





Sunrise Birding LLC
HONDURAS
Pico Bonito Special
January 19 – 24, 2014
TRIP REPORT
Photos & report by Frank Mantlik







Sunrise Birding LLC – Pico Bonito Special! Trip Report – January 19 - 24, 2014 www.sunrisebirding.com



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HONDURAS Pico Bonito Special!

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Leader: Frank Mantlik and a local guide

HIGHLIGHTS: (Rarities, specialties, or simply a group favorite):

- Honduran Emerald (globally endangered)
- Lovely Cotinga
- Keel-billed Motmot
- Keel-billed Toucan
- Violet Sabrewing
- King Vulture
- Great Potoo
- Boat-billed Heron
- Pale-billed Woodpecker
- Rufous-winged Tanager
- Mantled Howler Monkeys
- 162 Bird Species

- Black-throated Trogon
- Violet-crowned Woodnymph
- Hooded Warbler
- Bare-throated Tiger-Heron
- Wood Stork
- Black Hawk-Eagle
- Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl
- Laughing Falcon
- Barred Antshrike
- Altamira Oriole
- American Crocodile
- Fabulous lodging and meals

Day 1 - Arrival San Pedro Sula - Pico Bonito

Today was a travel day, with most people arriving on their flights to San Pedro Sula by early to mid-afternoon. The 2.5 hour van ride to Pico Bonito Lodge took us through extensive palm-oil plantations. Among the birds seen along the way (2 vans) were **White-tailed Kite, Roadside Hawk, Wood Storks, Cattle Egrets**, and **Black-necked Stilts**. Ron, Karen, and Liz were lucky to spot a male **Lovely Cotinga** in the gardens. In early evening, the group met for orientation and a scrumptious dinner.

Day 2 - Pico Bonito Lodge and grounds

After an early breakfast our local guide, Jose, led us on a morning walk in the Lodge gardens, which were alive with a wide variety of birds. First we enjoyed the many hummingbirds visiting feeders, including Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, Violet-crowned Woodnymph, and the huge flashy Violet Sabrewing. Among the other birds seen were Golden-collared Tanagers, Brown Jays, Blue-crowned Motmot, Keel-billed Toucan, Clay-colored and White-throated Robins, female Green Honeycreeper, Ovenbird, and Chestnut-colored Woodpecker. Among the species feeding at the trays of oil palm fruits were Magnolia and Hooded Warblers, Gray Catbirds, Summer Tanager, and Central



American Agouti, a large member of the rodent family. Then we had incredible scope views of a sleeping Great Potoo high up in a tree. Next we climbed the forested "Toucan Tower" overlooking the Rio Coloradito Valley and mountains. Here we saw two perched White-crowned Parrots, Brown-hooded Parrots flying, Montezuma Oropendola, a Purple-crowned Fairy feeding on Morning Glories, and Liz got us on a male White-collared Manakin.

Further along the trails, we found numerous species including close views (and photos) of a Gartered Trogon, Slaty-tailed Trogon, Masked Tityra, Squirrel Cuckoo, Black-throated Green Warbler, Ochre-bellied Flycatcher, Red-throated Ant-Tanager, Yellow-winged Tanagers, and Great Kiskadee. Recent rains gave way to dry skies today,



resulting in a raptor bonanza, including a pair of soaring White Hawks, Gray Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Black Hawk-Eagle, and great views of a perched Laughing Falcon. A visit to the Butterfly Farm provided photos of the spectacular Blue Morpho and other butterflies. Some enjoyed the reptiles of the Lodge's Serpentarium.

Before and after the delicious lunch, people had some personal time. Among the species seen at the lodge gardens and feeders by various participants were **Black-cheeked Woodpecker**, **Collared Aracari**, **Long-billed Hermit**, **Red-billed Pigeons**, **Social Flycatcher**, **Black-headed Saltators**, **Melodious Blackbirds**, **Chestnut-headed Oropendola**, **Variegated Squirrels** and a **Brown Basilisk Lizard**. Four of us saw a species rare for Honduras - a **Rufous-winged Tanager** - only the third seen by Jose in 15 years.

During our afternoon walk on different trails, it was surprisingly quiet for some reason; perhaps the still, humid air caused birds to become inactive. Nevertheless we saw **Groove-billed Anis**, **Golden-fronted Woodpecker**, **Buff-throated Saltator**, **Paltry**

Tyrannulet, and **American Redstart**. At dinner, the diverse gourmet menu pleased all appetites. The day's bird list was recorded.

Day 3 - Cuero y Salado Refuge / Rio Santiago Lodge
Today we took a morning excursion, by van then smallgauge train, to the Cuero y Salado Wildlife Refuge. The
train was a fun experience, and birding from it produced
Roadside Hawks, Groove-billed Anis, Ruddy
Ground-Doves, lots of Cattle Egrets and Little Blue
Herons, Orchard Oriole, noisy Brown Jays, and
fantastic views of a beautiful Bare-throated TigerHeron that Frank spotted atop a small tree. After
registering at the Park office, a large skiff took us on an
enjoyable boat ride through the mangrove forests of the
Rio Salado. Noteworthy birds seen included families of



Northern Jacanas, Yellow-crowned Night-Herons, numerous Boat-Billed Herons, Neotropic Cormorants, a Lesser Scaup, Red-lored Parrots, Belted, and Green Kingfishers, White-collared Swifts, and several more Bare-throated Tiger-Herons. We also heard the distinctive double-rap drumming of a Pale-billed Woodpecker; Frank said it sounds very similar to that of the extinct Ivory-billed Woodpecker. Other animal highlights were two Mantled Howler Monkeys, a group of Long-nosed Bats roosting on a tree trunk, several American Crocodiles, a Green Iguana, and numerous flashy Blue Morpho butterflies. Upon returning to the dock, we spotted a male Magnificent Frigatebird soaring overhead. After a picnic of cold fresh fruit, we walked to a nearby Caribbean beach, where a Whimbrel (Thanks, Annie!), Sanderlings, Spotted Sandpipers, and Brown Pelicans were seen.

After a delightful lunch that included shrimp ceviche, some down time allowed us to explore the Lodge grounds or to simply relax. Most got better looks and photos of the resident birds. Some saw an Olive-backed Euphonia and a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher.

Then we regrouped for an afternoon excursion to the Rio Santiago Nature Resort, in hopes of finding some new species. The abundant tubular feeders attracted dozens of hummingbirds of at least ten species. New for us were White-necked Jacobin, Brown Violetear, White-bellied Emerald, Band-tailed Barbthroat, and Scaly-breasted and Stripe-tailed Hummingbirds. A Pale-billed Woodpecker delighted us as it foraged on a tree limb for some time. Then we walked some newly-installed forest trails. After some effort, Jose spotted our quarry: the elusive Keel-billed Motmot! It perched for long periods



above us, allowing photo ops by many. Success! We returned to the van just as it began to rain. What an enjoyable and productive day!

Day 4 - Rio Aguan Valley

The birding group (minus Annie, who opted out) got a 4 am start for the long drive south around the coastal mountains to the tropical dry forest of the Rio Aguan Valley. Our quest today was the globally endangered **Honduran Emerald** hummingbird, the only endemic species in the country. During a picnic breakfast in Olanchito at first light, we saw **Tropical Kingbird**, **Yellow-throated Euphonia**, **White-winged Doves**, and **Bluegray Tanagers**. In the center of town, statues of the endemic Honduran Emerald and Spiny-tailed Iguana (Jamo) mark the significance of the remaining tropical dry forest habitat of the region. Birding from the van, we stopped to view a pair of **White-fronted Parrots**. A river crossing produced a pair of **Amazon Kingfishers**, **Mangrove Swallows**, **Gray Hawk**, and **Crested Caracara**. Another stop netted a flock of **Olive-throated Parakeets**, a **Rose-breasted Grosbeak**, **American Kestrels**, and two brilliant male **Altamira Orioles**.

Upon arriving at a special reserve, we walked into the thorn-forest, navigating a large rain pool. Early on, we saw our first male **Honduran Emerald**. Through the morning we saw several others. perched as well as feeding on the small red flowers of the favored species of pencil cactus. It is not the most colorful species of hummer, but when the light was right, the male's blue gorget glistened. We also heard a couple of Ferruginous Pygmy-Owls, and saw many different species in this unique habitat, including White-lored Gnatcatcher, White-bellied Wren, and Brown-crested Flycatcher. We heard the loud calls of Plain Chachalacas. and saw one or two soaring Great



Black Hawks. Back out on the dirt road we saw **Inca Doves**, a streaming immature **Zone-tailed Hawk**, and a large flock of **White-collared Swifts**. Before departing, Frank spotted an adult **King Vulture** soaring among the many **Black** and **Turkey Vultures**. Following a delicious and varied home-cooked lunch, we made the long drive "home" to Pico Bonito in the afternoon.

Day 5 - Lancetilla Botanical Garden & Tela

After an early breakfast, we checked a few spots for the Cotinga, then drove to the Lancetilla Botanical Garden. This combination of forest and gardens has much edge habitat, and provides great birding opportunities. We slowly walked up the entrance road, as well as a side road. Birds seen included White-collared and Variable Seedeaters, Chestnut-sided and Yellow Warblers, Northern Parula, Passerini's Tanagers, Streak-headed Woodcreeper, Short-tailed Hawk, four soaring Common Black Hawks, and 7 Wood Storks soaring with the raptors. A real treat was watching the alarm behavior of a Barred Antshrike. We also saw a Jamo Iguana on a tree limb, and heard the calls of a Little Tinamou and a Ruddy Crake.



Around the Visitor Center we saw flocks of Vaux's Swifts, a Wedge-billed Woodcreeper, a juvenile King Vulture, Boat-billed Flycatcher, Black-headed Saltator, and Squirrel Cuckoo. A calling Black Hawk-Eagle soared over the canopy, providing good looks at this striking raptor. We then drove to the arboretum/garden walk, where we marveled at huge stands of Bamboo. Bob took a group photo in front of a large Mahogany tree. From here we had great views of a Masked Tityra and a Turquoise-browed Motmot. We sniffed the leaves of a Clove tree and the bark of a Cinnamon tree. Then Jose gathered us for superb views of a roosting Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl. Sooo cute! It eventually flew down to the ground to catch insect prey.

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In nearby Tela, We had a fabulous outdoor seafood lunch on the Caribbean coast, while enjoying views of the turquoise sea and palm trees. Afterwards we saw a variety of shorebirds, gulls, **Brown Pelicans**, and numerous **Royal Terns** and **Sandwich Terns**. We were entertained by a young boy hawking his wares; Karen befriended him and shared her binos with him. After another great day of birding, we travelled back to the lodge. Frank, Ron and Karen heard a **Sunbittern** while watching the sunset from Toucan Tower. Our last dinner together concluded with reviewing the day's list.

Day 6 - Pico Bonito - San Pedro Sula

This was a travel day for many. But not before a post-breakfast stroll to the Toucan Tower resulted in 3 **Blue-crowned Chlorophonias** feeding on Cecropia fruits. Diane, Liz and Annie had great views of a pair of **Slaty-tailed Trogons**. Ron and Karen departed for their day trip to Cayos Cochinos. The group parted with fond farewells, and the van ride back to San Pedro Sula airport. All agreed it was a fabulous short getaway to the Neotropics. We'll be back!

Below: Costa Rica Group. Photo by Robert White.



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HONDURAS

Pico Bonito Special! SPECIES LIST

January 19 – 24, 2014



Leader: Frank Mantlik and local guide
A=Number of days seen out of 6. B=Maximum number per day (H = Heard)

	SPECIES	Scientific Name	Α	В
1	Little Tinamou	Crypturellus soui	1	1 H
2	Mallard	Anas platyrhynchos	1	1 (exotic?)
3	Lesser Scaup	Aythya affinis	1	1
4	Plain Chachalaca	Ortalis vetula	2	2 H
5	Wood Stork	Mycteria americana	3	8
6	Magnificent Frigatebird	Fregata magnificens	2	2
7	Neotropic Cormorant	Phalacrocorax brasilianus	2	3
8	Brown Pelican	Pelecanus occidentalis	2	20
9	Bare-throated Tiger-Heron	Tigrisoma mexicanum	1	4
10	Great Blue Heron	Ardea herodias	1	1
11	Great Egret	Ardea alba	4	20
12	Snowy Egret	Egretta thula	3	30
13	Little Blue Heron	Egretta caerulea	1	20
14	Cattle Egret	Bubulcus ibis	4	210
15	Green Heron	Butorides virescens	1	3
16	Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	Nyctanassa violacea	1	3
17	Boat-billed Heron	Cochlearius cochlearius	1	6
18	Black Vulture	Coragyps atratus	6	400
19	Turkey Vulture	Cathartes aura	4	20
20	King Vulture	Sarcoramphus papa	2	1
21	White-tailed Kite	Elanus leucurus	1	1
22	Black Hawk-Eagle	Spizaetus tyrannus	2	1
23	Common Black-Hawk	Buteogallus anthracinus	1	4
24	Great Black-Hawk	Buteogallus urubitinga	1	1
25	Roadside Hawk	Rupornis magnirostris	3	5
26	White Hawk	Pseudastur albicollis	1	2

27	Broad-winged Hawk	Buteo platypterus	2	1
28	Gray Hawk	Buteo plagiatus	2	1
29	Short-tailed Hawk	Buteo brachyurus	1	1
30	Zone-tailed Hawk	Buteo albonotatus	1	1
31	Sunbittern	Eurypyga helias	1	1 H
32	Ruddy Crake	Laterallus ruber	1	1 H
33	Purple Gallinule	Porphyrio martinicus	1	1
34	Black-necked Stilt	Himantopus mexicanus	1	15
35	Northern Jacana	Jacana spinosa	2	17
36	Spotted Sandpiper	Actitus macularius	2	2
37	Willet	Tringa semipalmata	1	1
38	Lesser Yellowlegs	Tringa flavipes	1	20
39	Whimbrel	Numenius phaeopus	1	1
40	Sanderling	Calidris alba	1	12
41	Laughing Gull	Leucophaeus atricilla	1	30
42	Royal Tern	Thalasseus maximus	1	50
43	Sandwich Tern	Thalasseus sandvicensis	1	5
44	Rock Pigeon	Columba livia	4	20
45	Red-billed Pigeon	Patagioenas flavirostris	3	12
46	White-winged Dove	Zenaida asiatica	3	30
47	Inca Dove	Columbina inca	2	4
48	Common Ground-Dove	Columbina passerina	2	2
49	Ruddy Ground-Dove	Columbina talpacoti	2	7
50	White-tipped Dove	Leptotila verreauxi	1	2
51	Squirrel Cuckoo	Piaya cayana	3	2
52	Groove-billed Ani	Crotophaga sulcirostris	5	35
53	Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl	Glaucidium brasilianum	2	3
54	Mottled Owl	Ciccaba virgata	4	1 H
55	Great Potoo	Nyctibius grandis	4	1
56	White-collared Swift	Streptoprocne zonaris	4	30
57	Vaux's Swift	Chaetura vauxi	3	20
58	White-necked Jacobin	Florisuga mellivora	2	4
59	Band-tailed Barbthroat	Threnetes ruckeri	1	1
60	Long-billed Hermit	Phaethornis longirostris	3	6
61	Stripe-throated Hermit	Phaethornis striigularis	3	2
62	Brown Violetear	Colibri delphinae	1	1
63	Purple-crowned Fairy	Heliothryx barroti	1	1

64	Scaly-breasted Hummingbird	Phaeochroa cuvieri	1	1
65	Violet Sabrewing	Campylopterus hemileucurus	3	10
66	(Violet) Crowned Woodnymph	Thalurania colombica	3	12
67	Stripe-tailed Hummingbird	Eupherusa eximia	1	1
68	White-bellied Emerald	Amazilia candida	1	2
69	Honduran Emerald E	Amazilia luciae	1	5
70	Rufous-tailed Hummingbird	Amazilia tzacatl	4	20
71	Slaty-tailed Trogon	Trogon massena	2	1
72	Black-headed Trogon	Trogon melanocephalus	4	3
73	Gartered Trogon	Trogon caligatus	2	1
74	Blue-crowned Motmot	Momotus coeruliceps	2	1
75	Keel-billed Motmot	Electron carinatum	1	1
76	Turquoise-browed Motmot	Eumomota superciliosa	1	1
77	Belted Kingfisher	Megaceryle alcyon	1	1
78	Amazon Kingfisher	Chloroceryle amazona	2	3
79	Green Kingfisher	Chloroceryle americana	1	1
80	Collared Aracari	Pteroglossus torquatus	5	6
81	Keel-billed Toucan	Ramphastos sulfuratus	5	6
82	Black-cheeked Woodpecker	Melanerpes pucherani	3	4
83	Golden-fronted Woodpecker	Melanerpes aurifrons	4	4
84	Chestnut-colored Woodpecker	Celeus castaneus	2	2
85	Pale-billed Woodpecker	Campephilus guatemalensis	1	2
86	Barred Forest-Falcon	Micrastur ruficollis	1	1 H
87	Crested Caracara	Caracara cheriway	3	2
88	Laughing Falcon	Herpetotheres cachinnans	1	1
89	American Kestrel	Falco sparverius	1	7
90	Olive-throated Parakeet	Aratinga nana	4	12
91	Brown-hooded Parrot	Pyrilla haematotis	2	14
92	White-crowned Parrot	Pionus senilis	1	6
93	Red-lored Parrot	Amazona autumnalis	1	2
94	White-fronted Parrot	Amazona albifrons	1	2
95	Great Antshrike	Tarabar major	1	1 H
96	Barred Antshrike	Thamnophilus doliatus	1	1
97	Wedge-billed Woodcreeper	Glyphorynchus spirurus	1	2
98	Streak-headed Woodcreeper	Lepidocolaptes souleyetii	1	1
99	Ochre-bellied Flycatcher	Mionectes oleagineus	2	1
100	Paltry Tyrannulet	Zimmerius vilissimus	1	1

101	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	Empidonay flaviyantria	3	1
102	Black Phoebe	Empidonax flaviventris	2	1
103	Dusky-capped Flycatcher	Sayornis nigricans	1	1
104	Great Crested Flycatcher	Myiarchus tuberculifer	1	1
105		Myiarchus crinitus	1	2
106	Brown-crested Flycatcher Great Kiskadee	Myiarchus tyrannulus	5	3
107		Pitangus sulphuratus	2	1
108	Boat-billed Flycatcher	Megarhynchus pitangua	3	4
109	Social Flycatcher Tropical Kinghird	Myioizetetes similis	3	5
110	Tropical Kingbird	Tyrannus melancholicus	2	1
111	Lovely Cotinga	Cotinga amabilis	1	1
112	Red-capped Manakin	Ceratopipra mentalis	2	2
113	White-collared Manakin	Manacus candei	2	2
114	Masked Tityra	Tityra semifasciata	1	 1
115	Philadelphia Vireo	Vireo philadelphicus	6	30
116	Brown Jay	Psilorhinus morio	1	6
117	Mangrove Swallow	Tachycineta albilinea	2	6
118	Barn Swallow	Hirundo rustica	1	3
119	White-bellied Wren	Uropsila leucogastra	1	2
120	White-lored Gnatcatcher	Polioptila albiloris	3	6
121	Wood Thrush	Hylocichla mustelina	6	20
122	Clay-colored Thrush	Turdus grayi	2	11
123	White-throated Thrush	Turdus assimilis	5	10
124	Gray Catbird	Dumetella carolinensis	2	10
125	Ovenbird	Seiurus aurocapilla	3	1
126	Black-and-white Warbler	Mniotilta varia	3	1
127	Hooded Warbler	Setophaga citrina		
128	American Redstart	Setophaga ruticilla	3	3
129	Northern Parula	Setophaga americana	1	1
	Magnolia Warbler	Setophaga magnolia	4	6
130	Yellow Warbler	Setophaga petechia	3	2
131	Chestnut-sided Warbler	Setophaga pensylvanica	1	2
132	Black-throated Blue Warbler	Setophaga caerulescens	1	1
133	Yellow-rumped Warbler	Setophaga coronata	1	1
134	Black-throated Green Warbler	Setophaga virens	1	2
135	Crimson-collared Tanager	Ramphocelus sanguinolentus	1	2
136	Passerini's Tanager	Ramphocelus passerinii	1	3
137	Blue-gray Tanager	Thraupis episcopus	2	2

138	Yellow-winged Tanager	Thraupis abbas	2	8
139	Golden-hooded Tanager	Tangara larvata	3	6
140	Rufous-winged Tanager	Tangara lavinia	1	1
141	Shining Honeycreeper	Cyanerpes lucidus	1	1
142	Green Honeycreeper	Chlorophanes spiza	1	3
143	Variable Seedeater	Sporophila corvina	1	2
144	White-collared Seedeater	Sporophila torqueola	2	20
145	Buff-throated Saltator	Saltator maximus	3	1
146	Black-headed Saltator	Saltator atriceps	2	1
147	Orange-billed Sparrow	Arremon auraniirostris	1	1 H
148	Summer Tanager	Piranga rubra	5	2
149	Red-throated Ant-Tanager	Habia fuscicauda	1	1
150	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	Pheucticus Iudovicianus	2	1
151	Melodious Blackbird	Dives dives	3	2
152	Great-tailed Grackle	Quiscalus mexicanus	6	300
153	Bronzed Cowbird	Molothrus aeneus	1	1
154	Orchard Oriole	Icterus spurius	1	1
155	Altamira Oriole	lcterus gularis	2	2
156	Baltimore Oriole	lcterus galbula	2	2
157	Chestnut-headed Oropendola	Psarocolius wagleri	3	7
158	Montezuma Oropendola	Psarocolius montezuma	5	10
159	Yellow-throated Euphonia	Euphonia hirundinacea	1	1
160	Olive-backed Euphonia	Euphonia gouldi	3	2
161	Blue-crowned Chlorophonia	Chlorophonia occipitalis	1	3
162	House Sparrow	Passer domesticus	1	2

	OTHER ANIMAL SPECIES	Scientific Name		
1	Central American Agouti	Dasyprocta punctata	6	8
2	Variegated Squirrel	Sciurus variegatoides	5	3
3	Mantled Howler Monkey	Alouatta palliata	1	3
4	Raccoon	Procyon lotor	1	1
5	Long-nosed Bat	Leptonycteris, sp.	1	12
6	Brown Basilisk Lizard	Basiliscus, sp.	3	2
7	(Central) American Crocodile	Crocodylus acutus	1	4
8	Black-chested Spiny-tailed Iguana (Jamo)	Ctenosaura melanosterna	1	1

9	Green Iguana	Iguana iguana	1	1
10	Turtle, sp.		1	1
	BUTTERFLIES			
1	Common Blue Morpho	Morpho helenor		
2	Brownish Cracker	Hamadryas ipthime		



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