

PERU: IQUITOS 2022

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Thomas's Silky Anteater at Muyuna Lodge

Working as a bird guide but try to see mammals as we go along! Unfortunately we only have limited amount of time to look for mammals on a birdwatching tour, but as more and more people interested in mammals we try to see as much as possible – combine night birding with mammals. Some locations visited for birds can be interesting for mammals too so a few notes and coordinates could help future mammal watchers when planning a tour. All coordinates were taken out from the **maps.me** app which I used during the tour. Peru is one of the biodiversity hotspots and there are a good number of mammal reports, however I did not find much information for the Iquitos area. This is a short recap what we managed to see on the **BIRDQUEST** Peru Iquitos tour in 2022.

Amazonian Peru has a lot to offer for mammal watchers! On the mammalwatching website I found a report about Tahuayo Lodge (by Greg Easton, 2021) and realised that Muyuna Lodge we were due to visit is nearby. Apart from this report there were a few describing Tapiche (by Jon Hall, 2014; by Benjamin Schweinhart, 2015 and by Margeaux Maerz 2018) reserve but not much else. I could not find any mammal watching infos north of the Amazon River or around Iquitos itself.

Eventually managed to see and ID 36 species and a quite a few slipped away without photos hence no identification (especially bats and rodents). As usual, knowledge of mammals and

especially their identification on the field is not so straightforward (not even from photos) and this is the also the case in Peru. If you spot any errors or misidentifications of species (those with photos) please kindly let me know and I would be very happy! Bat ID is especially not easy and many thanks for Venkat Sankar and Carlos Bocos for their help and suggestions with this tricky group.

All photos in the report were taken by me.

LOCATIONS VISITED

Mishana-Allpahuayo National Reserve (North of the Amazonas River)

A very nice reserve near Iquitos and can be accessed by car (about 1 hour drive from downtown). We had very limited time here and not spent much out at night so did not see many mammals. However it is certainly worth exploring! On our daytime outings we saw Ecuadorean Squirrel Monkey *Saimiri macrodon*, Red-mantled Saddle-back Tamarin *Saguinus lagonotus*, Red-crowned Titi Monkey *Plecturocebus discolor* and Amazon Dwarf Squirrel *Microsciurus flaviventer*. A nice jeep track is going into the forest and it looks ideal for walking at night looking for mammals. This is the coordinate for the 'Inia Gate' entrance: -3.95782, -73.410614. The jeep track starts from here (with a gate) which leads into the ranger station within 500 meters. I guess access with 4x4 car can be arranged in the Reserve and it would be excellent way to explore at night!

Explorama Lodge (North of the Amazonas River)

This is one of the lodges operated by Amazon Explorama Lodges (www.explorama.com) and in fact the first of all and where it all started for them. Founder was Peter S. Jenson. It is a rather basic lodge close to Las Palmeras village and Yanamono Island on the Amazonas. We only spent one evening here and although it was great for owls (Black-banded, Crested, Tawny-bellied Screech and Tropical Screech) no mammals were encountered apart from Ecuadorean Squirrel Monkey *Saimiri macrodon* and a few Black Agoutis *Dasyprocta fuliginosa* running around the lodge after a heavy shower. Website: <https://explorama.com/explorama-lodge.html>

ACTS (North of the Amazonas River)

This is the most remote of the places run by Amazon Explorama Lodges. It is along the Napo River (north of it) and you can access it by walking from Explornapo Lodge. The quick route would only take 45 minutes walking. ACTS (Amazon Conservatory of Tropical Studies) was set up in 1993 and provides a research station for scientists in the rainforest and an opportunity for layman to share in their discovery. This superb place has a canopy walkway and proper terra firme forest. Although the actual canopy walkway is a busy tourist place but 95% of the

visitors arrive for a day visit from the Ceiba Tops Lodge. So if you stay in the field centre you have excellent access to the forest at night! We spent three nights here and had a great variety of mammals on our night excursions while looking for the Nocturnal Curassow which is best found at night. Most mammals were seen on the trail to the canopy walkway as well as all below the canopy walkway. The trail also continuous further and in fact there are many other trails if you are tireless on your night outings! Highlights included Brown-eared Woolly Opossum *Caluromys lanatus*, Woolly Mouse Opossum *Marmosa demerarae*, White-bellied Slender Mouse Opossum *Marmosops noctivagus*, Linnaeus' Two-toed Sloth *Choloepus didactylus*, Kinkajou *Potos flavus* and Spiny Tree Rat *Mesomys hispidus* at night. On our daytime visits to the forest gave us Yellow-handed Titi Monkey *Cheracebus lucifer* and Black-backed Tamarins *Saguinus nigricollis*. Website: <https://explorama.com/acts-field-station.html>

Explornapo Lodge (North of the Amazonas River)

This lodge is also run by Amazon Explorama Lodges and most visitors access the canopy walkway at ACTS from here. It is along the Napo River (north of it). The trail system is better at ACTS and we did not spend much time around the lodge itself, we did our birding from boat along the Napo River. However a few hours spent around the lodge at dawn where we managed to see Spix's Night Monkey *Aotus vociferans*, Amazon Bamboo Rat *Dactylomys dactylinus* and Yellow-crowned Brush-tailed Rat *Isothrix bistrata*. There were Greater White-lined Bats *Saccopteryx bilineata* on the roof of the accommodation building. Several of them had young ones. Website: <https://explorama.com/explornapo-lodge.html>

Muyuna Lodge (South of the Amazonas River)

This lodge is located along the Yarapa (maps.me), Yanayacu (google) and Tahuayo River (Amazonia Expeditions) in the Tamshiyacu Tahuayo Reserve. You can pick your choice about the name of the river as everybody calls it differently but it has various lodges along it. We stayed at Muyuna Lodge (www.muyuna.com) but if you planning a mammal watching tour and wish to combine it with the Amazonia Expeditions run ARC (Amazon Research Center) you may want to do all your bookings with them and stay in the Tahuayo Lodge (www.perujungle.com). From here you may access the ARC which is further 10 km into the wilderness and possible to see Bald (or Bald-headed) Uakari *Cacajao calvus* so you do not need to go to Tapiche. Any of the lodges are happy to take you out with boat on night excursions, so you may see a variety of mammals from the boat. We had Capybara *Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*, Peruvian Tree Rat *Toromys rhipidurus* and many Brown-throated Sloth *Bradypus variegatus*. We also did some explorations right around the lodge itself and also on the trails along the river both to north and south from the lodge. The best mammal (for me) was found on the edge of the lodge clearing, a fantastic Thomas's Silky Anteater *Cyclopes thomasi*. But we also had Common Opossum *Didelphis marsupialis* and various bats in the garden. A few Proboscis Bats *Rhynchonycteris naso* were also resident in the roof of the restaurant. We did not come across Nancy Ma's Night Monkey *Aotus nancymai* but if you are after mammals

some of the guides will surely know some roosting trees for this species! During the day we did find Eastern Pygmy Marmoset *Cebuella niveiventris* on the trails around the lodge. It did look different from the Western Pygmy Marmosets I have seen in Ecuador (more rufous on the shoulders and on the sides) and apparently this is the species south of the Amazon. The Brown-throated Sloth *Bradypus variegatus* was common around the lodge too and also we had both day and night several Yellow-crowned Brush-tailed Rats *Isothrix bistrata*. We also regularly seen Ecuadorean Squirrel Monkey *Saimiri macrodon*, Large-headed Capuchin *Sapajus macrocephalus*, Juruá Red Howler Monkey *Alouatta juara* and heard Coppery Titi Monkey *Plecturocebus cupreus*. A great area and sure you will see a lot more mammal species if you devote most of your time to find them! Special mentioned should be made for the Wattled Curassow which can be found in this area (if you are also interested in birds). In fact this once widely distributed Amazonian ‘chicken’ is not easy to see nowadays and certainly this Tamshiyacu Tahuayo Reserve is amongst the most reliable place for it!



Nocturnal Curassows are honorary mammals. These secretive birds regularly call at night – fantastic eerie call – and this is your best chance to find them.

TRIP LIST

1 **Brown-eared Woolly Opossum** *Caluromys lanatus*

1 ACTS 2022-10-15. One was seen right around the field station. There are not many species in this genus and they are all very handsome. This one should perhaps be called Lilac-eared Woolly Opossum! ☺



2 **Common Opossum** *Didelphis marsupialis*

1 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-22, 1 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-23. Most probably the same individual was seen on two occasions around the lodge grounds.



3 **Woolly Mouse Opossum** *Marmosa demerarae*

1 ACTS 2022-10-15. One single sightings close to the canopy walkway.



4 **White-bellied Slender Mouse Opossum** *Marmosops noctivagus*

1 ACTS 2022-10-15, 1 ACTS 2022-10-17. We had two sightings at night. Both observations were close to the ground and on one occasion it was feeding on prey. They have really long tail!



5 **Common Brown Four-eyed Opossum** *Metachirus (nudicaudatus) myosuros*

1 ACTS 2022-10-16. One was seen close to the canopy walkway but it was rather shy and quick and unfortunately no images were made.

6 **Thomas's Silky Anteater** *Cyclopes (didactylus) thomasi*

1 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-23. A surprise observation and we were very happy to see this special mammal which was a new family for most of us. The Silky Anteater *Cyclopes didactylus* has been split to seven different species following a revision based on a combined approach of morphological, morphometrical and molecular data. Two of the seven species occurs in Peru, the Rio Negro Silky Anteater north of the Amazonas and the Thomas's Silky Anteater south of the Amazonas (Miranda et al, 2017). The observed individual was really golden yellow on the belly and more orange yellow on the sides and back. A superb little creature! Coordinates for our observation: -4.299035, -73.281778



7 **Linnaeus' Two-toed Sloth** *Choloepus didactylus*

2 ACTS 2022-10-16. We have observed two individuals on one evening. They really did look different from each other but they both had two toes on the forelimbs. However one was distinctly brown-throated and short coat while the other individual had a shaggy coat. I am not really sure of the distribution and identification of Hoffman's Two-toed Sloth *Choloepus hoffmanni* but these did look Linnaeus.



8 **Brown-throated Sloth** *Bradypus variegatus*

4 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-21, 5 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-22. Fantastic creature and it seemed pretty common around the lodge and along the river.



9 **Kinkajou** *Potos flavus*

1 ACTS 2022-10-16, 2 ACTS 2022-10-17. It was seen twice along the trails and others were heard too.



- 10 **Amazon River Dolphin** *Inia geoffrensis* EN
4 Iquitos to Explorama Lodge 2022-10-14. Considering the number of our boat journeys I was surprised how few of these special mammals we saw on the tour.
- 11 **Estuarine Dolphin** *Sotalia fluviatilis* EN
2 Iquitos to Explorama Lodge 2022-10-14, 1 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-24. Two sightings, once along the Napo River and once along the Amazonas.
- 12 **Greater Bulldog Bat** *Noctilio leporinus*
5 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-21, 3 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-22. It was seen a spotlight a few times along varzea water channels.
- 13 **Dark Fruit-eating Bat** *Artibeus obscurus*
6 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-23. Several 'large' bat were seen along the trails right around the lodge. They all seemed to be one species and it was suggested to be this species. It has dark brown dorsal coloration and indistinct facial stripes. Any other opinions welcome!



- 14 **Flat-faced Fruit-eating Bat** *Artibeus planirostris*
2 ACTS 2022-10-15. A female was seen with youngster near the canopy walkway.



15 **Stripe-headed Round-eared Bat** *Tonatia maresi*

1 ACTS 2022-10-15. One was photographed near the canopy walkway. Any other ID opinions welcome!



16 **Proboscis Bat** *Rhynchonycteris naso*

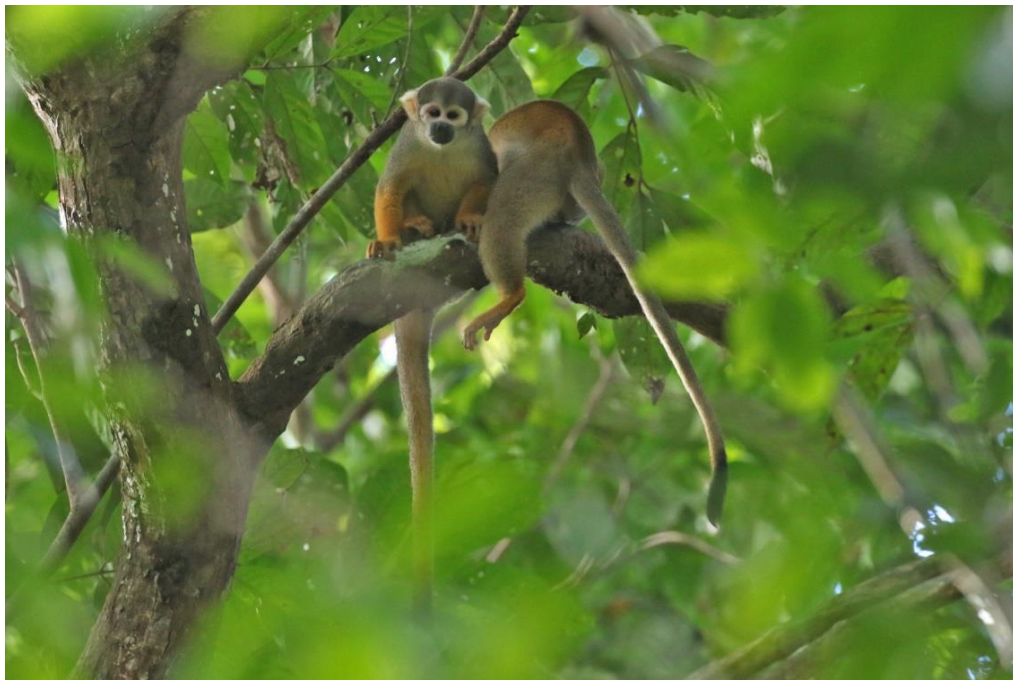
8 ACTS 2022-10-17, 8 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-22, 8 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-23. A few observation only. As usual mostly seen by water channels but they were also resident in the roof above the restaurant in Muyuna Lodge.



- 17 **Greater White-lined Bat** *Saccopteryx bilineata*
15 Explornapo Lodge 2022-10-18, 15 Explornapo Lodge 2022-10-19, 15 Explornapo Lodge 2022-10-20.
They were resident in the roof above the rooms.



- 18 **Ecuadorean Squirrel Monkey** *Saimiri macrodon*
3 Explorama lodge 2022-10-15, 5 Explornapo Lodge 2022-10-20, 20 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-23, 20
Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-24, 7 Allpahuayo-Mishana NP 2022-10-26. Most of the time we saw parties
travelling through the forest and they were not particularly shy, allowing pretty good looks. Curious
animals.



- 19 **Large-headed Capuchin** *Sapajus macrocephalus*
2 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-21, 2 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-23. They were rather skittish most of the time but once we got decent looks of them feeding on some fruits.

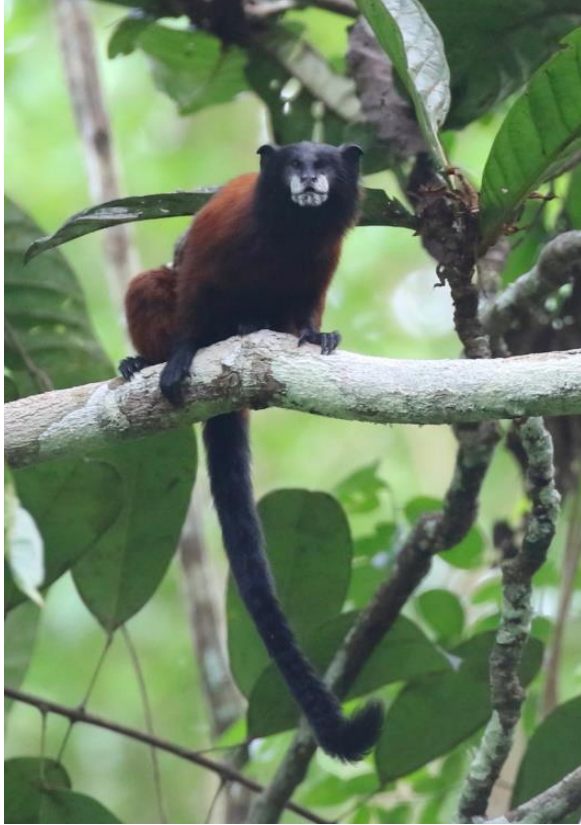


- 20 **Eastern Pygmy Marmoset** *Cebuella niveiventris* VU
2 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-21. We only had one sighting along the loop trail out of Muyuna Lodge. Fantastic little creatures! Apparently south of the Amazonas you get Eastern Pygmy Marmoset. They also seemed to be rustier compared the ones I have seen in Ecuador before. On the left image you can see the rusty pattern on the shoulders.



21 **Red-mantled Saddle-back Tamarin** *Saguinus lagonotus*

8 Allpahuayo-Mishana NP 2022-10-25, 5 Allpahuayo-Mishana NP 2022-10-26. We have seen them on both days when we have visited this white-sand forest reserve, mostly along the main jeep track after the ranger station. They are very smart indeed. At least we have ID them as this species! However taxonomy of these neotropical primates seem to be somewhat complicated and possible a bit over split as well (in HMW) nowadays.



22 **Black-mantled Tamarin** *Saguinus nigricollis nigricollis*

6 ACTS 2022-10-16, 4 ACTS 2022-10-18. Two encounters with them on the trails around ACTS. Usually quick and rather shy.



23 **Spix's Night Monkey** *Aotus vociferans*

3 Explornapo Lodge 2022-10-19, 3 Explornapo Lodge to Iquitos 2022-10-21. They were seen twice at dawn around the accommodation building feeding on fruits but they were shy and quickly disappeared when spotlit.



24 **Yellow-handed Titi Monkey** *Cheracebus lucifer*

5 heard ACTS 2022-10-16, 3 ACTS 2022-10-17, 3 ACTS 2022-10-18, 3 heard Explornapo Lodge 2022-10-20. A very handsome species and one I was particularly keen to see. However they were vocal, we only saw it once. They were seen here: -3.255624, -72.910939.



- 25 **Coppery Titi Monkey** *Plecturocebus cupreus*
Heard Muyuna 2022-10-24
- 26 **Red-crowned Titi Monkey** *Plecturocebus discolor*
4 Mishana-Allpahuayo Reserve 2022-10-25.
- 27 **Juruá Red Howler Monkey** *Alouatta juara*
4 heard Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-22, 2 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-23. South of the Amazonas it supposed to be this species.
- 28 **Colombian Red Howler Monkey** *Alouatta seniculus*
4 heard ACTS 2022-10-18
- 29 **Black Agouti** *Dasyprocta fuliginosa*
3 Explorama Lodge 2022-10-14. After a heavy rain they came out to the lawn around the lodge.



- 30 **Capybara** *Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*
1 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-21. Just a single one was observed on a night excursion out of Muyuna Lodge.



- 31 **Amazon Bamboo Rat** *Dactylomys dactylinus*
1 Explornapo Lodge 2022-10-19

- 32 **Yellow-crowned Brush-tailed Rat** *Isothrix bistrata*
2 Explornapo Lodge 2022-10-20, 1 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-22, 1 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-23, 4 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-24. Several sightings of this smart rodent. Something you properly ID for a change!



- 33 **Spiny Tree Rat** *Mesomys hispidus*
3 ACTS 2022-10-16, 4 ACTS 2022-10-17. This species was pretty common along the trails and especially around / under the canopy walkway.



- 34 **Peruvian Tree Rat** *Toromys rhipidurus* DD
3 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-21, 2 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-22, 1 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-23, 1 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-24.

35 **Spiny Rat sp** *Proechimys sp*

One was photographed at ACTS and as usual not identifiable to species 2022-10-17



36 **Amazon Dwarf Squirrel** *Microsciurus flaviventer*

1 Allpahuayo-Mishana NP 2022-10-25

37 **Southern Amazon Red Squirrel** *Sciurus spadiceus*

1 Muyuna Lodge 2022-10-23

REFERENCES

Miranda, F.R.; Casali, D.M.; Perini, F.A.; Machado, F.A.; Santos, F.R. (2017): Taxonomic review of the genus *Cyclopes* Gray, 1821 (Xenarthra: Pilosa), with the revalidation and description of new species. *Zoological Journal of the Linnean Society*. 183 (3): 687–721.