

Bolivia - Highlands

Naturetrek Tour Report

11 - 20 February 2013



Llama



Waders on Lake Uro Uro



Looking for Titicaca Grebe



La Paz

Report compiled by Jose Antonio Padilla
Images courtesy of Julia Panchen



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Route:

February 11 - Early Arrival to Cochabamba city, visited lake behind airport. Afternoon visit to Laguna Alalay. Overnight at Regina Hotel

February 12— Full Day - New road to Santa Cruz, 96 km San Jose Power pipeline road, secondary humid montane forest , altitude 1900 metres. Overnight at Regina Hotel

February 13— Full Day - New road to Santa Cruz, Tablas Monte, elfin forest and montane (Yungas) cloudforest (3170 metres max). Overnight at Hotel Regina

February 14 - Full Day - Cerro Tunari , montane forest, polylepis forest, puna grassland, lakes and rocky scree. Max altitude 4400 metres.

February 15 - Drive from Cochabamba to Oruro, altiplano, puna grassland with various stops (max altitude 4500 metres) . Overnight at Hotel San Felipe

February 16 - Laguna Uru, then drive across altiplano to the city of La Paz (3800 metres).Overnight at Hotel Rosario

February 17 - Very early departure and full day for Cotopata N , over the pass at 4620 metres, then drive down to Chulamani (single track gravel road with passing places). Various stops. Return to La Paz.

February 18 - Full day - La Paz to El Pongo trail 3600 to 4000 metres, puna grassland and polylepis forest and La Cumbre Pass elevation 4500 metres, puna grassland and bogs.

February 19 – La Paz to Lake Titicaca and then towards Sorata via Sorata Pass (4100 metres). High altitude lakes, puna grassland, cultivated fields and village eucalyptus groves.

February 20 -- End of the highland birding trip. Return to the UK for most of the participants.

Summary

Our tour successfully covered Bolivia's topographic diversity and great variety of habitats. Thanks to all the participants, without them this trip wouldn't have been as successful, they were all excellent birders too.

In total we recorded 202 species for the trip in the Highlands.

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Species List

Key: E -Bolivian Endemic

NE- Almost totally restricted to Bolivia but can be seen in NW Argentina or Southern Peru

H---Heard only bird

Day 1

Monday 11 February

WHITE-TUFTED GREBE (*Rollandia rolland*)

SILVERY GREBE (*Podiceps occipitalis*)

NEOTROPIC COMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*)

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)

GREAT EGRET (*Casmerodius albus*)

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubuculus ibis*)

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*)

PUNA IBIS (*Plegadi Ridgewayi*)

Widespread and common in Andean lakes and ponds,

FULVUOUS WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna viduata*)

Small wetlands behind Cochabamba airport.

BLACK BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*)

WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAIL (*Anas bahamensis*)

YELLOW-BILLED PINTAIL (*Anas georgica*)

Laguna Alalay , Cochabamba

PUNA TEAL (*Anas puna*)

Common in Andean wetlands

CINNAMON TEAL (*Anas cyanoptera*)

Seen at Laguna Alalay

RED SHOVELER (*Anas platalea*)

ROSY-BILLED POCHARD (*Netta peposaca*)

Another rare duck at Laguna Alalay.

ANDEAN RUDY DUCK (*Oxyura ferruginea*)

Considered sub species of Northern Ruddy Duck.

ROADSIDE HAWK (*Buteo magnrostris*)

APLOMADO FALCON (*Falco femoralis*)

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*)

COMMON MOORHEN (*Gallinula chloropus*)

ANDEAN (SLATE-COLORED) COOT (*Fulica ardesiaca*)

Common on Andean lakes.

WHITE-BACKED STILT (*Himantopus melanurus*)

Common at Laguna Alalay and Lake Uru Uru

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*)

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*)

ANDEAN GULL (*Larus serranus*)

Common around altiplano lakes. A few in breeding plumage.

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*)

Common bird in the trip.

EARED DOVE (*Zenaida auriculata*)

PICUI GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina picui*)

BARE-FACED GROUND-DOVE (*Metriodelia ceciliae*)

MITRED PARAKEET (*Aratinga mitrata*)

LONG-TAILED SYLPH (*Agelaiocercus kingii*)

RUFOUS HORNERO (*Furnarius rufus*)

WREN-LIKE RUSHBIRD (*Phleocryptes melanops*)

Laguna Alalay.

WHITE-TIPPED PLANTCUTTER (*Phytotoma rutila*)

Seen around Tambo and again at Laguna Alalay.

MANY-COLORED RUSH-TYRANT (*Tachuris rubrigastra*)

Good views at Laguna Alalay.

BLUE-AND-WHITE SWALLOW (*Notiochelidon cyanoleuca*)

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*).

HOUSE WREN (*Troglodytes aedon*)

Also called Southern House Wren , we saw the lowland subspecies *T.a.rex* and the highland sub species *T.a.puna* .

CREAMY-BELLIED THRUSH (*Turdus amaurochalinus*)

Cerro tunari, several.

SAYACA TANAGER (*Thraupis sayaca*)

YELLOW-WINGED BLACKBIRD (*Agelius thilius*)

Laguna Alalay.

BAY-WINGED (*Agelaioides badius*)

SHINY COWBIRD (*Molothrus bonariensis*)

RUFIOUS-COLLARED SPARROW (*Zonotrichia capensis*)

SAFFRON FINCH (*Sicalis flaveo*)

HOODED SISKIN (*Carduelis magellanica*)

Widespread.

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*)

WHITE-RUMPED SWALLOW (*Tachycineta leucorrhoa*).

New birds seen today: 49 species

Day 2

Tuesday 12 February

BROWN TINAMOU (H) (*Crypturellus obsoletus*)

Heard many times in foothills and Yungas cloud forest

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*)

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura ruficollis*)

SPECKLED TEAL (*Anas flavirostris*).

SWALLOW-TAILED KITE (*Elanoides forficatus*)

Seen at several locations, best views at San Jose Power Station.

PLUMBEOUS PIGEON (H) (*Patagioenus plumbea*)

Heard several times along San Jose Power Station road. Cloudforest.

RED-BILLED PARROT (*Pionus sordidus*)

CHESTNUT-COLLARED SWIFT (*Streptoprocne rutila*)

WHITE-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia chionogaster*)

SPECKLED HUMMINGBIRD (*Adelomyia melanogenys*)

CHANNEL-BILLED TOUCAN (*Ramphastos vitellinus*) (H)

Only heard at San Jose Power Station.

CRIMSON-MANTLED WOODPECKER (*Piculus rivolii*)

GOLDEN-OLIVE WOODPECKER (*Piculus rubiginosus*)

OLIVE-BACKED WOODCREEPER (*Xiphorhynchus triangularis*)

MONTANE WOODCREEPER (*Lepidocolaptes lacrymiger*)

AZARA'S SPINETAIL (*Synallaxis azarae*)

The common voice of the humid forests of the Andes

UPLAND ANTSHRIKE (NE) (*Thamnophilus aroyae*)

Heard along the pipeline road, pair responded to tape on lower trail in Cotopata N.P.

TRILLING TAPACULO (H) (*Scytalopus parvirostris*)

Responded to tape at Tablas Montes. Heard only.

BOLIVIAN TYRANNULET (NE) (*Zimmerius bolivianus*)

San Jose Pipeline

MOTTLE-CHEEKED TYRANNULET (*Phylloscartes ventralis*)

OCHRE-FACED TODY-FLYCATCHER (*Poecilotriccus plumbeiceps*)

Along the pipeline road.

CINNAMON FLYCATCHER (*Pyrrhomyias cinnamomea*)

BLACK PHOEBE (*Sayornis nigricans*)

TROPICAL KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus melancholicus*)

BROWN-BELLIED SWALLOW (*Notiochelidon murina*)

CHIGUANCO THRUSH (*Turdus chiguanco*)

The blackish thrushes seen predominantly in the Altiplano.

INCA JAY (*Cyanocorax inca*)

ORANGE-BELLIED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia xanthogastor*)

Along pipeline road.

COMMON BUSH-TANAGER (*Chlorospingus ophthalmicus*)

MAGPIE TANAGER (*Cipossis leveriana*)

BLUE-WINGED MOUNTAIN-TANAGER (*Anisognathus somptuosus flavinuchus*)

The commonest mountain tanager in the cloud forest , this form with a blue rump is probably a different species from that in central Peru and north which has a green rump.

BLUE-CAPPED TANAGER (*Thraupis cyanocephala*)

SLATE-THROATED REDSTART (*Myioborus miniatus*)

SPECTACLED REDSTART (*Myioborus melanocephalus*)

DUSKY-GREEN OROPENDOLA (*Psarocolius atrovirens*)

BOLIVIAN BRUSH-FINCH (E) (*Atlapetes rufinucha*)

Part of the Rufous-naped Brush-Finch complex .

TORRENT TYRANNULET (*Serpophaga cinerea*)

GREEN VIOLETEAR (*Colibri thalassinus*).

Making an interesting display, hard to id. at the beginning, but later we did it.

New birds seen today: 35 species.

Day 3

Wednesday 13 February

VARIABLE HAWK (*Buteo polysoma*)

This a recent lump of Red-backed Hawk and Puna Hawk. Red-backed is the lower elevation form while Puna occurs above treeline. We saw both .

MOUNTAIN CARACARA (*Phalcoboenus megalopterus*)

Common on the altiplano.

BAND-TAILED PIGEON (*Patagioenus fasciata*)

GREAT SAPPHIREWING (*Pterophanes cyanopterus*)

GOULD'S INCA (*Coeligena inca*)

VIOLET-THROATED STARFRONTLET (*Coeligena violifer*)

Seen well at Tablas Montes.

VIOLET-FRONTED BRILLIANT (*Heliodoxa leadbeateri*)

TYRIAN METALTAIL (*Metallura tyrianthina*)

At Tablas Monte allowed us to see the purple red tail separating from the Scaled Metaltail.

BAR-WINGED CINCLODES (*Cinclodes fuscus*)

BLACK-THROATED THISTLETAIL (*Schizoeaca harterti*)

At Tablas Montes.

RUFIOUS ANTPITTA (*Grallaria rufula*)

Very close all people excellent views of this antpitta along the main road at Tablas Montes.

TRILLING TAPACULO (H) (*Scytalopus parvirostris*)

Responded to tape at Tablas Montes.

SMALL-BILLED ELAENIA (*Elaenia parvirostris*)

WHITE-BANDED TYRANNULET (*Mecocerculus leucophrys*)

A pair was seen in near Tablas Montes.

RUFIOUS-BREASTED CHAT-TYRANT (*Ochthoeca rufipectoralis*)

Seen at Tablas Monte and Las Yungas.

PLUSCAP (*Catamblyrhynchus diadema*)

Nice views at Tablas Montes Cloudforest.

MASKED FLOWERPIERCER (*Diglossa cyanea*)

MOUSTACHED FLOWERPIERCER (*Diglossa mystacalis*)

One at Tablas Monte and again at the upper trail Cotopata N.P

WHITE-BROWED CONEBILL (*Conirostrum ferrugineiventris*)

The high elevation conebill, we saw it at Tablas Monte and Cotopata N.P.

BLUE-BACKED CONEBILL (*Conirostrum sitticolor*)

CAPPED CONEBILL (*Conirostrum albifrons*)

RUST-AND-YELLOW TANAGER (*Thlypopsis ruficeps*)

Tablas Monte.

BLUE-AND-BLACK TANAGER (*Tangara vassorii*)

Seen at Cotopata N.P. and San Jose Pipeline hike.

CHESTNUT-BELLIED MOUNTAIN-TANAGER (*Dubusia castaneiventris*)

Tablas Montes, good views.

GOLDEN-COLLARED TANAGER (*Iridoprocne jelskii*)

SCARLET-BELLIED MOUNTAIN-TANAGER (*Anisognathus igniventris*)

New birds seen today: 25 species

Day 4

Thursday 14 February

ANDEAN TINAMOU (*Nothoprocta pentlandii*)

BLACK-CHESTED BUZZARD-EAGLE (*Geranoaetus melanoleucus*)

BLACK-WINGED GROUND-DOVE (*Metriopelia melanoptera*)

Cerro Tunari.

GRAY-HOODED PARAKEET (*Psilopsiagon aymara*)

ANDEAN PARAKEET (*Bolborhynchus orbygniesius*)

A nice flock flew in front of us on the way up to Cerro Tunari.

SPARKLING VIOLETEAR (*Colibri coruscans*)

ANDEAN HILLSTAR (*Oreotrochilus estella*)

Several seen well at Cerro Tunari. This subspecies is likely to be split to Green-throated Hillstar.

GIANT HUMMINGBIRD (*Patagonia gigas*)

RED-TAILED COMET (*Sappho sparganura*)

DARK-BILLED CUCKOO (*Coccyzus melacoryphus*)

STRIPED WOODPECKER (*Picoides lignarius*)

GREEN-BARRED WOODPECKER OR FLICKER (*Colaptes melanochloros*)

ANDEAN FLICKER (*Colaptes rupicola*)

Seen above treeline at Cerro Tunari and Sorata Pass.

RUSTY-VENTED CANASTERO (*Asthenes dorbignyi*)

The common canestero around Cochabamba , part of the Creamy-bellied Canastero complex.

WHITE-WINGED CINCLODES (*Cinclodes atacamensis*)

A few at the higher elevations at Cerro Tunari.

MAQUIS (IQUICO) CANASTERO (E) (*Asthenes heterura*)

Cerro Tunari.

WHITE-CRESTED ELAENIA (*Elaenia albiceps*)SUB-TROPICAL DORADITO (*Pseudocolopteryx acutipennis*).TUFTED TIT-TYRANT (*Anairetes parulus*)TACZANOWSKI'S GROUND-TYRANT (*Muscisaxicola griseus*)WHITE-WINGED BLACK-TYRANT (*Knipolegus aterrimus*)

Around Tambo and Laguna Alalay.

ANDEAN SWALLOW (*Haplochelidon andecola*)

Seen on the Altiplano and High areas of Cerro Tunari.

GRAY-BELLIED FLOWERPIERCER (E) (*Diglossa carbonaria*)

Several locations , cloud forest habitat.

RUSTY FLOWERPIERCER (*Diglossa sittoides*)CINEREOUS CONEBILL (*Conirostrum cinereum*)BLUE-AND-YELLOW TANAGER (*Thraupis bonariensis*)BOLIVIAN BLACKBIRD (E) (*Oreopsar bolivianus*)

Seen around Cochabamba.

GOLDEN-BILLED SALTATOR (*Saltator aurantirostris*)

Widespread around Cochabamba.

RUFIOUS-BELLIED SALTATOR (NE) (*Saltator rufiventris*)

This scarce endangered saltator we saw well at Cerro Tunari and elsewhere on the Altiplano.

BAND-TAILED SEEDEATER (*Catamenia analis*)PLUMBEOUS SIERRA-FINCH (*Phrygilus unicolor*)ASH-BREASTED SIERRA-FINCH (*Phrygilus plebejus*)BLACK-HOODED SIERRA-FINCH (*Phrygilus atriceps*)

Cerro Tunari

RINGED WARBLING-FINCH (*Poospiza torquata*)COCHABAMBA MOUNTAIN-FINCH (E) (*Poospiza garleppi*)

An endemic with a very restricted range , we saw only one at the end of our tour at Cerro Tunari, Thanks you all for helping searching this bird.

RUFIOUS-SIDED WARBLING-FINCH (*Poospiza hypochondria*)BOLIVIAN WARBLING-FINCH (NE) (*Poospiza boliviana*)

A near-endemic , only a few got views at Cerro Tunari.

GREENISH YELLOW-FINCH (*Sicalis olivascens*)BRIGHT-RUMPED YELLOW-FINCH (*Sicalis uropygialis*)

New birds seen today: 39 species

Day 5**Friday 15 February**

BROWN-CAPPED TIT-SPINETAIL (*Leptasthenura fuliginiceps*)

Seen on the main road to Oruro.

STRAIGHT-BILLED EARTHCREEPER (*Upucerthia ruficaudus*)

D'ORBIGNY'S CHAT-TYRANT (*Ochthoeca oenanthoides*)

GREAT THRUSH (*Turdus fuscater*)

Replaces the former in the humid montane zone.

BLACK-BILLED THRUSH (*Turdus ignobilis*)

GIANT CONEBILL (*Oreomanes fraseri*)

We got lucky. Seen at stop along the Cochabamba –Oruro road in a polylepsis grove.

PLAIN-COLORED SEEDEATER (*Catamenia inornata*)

GREAT PAMPA FINCH (*Embernagra platensis*)

New birds seen today: 8 species

Day 6**Saturday 16 February**

CHILEAN FLAMINGO (*Phoenicopterus chilensis*)

Nice views of this species at Lake Uru-Uru and Lake Titicaca.

ANDEAN FLAMENGO (*Phoenicoparrus andinus*).

CRESTED DUCK (*Anas speculariorides*)

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrines*)

ANDEAN LAPWING (*Vanellus resplendes*)

Common in the Altiplano.

ANDEAN AVOCET (*Recurvirostra andina*)

Just a couple seen near Oruro .

PECTORAL SANDPIPER (*Calidris melanotos*)

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER (*Calidris bairdii*)

SPOT-WINGED PIGEON (*Patagioenas maculosa*)

One seen in village near Lake Titicaca on last day .

MOUNTAIN PARAKEET (*Bolborhynchus aurifons*)

Group on cliff face at Lake Uru Uru , Oruro. This species prefers arid mountain sides , puna etc unlike the very similar Andean Parakeet which prefers montane or polylepis forest.

COMMON MINER (*Geositta cunicularia*)

Around Oruro and road to La Paz.

ANDEAN NEGRITO (*Lessonia oreas*)

Around Uru Uru Andean lake.

SHORT-BILLED PIPIT (*Anthus furcatus*)

On the day we went from Oruro to La Paz, on a cultivated field.

BAND-TAILED SIERRA-FINCH (*Phrygilus alaudinus*)

BLACK SISKIN (*Carduelis atrata*)

Seen in the Altiplano , Chochabamba to Oruro road and again the last day near the Sorata Pass.

New birds seen today: 15 species

Day 7

Sunday 17 February

ANDEAN GOOSE (*Chloephaga melanoptera*)

Close views off road to Las Yungas.

SCALY-NAPED PARROT (*Amazona mercenaria*)

AMETHYST-THROATED SUNANGEL (*Heliangelus amethysticollis*)

LIGHT-CROWNED SPINETAIL (*Cranioleuca albiceps*)

We saw amazing views of the buffy crowned race (*C.a. discolor*) Tablas Monte and on Chulumani Road.

DIADEMED TAPACULO (*Scytalopus schulebergi*)

RED-CRESTED COTINGA (*Ampelion rubrocristatus*)

Along the road to Chulumani.

BARRED FRUITEATER (*Pipreola arcuata*)

Yungas Road.

SIERRAN ELAENIA (*Elaenia pallatangae*)

WHITE-THROATED TYRANNULET (*Mecocerculus leucophrys*)

BROWN-BACKED CHAT-TYRANT (*Ochthoeca fumicolor*)

WHITE-COLLARED JAY (*Cyanolyca viridicyana*)

HOODED MOUNTAIN-TANAGER (*Buthraupis montana*)

One at Chulumani Road..

CITRINE WARBLER (*Basileuterus luteoviridis*)

The high elevation basileuterus warbler Cotapata trail.

SOUTHERN-MOUNTAIN CACIQUE (*Cacicus chrysonotus*)

WHITE-WINGED DUICA-FINCH (*Diuca speculifera*)

At La cumber pass. We saw several on the ground.

New birds seen today: 15 species

Day 8

Monday 18 February

ANDEAN GUAN (*Penelope montagnii*)

WHITE-THROATED HAWK (*Buteo albigula*)

SCRIBBLED-TAILED CANASTERO (*Asthenes maculicauda*)

PEARLED TREERUNNER (*Margarornis squamiger*)

Corata Road, many views.

MOUNTAIN WREN (*Troglodytes solstitialis*)

WHITE-CAPPED DIPPER (*Cinclus leucocephalus*)

On drive to Chulumani.

BLACK-THROATED FLOWERPIERCER (*Diglossa brunneiventris*)

At Lake Titicaca and Coroico Road.

ORANGE-BROWED HEMISPINGUS (**NE**) (*Hemispingus calophrys*)

Excelent views of a small flocks of at least 4 of them.

THREE-STRIPED HEMISPINGUS (*Hemispingus trifasciatus*)

PALE-LEGGED WARBLER (*Basileuterus signatus*)

Chulumani Road.

New birds seen today: 10 species

Day 9**Tuesday 19 February**

HUAYCO TINAMOU (E) (H) (*Rhynchotus maculicollis*)

Very close to us at Sorata Road but vegetation was just too thick . A recent split from Red-winged Tinamou.

SHORT-WINGED or TITICACA GREBE (NE) (*Rollandia microptera*)

Endemic to a few lakes between Bolivia and Peru. We all got good scope views of this threatened species at Lake Titicaca .,

PLUMBEOUS RAIL (*Pardirallus sanguinolentus*)

On a small marsh area by the main road to Sorata.

BLACK-HOODED SUNBEAM (E) (*Aglaeactis pamela*)

Views at a village near Sorata.

BERLEPSCH'S CANASTERO (*Asthenes berlepschi*)

Restricted to the Sorata valley , we saw this endangered endemic around its nest in a eucalyptus grove.

PERUVIAN SIERRA-FINCH (*Phrygilus punensis*)

Around Lake Titicaca .

BLACK-TAILED TRAINBEARER (*Lesbia victoriae*)

New birds seen today: 6 species