

## Rainforest Ecology and Conservation Tour: July 17-July 23, 2015

If your idea of a great vacation includes spending your days and nights surrounded by tropical trees, birds of every color, monkeys that are almost within arms reach of your room's windows, and learning about what you're seeing, then the Canopy Tower and the Canopy Lodge are the stuff of dreams.

This was the sixth group I have brought to Panama and to the Canopy Tower Family. As a young wildlife biologist in the mid-1980s, I lived in Gamboa and worked on a research project on Pipeline Road. It left a lasting impression! I like nothing better than to introduce these remarkable places and creatures to the people that I bring to the Canopy Tower and Canopy Lodge. The location of the canopy Tower, just an hour from a major airport, high on hilltop, in the lush Canal Zone forest, makes it the most accessible, easiest, and pleasant ways to see a tropical rain forest in the Americas. The Canopy Lodge with its beautiful gardens, swimming hole and access to the cloud forest and nearby waterfall makes for a different, but equally, remarkable experience.

This year we added short, evening slideshow presentations on subjects that included general tropical ecology, hummingbirds, canopy research, and tropical conservation. My hope was that this helped the group put all the amazing birds, plants, mammals, reptiles, and insects into a broader context.

This year's highlights:

Day One: Arrival after dark at the Canopy Tower. The group was given a short orientation that was interrupted by a small group of fellow primates... night monkeys...so close to the dining area windows, that we could see the glint in their eyes. (I like to promise people that on this trip, they will see at least one kind of monkey, toucan, sloth and parrot. This year, my promise was met before breakfast on the first full day!)

Day Two: After an unusually long dry season, the rains arrived the day before, and left a surreal, foggy morning atop Canopy Tower deck on the morning of the second day. That didn't keep us from enjoying the experience of watching keel-billed toucans, blue-headed parrots and green honeycreepers, above the treetops, coffee in-hand, while the sun broke through (I can tell you, that first morning on the deck with coffee is worth any length of travel!). We spent the morning looking for birds on Old Gamboa Road and in the afternoon, at the Ammo Ponds where we were treated to an excellent view of a tiger heron.

Day Three: It was off to Pipeline Road on the morning of day three. Near the entrance, we spent some time in the open areas where the highlight became several excellent views of a black-tailed trogon. The afternoon was spent at Miraflores Locks Visitor Center where the group watched a couple giant container ships pass through the locks. After dinner, we headed out for the night drive where we saw a kinkajou, a paca, a wooly opossum, armadillos and a mother sloth seemingly teaching her baby to scratch.

Day Four: This morning we saw the forests from a different angle... a jungle boat trip on the Chagres River and Gatun Lake. The group was particularly impressed with hunting snail kites, white faced capuchin monkeys, and caiman. In the afternoon, with a brewing rainstorm above,

the group was asked whether or not we wanted to bring the van or the open-air Bird Mobile. Because all the members of the group were from either the deserts of New Mexico or Colorado, we jumped at the chance to get wet, threw on our ponchos and opted for the Bird Mobile. The sprinkle turned into a warm downpour that left us laughing. By the time we reached Gamboa Resort for a few hours birding, the rain had stopped. The rain picked up again that night, and by the time it was finished the next morning, the total was over 8 inches in less than 24 hours. What a thrill for desert people!

Day Five: This morning we headed down Semaphore Hill, enjoying the army ants and accompanying antbirds and out last morning at the Canopy Tower. After lunch, we headed to El Valle and the Canopy Lodge.

Day Six: This morning, the group headed up to the mists of La Mesa, but not without stopping along the road at a spot with so much bird activity, we could hardly keep up....several handfuls of hummingbirds, wrens and tanagers. By then even the avid birders were overwhelmed and the non-birders had become tropical bird fans. Further up the road, and after a bit of a search, the group was left in awe when we found an orange-bellied trogon. After lunch and a quick stop at the El Valle marketplace, we spent the afternoon in the forests at the Canopy Adventure.

Day Seven: Another amazing breakfast and some time exploring the gardens at the Canopy Lodge before it was time to say goodbye. After all my visits, I am convinced there is no other place in the world that is better-situated in the middle of a tropical rain forest, with better guides, with more caring staff, and with better food. I will keep coming back until I have to be carried up the stairs of the Canopy Tower.

## **PANAMA FINAL LIST**

**7/17/15 – 7/23/15**

**GREAT TINAMOU**  
**BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK**  
**MUSCOVY DUCK**  
**GRAY-HEADED CHACHALACA**  
**LEAST GREBE**  
**PIED-BILLED GREBE**  
**WOOD STORK**  
**MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD**  
**ANHINGA**  
**BROWN PELICAN**  
**LEAST BITTERN**  
**RUFESCENT TIGER-HERON**  
**GREAT BLUE HERON**  
**GREAT EGRET**  
**LITTLE BLUE HERON**  
**SNOWY EGRET**  
**GREEN HERON**  
**STRIATED HERON**

**BOAT-BILLED HERON**  
**GLOSSY IBIS**  
**WHITE IBIS**  
**TURKEY VULTURE**  
**BLACK VULTURE**  
**OSPREY**  
**AMER SWALLOW-TAILED KITE**  
**SNAIL KITE**  
**SHORT-TAILED HAWK**  
**GRAY-LINED HAWK**  
**ZONE-TAILED HAWK**  
**WHITE-THROATED CRAKE**  
**GRAY-NECKED WOOD-RAIL**  
**PURPLE GALLINULE**  
**COMMON MOORHEN**  
**AMERICAN COOT**  
**LIMPKIN**  
**SOUTHERN LAPWING**  
**WATTLED JACANA**  
**SPOTTED SANDPIPER**  
**LESSER YELLOWLEGS**  
**LAUGHING GULL**  
**ROCK PIGEON**  
**PALE-VENTED PIGEON**  
**RUDDY GROUND-DOVE**  
**WHITE-TIPPED DOVE**  
**GRAY-CHESTED DOVE**  
**SQUIRREL CUCKOO**  
**GREATER ANI**  
**SMOOTH-BILLED ANI 48**  
**TROPICAL SCREECH-OWL**  
**CHOCO SCREECH-OWL**  
**MOTTLED OWL**  
**BLACK -AND-WHITE OWL**  
**COMMON POTOO**  
**SHORT-TAILED SWIFT**  
**BAND-RUMPED SWIFT**  
**WHITE-NECKED JACOBIN**  
**RUFIOUS-BREASTED HERMIT**  
**GREEN HERMIT**  
**LONG-BILLED HERMIT**  
**STRIPE-THROATED HERMIT**  
**LONG-BILLED STARHROAT**  
**WHITE-VENTED PLUMELETEER**  
**BRONZE-TAILED PLUMELETEER**  
**VIOLET-CROWNED WOODNYMPH**

BLUE-CHESTED HUMMINGBIRD  
SNOWY-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD  
RUFIOUS-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD  
**SLATY-TAILED TROGON**  
BLACK-TAILED TROGON  
WHITE-TAILED TROGON  
GARTERED TROGON  
BLACK-THROATED TROGON  
ORANGE-BELLIED TROGON  
TODY MOTMOT  
WHOOPING MOTMOT  
RUFIOUS MOTMOT  
BROAD-BILLED MOTMOT  
AMERICAN PYGYMY KINGFISHER  
GREEN KINGFISHER  
AMAZON KINGFISHER  
RINGED KINGFISHER  
BLACK-BREASTED PUFFBIRD  
PIED PUFFBIRD  
WHITE-WHISKERED PUFFBIRD  
SPOT-CROWNED BARBET  
COLLARED ARACARI  
KEEL-BILLED TOUCAN  
BLACK-MANDIBLED TOUCAN  
BLACK-CHECKED WOODPECKER  
RED-CROWNED WOODPECKER  
CINNAMON WOODPECKER  
**LINEATED WOODPECKER**  
CRIMSON-CRESTED WOODPECKER  
YELLOW-HEADED CARACARA  
BAT FALCON  
ORANGE-CHINNED PARAKEET  
BROWN-HOODED PARROT  
RED-LORED AMAZON  
MEALY AMAZON  
**FASCIATED ANTSHRIKE**  
**GREAT ANTSHRIKE**  
BARRED ANTSHRIKE  
BLACK-CROWNED ANTSHRIKE  
SLATY ANTWREN  
DOT-WINGED ANTWREN  
DUSKY ANTBIRD  
**WHITE-BELLIED ANTBIRD**  
**CHESTNUT-BACKED ANTBIRD**  
SPOTTED ANTBIRD  
BICOLORED ANTBIRD

**OCELLATED ANTBIRD**  
**STREAK-CHESTED ANTPITTA**  
**BLACK-HEADED ANTHRUSH**  
**SCALY-THROATED LEAFTOSSER**  
**PLAIN-BROWN WOODCREEPER**  
**NO. BARRED WOODCREEPER**  
**COCOA WOODCREEPER**  
**BLACK-STRIPED WOODCREEPER**  
**SPOTTED WOODCREEPER**  
**PLAIN XENOPS**  
**BROWN-CAPPED TYRANNULET**  
**YELLOW-CROWNED TYRANNULET**  
**FOREST ELAENIA**  
**YELLOW-BELLIED ELAENIA**  
**OCHRE-BELLIED FLYCATCHER**  
**SEPIA-CAPPED FLYCATCHER**  
**PALTRY TYRANNULET**  
**BLACK-CAPPED PYGMY-TYRANT**  
**SOUTHERN BENTBILL**  
**COMMON TODY-FLYCATCHER**  
**BLACK-HEADED TODY-FLYCATCHER**  
**YELLOW-MARGINED FLYCATCHER**  
**RUDDY-TAILED FLYCATCHER**  
**TROPICAL PEWEE**  
**BRIGHT-RUMPED ATTLA**  
**DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER**  
**PANAMA FLYCATCHER**  
**LESSER KISKADEE**  
**GREAT KISKADEE**  
**RUSTY-MARGINED FLYCATCHER**  
**SOCIAL FLYCATCHER**  
**STREAKED FLYCATCHER**  
**PIRATIC FLYCATCHER**  
**TROPICAL KINGBIRD**  
**MASKED TITYRA**  
**CINNAMON BECARD**  
**PURPLE-THROATED FRUITCROW**  
**BLUE COTINGA**  
**LANCE-TAILED MANAKIN**  
**RED-CAPPED MANAKIN**  
**GOLDEN-COLLARED MANAKIN**  
**BLUE-CROWNED MANAKIN**  
**SCRUB GREENLET**  
**LESSER GREENLET**  
**GOLDEN-FRONTED GREENLET**  
**GREEN SHRIKE-VIREO**

BLACK-CHESTED JAY  
GRAY-BREASTED MARTIN  
MANGROVE SWALLOW  
SO ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW  
SCALY-BREASTED WREN  
SOUTHERN HOUSE WREN  
RUFIOUS-BREASTED WREN  
BLACK-BELLIED WREN  
RUFIOUS-AND-WHITE WREN  
PLAIN WREN  
BAY WREN  
**BUFF-BREASTED WREN**  
WHITE-BREASTED WOOD-WREN  
TAWNY-FACED GNATWREN  
LONG-BILLED GNATWREN  
PALE-VENTED THRUSH  
CLAY-COLORED THRUSH  
TROPICAL MOCKINGBIRD  
BUFF-RUMPED WARBLER  
RUFIOUS-CAPPED WARBLER  
BANANAQUIT  
ROSY THRUSH-TANAGER  
DUSKY-FACED TANAGER  
WHITE-SHOULDERED TANAGER  
TAWNY-CRESTED TANAGER  
CRIMSON-BACKED TANAGER  
FLAME-RUMPED TANAGER  
BLUE-GRAY TANAGER  
PALM TANAGER  
GOLDEN-HOODED TANAGER  
PLAIN-COLORED TANAGER  
BAY-HEADED TANAGER  
**SILVER-THROATED TANAGER**  
BLUE DACNIS  
RED-LEGGED HONEYCREEPER  
GREEN HONEYCREEPER  
**STREAKED SALTATOR**  
BLACK-HEADED SALTATOR  
BUFF-THROATED SALTATOR  
**SLATE-COLORED GROSBEAK**  
BLUE-BLACK GRASSQUIT  
VARIABLE SEEDEATER  
THICK-BILLED SEED-FINCH  
YELLOW-FACED GRASSQUIT  
ORANGE-BILLED SPARROW  
**BLACK-STRIPED SPARROW**

**RED-CROWNED ANT-TANAGER**  
**RED-THROATED ANT-TANAGER**  
**BLUE-BLACK GROSBEAK**  
**GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE**  
**SHINY COWBIRD**  
**GIANT COWBIRD**  
**YELLOW-BACKED ORIOLE**  
**YELLOW-TAILED ORIOLE**  
**SCARLET-RUMPED CACIQUE**  
**YELLOW-RUMPED CACIQUE**  
**YELLOW-BILLED CACIQUE**  
**CHESTNUT-HEADED OROPENDOLA**  
**YELLOW-CROWNED EUPHONIA**  
**THICK-BILLED EUPHONIA**  
**FULVOUS-VENTED EUPHONIA**  
**TAWNY-CAPPED EUPHONIA**

**BLACK-FACED ANTTHRUSH ?**

**EYE-RINGED FLATBILL (nest)**

**TOTAL 218**  
**includes**  
**28 heard birds**

## **MAMMALS**

**Night Monkey**  
**Geoffroy's Tamarin**  
**White-faced capuchin monkeys**  
**Mantled howler monkeys**  
**Agouti**  
**Lesser Capybara**  
**Paca**  
**Spectacled Caiman**  
**American Crocodile**  
**Wooly Possum**  
**Kinkajou**  
**Armadillo**  
**2/3-toed Sloths**  
**Red Squirrel**