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A TRIP REPORT FOR A BIRDING TRIP TO MACHU-PICCHU AND ABRA MALAGA

May 19th – May 23th 2009

Trip Leader: Silverio Duri

With: John Kerns



Torrent Ducks – Jake Faust

DAY BY DAY ACTIVITIES

May 19th: Cusco (Just a little bit outside of Cusco we went to a place called “CUCHARA”) because of A farmers Strike, we couldn't get to Huacarpay LakeS which was the original plan; Overnight at Los Andes de America Hotel.

May 20th: Cusco to Ollantaytambo with a birding morning up to a little patch of forest at the Saqsayhuaman ruins and we visited the ruins as well after a picnic lunch and then on to Ollantaytambo. We stopped at the CHINCHERO “Piuray Lake” where we saw some good birds like the Grebes - Silvery and White-tufted and then continued on our way until we came across the strikers blocking the road with large stones. We were stuck until 11 pm when finally we continued to our Hotel; Overnight at Pakaritampu Hotel.

May 21st: Early morning after a good breakfast we took our train to Machu-Picchu where we visited the ruins first until noon and then after lunch we birded our way back down towards Aguas Calientes Town where we took our train back to Ollantaytambo; Overnight at Pakaritampu Hotel.

May 22nd: Abra Malaga *Polylepis* woodlands (west slope). After a good breakfast we headed up to the Abra Malaga pass (4316 mts) and birded the *Polylepis* forest finishing up at 3:00 pm and after a late lunch we headed back to the Hotel; Overnight at the Pakaritampu Hotel.

May 23rd: Ollantaytambo to Cusco with day birded at Abra Malaga on the east slope, starting at tree-line at Canchailloc 3600 mts and working down to around 3200 mts and then after lunch we headed back to Cusco; Overnight at the Los Andes de America Hotel.

THE BIRDLIST

Trip report shows seen only birds

E/RR = Endemic or Restricted Range species

Conservation Status - Follows Birdlife International (2007)

Taxonomy – Follows the IOC world list (2008) – mostly...

SACC = South American Checklist Committee

Family: ANATIDAE

Ruddy [Andean] Duck

Oxyura jamaicensis

Very good looks at the (Piuray Lake) on our way to Ollantaytambo on May 20th; Andean populations have often been treated as a separate species. The SACC says “Andean populations have often (e.g., Hellmayr & Conover 1948a, Siegfried 1976, Sibley & Ahlquist 1990, AOU 1998, Ridgely et al. 2001, Jaramillo 2003) been treated as a separate species, *O. ferruginea* (“Andean Duck” or “Andean Ruddy-Duck”). However, see Adams and Slavid (1984), Fjeldså (1986), and McCracken & Sorenson (2005) for rationale for treating them as conspecific, as done previously (e.g., Blake 1977, Johnsgard 1979), and then followed by Fjeldså & Krabbe (1990) and Carboneras (1992f). Siegfried (1976) and Livezey (1995) considered *ferruginea* to be more closely related to *O. vittata* than to *O. jamaicensis*, but McCracken & Sorenson (2005) showed that this is incorrect” Cited as “Andean Duck “by the IOC.

Torrent Duck

Merganetta armata turneri

Wonderfull looks on the Urubamba River around Aguas Calientes with the telescope on our way back from the Machu-Picchu ruins and also few of them seen along the river from the train on the way to Machu-Picchu

Speckled Teal

Anas flavirostris

Seen also at the Piuray Lake on May 20th

Yellow-billed Pintail*Anas georgica*Several seen well at the Piuray Lake on May 20th**Puna Teal***Anas puna*Common at the Piuray Lake seen on May 20th on our way to Ollantaytambo**Family: PODICIPEDIDAE****White-tufted Grebe***Rollandia rolland*Two individuals well seen and some farther away at the Piuray Lake on May 20th**Silvery Grebe***Podiceps occipitales*Very good views of two of them at the Piuray Lake on May 20th**Family: THRESKIORNITHIDAE****Puna Ibis***Plegadis ridgwayi*Quiet a few seen flying around "Cuchara" on the May 19th and 2 more at Abra Malaga on May 23rd**Black-faced [Andean] Ibis***Theristicus melanops branckii*Nice looks at two of them on our way back from (Canchailloc) at Abra Malaga seen on May 23rd. Sibley & Monroe (1990) considered *branckii* as separate species ("Andean Ibis") from *melanopsis*. SACC are waiting for a proposal.**Family: ACCIPITRIDAE****Black-chested Buzzard Eagle***Geranoaetus melanoleucus*One Juvenal seen around "Cuchara" on May 19th**Family: FALCONIDAE****Mountain Caracara***Phalcoboenus megalopterus*

Common during both tour extensions with two seen near the PISAQ Pass

American Kestrel*Falco sparverius*

Seen around Cusco, common

Family: RALLIDAE**Common Moorhen***Gallinula chloropus*

Seen on the ride along the road just before CHINCHEROS. A bitter battle with the powers that be in the IOC. Moorhen has nothing to do with moors (a rolling expanse of bleak wasteland) but comes from the word "mere" which means "a sheet of standing water or pool" So it would have originally in old British English have been called a Merehen and this has been corrupted over the years. I am glad the IOC adopts Common Moorhen. It could never be a Gallinule to me! I would even vote in favor of Common Merehen. However the American dominated SACC insists that "Formerly known as "Common Moorhen" (e.g., Dickinson 2003). Hilty & Brown (1986), Fjeldså & Krabbe (1990), Haverschmidt & Mees (1994), and Ridgely et al. (2001) continued to use "Common Gallinule." Long known by this name in the New World (e.g., Meyer de Schauensee 1970), the AOU (1983) switched to "Moorhen" to conform to Old World usage. SACC proposal passed to change to "Common Gallinule." SACC proposal to add "Common Moorhen" as an alternative name did not pass." Need some beer to discuss this one.

Andean Coot*Fulica ardesiaca*Common at the Piuray Lake seen on May 20th**Family: CHARADRIIDAE****Andean Lapwing***Vanellus resplendens*

Common in large numbers at Abra Malaga and also seen at Saqsayhuaman and Piuray Lake

Family: LARIDAE

Andean Gull

Larus serranus

A lot of them at Piuray Lake seen on May 20th

Family: COLUMBIDAE

Spot-winged Pigeon

Patagioenas maculosa

Good looks at the “Cuchara” area seen on May 19th Note that recent research has shown that the genus *Columba* is paraphyletic, with New World taxa being more closely related to *Streptopelia* than to Old World *Columba* pigeons. This is consistent with differences between New World and Old World *Columba* in terms of morphology, serology and behavior. The suggestion was made to place all New World forms in the genus *Patagioenas*, and the AOU recently adopted this change in its latest checklist supplement.

Eared Dove

Zenaida auriculata

Very good looks at the “Cuchara” area on May 19th

Bare-faced ground Dove

Metriopelia ceciliae

Beautiful dove seen at the “Cuchara” area on May 19th

Family: PSITTACIDAE

Andean Parakeet

Bolborhynchus orbygnesi

A small flock seen at Machu-picchu on our way down from the ruins along the trail on May 21st and also surprisingly another small flock seen at the end of the valley at Abra Malaga on May 22nd

Speckle-faced Parrot

Pionus seniloides

Just one seen from a flock at Machu-Picchu on May 21st; Interestingly, the northern subspecies *seniloides* was formerly considered a separate species ("White-capped Parrot") from *Pionus tumultuosus*, (“Plum-crowned Parrot”) but O'Neill & Parker (1977) noted that the only differences between the two are the degree of saturation of rosy pigment. There is no evidence of intergradation between the two.

Family: TROCHILIDAE

Sparkling Violet-ear

Colibri coruscans

Common throughout the tour

Green Violetear

Colibri thalassinus

One seen well at Machu-Picchu. ‘*Thalassinus*’ is Latin for ‘sea green’.

E Green and White Hummingbird

Leucippus viridicauda

Common at Machu Picchu, realistically the only place in the world you can see this species.

White-bellied Hummingbird

Leucippus chionogaster

Common at the Pakaritampu Hotel

Green-tailed Trainbearer

Lesbia nuna

One male seen at the (Cuchara) spot and another one, a female seen perch around the Saqsaywaman ruins on May 20th. Named for the character Nouna-Koali, an elegant Indian virgin in a novel by Jaen Ferdin-and Denis’ 1829

White-bellied Woodstar

Chaetocercus mulsant

Good look along the trail on our way down from the Machu-Picchu ruins feeding on (Inga) flowers

Family: PICIDAE

Andean Flicker

Colaptes rupicola

One seen at the “Cuchara” area and another one at Abra Malaga by the end of the valley on May 22nd before lunch.

Family: FURNARIIDAE

Bar-winged Cinclodes

Cinclodes fuscus rivularis

Common at Abra Malaga seen on May 22nd and 23rd

White-winged Cinclodes

Cinclodes atacamensis

1 seen well along the Urubamba River on May 21st

RR Tawny Tit-spinetail

Leptasthenura yanacensis

Very good looks at the Abra Malaga *Polylepis* woodlands seen on May 22nd. Named for the village of Yanac in Ancash Peru – the type locality. **NEAR THREATENED**

E White-browed Tit-spinetail

Leptasthenura xenothorax

One of the *Polylepis* specialists at Abra Malaga seen on May 22nd. **ENDANGERED**

E Marcapata Spinetail

Cranioleuca marcapatae marcapatae

Good look at Abra Malaga on May 23rd after lunch

E Rusty-fronted Canastero

Asthenes ottonis

Nice looks of this arid montane scrub species at the “Cuchara” area seen on May 19th

Streak-throated Canastero

Asthenes humilis

One seen well at the beginning of our walk at Abra Malaga on May 23rd

RR Line-fronted Canastero

Asthenes urubambensis

Seen at Abra Malaga in the *polylepis* forest on May 22nd **NEAR THREATENED**

Pearled Treerunner

Margarornis squamiger

Common in the elfin forest habitat at Abra Malaga - we saw two of them

Family: GRALLARIDAE

RR Stripe-headed Antpitta

Grallaria andicola

Ace looks at Abra Malaga in the *polylepis* forest on May 22nd



Stripe-headed Antpitta

Family: RHINOCRYPTIDAE

RR Puna Tapaculo

Scytalopus simonsi

This little bird come very close giving us very good looks, seen on May 22nd. Who says Tapaculos never come into view?

Family: TYRANNIDAE

Sclaters Tyrannulet

Phyllomyias sclateri

RR Common at Machu Picchu and we saw two individuals along the road on our way back to Aguas Calientes seen on May 21st. Named after Phillip Sclater, British ornithologist and collector 1829-1913

E Ash-breasted Tit-Tyrant

Anairetes alpinus

We got very good looks of this *polylepis* forest specialist at Abra Malaga on May 23rd

ENDANGERED

White-throated Tyrannulet

Mecocerculus leucophrys

Common at Abra Malaga

White-banded Tyrannulet

Mecocerculus stictopterus

Common at Abra Malaga

Yellow-billed Tit-Tyrant

Anairetes flavirostris

One seen in the arid scrub at Saqsayhuaaman ruins on May 20th

Black Phoebe

Sayornis nigricans latirostris

Common along the Rio Urubamba seen on May 21st; this is the southern subspecies *latirostris*. The change from the darker-winged nominate *nigricans* to the white-winged *latirostris* is a north-south cline, with larger amounts of white gradually appearing further south

Brown-backed Chat-Tyrant

Ochthoeca fumicolor berlepschi

Several seen at the two sites of the Abra Malaga area

Rufous-breasted Chat-Tyrant

Ochthoeca rufipectoralis rufipectoralis

Common at Abra Malaga

White-browed Chat-Tyrant

Ochthoeca leucophrys

One seen around the "Churara" area and also around Saqsayhuaaman ruins

Red rumped Bush Tyrant

Cnemarchus erythropgius

Quite good view during our visit to the Abra Malaga *Polylepis* forests on May 22nd

Rufous-naped Ground Tyrant

Muscisaxicola rufivertex

Several seen at Abra Malaga

Puna Ground Tyrant

Muscisaxicola juninensis

Difficult to ID but we managed to get this guy in the Abra Malaga *Polylepis* valley, on our way out of the valley on May 22nd

Cinereous Ground Tyrant

Muscisaxicola cinerea

The ID challenges were coming thick and fast as this guy popped up in to the Abra Malaga *Polylepis* valley several seen well

Family: COTINGIDAE

Red-crested Cotinga

Ampelion rubrocristata

Very common at the Abra Malaga on the cloud forest seen well with the telescope on May 23rd

Family: TITYRIDAE

Crested Becard

Pachyramphus validus

Surprisingly one female seen well by the end of the valey at Abra Malaga seen on May 22nd. This is an isolated resident population.

INCERTAE SEDIS

For the following species there are currently SACC proposals needed or impending, or awaiting further research as to their exact taxonomic placement/treatment

Dull-coloured Grassquit

Tiaris obscura

Very good looks of 6 individuals more o less at Machu Picchu on May 21st

Family: HIRUNDINIDAE

Brown-bellied Swallow

Notiochelidon murina

Common at Abra Malaga seen on May 23rd

Blue-and-white Swallow

Notiochelidon cyanoleuca

Common at Machu-Picchu where it nests in the walls of the ruins

Family: TROGLODYTIDAE

E Inca Wren

Thryothorus eisenmanni

Great views of one at Machu-Picchu one of the specialities of the Machu-Picchu area seen on May 22nd

Southern House Wren

Troglodytes (aedon) musculus

Common. Many authors (e.g., Hellmayr 1934, Pinto 1944, Phelps & Phelps 1950a) formerly treated Neotropical mainland populations as a separate species *T. musculus*; see also Brumfield and Capparella (1996); this treatment was followed by Brewer (2001) and Kroodsma & Brewer (2005). The Falklands population, *T. a. cobbi*, might also be best treated as a species (Wood 1993), as was done by Brewer (2001), Mazar Barnett & Pearman (2001), Jaramillo (2003), and Kroodsma & Brewer (2005);

Grey-breasted Wood-Wren

Henicorhina leucophrys

One seen along the road on our way down from the Machu-picchu ruins on May 21st. Note that IOC adopt the spelling of grey with an “e” due to the fact that historically more birds have been described using “grey” rather than “gray”

Family: TURDIDAE

Chiguanco Thrush

Turdus chiguanco chiguanco

Common

Great Thrush

Turdus fuscater ockenderi

Common in the cloud forest sitde of Abra Malaga

Family: CINCLIDAE

White-capped Dipper

Cinclus leucocephalus

Seen well along the Rio Urubamba by Aguas Caliente on May 22nd

Family: FRINGILLIDAE

Hooded Siskin

Carduelis magellanica urubambensis

Several sightings in the first and the second days around Cusco

Family: PARULIDAE

Slate-throated Whitestart

Myioborus miniatus

Common seen at Machu-picchu

Spectacled Whitestart

Myioborus melanocephalus

Common seen at Machu-Picchu and Abra Malaga

Family: EMBEZERIDAE

Rufous-collared Sparrow

Zonotrichia capensis

Common

Mourning Sierra-Finch

Phrygilus fruticeti

Great look of a male around the “Cuchara” area seen on May 19th

Plumbeous Sierra-Finch

Phrygilus unicolor

Common at Abra Malaga

White-winged Diuca-Finch

Diuca speculifera

Very good look of one in our visit to Abra Malaga on May 22nd

Band-tailed Seed eater

Catamenia analis analis

Common

Family: THRAUPIDAE

Tooth-billed (Highland Hepatic) Tanager

Piranga lutea

One male seen well at Machu-picchu on May 21st

E Parodi’s Hemispingus

Hemispingus parodi

Two of them seen with the rain after lunch at Abra Malaga on May 23rd

Blue-and-yellow Tanager

Thraupis bonariensis

One Juvenal seen around the “Cuchara” area and another one at Saqsaywaman ruins on May 20th
Named for the Argentine capital Buenos Aires – the southernmost ranging Tanager.



Parodi’s Hemispingus – Ian Merrill

Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanager

Anisognathus igniventris igniventris

The “Christmas-card bird” – stunning views at Abra Malaga

Saffron-crowned Tanager

Tangara xanthocephala lamprotis

One seen well at Machu-Picchu on May 21st. The race here has an orange crown

Cinereous Conebill

Conirostrum cinereum cinereum

Several seen around Saqsaywaman ruins and (Cuchara) area

RR White-browed Conebill

Conirostrum ferrugineiventre

Cracking views at Abra Malaga in the elfin forest seen on May 23rd

Black-throated Flower-piercer

Diglossa brunneiventris

Two seen around the (Cuchara) area on May 20th

Blue-necked Tanager

Tangara cyanicollis

Also seen at Machu-picchu on May 21st

Blue-and-black Tanager

Tangara vassorii atrocaerulea

Two seen at Abra Malaga on May 23rd

CARDINALIDAE

Golden-billed Saltator

Saltator aurantirostris albociliaris

One seen well around Saqsayhuaman on May 20th



Nevado Veronica – Abra Malaga

