

## Panama ◦ 2-23 Sep 2022

This is a report on a three-week trip to Panama, spent mostly teaching a fieldcourse based with the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI) in Gamboa, with 6 days' travelling afterwards to find some of the mammals only found elsewhere. In Gamboa most of the sightings we made were in the open areas around town, along Pipeline Road, in the Rainforest Resort Hotel grounds, or along Laguna Trail; all were good for finding mammals, especially at night. We also had a fantastic bat-catching session with STRI staff; visited Parco Metropolitano and Punta Culebra in the daytime; and had an overnight stay on Barro Colorado Island (BCI).

Later we drove east (with guide Alex Guevara – WhatsApp +50761121643 – who was outstanding) to Tortí, where we went out with a local farmer to see brown-headed spider monkeys and Colombian white-faced capuchins in forest fragments on his property. We then spent two nights in El Valle de Anton (to break the long drive to the west); and two nights staying in the wonderful Cabin 8 at Los Quetzales, near Volcan, where the staff had kindly been putting out bananas for several days to draw in cacomistles. While there we had hoped to visit Volcan Barú NP to look for bushy-tailed olingos with local guide Raul (WhatsApp +50762474455; a friend of Alex) but hadn't realised this would entail a 5h round trip from Los Quetzales, so opted for more time with the cacomistles. We returned to Gamboa for our final night, meeting up with Alex and his colleague Carlos for a very productive 4h night walk up and down Semaphore Hill Road. On the way back to the airport we called in (following up on Jon Hall's recent report) at the Miraflores Locks visitor centre for mid-afternoon views of Central American red brocket.

We are grateful to numerous contributors to mammalwatching.com for recommendations, the Gamboa Bat Lab, Fiona Reid for generous help with several tricky IDs, and Sofia Alonso, Carlos and especially Daniel Field for use of their photos.



Northern tamandua, Hoffmann's two-toed sloth, and crab-eating raccoon (all photos Daniel Field)





Panamanian night monkey (Daniel Field), bicoloured arboreal rice rat (Carlos), tayra, hairy big-eared bat (Sofia Alonso) and cacomistle



**What we saw (or otherwise detected) and where:**

Central American woolly opossum	<i>3 on Semaphore Hill Road; singletons near Tortí and in El Valle</i>
Common opossum	<i>several in open areas around Gamboa, a confusing youngster camera-trapped on Pipeline Rd, and in Tortí</i>
Grey four-eyed opossum	<i>Gamboa - Laguna Trail and Semaphore Hill Rd, and El Valle de Anton; always in trees</i>
Nine-banded armadillo	<i>common around Gamboa</i>
Hoffmann's two-toed sloth	<i>widespread; abundant at Punta Culebra</i>
Brown-throated three-toed sloth	<i>singletons on Pipeline Rd and Semaphore Hill Rd</i>
Northern tamandua	<i>4 - Gamboa town, BCI, Pipeline Rd, Semaphore Hill Rd</i>
White-nosed coati	<i>widespread</i>
Crab-eating raccoon	<i>abundant at Punta Culebra</i>
Kinkajou	<i>BCI, Laguna Trail</i>
Western lowland olingo	<i>single animal on Pipeline Road, at ~2100</i>
Cacomistle	<i>Cabin 8; 2 individuals on first night; 1 larger, more confident animal on second night; all visits @ ~1900</i>
(Tayra	<i>one near mid-day in camera trap at Cabin 8)</i>
Central American spider monkey	<i>BCI</i>
Brown-headed spider monkey	<i>private land near Tortí</i>
Mantled howler monkey	<i>widespread</i>
Panamanian white-faced capuchin	<i>BCI, Pipeline Rd</i>
Colombian white-faced capuchin	<i>private land near Tortí (fleeting glimpse)</i>
Geoffroy's tamarin	<i>widespread</i>
Panamanian night monkey	<i>at roost next to entrance to Summit Golf Resort near Gamboa; at large above Rainforest Resort carpark, Gamboa</i>
Gabb's cottontail	<i>Fairly common on grassy patches near entrance to Pipeline Rd @~2100</i>
Paca	<i>single animal on Semaphore Hill Rd, and a pregnant female crossing road between there and bridge into Gamboa</i>
Central American agouti	<i>widespread</i>
Lesser capybara	<i>Ammo Ponds, Gamboa; apparently declined recently</i>
Quichua porcupine	<i>single individual at El Valle de Anton</i>
Variiegated squirrel	<i>Pipeline Rd</i>
Red-tailed squirrel	<i>Pipeline Rd, and on trail to Respingo, near Los Quetzales</i>
Bang's mountain squirrel	<i>2 animals near Los Quetzales: 1 crossing Las Minas Trail @~0730 and another crossing trail to Respingo @~1000. Clearly smaller than red-tailed squirrel but not as small as pygmy squirrels; appeared uniformly brown in poor light</i>
Tomes' spiny rat	<i>1 seen and several camera-trapped along Pipeline Rd</i>
Bicoloured arboreal rice rat	<i>2 single individuals seen along Semaphore Hill Rd, a freshly dad animal on Pipeline; ID kindly confirmed by Fiona Reid</i>
Collared peccary	<i>seen once and camera-trapped often on Pipeline Rd</i>
Central American red brocket	<i>4 animals in open from Miraflores Locks observation platform@1450</i>
(White-tailed deer	<i>1 seen by others in group @~0700, Parque Metropolitano); camera-trapped on Pipeline Rd</i>
(Baird's tapir	<i>trail seen crossing Las Minas Trail, Los Quetzales)</i>



Lesser white-lined bat	<i>Roosting in open hut before start of Pipeline Rd; Saccopteryx under wooden bridge near start of Semaphore Hill Rd probably this species too</i>
Greater white-lined bat	<i>widespread on buildings on BCI and in Gamboa</i>
Seba's short-tailed bat	<i>caught by STRI staff; under Semaphore Hill bridge</i>
Common long-tongued bat	<i>under Semaphore Hill bridge (based on ID by Karina Karenina &amp; Andrey Giljov); notably larger and longer snouted than Seba's)</i>
Niceforo's bat	<i>shown by STRI staff; ID kindly confirmed by Fiona Reid</i>
Common big-eared bat	<i>caught by STRI staff</i>
Hairy big-eared bat	<i>roosting in open hut before start of Pipeline Rd; ID kindly confirmed by Fiona Reid</i>
Fringe-lipped bat	<i>shown by STRI staff</i>
Jamaican fruit eating bat	<i>caught by STRI staff</i>
Pygmy fruit-eating bat	<i>caught by STRI staff</i>
Pale spear-nosed bat	<i>Gamboa - 1 v large bat flying and feeding on bananas</i>
Common tent-making bat	<i>caught by STRI staff</i>
Thomas' shaggy bat	<i>abundant along interior of Pipeline Rd; v frequently and unambiguously ID'd by Echometer 2</i>
Hairy-legged myotis	<i>small bat flying low around small fish ponds below Cabin 8; seems to be only water-associated Myotis likely at 2270m, and frequently identified as this by Echometer 2</i>

45 species (+ 3 detected but not seen)



Rosenberg's gladiator frog, milk treefrog and red-eyed leaf frog