



Field Guides Tour Report

Machu Picchu & Abra Malaga, Peru II 2017

Aug 3, 2017 to Aug 12, 2017

Jesse Fagan & Cory Gregory

For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, [please VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE.](#)



The view from the west slope of Abra Malaga takes your breath away! Photo by guide Cory Gregory.

Saying that the Cusco region of Peru has “a lot to offer” is a bit of an understatement! Besides the intensely rich human history of the Inca and the ruins that still endure, this part of Peru has an impressive avian diversity highlighted by a lengthy list of species found nowhere else on the planet. Our tour to this region, graced with superb weather, some phenomenal birding, and a fun bunch of birders, made this a pleasant trip and one we hope you enjoyed.

Although our tour started in Lima, our real birding began after our early-morning flight to Cusco. Carlos and Lucretia (and some hot coca tea) met us at the airport before we headed off to Huacarpay Lake. The lake yielded a wealth of new birds like Puna and Yellow-billed teal, Yellow-billed Pintail, the sneaky Wren-like Rushbird, and the gaudy but secretive Many-colored Rush-Tyrants. We saw some specialties, too, like the Peruvian endemic Rusty-fronted Canastero, the shy Streak-fronted Thornbird, and even a couple of ground-tyrants like Spot-billed and Rufous-naped. The grounds of our hotel in Ollantaytambo yielded even more targets like the fan favorite Bearded Mountaineer, Green-tailed Trainbearer, Golden-billed Saltator, and Black-backed Grosbeak.

The next morning we boarded the train and started making our way towards Aguas Calientes along the banks of the Urubamba River. Some sightings from the train included Torrent Ducks, Torrent Tyrannulets, White-capped Dippers, and some fantastic scenery. Upon arrival, we made our way up to the awe-inducing Machu Picchu ruins, where we had an excellent guided tour by our local expert Lucretia. Although we were met by fog and clouds, these eventually burned off, yielding the ruins in all their glory. That afternoon, we explored the grounds of the lush Inkaterra Lodge where we added species such as Andean Cock-of-the-rock, a rare American Redstart, the colorful Blue-naped Chlorophonia, and a mix of tanagers such as Blue-gray, Palm, Golden-naped, Silvery, Blue-necked, Saffron-crowned, and more!

We managed an early start the following day for a bird-filled trek in the lush Sacred Valley near Aguas Calientes. It was hard to keep track of all the goodies, but highlights included a stunning Blue-banded Toucanet overhead, Andean Guan, Variable Antshrike, Barred Becard, close flocks of Mitred Parakeets, White-tipped Swifts, Andean Motmot, and even a skulking Fasciated Tiger-Heron. Closer to the waterfall, we had even more good fortune by finding the endemic Inca Flycatcher, a rare Marble-faced Bristle-Tyrant, Smoke-colored Pewee, and a Short-billed Chlorospingus.

The following morning we explored a few of the trails on the grounds before settling in at the helipad as the sun came up through the valley. New birds continued to arrive, such as White-bellied Woodstar, Masked Flowerpiercer, Olivaceous Siskin, Streaked Flycatcher, and more. But before long it was time to say goodbye to Aguas Calientes, and we returned to Ollantaytambo via the train (but not without snagging new species like Great Egret and Andean Swift!).

Veronica, the snow-capped Andean peak that stands more than 18,000 feet high, was glorious on this tour and we saw her that next morning as we climbed the west slope of Abra Malaga. Being at elevation, we were immersed in a new suite of birds including the Peruvian endemics Creamy-crested Spinetail and White-tufted Sunbeam, a collection of ground-tyrants including Taczanowski's, White-browed, and Puna, and a variety of canasteros like

Line-fronted, Junín, and Streak-backed. Higher up, near the pass, we all managed to get eyes on an Andean Condor cruising high overhead, a pair of Andean Geese sitting pretty at the pass, and even a surprise Rufous-webbed Bush-Tyrant.

The following day we went up and over the pass, and focused on the humid east slope of Abra Malaga. The weather smiled on us and we found a monster flock of new species that kept us busy for a good part of the morning. A couple of key Peruvian endemics showed themselves nicely, including Parodi's Hemispingus, Marcapata Spinetail, Unstreaked Tit-Tyrant, and even the secretive Inca Wrens. Mixed in with the flocks were Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanagers, a variety of tyrannulets like White-banded and White-throated, a couple of Streaked Tuftedcheeks, and some amazing hummingbirds like Purple-backed Thornbill, Sword-billed Hummingbird, Sapphire-vented Puffleg, Amethyst-throated Sunangel, Scaled Metaltail, and more. The west side of the mountain offered up d'Orbigny's Chat-Tyrant and the cute Tufted Tit-Tyrant on our return home. All in all, what an amazing day of birding!

Our last day of birding on Abra Malaga was an important one. We ventured up to a Polylepis patch where we stirred up a couple of key species like the Peruvian endemic White-browed Tit-Spinetail, the attractive Tawny Tit-Spinetail, a Stripe-headed Antpitta that finally showed itself, and some bonus Blue-mantled Thornbills. Even a pair of Black-faced Ibis flew over and across the face of Veronica. Wow, what a way to close out an incredible few days of birding the area. Our travel back to Cusco had a birdy intermission at Huaypo Lake where we continued to rack up new species like Cinereous Harrier, Cattle Egret, and Lesser Yellowlegs. We also had another chance to study fantastic species like Chilean Flamingos, White-tufted Grebes, Black-faced and Puna ibis, and a fun selection of ducks such as "Andean" Ruddy Ducks, Puna and Cinnamon teal, and another duo of Andean Geese.

A major thanks goes out to Karen for doing a great job at organizing things from Austin, Carlos for his safe and expert driving, and local guide Lucretia who did an excellent job at keeping things organized and who was a wealth of information. Jesse and I want to thank you for joining us on this Field Guides tour and we sincerely hope you enjoyed your time seeing the sights and hearing the sounds of Machu Picchu and Abra Malaga.

Until we meet again, good birding!

-- Cory

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

BIRDS

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

ANDEAN GOOSE (*Oressochen melanopterus*) – This white goose often prefers high elevations and, in fact, we saw a pair at about 14,000 feet at the pass of Abra Malaga.

TORRENT DUCK (*Merganetta armata*) – The rushing streams provided great habitat for this unique species. We tallied many on our train ride along the Urubamba River and near Aguas Calientes.

CINNAMON TEAL (*Anas cyanoptera*) – We found a pair of dull female-type birds on our first day but later caught up to several adult males on Huaypo Lake.

YELLOW-BILLED PINTAIL (*Anas georgica*) – It didn't take long for us to catch glimpses of this sleek species; we had sightings from Huacarpay Lake, the Urubamba River, and Huaypo Lake.

PUNA TEAL (*Anas puna*) – A squat species, this striking duck was spotted on our first day of birding at Huacarpay Lake.

YELLOW-BILLED TEAL (*Anas flavirostris*) – We saw these ducks at a wide range of elevations: from Huacarpay Lake all the way up to the pass at Abra Malaga.

RUDDY DUCK (ANDEAN) (*Oxyura jamaicensis ferruginea*) – This diving duck was spotted at both Huacarpay and Huaypo lakes. For now, the birds we saw are considered a subspecies of Ruddy Duck.

Cracidae (Guans, Chachalacas, and Curassows)

ANDEAN GUAN (*Penelope montagnii*) – It was pretty wild to find this awkward species perched in a tree above the trail during our hike in the Sacred Valley!

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

WHITE-TUFTED GREBE (*Rollandia rolland*) – Both Huacarpay and Huaypo lakes hosted this striking-plumaged grebe. However, the best views came on our last birding day at Huaypo Lake.

Phoenicopteridae (Flamingos)

CHILEAN FLAMINGO (*Phoenicopus chilensis*) – Wow, even the red knees were visible on this striking species! We chanced into flamingos at Huacarpay and again at Huaypo.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

FASCIATED TIGER-HERON (*Tigrisoma fasciatum*) – We had two encounters with this shy species; first up along the waterfall trail in the Sacred Valley and then again in the stream near Aguas Calientes.

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – This one was a surprise. We spotted this familiar heron on the train ride back to Ollantaytambo.

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*) – We found this graceful little heron on our first birding day at Huacarpay Lake.

LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*) – Like the previous species, this heron was seen only on our first day at Huacarpay Lake.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – We had decent scope views of 3 on our last day at Huaypo Lake.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – A few folks caught a quick glimpse of this species at Huacarpay Lake on our first day of birding. Turns out, that was our only encounter.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

PUNA IBIS (*Plegadis ridgwayi*) – Fairly regular throughout our trip. This dark ibis is in the *Plegadis* genus along with Glossy and White-faced.
BLACK-FACED IBIS (BRANICKII) (*Theristicus melanopis branickii*) – Although we were high up at 14,000 feet near the pass of Abra Malaga, we watched as this fascinating (and strange sounding!) species flew overhead. We later saw a few near Huaypo Lake.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*) – It's bizarre, I know, but this species is fairly uncommon in the Cusco area! We paused (albeit briefly) to take a quick look at one.

ANDEAN CONDOR (*Vultur gryphus*) – The wingspan of this massive and regal species tops 10 feet! Everyone, including Phil, got out in time to see this bird fly over near Maxima's house.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

CINEREOUS HARRIER (*Circus cinereus*) – Quite a few of these open-country birds were spotted near Huaypo Lake on our final day of birding.

ROADSIDE HAWK (*Rupornis magnirostris*) – We had only one very brief view of this widespread species during our hike in the Sacred Valley.

VARIABLE HAWK (*Geranoaetus polyosoma*) – Seen a few times throughout the tour, the best looks came from the west slope of Abra Malaga as one kited directly overhead.

BLACK-CHESTED BUZZARD-EAGLE (*Geranoaetus melanoleucus*) – It must be glorious to be this species and be able to soar over Machu Picchu! Additionally, we watched a pair slowly drift along the side of a mountain near Aguas Calientes.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

PLUMBEOUS RAIL (*Pardirallus sanguinolentus*) – How cool was this?! Besides getting to hear this hard-to-see species at Huacarpay Lake, one actually came out and swam across an opening in the reeds once or twice.

COMMON GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*) – This gallinule, the same widespread species that is found in the US, was seen easily at Huacarpay and Huaypo lakes.

SLATE-COLORED COOT (*Fulica ardesiaca*) – Like the previous species, we only encountered this South American coot at Huacarpay and Huaypo lakes.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

ANDEAN LAPWING (*Vanellus resplendens*) – A fairly widespread species, these shorebirds were spotted at both Huacarpay and Huaypo lakes as well as several times on Abra Malaga.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*) – A lone individual at Huaypo Lake on our final day of birding was our only sighting. [b]

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

ANDEAN GULL (*Chroicocephalus serranus*) – We saw this (sometimes) handsome gull on most days including Huacarpay Lake, along the Urubamba River, in Aguas Calientes, and even up at the pass at Abra Malaga.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – Seen most days in urban areas. [I]

SPOT-WINGED PIGEON (*Patagioenas maculosa*) – This pigeon is fairly distinctive with a bold, pale patch in the wings. We spotted them several times including a flock of 30 at Huaypo Lake.

BARE-FACED GROUND-DOVE (*Metriopelia ceciliae*) – Our best looks of this tiny dove were on our first day at Huacarpay Lake when one perched up on a rock fence for a few moments.

WHITE-TIPPED DOVE (*Leptotila verreauxi*) – Although easy to hear, this dove can be somewhat secretive. It prefers lush forests at lower elevations and so we only detected this species around Aguas Calientes.

WHITE-THROATED QUAIL-DOVE (*Zentrygon frenata*) – Such a sneaky species! Although we managed to hear them from time to time, only a few lucky birders got to see 1-2 shuffling away from us at the Inkaterra Lodge.

EARED DOVE (*Zenaida auriculata*) – This species is in the same genus as Mourning Doves and you can see why; they're very similar! We spotted a few at various times around Cusco including a pair at Huaypo Lake.

Strigidae (Owls)

YUNGAS PYGMY-OWL (*Glaucidium bolivianum*) – Grrr, although it was calling blatantly in front of us, we never could get a visual of the bird down the east slope of Abra Malaga. [*]

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

LYRE-TAILED NIGHTJAR (*Uropsalis lyra*) – Seeing this long-tailed insect eater in the spotlight one morning at Aguas Calientes was a major highlight for some!

Apodidae (Swifts)

CHESTNUT-COLLARED SWIFT (*Streptoprocne rutula*) – A few of these sturdy swifts were seen zooming overhead at Machu Picchu.

WHITE-COLLARED SWIFT (*Streptoprocne zonaris*) – We found ourselves in the middle of a swarm of these enormous swifts on the east slope of Abra Malaga. Seeing them zooming down the road at eye level was very impressive!

WHITE-TIPPED SWIFT (*Aeronautes montivagus*) – These sporty swifts were seen from the ruins at Machu Picchu and then again, fairly low, near the stream at Aguas Calientes.

ANDEAN SWIFT (*Aeronautes andecolus*) – Our only sighting of this uncommon swift was on the train ride back to Ollantaytambo. Whew, just in time!

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

LESSER VIOLETEAR (*Colibri cyanotus*) – Green Violetear has been split into two species: Mexican and Lesser violetear. The latter of the two is the variety in Peru and the lodge in Aguas Calientes was a good spot to study them.

SPARKLING VIOLETEAR (*Colibri coruscans*) – A close relative of the previous species, this hummer is larger and has more blue/purple on the breast. Turns out, this was the only species of hummingbird that we tallied every day of tour!

AMETHYST-THROATED SUNANGEL (*Heliangelus amethysticollis*) – We were lucky to catch up to one of these on the east slope of Abra Malaga. Turns out, this was our only sighting on tour.

SPECKLED HUMMINGBIRD (*Adelomyia melanogenys*) – The Inkaterra Lodge was our only spot for this somewhat-drab hummer. In the end, we all had good looks before returning to Ollantaytambo.

LONG-TAILED SYLPH (*Agelaiocercus kingii*) – What a bird! One of these attractive hummers visited us at the helipad at the Inkaterra Lodge.

GREEN-TAILED TRAINBEARER (*Lesbia nuna*) – We had very nice looks at a few trainbearers at the lodge in Ollantaytambo that ended up being this species.

PURPLE-BACKED THORNBILL (*Ramphomicron microrhynchum*) – Holy smokes, this sighting instantly became a crowd favorite and for good reason! This gorgeous and tiny-billed hummer gave us all point-blank looks on the east slope of Abra Malaga. Truly memorable!

BLUE-MANTLED THORNBILL (*Chalcostigma stanleyi*) – A couple of these high-elevation specialists were spotted while we were birding the Polylepis forest on Abra Malaga towards the end of the trip.

BEARDED MOUNTAINEER (*Oreonympha nobilis*) – Hummingbirds are understandably cool... but this one kind of takes it to a new level. It's huge, bold, amazingly colored, and it's only found in Peru! We were lucky to have this be a regular species in the gardens in Ollantaytambo. [E]

TYRIAN METALTAIL (SMARAGDINICOLLIS) (*Metallura tyrianthina smaragdinicollis*) – This and the following species can be very similar but remember to look at the tail color; the Tyrians we were seeing on Abra Malaga had a coppery-colored tail.

SCALED METALTAIL (*Metallura aeneocauda*) – The tail color in this species is more greenish than in the previous species. We only spotted these down the humid eastern slope of Abra Malaga.

SAPPHIRE-VENTED PUFFLEG (COPPERY-NAPED) (*Eriocnemis luciani sapphiropygia*) – Our only chance for this species was on the east slope of Abra Malaga and that's exactly where we found it. With a bit of time, most were able to see it through the scope as it sallied out and repeatedly came back to the same perch.

WHITE-TUFTED SUNBEAM (*Aglaeactis castelnaudii*) – We found this Peruvian endemic on our first morning of birding Abra Malaga. With a name like "sunbeam", you know it's going to be good! [E]

COLLARED INCA (GOULD'S) (*Coeligena torquata omissa*) – Bold and flashy, this hummer was spotted only while we were at the lower elevations of Aguas Calientes and the Sacred Valley.

VIOLET-THROATED STARFRONTLET (*Coeligena violifer*) – You might remember this large hummer for the flashes of buff in the tail. Our only sightings came from the east slope of Abra Malaga.

SWORD-BILLED HUMMINGBIRD (*Ensifera ensifera*) – What a fantastic bird! We spotted this long-billed hummer on the east slope of Abra Malaga. This is the only bird known to have a bill longer than its body.

GREAT SAPPHIREWING (*Pterophanes cyanopterus*) – This big and flashy hummer zoomed around a couple of times as we birded both slopes of Abra Malaga. This species is one of the largest hummingbird species in the world.

CHESTNUT-BREASTED CORONET (*Boissonneaua matthewsii*) – An abundant species at the Inkaterra lodge.

BOOTED RACKET-TAIL (*Ocreatus underwoodii*) – Just a couple of these were spotted when we were in the lower, lush forests around Aguas Calientes.

GIANT HUMMINGBIRD (*Patagona gigas*) – The largest hummingbird species in the world, this brute was seen several times around Ollantaytambo.

WHITE-BELLIED WOODSTAR (*Chaetocercus mulsant*) – Not a species we get every tour, this uncommon Andean hummer showed up as we birded the helipad near Aguas Calientes.

WHITE-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia chionogaster*) – Very similar to the following species, this fairly-plain hummer tended to hang out at higher elevations, such as our lodge at Ollantaytambo.

GREEN-AND-WHITE HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia viridicauda*) – This species, which is only found in Peru, was seen only around Aguas Calientes. [E]

Momotidae (Motmots)

ANDEAN MOTMOT (*Momotus aequatorialis*) – We had a fairly tame bird on a power line as we made our hike from Aguas Calientes. These are classic perch-and-wait predators.

Ramphastidae (Toucans)

BLUE-BANDED TOUCANET (*Aulacorhynchus coeruleicinctis*) – An uncommon bird at best, a very vocal toucanet was seen on our hike from Aguas Calientes. Not only did it give everyone looks, it showed REALLY well and we had to eventually walk away from it!

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

OCELLATED PICULET (*Picumnus dorbignyanus*) – This tiny woodpecker was seen a few times around Aguas Calientes.

GOLDEN-OLIVE WOODPECKER (*Colaptes rubiginosus*) – Fairly common around Aguas Calientes, this woodpecker was spotted a few times on the Inkaterra Lodge grounds. We had another bird down the east slope of Abra Malaga that was probably this species as well.

ANDEAN FLICKER (*Colaptes rupicola*) – At home at very high elevations, this woodpecker was seen several times around the Abra Malaga pass. This very striking bird doesn't need trees, it's happy to forage on the ground.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

MOUNTAIN CARACARA (*Phalcoboenus megalopterus*) – One of the more common birds-of-prey at elevation, these striking raptors were spied several times ranging from Huacarpay Lake to the top of Abra Malaga.

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*) – Fairly common in a variety of habitats, this small falcon was seen most days of the tour.

Psittacidae (New World and African Parrots)

BARRED PARAKEET (*Bolborhynchus lineola*) – This tiny parakeet was heard overhead down the east slope of Abra Malaga but seeing them proved to be difficult. [*]

SPECKLE-FACED PARROT (PLUM-CROWNED) (*Pionus tumultuosus tumultuosus*) – These chunky parrots with short tails were seen from the grounds of the Inkaterra Lodge in Aguas Calientes.

MITRED PARAKEET (*Psittacara mitratus*) – We often will see flocks high overhead in Aguas Calientes but we were in for a special treat when we came face-to-face with a perched, feeding flock almost at eye level! Amazing views!

Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds)

VARIABLE ANTSHRIKE (*Thamnophilus caerulescens*) – A sharp, black-and-white species, these turned out to be fairly common on our hike from Aguas Calientes (sometimes they can be hard!).

Grallariidae (Antpittas)

STRIPE-HEADED ANTPITTA (*Grallaria andicola punensis*) – Although it took a bit of work, we were eventually rewarded with unobstructed views of this high-elevation specialty up on Abra Malaga.

RUFIOUS ANTPITTA (SOUTH PERUVIAN) (*Grallaria rufula occabambae*) – Sometimes hard-to-see birds just fall in your lap! We were astonished to see this bird, completely without trying to, when one popped up into a bush on the east slope of Abra Malaga. We would go on to hear several more farther down the east slope.

Rhinocryptidae (Tapaculos)

TRILLING TAPACULO (*Scytalopus parvirostris*) – This species, which we heard well on the east slope of Abra Malaga, is typically found at lower elevations than the Diademed. [∗]

PUNA TAPACULO (*Scytalopus simonsi*) – We worked and worked on this high-elevation specialty and, in the end, dumb luck provided us a view of one out in the open way downhill.

DIADEMED TAPACULO (*Scytalopus schulenbergi*) – We heard this species at close range on the east slope of Abra Malaga but one never popped out. Sigh, so typical for a tapaculo. [∗]

Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)

STREAKED XENOPS (*Xenops rutilans*) – We saw this tiny, tree-creeping species a few times at the Inkaterra Lodge.

STREAKED TUFTEDCHEEK (*Pseudocolaptes boissonneautii*) – An easily-missable species, these uncommon and large furnarids were seen well on the east slope of Abra Malaga.

WREN-LIKE RUSHBIRD (*Phleocryptes melanops*) – Remember the clicking sound coming from the marshes of Huacarpay Lake? These small furnariids have evolved to be marsh specialists, and we eventually had nice looks at some sneaking through the reeds.

CREAM-WINGED CINCLODES (*Cinclodes albiventris albiventris*) – A common species on Abra Malaga, these were seen every day we birded that area.

TAWNY TIT-SPINETAIL (*Leptasthenura yanacensis*) – A Polylepis specialist limited to the central Andes, this rare furnariid was seen on our final morning on Abra Malaga.

WHITE-BROWED TIT-SPINETAIL (*Leptasthenura xenothorax*) – A highland specialty of the Polylepis forests in Peru, this endemic was one of the main targets on our final Abra Malaga day. Thankfully we eventually connected with it! [E]

STREAK-FRONTED THORNBIRD (*Phacellodomus striaticeps*) – Our very first day of birding around Huacarpay Lake netted us this dry-country, high-elevation species. This thornbird is limited to Peru, Bolivia, and Argentina.

LINE-FRONTED CANASTERO (*Asthenes urubambensis*) – This canastero, the one that prefers bushy grasslands with scattered trees, was seen on only one day on the east side of Abra Malaga.

JUNIN CANASTERO (*Asthenes virgata*) – A Peruvian specialty, this was one of two canasteros that we found on the high, west slope of Abra Malaga. It shares the same puna habitat with the following species. [E]

STREAK-BACKED CANASTERO (*Asthenes wyatti*) – This is another canastero that prefers the high puna habitat of Abra Malaga.

STREAK-THROATED CANASTERO (*Asthenes humilis*) – Unlike the previous canasteros, this species has an affinity for more rocky habitat. We had great looks at this species on multiple days on the west slope of Abra Malaga.

PUNA THISTLETAIL (*Asthenes helleri*) – This small and slender furnariid, one that is especially fond of bamboo, is nearly endemic to Peru. We caught up to this specialty just up and over the pass at Abra Malaga.

RUSTY-FRONTED CANASTERO (*Asthenes ottonis*) – Our first day of birding around Huacarpay Lake netted us this range-restricted (and poorly known) Peruvian endemic. [E]

MARCAPATA SPINETAIL (*Cranioleuca marcapatae*) – Not only is this spinetail endemic to Peru, it's nearly endemic to the province of Cusco! This was another key target we saw exceedingly well down the east slope of Abra Malaga. [E]

CREAMY-CRESTED SPINETAIL (*Cranioleuca albicapilla*) – Another one of the Peruvian specialties, this endemic was seen on our first day of birding the drier, west slope of Abra Malaga. The creamy-colored crest was very distinctive! [E]

AZARA'S SPINETAIL (*Synallaxis azarae*) – We got glimpses, at first, of this slinky species but eventually got excellent looks near Aguas Calientes. The "quick feet" call was easy to pick out.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

WHITE-BANDED TYRANULET (*Mecocerculus stictopterus*) – This flycatcher was mixed in with the mega-flock down on the east slope of Abra Malaga. The bold, white wingbars were good fieldmarks to watch for.

WHITE-THROATED TYRANULET (*Mecocerculus leucophrys*) – Although in the same genus as the previous species (and seen in the same area), this flycatcher has a very white throat that often looks puffed out.

TUFTED TIT-TYRANT (*Anairetes parulus*) – A last-minute snag, we spotted this dainty but widespread species as we retreated down the west slope of Abra Malaga. The little tuft was all too cute.

UNSTREAKED TIT-TYRANT (*Uromyias agraphia*) – Unstreaked, at least in comparison, this little tit-tyrant was seen on the east slope of Abra Malaga. This is a bamboo specialist found only in Peru. [E]

YELLOW-BELLIED ELAENIA (*Elaenia flavogaster*) – We found this fairly dull flycatcher a couple of places on our hike from Aguas Calientes.

SIERRAN ELAENIA (*Elaenia pallatangae*) – Our first was seen briefly from the helipad near our lodge, but we caught up to another at our lunch stop on the east slope of Abra Malaga.

TORRENT TYRANULET (*Serpophaga cinerea*) – A mainstay along rushing streams near Aguas Calientes.

STREAK-NECKED FLYCATCHER (*Mionectes striaticollis*) – One made a brief appearance on our hike from Aguas Calientes.

INCA FLYCATCHER (*Leptopogon taczanowskii*) – Those who wandered up to the waterfall on our hike from Aguas Calientes were treated to good views (and audio) of this Peruvian endemic. [E]

MARBLE-FACED BRISTLE-TYRANT (*Phylloscartes ophthalmicus*) – This is an uncommon species that's not typically seen on this tour. However, we lucked out and found one near the waterfall on our Aguas Calientes hike day.

MOTTLE-CHEEKED TYRANNULET (*Phylloscartes ventralis*) – These ended up being fairly common on our birding outings at the Inkaterra Lodge in Aguas Calientes. This flycatcher has a more elongated, horizontal posture than the following species.

SCLATER'S TYRANNULET (*Phyllomyias sclateri*) – The Aguas Calientes area has been a reliable spot for this fairly rare species. In fact, we found several on the grounds of our lodge.

ASHY-HEADED TYRANNULET (*Phyllomyias cinereiceps*) – This chunky and round-headed species was first heard calling on the grounds of the Inkaterra Lodge. We eventually reeled one in and had great looks.

MANY-COLORED RUSH TYRANT (*Tachuris rubrigastra*) – It's a shame that such a colorful bird can be so secretive and hard to see! We found these skulking in the marshes of Huacarpay Lake on our first birding outing near Cusco.

RUFIOUS-HEADED PYGMY-TYRANT (*Pseudotriccus ruficeps*) – This tiny and uncommon passerine gave his location away by his singing... but he still managed to stay hidden. This was on the east slope of Abra Malaga. [∗]

COMMON TODY-FLYCATCHER (*Todirostrum cinereum*) – Common but still rather slinky, this species ended up giving us a great show as a pair visited a nest near the helipad in Aguas Calientes. [N]

YELLOW-OLIVE FLYCATCHER (ANDES) (*Tolmomyias sulphureus peruvianus*) – Our hike in the Sacred Valley yielded one or two of these rather plain flycatchers.

CINNAMON FLYCATCHER (*Pyrrhomyias cinnamomeus*) – We bumped into this colorful flycatcher (yes, such a thing does exist!) a couple of times: first in the Sacred Valley and then again low down on the east slope of Abra Malaga.

SMOKE-COLORED PEWEE (*Contopus fumigatus*) – In typical pewee fashion, one of these gray flycatchers was seen teed-up near the waterfall on the Sacred Valley hike.

BLACK PHOEBE (WHITE-WINGED) (*Sayornis nigricans latirostris*) – Often keeping company of the Torrent Tyrannulets, these flycatchers were common along waterways in Aguas Calientes. Although this subspecies, *S. n. latirostris*, is part of the Black Phoebe complex, they look a bit different from the ones in the US.

SPOT-BILLED GROUND-TYRANT (*Muscisaxicola maculirostris*) – Although somewhat distant, a couple of these ground-tyrants were spotted on our first day in a tilled field near Huacarpay Lake.

TACZANOWSKI'S GROUND-TYRANT (*Muscisaxicola griseus*) – This large ground-tyrant was spied up at the pass of Abra Malaga where 2-3 were present. This species lacked any brownish tones on the crown; instead it had a dark gray crown with a flared, pale eyebrow.

PUNA GROUND-TYRANT (*Muscisaxicola juninensis*) – A non-migratory ground-tyrant with a slight rufous tinge to the crown, this species was seen on our first day of birding the west slope of Abra Malaga.

RUFIOUS-NAPED GROUND-TYRANT (*Muscisaxicola rufivertex*) – Although our first sighting of this nicely-patterned ground-tyrant came from Huacarpay Lake on our first day, we would go on to see more on Abra Malaga including one in the Peñas region.

WHITE-BROWED GROUND-TYRANT (*Muscisaxicola albifrons*) – An austral migrant that breeds in southern Argentina, this species winters north into Peru and Ecuador. We saw a few of these subtly-patterned flycatchers near the pass of Abra Malaga. [a]

SMOKY BUSH-TYRANT (*Myiotheretes fumigatus*) – This was an excellent, surprise find as we birded the east slope of Abra Malaga. This isn't a species we often see on this tour and so it was especially nice to see (there were even 2 of them!).

RUFIOUS-WEBBED BUSH-TYRANT (*Polioptila rufipennis*) – Another surprise find was this bush-tyrant that was foraging from a fence post well below us on the west slope of Abra Malaga. The rufous webbing in the wings was especially evident when it flew.

RUFIOUS-BREASTED CHAT-TYRANT (*Ochthoeca rufipectoralis*) – This was a common (and sharp) little flycatcher that we bumped into frequently on the east slope of Abra Malaga.

BROWN-BACKED CHAT-TYRANT (*Ochthoeca fuscicollis*) – This unassuming species was called out a few times on the west slope of Abra Malaga but was never a very major part of the flocks.

D'ORBIGNY'S CHAT-TYRANT (*Ochthoeca oenanthoides*) – The west slope of Abra Malaga provided several looks at these in the more bushy habitats.

GOLDEN-CROWNED FLYCATCHER (*Myiodynastes chrysoscapus*) – An abundant species in the lush forests around Aguas Calientes. Their calls, which sound like squeaky toys, were commonplace.

STREAKED FLYCATCHER (SOLITARIUS) (*Myiodynastes maculatus solitarius*) – This austral migrant was seen (and heard!) from the helipad near our lodge in Aguas Calientes. Eventually it teed-up on a treetop for all to see. [a]

TROPICAL KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – A common and widespread species, especially around Aguas Calientes and our Inkaterra Lodge.

Cotingidae (Cotingas)

BARRED FRUITEATER (*Pipreola arcuata*) – It was near our lunch stop on the east slope of Abra Malaga that we first heard, and then saw, this handsome (mostly green!) species. This was picked by some as a trip highlight.

RED-CRESTED COTINGA (*Ampelion rubrocristatus*) – One was spotted perched up for an all-too-brief moment as we birded the west slope of Abra Malaga. Unfortunately it departed before everyone got a glimpse.

ANDEAN COCK-OF-THE-ROCK (*Rupicola peruvianus*) – Wow, it's hard to think of a more emblematic and attractive species of the Peruvian Andes! We had good looks of this stunner several times around Aguas Calientes including one right on the grounds of our hotel! It's hard to beat that.

Tityridae (Tityras and Allies)

BARRED BECARD (*Pachyrhamphus versicolor*) – Although we heard these more often than we saw them, we still managed to see a couple on our Sacred Valley hike from Aguas Calientes.

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

BROWN-CAPPED VIREO (*Vireo leucophrys*) – Very similar in appearance to the Warbling Vireo of North America, this subtle vireo was heard and seen near the Inkaterra Lodge in Aguas Calientes as well as on our hike in the Sacred Valley.

RED-EYED VIREO (MIGRATORY CHIVI) (*Vireo olivaceus chivi*) – Fairly common around Aguas Calientes, this subspecies doesn't actually have a red eye!

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

BLUE-AND-WHITE SWALLOW (*Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*) – Our common and widespread swallow throughout the tour.

BROWN-BELLIED SWALLOW (*Orochelidon murina*) – Usually found above 2500 m. in elevation, this Andean species was seen well in the upper reaches of Abra Malaga.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

HOUSE WREN (*Troglodytes aedon*) – A common and widespread species found in many of the habitats we were in. In fact, we detected these every day of the tour.

MOUNTAIN WREN (*Troglodytes solstitialis*) – This species, which is usually found at high elevations in the Andes, was heard (and seen by some) as we birded the east slope of Abra Malaga. Unfortunately it slipped away before we could all see it.

INCA WREN (*Pheugopedius eisenmanni*) – Oh brother, seeing these became a real chore! Persistence paid off though, when some folks managed to see the head of this Peruvian endemic stick out of the bamboo! These are very vocal, though, and hearing them was no trouble whatsoever. Interestingly, this species was discovered as recently as 1985! [E]

GRAY-BREASTED WOOD-WREN (*Henicorhina leucophrys*) – A very common sound around the Inkaterra Lodge. Once in a while, one would even pop into view near the feeders.

Cinclidae (Dippers)

WHITE-CAPPED DIPPER (*Cinclus leucocephalus*) – The rushing streams of the Andes is where this emblematic and fascinating species hangs out. We saw several from the train rides to/from Ollantaytambo as well as more near Aguas Calientes.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

ANDEAN SOLITAIRE (*Myadestes ralloides*) – The flutey songs of this gifted songster were a welcome soundtrack on our hike in the Sacred Valley near Aguas Calientes. Tough to see, one of these even perched on a hillside post at one point much to our chagrin.

GREAT THRUSH (*Turdus fuscater*) – These were the common thrushes at higher elevation on Abra Malaga. At lower elevations, they are replaced by the following species.

CHIGUANCO THRUSH (*Turdus chiguanco*) – Common around our hotel in Ollantaytambo, this species is fond of dry areas, especially near agriculture and villages.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

AMERICAN REDSTART (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – As crazy as it seems, this might have been the rarest sighting of all! This species breeds in North America and then winters south to Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador. They very rarely show up in Peru and even when they do, August is FAR too early to expect that. We managed to stir up this same rarity multiple days on the grounds of the Inkaterra Lodge in Aguas Calientes.

TROPICAL PARULA (*Setophaga pitiayumi*) – A small and compact warbler, this species was fairly common around Aguas Calientes/Machu Picchu.

THREE-STRIPED WARBLER (*Basileuterus tristriatus*) – Our only encounter with this *Basileuterus* warbler came on our hike in the Sacred Valley near Aguas Calientes. These tend to stay low and often aren't easy to see well.

PALE-LEGGED WARBLER (*Myiothlypis signata*) – We found this warbler just once or twice on our hike in the Sacred Valley. Even the pale legs were seen!

RUSSET-CROWNED WARBLER (*Myiothlypis coronata*) – Seen first on our hike in the Sacred Valley, this attractive warbler was seen again on the grounds of the Inkaterra Lodge. In the end, I think everyone got good looks!

SLATE-THROATED REDSTART (*Myioborus miniatus*) – A common and widespread species, this was our most numerous warbler of the trip. This species has a yellow belly in the southern part of their range and a reddish belly up north in Mexico. The ones we saw were all yellow-bellied.

SPECTACLED REDSTART (*Myioborus melanocephalus*) – This colorful forest resident of the Andes was seen both at the Inkaterra Lodge in Aguas Calientes as well as the east slope of Abra Malaga.

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

BLACK-CAPPED HEMISPINGUS (WHITE-BROWED) (*Hemispingus atropileus auricularis*) – This was a surprise find on the east slope of Abra Malaga. This species has an affinity for bamboo, which makes sense given the thick *Chusquea* thickets we were birding.

PARODI'S HEMISPINGUS (*Hemispingus parodii*) – This very local Peruvian endemic was discovered only ~50 years ago! Our group was rewarded with smashing looks on the east slope of Abra Malaga. Crazy cool! [E]

OLEAGINOUS HEMISPINGUS (*Hemispingus frontalis*) – Although this is a rather dull-colored species, that didn't stop us from taking a close look at it on our hike in the Sacred Valley! These yellowish birds could be mistaken as chunky warblers if not seen well.

THREE-STRIPED HEMISPINGUS (*Hemispingus trifasciatus*) – This species, which is only found on the east slope of the Andes in Peru and Bolivia, showed well on the east slope of Abra Malaga.

RUST-AND-YELLOW TANAGER (*Thlypopsis ruficeps*) – Within Peru, this tanager is only found in the southern portions of the country. We saw this species both at the Inkaterra Lodge as well as the west slope of Abra Malaga.

SCARLET-BELLIED MOUNTAIN-TANAGER (*Anisognathus igniventris*) – Wow, this was a mountain-tanager worth seeing! The bright red really stood out as we birded the east slope of Abra Malaga. Rightfully so, this was selected as a trip highlight for some.

CHESTNUT-BELLIED MOUNTAIN-TANAGER (*Dubusia castaneiventris*) – This is a beautiful species of mountain-tanager that we found on the east slope of Abra Malaga. Unfortunately, it came and went rather quickly.

BLUE-AND-YELLOW TANAGER (*Pipraeidea bonariensis*) – One of many tanagers to take in, this widespread species was seen best around Huacarpay Lake and again at the Inkaterra Lodge.

BLUE-GRAY TANAGER (*Thraupis episcopus*) – The common and ubiquitous tanager, these were abundant at the fruit feeders at the Inkaterra Lodge as well as just about everywhere else.

PALM TANAGER (*Thraupis palmarum*) – The fruit feeders at the Inkaterra Lodge proved to be a good location to see this widespread species.

BLUE-CAPPED TANAGER (*Thraupis cyanocephala*) – A nicely-colored tanager, but one we didn't see a lot of, this mostly-Andean species was spotted once on our hike in the Sacred Valley.

GOLDEN-NAPED TANAGER (*Tangara ruficervix inca*) – This mostly-blue Andean tanager was seen point blank on a walk at the Inkaterra Lodge. We saw a few more sprinkled here and there around Aguas Calientes but it was never abundant.

SILVERY TANAGER (*Tangara viridicollis*) – Formerly known as Silver-backed Tanager, these were fairly common at the Inkaterra Lodge in Aguas Calientes. Unlike many *Tangara* tanagers, these are very sexual dimorphic.

BLUE-NECKED TANAGER (*Tangara cyanicollis*) – Not only does this tanager have a blue neck... but it also has an entirely blue head! It's a very attractive species that was common around Aguas Calientes, sometimes coming into the fruit at Inkaterra.

SAFFRON-CROWNED TANAGER (*Tangara xanthocephala*) – This attractive tanager with a yellow hood is limited to the Andes from Venezuela to Bolivia. We had several encounters and all in the lush forests around Aguas Calientes.

BLUE DACNIS (*Dacnis cayana*) – A small but brightly colored member of the tanager family, this is a very widespread species fond of humid lowlands. We found a couple of these each of our days around Aguas Calientes.

CINEREOUS CONEBILL (*Conirostrum cinereum*) – Small and compact with two bold wingbars and a bold eyeline, this species was seen well at our hotel in Ollantaytambo.

CAPPED CONEBILL (*Conirostrum albifrons*) – Only a couple of these dark-blue tanagers were seen including one near the train-tracks on our final day in Aguas Calientes.

WHITE-BROWED CONEBILL (*Conirostrum ferrugineiventris*) – One of these tanagers put in a brief appearance on the east slope of Abra Malaga.

TIT-LIKE DACNIS (*Xenodacnis parina*) – It wasn't until we birded the east slope of Abra Malaga that we saw this uncommon, mostly-blue species.

MOUSTACHED FLOWERPIERCER (*Diglossa mystacalis*) – This mostly-black flowerpiercer put on a good show, singing from a bush right next to us on the east slope of Abra Malaga.

BLACK-THROATED FLOWERPIERCER (*Diglossa brunneiventris*) – A mostly orange and black flowerpiercer, this colorful species was seen both at our hotel in Ollantaytambo as well as on Abra Malaga. However, it was never abundant.

RUSTY FLOWERPIERCER (*Diglossa sittoides*) – It seems like we saw more females than males on this tour, but we eventually caught up to some in Ollantaytambo and the Inkaterra Lodge.

MASKED FLOWERPIERCER (*Diglossa cyanea*) – Although this blue species with a black facemask ranges throughout the Andes, it was never a common species for us. We saw our first near the helipad at Inkaterra and then again on the east slope of Abra Malaga.

PERUVIAN SIERRA-FINCH (*Phrygilus punensis*) – This attractive denizen of the high Andes was seen a couple of times on Abra Malaga, including at Maxima's House and some pastures just downslope from there. The coloration and habits of this species remind some of the "Oregon" Dark-eyed Juncos from North America.

PLUMBEOUS SIERRA-FINCH (*Phrygilus unicolor*) – Uniform slaty gray, this Andean species is fairly wide-ranging, from Venezuela south to the southern tip of South America. We had very good looks as we birded the higher elevations of Abra Malaga.

ASH-BREASTED SIERRA-FINCH (*Phrygilus plebejus*) – Although similar to the previous species, the Ash-breasted has a paler breast and a slightly bolder facial pattern. Our first sighting was from Huacarpay Lake but we saw a few more on Abra Malaga as well.

WHITE-WINGED DIUCA-FINCH (*Diuca speculifera*) – A fascinating species of the high Andes, evidence has shown that these actually build nests on ice, perhaps the only species in the world that does so. We saw a few of these foraging on the ground downslope from the pass at Abra Malaga.

CHESTNUT-BREASTED MOUNTAIN-FINCH (*Poospiza caesar*) – Not only is this species quite attractive and distinctive, it's also found in no other country but Peru! Thankfully, we found one foraging on the ground near Maxima's house. [E]

GREENISH YELLOW-FINCH (*Sicalis olivascens*) – We were treated to a large flock of these foraging on the grounds of our hotel in Ollantaytambo... literally. The swarm, sometimes numbering close to 100, was seen feeding on the lawn.

BAND-TAILED SEEDEATER (*Catamenia analis*) – Although these were fairly-common around the hotel in Ollantaytambo, our first sighting came from near Huacarpay Lake on our first day.

PLAIN-COLORED SEEDEATER (*Catamenia inornata*) – This is a fairly common species of the high Andes from Venezuela south to Argentina. We had brief looks once or twice as we birded Abra Malaga but they never seemed to stick around long.

DULL-COLORED GRASSQUIT (*Tiaris obscurus*) – Two were seen briefly on our trek in the Sacred Valley.

GOLDEN-BILLED SALTATOR (*Saltator aurantirostris*) – Our only saltator of the trip, this attractive and heavy-billed bird was seen on the grounds of our hotel in Ollantaytambo as well as a couple of times around Abra Malaga.

Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

SHORT-BILLED CHLOROSPINGUS (*Chlorospingus parvirostris*) – The only spot where we hoped to find this uncommon species was near the waterfall in the Sacred Valley. Luckily, we did indeed connect with one or two very briefly near there.

CHESTNUT-CAPPED BRUSHFINCH (*Arremon brunneinucha*) – Remember not to focus on the chestnut cap, instead it was the puffy, white throat that really jumped out. One of these was seen on the grounds of our lodge in Aguas Calientes.

RUFIOUS-COLLARED SPARROW (*Zonotrichia capensis*) – Ahh, this ubiquitous species was one of the most widespread and easily seen species of the highlands. However, you might have noticed that we failed to see any around Aguas Calientes or Machu Picchu.

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

HEPATIC TANAGER (HIGHLAND) (*Piranga flava lutea*) – An attractive male was heard and then seen from the pool at the Inkaterra Lodge (yeah, hard life, seeing gorgeous birds from the pool).

BLACK-BACKED GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus xantheiventris*) – This yellow and black grosbeak sports a monster bill! We saw this fairly common species very well including right at our hotel in Ollantaytambo.

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

YELLOW-WINGED BLACKBIRD (*Agelasticus thilius*) – Seemingly always distant, these black birds with yellow in the wing were spotted at Huacarpay Lake early in the trip and then again at Huaypo Lake.

DUSKY-GREEN OROPENDOLA (*Psarocolius atrovirens*) – The only oropendola on the trip, these were especially noticeable around the Inkaterra Lodge and Aguas Calientes. They would occasionally visit the banana feeders as well.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

THICK-BILLED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia lanirostris*) – This was the common and expected euphonia throughout our time in the Sacred Valley. For example, they were very common at the banana feeders at the Inkaterra Lodge.

ORANGE-BELLIED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia xanthogaster*) – Not a common bird, a male dropped into the feeders at the Inkaterra Lodge showing that dark throat that separates it from the Thick-billed.

BLUE-NAPED CHLOROPHONIA (*Chlorophonia cyanea*) – A real stunner, this green, blue, and yellow flash-of-color visited the fruit feeders at Inkaterra much to our delight!

HOODED SISKIN (*Spinus magellanicus*) – The higher-elevation version of the following species (at least in Peru), these were spotted on our first day of birding by Huacarpay Lake. We also saw a nice gathering at the Chinchero marsh as we returned to Cusco on our final day.

OLIVACEOUS SISKIN (*Spinus olivaceus*) – An uncommon finch, this relative of the previous species was seen at lower elevations such as the Inkaterra Lodge where we saw some from the helipad. This species is limited to Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia.

MAMMALS

BROWN AGOUTI (*Dasyprocta variegata*) – Our only mammal encounter was a brief one... we had a quick look of an agouti booty as it scurried away from the compost pile at Inkaterra.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 199 bird taxa and 1 mammal taxa