

Paraguay, April 8-24, 2015

Introduction

Inspired in part by mammalwatching.com trip reports, we booked a trip with Paul Smith of Fauna Paraguay to visit the Chaco, as well as some cerrado and Atlantic forest. We were a group of seven friends, and the trip was a compromise between sometimes competing interests in mammals, birds, and herps. I would recommend Paul without reservation; he is extremely knowledgeable about the local fauna (and where to find it), has great field skills, and is very good company. In short, he did an excellent job developing a suitable itinerary and delivering upon it, despite sometimes demanding Paraguayan logistics. Details for many of the areas we visited have been provided in past Paraguay trip reports, so I will primarily summarize the species we recorded on this trip.

Participants

Ian Thompson, Ted Armstrong, Chris Escott, Nick Escott, Rob Foster, Jack Haggarty, Al Harris,

Itinerary

April 8: travel from Canada

April 9: arrived in Asunción, travel through central Chaco, overnight at Laguna Capitán

April 10: Central Chaco with night drive at Tunocajai Reserve; overnight at Laguna Capitán

April 11: Fortin Toledo area in morning; overnight Enciso National Park

April 12: Enciso National Park

April 13: Enciso National Park

April 14: left Enciso National Park in morning; night drive near Laguna Salada; overnight at Laguna Capitán

April 15: Central Chaco then on to Laguna Blanca

April 16: Laguna Blanca in morning; travel to and overnight at Mbaracayu Lodge

April 17: Mbaracayu Forest Nature Reserve; (after a morning at the reserve, Paul and two of our group headed south to bird for the remainder of the trip, Asunción; the other Fauna Paraguay vehicle returned to Asunción; we were on foot or mountain bike for the remainder)

April 18: Mbaracayu Forest Nature Reserve

April 19: Mbaracayu Forest Nature Reserve

April 20: Mbaracayu Forest Nature Reserve

April 21: Mbaracayu Forest Nature Reserve

April 22: afternoon transfer organized through Mbaracayu Lodge; overnight Asunción

April 23-24: early morning in Asunción; return travel to Canada

Mammals Observed

A total of 30 species including live individuals (19 spp.) roadkill, trail camera, and tracks:

Giant Anteater (*Myrmecophaga tridactyla*): roadkill on Trans-Chaco highway north Pirahu

Southern Tamandua (*Tamandua tetradactyla*): roadkill near Laguna Blanca

Six-banded Armadillo (*Euphractus sexcinctus*): roadkill near Laguna Blanca

Greater Hairy Armadillo (*Chactophractus villosus*): Enciso (1)

Nine-banded Armadillo (*Dasypus novemcinctus*): tracks near Laguna Blanca; roadkill at Tunokojai

Southern Three-banded Armadillo (*Tolypeutus matacus*): in hand at Tunokojai; several observed on road near Enciso

Common Vampire Bat (*Desmodus rotundus*): 3 in hollow tree at Enciso; several in abandoned building near Laguna Salada

Diminutive Brown Bat (*Eptesicus diminutus*): under bridge near Pirahu

Black Myotis (*Myotis nigricans*): under bridge near Pirahu

Tufted Capuchin (*Sapajus cay*): observed at on early morning walk with local researcher; group of 3-4 observed briefly on forest road east of Mbaracayu Lodge (very skittish here, possibly due to hunting pressure from local Aché).

Crab-eating Fox (*Cerdocyon thous*): roadkill on Trans-Chaco highway near Pirahu; observed roadside several times near Laguna Capitán

Pampas Fox (*Pseudalopex gymnocercus*): observed roadside several times near Laguna Salada, Tunokoja, Fortin Toledo, and Enciso; also on trail during night walk at Enciso

Crab-eating Raccoon (*Procyon cancrivorus*): roadkill on Trans-Chaco highway west of Philadelphia

Molina's Hog-nosed Skunk (*Conepatus chinga*): roadkill on Trans-Chaco highway north of Pirahu and west of Philadelphia

Geoffrey's Cat (*Oncifelis geoffroyi*): observed briefly roadside at night on Trans-Chaco highway north of Pirahu; good sustained look at another near roadside at Laguna Capitán at night; two other roadkills in low Chaco (lots of feral cat lookalikes observed roadside as well).

Oncilla (*Leopardus tigrinus*): photographed on trail camera on forest road Mbaracayu several km east of lodge

Jaguar (*Panthera onca*): possible tracks observed on dirt road west of Enciso

Puma (*Puma concolor*): Ian was followed at close quarters (as close 3-5m) for 100 metres just before dawn on trail near Enciso just before sunrise – it left once he approached the ranger station; one observed crossing the road in front of vehicle in late afternoon near Laguna Capitán; one emerged from the forest just in front of Al, Ted, and Ian on the forest road east of the Mbaracayu lodge early morning, took one look at them, and then jumped into the forest on the other side of the road; another crossed the road in front of Rob at daybreak 2 days later on same road; several photos on trail camera along same road.

Lowland Tapir (*Tapirus terrestris*): one seen by Rob and Ian at close quarters during night walk on trails at Enciso, heard another night, and caught on trail camera at nearby pond; one

seen in distance crossing a wetland in late afternoon near Laguna Capitán; numerous tracks observed at Mbaracayu.

Chaco Peccary (*Catagonus wagneri*): two observed on trail near Enciso; captive individuals observed at breeding facility near Fortin Toledo.

Collared Peccary (*Pecari tajacu*): tracks observed near Laguna Capitán

Grey Brocket Deer (*Mazama gouazoubira*): doe and fawn and a separate adult observed on road near Laguna Capitán; lone adults observed on several occasions at Enciso

Pampas Cavy (*Cavia aperea*): observed on night drive on Trans-Chaco highway near Pirahu

Yellow-toothed Cavy (*Galea musteloides*): observed on several occasions at Enciso

Chacoan Mara (*Dolichotis salinicola*): observed on several occasions near Fortin Toledo, Enciso, or Laguna Capitán

Azaras Agouti (*Dasyprocta azarae*): observed on multiple occasions near Mbaracayu Lodge

Spotted Paca (*Agouti paca*): caught on trail camera on forest road east of Mbaracayu Lodge

Plains Viscacha (*Lagostomus maximus*): observed roadside on night drive near Enciso

Conover's Tuco-tuco (*Ctenomys conoveri*): roadkill north of Laguna Blanca

Tapeti (*Sylvilagus brasiliensis*): observed on several occasions at Laguna Blanca or Enciso

Reptiles

Species for which id's could be determined. Included here since there is no www.herpwatching.com.

Pantanal Snakeneck Turtle (*Acanthochelys macrophala*): in hand at Laguna Capitán

Scorpion Mud Turtle (*Kimosternon scopiodes*): roadkill on Trans-Chaco highway

Yacare Caiman (*Caiman yacare*): lagoon at Laguna Capitán

Point-nose False Chameleon (*Polychrus acutirostris*): Enciso

Western Collared Spiny Lizard (*Tropidurus etheridgei*): Enciso

Chaco Collared Spiny Lizard (*Tropidurus spinulosus*): Fortin Toledo, Enciso

Chaco Straight-toed Gecko (*Homonota fasciata*): at Enciso ranger station

Chaco Leaf-toed Gecko (*Phyllopezus pollicaris*): at Enciso ranger station

Green Jungle Runner (*Ameiva ameiva*): Fortin Toledo

Four-toed Whiptail Lizard (*Teius teyou*): Fortin Toledo, Enciso

Cercolophia (*Amphisbaena* sp. likely *roberti*): 1 on road at Mbaracayu after heavy rain

Boa Constrictor (*Boa constrictor*): massive individual eating Lark-like Brushrunner at Laguna Capitán

Chaco Rainbow Boa (*Epicrates alvarezii*): night drive near Laguna Salada

False Mussurana (*Boiruma maculatus*): night drives at Enciso and Laguna Salada; also several roadkill

Bicoloured Mussurana (*Mussurana bicolor*): en route Laguna Capitán

Racer (*Philodryas* sp.): en route Laguna Capitán

Spotted Keelback (*Helicops leopardinus*): roadkill on Trans-Chaco highway
Yellow-bellied Liophis (*Erythrolamprus poecilogyrus*): on forest road early morning near Lagunita at Mbaracayu
Variable Blackhead (*Apostolepis dimidiata*): 1 on road at Mbaracayu after heavy rain
Painted Lancehead (*Bothrops diporus*): night drive at Laguna Salada
Tropical Rattlesnake (*Crotalus durissus*): 5 total seen on dirt roads during evening and night drives at Enciso and Laguna Salada

Amphibians

Warty Snouted Treefrog (*Scinax acuminatus*): Fortin Toledo
Yellow-legged Snouted Treefrog (*Scinax fuscovarius*): at Enciso ranger station
Lesser Snouted Treefrog (*Scinax nasicus*): Laguna Capitán
Milky Treefrog (*Trachycephalus typhonius*): Enciso
Earless Tree Frog (*Phyllomedusa azurea*): roadkill near Pirahu
Oven Frog (*Leptodactylus bufonius*): Laguna Capitán
Chaco Frog (*Leptodactylus chaquensis*): Laguna Capitán
Coralline Frog (*Leptodactylus laticeps*): Laguna Salada
Rococo Toad (*Rhinella schneideri*): Laguna Capitán, Enciso

Birds

Approximately 320 bird species, including most Chaco specialties and the globally rare White-winged Nightjar at Laguna Blanca. Bird list will be reported in separate trip report, time permitting.

Contact:

Robert Foster
Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada
contact: rfoster@northernbioscience.com



Grey Brocket Deer fawn (I. Thompson)



Southern Three-banded Armadillo (J. Haggarty)



Common Vampire Bat (I. Thompson)



Pantanal Snakeneck Turtle (R. Foster)



Chaco Straight-toed Gecko (R. Foster)



Chaco Rainbow Boa (R. Foster)



Tropical Rattlesnake (R. Foster)



Cercolophia (T. Armstrong)



Variable Blackhead (T. Armstrong)



Boa Constrictor (I. Thompson)



Boa Constrictor with Lark-like Brushrunner (R. Foster)



Bicoloured Mussurana (R. Foster)