

Endémicos Insulares, A.C.

Para el estudio y conservación de las Islas Mexicanas y las especies que en ellas habitan

BIRDING IN THE STATE OF VERACRUZ

How to arrive and what to see?

Jorge E. Montejo Díaz

jorge.montejo@endemicos.org

INTRODUCTION

This site guide was created for the visiting birder to Veracruz, including directions to 41 sites of interest organized by driving times from Veracruz City. All site directions begin from either Veracruz City or Xalapa (or Japala) and driving times, when provided, are estimates in 'good' traffic conditions. Links to maps have also been provided to aid in navigation. Many sites are included due to their birding productivity during fall migration, in addition to their rich diversity of resident species. Several of these sites can also be found, with much greater detail such as species lists, in S.N.G. Howell's 'A Bird-finding Guide to Mexico'. More than one of these sites can be visited per day to maximize species and habitat diversity on a daily birding adventure in Veracruz.

Los Tuxtlas maps: http://www.tuxtlas.com/photos/index_maps.html

Veracruz State maps: <http://www.maps-of-mexico.com/veracruz-state-mexico/veracruz-state-mexico-map-main.shtml>

Xalapa 'interactive' city map: www.xalapa.net/mapa.htm#

Site descriptions and directions are brief, though one should be able to find their way combining written directions with maps. Highway toll prices normally range \$17-80 pesos, though up to \$145 pesos on Hwy 145D. Note that not all roads are suitable for low clearance vehicles and depending on the severity of recent rains, may be impassible even in a van or truck. Take extreme caution when looking for entrances off highways as many drivers exceed posted speed limits and ignore designated lanes (ie. 3 lanes are used where appears to be 2). Never leave valuables in plain sight within parked vehicles. It is always a good idea to explain what you are doing and/or ask for permission to bird when encountering people on private or community lands. All information provided herein is to the best of the author's knowledge. Neither the author nor Endemicos Insulares, A.C. is responsible for any misfortune that occurs while one is looking for or birding one of these sites.

Drive safe and good birding!

Endémicos Insulares, A.C.

Para el estudio y conservación de las Islas Mexicanas y las especies que en ellas habitan

WITHIN ONE HOUR OF VERACRUZ CITY (13 SITES)

1.- San Julian Lagoon - Located ~10 km north of Veracruz City, just to the northeast of the overpass where Hwy 180 (4 lanes) passes under Hwy 140 (2 lanes). Take Hwy 140 out of Veracruz City, following signs for and ultimately passing the Veracruz International Airport and the 'industrial city', until you reach the major intersection: Paso de Ovejas (straight), Paso del Toro/Alvarado (left) and Cardel/San Julian (right). Take to the right towards Cardel/San Julian for ~5 km until passing the toll booths, keeping in the leftmost lane following signs for Poza Rica/Cardel. Once on the overpass, the entrance to the town and lagoon of San Julian is straight ahead. Follow the road through the main part of town to where the paved road ends, continue on the dirt road and one can park wherever there is sufficient room and bird along this road and surrounding patches of tropical dry forest, pastures, and the lagoon. Species of interest here include hummingbirds such as Canivet's Emerald and, with luck, the endemic Mexican Shearwater, aquatic species such as Limpkin, Sora, and Purple Gallinule, and a good variety of tropical and migratory raptors. In the mornings, one can observe the migration of flycatchers, orioles and raptors, mainly hunting accipiters and falcons.

2.- La Catalana: This coastal lagoon can be found 14 km north of Veracruz City, ~15 minutes by car. Following the directions to the previous site (San Julian), at the end of the overpass (and before entering San Julian) exit onto federal Hwy 180 and continue north. In front of the only U-turn access (now blocked, though still visible) between the San Julian exit (see above) and the toll booths at the La Antigua River, is the entrance to La Catalana (right, or east). Right before the entrance to the site is a green, with white lettering, sign for "La Catalana" and at the entrance is an abandoned casita and gate (park here), representing the doorway of what was to be a housing development. The site has several streets made of river stones and at the end of the main street is the lagoon. Like many other sites along the central Veracruz coast, the area is covered with tropical dry forest and great coastal dunes separate the lagoon from the ocean. At this site one can encounter many resident and migratory species of interest such as the local subspecies of Rufous-naped Wren, Collared Forest-Falcon, a variety of hummingbirds, orioles and a good diversity of raptors. This is also a good place to find a wide diversity of butterflies.

3.- La Antigua River: This is the largest river that crosses the central portion of the state, located ~19 km north of Veracruz City off the toll portion of federal Hwy 180. The river can be enjoyed by boat, leaving from the historic town of La Antigua. Exit Veracruz City following directions to the entrance for the previous site (La Catalana), continuing north on Hwy 180 to the toll booths. Easily located as one crosses the river before arriving to the toll station, the trip by car is ~20 minutes from Veracruz City. To get to the river it is necessary to enter the village of La Antigua: after passing the toll station (\$35 pesos/car) take the road that immediately exits to the left (west) for ~1 km until arriving at the village. One can easily find the boat launch site by asking anyone in town, and once there it is important to negotiate a price with a boat operator BEFORE (usually ~ \$500 pesos/boat) leaving on the trip. The vegetation along the river is riparian with open fields beyond the borders, and towards the mouth of the river are coastal dunes with its characteristic vegetation. Species of interest during this outing include, not surprisingly, a variety of aquatic species, although on the bordering lands one can find Aplomado Falcon, Crested Caracara, and, if the nearby tributary river is visited, up to four species of kingfisher. At the mouth of the river and adjacent beaches one can find Collared Plover, Gray-necked Wood-Rail, Brown and American White pelicans, great concentrations of gulls, terns, shorebirds and various types of herons and egrets. Late afternoon can be the best time to visit this site when many species arrive to roost near the mouth of the river.

Endémicos Insulares, A.C.

Para el estudio y conservación de las Islas Mexicanas y las especies que en ellas habitan

4.- Chalchihuecan Beach: The entrance to this beach is located ~20 km north of Veracruz City on the toll portion of federal Hwy 180, the trip ~20 minutes by car. Follow directions to the entrance for site #2 (La Catalana), continuing north on Hwy 180 past the toll station at the La Antigua River. Continue on Hwy 180 north for another ~800 meters until the entrance to the beach (right, or east) which should be indicated with a sign, also look for an abandoned store at the entrance. From here the beach is ~3km on this sandy road. At the beginning of the road the vegetation consists mainly of shrubs, with some patches of trees and open areas. Along this road it is recommended to walk a little of the way, birding adjacent vegetation zones and near the beach where small wetlands can be found. Among species of interest at this site are Laughing Falcon, Collared Forest-Falcon, Mexican Sheartail, Canivet's Emerald, Common Pauraque, as well as flocks of migratory species, including raptors.

5.- Zempoala: This archaeological site is located ~37 km north of Veracruz City on federal Hwy 180, ~40 minutes from the port. Follow directions to the entrance for the previous site (Chalchihuecan Beach), continuing north on Hwy 180 past the city of Cardel following signs for Poza Rica. The turnoff to the archaeological zone is located ~8 km north of Cardel, taking the entrance (left, or west) to the town of Zempoala. The entrance to the ruins is located ~500 meters from Hwy 180 and is well-marked by signs. This site is a visit to the prehispanic period of central Veracruz, and within the borders of the ruins one can find Red-billed Pigeon, Golden-fronted Woodpecker, Blue-gray and Yellow-winged tanagers, several species of migratory warblers, *Columbina* ground-doves, and during the day this can be a good place to enjoy coastal lowland migration. Cost: ~\$30 pesos/each to enter ruins.

6.- Cardel (Hotel Internacional): The city of Cardel is located ~29 km north of Veracruz City, off federal Hwy 180 (see sites #1 & 2 to get out of Veracruz City), ~35 minutes from the port by car. The main attraction of this site to the birder is the raptor migration, perhaps the best place in the world to observe this phenomenon, as well as the migration of many non-raptor species. Hotel Internacional will have its rooftop open to hawkwatchers from at least Sept 29 to Oct 10, complete with tarps for shade and chairs. To find Hotel Internacional one must enter the city of Cardel, taking the first entrance to the city center. At the city's central park, or zocalo, on its northwest corner are Hotel Bienvenido and the bank Bancomer. Take this street (Jose Cardel) at Bancomer, continuing west for a couple of blocks to the train tracks; after the tracks continue one block, taking to the left (south) and Hotel Internacional should be on your left (#25 Independencia, also called Internacional Plaza Hotel) ~ ½ block down. Among the most common species to be observed are the great flocks of Turkey Vulture, Broad-winged and Swainson's hawks, with these three species often forming groups of many thousands of individuals, as well as other migratory raptor species. In addition to raptors, one can also observe the migration of large groups of American White Pelican, Anhinga, White Ibis, Wood Stork, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, among others. Hotel Internacional tel: (296) 962-0288.

7.- Chichicaxtle: The town of Chichicaxtle is located ~40 km north and west of Veracruz City. The main attraction of this site is the migration of raptors and aquatic birds, best in the afternoon when the winds originating from the Gulf of Mexico push migrating birds inland. Passing the city of Cardel on Hwy 180 (see previous site), on Cardel's northern limit take federal Hwy 140 west (left) towards the city of Xalapa for ~ 11 km. A raptor count site is located on the east side just after entering the town, along the baseball & soccer fields next to the highway. It is important to note that the new federal highway now skirts around the edge of town, and it is necessary to leave Hwy 140 to enter Chichicaxtle, well-marked by signs. In addition to migrating raptors, this site has been semi-reliable for Mexican Sheartail, feeding on flowers growing along the fence next to the soccer field, as well as

Endémicos Insulares, A.C.

Para el estudio y conservación de las Islas Mexicanas y las especies que en ellas habitan

Blue-black Grassquit, White-collared Seedeater, and resident raptors such as Bat Falcon and White-tailed Hawk.

8.- Río Escondido: This dirt road travels along the edge of a canyon, and is located ~46 km north and west of Veracruz City, ~50 minutes by car from the port. Following directions to the entrance for the previous site (Chichicaxtle), continue west on Hwy 140 until you arrive to the town of Tamarindo ~3 km later. Continue towards Xalapa (west) for another ~ 3 km passing 2 Pemex gas stations until arriving to the exit for the town of “Rinconada”. Take the overpass to Rinconada and, just when finishing the descent of the bridge, make a U-turn to return again to Cardel (east) on Hwy 140. Approximately 500 meters after making the U-turn is a sign reading “Retorno a 500 metros” (on right) and next to this sign is an entrance to a dirt road that follows an irrigation canal. The dirt road is bordered by agricultural fields and patches of tropical dry forest, as well as a good view of the canyon and the river that runs through it. Among species of interest here are Varied Bunting, Vermilion Flycatcher, sparrows such as Botteri’s and Savannah, White-collared Swift, with luck Mexican Sheartail, Olive-throated (Aztec) Parakeet, White-crowned Parrot and resident raptors such as White-tailed Hawk and Bat Falcon.

9.- Juan Angel Beach: This beach is located ~46 km north of Veracruz City, ~ 1 hour by car from the port. Follow directions to the entrance for site#5 (Zempoala), continuing on Hwy 180 north several kilometers until arriving to the entrance (on right) signed “Paso Doña Juana”; this entrance is located just before passing the bridge “Agua Fría”. Taking this entrance, the beach is located ~7 km to the east. Passing through the town of Paso Doña Juana, the paved road ends at a T-intersection. Take to the left and ~10 meters ahead the road bears to the right. After ~ 300 meters this dirt road meets a T-intersection, take to the left and continue to the beach. Ask anyone for the ‘playa’ if you are unsure! The dominant vegetation in this area is sugarcane fields, and after passing Paso Doña Juana the vegetation is mixed with second growth, open fields and small patches of tropical dry forest. These latter places are good for various resident species such as Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Altamira Oriole, Rose-throated Becard, Collared Forest-Falcon, among others. Nearer the beach one passes parallel with the Actopan River and, continuing on the road, eventually arrives to the coastal dunes and ocean. Other species of interest at this site are Aplomado Falcon, Mexican Sheartail (try around a small, gray abandoned house on the left overlooking the river), Double-striped Thick-knee, the local subspecies of Rufous-naped Wren, Collared Plover, and Northern and Tropical mockingbirds. In the open areas next to the beach is the town dump, and a good site to find Fork-tailed and Scissor-tailed flycatchers together, as well as several species of migratory sparrows. The mouth of the river is at the end of the road (ocean), and an excellent place to observe shorebirds and other aquatic species. In general, this site is good to enjoy the migration of many of birds, as well as the migration of butterflies and dragonflies.

10.- Arroyo Moreno: This area of mangroves is located in nearby Boca del Rio and is of easy access from downtown Veracruz City. Following Boulevard Costero one should arrive to the historic center of the city of Boca del Rio and from there straight to the boat docks. One should see an office where one can book a boat trip traversing the mangroves using Arroyo Moreno as the principal route. Making arrangements and setting a price with the boat operator(s) beforehand, one can stop and explore by foot at various points to bird in the mangroves, deciduous tropical forest or areas used for cattle pasture and agriculture. Alternatively, one can use Boulevard Costero and arrive to the entrance of Fraccionamiento (neighborhood) Tampiquera, from there taking to the west and arriving at the end of the road. Park here and walk to the trail. This trail is the remains of a levee system and runs for ~5 km. Following the trail to the end, one will encounter many birds and have executed a good day’s exercise. Among interesting species one can find at this site are “Mangrove” Yellow Warbler, Laughing Falcon, Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, Gray-necked Wood-Rail, and

Endémicos Insulares, A.C.

Para el estudio y conservación de las Islas Mexicanas y las especies que en ellas habitan

American Pygmy-Kingfisher.

11.- La Piedra: This town is located ~28 km southeast of Veracruz City along federal Hwy 180, towards the cities of Alvarado and Catemaco. The trip by car is ~ 35 minutes from the port. Take the highway that runs from Veracruz City to Boca del Rio, continuing towards “Paso del Toro” until arriving to the intersections of the highways 150 to “Paso del Toro” & “Cordoba” and 180 to Alvarado, taking to the left (southeast) towards Alvarado. Passing the town of “La Laguna” and the exit to “Tlalixcoyan” (right), a few kilometers further ahead is the entrance to the town of La Piedra (on left), around several “topes” (speedbumps) across the highway; the entrance is marked with a sign for “La Piedra”. The first 8-9 kilometers of this paved road is bordered by pasture with small wetlands and patches of typical coastal vegetation, with a good component of palms. Among species of interest are a great number of aquatics such as terns, Neotropic Cormorant, Northern Jacana, Black-necked Stilt, Least Grebe and various shorebirds. Where one can find patches of regenerating vegetation are productive for many types of flycatchers and warblers; raptors are common along the road with such possibilities as Aplomado Falcon, Crane Hawk, Crested Caracara, and migratory raptors. If you follow this road to its end you will eventually reach the beach at Antón Lizardo, from where it is easier to return to Veracruz City along the coastal road.

12.- Las Barrancas: This area of coastal prairie is located ~30 km southeast of Veracruz City, along Hwy 180 towards the city of Alvarado and the Los Tuxtlas region. The trip by car is ~ 40 minutes from the port. Follow directions to the entrance for the previous site (La Piedra) along Hwy 180, continuing on Hwy 180 southeast for ~2 km until reaching the entrance to a dirt road on the left (east), marked by a restaurant with a palm-thatched roof next to the highway and a line of Australian pines. Passing a giant sign of a bull’s silhouette (on left or east, in a field) on the highway, go back ~ 100 meters. The first 6 km of the Las Barrancas road is the most interesting for birding. The vegetation consists mostly of open areas with pasture and small patches of coastal scrub, interspersed with small wetlands and lagoons. After the first 6 km, the vegetation changes to a shrub-dominated landscape hosting a different community of birds. At this site one can find Double-striped Thick-knee, raptors such as Aplomado Falcon, Crested Caracara, and Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, open area species such as Fork-tailed Flycatcher, as well a great variety of herons, egrets and other aquatic species. Pinnated Bittern can be found with patience in the reed-dominated lagoons and in the shrubbier areas a great quantity of migratory and resident species, including Common Tody-Flycatcher.

13.- Salinas-Costa de la Palma: This dirt road is located ~5 km southeast of the entrance to the previous site (Las Barrancas), on Hwy 180 next to the beginning of the town of Salinas. The trip from Veracruz City should take no more than 45 minutes. At the entrance one can find a sign for the communities of “Mosquitero” and “Costa de la Palma”. This exit is located next to the first tope at the entrance of Salinas, on the right side if you are traveling from Veracruz City. The dominant vegetation along this road is pastures with patches of dry forest and scrub and, depending on the extent of recent rains, possibly flooded areas. Along this road one can find a great variety of migratory species, from aquatics to flycatchers and warblers; resident species of interest are Yellow-bellied Elaenia, Northern Jacana, Common Black-Hawk, Grayish and Black-headed saltators, Gray-crowned Yellowthroat, among others.

Endémicos Insulares, A.C.

Para el estudio y conservación de las Islas Mexicanas y las especies que en ellas habitan

1-2 HOURS FROM VERACRUZ CITY (13 SITES)

14.- La Mancha: The biological station La Mancha is ~65 km north of Veracruz City off federal highway 180. Follow directions to the entrance for site #5 (Zempoala), continuing north on Hwy 180 ~32 km past the city of Cardel until finding signs for La Mancha, the entrance on one's right (east). Before arriving to the entrance to La Mancha, the lagoon can be seen from above on one's right (east) and ~ 1 km further ahead is the entrance to the community of La Mancha. From the community to the biological station and lagoon of La Mancha is ~ 2 km along a dirt road, almost anywhere along which is good for birding. The station and its surroundings host a variety of habitats within a relatively small area, the most representative being mangroves, coastal dunes, tropical forest remnants and a coastal lagoon, as well as agricultural fields. Species of interest in the area are Aplomado Falcon, Common Black-Hawk, Boat-billed Heron, Ringed Kingfisher, Olive-throated (Aztec) Parakeet, Lineated Woodpecker, Gray-necked Wood-Rail, Black-headed Trogon, and a great variety of migratory species. This is an excellent place to observe the migration of raptors, doves, flycatchers, swallows, and warblers, among others. Cost at the station for using trails/birding is normally \$30 pesos/person.

15.- El Farallón & El Llano Lagoons: These two lagoons are part of the extensive coastal lagoon system of Veracruz, of which more than 90 such lagoons can be found along the state's coast. Following directions to the entrance for the previous site (La Mancha), continue for another 1-2 kilometers north on Hwy 180. El Farallon lagoon is located just past the first large hill (on left) after the entrance to the previous site (La Mancha). Next to the high part of the hill is a wide entrance (on right) to a private property that one can use to park, and from there walk some 30 meters to the edge of the southern end of the lagoon. To find the El Llano lagoon continue north on Hwy 180 ~ 3 km, and after passing the El Farallon lagoon and the base of the Laguna Verde nuclear plant workers, is the El Llano lagoon. One can access the El Llano lagoon entering the town of Villa Rica (on right or east) and then taking the first road to the right, which ends at the lagoon. The Villa Rica entrance can easily be found as it is the road opposite the access road to the ruins of Quiahuixtlan. The dominant vegetation around the two lagoons is tropical dry forest and second growth, as well as the coastal zones at the mouth of the lagoons. Species of interest for these sites are a variety of aquatics, including gulls, terns and shorebirds at the lagoon mouths, ducks, herons, and egrets along the edges of the lagoons, and raptors and warblers in the shrubs and nearby hills. As per the previous site this can be a good place to observe the migration of raptors and other species.

16.- Quiahuixtlan: This ancient Totonac cemetery is located at the base of the sierra Manuel Diaz and offers an impressive view of the central Veracruz coastline. The entrance to this beautiful archaeological site is located ~70 km north of Veracruz City, using federal Hwy 180. Follow directions for the previous site (El Farallon & El Llano lagoons) to the entrance to Villa Rica, taking the well-marked entrance to Quiahuixtlan opposite the community of Villa Rica. Exiting Hwy 180, take the dirt road for ~3 km, climbing the sierra gradually until reaching the parking lot for Quiahuixtlan. The vegetation along the entrance road consists of pasture in the lower parts, changing to second growth and remnants of tropical dry forest as one climbs. From this site one can see a great variety of tropical raptors and, in the fall, it is one of the best places to view the raptor migration. At Quiahuixtlan is a great rock monolith that acts as a bird magnet, drawing a wide variety of species. Along the access road one can find Vermilion Flycatcher, Gray-crowned Yellowthroat, Magnificent Frigatebird, and a variety of orioles, migratory warblers and flycatchers. Cost is ~\$35 pesos/person to enter the ruins.

Endémicos Insulares, A.C.

Para el estudio y conservación de las Islas Mexicanas y las especies que en ellas habitan

17.- Cerro Gordo: This historic hill is another site for birding the tropical dry forests of central Veracruz. Follow directions for sites #1 & 2 out of Veracruz City to Hwy 180, continue north on Hwy 180 to Cardel, then take Hwy 140 west (left) towards the city of Xalapa. Cerro Gordo is located ~80 km north and west of Veracruz City, or ~23 km east of Xalapa. To find Cerro Gordo, one must take the old free highway to Xalapa from near Cardel, not the new toll highway. The entrance road is located at the foot of the hill, ~3 km before arriving to the community of Cerro Gordo; this entrance can be difficult to see the first time but when one arrives to the part of the highway where it opens to 3 lanes (2 going up, 1 going down) it means the entrance is ~100 meters back. This small road takes one to rocky fields with seasonal crops and, further ahead, patches of tropical dry forest. Here you can walk and find White-bellied Wren, Black-crested Titmouse, Varied Bunting, the local subspecies of Rufous-naped Wren, and, with luck, in the late afternoons this is one of the few places in central Veracruz where Yellow-headed Parrot can still be found.

18.- Xalapa (Macuiltepetl Park): This hill is located in the center of the city of Xalapa and is used as a recreational park by Xalapa's citizens. Xalapa is ~ 105 km north and west of Veracruz City, ~ 1.5 hours by car. Follow the directions to site #7 (Chichicaxtle), continuing on Hwy 140 west to Xalapa. Entering the city limits, one passes several malls and, almost immediately after passing Home Depot & Sam's Club (on right) take to your left on "Murillo Vidal" at the intersection. Follow Murillo Vidal for several kilometers to the heart of downtown Xalapa until reaching the city's giant cathedral (on right) and central park (left). At the far corner of the cathedral on the right is the small, one way street, "Revolucion", heading up to the right. Take Revolucion to and around a 'circular' market, after which is the intersection with the avenue "Americas". Crossing Americas is the beginning of the avenue "Miguel Aleman", and ~100 meters ahead there is a Y-intersection, keep to the right. ~1 block after the Y-intersection is a PEMEX gas station to the left, and after 1 more block on the left is the cobblestone street "Nevado de Toluca". Take Nevado de Toluca to the left up the hill for a couple of blocks and park next to the curb before the entrance to the park. The hill contains mostly cloud forest, as well as several gardens and non-native tree stands. This site is easy to access and explore as there are wide, winding trails that spiral up the old volcano to its summit. One can see many impressive resident species here such as Blue-crowned Motmot, Green Jay, Blue Mockingbird, a variety of hummingbirds, woodpeckers, brush-finches, and migratory and resident warblers, with migratory species from both eastern and western North America.

19.- Jardín Botánico (Botanical Garden): The Jardin Botanico is located on the outskirts of the city of Xalapa, ~3 km from the city center west along the old highway to Coatepec. The exit to the old highway to Coatepec is located next to the Ferrocarrilero Sports club and IMSS Clinic #66, at a traffic circle. To find this road, the easiest way is to ask someone or use a map of the city, careful not to confuse this highway with the new highway to Coatepec which runs parallel to the old one [labeled "A COATEPEC (BRIONES)" on link city map]. The botanical garden is part of the Institute of Ecology, located on the left side of the old highway ~2 km from the traffic circle, well-marked with signs. Within the garden one can find plant species from around the world, as well as regional and national species, and in the hills surrounding the garden one can find typical cloud forest plants. For birding, the garden is a good place to find resident species such as Blue-crowned Motmot, Clay-colored Robin, Squirrel Cuckoo, Short-tailed Hawk, Common Bush-Tanager, Golden-crowned Warbler, and during migration periods a great variety of migratory species. Cost is \$5 pesos/person to enter the garden.

20.- El Basurero (El Atorón): Contrary to its name, this is one of the best places near Xalapa to bird. The site is named "El Basurero", or the garbage dump, owing to the entrance being opposite the old city dump. To find this site one must take the old highway to Coatepec (see previous site for directions), passing the entrance to Jardin Botanico, and at km marker 6 is the entrance on the right,

Endémicos Insulares, A.C.

Para el estudio y conservación de las Islas Mexicanas y las especies que en ellas habitan

well-marked with signs for “Colegio Simon Bolivar”. Fifty (50) meters after passing the school one can park next to the wooden bridge crossing the Consolapa River. The vegetation consists of cloud forest patches, disturbed areas and shade coffee along which one can bird following the dirt road for at least 1.5 km. Among species of interest one can find both Montezuma and Chestnut-headed oropendolas, White-crowned Parrot, Yellow-olive Flycatcher, Smoky-brown Woodpecker, many species of hummingbirds, Rufous-capped Warbler, and, with a little luck, Emerald Toucanet, and a good diversity of migratory and other resident flycatchers and warblers.

21.- Texolo waterfall: The Texolo waterfall is a very popular tourist destination among people in the region, a site where many Hollywood movies have been filmed. The waterfall is located ~20 km south of the city of Xalapa, though owing to long series of twisting roads and city driving it can take more than 1 hour from Xalapa by car. From Xalapa, take the new highway to the city of Coatepec (taking “AUTOPISTA TO COATEPEC” on link Xalapa city map) to the traffic circle at the entrance to Coatepec; take the first street on the right after the newly painted (purple) gas station to the city center, or zocalo, passing the large city church and following signs for Teocelo and Xico out of Coatepec. Once out of Coatepec, one soon passes the town of San Marcos and further ahead is the intersection - left to the town of Teocelo and straight (~ 3 km) to Xico, and the Texolo falls. Go straight to Xico, and next to the entrance of Xico is a sign directing to the waterfall (to the left), from where exits a cobblestone road that goes to the site (~ 2 km). Here one can find Bat Falcon, American Dipper, Common Bush-Tanager, Great Swallow-tailed Swift, White-collared Swift, Chestnut-collared Swift, Montezuma Oropendola and if one stays until the late afternoon one can enjoy the spectacular show of swifts arriving to roost on the canyon walls.

22.- La Joya: This town is ~29 km west of Xalapa on Hwy 140, towards the cities of Perote and Mexico. At the opposite end of La Joya, park next to the very last restaurant on the right driving through town, “La Cabaña del Chivo”. From the parking lot, walk around the fenced playground to the edge of the pines taking the trail that begins there, where one sees a clearing with gravel. There are several trails that branch off, all of which are good for birding. Dominant vegetation here is pine-oak woods, with a thick undergrowth of shrubs and disturbed areas at the edges. Species of interest here include Slate-throated Redstart, Black-headed Siskin, Acorn Woodpecker, Gray Silky-flycatcher, Pine Flycatcher, Red Warbler, Collared Towhee, Bumblebee Hummingbird, Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer and a variety of migratory and other resident warblers.

23.- Rancho El Mirador: This beautiful rustic coffee plantation and its surrounding patches of montane rainforest are located ~93 km west of Veracruz City, in the foothills of central Veracruz. Exit Veracruz City following directions for sites #1 & 2, take Hwy 180 north to Cardel, then Hwy 140 west towards Xalapa. Thirteen (13) km further ahead in the community of Tamarindo, there is a sign for “Paso de Ovejas”, or the free highway to Veracruz (City), on the left side. Take this exit and ~5 km further ahead is a T-intersection to Paso de Ovejas (straight) and Totutla-Huatusco (right), taking the road to the right (west). Following this highway (Hwy 126) for ~43 km one arrives to the town of “Mata Oscura” and ~2 km further ahead is the entrance to the ranch’s main house, marked with a giant cross on the left side of the highway, and the entrance to the ranch’s coffee plantations and forest are ~100 meters further ahead on the right side of the highway. If one arrives to the intersection with a sign for “Tlacotepec”, the ranch is located ~300 meters back on Hwy 126. Generally the people at the ranch are very open to visitors, especially birders. Owing to the retention of native forest, many species of interest here are dependent on good tree cover such as Keel-billed Toucan, Collared Trogon, Ivory-billed Woodcreeper, Wedge-tailed Sabrewing, Red-throated Ant-tanager, Common Bush-Tanager and Ochre-bellied Flycatcher. Additionally, from the Paso de Ovejas/Totutla-Huatusco intersection to the ranch is a good stretch for finding raptors such as Bat Falcon, Crested Caracara, Laughing Falcon, and White-tailed Kite.

Endémicos Insulares, A.C.

Para el estudio y conservación de las Islas Mexicanas y las especies que en ellas habitan

24.-Las Cañadas: This eco-ranch/protected area is located in the heart of central Veracruz coffee country, ~111 km west of Veracruz City. Las Cañadas is a private protected area, maintaining and restoring hundreds of hectares of cloud forest as well as producing organic vegetables and dairy products. Follow directions to the entrance for the previous site (Rancho El Mirador), continuing ~ 10 km west on Hwy 126 until arriving to a Y-intersection to Totutla-Xalapa (right) and Huatusco (left).

A PEMEX gas station is also present at this intersection. Continue on the road to the left towards Huatusco for ~6 km until arriving to the arch entrance for the “Universidad de Chapingo” on the right.

Enter the dirt road here, passing the university station, and continue for ~ 2 km until arriving to the ranch. Entering the ranch, one can park next to the cafeteria and ask for permission/pay at the ranch office to bird and explore. Ask for the trail that traverses the forest and creek, ~1.5 km from the ranch headquarters, and drive to the trailhead. The trail and the road surrounding the trailhead can be good for Green Violet-ear, Brown-backed Solitaire, Mountain Trogon, Hooded Yellowthroat, White-naped Brush-Finch, Golden-olive Woodpecker, Blue Mockingbird, other species of hummingbirds and many migratory and resident warblers. The cost to bird, with no extra services, may run between \$50-60 pesos/person.

25.- Cosamaloapan wetlands: This is a large area of permanent lagoons, wide rivers and seasonally flooded agricultural lands located along the Xalapa-Acayucan toll highway (Hwy 145D). From Veracruz City the trip is ~90 km to the first wetlands, beginning at ~ km marker 56 on Hwy 145D. Leaving the city of Veracruz, take the highway towards the international airport “Heriberto Jara Corona” following signs south out of the city for “La Tinaja” and “Acayucan” on toll Hwy 150D. Continuing south on Hwy 150D, at km marker 43 are signs for “Sureste” and “Acayucan”. Take this right exit and enter federal toll Hwy 145D. The wetlands can be found from ~ km marker 56 through to the exit to the Los Tuxtlas region and the city of Isla, ~ 60 km stretch. Along this part of the highway one can find large rivers, lagoons, flooded fields, cattail marshes and agricultural fields supporting a great diversity of species. One can park along the edge of Hwy 145D to bird interesting sites, taking care to pull well off the highway. Species of interest here include Bare-throated Tiger-Heron, Snail Kite, Black-collared Hawk, Northern Jacana, Crested Caracara, Aplomado Falcon, White-tailed Hawk, Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, Limpkin, as well as a good diversity of migratory ducks, shorebirds, warblers, and orioles.

26.- Tlacotalpan: This colorful city of the Veracruz coast is a registered UNESCO World Heritage Site and an excellent location to enjoy local cuisine and “jarocho” music. Located ~ 106 km southeast of Veracruz City, Tlacotalpan is seated next to the Papaloapan River. Leaving Veracruz City, take Hwy 180 southeast towards the city of Alvarado and the Los Tuxtlas region (see directions for site #11 La Piedra). After crossing the city of Alvarado and the enormous bridge of the same name, ~12 km ahead one should encounter the right exit to the city of Tlacotalpan. Just after taking this exit is the bridge crossing the Papaloapan River from which, with caution, one can stop to look for species of swallows flying over the river and raptors perching on the edges. Two hundred (200) meters from the bridge is a toll booth, next to which one can park and bird the surroundings. From the toll booth to Tlacotalpan is ~12 km, along which, and with much caution, one can bird by using the few pullouts along the way or, owing to the usually light traffic, carefully parking well off to the side along straight stretches of road. Here the road is dominated by the view of the Papaloapan River and flooded areas, as well as patches of shrubs and trees. This road can be good for species such as Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, Black-collared Hawk, Snail Kite, Mangrove Swallow, Great Black-Hawk, Limpkin and a great variety of shorebirds, herons and egrets in the flooded areas, gulls and terns along the river, as well as various landbirds.

Endémicos Insulares, A.C.

Para el estudio y conservación de las Islas Mexicanas y las especies que en ellas habitan

2-3 HOURS FROM VERACRUZ CITY (15 SITES)

27.- Tecolutla: This small town is located on the north-central portion of the Veracruz coast, along the ocean and next to mouth of the river of the same name. This site is ~211 km northwest of Veracruz City, following federal Hwy 180. Exit Veracruz City following directions to sites #1 & 2, continuing north on Hwy 180 ~200 km to the entrance to the city of Gutierrez Zamora (on right). Take the city entrance and pass through Gutierrez Zamora continuing to the town of Tecolutla, ~10 km to the east. Along the road between Gutierrez Zamora and Tecolutla one can stop to bird, especially in flooded areas and along the river. Another birding possibility is to follow the sand road that runs north from Tecolutla, following the coastline, this road passes next to shrubby areas and after ~ 3 km it joins a large area of wetlands known as “Estero Lagartos”. Another road one can use to bird these wetlands is located on the east edge (the exit from the city to the coast) of Gutierrez Zamora and heading north to Boca de Lima. The dominant vegetation here is fields with shrubs, coconut palms at the coast, wetlands with cattails, and the coast itself with its beautiful beaches. Among species of interest are the endemic Altamira Yellowthroat, Red-crowned Parrot, Tamaulipas Crow in the coconut palms near the beach, and the migration of raptors, flycatchers, warblers and other species along the coastline.

28.- El Tajín: These, the most famous ruins in the state, belong to the heart and culture of the Totonacs. This archaeological site is located ~238 km north of Veracruz City, along federal Hwy 180. Follow directions for the previous site (Tecolutla) to the entrance to Gutierrez Zamora, continuing north on Hwy 180 to the city of Papantla (signs for El Tajin en route). Before entering Papantla, one should see signs to the archaeological zone (to the west of the city), ~8km distance. This road is well-marked owing the site’s historic and touristic importance. Vegetation at the site is confined to the edge of the archaeological zone, composed of remnants of deciduous tropical forest. Along the edges and trees within the ruins one can find species such as Squirrel Cuckoo, several species of parrot such as Red-crowned Parrot, Tamaulipas Crow, and a great diversity of migratory and resident species in general. Cost is ~\$80 pesos/person to enter the ruins.

29.- Naolinco: This beautiful city of central Veracruz is located ~24 km north of the city of Xalapa and in the foothills of the Sierra Madre Oriental. Naolinco is locally famous for its waterfall and delicious typical cuisine. Take Hwy 140 west from Xalapa (towards the cities of Perote and Mexico) for ~3 km to the city of Banderilla. Arriving to the end of Banderilla (on federal Hwy 140), on the right is state Hwy 65 to the cities of “Naolinco” and “Misantla”. At first this highway passes patches of cloud forest, changing to pine-oak in the area known as “El Esquilon” - here is a good place to bird, one can park at a small school on the right and bird the trails/road. Shortly after passing the pines, one finds a valley known as “Malpais”, with ground composed of volcanic rock giving it unique vegetation composed mainly of stunted pines and xerophytic plants, another interesting place to bird. Continuing along this valley one begins to climb the hills to Naolinco, this part of the trip is characterized by the presence of more open areas, housing a different community of birds. Finally, arriving to the city one can visit the lookout at the waterfall, located by following the signs along the state highway passing around the edge of the city. From the lookout, besides the impressive view of the region, one can also bird. Among species of interest on this route are Black-headed Nightingale-Thrush, Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush, Slate-colored Solitaire, Green Jay, Brown-capped Vireo, Tufted Flycatcher, Black-crested Titmouse, Bat Falcon, Hooded Yellowthroat, as well as a good variety of hummingbirds and other warblers.

30.- Volcancillo: This extinct volcano, like many that exist in the region, is very easy to access. Located ~33 km west of the city of Xalapa, take Hwy 140 west from Xalapa (towards the cities of

Endémicos Insulares, A.C.

Para el estudio y conservación de las Islas Mexicanas y las especies que en ellas habitan

Perote and Mexico) and, passing the town of La Joya (site #22), ~4 km further ahead is the community of “Toxtlacoaya”. Enter this community following the street (on left) located next to the highway bus stop, the only street entering town from the highway. Taking this street, follow it to the end of town (~200-300 meters) where one should see a dirt road/trail on the right (with a low stone wall opposite/on the left), this is the road/trail to the hill and crater. Roughly 200-300 meters after embarking on this dirt road/trail is an intersection of trails, this site marked by a small grassy area; from here take the trail that climbs up to the left through the pines and continue to the crater. The vegetation here consists mostly of pines, with patches of oaks and alders at the edges of the volcano. Species of interest here include Collared Towhee, Lesser Goldfinch, Flame-colored and Hepatic tanagers, Slate-throated Redstart, Olive Warbler, Gray Silky-flycatcher, Bushtit, White-eared Hummingbird, Tropical Parula, Violet-green Swallow, Greater Pewee, and, with luck, Red Warbler and Strickland’s Woodpecker, as well as many other species typical of this altitude and habitat.

31.- Las Minas: The entrance to Las Minas is located ~44 km west of the city of Xalapa, with a spectacular view from the upper road of its deep canyon and multiple waterfalls. Take Hwy 140 west from Xalapa (towards the cities of Perote and Mexico), passing the town of “Las Vigas” and continuing towards Perote. After passing the entrance to the town of “Cruz Blanca”, ~2 km ahead is the right (north) exit to the community of “Las Minas”, located 12 km down this road at the base of the canyon of the same name. Good birding begins just after taking the exit from Hwy 140 and crossing the train tracks, within the agricultural fields. The vegetation along the beginning of this road is seasonal agriculture with patches of pines behind. Roughly 1 km from Hwy 140, and after passing the community, the vegetation changes to pine until the beginning of the canyon, ~4 km from Hwy 140. The vegetation of the canyon consists mainly of oaks on the edges and pines in higher parts. Birds of the agricultural/open areas include Eastern and Western bluebirds, Canyon Towhee, Say’s Phoebe, Curve-billed Thrasher, and Striped Sparrow. Birds of the pines include Mexican Chickadee, Hermit Warbler, Red Crossbill, Red Warbler, Olive Warbler, Brown Creeper, and a great variety of other resident and migratory warblers. Arriving to the canyon, one can park (where possible) and walk for at least 2 km birding the adjacent forest for Tropical Parula, Mountain Trogon, Brown-backed Solitaire, White-throated Swift, Golden-browed Warbler, with luck Dwarf Jay, and listening for Bearded Wood-Partridge, as well there is a good variety of hummingbirds and other resident species.

32.- 20 de Noviembre: This site is a typical example of the pine woods of the mountain Cofre de Perote. This community is located ~47 km west of the city of Xalapa and close to the city of Perote. Following directions for the previous site (Las Minas), take Hwy 140 west passing the entrance to the community of Las Minas (on right) and continue for ~ 2 km to where one encounters the intersection of the exit to the toll highway to Mexico City and the free highway to the city of Perote; continue on the free highway to Perote. One (1) km after this intersection is the entrance (on the left) marked with a sign for “20 de Noviembre”, and on the right side of the highway is a bus stop with the same name. The road in its first 200 meters is surrounded by agricultural fields, then changing to pine woods, and eventually arriving at the community. Within the woods one can find various trails, perfect for walking and birding, many beginning at the pine woods/field edge. Among possible species here are Buff-breasted Flycatcher, Striped Sparrow on the edges of the pines/fields, Greater Pewee, Mexican Chickadee, and nightingale-thrushes.

33.- Cofre de Perote: The road that leads to this mountain is located ~50 km west of the city of Xalapa. The entrance to this road is off Hwy 140, ~9 km before arriving to the city of Perote. The road is well-marked with signs for “Pescados” and “Conejos”, ~3 km after the entrance for the previous site (20 de Noviembre). Passing the exit for the city of Teziutlan (right side), on the left is a road marked with signs for the communities “Pescados” and “Conejos”. If one arrives to the town of

Endémicos Insulares, A.C.

Para el estudio y conservación de las Islas Mexicanas y las especies que en ellas habitan

“Sierra de Agua”, one has driven too far and needs to double back on Hwy 140. The dominant vegetation along this road is pine woods. Climbing the mountain, one can drive for ~ 10 km, along which one can stop virtually anywhere to look for birds. Birds of interest include Pygmy Nuthatch, Northern Flicker, Olive Warbler, Striped Sparrow, Pine Siskin, Gray Silky-flycatcher, Montezuma Quail, and a great variety of species typical of the highland pines.

34.- Los Humeros: This desert ecosystem is unique within the state and is located on the central plateau ~ 63 km west of the city of Xalapa. Take Hwy 140 west to the city of Perote, taking the free highway as outlined for site #32 (20 de Noviembre). Arriving to Perote, continue through the city until reaching the opposite side (west) where one will find a sign for “Los Humeros” directing to the right; the road is just opposite a PEMEX gas station, the only PEMEX station on this side (left) in the city. The road to Los Humeros is quite potholed, and one should not drive very quickly, but slow driving permits birding opportunities along the valley in the cultivated areas and lines of vegetation. The pig farms along the first kilometers of this road contain sedimentation pools that are sometimes good for shorebirds, such as Baird’s Sandpiper. After crossing the cultivated zone one arrives to the area known as “Malpais” (~11 km), with soil of lava rock bearing unique vegetation. Here one can pull off to the left opposite the open pumice rock mine, and visit the Malpais, taking great care while walking for rattlesnakes and plentiful (and potentially painful) cactus. Another site worth visiting is ~2km ahead continuing on the highway, on the left side with an old oil tank and a water tank, park here, across from this site is a small dirt road up to the pumice mine. On this trip one can find species such as Scott’s Oriole, Canyon Towhee, Loggerhead Shrike, Western Scrub-Jay, Curve-billed Thrasher, Broad-tailed Hummingbird, Black-chinned Sparrow, Rufous Hummingbird, Phainopepla, Magnificent Hummingbird, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, among many other migratory and resident species.

35.- Cantona ruins: This prehispanic city, which may be among the largest in Mesoamerica, is ~88 km west of the city of Xalapa in the heart of the central plateau. Located in the state of Puebla, it is worth visiting for its beauty as well as for the birds that can be seen in the area. From Xalapa take Hwy 140 west towards the cities of Perote and Mexico, taking the toll highway towards Mexico City and continuing for ~18 km from the intersection with the free highway to Perote & the toll highway. Here at the Veracruz-Puebla border is a dirt road to the Cantona ruins (right side), marked by a sign. The ruins are located ~12 km from Hwy 140 down this road. The road crosses open lands with some agriculture and areas of xerophytic vegetation. Along this dirt road one can find Burrowing Owl, Loggerhead Shrike, Horned Lark, Scott’s Oriole, and a variety of sparrows, hummingbirds and raptors. Cost is ~\$30 pesos/person to enter the ruins.

36.- Alchichica Lagoon: This lagoon of volcanic origin is located ~74 km west of the city of Xalapa, within the state of Puebla. Besides offering a great view, this lagoon is typical of the lagoons found in the central plateau of Mexico. Take Hwy 140 west from Xalapa towards the cities of Perote and Mexico. Twenty-three (23) km southwest of Perote, one reaches the town of Alchichica and soon thereafter the lagoon of the same name. To easily access the lagoon, park at the PEMEX gas station (on right) located at the opposite end of town (west) along the highway; behind the gas station is a trail one can take down to the edge of the lagoon. The surrounding vegetation consists of mostly disturbed areas with shrubs, on the far side of the lagoon are remnant cactus and other xerophytic vegetation. Around the lagoon one can find Lesser Scaup, Eared Grebe, American Coot, Killdeer, Ruddy Duck, House Finch, and several species of hummingbirds, warblers and sparrows.

37.- Ruiz Cortines: This small community at the foot of the San Martin Pajapan volcano and within the Los Tuxtlas Biosphere Reserve is located ~162 km southeast of Veracruz City. Following

Endémicos Insulares, A.C.

Para el estudio y conservación de las Islas Mexicanas y las especies que en ellas habitan

directions to the entrance for site #11 (La Piedra), continue southeast on Hwy 180 following signs to the city of Alvarado and the Los Tuxtlas region (Santiago Tuxtla, San Andres Tuxtla and Catemaco).

Arriving to the city of San Andres Tuxtla continue on the highway, skirting the city's edge, until almost reaching the opposite side (east) and look for a giant tire store (Bridgestone) on the right. Almost directly opposite the Bridgestone store is a small street with no sign that goes to "Laguna Encantada", located ~ 2 km from this intersection; this lagoon is well known to the local people. The street in front of the Bridgestone store can be difficult to find, it is recommended to ask in the event that one cannot find the exit. Two (2) km after taking this unmarked street one arrives to a T-intersection, take to the left and drive up for ~ 10 km until arriving to the community of Ruiz Cortines. Four (4) km before reaching the community one is surrounded by a large patch of montane rainforest, excellent for birding in any place and various trails enter the forest from the road one can use to bird. Another interesting site to visit near the community is the trail to the volcano. After passing the large patch of montane rainforest one arrives to some agricultural lands and from there enters Ruiz Cortines. Arriving to the first intersection of streets there is a school on the left corner, take the road to the left, passing in front of the school, for ~ 200 meters until the road doubles to the right, roughly 2 blocks later. Continue for a little more than 1 km until this road ends at a T-intersection, taking then to the left for ~200 meters until reaching a gate, one can park here and walk past the fence, this is the road into the mountain. Remember to ask for permission when encountering anyone past the fence, after parking the car. The dominant vegetation is montane rainforest, with some fields on the edges of forest patches. Here one can find many specialty species of the region, such as the endemics Tuxtla Quail-Dove and Long-tailed Sabrewing, Scaly-throated (Spectacled) Foliage-gleaner, Blue-crowned Chlorophonia, Ornate Hawk-Eagle, Yellow-faced Grassquit, Yellowish Flycatcher, "Plain-breasted" Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch, among many others.

38.- Nanciyaga: This touristic site is located on the edge of Lake Catemaco, ~176 km southeast of Veracruz City. Follow directions for the previous site (Ruiz Cortines) to San Andres Tuxtla, continuing on the highway through San Andres Tuxtla to Catemaco. Arriving to Catemaco, instead of continuing on the highway to the south take the first entrance into the city, as a reference there is a PEMEX gas station on the left side next to the Y-intersection. Entering this avenue, continue for ~ 500 meters until finding signs for "Coyame", "Tebanca" and "Sontecomapan", the exit is to the left. Various signs further into the city mark the road until exiting the highway (state Hwy 168) that goes to the north and along the lagoon. After leaving the city ~5 km ahead is another Y-intersection, to the left is Sontecomapan and Monte Pio, and to the right is Coyame and Tebanca, taking to the right for ~2.5 km finding the entrance to "Nanciyaga" on the right side, normally well-marked with signs. The entrance is a dirt road in good condition, which after ~ 500 meters ends at a parking lot. One can either walk from the highway entrance or, arriving to the parking lot, walk back to the highway. Also, there is a trail that takes to the right from the parking lot or trails that run among the cabins for tourists. At the parking lot there should be a property guardian, ask for permission to bird the grounds. The dominant vegetation on this property is lowland rainforest. Among species of interest here are Keel-billed Toucan, White-breasted Wood-Wren, Ivory-billed Woodcreeper, Red-throated Ant-tanager, Montezuma Oropendola, Short-tailed Hawk, Yellow-olive Flycatcher, Boat-billed Flycatcher, and next to the lagoon one can find Snail Kite, Lesser Scaup, Ruddy Crane, among other aquatic-related species.

39.- Laguna de Sontecomapan: This coastal lagoon forms part of a large wetland system and is ~190 km southeast of Veracruz City. Follow directions for the previous site (Nanciyaga) to the Y-intersection after passing Catemaco, taking to the left towards Sontecomapan and Monte Pio. The town of Sontecomapan is ~10 km north after the Y-intersection, and here one can rent a boat to visit any of the 7 rivers that empty into the lagoon and mouth of the lagoon. The boat dock is located at the opposite end of town, if one is driving from Catemaco. One can also try the road to the mouth of

Endémicos Insulares, A.C.

Para el estudio y conservación de las Islas Mexicanas y las especies que en ellas habitan

the lagoon to bird: continue north on the highway towards Monte Pio and the UNAM biological station, ~7 km further ahead one crosses a small bridge and ~100 meters further ahead is a dirt road to the right. This dirt road runs to a community at the mouth of the lagoon. The dominant vegetation of the lagoon and rivers are mangroves, and along the road to the mouth of the lagoon are pastures combined with flooded areas which can be good for a variety of ducks, shorebirds, and herons and egrets. The mouth of the lagoon can be productive for gulls, terns, more shorebirds, and kingfishers. At the lagoon and rivers, species of interest include Sungrebe, American Pygmy Kingfisher, Muscovy Duck, Yellow-tailed Oriole, Violet Sabrewing, Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift, Bat Falcon, Black-collared Hawk, as well as a great variety of other raptors, hummingbirds and typical tropical species. The boat trip is usually \$500 pesos/boat, and it is a very good idea to decide on a price before leaving the dock.

40.- Biological Station of Los Tuxtlas (UNAM): This site located in the heart of the Los Tuxtlas region is ~204 km southeast of Veracruz City. This center of investigations belongs to UNAM, the largest university in the country, based in Mexico City. Located ~30 km north of the city of Catemaco, follow directions for the previous site (Sontecomapan), continuing north on the highway to the town of Monte Pio on the coast, and the biological station is ~15 km north of the town Sontecomapan. The UNAM field station is unmistakable as it is the only large construction on the road and is well-marked with signs. One can park on the highway next to the building on the left and from there walk along the road or enter next to the buildings on either side of the road, remembering to ask for permission if one encounters people. The vegetation is mostly lowland rainforest, along some parts of the road one can find pasture next to the forest surrounding the station. This site is excellent to find typical tropical species such as White Hawk, Keel-billed Toucan, Stub-tailed Spadebill, Buff-throated Saltator, Black Hawk-Eagle, Red-lored Parrot, Black-cheeked Woodpecker, Collared Aracari, Black-and-white Owl, Plain Xenops, Black-throated Shrike-tanager, among many, many others.

41.- Tuxtepec: This Oaxacan city is adjacent to the border with Veracruz State, ~185 km south of Veracruz City. Follow directions to site#25 (Cosamaloapan), and ~63 km after entering Hwy 145D from Hwy 150D are the toll booths at "Cosamaloapan", and the exit to the city of Tuxtepec to the right along federal Hwy 175, ~71 km to the south. For areas of birding interest, take to the right at the first 'glorieta' or traffic circle in Tuxtepec, as a reference there is a PEMEX gas station on the right hand corner. Following the avenue continue for ~ 1 km until arriving to the next traffic circle, which has a sculpture of a woman's silhouette in typical local clothing and signs for "Jalapa de Diaz" and "Camelia Roja". At the traffic circle, take to the right and continue on this avenue until arriving to the exit (left) to Camelia Roja, as a reference there is a PEMEX gas station on the corner. Camelia Roja is ~ 10 km from Tuxtepec, at the community taking the right entrance to the road to "Mazin Chico" is very good for birding for at least the first 2 km. Also, past the community of Camelia Roja is a small bridge crossing a creek, this creek and the surrounding seasonally flooded lands are excellent for birding. Past the bridge one eventually arrives to the large Miguel Aleman reservoir, almost anywhere along the way is good for birding. Among species of interest in this area are White-crowned Parrot, Spot-breasted Wren, Grayish and Black-headed saltators, Thicket Tinamou, Olive-throated (Aztec) Parakeet, Lineated Woodpecker, Barred Antshrike, Keel-billed Toucan, Thick-billed Seed-Finch, Variable Seedeater, Red-lored Parrot, Limpkin and several kingfishers.