

Males seen on three dates, including from the MUSA tower in Manaus on the 14th and also at the Cachoeira da Onça in Presidente Figueiredo on the 16th, where we saw at least three males displaying in the canopy and subcanopy for a female.

Bare-necked Fruitcrow *Gymnoderus foetidus*

One seen on the afternoon of the 14th outside of Itacoatiara. Two seen at the Ramal da Prainha near Jaci-Paraná on the 28th.

Capuchinbird *Perissocephalus tricolor*

One seen relatively briefly along the main trail at the Adolpho Ducke Reserve near Manaus on the 13th. Much better views of at least three birds in the *campinarana* forest at the Cachoeira da Onça reserve in Presidente Figueiredo on the 16th.

MANAKINS (PIPRIDAE)

*** Dwarf Tyrant-Manakin** *Tyranneutes stolzmanni*

Heard on six dates at sites west of the Rio Negro, and sites south of the Amazon.

Tiny Tyrant-Manakin *Tyranneutes virescens*

Recorded on several dates in the Guianan Shield forests around Manaus, Itacoatiara and Presidente Figueiredo.

Sulphur-bellied Tyrant-Manakin *Neopelma sulphureiventer*

We saw one by a dried-up streambed at a small bridge on the Ramal do Noca on the 29th.

Saffron-crested Tyrant-Manakin *Neopelma chrysocephalum*

One finally seen after quite a bit of effort in the stunted *campinarana* forest near the Cock-of-the-Rock lek at the Mari Mari reserve on the 17th.

White-throated Manakin *Corapipo gutturalis*

Encountered along the forest trail at Hotel Um Lugar in Presidente Figueiredo, and at Tucumanduba as well.

Black Manakin *Xenopipo atronitens*

A male seen ever so briefly in some very dense *campinarana* at the Ramal da Prainha on the 28th.

Blue-crowned Manakin *Lepidothrix coronata*

We had nice views of at least one male and a female or two in a stretch of secondary forest along the loop trail at the Ekobe Reserve near Novo Airão on the morning of the 22nd.

*** Snow-capped Manakin** *Lepidothrix nattereri*

Heard on the 27th near Jaci-Paraná.

White-fronted Manakin *Lepidothrix serena*

Seen only on the 13th during our morning birding session at the Adolpho Ducke Reserve in Manaus.

White-bearded Manakin *Manacus manacus*

One seen on the 28th at the Ramal da Prainha.

Wire-tailed Manakin *Pipra filicauda*

After only hearing the species in the river islands of the Anavilhanas archipelago on the 21st, we returned to the same area on the 23rd specifically to find these stunning little manakins. A short wait in the right spot did the trick, producing very nice views of at least two males that interspersed bouts of active displaying with quieter periods during which they sat still on certain perches.

White-crowned Manakin *Pseudopipra pipra*

A male seen in the forest at the Ekobé Reserve in Novo Airão proved to be our only sighting. White-crowned Manakin was previously classified as *Pipra pipra*, and more recently as *Dixiphia pipra*, but it is now placed in its own monotypic genus.

Golden-headed Manakin *Ceratopipra erythrocephala*

Seen on three dates in the Manaus and Presidente Figueiredo areas.

Red-headed Manakin *Ceratopipra rubrocapilla*

Seen only on the 26th, and heard on the 27th, with both records coming at sites to the south of the Amazon, where it replaces the preceding species.

ROYAL FLYCATCHER & ALLIES

*** Amazonian Royal Flycatcher** *Onychorhynchus coronatus*

Heard on the 30th at the Ramal do Noca, a bird vocalizing from well off the track.

Whiskered Flycatcher *Myiobius barbatus*

Seen on two dates in the Presidente Figueiredo area, including a nest building bird on the 16th at the Cachoeira da Onça. Some checklists use the somewhat awkward English name of Whiskered Myiobius, though I supposed it is no more awkward than Chlorophonia, Tityra, or any other generic name which is more established as a common name.

*** Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher** *Terenotriccus erythrurus*

Heard on four dates, but remarkably it went unseen during the tour.

TITYRAS & ALLIES (TITYRIDAE)

Black-crowned Tityra *Tityra inquisitor*

Seen on four dates, including multiple pairs observed at the Ramal do Noca in Acre.

Black-tailed Tityra *Tityra cayana*

Seen on five dates, all north of the Amazon in the Manaus, Presidente Figueiredo and Novo Airão areas.

Varzea Schiffornis *Schiffornis major*

At least two birds seen in the flooded forests at the Furo de Miracoera near Itacoatiara on the 15th.

*** Guianan Schiffornis** *Schiffornis olivacea*

Heard and glimpsed, but not really seen at all, on the 17th at the Mari Mari Reserve. Sometimes called Olivaceous Schiffornis.

Brown-winged Schiffornis *Schiffornis turdina*

Our only sighting came in the *terra firme* forest at the Ramal Novo Horizonte west of Humaitá on the 26th. Like the above species, the Brown-winged Schiffornis was one of six different species that arose from the split of the Thrush-like Schiffornis a few years ago.

Cinereous Mourner *Laniocera hypopyrra*

Seen on the 13th at the Ducke Reserve in Manaus, on the 25th at the Ramal das Campinas (in a remnant stand of riparian forest, where we had excellent views), and on the 26th at the Ramal Novo Horizonte near Humaitá.

Green-backed Becard *Pachyramphus viridis*

We saw a pair in the canopy along the Ramal do Noca on the 29th. The birds we saw are the *xanthogenys* race, which is sometimes split as a separate species and called Yellow-cheeked Becard.

Cinereous Becard *Pachyramphus rufus*

Lovely views of male in the orchards at the Hotel Um Lugar in Presidente Figueiredo on the 16th.

Chestnut-crowned Becard *Pachyramphus castaneus*

One seen on the 19th at Marchantaria island in the Solimões was our only record.

White-winged Becard *Pachyramphus polychopterus*

Recorded on five dates, though our best sighting came on the 25th in the *varzea* near Humaitá.

Black-capped Becard *Pachyramphus marginatus*

One seen on the 14th with a mixed species flock in the canopy at the MUSA tower in Manaus.

Glossy-backed Becard *Pachyramphus surinamus*

We saw a male at the MUSA canopy tower in Manaus on the 14th. This low-density species is often quite difficult to find in its range (mostly the Guianan Shield, but also a few scattered localities to the south of the Amazon) due to its canopy habits and vocal similarities to the more common Todd's Sirystes.

Pink-throated Becard *Pachyramphus minor*

A pair seen at the Ramal do Pau Rosa – near a nest site they seem to use annually – on the 20th.

VIREOS (VIREONIDAE)

*** Rufous-browed Peppershrike** *Cyclarhis gujanensis*

Heard on eleven different dates, but remarkably we did not see this widespread species during the tour.

Slaty-capped Shrike-Vireo *Vireolanius leucotis*

Seen with a mixed flock in the canopy at the Hotel Um Lugar on the morning of the 17th. Also heard on a couple of dates close to Manaus.

Chivi Vireo *Vireo chivi*

Seen or heard on eleven dates. This South American form of Red-eyed Vireo was recently split.

*** Grey-chested Greenlet** *Hylophilus semicinereus*

Heard on three dates.

Ashy-headed Greenlet *Hylophilus pectoralis*

One seen at the roadside on the Transamazônica highway on the east bank of the Madeira opposite Humaitá on the afternoon of the 25th.

Dusky-capped Greenlet *Pachysylvia hypoxantha*

Recorded on four dates, west of the Rio Negro and west of the Madeira to the south of the Amazon.

Buff-cheeked Greenlet *Pachysylvia muscicapina*

Seen or heard on five dates in the Guianan Shield forests around Manaus and Presidente Figueiredo. A pair seen well on the 14th with a mixed flock at the MUSA canopy tower in Manaus, which must be one of the

best places in the world to see this species at such close range.

Tawny-crowned Greenlet *Tunchiornis ochraceiceps*

We saw one with an understorey flock on the 17th at the Hotel Um Lugar. HBW Alive suggested that the Tawny-crowned Greenlet should best be treated as two or perhaps even three species, based on vocal and plumage differences. The *luteifrons* ssp. that we saw in Presidente Figueiredo is a Guianan Shield endemic, and if treated as a full species would be called Olive-crowned Greenlet. Clements and eBird have moved the Tawny-crowned Greenlet into its own genus, *Tunchiornis*, a reasonable enough suggestion based on field observations alone (the voice is much different from *Hylophilus* / *Pachysylvia* greenlets in general, as are its habits). A genetic analysis of the greenlets found that *Hylophilus* contained three distinct groups, and accordingly the scrub-dwelling greenlets (Rufous-crowned, Grey-eyed, Scrub Greenlet, etc.) were retained in *Hylophilus*, while the canopy-dwelling greenlets (Dusky-capped, Buff-cheeked, Golden-fronted, etc.) were transferred to *Pachysylvia*, and the Tawny-crowned Greenlet was assigned the newly-created *Tunchiornis*.

JAYS (CORVIDAE)

*** Plush-crested Jay** *Cyanocorax chrysops*

We heard the species in the *campinarana* of the Ramal da Prainha on the 28th, but the birds refused to approach in response to playback. The birds here belong to the *diesingii* subspecies, a disjunctly distributed race found in the south-central Amazon between the Madeira and Tapajós rivers, where it inhabits stunted *campinaranas* and similar habitats on sandy soils. This form is typically quite shy and reclusive, and our encounter (or lack thereof, I suppose) proved this quite well.

Campina Jay *Cyanocorax hafferi*

We had a fabulous encounter with these birds – at least 20 in total – in a stretch of mid-stature *campinarana* on very sandy soil on the west bank of the Madeira at the Linha C-30 on the afternoon of the 24th. The birds appeared on cue right where we hoped to find them, and proceeded to put on something of a show, feeding at the forest edge and even dropping down onto the track itself, apparently to ingest minerals. A species with a fascinating history: first seen in 2002 by Mario Cohn-Haft, and formally described to science in 2013, the discovery of a large, distinctive jay (one that occurs just a few kilometres from a major paved highway, no less) is certainly one of the most remarkable ornithological findings of the 21st century thus far. The species seems to have a patchy distribution south of the Amazon and west of the Madeira – specifically between the Purus and the Madeira rivers – in areas of transitional *campinarana* between *campinas* and taller forest on sandy soils. Strangely, although it was described as a species-level taxon, only HBW has recognized it as a full species. Clements and IOC both treat it as a subspecies of the Azure-naped Jay *C. heilprini*.

SWALLOWS & MARTINS (HIRUNDINIDAE)

White-winged Swallow *Tachycineta albiventer*

Recorded on eleven dates.

Grey-breasted Martin *Progne chalybea*

Seen on seven dates.

Brown-chested Martin *Progne tapera*

Seen on just three dates.

White-banded Swallow *Atticora fasciata*

We saw this sleek, striking swallow of Amazonian rivers on the 27th along the Rio Branco near Jaci-Parana (at least 30 birds total), and again on July 1st at the Andirá river in eastern Acre.

White-thighed Swallow *Neochelidon tibialis*

Three birds seen in the parking lot at the Ducke Reserve in Manaus on the 13th was our only sighting.

Southern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*

Seen on ten dates.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Seen only on the 19th during our day birding the white water river islands on the Solimões.

DONACOBIUS (DONACOBIIDAE)

Black-capped Donacobius *Donacobius atricapilla*

We saw this charismatic marsh-dweller of uncertain taxonomic affinities in small numbers on three dates.

WRENS (TROGLODYTIDAE)

Thrush-like Wren *Campylorhamphus turdinus*

Seen or heard on four dates.

Moustached Wren *Pheugopedius genibarbis*

Seen or heard on six dates, south of the Amazon and west of the Madeira.

Coraya Wren *Pheugopedius coraya*

We saw this boldly patterned wren as it skulked in undergrowth at the roadside at the Ramal do Pau Rosa north of the Manaus on the 20th.

Buff-breasted Wren *Cantorchilus leucotis*

Recorded on six or seven dates.

House Wren *Troglodytes aedon*

Widespread and recorded on fourteen dates. The official Brazilian checklist maintained by the CBRO splits this as Southern House Wren *Troglodytes musculus*.

Scaly-breasted Wren *Microcerculus marginatus*

After a near miss with a singing bird in the Bushbird forest on the 27th, we managed to see one a few days later at the Ramal do Noca in eastern Acre. The IOC calls this species Southern Nightingale Wren.

Wing-banded Wren *Microcerculus bambla*

Moments after enjoying a great encounter with a Musician Wren (see below), we called in a responsive individual of this species in *terra firme* forest at the Cachoeira da Onça in Presidente Figueiredo on the 16th. As is often the case when the species responds to imitations or playback, the bird was quite excited and took a while to settle down and stay still in the understorey, but once it did we all managed excellent views, taking in the startling contrast between the bright white wing stripe and the darkness of the forest floor while the bird belted out its ringing song.

Musician Wren *Cyphorhinus arada*

What a performance from this, the most renowned songster of the Amazon, on the 14th at the Cachoeira da Onça reserve in Presidente Figueiredo. We watched as it sang from atop its favoured podium in the *terra firme* for quite some time, even allowing the photographers to get some terrific shots in spite of the low light conditions. The bird even returned a bit later on to run off the Wing-banded Wren that came in to sing nearby! A study published in 2016 showed that there are actually multiple species-level taxa within the Musician Wren as we currently know it, six of them to be exact; the nominate form of the Guianan Shield might retain the original English name if they are split in the future.

GNATCATCHERS (POLIOPTILIDAE)

Collared Gnatwren *Microbates collaris*

Always quite a difficult bird to actually see in the Guianan Shield forests around Manaus and Presidente Figueiredo. We could do no better than a couple of quick glimpses on the 16th at the Cachoeira da Onça.

Trilling Gnatwren *Ramphocaenus melanurus*

Seen with a mixed flock at the Cachoeira da Onça on the 16th. This one was not listed on our checklist, arising from a split of the Long-billed Gnatwren which has been adopted by the major checklists as of early 2020.

*** Chattering Gnatwren** *Ramphocaenus sticturus*

One heard on the 30th at the Ramal do Noca. Like the above species, this was split from the Long-billed Gnatwren in 2019 or 2020, depending on which list you like to follow.

*** Tropical Gnatcatcher** *Poliophtila plumbea*

Heard at the Furo de Miracoera on the 15th, but not seen.

THRUSHES (TURDIDAE)

Pale-breasted Thrush *Turdus leucomelas*

Seen on two dates on the grounds of our hotel in Novo Airão.

Creamy-bellied Thrush *Turdus amaurochalinus*

Seen at the Ramal do Noca on July 1st.

Black-billed Thrush *Turdus ignobilis*

One seen at the Ramal do Noca on the 30th.

Campina Thrush *Turdus arthuri*

A recent split of Black-billed Thrush (into 2 species in Clements / eBird, 3 species in IOC), means that the birds we saw on the 17th at the Lajes Reserve in Presidente Figueiredo have been split and now refer to Campina Thrush.

Hauxwell's Thrush *Turdus hauxwelli*

Steve saw one along the Rio Branco near Jaci-Parana on the 27th. We all saw another bird two days later at the Ramal do Noca.

*** Varzea Thrush** *Turdus sanchezorum*

A singing bird heard just before dusk, by the first wooden bridge along the Transamazonica highway east of Humaitá on the east bank of the Madeira, on the afternoon of the 25th.

White-necked Thrush *Turdus albicollis*

One seen on the 13th, along the main trail at the Adolpho Ducke Reserve in Manaus.

OLD WORLD SPARROWS (PASSERIDAE)

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Seen on eight dates in urban areas.

SISKINS & ALLIES (FRINGILLIDAE)

Plumbeous Euphonia *Euphonia plumbea*

A pair seen well at the Lajes Reserve in Presidente Figueiredo on the 17th. We also saw a female at the Ramal do Pau Rosa on the 20th, which came as a bit of a surprise as I'd never seen the species there before.

Purple-throated Euphonia *Euphonia chlorotica*

An immature male seen on the 23rd in Novo Airão.

White-lored Euphonia *Euphonia chrysopasta*

Seen on three dates. Also called Golden-bellied Euphonia.

White-vented Euphonia *Euphonia minuta*

A male seen on the 20th at the Ramal do Pau Rosa, another seen on the 28th at the Ramal da Prainha, and two males seen on July 1st at the Ramal do Noca.

Rufous-bellied Euphonia *Euphonia rufiventris*

Seen or heard on seven dates at sites west of the Rio Negro, and south of the Amazon.

NEW WORLD WARBLERS (PARULIDAE)

Buff-rumped Warbler *Myiothlypis fulvicauda*

One seen at a streambed on the 29th at the Ramal do Noca.

*** Riverbank Warbler** *Myiothlypis rivularis*

Heard at the small river that runs through the Cachoeira da Onça reserve in Presidente Figueiredo.

NEW WORLD BLACKBIRDS (ICTERIDAE)

Red-breasted Meadowlark *Leistes militaris*

Seen daily once we started birding south of the Amazon, from Porto Velho onward to Acre. Previously known as Red-breasted Blackbird, the species is sometimes placed in the *Sturnella* genus.

Crested Oropendola *Psarocolius decumanus*

Seen on six dates.

Yellow-rumped Cacique *Cacicus cela*

Seen on fourteen dates. We saw hundreds of them on the 14th at the MUSA tower in Manaus, and as they streamed into the town square in Itacoatiara, and again on the 21st as huge flocks streamed across the Rio Negro in the Anavilhanas archipelago.

Red-rumped Cacique *Cacicus haemorrhous*

At least ten birds seen from the MUSA canopy tower in Manaus on the 14th.

Orange-backed Troupial *Icterus croconotus*

Seen on the 25th near Humaitá, and heard on the 19th and 29th.

Epaulet Oriole *Icterus cayanensis*

One seen at the Lajes Reserve in Presidente Figueiredo on the 17th. We saw the *chrysocephalus* form, which has in the past been split and called Moriche Oriole, named thusly in consideration of its strong preference for *Mauritia* palm swamps.

Giant Cowbird *Molothrus oryzivorus*

Seen on three dates.

Shiny Cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis*

Seen on eight dates, but never in particularly large numbers.

Velvet-fronted Grackle *Lamprosar tanagrinus*

We had just a single sighting of this enigmatic blackbird of Amazonian riparian habitats. We saw a small

group of five birds near the bridge over the Andirá river north of Rio Branco on the afternoon of July 1st.

Oriole Blackbird *Gymnomystax mexicanus*

This large and spectacular blackbird, found in the Orinoco basin and along the large rivers of the Amazon basin, is regularly found in the river islands at Marchantaria upstream from Manaus on the Solimões. They rove around in (mostly small) flocks, typically foraging at low levels, where they feed on just about anything they can find. We saw a dozen of them at Marchantaria on the 19th.

Yellow-hooded Blackbird *Chrysomus icterocephalus*

Although not quite as spectacular a bird as the preceding species, seeing large flocks of these colourful blackbirds is a great part of the river islands experience when visiting Marchantaria. We counted roughly 150 birds in the flooded meadows and grassy edges on the 19th.

BANANAQUIT (COEREVIDAE)

Bananaquit *Coereba flaveola*

Recorded on six dates.

NEW WORLD SPARROWS (PASSERILLIDAE)

Grassland Sparrow *Ammodramus humeralis*

Quite numerous in the native grasslands along the Ramal das Campinas on the 25th.

Yellow-browed Sparrow *Ammodramus aurifrons*

A common and widespread sparrow of the Amazonian lowlands, particularly near water. Recorded on eleven dates.

TANAGERS & ALLIES (THRAUPIDAE)

Red-capped Cardinal *Paroaria gularis*

Seen on four dates in riparian habitats.

Black-faced Tanager *Schistochlamys melanopis*

Seen only on the 25th in the native grasslands on the Ramal das Campinas between Porto Velho and Humaitá, where we had at least eight birds during our morning visit. Not strictly an Amazonian species, the species tends to occur only around the fringes of the Amazon basin, making greater inroads in the patchily distributed savanna habitats found in the southern and eastern Amazon basin.

Magpie Tanager *Cissopis leverianus*

Pairs seen daily on the Ramal do Noca in eastern Acre.

*** Red-billed Pied Tanager** *Lamprospiza melanoleuca*

Heard on the 13th and 14th in Manaus.

Hooded Tanager *Nemosia pileata*

Seen only on the 25th in the *varzea* forest on the east bank of the Madeira opposite Humaitá, where we saw at least ten birds in our relatively short afternoon session!

Flame-crested Tanager *Tachyphonus cristatus*

Seen on three dates.

Fulvous-crested Tanager *Tachyphonus surinamus*

Seen on three dates in the Guianan Shield forests around Manaus and Presidente Figueiredo.

White-shouldered Tanager *Tachyphonus luctuosus*

Only seen on the 14th outside Itacoatiara, on the 21st near Novo Airão, and on the 1st at the Ramal do Noca.

White-lined Tanager *Tachyphonus rufus*

A male seen on the 30th at the Ramal do Noca.

Red-shouldered Tanager *Tachyphonus phoenicius*

A specialty of white sand *campinas* and other associated habitats. At least five birds seen at the Lajes Reserve in Presidente Figueiredo on the 17th, and a pair seen at the Ramal da Prainha on the 28th.

*** Fulvous Shrike-Tanager** *Lanio fulvus*

Heard on two dates near Manaus and Presidente Figueiredo.

Silver-beaked Tanager *Ramphocelus carbo*

Common and widespread, recorded on 14 dates.

Blue-grey Tanager *Thraupis episcopus*

Common and widespread, recorded on 15 dates.

Palm Tanager *Thraupis palmarum*

Common, widespread, and recorded nearly every day of the trip.

Turquoise Tanager *Tangara mexicana*

Seen by the group on three dates, with leader-only records on four other dates!

Paradise Tanager *Tangara chilensis*

Seen on seven dates, including daily at the Ramal do Noca.

Spotted Tanager *Tangara punctata*

Seen on three dates in the Manaus and Presidente Figueiredo area, where the species is fairly common.

*** Dotted Tanager** *Tangara varia*

This rather scarce Amazonian tanager was heard on the 13th at the Ducke Reserve, and the 17th at Hotel Um Lugar, but we didn't manage to see either bird.

Masked Tanager *Tangara nigrocincta*

Our only sighting came on the 29th at the Ramal do Noca, where we saw three birds.

Opal-rumped Tanager *Tangara velia*

Small parties seen on four dates.

Opal-crowned Tanager *Tangara callophrys*

We had at least three birds at a fruiting tree alongside the Ramal do Noca on the 29th. In Brazil, this west Amazonian tanager is restricted to Acre and the western portion of the state of Amazonas.

Swallow Tanager *Tersina viridis*

Seen on just a couple of dates.

Black-faced Dacnis *Dacnis lineata*

Seen on four dates.

Yellow-bellied Dacnis *Dacnis flaviventer*

Good views of a pair on the 21st in the Anavilhanas archipelago, and we saw the species there again on the 23rd.

Blue Dacnis *Dacnis cayana*

Common, seen on twelve dates.

Short-billed Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes nitidus*

Seen only on the 26th, in a small clearing along the forest trail at the Ramal Novo Horizonte, where we had a pair. This scarce little tanager occurs widely across the Amazon basin, but tends to be rare to uncommon just about everywhere.

Purple Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes caeruleus*

Seen on five dates, almost always in pairs.

Red-legged Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes cyaneus*

We saw females on the 17th at Hotel Um Lugar, on the 22nd at the Ekobe Reserve, and we had four birds at the Ramal da Prainha west of Jaci-Paraná on the 28th.

Green Honeycreeper *Chlorophanes spiza*

Seen on six dates.

Yellow-backed Tanager *Hemithraupis flavicollis*

A pair seen on the 26th at Ramal Novo Horizonte near Humaitá.

Chestnut-vented Conebill *Conirostrum speciosum*

A couple of pairs seen in *varzea* forest near Humaitá on the afternoon of the 25th; also seen on the 30th at the Ramal do Noca.

Bicoloured Conebill *Conirostrum bicolor*

Seen in double digits on the river islands at Marchantaria on the 19th.

Pearly-breasted Conebill *Conirostrum margaritae*

Not nearly as common as the preceding species, but we saw at least one pair at Marchantaria on the 19th.

Black-masked Finch *Coryphas piza melanotis*

We saw a male in the native grasslands at the Ramal das Campinas between Porto Velho and Humaitá on the morning of the 25th. While this attractive finch is mostly found in the *cerrado* and similar grassland habitats of central Brazil, Bolivia and Paraguay, it has at least two disjunctly distributed populations in Amazonian savannas.

Orange-fronted Yellow Finch *Sicalis columbiana*

Seen on three dates around Manaus and Novo Airão.

Wedge-tailed Grass-Finch *Emberizoides herbícola*

Seen only on the 25th in the native grasslands at the Ramal das Campinas.

*** Slate-coloured Grosbeak** *Saltator grossus*

Heard on the 18th at the Ramal do Tucumanduba.

Buff-throated Saltator *Saltator maximus*

Seen on the 29th and 30th at the Ramal do Noca, and heard on a couple of dates earlier in the tour.

Greyish Saltator *Saltator coerulescens*

Seen only at the Ramal do Noca in Acre, where we had them on two dates. The CBRO (Brazilian Ornithological Committee) had, for a short time, split the Amazonian *azarae* form of the species and called it Amazonian Greyish Saltator, but lumped it back into *S. coerulescens* in 2016. HBW Alive also suggested

that the species might best be split into three different species based on geographic groups from Middle America, the Caribbean, and the lowlands of the Amazon and eastern South America.

Blue-black Grassquit *Volatinia jacarina*

Recorded on six dates.

Plumbeous Seedeater *Sporophila plumbea*

We counted six birds in the native grasslands along the Ramal das Campinas between Porto Velho and Humaitá on the 25th.

Wing-barred Seedeater *Sporophila americana*

Males seen on the 18th as we returned to Manaus from Presidente Figueiredo, and on the 25th in the *varzea* across the Madeira river from Humaitá turned out to be our only sightings of the species.

Lined Seedeater *Sporophila lineola*

We saw between 15 and 20 individuals during our morning in the river islands at Marchantaria, and another pair near Humaitá on the 26th.

Double-collared Seedeater *Sporophila caerulescens*

A dozen or so seen on the 25th in the native grasslands along the Ramal das Campinas.

Chestnut-bellied Seedeater *Sporophila castaneiventris*

Seen on seven dates.

Chestnut-bellied Seed-Finch *Oryzoborus angolensis*

A pair seen near the beginning of the Ramal do Noca on July 1st. The species is sometimes included in the genus *Sporophila*.

CARDINAL GROSBEAKS (CARDINALIDAE)

Rose-breasted Chat *Granatallus pelzelni*

We saw a male in a stand of bamboo in the *terra firme* forest we birded near the Rio Branco south of Jaci-Paraná on the 27th, while we waited for a response from the Rondonia Bushbird.

Yellow-green Grosbeak *Caryothraustes canadensis*

A flock of six birds seen on the 18th at the Ramal do Tucumanduba.

*** Amazonian Grosbeak** *Cyanocompsa rothschildii*

Heard on the 27th near Jaci-Paraná. Split from Blue-back Grosbeak.