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A TRIP REPORT FOR A BIRDING TRIP TO THE APURIMAC CANYON

March 26 - 28 – 2016

LEADER: SILVERIO DURÍ

This short 3-days trip to see the special Apurimac's SPECIALITIES & ENDEMICs it was very successful - where we recorded 11 Peruvian endemics and a great bonus (Buff-fronted Owl) that is a new record in this part of the country – this coupled with spectacular scenery gave us a stunning 3 days birding.

BIRDING LOCALITIES

Andahuaylas road – below Abancay (1875 mts)

Birding spot above Abancay - S 13 32 108 W 072 51 (3682) meters

Huanipaca Road - S 10 01 017 W 072 53 071 (3890) meters

Soraypampa road – (3400-3840 mts)

Yogalimatambo Guesthouse – S 13.50 819 W 72.49 804 (2415 mts)

DAY BY DAY ACTIVITIES

March 26th: Travel day from Cusco to Abancay (Department of Apurimac) with some birding stops above Abancay Town and below (on the Andahuaylas road) over viewing the Pachachaca River and in the evening Owling by the Pachachaca bridge. Overnight at Abancay

March 27th: Abancay to Limatambo with birding morning above Abancay and Huanipaca road and after lunch we drove to Limatambo where we had the AMAZING surprise of a Buff-fronted Owl in the Hotel's garden. Overnight at the Limatambo Guesthouse.

March 28th: Morning to Soraypampa road with few more pictures of the Buff-fronted Owl before breakfast (great views and pictures) plus a second view of Koepcke's (Apurimac) Screech-Owl and after breakfast we went to Soraypampa road where we got great views of Vilcabamba Tapaculo. We travelled back to Cusco in the afternoon.



Soraypampa Road and the Salkantay Massif - Silverio Duri

The Key to the Bird list

RED – IUCN RED LIST CATEGORY

SACC = South American Classification Committee

IOC = International Ornithological Congress

RR = Range restricted species

E = Peruvian Endemic

* = Heard Only

THE BIRDLIST

Family: TINAMIDAE - TINAMOUS

RR Taczanowski's Tinamou - *Nothoprocta taczanowskii*

It required some mountain climbing above Abancay to finally see one walking away very close from us and another one seen from the vehicle running away from us on the Huanipaca road.

VULNERABLE

Family: ANATIDAE - DUCKS

Torrent Duck - *Merganetta armata*

One female seen near Limatambo as we were coming back from Abancay to Limatambo; how on earth does this species cope "acoustically" by living in such torrential waters?

Family: PHALACROCORACIDAE - CORMORANTS

Neotropic Cormorant – *Phalacrocorax brasilianus*

Common on the Apurimac River

Family: ARDEIDAE - HERONS

Cattle Egret – *Bubulcus ibis*

Common

Family: THRESKIORNITHIDAE - IBIS

Puna Ibis – *Plegadis ridgwayi*

Seen in our way back to Cusco from Limatambo

Family: ACCIPITRIDAE - HAWKS & EAGLES

Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle – *Geranoaetus melanoleucus*

Seen on 3 different days at three different localities

Variable Hawk - *Geranoaetus polyosoma*

A common one around Abancay

Family: LARIDAE – GULLS

Andean Gull - *Chroicocephalus serranus*

One seen in the Apurimac River in our to Limatambo from Abancay

Family: COLUMBIDAE – PIGEONS AND DOVES

Spot-winged Pigeon - *Patagioenas maculosa*

Common – seen the three consecutive days

Eared Dove – *Zenaida auriculata*

Common

White-tipped Dove - *Leptotila verreauxi decipiens*

Very common around Limatambo

Family: CUCULIDAE - ANIS

Groove-billed Ani - *Crotophaga sulcirostris*

Common in the Apurimac valley

Family: STRIGIDAE – TROPICAL OWLS

E Koepcke's (Apurimac) Screech-Owl - *Megascops koepckae hockingii*

Fantastic views after suffering a little bit at Pachachaca bridge in the early start but after a while it behaved really well that we got good pictures and another one as a very nice bonus to the next specie at Yoga Limatambo near Limatambo town.



Koepcke's Screech Owl (*hockingii* race) – Dave Krueper

Buff-fronted Owl – *Aegolius harrisi*

A really WONDEFULL surprise “*not expected of course*” near Limatambo Town. This is what I was hearing from my room and said to CG making comment that this bird call outside our rooms was some....Pygmy Owl sp. I went I heard the bird call I paid more attention and I said to myself (that call doesn't sound familiar to me I had better go outside and make sure who is it!) so I grabbed my spotlight and my recording equipment and went out to look for it before saying anything to anyone, and BINGO! There it was a beautiful bird calling with totally tranquillity and I got good recording to ensure its play-back and went we all got the rest to see the bird we all got great pictures.

So we saw it that evening and the next day in the morning before breakfast. Just awesome!



Buff-fronted Owl – Silverio Duri

Family: APODIDAE - SWIFTS

Andean Swift – *Aeronautes andecolus*

Seen in two consecutive days around the bridge that divided Apurimac and Cusco State on the Apurimac River

Family: TROCHILIDAE - HUMMINGBIRDS

Sparkling Violet-ear - *Colibri coruscans*

Quiet common throughout the trip in the first two days

White-bellied Hummingbird - *Leucippus chionogaster*

Seen at Yoga Limatambo at the feeders

Shining Sunbeam - *Aglaeactis cupripennis caumatonotus*

A few seen at Soraypampa road

E White-tufted Sunbeam - *Aglaeactis castelnaudii*

Seen in two consecutive days; at Huanipaca road and seen really well at Soraypampa road – a Peruvian endemic

Great Sapphirewing - *Pterophanes cyanopterus*

One female seen on the Huanipaca road

Sword-billed Hummingbird – *Ensifera ensifera*

A female one seen really well on the Soraypampa road

Purple-backed Thornbill - *Ramphomicron microrhynchum*

2 seen on the Huanipaca road at lunch time

Tyrian Metaltail - *Metallura tyrianthina*

Common, seen in the three consecutive days - Named after the color Tyrian purple; Various known as Royal purple, Tyrian purple, purple of the ancients, this ancient dyestuff, mentioned in texts dating about 1600 BC, was produced from the mucus of the hypobranchial gland of various species of marine mollusks, notably Murex. Although originating in old port of Tyre in modern day Syria (hence the name), man's first large scale chemical industry spread throughout the world. With the decline of the Roman Empire, the use of the dye also declined and large scale production ceased with the fall of Constantinople in 1453. It was replaced by other cheaper dyes like lichen purple and madder

Family: BUCCONIDAE – PUFFBIRDS

White-eared Puffbird - *Nystalus chacuru**

Heard on the Andahuaylas road

Family: PICIDAE – WOODPECKERS

Andean Flicker - *Colaptes rupicola*

Quiet common the first two days above Abancay

Family: FALCONIDAE - CARACARAS

Mountain Caracara- *Phalcoboenus megalopterus*

Common

American Kestrel - *Falco sparverius*

Common

Peregrine Falcon - *Falco peregrinus*

Seen in the second day at Huanipaca road

Family: PSITTACIDAE - PARROTS

Mitred Parakeet - *Aratinga mitrata alticola*

Great views in the Apurimac canyon at the roosting area – seen in two consecutive days

Family: GRALLARIDAE – ANTPITTAS

Undulated Antpitta - *Grallaria squamigera**

RR Stripe-headed Antpitta - *Grallaria andicolus punensis*

One seen above Abancay - here the subspecies *punensis* which may deserve full species rank from the northern nominate form.

Family: RHINOCRYPTIDAE - TAPACULOS

E Vilcabamba Tapaculo - *Scytolopus urubambae*

NO other Tapaculo behaves like this one – simple incredible views of the last one from a total of 2 at Soraypampa road.



Vilcabamba Tapaculo – Silverio Duri

E “Ampay” Tapaculo - *Scytalopus sp. nov.*

Seen in two consecutive days; one above Abancay and another one and better views along the Huanipaca road. This is one of a complex of “above tree-line Tapaculos that need to be worked on forming a complex with the already described Vilcamaba Tapaculo to the north of the Apurimac River, Puna Tapaculo farther north over the Urubamba River and other un-described forms in the Departments of Ayacucho, Junín and Lambayeque.



“Ampay” Tapaculo – Barry Walker

Family: FURNARIIDAE - OVENBIRDS

Cream-winged Cinclodes - *Cinclodes albiventris*

Common throughout the trip; Jaramillo (2003) suggested that the *albiventris* group might warrant recognition as a separate species from Bar-winged Cinclodes *Cinclodes fuscus*. Unfortunately, Chesser's (2004a) sampling did not include populations of *C. fuscus* from the Andes north of Argentina. Sanín et al. (2009) sampled *C. fuscus* from throughout its range and found that it was polyphyletic, with various populations more closely related to *C. ologi*, *C. oustaleti*, *C. comechingonus*, and *C. antarcticus*. SACC proposal passed to elevate the *albiventris* and *albidiventris* groups to species rank. As for English names, Jaramillo (2003) proposed Cream-winged Cinclodes for *C. albiventris* and Buff-winged Cinclodes for *C. fuscus*, and Jaramillo (see

proposal 415) proposed Chestnut-winged Cinclodes for *C. albidiventris*; these are used here tentatively until formal SACC action.



Apurímac Spinetail – Angela Pattison

E Apurimac Spinetail - *Synallaxis courseni*

Wonderful views on the Huanipaca road and also at Soraypampa road. **VULNERABLE**

E Creamy-crested Spinetail - *Cranioleuca albicapilla albicapilla*

Common endemic in this trip – great views above Abancay, Huanipaca road and Soraypampa road

E Rusty-fronted Canastero - *Asthenes ottonis*

Quiet good views at Huanipaca road

E Pale-tailed Canastero - *Asthenes huancavelicae usheri**

At Huanipaca road

E Junin Canastero - *Asthenes virgata*

Great views near the pass in our way in to Abancay



Creamy-crested Spinetail – Dave Krueper



Junin Canastero – Ian Merrill

Family: TYRANNIDAE – TYRANT & FLYCATCHERS

Sierran Elaenia - *Elaenia pallatangae*

1 seen above Abancay

Tufted Tit-Tyrant - *Anairetes parulus*

Seen every location in this trip

Rufous-breasted Chat-Tyrant - *Ochthoeca rufipectoralis rufipectoralis*

One seen well on the Huanipaca road

White-browed Chat-Tyrant - *Ochthoeca leucophrys*

Seen every day

Black-billed Shrike-Tyrant - *Agrionis montana*

1 seen at the Huanipaca road

RR Rufous-webbed Tyrant - *Polioxolmis rufipennis*

Seen also on the Huanipaca road

Rufous-naped Ground-Tyrant - *Muscisaxicola rufivertex*

Very good views at Huanipaca road at our lunch spot

Puna Ground-Tyrant - *Muscisaxicola juninensis*

Only one seen at Huanipaca road

Family: COTINGIDAE - COTINGAS

Red-crested Cotinga - *Ampelion rubrocristatus*

Common above Abancay, Huanipaca road and on the Soraypampa road

Family: HIRUNDINIDAE – SWALLOWS

Brown-bellied Swallow - *Notiochelidon murina*

Common above Abancay

Family: TROGLODYTIDAE - WRENS

Puna Wren - *Cistothorus minutus**

Family: TURDIDAE – THRUSHES & SOLITAIRES

Chiguanco Thrush - *Turdus chiguanco chiguanco*

Common

Great Thrush - *Turdus fuscater ockenderi*

Common

Family: THRAUPIDAE – TANAGERS & ALLIES

Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanager - *Anisognathus igniventris*

Seen in two consecutive days above Abancay

Black-throated Flower-piercer - *Diglossa brunneiventris*

Quiet common seen in the second day

RR Tit-like Dacnis - *Xenodacnis parina*

Very good views of 2 on the second day above Abancay

Cinereous Conebill - *Conirostrum cinereum cinereum*

Common on the Soraypampa road

RR Peruvian Sierra-Finch - *Phrygilus punensis*

Common – seen at every locality

Ash-breasted Sierra-Finch - *Phrygilus plebejus*

Seen on the in the second day and also on the Soraypampa road

E Chestnut-breasted Mountain-Finch - *Poospiza caesar*

Very good destination to see this Peruvian endemic – seen at every locality, 7 in total

Plain-colored Seedeater - *Catamenia inornata*

Common above Abancay

INCERTAE SEDIS

Golden-billed Saltator - *Saltator aurantiirostris*

Another common bird above Abancay, seen on two consecutive days



Apurimac Brushfinch – Fabrice Schmitt

Family: EMBEZERIDAE – NEW WORLD SPARROWS

Rufous-collared Sparrow - *Zonotrichia capensis*

Common

E Apurimac Brush-finch - *Atalapha forbesi*

Very good views of this Peruvian endemic at every locality – Above Abancay, Huanipaca and Soraypampa road – 8 in total **VULNERABLE**

Family: CARDINALIDAE – CARDINAL GROSBILLS

Several tanager species (genus *Piranga* for example) and certain grosbill species are now placed in this family. Awaiting news regarding their English (vernacular) names

Black-backed Grosbill - *Pheucticus aureoventris*

2 seen in the second day above Abancay

Family: ICTERIDAE – ORIOLES & BLACKBIRDS

Mountain Cuckoo - *Coccyzoides chrysonotus*

This it was a BIG surprise for me to find this bird in an unusual habitat – 2 seen in the Apurimac valley near the Cunyac bridge (on the Apurimac River) in our way back from Abancay to Limatambo

Family: FRINGILLIDAE - FINCHES

Hooded Siskin - *Spinus magellanicus*

Seen at the Pakaritampu Hotel and in the west slope of Abra Malaga

MAMMALS

Family: CANIDAE – DOGS

Culpeo - *Lycalopex culpaeus*

A nice view of 1 walking and playing along the Apurimac River near the division bridge in our way into Abancay



Culpeo – Silverio Duri

