

# AGUA SELVA, TABASCO

## June 2016, Trip Report



Tabasco Birding Tours  
[avesdeltropico.com](http://avesdeltropico.com)

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**T**his trip report covers a two-day visit to a community called Agua Selva, located in Malpasito, Tabasco, Mexico.

This time we visited a private site called EcoParque AguaSelva. The habitat is tropical rainforest mixed with patches of second growth. Many streams and waterfalls pleasantly crisscross the area. The eco-park has well defined walking paths. The area is secure and the access roads to the site are in an acceptable condition although there is a small unpaved portion. From the state capital (Villahermosa) it is a 2.5 hours ride.

**Day One:** As we approached the entrance to the park, we were greeted by nesting pairs of **Rose-throated Becards**, **Black-headed Saltators** and **Black-cowled Orioles**. **House Wrens** of the southern race were very vocal along with **Green-backed Sparrows**, **White-collared Seedeaters** and **Blue-black Grassquits**.



Yellow-olive Flycatcher

EcoParque AguaSelva offers the following services:

- Cabins
- Camping Facilities
- Guided Walks
- Meal Services
- Rappel
- Archeological Tours

More info:

[aguaselva.com.mx](http://aguaselva.com.mx) or at  
[luis.alejandro.madrigal@gmail.com](mailto:luis.alejandro.madrigal@gmail.com)

Cultural Attraction:  
**Malpasito Archeological** site is located within walking distance of the EcoParque, and features a ball court, unique ancestral bathroom facilities, many petroglyphs and a main plaza.



Crimson-collared Tanager



Sings at the Park. Photo by Hardy Perez

We also encountered **Gray-crowned Yellowthroat**, the resident **Rufous-capped Warbler** (ssp. salvini) with its mostly yellow under parts, and the always astonishing **Crimson-collared Tanager**.

It was time to enter proper rainforest, and the first bird to greet us, with its distinctive thrilling call, was an **Olivaceous Woodcreeper**. Immediately afterwards, we attracted the attention of a pair of **Red-legged Honeycreepers**, which were feeding very close to a **Yellow-throated Euphonia**. A still standing dead tree hosted a nesting **Gartered Trogon** and also a group of noisy **Sulphur-bellied Flycatchers**.



Continuing down the path, we found two more attractive species: **Tawny-winged** and **Ivory-billed Woodcreeper**. **Red-lored Parrots** and **Keel-billed Toucans** were foraging on the canopy. **Blue-crowned Motmots**, very common here, started appearing. The first noisy group of **Red-throated Ant-Tanagers** materialized from the understory and came close to check us out.



Tawny-winged Woodcreeper



Ivory-billed Woodcreeper



Olivaceous Woodcreeper

This site offers an interesting mix of lowland and highland species, like Black-crowned Tityra and Slate-colored Solitaire.



Northern Bentbill



Black-crowned Tityra (male)

Soon it was time for lunch, which we enjoyed near the waterfall locally known as “*Las Pavitas*”. **Spot-breasted** and **White-breasted Wood-wren** called nearby. A **Black-crowned Tityra** foraged on a fruiting ficus tree. Sitting down we also added **Black-headed Trogon** and a buzzing **Stripe-throated Hermit** to the list. The nostalgic call of the **White-tipped Dove** was a constant during the entire trip. We resumed our walk and were rewarded with the colorful **Golden-hooded Tanager** and a very vocal **Northern Bentbill**. **Lesser Greenlets** and **Golden-crowned Warblers** were all over our camping grounds.

The best was yet to come. As evening approached, we hiked the gentle trail that leads to a bigger waterfall known as “*La Pava*”. There we heard our main objective, **the Slate-colored Solitaire** with its ethereal and magical song. What a joy is to hear this metallic voice as it ascends and fills the surrounding forest! Satisfied, we started our way back. We were fording a tiny stream when a few meters ahead, in a muddy puddle, we encountered a veritable ghost: a fully-adult male **Great Curassow**! It was an astonishing find. This species is considered highly endangered, due to hunting pressure and loss of habitat. It glanced at us and then it flew to a nearby tree and actually started to climb amid the branches. We will not forget this encounter in a long time. We sat down to absorb the emotion when a **Royal Flycatcher** came to complete the staggering moment. And with that note, it was time to go back to our camping grounds.



Royal Flycatcher



Great Curassow



**Day Two:** We intended to do some owling at night, but a tropical downpour that lasted hours quickly ended our ambitions. In the early morning we hiked back to “La Pava” where we relocated, in the same puddle, the Curassow. We also spotted **Common-Black, Roadside** and **Gray Hawks**. **Collared Aracari** and **Rufous-breasted Spinetail** were new birds to our list.



La Pava Waterfall



Red-crowned Ant-Tanager

We were transitioning a patch of second growth when a strange song attracted our attention. Eventually, a pair of **Red-crowned Ant-Tanagers**, an uncommon species, emerged from the vegetation. A **Squirrel Cuckoo** also called loudly on the canopy.

We birded the rest of the morning in a relaxed pace, adding along the way **Buff-throated Saltator**, **Long-billed Gnatwren** and **Yellow-olive Flycatcher**. Interesting non-birds sightings included a head-bobbing basilisk, a rather large, beautiful, terrestrial and green snake, an enormous yellow crab, which seemed a bit out of place in the jungle, and a cute family of very bold nine-banded armadillos. Finally, the weird call of the **Montezuma Oropendola** bade us farewell till our next adventure.



Long-billed Gnatwren



Jungle-dwelling Crab



Nine-banded Armadillo



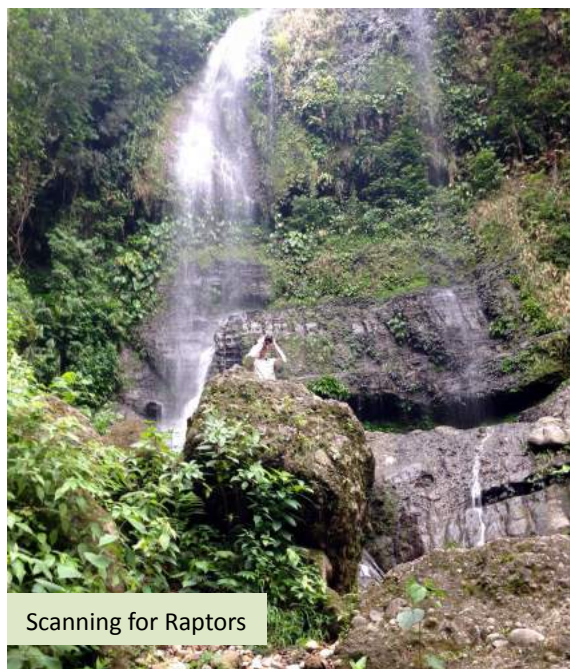
## Bird List: 64 Species

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Plain Chachalaca (*Ortalis vetula*)  
Great Curassow (*Crax rubra*)  
Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*)  
Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*)  
Common Black Hawk (*Buteogallus anthracinus*)  
Roadside Hawk (Mainland) (*Rupornis magnirostris*)  
White-tipped Dove (*Leptotila verreauxi*)  
White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*)  
Squirrel Cuckoo (*Piaya cayana*)  
Groove-billed Ani (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*)  
Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl (*Glaucidium brasilianum*)  
Stripe-throated Hermit (*Phaethornis striigularis*)  
Slaty-tailed Trogon (*Trogon massena*) **Heard Only**  
Black-headed Trogon (*Trogon melanocephalus*)  
Gartered Trogon (*Trogon caligatus*)  
Blue-crowned Motmot (*Momotus coeruliceps*)  
Keel-billed Toucan (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*)  
Collared Aracari (*Pteroglossus torquatus*)  
Golden-fronted Woodpecker (*Melanerpes aurifrons*)  
Red-lored Parrot (*Amazona autumnalis*)  
White-fronted Parrot (*Amazona albifrons*)  
Olive-throated Parakeet (*Eupsittula nana*)  
Olivaceous Woodcreeper (*Sittasomus griseicapillus*)  
Tawny-winged Woodcreeper (*Dendrocicla anabatina*)  
Ivory-billed Woodcreeper (*Xiphorhynchus flavigaster*)  
Rufous-breasted Spinetail (*Synallaxis erythrothorax*)  
Northern Bentbill (*Oncostoma cinereigulare*)  
Yellow-olive Flycatcher (*Tolmomyias sulphurescens*)  
Royal Flycatcher (*Onychorhynchus coronatus*)  
Great Kiskadee (*Pitangus sulphuratus*)  
Boat-billed Flycatcher (*Megarynchus pitangua*)  
Social Flycatcher (*Myiozetetes similis*)  
Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher (*Myiodynastes luteiventris*)  
Black-crowned Tityra (*Tityra inquisitor*)  
Masked Tityra (*Tityra semifasciata*)  
Rose-throated Becard (*Pachyramphus aglaiae*)  
Lesser Greenlet (*Pachysylvia decurtata*)  
Brown Jay (*Psilorhinus morio*)  
House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*)



Happy birder on the trail



Scanning for Raptors

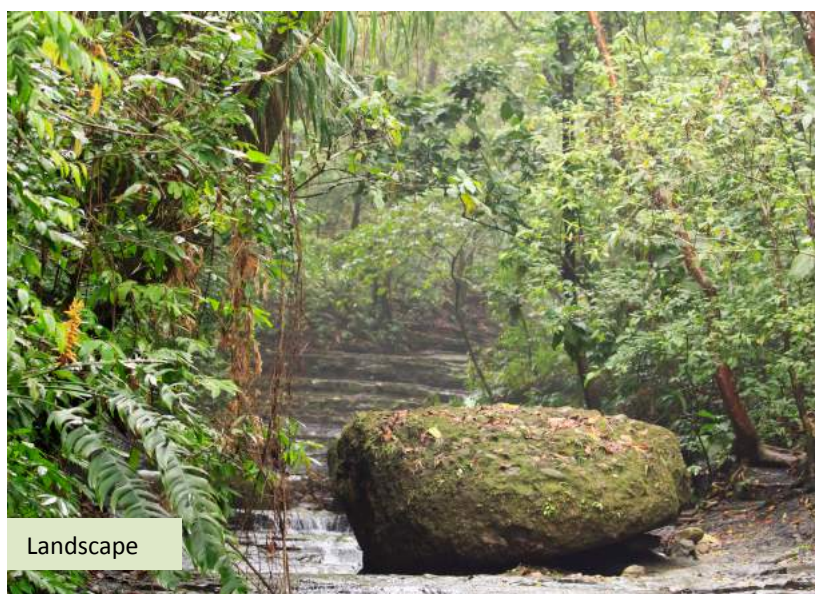
## Bird List

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Band-backed Wren (*Campylorhynchus zonatus*)  
Spot-breasted Wren (*Pheugopedius maculipectus*)  
White-breasted Wood-Wren (*Henicorhina leucosticta*)  
Slate-colored Solitaire (*Myadestes unicolor*) **Heard**  
Clay-colored Thrush (*Turdus grayi*)  
Gray-crowned Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis poliocephala*)  
Rufous-capped Warbler (*B. rufifrons salvini*)  
Golden-crowned Warbler (*Basileuterus culicivorus*)  
Crimson-collared Tanager (*R. sanguinolentus*)  
Golden-hooded Tanager (*Tangara larvata*)  
Red-legged Honeycreeper (*Cyanerpes cyaneus*)  
Blue-black Grassquit (*Volatinia jacarina*)  
White-collared Seedeater (*Sporophila torqueola*)  
Buff-throated Saltator (*Saltator maximus*)  
Black-headed Saltator (*Saltator atriceps*)  
Green-backed Sparrow (*Arremonops chloronotus*)  
Red-crowned Ant-Tanager (*Habia rubica*)  
Red-throated Ant-Tanager (*Habia fuscicauda*)  
Melodious Blackbird (*Dives dives*)  
Great-tailed Grackle (*Quiscalus mexicanus*)  
Black-cowled Oriole (*Icterus prosthemelas*)  
Altamira Oriole (*Icterus gularis*)  
Montezuma Oropendola (*Psarocolius montezuma*)  
Yellow-throated Euphonia (*Euphonia hirundinacea*)

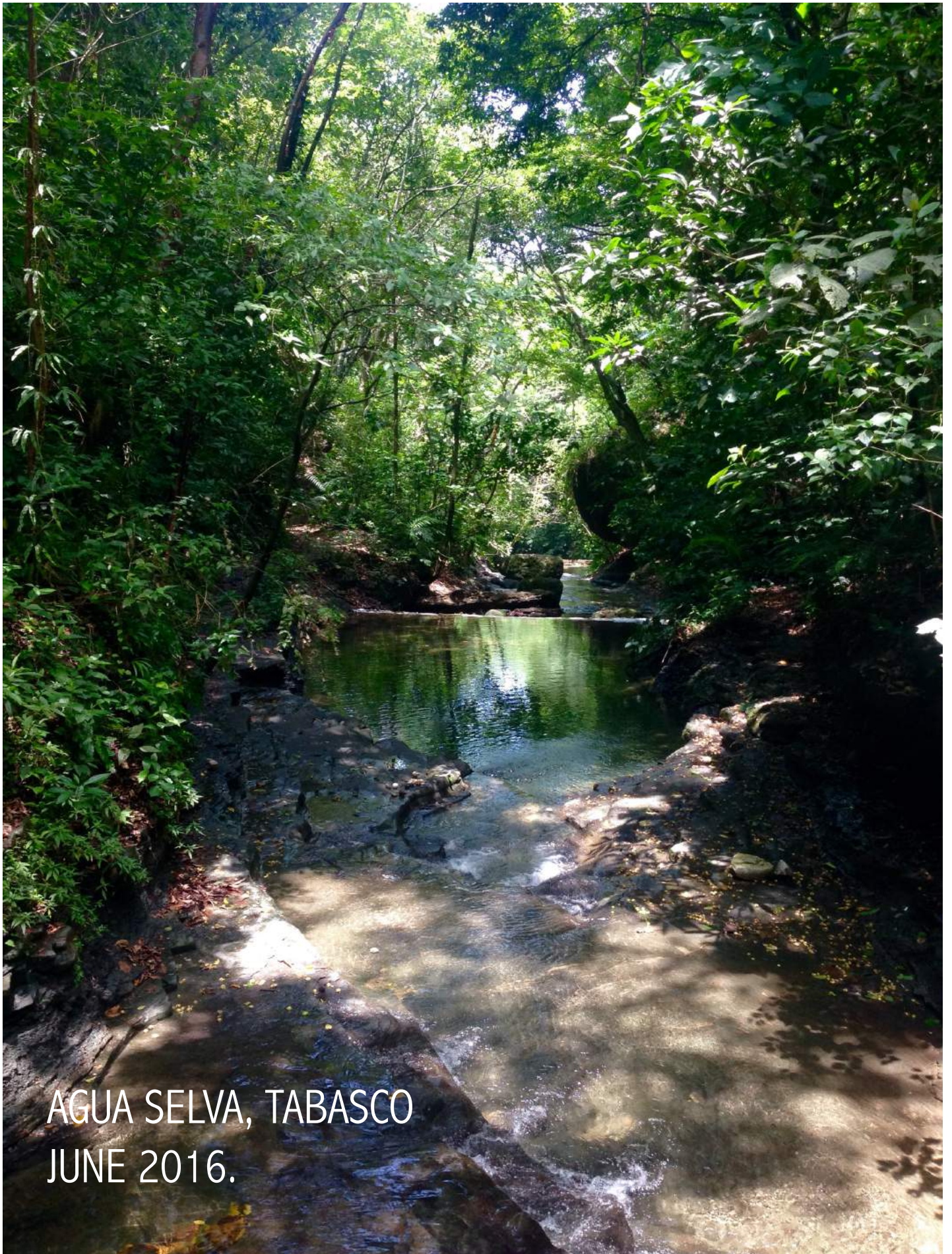


Montezuma Oropendola



Landscape





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JUNE 2016.