

Mammalwatching Trip Notes

Ecuador: December 2020 and April 2019

Overview

These notes cover two trips to Ecuador – neither of these were dedicated birding or mammalwatching trips but did see some nice mammals along the way.

24-28 April 2019 I travelled to Jocotoco's Rio Canandé reserve, with one night at Tesoro-Escondido camp and a couple of nights at the Canandé lodge.

I was back at Canandé for 3-7 December 2020, followed by a week on the east slope. Jocotoco's Narupa Reserve 8 December, Reserva Rio Bigal 9-10 December, WildSumaco 11-12 December, San Isidro 13 December finishing up at Jocotoco's Chakana reserve on 14 December.

Locations

Yanacocha

Jocotoco's 11,000 feet reserve close to Quito had some nice birds on 2 December 2020 but only Andean Rabbit and one Red Tailed Squirrel on the mammal front.

Rio Canandé

A fantastic lowland Chocó site surrounded by ever present deforestation.

In April 2019 my night at the Tesoro Escondido campsite produced a Derby's Woolly Opossum and in one day walking the trails I saw all three of the possible primates, **Brown Headed Spider Monkey**, Mantled Howler and Colombian White Fronted Capuchin on the main Ground Cuckoo trail, as well as a distinctive race of Red Tailed Squirrel.

In 2020 we had only one full day on the trails, with constant light rain keeping activity and visibility low. This time we heard Mantled Howlers and had 5 Brown Headed Spider Monkeys on our first afternoon. At night near the lodge we had a single Kinkajou.

Reserva Rio Bigal

We had two nights at this fantastic eastern foothill site. The mammal list for this place is very full but unfortunately, I had only one day here and one full spotlighting session. The best sighting was a **Water Opossum** in the stream near the accommodation on the second night – unfortunately it scrambled away too quickly for me to be able to photograph it. We also had a very calm Common (Poepig's) Woolly Monkey on our full day on the trails. Paca come in regularly behind the 'kitchen' but I did not manage to see them in my two nights.

WildSumaco

This is a great site, although definitely more comfortable and less wild than Bigal. Got to overlap with Ian Thomson of mammalwatching fame on our second night here.

Black Mantled (Graell's) Tamarins are pretty much guaranteed on the trees in front of the lodge, where the staff tie bananas. We saw a couple of Marañon White Fronted Capuchin from the road just up from the lodge entrance. Kinkajou was common with at least 3 (and a fourth that could have been an Olingo) and we had a Red Tailed Squirrel near the deck. Ian picked out what I think he recorded as a White-bellied Arboreal Mouse in some spotlighting before rain set in for the second night.

San Isidro

This is a beautiful, and quite luxurious lodge. Very nice rooms, fantastic restaurant and very nice cloud forest. One night was not enough.

Andean Tapir do come into the salt lick but not during the day I was there. The mammal highlight was definitely the **Lemurine Night Monkeys** that come out around the cabins in the early evening. Black Agouti is best seen from the restaurant while drinking a cold beer.

Chakana

This high elevation Jocotoco reserve is a testament to how quickly nature can recover if given a chance. Since its acquisition by Jocotoco, to focus on Andean Condor conservation, the habitat was allowed to recover from overgrazing and there are now 14 Spectacled Bears in the smaller accessible side of the reserve (and an unknown number in the much larger inaccessible area). With help from Jocotoco's amazing manager we did see 4 **Spectacled Bears**, a mother with 2 cubs and a rather distant male. Andean Deer and Andean Rabbits are both common. The increasing numbers of deer have also allowed Puma to repopulate the reserve, although you would have to be very lucky to see these.

MAMMAL LIST

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|---------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| 1. Derby's Woolly Opossum | <i>Caluromys derbianus</i> | Canandé |
| 2. Water Opossum | <i>Chironectes minimus</i> | Bigal |
| 3. Black-Mantled Tamarin | <i>Leontocebus nigricollis</i> | WildSumaco |



On the WildSumaco feeding station/tree

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|-------------------------------------|------------------------|---------|
| 4. Colombian White-Fronted Capuchin | <i>Cebus capucinus</i> | Canandé |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|---------|

5. Marañon White-Fronted Capuchin *Cebus yuracus*

Wildsumaco



From road in front of WildSumaco

6. Lemurine Night Monkey

Aotus lemurinus

San Isidro



One of a party that moved through the cecropias in early evening

7. Mantled Howler

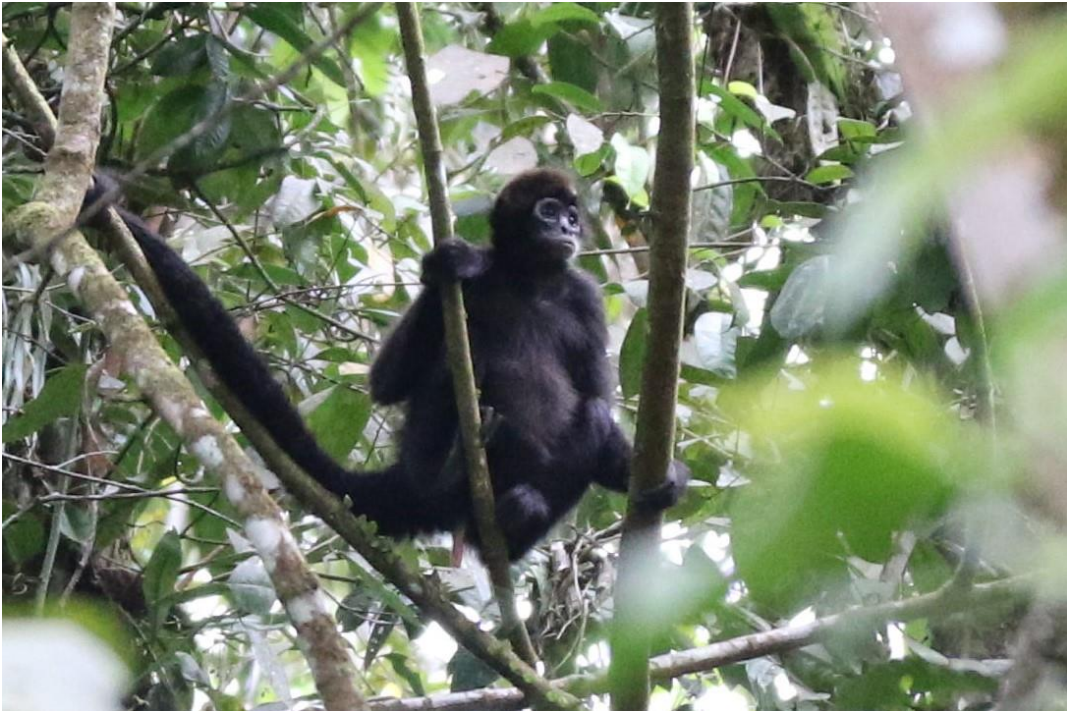
Alouatta palliata

Canandé

8. Brown-Headed Spider Monkey

Ateles fusciceps

Canandé `



This is a female on Red Mannikin trail (easily misidentified as male due to the rather large pendulous clitoris) with young clinging to her

9. Common Woolly Monkey

Lagothrix lagothricha Bigal



Very unafraid - on main Bigal trails behind accommodation

10. Red-Tailed Squirrel *Notosciurus granatensis* Yanacocha, Canandé, Wildsumaco

11. White-bellied Arboreal Mouse *Oecomys bicolor* Wildsumaco

12. Black Agouti *Dasyprocta fuliginosa* San Isidro



From San Isidro restaurant

13. Andean Rabbit *Sylvilagus andinus* Yanacocha, Chakana

14. Spectacled Bear

Tremarctos ornatus

Chakana



Mother looking back to us before returning to feeding on favored plants

15. Kinkajou

Potos flavus

Canandé, WildSumaco



One of our WildSumaco Kinkajous

16. Andean Deer

Odocoileus ustus

Chakana



Andean Deer population is rapidly growing at Chakana