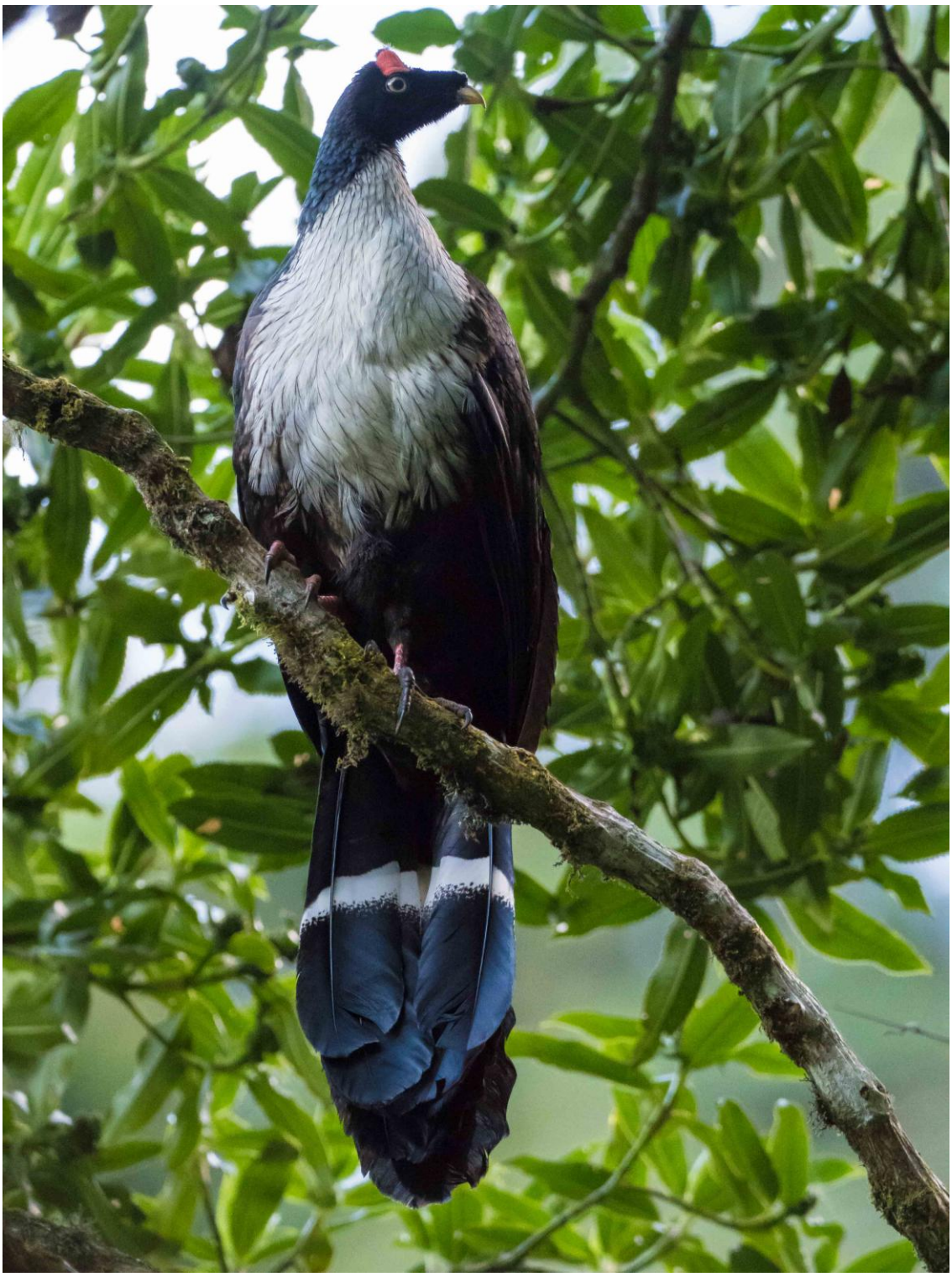
Guatemala



Immature Horned Guan, Fuentes Georginas

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9 January to 6 February 2024

Introduction

This four-week trip to Guatemala was arranged to find as many bird species as possible in the Western Highlands, the Cobán area and adjacent lowlands. We flew with United Airlines to Guatemala City from Heathrow, via a three hour stop-over at Houston, and hired a VW Tiguan from Hertz for the duration of our trip (1,064 USD without CDW). Our journey started in Antigua, just west of Guatemala City, proceeding to various locations around Lake Atitlán with a short visit to the nearby lowland site of Los Tarrales, before heading north to Fuentes Georginas, Volcán Chiquibal and the Cuchumatan highlands. We then travelled east to Cobán, where we visited several cloud-forest locations, and completed our trip with a short visit to the lowland Heloderma Reserve on our return journey to Guatemala City. Our itinerary was largely based on that undertaken by Mike Moore (www.cloudbirders.com/tripreport) and we strongly recommend his detailed report to anyone planning a visit to Guatemala.

It was the dry season during our visit and the weather during the first part of the trip was consistently cool (rarely reaching the high twenties), dry and generally sunny. Many locations were at elevations well over 2,500m and it was often quite chilly at night and in the early morning, with the lowest observed temperature being -2^{o}C on our night-time return from an owl location in the Cuchumatan mountains (at around 3,500m). The weather changed on our last day in the mountains and it rained throughout our six hour journey to Cobán, with light rain, drizzle and fog for much of the following couple of days - apparently very unusual for the time of year. The weather improved during our last few days, with drier conditions and less fog, and temperatures approached 35 ^{o}C on our arrival at the Heloderma Reserve.

We made extensive use of Google Maps to navigate the almost entirely unsigned roads and, apart from the occasional wrong or missed turn, we had little difficulty finding the public birding locations which are all identified as hotspots and therefore easily located on eBird. Other locations are on private land and in these cases access should be sought through local bird guides. Most of the roads were surfaced and in good condition, although some had numerous pot-holes. We had to traverse a few landslips and the back roads in the Cuchumatan mountains were often challenging in places, many being very steep as well as gravelly. High clearance is essential for this area and generally helpful elsewhere given the numerous, often very large and usually unmarked speed-bumps (or *tumulos*) which are to be found in even the smallest settlements. The Tiguan's alleged 4WD was barely adequate on the roughest roads and nervous drivers might prefer to invest in a larger off-road vehicle. Despite its reputation the Guatemalan driving experience was generally fine, with little of the habitual tail-gating familiar to UK drivers. Perhaps the most nerve-wracking moments were spent negotiating the extremely narrow roads in some of the towns and villages, with parked vehicles, market stalls and fast-moving motorbikes and chicken buses only a few inches away.

All our accommodation was good to very good (see below), with mostly hot showers and comfortable beds. We booked several locations well in advance (Los Tarrales, San Lucas Toliman, Fuentes Georginas) while others were booked during the trip. This worked quite well although, in retrospect, advance booking of other locations with very limited accommodation (Ranchitos del Quetzal, Heloderma Reserve) is advisable. Food is very much dominated by chicken and beef with beans and chips and the choice for vegetarians is thus often extremely limited. As such we lived on eggs (omelettes and pancakes), beans, plantain and tortillas for much of our stay. Food and beer is incredibly cheap, with a meal and drink for two rarely exceeding Q150 (about £15 at the time of our visit).

During our visit we enjoyed the company of some excellent local bird guides: Josué de Leon at and around Lake Atitlán, Esteban Matias in the Cuchumatan mountains and John Cahill at Finca Rubel Chaim. Without the local knowledge, birding skills and expertise of these guides we would have almost certainly missed

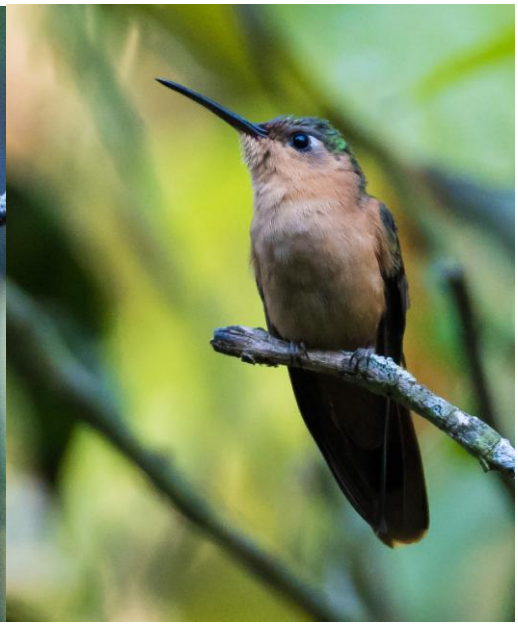
many of our target species. As it was, we recorded 273 species with nearly a third of these being new to us. Some of the best of these include **Highland** and **Horned Guans**, **Ocellated Quail**, **Lesser Ground-cuckoo**, **Unspotted Saw-whet Owl**, **Bearded Screech-owl**, **Fulvous Owl**, **Mountain Trogon**, **Blue-throated Motmot**, **Belted Flycatcher**, **Middle American Leaftosser**, **Chestnut-sided Shrike-vireo**, **Golden-cheeked** and **Pink-headed Warblers**, **Azure-rumped Tanager** and **Yellow-throated Nightingale-thrush**.

Finca el Pilar, 11-12 January

We visited this trail over two days, staying at a nearby hotel in the picturesque town of Antigua. The trail opens at 07.00 and there is a Q65 entrance fee per person plus Q15 for vehicle parking. The outdoor swimming pools are popular with locals and, as some people seem to combine a visit to the pools with a walk on the trail, the area could potentially be quite busy at weekends. The hummingbird feeders are near the start of the trail (just beyond the pools) and are placed under a long roof several metres away from the observation platform. We found this arrangement seriously hampered views of the birds and it was difficult to appreciate plumage colours. In the end we abandoned the platform and viewed the birds below the feeders where they often perched in better light in nearby trees and bushes. We eventually identified **Rivoli's**, **Azure-crowned** and **Berylline Hummingbirds** and **Rufous Sabrewing**.

The trail itself was rather quiet and we found roadside birding below the pools as well as below the gates to be more productive, giving views of mobile flocks of **Bushy-crested Jays** as well as **White-fronted Parrots**, **Black-vented** and **Bar-winged Orioles**, **Grey-silky Flycatchers**, **Tufted Flycatcher** and **Hairy Woodpecker**. The trail proceeds up steep slopes to a mirador and eventually reaches a dirt road which apparently continues through forest for several kilometres, although we walked no further than the mirador during our visits.

Rivoli's Hummingbird



Rufous Sabrewing

Los Robles, Finca Santa Victoria, Tanager Trail and IMAP, 13 January

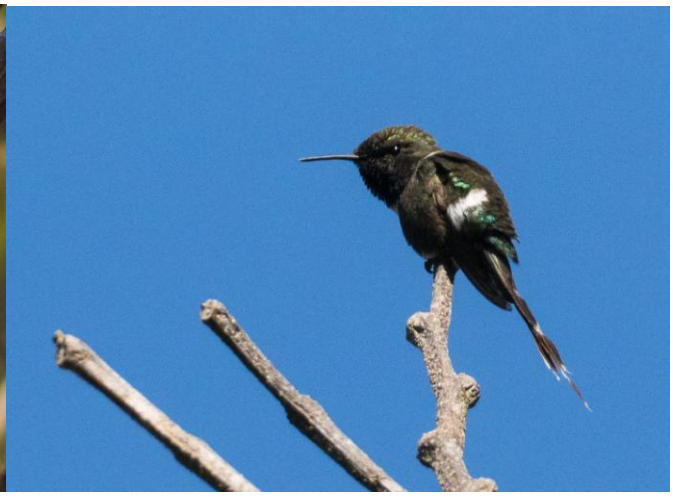
Today we were collected from our lakeside hotel in San Lucas Toliman at 5.45am by our guide Josué de Leon (josuedeleonlux@gmail.com) in order to arrive at Los Robles at dawn. We first viewed this private farm from the roadside, which gave us good views of **Acorn Woodpecker**, **Steller's Jay**, **Summer Tanager** and **Eastern Bluebird** in the trees and crops below the road. We then drove a short distance down the hill to the start of

a rough track leading onto the farm. Here we quickly saw our main target, a stunning male **Belted Flycatcher**, perched quietly in a small clearing surrounded by dense scrub. Further on we saw several **Hammond's Flycatchers** and **Greater Pewees**, as well as **Buff-breasted Flycatchers**, **White-eared Ground Sparrows**, a **MacGillivray's Warbler**, **Black-capped Swallows, Lincoln's Sparrows** and the first of many **Rufous-collared Thrushes**. Excitement grew when Josué heard an **Ocellated Quail** calling from a nearby maize field. Unfortunately, despite his best efforts, we only managed brief views of this bird in flight, although he reassured us that we would have more luck with this species in the Chiabal area with Esteban.

Before driving to our next site we called in at a nearby roadside viewpoint at Mirador Mario Montenegro. As well as providing fantastic views of Lake Atitlán and its surrounding volcanoes we had equally amazing views of a pair of **Olive Warblers** in some adjacent pines and we saw a **Black-headed Siskin** flying overhead.

We next visited Finca Santa Victoria, also a private farm, in search of another target species the diminutive **Sparkling-tailed Hummingbird**. This was one of the first birds seen with three hummingbirds all perched in the same path-side tree. We also saw a smart **White-eared Hummingbird**, the first of many for the trip, as well as **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** and **Warbling Vireo**.

Belted Flycatcher



Sparkling-tailed Hummingbird

After a lunch break at a restaurant in the busy town of Panajachel we made a roadside stop to investigate the 'Tanager Trail', so called because of its reliability for views of the globally threatened **Azure-rumped Tanager**. Unfortunately the tanager was a no-show probably, as Josué suggested, because an **American Kestrel** was perched by the tanagers' favourite tree for the duration of our visit. Some compensation was provided by views of skulking **White-faced Ground-sparrows** and a flock of **Pacific Parakeets** overhead.

The final location of the day was a sustainable farming practice at the Mesoamerican Permaculture Institute (IMAP) (Q35 entrance fee/person) which is situated on the shores of Lake Atitlán just to the north of San Lucas Toliman. This is usually a good location for **Slender Sheartail**, although Josué informed us that this species is hard to find after December. Sure enough, after a couple of hours of searching some bushes and crops on the edge of the lake we drew a blank, making do instead with views of a **Sora** foraging by a wooden jetty.

Volcán Atitlán, Hotel Bambu, Tanager trail and La Playa, 14 January

We set off in the dark once more, again in Josué's company, arriving at dawn at the start of a trail leading up to the summit of Volcán Atitlán. As with most of these trails there was much evidence of low-scale but extensive and ultimately unsustainable scrub clearance and recent felling of smaller trees, the work of local villagers collecting firewood for cooking.

The day started well with two **Rusty Sparrows** in bushes by our parking location and a **Cooper's Hawk** overhead. The trail was gently sloping in most places (unusual for Guatemalan birding locations!) and there was a good level of activity, with **Highland Guans** and **Brown-backed Solitaires** calling, a small group of **Black-throated Jays** and mixed flocks featuring, amongst others, **Elegant Euphonia**, the lovely **Crescent-chested Warbler** and **Brown-capped Vireo**. Other star birds included a male **Mountain Trogon** and a **Fulvous Owl**, the latter responding almost instantly to play-back and apparently entirely unfazed as we photographed it only a few metres away. Two **Yellow-throated Nightingale-thrushes** were less obliging and we had only brief and shadowy views of these notorious skulkers.

Mountain Trogon

Fulvous Owl

We gradually ascended some steeper and more open slopes where we enjoyed views of lekking **Wine-throated Hummingbirds** (up to eight birds according to Josué) along with **Northern Emerald Toucanet**, **Mexican Violet-ear** and **Yellowish Flycatcher**.

At lunchtime we stopped at the nearby Bambu Hotel where we ate our tortillas alongside views of a **Blue-tailed Hummingbird** (the hotel garden is perhaps the most reliable locations for this species). We then made our way back to San Lucas Toliman where we took a detour to La Playa - not a beach as the name suggests but rather an area of remnant forest, scrub and cultivated fields. This is one of Josué's favourite locations

and here we saw a huge mixed flock of over 30 species including **Golden-browed** and **Chestnut-capped Warblers**, **Cinnamon-bellied Saltator** and **Yellow-breasted Chat**. We also had a tantalising glimpse of female **Slender Sheartail** but could not achieve a better view before heading back for another go on the Tanager trail.

With no kestrels in sight we soon found two **Azure-rumped Tanagers** on the trail, both together in their usual location - an enormous fig tree not far from the path. We also saw another **Rufous Sabrewing** here along with good views of a pair of **Blue-and-white Mockingbirds**.

Los Tarrales, 15-18 January

After an unsuccessful second attempt to get good views of the **Slender Sheartail** at La Playa we headed south and downhill to Los Tarrales, arriving late in the morning. We were lucky that our visit coincided with the arrival of hundreds of parrots which were feeding on some large flowering trees a short distance from the lodge. These were mostly **Pacific Parakeets** as far as we could tell, although prolonged scope views of the treetops also identified **Orange-fronted Parakeets** and at least a few critically endangered **Yellow-naped Parrots**. Also in the treetops in the evening were **Red-billed Pigeons** and **Collared Aracaris**, while our first foray onto the trails located **Long-billed Starthroat**, **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**, **White-throated Magpie-jays** and **Scrub Euphonias**.

On the following two days we made an early start in order to be on the Rinconada trail shortly after dawn. Apart from some noisy and very showy **Crested Guans** we found the forest to be rather quiet and inactive, although with persistence we managed views of **Highland Guan**, **White-bellied Emerald** and **Blue-throated Goldentail**, **Gartered Trogon**, **Tody Motmot**, **Long-tailed Manakin**, **Yellow-throated Euphonia**, **Yellow-olive Flycatcher**, **Red-capped Ant-tanager**, **Fan-tailed Warbler** and the briefest glimpse of a **White-faced Quail-dove**. Birding was definitely easier around the feeding stations, where we had close views of **White-bellied Chachalaca**, **Cinnamon Hummingbird**, **Lesson's Motmot**, **Spot-breasted Oriole** and another **Yellow-breasted Chat**. We also tried to find **Rufous-breasted Spinetail** on the Laguna trail but had no luck.

Crested Guan

Yellow-breasted Chat

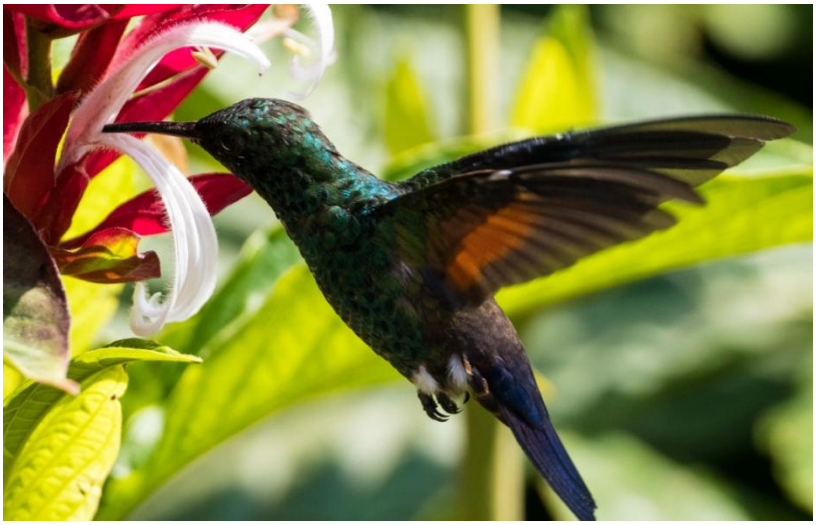
In the evenings we kept watch for **Lesser Swallow-tailed Swifts** which, according to Mike Moore's report, make a regular appearance over the reception buildings. Accordingly, on two evenings at around 5.45pm, we saw several in the company of **Vaux's Swifts**. Although viewed at great height, their strange, bat-like, fluttering flight, with noticeably stubby wings and forked tails confirmed their identification.

Mirador Rey Tepepul, Hotel Bambu, IMAP, 19 January

Today we searched for some of the birds previously overlooked in the Lake Atitlán area before we continued our journey into the Western Highlands. We arrived at Mirador Rey Tepepul early in the morning and quickly located the start of the trail a couple of hundred metres back down the road. It was steep and slippery in places, with numerous smaller side-trails created by woodcutters. We followed the main trail to a small stream at the bottom of the narrow valley and also explored one of the longer side trails, hearing **Highland Guans** and seeing some **Black Thrushes** and **Emerald-chinned Hummingbirds** amongst other more familiar species. We also had good views of several **Brown-backed Solitaires**, the first seen on the trip.

After another lunch-time stop at Hotel Bambu, and some photos of an obliging **Blue-tailed Hummingbird**, we headed back to San Lucas Toliman and IMAP where we eventually had good views of a female **Slender Sheartail**.

Brown-backed Solitaire



Blue-tailed Hummingbird

Chuiraxamelo Ecological Park, 20 January

This location, to the northwest of Lake Atitlán, is a hotspot notable for some species we had so far missed, including **Blue-throated Motmot**, **Chestnut-sided Shrike-vireo** and **Ruddy Foliage-gleaner**. Although perhaps better known for its zip lines and Mayan altars the site has several trails through good forest (subject to the usual woodcutting activities). After paying the entrance fee (Q20/person) we followed a wide track down the side of a steep hill and which eventually joined another even steeper trail which ascended the same hill. There were no other people present apart from a couple of woodcutters and some people tending the altars. With the exception of the **Mexican Violet-ears** it was very quiet during our few hours here and none of the species found were new, including **Highland Guan**, **White-eared** and **Wine-throated Hummingbirds** and **Crescent-chested Warbler**.

Fuentes Georginas, 21-24 January

We stayed here for three nights, giving us plenty of time to see **Horned Guan**, the main target species for this location. Fuentes Geroginas is famed for its hot pools and is thus very popular with visitors, especially at weekends, although few people climb the steep and slippery trail to the mirador and even fewer attempt the ridge trail. We ascended the trail to the ridge and mirador three times during our stay and saw different birds each time. In contrast to Mike Moore's report we found the mirador trail to be the most open and well-maintained, and we only walked the ridge trail once, finding it very overgrown on the steeper sections and only opening up on the more level areas further along the trail. We also viewed the forest from behind our cabin as well as the hot pools area, the latter being be excellent for the shyer species at first light and dusk when no or few visitors were present. Thick fog regularly covers the hill tops in the afternoon so early visits to the trails are recommended.

Several **Horned Guans** were found along the ridge trail, although none were seen well as the birds always flushed from the treetops before we could get decent views, so we were very lucky to find an immature bird in a tree by the hot pools early one morning. Other new birds seen on the trails include **Garnet-throated Hummingbird**, a large flock of **Black-throated Jays**, **Pink-headed Warbler**, **Flame-coloured Tanager**, **Chestnut-capped** and **White-naped Brushfinches, Rufous-browed Wren** and **Ruddy-capped Nightingale Thrush** (the latter four also by the pools at dusk and dawn). We saw our only **Black-capped Siskin** of the trip at the Mirador as well as a **Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer**. The access track was also quite productive, with more flowerpiercers and **Wine-throated Hummingbirds** in the roadside vegetation, the birds not seeming to mind the clouds of sulphuric vapours emerging from the ground nearby. We heard also heard **Blue-throated Motmots** in the scrubby forest above the road but could not encourage them to show themselves. On our last full day we were surprised to hear **Singing Quails** next to the trail and we even managed to catch sight of one when it flew across the path.

Horned Guan

Wine-throated Hummingbird

Volcán Chiquibal and Pologua Ecological Park, 24-25 January

Volcán Chiquibal is another hotspot with a tempting selection of montane forest species. Entrance to this location (50Q entrance fee/person), requires a very steep climb on the wide access track followed by a descent to an information centre and shop, with another even steeper track leading to a viewpoint over the scenic lake in the volcanic caldera. We spent a productive afternoon and morning here (again mornings are better to avoid fog), at last finding **Blue-throated Motmots** along with **Mountain Trogon**, **Blue-and-white**

Mockingbird, **Black-throated Jay, Black-headed Siskin**, numerous **Pink-headed Warblers** and three **Yellow-eyed Juncos**, the latter in a weedy field just before reaching the information centre.

On our way from Volcán Chiquibal to our next hotel we made a brief stop at Pologua Ecological Park, an area of pine forest on steep slopes (again with a zip line). Here we found some good flocks of warblers including our only **Hermit Warbler** of the trip.

Sierra de Los Cuchumatanes, 26-28 January

We arrived at Chiabal in the early afternoon and met up with our guide for the next two days Esteban Matias (esteban.matias@hotmail.com). As soon as we had settled in to our accommodation Esteban led us through the cultivated fields and scrubby slopes above his house. Here we heard some **Singing Quail** and quickly saw **Broad-tailed Hummingbird**, **Northern Flicker**, **Yellow-eyed Junco**, **Pine Flycatcher**, **Olive Warbler** and **Pine Siskin**. We also saw a **Scott's Oriole**, a regular visitor and far south of its wider range in Mexico. In the evening we made our first attempt to see some night-birds in the pine forests above the town of Todos Santos Cuchumatan, seeing several **Mexican Whip-poor-wills** and a **Fulvous Owl** but only hearing some **Unspotted Saw-whet Owls**.

Yellow-eyed Junco

Pine Flycatcher

The next day we took an early breakfast at a nearby restaurant before driving to the west of Chiabal where we saw **Goldman's Warblers** at several locations and had distant scope-views of three **Ocellated Quails** on a rocky hillside. In the afternoon we tried for **Chestnut-sided Shrike-vireo** and **Hooded Grosbeak**, scoring with two shrike-vireos which eventually gave excellent, eye-level views in the roadside bushes. As evening approached we travelled even further west on a gravel road to a pine forest where we saw **Northern Pygmy Owl** perched in a tree and two **Buffy-crowned Wood-partridges** crossing the track. The **Unspotted Saw-whet Owls** were more troublesome and, with a strengthening breeze and cool temperatures, our chances of seeing one seemed low. However, Esteban was indefatigable and unrelenting in his search and he eventually found two owls, giving us excellent views of the second which was perched low down in the roadside scrub.

Unspotted Saw-whet Owl

Goldman's Warbler

On our final morning Esteban decided to focus on finding us good views of **Ocellated Quail** in the scrubby fields above his house. This proved to be a good plan as the area supports a high density of this species and we eventually had views of several birds including a stunning male.

Finca Rubel Chaim and Chajbaoc Reserve, 29-30 January

We arranged access to this private farm, managed by Community Cloud Forest Conservation, through John Cahill (xikanel@gmail.com), another accomplished bird guide with a long history of birding in Guatemala. The weather was unseasonably wet and cold during our visit, which perhaps hampered our attempts to see some of the location's specialities. In particular **Middle American Leaftosser** and **Yellow-throated Nightingale-thrush** completely eluded us, and thick fog was probably responsible for our failure to see **Greater Swallow-tailed Swift**. That said, we enjoyed our visit to this scenic and peaceful location and we saw plenty of other excellent birds. A superb breakfast and lunch were provided by the CCFC lodge and we had plenty of time to explore the excellent trails around the farm.

During our full day here we saw several **Highland Guans**, recently returned to the farm following extensive forest restoration, along with **Violet Sabrewings** at the feeders, **Azure-crowned Hummingbird**, **Hook-billed Kite** overhead, **Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaner**, **Plumbeous**, **Yellow-throated** and **Philadelphia Vireos**, **Kentucky Warbler** and **Slate-coloured Solitaire**. John called in a **Guatemalan Tyrannulet**, which had eluded us at Fuentes Georgina, and we had close-up views of **Yellowish Tyrannulets** by the lodge. The most exciting find was a stunning **Golden-cheeked Warbler** high in the trees with a mixed flock, quickly followed by a group of **Blue-crowned Euphonias**.

In the late afternoon we travelled by 4WD up to a nearby mountain ridge in search of **Bearded Screech-owl**. With a stiff breeze, fog and rain we were not overly confident, but we need not have worried as John and his wife Michelle very quickly located two owls in low bushes only a few metres below the track, one of which allowed us to approach literally within arm's reach.

Slate-coloured Solitaire

Bearded Screech-owl

We had a couple of hours the next morning with John before he had to leave on a trip with another group. The weather was somewhat improved, although the leaftosser and nightingale-thrush remained stubbornly silent and out of view. Despite the limited time, John did not disappoint and we managed to add **Sharp-shinned Hawk**, **Grey-collared Becard**, **Eye-ringed Flatbill** and **Ruddy Foliage-gleaner** to our list.

John also kindly contacted the owner of the nearby Chajbaoc Reserve to forewarn him of our visit later in the morning. On our arrival at the reserve we met with Pedro, the reserve's caretaker and guide. After looking around some quite structured but wildlife-friendly gardens, where we saw a **Blue-winged Flycatcher**, we walked up the trails with Pedro. Given the lateness of our visit bird activity was perhaps lower than usual, although we saw **Plain Chachalaca**, **Common Pauraque**, **Ovenbird**, **Kentucky** and **Rufous-capped Warblers**, as well as a roosting **Middle American Screech-owl**. The most interesting find was a **Pheasant Cuckoo** which was calling in trees quite close to the trail but which remained frustratingly out of view.

Finca Santa Rosa, Ranchitos del Quetzal, 31 January

We did some roadside birding at the private Finca Santa Rosa on our way to Ranchitos del Quetzal. Our main target here was **Grace's Warbler** which can be found in pine trees along the road. There are four hot spots along the road through the Finca, although we only explored the first two. More interesting species recorded here include **Green-throated Mountain-gem**, **Elegant Euphonia**, **Yellow-backed Oriole**, **Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer** and **Slate-coloured Solitaire**. Unfortunately we had no luck with the warbler, which we also missed at Finca Rubel Chaim.

We arrived at the popular lodge at Ranchitos del Quetzal at mid-day when our first birds were two **Unicoloured Jays**, which have become habituated to the lodge staff replenishing food at the feeders whenever new guests turn up. After dropping our baggage at the accommodation we made our way to the start of the 2km loop trail where we saw the only **Bright-rumped Attila** and **Ochre-bellied Flycatcher** of the

trip. Given the lateness of the day we saw little further on, with a **Louisiana Waterthrush** on one of the waterfalls, some more **Unicoloured Jays** in the forest and the first of many **Grey-breasted Wood-wrens**.

Ranchitos del Quetzal and Biotopo del Quetzal, 1 - 2 February

On our second day we started up the trail in semi-darkness in hope of seeing the species we missed at Finca Rubel Chaim. We were not disappointed, quickly finding a **Middle American Leaftosser** on the path near the start of the trail, where it was so busy pulling moss out of the adjacent bank that it barely seemed to notice our approach. Towards the end of the trail we also had good views of a **Black-headed Nightingale-thrush**. Happy with our success we headed back to the lodge for breakfast where we bumped into Lester, Josué's brother, who showed us a fine male **Resplendent Quetzal** in a tree over the road.

Later in the morning we drove the short distance from Ranchitos del Quetzal to the cloud-forest reserve Biotopo del Quetzal. On paying the entrance fee (60Q/person) we undertook the longer of the two trail routes (3km and 4km options) through some excellent forest on very well-constructed and maintained paths. The first bird seen here was a stunning **Yellow-throated Nightingale-thrush**, only a few hundred metres from the start of the trail. Other birds seen along the trail include a male **Collared Trogon**, **Barred Forest-falcon** and a **Scaled Antpitta** which we saw walking along the path ahead of us.

Resplendent Quetzal

Yellow-throated Nightingale-thrush

On our final morning at Ranchitos del Quetzal we again made a very early start on the trail and were rewarded with views of three more **Yellow-throated Nightingale-thrushes,** all clearly visible on the open path. Along with the other nightingale-thrush and the leaftosser all these birds were hidden and silent when we visited the trail during the day and it seems they are rarely seen at this location after sunrise. Later, on our return from seeing the nightingale-thrushes, we also had a good view of a **White-faced Quail-dove** on the path, only a few metres from the start of the trail. After lunch we spotted a resident **White-nosed Coati** eating scraps below the feeding station and a juvenile **Barred Forest-falcon** above the lodge.

Heloderma Reserve, 3-4 February

Although requiring a significant diversion from our return journey to Guatemala City, this reserve is worth a visit for the chance of seeing **Lesser Ground-cuckoo**, although with only one night's stay we were not overly optimistic. On arriving we thought we found the correct track off the road from the village of Cabañas but there were no confirmatory signs to reassure us. Thankfully, while we considered which route to take, Franklin, the reserve's bird guide arrived on his motorbike and guided us for the remainder of the journey.

With temperatures in the low thirties conditions were much hotter than we were used to, so rather than exploring the trails in the reserve we returned to the access road and tracks below the gate as these were more level and shaded. This was a good move as we quickly found **Turquoise-browed** and **Russet-crowned Motmots** just below the gates. Then for the real surprise when a **Lesser Ground-cuckoo** flew across the track and landed in full view on the ground just a few metres away. Its behaviour was quite bizarre as it seemed completely unperturbed by us as it slowly walked into the shrubbery, where it spent much time peering intently at the ground, presumably in search of invertebrates, while all the time wagging its tail slowly from side-to-side. Eventually we moved on to look for other birds further down the track, finding **Northern Beardless Tyrannulets**, **Great Crested Flycatchers**, many **Altamira Orioles**, **Squirrel Cuckoo**, **Elegant Trogon** and **White-eyed Vireo.** The reserve staff went home in the afternoon so we had the place to ourselves as night fell. With dusk several **Lesser Nighthawks** could be seen flying over the reserve buildings and we saw a **Ferruginous Pygmy-owl** by the car parking area.

The following day Franklin joined us and we revisited some of the trails from the day before. Here we saw small flocks of **Orange-fronted Parakeets** and **White-fronted Parrots** along with **Ash-throated Flycatchers**, several **Yellow Grosbeaks** and a **Lesser Roadrunner**. Back at the reserve the small hummingbirds feeding in bushes by the accommodation turned out to be **Cavinet's Emerald** and we saw several **White-lored Gnatcatchers** in the same area. Finally, just before we left, Franklin showed us a captive **Guatemalan Beaded Lizard** after which the reserve is named.

Turquoise-browed Motmot

Lesser Ground-cuckoo

Checklist of birds seen or heard

(**IUCN Threatened, *IUCN Near-threatened)

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis* - at least 4 on two dates at IMAP, Lake Atitlán

Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris* - 1-3 on two dates at IMAP, Lake Atitlán

Blue-winged Teal *Spatula discors* - several on one date at IMAP, Lake Atitlán

American Wigeon *Mareca americana* - 1 at IMAP, Lake Atitlán

Highland Guan *Penelopina nigra*** - 1-6 on several dates at Volcan Atitlán, Los Tarrales, Mirador Rey Tepepul, Chuiraxamolo, Fuentes Georginas, Volcán Chicabal and Finca Rubel Chaim

Crested Guan *Penelope purpurascens** - up to 3 on two dates at Los Tarrales

Plain Chachalaca *Ortalis vetula* - 2 Chajbaoc

White-bellied Chachalaca *Ortalis leucogastra* - 2-5 daily at Los Tarrales, often at feeders

Horned Guan *Oreophasis derbianus*** - several in flight on the ridge trail at Fuentes Georginas and one immature bird perched in a tree adjacent to the hot pools early in the morning

Buffy-crowned Wood Partridge *Dendrortyx leucophrys* - 2 seen briefly while crossing a track at a bearded screech-owl location west of Todos Santos Cuchumatan; heard on two dates at Finca Rubel Chaim

Singing Quail *Dactylortyx thoracicus* - several heard and one seen briefly in flight on the path to the ridge trail at Fuentes Georginas

Ocellated Quail *Cyrtonyx ocellatus*** - 1 in flight at Los Robles and 3-5 on two dates in the Chiabal area

Least Grebe *Tachybaptus dominicus* - 1 at IMAP, Lake Atitlán

Rock Dove *Columba livia* - common in larger towns

Eurasian Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* - several at San Lucas Toliman and Panajachal

Band-tailed Pigeon *Patagioenas fasciata* - frequently seen or heard in montane forests around Lake Atitlán, Fuentes Georginas and elsewhere

Red-billed Pigeon *Patagioenas flavirostris* - up to 5 daily in treetops at Los Tarrales

White-tipped Dove *Leptotila verreauxi* - widespread but more often heard than seen at Finca el Pilar, in forests around Lake Atitlán, at Finca Rubel Chaim, Chajbaoc and Heloderma Reserve

White-faced Quail Dove *Geotrygon albifacies* - 1 briefly in the forest at Los Tarrales, several at Finca Rubel Chaim and 1 on the path at Ranchitos del Quetzal

White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica* - frequent at Finca el Pilar, around Lake Atitlán and at Heloderma Reserve

Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura* - 1 Los Robles

Inca Dove *Columbina inca* - up to 4 on six dates at Los Robles, Finca Santa Victoria, Tanager trail, La Playa, Los Tarrales and Heloderma Reserve

Common Ground Dove *Columbina passerina* - several at IMAP, Finca Santa Victoria and Mirador Rey Tepepul

Lesser Nighthawk *Chordeiles acutipennis* - up to 3 at dusk and dawn at Heloderma Reserve

Common Pauraque *Nyctidromus albicollis* - 1 accidentally flushed during the day at Chajbaoc

Mexican Whip-poor-will *Antrostomus arizonae* - up to 3 on the road above Todos Santos Cuchumatan

White-collared Swift *Streptoprocne zonaris* - 1 Los Tarrales

Vaux's Swift *Chaetura vauxi* - several on two dates at Los Tarrales

Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift *Panyptila cayennensis* - several seen high over the reception buildings at Los Tarrales on two evenings

Stripe-throated Hermit *Phaethornis striigularis* - 1 heard at Finca Rubel Chaim

Mexican Violetear *Colibri thalassinus* - 1-4 on eight dates at Volcan Atitlán, Chuiraxamolo, Fuentes Georginas, Volcán Chicabal and Chiabal area

Canivet's Emerald *Chlorostilbon canivetii* - at least 2 near the accommodation building at Heloderma Reserve

Emerald-chinned Hummingbird *Abeillia abeillei* - at least two feeding on flowering shrubs on the trail below Mirador Rey Tepepul

Rufous Sabrewing *Campylopterus rufus* - 1-2 on six dates at Finca el Pilar, Volcán Atitlán, Finca Santa Victoria, the Tanager trail, La Playa and Fuentes Georginas

Violet Sabrewing *Campylopterus hemileucurus* - 1-2 daily, usually at feeders, at Finca Rubel Chaim and Ranchitos del Quetzal

Cinnamon Hummingbird *Amazilia rutila* - several daily at feeders and on trails at Los Tarrales

White-bellied Emerald *Amazilia candida* - 1-2 daily on trails at Los Tarrales

Azure-crowned Hummingbird *Amazilia cyanocephala* - 1-2 on four dates at Finca el Pilar, Finca Santa Victoria and Finca Rubel Chaim

Berylline Hummingbird *Amazilia beryllina* - 1-2 on three dates at the Finca el Pilar feeders and the San Lucas Toliman hotel

Blue-tailed Hummingbird *Amazilia cyanura* - singles on two dates at Hotel Bambu

Blue-throated Goldentail *Hylocharis eliciae* - 1 on the Rinconada trail at Los Tarrales

White-eared Hummingbird *Hylocharis leucotis* - widespread and 1-2 seen at several locations including Volcán Atitlán, Chuiraxamolo, Fuentes Georginas, Volcán Chicabal, Chiabal, Finca Rubel Chaim and Finca Santa Rosa

Rivoli's Hummingbird *Eugenes fulgens* - 1-2 on five dates at Finca el Pilar, Los Robles, Chiabal, Finca Rubel Chaim and Ranchitos del Quetzal

Long-billed Starthroat *Heliomaster longirostris* - singles on three dates at Los Tarrales

Green-throated Mountain-gem *Lampornis viridipallen* - singles on three dates at Volcán Atitlán, Fuentes Georginas and Ranchitos del Quetzal and probably overlooked elsewhere

Garnet-throated Hummingbird *Lamprolaima rhami* - 1-2 on three dates at Fuentes Georginas and in the Chiabal area

Slender Sheartail *Doricha enicura* - single females on three dates at IMAP and La Playa

Sparkling-tailed Woodstar *Tilmatura dupontii* - at least 3 at Finca Santa Victoria

Ruby-throated Hummingbird *Archilochus colubris* - 1-2 on four dates at Mirador Mario Montenegro, Finca Santa Victoria, the Tanager trail, Volcán Atitlán, La Playa, Los Tarrales and Mirador Rey Tepepul

Wine-throated Hummingbird *Atthis ellioti* - up to 8 birds at active leks at Volcan Atitlán, Chuiraxamolo and on the access road at Fuentes Georginas

Broad-tailed Hummingbird *Selasphorus platycercus* - 1-2 daily in the Chiabal area

Groove-billed Ani *Crotophaga sulcirostris* - small groups at IMAP, Los Tarrales and Heloderma Reserve

Pheasant Cuckoo *Dromococcyx phasianellus* - 1 heard tantalisingly close to the trail at Chajbaoc

Lesser Roadrunner *Geococcyx velox* - 1 at Heloderma Reserve

Squirrel Cuckoo *Piaya cayana* - singles at La Playa, Ranchitos del Quetzal and Heloderma Reserve

Lesser Ground-cuckoo *Morococcyx erythropygus* - 1 seen well on the access track below the reserve at Heloderma Reserve

Sora *Porzana carolina* - 1 foraging by the quay at IMAP

Common Gallinule *Gallinula galeata* - small numbers on Lake Atitlán at San Lucas Toliman and IMAP

American Coot *Fulica americana* - common on Lake Atitlán and seen from San Lucas Toliman, Hotel Bambu and IMAP

Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* - singles at IMAP, a flock feeding on farmland on the access road to Los Tarrales and 1-2 in an avocado plantation on the approach to Finca Rubel Chaim

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias* - 1-2 on three dates from San Lucas Toliman, Hotel Bambu and IMAP on Lake Atitlán

Great Egret *Ardea alba* - 1-2 on five dates on Lake Atitlán and on farmland on the access road to Los Tarrales

Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea* - 2 on Lake Atitlán from San Lucas Toliman

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius* - 1 foraging by the quay at IMAP

Laughing Gull *Leucophaeus atricilla* - small numbers seen from San Lucas Toliman and Hotel Bambu on Lake Atitlán

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura* - common and widespread throughout

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus* - common and widespread throughout

Hook-billed Kite *Chondrohierax uncinatus* - 1 overhead at Finca Rubel Chaim

Sharp-shinned Hawk *Accipiter striatus* - 1 perched in tree at Finca Rubel Chaim

Cooper's Hawk *Accipiter cooperii* - 1 overhead at Volcan Atitlán

Grey Hawk *Buteo plagiatus* - 1 perched in a tree at Los Tarrales

Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus* - singles on five dates at Volcan Atitlán, Los Tarrales, Fuentes Georginas, Chiabal and Heloderma Reserve

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis* - 1 overhead at Los Robles

Northern Pygmy Owl *Glaucidium gnoma* - 1 perched in a pine forest west of Chiabal

Ferruginous Pygmy Owl *Glaucidium brasilianum* - heard at Ranchitos del Quetzal and singles seen on two dates at Heloderma Reserve

Unspotted Saw-whet Owl *Aegolius ridgwayi* - several heard in the Todos Santos Cuchumatan area and 2 seen the following night west of Chiabal

Bearded Screech Owl *Megascops barbarus* - 2 of the rufous form seen at close range in roadside bushes at Finca Rubel Chaim

Middle American Screech Owl *Megascops guatemalae* - 1 at a daytime roost at Chajbaoc and others heard at Ranchitos del Quetzal and Heloderma Reserve

Fulvous Owl *Strix fulvescens* - 1-2 seen at Volcan Atitlán and near Todos Santos Cuchumatan and another heard a Finca Rubel Chaim

Middle American Screech-owl

Great Horned Owl *Bubo virginianus* - 1 heard on the Tanager Trail

Resplendent Quetzal *Pharomachrus mocinno** - a male and female at the entrance gate to Ranchitos del Quetzal and a single female in the parking area at Biotopo del Quetzal

Gartered Trogon *Trogon caligatus* - 1 female on the Rinconado trail at Los Tarrales

Elegant Trogon *Trogon elegans* - several seen from the access tracks below Heloderma Reserve

Mountain Trogon *Trogon mexicanus* - 1-2 at six dates at Volcán Atitlán, Chuiraxamolo, Fuentes Georginas and Volcán Chicabal

Collared Trogon *Trogon collaris* - 1-2 on five dates at Finca el Pilar, Finca Rubel Chaim, Finca Santa Rosa and Biotopo del Quetzal

Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus* - small numbers seen on six dates at Finca Santa Victoria, Volcán Atitlán, Los Robles, La Playa, Chiabal and Finca Rubel Chaim

Golden-olive Woodpecker *Colaptes rubiginosus* - 1-2 on seven dates at Los Robles, La Playa, Volcán Atitlán, Los Tarrales, Fuentes Georginas and around Chiabal

Acorn Woodpecker *Melanerpes formicivorus* - at least 6 at Los Robles and Mirador Mario Montenegro

Golden-fronted Woodpecker *Melanerpes aurifrons* - widespread and common; seen at Finca el Pilar, around Lake Atitlán, Los Tarrales, Finca Rubel Chaim, Ranchitos del Quetzal and Heloderma Reserve

Hairy Woodpecker *Picoides villosus* - singles on five dates at Finca el Pilar, Fuentes Georginas, Volcán Chicabal , Finca Rubel Chaim and Ranchitos del Quetzal

Smoky-brown Woodpecker *Picoides fumigatus* -1 heard at Finca Rubel Chaim

Northern Emerald Toucanet *Aulacorhynchus prasinus* - 1-2 on seven dates at Volcan Atitlán, Mirador Rey Tepepul, Fuentes Georginas, Finca Rubel Chaim and Ranchitos del Quetzal

Collared Aracari *Pteroglossus torquatus* - groups of up to 6 on two dates in treetops at Los Tarrales

Tody Motmot *Hylomanes momotula* - 1 on the Rinconada trail at Los Tarrales

Blue-throated Motmot *Aspatha gularis* - several heard in the forest and along the access road at Fuentes Georginas and 2 seen from the access road to Volcan Chicabal

Blue-throated Motmot

Lesson's Motmot *Momotus lessonii* - 1-3 on six dates at Los Tarrales feeders and Finca Rubel Chaim

Russet-crowned Motmot *Momotus mexicanus* - 2-3 on two dates at Heloderma Reserve

Turquoise-browed Motmot *Eumomota superciliosa* - 2-3 on two dates at Heloderma Reserve

Barred Forest Falcon *Micrastur ruficollis* - singles at Biotopo del Quetzal and Ranchitos del Quetzal

Crested Caracara *Caracara cheriway* - 3 on the Laguna trail at Los Tarrales

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius* - 1-3 on five dates at Los Robles, Tanager trail, Los Tarrales, on overhead wires along the road to Cobán, and at Finca Rubel Chaim

White-fronted Parrot *Amazona albifrons* - at least 2 on two dates at Finca el Pilar and Heloderma Reserve

Yellow-naped Parrot *Amazona auropalliata* ** - unknown numbers in large flocks with other parrots at Los Tarrales

Orange-fronted Parakeet *Eupsittula canicularis* ** - flocks at Los Tarrales and Heloderma Reserve

Pacific Parakeet *Psittacara strenuus* - a flock of 20 over the Tanager trail and large flocks feeding on fruiting trees at Los Tarrales

Barred Parakeet *Bolborhynchus lineola* - 2 heard at Volcán Atitlán

Long-tailed Manakin *Chiroxiphia linearis* - several daily on the Rinconada trail at Los Tarrales

Masked Tityra *Tityra semifasciata* -1-3 on five dates at Finca el Pilar, Los Tarrales, Finca Rubel Chaim and Heloderma Reserve

Rose-throated Becard *Pachyramphus aglaiae* - 1-2 on five dates at Los Robles, Volcan Atitlán, Fuentes Georginas, Volcán Chicabal and Finca Rubel Chaim

Grey-collared Becard *Pachyramphus major* - a pair at Finca Rubel Chaim

Ochre-bellied Flycatcher *Mionectes oleagineus* - singles at Finca Rubel Chaim and Ranchitos del Quetzal

Eye-ringed Flatbill *Rhynchocyclus brevirostris* - 1-2 seen or heard at Finca Rubel Chaim

Yellow-olive Flycatcher *Tolmomyias sulphurescens* - 2 Los Tarrales

Common Tody Flycatcher *Todirostrum cinereum* - 1 on two dates at Los Tarrales

Guatemalan Tyrannulet *Zimmerius vilissimus* - heard at Fuentes Georginas and 3 seen at Finca Rubel Chaim

Northern Beardless Tyrannulet *Camptostoma imberbe* - several on two dates at Heloderma Reserve

Bright-rumped Attila *Attila spadiceus* - 1 Ranchitos del Quetzal

Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus* - 1-2 on three dates at Los Tarrales and Heloderma Reserve

Boat-billed Flycatcher *Megarynchus pitangua* - 1-2 on six dates at Volcan Atitlán, Los Tarrales, Finca Santa Rosa and Heloderma Reserve

Social Flycatcher *Myiozetetes similis* - 1-2 on six dates at Finca el Pilar, Los Robles, Finca Santa Victoria, Los Tarrales and Heloderma Reserve

Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus* - small numbers on seven dates at Antigua, Finca el Pilar, Los Robles, La Playa, Los Tarrales and Heloderma Reserve

Dusky-capped Flycatcher *Myiarchus tuberculifer* - 1-2 at Volcán Atitlán, Los Tarrales and Finca Rubel Chaim

Great Crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus crinitus* - at least 4 at Heloderma Reserve

Brown-crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus tyrannulus* - 1 at Volcan Atitlán

Ash-throated Flycatcher *Myiarchus cinerascens* - 4 Heloderma Reserve

Tufted Flycatcher *Mitrephanes phaeocercus*- 1-2 at Finca el Pilar, Los Robles, Finca Rubel Chaim, Finca Santa Rosa and Ranchitos del Quetzal

Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans* - 1-2 on three dates at San Lucas Toliman, Los Robles Finca Santa Victoria, and Los Tarrales

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher *Empidonax flaviventris* - 1-3 on four dates at Los Tarrales, Biotopo del Quetzal and Finca Rubel Chaim

Hammond's Flycatcher *Empidonax hammondii* - quite widespread and seen at many locations including Los Robles, Finca Santa Victoria, La Playa, Volcán Atitlán, Los Tarrales, Mirador Rey Tepepul, Fuentes Georginas, Chiabal and Finca Rubel Chaim

Pine Flycatcher *Empidonax affinis* - 2 called in by Esteban at Chiabal

Yellowish Flycatcher *Empidonax flavescens* - 1-2 at Volcan Atitlán and Finca Rubel Chaim

Buff-breasted Flycatcher *Empidonax fulvifrons* - 1-2 on three dates at Los Robles, Fuentes Georginas and Chiabal

Greater Pewee *Contopus pertinax* - 1-3 on four dates at Los Robles, Finca Santa Victoria, Tanager trail, La Playa and Finca Rubel Chaim

Tropical Pewee *Contopus cinereus* - 1 Los Tarrales

Belted Flycatcher *Xenotriccus callizonus* - 1 at Los Robles

Barred Antshrike *Thamnophilus doliatus* - singles heard at Los Tarrales and Finca Rubel Chaim

Scaled Antpitta *Grallaria guatimalensis* - 1 on the path at Biotopo del Quetzal

Middle American Leaftosser *Sclerurus mexicanus* - 2 heard at Finca Rubel Chaim and 1 eventually seen well at Ranchitos del Quetzal

Olivaceous Woodcreeper *Sittasomus griseicapillus* - 1 at Biotopo del Quetzal

Ivory-billed Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus flavigaster* - 1 Los Tarrales

Spotted Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus erythropygius* - singles at Finca Rubel Chaim, Ranchitos del Quetzal and Heloderma Reserve

Spot-crowned Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes affinis* - 1-2 on six dates at La Playa, Fuentes Georginas, Volcán Chicabal, Finca Rubel Chaim and Ranchitos del Quetzal

Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaner *Anabacerthia variegaticeps* - 1-2 on three dates at Finca Rubel Chaim and Ranchitos del Quetzal

Ruddy Foliage-gleaner *Clibanornis rubiginosus* - 1 seen briefly and others heard at Finca Rubel Chaim

Rufous-browed Peppershrike *Cyclarhis gujanensis* - 1-2 on three dates at Volcán Atitlán, Los Tarrales and Finca Rubel Chaim and probably overlooked elsewhere

Chestnut-sided Shrike Vireo *Vireolanius melitophrys* - 2 Chiabal

White-eyed Vireo *Vireo griseus* - 2 Heloderma Reserve

Yellow-throated Vireo *Vireo flavifrons* - 1 Finca Rubel Chaim

Plumbeous Vireo *Vireo plumbeus* - 1 Finca Rubel Chaim

Blue-headed Vireo *Vireo solitarius* - 1-4 on five dates at Los Robles, Finca Santa Victoria, Volcan Atitlán, Volcán Chicabal, Finca Rubel Chaim and Ranchitos del Quetzal

Hutton's Vireo *Vireo huttoni* - 1 Los Robles

Warbling Vireo *Vireo gilvus* - 2 Santa Victoria

Brown-capped Vireo *Vireo leucophrys* - 1 Volcan Atitlán

Philadelphia Vireo *Vireo philadelahicus* - 2 Finca Rubel Chaim

Black-throated Jay *Cyanolyca pumilo* - flocks seen at Volcan Atitlán, Fuentes Georginas and Volcán Chicabal

Unicolored Jay *Aphelocoma unicolor* - small flock regularly at feeders at Ranchitos del Quetzal

Steller's Jay *Cyanocitta stelleri* - flocks seen at Los Robles, Volcán Chicabal and Chiabal

White-throated Magpie Jay *Cyanocorax formosus* - 1-2 seen daily at Los Tarrales

Bushy-crested Jay *Cyanocorax melanocyaneus* - flocks seen at Finca el Pilar, La Playa, Volcán Atitlán, Finca Rubel Chaim, Finca Santa Rosa and in the gardens at the Ram Tzul hotel

Olive Warbler/Peucedramus *Peucedramus taeniatus* - a pair seen at Mirador Mario Montenegro and several more on two dates at Chiabal

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* - commonly seen in built-up areas

Blue-crowned Chlorophonia *Chlorophonia occipitalis* - heard at the Tanager trail and a flock of nine seen in treetops at Finca Rubel Chaim

Scrub Euphonia *Euphonia affinis* - 2 at Los Tarrales

Yellow-throated Euphonia *Euphonia hirundinacea* - up to three daily at Los Tarrales, often at feeders

Elegant Euphonia *Euphonia elegantissima* - small numbers on six dates at Volcan Atitlán, Mirador Rey Tepepul, Chiabal, Finca Rubel Chaim and Finca Santa Rosa

Pine Siskin *Spinus pinus* - small flocks on two dates at Chiabal

Lesser Goldfinch *Spinus psaltria* - 1-2 on three dates at Los Robles, Volcán Chicabal and Finca Rubel Chaim

Black-capped Siskin *Spinus atriceps* - 1 at the Fuentes Georginas mirador

Black-headed Siskin *Spinus notatus* - 1-2 on five dates at Mirador Mario Montenegro, Volcán Atitlán, Volcán Chicabal and the Ram Tzul hotel

Common Tanager Finch *Chlorospingus flavopectus* - singles and small groups seen on seven dates at Volcan Atitlán, Chiabal, Finca Rubel Chaim, Finca Santa Rosa, Ranchitos del Quetzal, Biotopo del Quetzal and Heloderma Reserve

Chestnut-capped Brush Finch *Arremon brunneinucha* - small numbers seen daily at Fuentes Georginas, particularly at dawn and dusk around the hot pools, and also at Finca Rubel Chaim and Ranchitos del Quetzal

Spotted Towhee *Pipilo maculatus* - 1-3 on four dates at Los Robles, Volcán Chicabal and Chiabal

White-naped Brush Finch *Atlapetes albinucha* - 1-2 on four dates at the Volcán Atitlán, the Tanager trail, Fuentes Georginas (by pools) and Chiabal

White-faced Ground Sparrow *Melozone biarcuata* – 1-2 at the Tanager trail and Volcan Atitlán

White-eared Ground Sparrow *Melozone leucotis* - 2 at Los Robles and La Playa

Rusty Sparrow *Aimophila rufescens* - 2 Volcan Atitlán and 1 La Playa

Yellow-eyed Junco *Junco phaeonotus* - 3 in a weedy field at Volcán Chicabal and 2-3 daily at Chiabal

Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis* - small numbers at Los Robles, Los Tarrales, Fuentes Georginas and Chiabal

Lincoln's Sparrow *Melospiza lincolnii* - 2 Los Robles

Ovenbird *Seiurus aurocapilla* - singles on four dates at Los Tarrales, Finca Rubel Chaim and Chajbaoc

Worm-eating Warbler *Helmitheros vermivorum* - singles on five dates Finca el Pilar, Los Robles, La Playa, Volcán Atitlán and Finca Rubel Chaim

Louisiana Waterthrush *Parkesia motacilla* - 1-4 seen or heard on four dates at Finca Rubel Chaim, Ranchitos del Quetzal and at the Ram Tzul hotel

Blue-winged Warbler *Vermivora cyanoptera* - 1 Chajbaoc

Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia* - widespread at higher elevations and seen on fifteen dates

Crescent-chested Warbler *Oreothlypis superciliosa* - 1-3 on five dates at Volcan Atitlán, Chuiraxamolo, Fuentes Georginas, Volcán Chicabal, Pologua and Chiabal

Tennessee Warbler *Leiothlypis peregrina* - one of the most frequent warblers with numerous sightings at sixteen locations

Nashville Warbler *Leiothlypis ruficapilla* - 1-2 on five dates at Los Robles, Volcán Atitlán, Finca Santa Victoria, Los Tarrales and Fuentes Georginas

MacGillivray's Warbler *Geothlypis tolmiei* - 1-2 at Los Robles, Finca Santa Victoria and the Tanager trail

Kentucky Warbler *Geothlypis formosa* - 1 Finca Rubel Chaim and 2 Chajbaoc

Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas* - 2 IMAP and 1 Los Tarrales

Magnolia Warbler *Setophaga magnolia* - singles on five dates at La Playa, Los Tarrales, Finca Rubel Chaim and Ranchitos del Quetzal

Yellow Warbler *Setophaga petechia* - singles on two dates at Los Tarrales

Chestnut-sided Warbler *Setophaga pensylvannica* - 1-2 on two dates at Finca Rubel Chaim

Yellow-rumped Warbler *Setophaga coronata* - 1 Fuentes Georginas and several sightings of *S. coronata goldmani* 'Goldman's warbler' at locations around Chiabal

Townsend's Warbler *Setophaga townsendi* - another of the more frequently seen warblers with numerous sightings in the Western Highlands (but with none further east in the Cobán area)

Hermit Warbler *Setophaga occidentalis* - 1 in a mixed flock in a pine forest at Pologua

Golden-cheeked Warbler *Setophaga chrysoparia*** - 1 in treetops at Finca Rubel Chaim

Black-throated Green Warbler *Setophaga virens* - frequent and most abundant in the Cobán area

Fan-tailed Warbler *Basileuterus lachrymosus* - 2 on the Rinconada trail at Los Tarrales

Chestnut-capped Warbler Basileuterus delattrii - 1 La Playa

Rufous-capped Warbler *Basileuterus rufifrons* - singles at Chiabal and Finca Rubel Chaim

Golden-browed Warbler *Basileuterus belli* - small groups of 3-4 birds seen on five dates at Volcán Atitlán, Fuentes Georginas, Chiabal and Ranchitos del Quetzal

Golden-crowned Warbler *Basileuterus culicivorus* - 1-2 at Volcán Atitlán, Los Tarrales and Finca Rubel Chaim

Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla* - widespread and frequent; seen almost daily

Pink-headed Warbler *Cardellina versicolor* - 1-2 birds often seen in mixed flocks; seen on six dates at Fuentes Georginas, Volcán Chicabal, Pologua and Chiabal

Slaty-throated Whitestart *Myioborus miniatus* - widespread and frequent; seen or heard on eleven dates

Yellow-breasted Chat *Icteria virens* - 1 in a mixed flock at La Playa and 1 on two dates at the Los Tarrales feeding station

Yellow-billed Cacique *Amblycercus holosericeus* - 1 La Playa

Chestnut-headed Oropendola *Psarocolius wagleri* - 6 Finca Rubel Chaim and 2 Chajbaoc

Yellow-backed Oriole *Icterus chrysater* - 1-4 on three dates at La Playa, Finca Rubel Chaim and Finca Santa Rosa

Altamira Oriole *Icterus gularis* -1-2 daily at the Los Tarrales feeding station, by the hotel in Panajachel and numerous at the Heloderma Reserve

Baltimore Oriole *Icterus galbula* - 1-5 on three dates at La Playa, Los Tarrales and Finca Rubel Chaim

Spot-breasted Oriole *Icterus pectoralis* - at least 2 on two dates at the Los Tarrales feeding station

Spot-breasted Oriole

Bar-winged Oriole *Icterus maculialatus* - 1 at Finca el Pilar and 2 La Playa

Black-vented Oriole *Icterus wagleri* - 1 Finca el Pilar and 2 La Playa

Orchard Oriole *Icterus spurius* - 1 Finca el Pilar and 1-3 at Los Tarrales

Scott's Oriole *Icterus parisorum* - 1 immature male seen on two dates at Chiabal

Bronzed Cowbird *Molothrus aeneus* - at least 20 at an evening roost around the hotel in Panajachel

Melodious Blackbird *Dives dives* - generally small numbers on eight dates at Los Robles, La Playa, Los Tarrales, Finca Rubel Chaim and Heloderma Reserve

Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus* - widespread and numerous; seen on fifteen dates, particularly abundant at Los Tarrales and Chiabal

Yellow Grosbeak *Pheucticus chrysopeplus* - 4 in trees along the tracks below Heloderma Reserve

Rose-breasted Grosbeak *Pheucticus ludovicianus* - 1-2 on nine dates a Finca el Pilar, Los Robles, Finca Santa Victoria, the Tanager trail, Volcán Atitlán, La Playa, Los Tarrales, Fuentes Georginas and Chajbaoc

Indigo Bunting *Passerina cyanea* - 3 IMAP and 1 Los Tarrales

Painted Bunting *Passerina ciris* - 1 La Playa

Red-crowned Ant Tanager *Habia rubica* - 2 on the Rinconada trail, Los Tarrales

White-winged Tanager *Piranga leucoptera* - singles on four dates at La Playa, Los Tarrales, Fuentes Georginas and Finca Rubel Chaim

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra* - 1-2 on four dates at Los Robles, La Playa, Mirador Rey Tepepul and Finca Rubel Chaim

Flame-colored Tanager ***Piranga bidentata*** - singles at Volcán Atitlán and Fuentes Georginas but probably overlooked elsewhere

Western Tanager ***Piranga ludoviciana*** - quite widespread and abundant; individuals or groups on 12 dates at Finca el Pilar, Los Robles, La Playa, Los Tarrales, Mirador Rey Tepepul, Chuiraxamolo, Fuentes Georginas, Volcán Chicabal and Heloderma Reserve

Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer ***Diglossa baritula*** - 1-4 on four dates at Fuentes Georginas (at the mirador and along access road), Chiabal and Finca Santa Rosa

Crimson-collared Tanager ***Ramphocelus sanguinolentus*** - 1-2 on two dates at Finca Rubel Chaim

Red-legged Honeycreeper ***Cyanerpes cyaneus*** - a small flock on two dates feeding high in trees above the Los Tarrales mirador

White-collared Seedeater ***Sporophila torqueola*** - 1-2 on four dates at Los Tarrales and Mirador Rey Tepepul

Buff-throated Saltator ***Saltator maximus*** - 1-3 on two dates at Finca Rubel Chaim

Black-headed Saltator ***Saltator atriceps*** - noisy groups seen on trails and feeders daily at Los Tarrales; also seen at Finca Rubel Chaim and Heloderma Reserve

Cinnamon-bellied Saltator ***Saltator grandis*** - 2 on two dates at La Playa and 1 at Los Tarrales

Blue-grey Tanager ***Tangara episcopus*** - 1-2 on five dates at Los Robles, Finca Santa Victoria, Los Tarrales and by the hotel in Panajachal

Yellow-winged Tanager ***Tangara abbas*** - 2-4 on eight dates in the hotel garden at Antigua, at La Playa, Los Tarrales, Mirador Rey Tepepul, Finca Rubel Chaim, the Ram Tzul hotel and Ranchitos del Quetzal

Azure-rumped Tanager ***Tangara cabanisi*** ** - 2 on the Tanager Trail

Barn Swallow ***Hirundo rustica*** - a flock over Finca el Pilar

Violet-green Swallow ***Tachycineta thalassina*** - up to 30 at Los Robles with smaller numbers at Los Tarrales, Chiabal and Finca Rubel Chaim

Mangrove Swallow ***Tachycineta albilinea*** - a small flock over the Los Tarrales reception area

Grey-breasted Martin ***Progne chalybea*** - several loafing at a fuel station on the way to the Heloderma Reserve

Northern Rough-winged Swallow ***Stelgidopteryx serripennis*** - 2 at Finca el Pilar and small numbers at Mirador Rey Tepepul

Black-capped Swallow ***Atticora pileata*** - small flocks overhead at Los Robles and a few individuals passed over Finca Rubel Chaim during the afternoon

Bushtit ***Psaltriparus minimus*** - parties of 10-20 at Los Robles, La Playa and Chiabal

Grey Silky-flycatcher ***Ptiliogonys cinereus*** - at least 30 high in distant trees at Finca el Pilar and smaller numbers seen at Los Robles, Volcan Atitlán and Fuentes Georginas

House Wren ***Troglodytes aedon*** - individuals on eight dates at Los Robles, La Playa, Los Tarrales, Fuentes Georginas and Chiabal

Rufous-browed Wren ***Troglodytes rufociliatus*** - 1-4 on five dates at Chuiraxamolo, Fuentes Georginas, Volcán Chicabal, Chiabal and Finca Rubel Chaim; probably overlooked earlier during the trip

Band-backed Wren ***Campylorhynchus zonatus*** - 2-6 on eight dates at Finca el Pilar, Los Robles, Volcán Atitlán, La Playa, Mirador Rey Tepepul, Volcán Chicabal, Finca Rubel Chaim and Chajbaoc

Rufous-naped Wren ***Campylorhynchus rufinucha*** - small groups at Los Tarrales and Heloderma Reserve

Spot-breasted Wren ***Pheugopedius maculipectus*** - 1-2 heard daily at Los Tarrales

Rufous-and-white Wren *Thryophilus rufalbus* - 1 heard on the Tanager trail

Plain/Cabani's Wren *Cantorchilus modestus* - 1-2 on two dates at Finca Santa Victoria and Volcán Atitlán

White-breasted Wood Wren *Henicorhina leucosticta* - 1 Los Tarrales

Grey-breasted Wood Wren *Henicorhina leucophrys* - 1-4 seen or heard on eight dates at Volcan Atitlán, Mirador Rey Tepepul, Finca Rubel Chaim and Ranchitos del Quetzal

White-lored Gnatcatcher *Polioptila albiloris* - 2-4 on two dates at Heloderma Reserve

Blue-and-white Mockingbird *Melanotis hypoleucus* - 1-2 on five dates at Finca Santa Victoria, the Tanager trail, La Playa, Volcán Chicabal and Finca Rubel Chaim

Grey Catbird *Dumetella carolinensis* - 2-3 on two dates at Finca Rubel Chaim

Tropical Mockingbird *Mimus gilvus* - 1-2 on three dates at IMAP and La Playa

Eastern Bluebird *Sialia sialis* - 2-4 on four dates at Los Robles and around Chiabal

Brown-backed Solitaire *Myadestes occidentalis* - 1-5 seen or heard on nine dates at Finca el Pilar, Volcan Atitlán, Mirador Rey Tepepul, Fuentes Georginas, Volcán Chicabal and Finca Santa Rosa

Slate-colored Solitaire *Myadestes unicolor* - 1-5 seen or heard on three dates at Finca Rubel Chaim and Finca Santa Rosa

Wood Thrush *Hylocichla mustelina* - 1-4 on two dates at Finca Rubel Chaim and Chajbaoc

Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus* - 1 on two dates at the Los Tarrales feeding station

Orange-billed Nightingale-thrush *Catharus aurantiirostris* - 1-2 heard at Finca Santa Victoria and Finca Rubel Chaim

Ruddy-capped Nightingale Thrush *Catharus frantzii* - 1-2 on three dates at Fuentes Georginas where only seen at dawn and dusk around the hot pools areas

Black-headed Nightingale Thrush *Catharus mexicanus* - 1 Ranchitos del Quetzal

Yellow-throated/Spotted Nightingale Thrush *Catharus dryas* - 2 at Volcan Atitlán, 1 near the start of the trail at Biotopo del Quetzal and 3 at dawn on the path at Ranchitos del Quetzal

White-throated Thrush *Turdus assimilis* - singles on two dates at La Playa and Los Tarrales

Clay-colored Thrush *Turdus greyi* - widespread and quite numerous; seen or heard almost daily

Black Thrush *Turdus infuscatus* - 1-3 on four dates at Mirador Rey Tepepul and Fuentes Georginas

Rufous-collared Thrush *Turdus rufitorque* - 3 at Los Robles and flocks seen daily at Fuentes Georginas, Volcán Chicabal and Chiabal

Other groups

White-nosed Coati *Nasua coati* - 1 at the Ranchitos del Quetzal feeding station

Deppe's Squirrel *Sciurus deppei* - 1-2 seen at La Playa, Los Tarrales and Ranchitos del Quetzal

Central American Agouti *Dasyprocta punctata* - 1-2 regularly at the feeding station and on the trails

White-tailed Deer *Odocoileus virginianus* - at least four including twin fawns at Los Tarrales

Guatemalan/Motagua Valley Beaded Lizard *Heloderma chartesbogerti* - 1 temporarily captive animal seen at the Heloderma Reserve

Ocellated Quail

Accommodation

Prices vary depending on exchange rates, how and when booked etc. Indicative costings shown based on Sterling costs as: *** >£75; ** £20-75; * <£20)

9 Jan. Barcelo Guatemala City guatemalacity@barcelo.com pre-booked via Tripadvisor from UK due to flight arriving late night. Took taxi from airport (about 70Q). With help from the hotel staff we managed to get the Hertz car delivered here on the following day. B&B ***

10/11 Jan. Good Hotel, Antigua Guatemala https://goodhotel.co/antigua/eat-drink. Comfort for a couple of nights – having a birthday here encouraged the staff to give us an upgrade to the Patio Room and one free breakfast at the Saul restaurant next door! Not too far to walk to Finca El Pilar. Parking in secure area just up the road. Room only ***

12/13/14 Jan. Hotel Toliman, San Lucas Toliman https://hoteltoliman.com/ pre-booked for three nights from UK. Arranged a packed breakfast when leaving early to go birding (a sandwich, drink, fruit and biscuit). The full breakfast in the hotel was very good, as were all the meals here, despite limited vegetarian choices. Swimming pool, gardens and off-road parking available, also access to Lago Atitlán. B&B **

15/16/17 Jan. Los Tarrales https://www.tarralesreserve.com/ pre-booked from UK, although did extend by one night on arrival. Room only, in the Las Chachas building. Meals and beer available on-site. We had snacks with us for breakfast out on the trails (access to trails included in price), only having one breakfast on the last day. Room only **

18/19 Jan. Posada de los Volcanes, Panajachel https://posadadelosvolcanes.com/en/ booked the day before for two nights. Parking free in gated area opposite the hotel. Room-only **

20 Jan. Los Cumbres. Spa hotel near Zunil https://lascumbres.com.gt/en/start-2019/ , just turned up and only had pricy room left (but with own sauna room!). Good pancakes for breakfast, restaurant available. B&B ***

21/22/23 Jan. Fuentes Georginas (contact via Whatsapp +502 5704 2959 Don Tito). Pre-booked from UK for three nights, but had to arrange to pay by bank transfer before room confirmed (with help of Josué). Room only (with own spa pool and log fire). Meals on site but note that the restaurant closes at 6pm. Small shop on site to buy snacks during opening hours. Room only **

24 Jan. San Martin Sacatepequez, Centro Turistico y Recreacciones Chile Verde. Cheap hotel with restaurant in attached sports centre and secure parking. Found using Google maps in the village from where there is access to the steep track to Volcan Chiquibal (15Q to park, it is a steep few kms to walk to the mirador although 4WD 'taxis' are available). Room only *

25 Jan. Hotel Piedras Negras. South of Huehuetenango, close to the Pan-American, so noisy at night. Surcharge on credit cards, restaurant available. B&B **

26/27 Jan. Hospedaje Perez Matias in Aldea Chiabal pre-arranged via Esteban Matias. Self-catering but meals can be arranged. Restaurant about 10 minutes drive away on main road for breakfast on one day. Bring snacks, or buy at local shop, for full days/evenings with Esteban. Room only **

28/29/30 Jan. Estancia del Montje, Coban. Recommended by John Cahill and booked on Booking.com for three nights a few days in advance. Cabin rooms, very comfortable, just off the main road out of town and with a garden all round. Breakfast can be taken at any time of day with prior arrangement, and meals also available. B&B **

31 Jan/2 Feb. Ranchitos del Quetzal. Booked this directly as could not have three nights in a row. Small restaurant serves meals and coffee through the day. As it is very close to the main road traffic noise can be bad at night. B&B **

1 Feb. Ram Tzul Resort/Hotel. Found on Google maps and in LP guidebook. About 5 minutes drive from RDQ. We booked a room the day before while having lunch there, but it was not busy. Set back from the road so less road noise than RDQ. We did not have time to explore the nature trail there (additional charge 100Q pp), but bird activity in the gardens at dawn and dusk (and Louisiana waterthrush within the restaurant!) showed promise. B&B **

3 Feb. Reserva Natural Heloderma https://forgottennature.org/areas/tester-area/ booked one night here directly with the reserve via Whatsapp, staying at the Estacion Cientifica 14.862988583531546, -89.78643530137795 a few kms up a dirt track from the main reserve location shown on Google maps. Self-catering three-room cabin with shared facilities, sheets and towels provided. Bring own food/drinks (although plenty of drinking water/tea/coffee/cooking oil etc. available). Apparently larger groups can have meals provided. Room only *

4 Feb. Hotel y Restuarante Casa Vieja, Guastatoya. Comfortable and clean hotel off main highway not far into town, with reasonable restaurant and a small pool. Room only *

5 Feb. Hostal Guatefriends. One of many places near the airport. We only booked the day before so ended up in a 5-bed shared dorm room, but apparently private rooms are available with shared bathrooms. Only breakfast provided, but a nearby bar, Shucos y Chelas, does a range of food and cold beer. B&B ** free shuttle to airport.

Itinerary

		Locations visited	**Overnight**
T	9 Jan	Arrive Guatemala city airport 23.00	Guatemala City
W	10	Travel to Antigua	Antigua
TH	11	Finca el Pilar am	Antigua
F	12	Finca el Pilar am – travel to San Lucas Toliman pm.	San Lucas Toliman
S	13	Los Robles, Finca Santa Victoria, Tanager Trail, IMAP	San Lucas Toliman
SU	14	Volcan Atitlán, Hotel Bambu, Tanager Trail, La Playa	San Lucas Toliman
M	15	La Playa am, Los Tarrales pm	Los Tarrales
T	16	Los Tarrales	Los Tarrales
W	17	Los Tarrales	Los Tarrales
TH	18	Los Tarrales am	Panajachel
F	19	Mirador Rey Tepepul, Hotel Bambu, IMAP	Panajachel
S	20	Chuiraxamelo Ecological Park	Los Combres, nr Zunil
SU	21	Fuentes Georginas	Fuentes Georginas
M	22	Fuentes Georginas	Fuentes Georginas
T	23	Fuentes Georginas	Fuentes Georginas
W	24	Fuentes Georginas am, Volcan Chiquibal pm	San Martin Sacatepequez
TH	25	Volcan Chiquibal am, Pologua Ecological Park pm	Nr Huehuetenango
F	26	Chiabal, Todos Santos Cuchumatan pm	Chiabal
S	27	Chiabal and surrounding areas to the west	Chiabal
SU	28	Chiabal am. Travel to Coban pm	Coban
M	29	Finca Rubel Chaim	Coban
T	30	Finca Rubel Chaim, Chajbaoc Reserve	Coban
W	31	Finca Santa Rosa am, Ranchitos del Quetzal	Ranchitos del Quetzal
TH	1 Feb	Ranchitos del Quetzal, Biotopo del Quetzal	Rum Tzul Hotel
F	2	Ranchitos del Quetzal	Ranchitos del Quetzal
S	3	Ranchitos del Quetzal am, Heloderma Reserve pm	Heloderma Reserve
SU	4	Heloderma Reserve am	Guastatoya
M	5	Return journey to Guatemala City	Guatemala City
T	6	Depart Guatemala city airport 13.37	