

Bird Species of the Gamboa Area



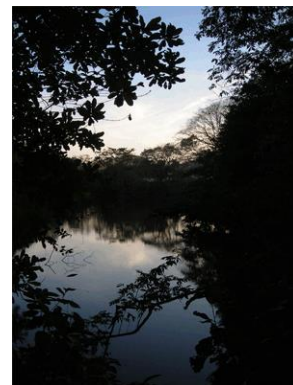
To follow is an annotated list of the species found within a short distance of the village of Gamboa, Colón Province, Republic of Panamá. This list has been designed specifically for birders visiting Ivan's Bed-and-Breakfast in Gamboa; all of the birding sites included herein can be reached on foot, or by a short car or bus ride from Gamboa. That having been said, there are other lodging alternatives in the area that cater to different tastes and budgets, and a visiting birder might

maximize his or her species count by spending time at multiple locations. This list is not intended to be comprehensive; I have omitted a few species that have been recorded in the area only a few times, and addressed certain groups of birds (especially northern migrants) en masse. I have attempted to list the species of birds that one might reasonably expect to find on a trip to the Gamboa area, and to offer some sort of assessment of relative abundance, and the most likely areas in which certain species might be found. Aside from personal experience in the area, I have consulted *A Birdfinding Guide to Panama* (© 2008 Panama Audubon Society) for supplementary information; this publication is highly-recommended to birders visiting Panama (see below).

Note that the original edition of this checklist was created by Ken Allaire and his local knowledge of avian taxa has made this an indispensable guide for anyone seeking out birds in the above-mentioned areas. Without his dedication and attention to detail, no such comprehensive guide would exist. This checklist was updated in 2017 by Charles Clarkson, PhD (owner and operator of Antbird Tours) and includes all updates to the Taxonomy according to the 58th Supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union Checklist of North American Birds; we recognize that other taxonomies may differ (often justifiably), but maintain that the AOU Checklist should represent the "default" taxonomy for the region.

Birding Sites Mentioned:

As stated above, all of the sites included in this list can be reached quite easily from Ivan's Bed-and-Breakfast in Gamboa, several on foot, and all by public transport in about 15-20 minutes' time. A few other birding sites in central Panama are mentioned in passing when they offer better opportunities to view certain species; a birder with a bit of time would be well-advised to visit Parque Metropolitano in Panama City, Tocumen Marsh near the international airport, the western foothills of El Valle, and the eastern foothills of Cerro Azul/Jefe. Details regarding visits to these locales can be found online and in the publications mentioned above. As for the immediate area of Gamboa, working from north to south:



Pipeline Road (fee): This world-class birding site is walking distance from the village of Gamboa; it offers spectacular opportunities to view species of mature rainforest. The

Rainforest Discovery Center (fee) has a nice network of trails and a nice observation tower. An intrepid hiker (packing food and water) can roam into the deeper regions of the forest, which intersect the lower end of the eastern foothills of Panama after about 4 kilometers from the entrance gate, or even wade up one of the many streams that cross the main road. Guests at Ivan's B&B might also enjoy a pre-breakfast walk to the start of the road before first light; the calls of nocturnal birds overlapping with the dawn chorus can be quite exhilarating.

Ammo Dump Ponds: This extensive marsh bordering an ordinance depot (for Canal dredging) can offer some exciting birds. You will pass the ponds on the way to Pipeline Road, and they can be particularly rewarding in the early morning and late afternoon. Aside from wetland species, one might find birds of light woodlands, and grassy areas along the road are great for seedeaters.

Residential Areas: The village of Gamboa can be quite productive for species of open habitats and lightly-wooded areas, and fruit and nectar feeders around town host a few species that are otherwise hard to find in the region. The grounds of the Gamboa Rainforest Resort (of little interest to birders seeking lodging) contain remnant wetlands, river access, light woodlands, and an observation tower that has been little-explored- while this property is technically open only to guests at the Resort, a wandering gringo is unlikely to be questioned.

Chagres River and Lago Gatún: The banks and upper reaches of the Chagres River, and the nooks and crannies of Lake Gatún (the Canal's reservoir) offer great opportunities for finding some of the less-common birds of the region. Parts of the shoreline can be reached on foot, and Ivan offers boating tours to explore more remote areas.

Plantation Trail (fee): This trail lies at the base of Semaphore Hill (info to follow), and hosts a few species that are hard to find elsewhere in the area. It is a fairly level trail through good forest habitat, extending for about 7 km until it connects with the Camino Las Cruces. Easily reached by bus (exit at the turnoff for the Canopy Tower).

Semaphore Hill: The Canopy Tower Lodge lies at the top of Semaphore Hill. The road to the Tower runs through excellent forest habitat, with the advantage that one's footfalls cannot be heard on the pavement, often allowing one to sneak up on more skittish species. The Tower itself offers splendid treetop birding, and extensive views of the surrounding area, making it a premier hawkwatching site. Semaphore Hill may be walked with payment of the access fee (currently \$5) for Soberania National Park; the Tower itself is open only to overnight guests or by prior arrangement (fee) for day trips.



Old Gamboa Road/ Summit Ponds: This level trail, accessed by car or bus about five minutes south of Semaphore Hill, contains the only accessible semi-deciduous forest in the area, as well

as wetlands, grassy areas, and light woodland. The Summit Ponds, at the entrance to the road, often contain some splendid waders, kingfishers, and other birds. This is one of my favorite birding spots in the region; a good morning here will add many species to one's trip list that are unlikely to be encountered elsewhere in the Canal area. Drivers are advised to park in the lot across from Summit Gardens and walk in, as recent paranoia on the part of the Panama Canal

Authority (ACP) has led to some harassment of birders who drive down to the gate. On occasion even groups led by authorized guides have been questioned, so the best thing any independent birder can do is, if asked to leave, do so, and try another day.

Summit Gardens (fee): This "botanical garden" and zoo consists of some nice open and forest-edge habitat, a nice Harpy Eagle exhibit, and some horrific cages containing bored animals of the region (although I understand that improvement is in the works). It is to be avoided on weekends, when picnicking families from Panama City run amok (I don't begrudge them the diversion, but their presence is not conducive to tranquil birding). This is the best local spot to find a few species of edge and open habitat, such as Black-crowned Tityra, Streak-headed Woodcreeper, and Crane Hawk. I'm often surprised at how productive this locale can be.

Generally-used Terms:

In the species accounts below you will encounter a number of terms describing habitat; my exact wording may vary on occasion (I get bored repeating the same thing over and over again!), but the following glossary will help you identify the specific sites to which I refer when using broader language.

"Forested Areas"- generally refers to the most mature forests of the area, including Pipeline Road, Semaphore Hill, and Plantation Trail.

"Semi-deciduous Forest"- the only example of this habitat in the area occurs along Old Gamboa Road.

"Wetland areas"- also "areas with water"; locales with still water (ponds or lakes) include Summit Ponds, Ammo Dump Ponds, a few spots at the Gamboa Rainforest Resort, and Gatun Lake. Locales with flowing water include Old Gamboa Road, Plantation Trail, streams crossing Pipeline Road, and the Chagres River.

"Light Woodlands" and "Semi-open areas"- A number of spots fit the bill, including parts of Old Gamboa Road, the Ammo Dump Ponds, the entrance to Pipeline Road, and Summit Gardens.



“Grassy areas”- these are few and far between- parts of Old Gamboa Road have grassland habitat, as do the road edges around the Ammo Dump Ponds, and a few spots on the grounds of the Gamboa Rainforest Resort.

“Forest Edge”- this can describe anything from the roadsides of Pipeline Road to the borders of the village of Gamboa, or the edges of Old Gamboa Road- this is a general term describing a spot where the forest meets open space.

Trip Preparation Resources:

A well-prepared birder is a successful birder, and I strongly recommend that all birders visiting Panama purchase and study the following widely-available publications prior to their visit:

A Guide to the Birds of Panama (© 1989 Princeton University Press), by Robery S, Ridgely and John A. Gwynne, Jr.. Even with the passing of two decades since its last revision, still by far the best field guide for Panamá. Be warned that, in 2005, Ediciones Balboa released a book called An Illustrated Field Guide to the Birds of Panama, with text in both Spanish and English. Many people rushed to purchase this, as they were excited to find a more contemporary publication; this proved to be a mistake. The illustrations and species descriptions in this book are so inaccurate that they will actually hinder your efforts to identify the birds of Panamá, and I consider it a shame that perfectly good trees were cut down in order to publish this piece of junk.

A Birdfinding Guide to Panama (© 2008 Panama Audubon Society), by George Angehr and Dodge and Lorna Engleman. This recent release provides outstanding details regarding hundreds of birding sites throughout Panamá, including those mentioned on this page; even if you are not planning on doing a great deal of independent birding during your stay, this book is a perfect complement to the aforementioned field guide, in that it contains updated taxonomy and distribution information.

About the Author: This list has been created by Ken Allaire, a resident of New York City who haunted the wilds of Panamá for several months each year. The checklist was updated in 2017 by Charles Clarkson, PhD ornithologist and owner of Antbird Tours, a Panama birding company specializing in central Panama birds (antbirdtours.com).

Species Accounts:

Great Tinamou: Common on Pipeline Road, Semaphore Hill, and Plantation Trail; always heard more often than seen.

Little Tinamou: Uncommon, and much harder to see than the previous species; best bets are just before the entrance to Pipeline Road, and on Old Gamboa Road.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck: a common species in wetlands and agricultural areas in central Panama, but in the Gamboa area a somewhat uncommon find around the Chagres River and Gamboa Rainforest Resort.

Muscovy Duck: a rare-uncommon find on the Chagres River; this species is also commonly kept in captivity in Panama, obscuring the origins of most individuals.

Blue-winged Teal: a common wintering species from the north, should be found easily on the Chagres River in the appropriate season; the only wintering duck that appears in Panamá with any frequency, although others may be found.

Masked Duck: a very rare find on the Chagres River; not to be expected.

Gray-headed Chachalaca: A common species in the area, although less likely to be found in the deep forest; easy at Summit Gardens and in the town of Gamboa.

Crested Guan: Extremely rare on Pipeline Road, with sightings separated by a matter of years.

Great Curassow: A very rare species on the deepest parts of Pipeline Road, with reports coming only every few years.

Marbled Wood-Quail: very rare; this species had not been reported from Pipeline Road until it was sighted a couple of times in spring 2008 past the Juan Grande Bridge (the first one), giving hope that a small population persists in the area.



Least Grebe: somewhat uncommon in the area, although it may just be tricky to see as it prefers more thickly- vegetated bodies of water than the following species. Old Gamboa Road has been good for this species as of late.

Pied-billed Grebe: A common resident on more open bodies of water in the area, such as the Chagres River and Lake Gatún; numbers augmented by migrants in the northern winter months.

Brown Pelican: a very common coastal bird, in this area most likely to be seen flying along the Canal.

Neotropic Cormorant: Common, in this area most likely to be seen along the Canal.

Anhinga: Common, favors marshier areas than the previous species; Summit Ponds can be good for this species, and it may be seen flying over Pipeline Road on occasion.

Magnificent Frigatebird: A common coastal bird, although it may often be seen along the Canal, and visitors are often treated to the incongruous sight of one passing over the depths of Pipeline Road.

Least Bittern: A rare bird anywhere in Panama, recent sightings in the Gamboa area have all come from the Ammo Dump Ponds.

Rufescent Tiger-Heron: somewhat uncommon, but the Ammo Dump Ponds are usually good for one, and has recently been seen with some regularity along Plantation Trail.

Fasciated Tiger-Heron: Rare anywhere in Panama; shows a preference for fast-moving stream and rivers. Recent reports from the Gamboa area are probably in error, likely referring to the previous species.

Bare-throated Tiger-Heron: rare anywhere in Panama, although a few pairs may be resident in the backwaters of Lake Gatún; not to be expected.

Great Blue Heron: Generally uncommon in Panama, but may be found on occasion at Ammo Dump Ponds and remnant marshes at the Gamboa Rainforest Resort.

Cocoi Heron: Rare in the Gamboa area, but has been seen on occasion around the Rainforest Resort.

Little Blue Heron: Perhaps the most common heron in the immediate area, more so around the Chagres River than elsewhere.

Green Heron: Common; this species and the following are readily-seen at all of the aquatic locations in the area.

Striated Heron: See above; the Canal Zone is perhaps the best place in the world to compare these two closely-related species.

Agami Heron: Rare in the area, but has been seen several times in the last few years at Summit Ponds, and seems to stick around for a while when it does show up.

Capped Heron: Rare, but probably always present in small numbers; Summit Ponds and nearby parts of Old Gamboa Road seem to be the best locale for this striking bird.

Boat-billed Heron: uncommon to rare, hard to find due to its nocturnal habits, but a good possibility at Summit Ponds, where it has nested.



Other Wading Birds: Several species of large wading birds that are uncommon-common elsewhere in Panama are seldom-seen around Gamboa, due to a lack of true wetlands and/or agricultural areas; among these species are Great, Snowy, and Cattle Egrets, Tricolored Heron, both Black-crowned and Yellow-crowned Night-Herons, White and Glossy Ibis, and Wood Stork.

Black Vulture: Abundant; if you miss this species you might consider taking up a new hobby.

Turkey Vulture: Abundant, although less so than the above species; large numbers appear during migration, and many stay for the northern winter months.

King Vulture: Rare-uncommon, most likely to be seen from either the Canopy Tower or the tower at the Rainforest Discovery Center, both of which offer panoramic views of the area. The same could be said regarding many of the raptors listed below.

Osprey: Common, particularly around Gamboa itself.

Gray-headed Kite: Uncommon, but seen with some regularity in forested areas throughout.

Hook-billed Kite: Rare, occasionally seen deep on Pipeline Road, often in association with troupes of foraging Capuchin monkeys.

Swallow-tailed Kite: As a resident much more common in the foothills, but northern migrants are seen in the appropriate seasons from atop the Canopy Tower and elsewhere in the area.

White-tailed Kite: Uncommon-common; there's not really a local hotspot for this species, but it may be found in more open areas throughout.

Snail Kite: Common; this species colonized the Canal area in the last couple of decades, and now is easily found on Lake Gatún- in more recent years is seen with increasing frequency on the Ammo Dump Ponds and the Chagres River.

Double-toothed Kite: Perhaps the most common forest raptor in the area, most likely to be found trailing troupes of Capuchin monkeys.

Mississippi Kite: This northern migrant passes through the Canal area in huge numbers, particularly in the fall, and may be seen from atop the Canopy Tower in flocks numbering in the hundreds. The tower at the Rainforest Discovery Center has not yet been put to the test as a platform from which to observe raptor migration, but certainly has potential in this regard.

Plumbeous Kite: An austral migrant, fairly common in transit and during Panama's rainy season—as with most migratory raptors, best seen from the Canopy Tower.

Tiny Hawk: Rare in the area, although the few reports in recent years seem to have come mostly from the base of Semaphore Hill, near the entrance to Plantation Trail.



Crane Hawk: Uncommon, but fairly readily found at Summit Gardens.

Semiplumbeous Hawk: Rare on Pipeline Road, but when found can be quite confiding; it recently has been seen with some regularity around the Rio Juan Grande.

White Hawk: Uncommon; much easier to find in the foothills, but may be seen on occasion soaring over Pipeline Road.

Common Black-Hawk: Uncommon in the area, but may be seen on occasion from atop the Canopy Tower.

Great Black-Hawk: Uncommon, possibilities much as with the above species.

Roadside Hawk: Rare, although common in other parts of the country with similar habitat.

Broad-winged Hawk: May be seen in huge numbers in migration, especially from the Canopy Tower; over-wintering birds are more likely to be found in the foothills.

Gray Hawk: Common in almost any forest edge habitat in the area; regularly breeds at Summit Gardens.

Short-tailed Hawk: Common, most often seen in flight. The dark-morph outnumbers the light-morph in Panama.

Swainson's Hawk: An uncommon migrant, but may be seen soaring overhead almost anywhere in the area at appropriate times of year.

Zone-tailed Hawk: Uncommon, but may be overlooked due to striking similarity to soaring vultures in appearance and flight style. Best chance is from the Canopy Tower.

Crested Eagle: There have been a couple of reports of this species from the Canal area in recent years, but documentation would be required to confirm the presence of this extremely rare bird.

Harpy Eagle: Rare- this species is only listed here because of the local presence of several individuals introduced to Pipeline Road by the Peregrine Fund; one curious bird remains, and is prone to wandering, having been seen in the village of Gamboa as well as near the Canopy Tower.



Black Hawk-Eagle: Fairly common; most often seen (and especially heard) on Semaphore Hill, where they seem to indulge a taste for Geoffroy's Tamarins (a tiny monkey)!

Ornate Hawk-Eagle: Very rare, with only a scattering of reports from the Canal area- not to be expected.

Barred Forest-Falcon: Uncommon, although heard often, especially at dawn. Best bets include Pipeline Road and the Canopy Tower.

Collared Forest-Falcon: Same as above species; like all forest-falcons, even when calling stays well-hidden.

Slaty-backed Forest-Falcon: Rare, the hardest to find of the three local forest-falcons. May be heard as part of the dawn chorus from atop the Canopy Tower.

Crested Caracara: Uncommon in this area, although sightings seem to be on the rise with the recent expansion of the Canal underway (more roadkill, clearing of habitat).

Yellow-throated Caracara: Common, quite easily seen along roadsides and in any open habitat, including in the village of Gamboa.

Laughing Falcon: Rare, with only occasional sightings from atop the Canopy Tower. When present its distinct vocalizations should give its location away.

American Kestrel: Uncommon; individuals seen in the Canal area are likely transients from the north, rather than resident breeders from western Panama.

Merlin: I am unaware on specific records from the Canal area, but it should be looked for during migration and the northern winter, when small numbers are present elsewhere in Panama.

Bat Falcon: Uncommon- common; may be found in semi-open areas throughout, most often found around the old water tank at the entrance of Old Gamboa Road.

Peregrine Falcon: A rare migrant, most likely to be seen from any hawk-watching location; may

be on the increase as populations recover from the crash of several decades ago.

White-throated Crake: Common; quite easily heard at the Ammo Dump Ponds, and to a lesser extent along Old Gamboa Road, but the possibility of seeing it is dependant on the thickness of vegetation at the ponds, which varies greatly through the seasons.

Gray-cowled Wood-Rail: Uncommon, although it may be present anywhere there is water, including puddles on the edge of Pipeline Road in the rainy season.



Yellow-breasted Crake: Very rare and difficult to see when present; there are only a couple of reports from the Ammo Dump Ponds in the last decade or so, although breeding has been documented at this site.

Sora: A rare wintering bird in the Canal area, much more likely to be found in season in more extensive wetlands nearer the coast.

Purple Gallinule: Common, most easily found on the Chagres River near the Gamboa Rainforest Resort's boat basin.

Common Gallinule: Common, see above species- perhaps even more widespread locally.

American Coot: A rare wintering bird, with a handful of reports from the Canal area in recent years; numbers may be on the rise, however.

Sungrebe: A very rare and shy bird anywhere in Panama; there have been unconfirmed reports as of late from the Calamito Lake access at the Rainforest Discovery Center. Should be looked for in the more secluded portions of Lake Gatún and the Chagres River.

Sunbittern: Rare-uncommon in this region, it has been reported to breed along the Plantation Trail, although it is likely present only in small numbers. Also possible along the streams and rivers crossing Pipeline Road.

Limpkin: Rare and local, this shy species is present in small numbers, and should be looked for in the more remote corners of the Chagres River and Lake Gatún.

Southern Lapwing: Common, should be looked for around the shore of the Chagres River and in grassy areas around the village of Gamboa.

Collared Plover: Rare, and more likely in coastal locales; this species has been found on a couple of occasions along Old Gamboa Road atop the dirt embankments created by the Canal expansion project.

Wattled Jacana: Common and easily-seen in any wetland habitat in the area, especially at the Ammo Dump Ponds and along the Chagres River.

Spotted Sandpiper: Common, the easiest wintering shorebird to find in the area, as it favors freshwater habitats. To be found anywhere there is water, or even a good patch of dirt or mud.

Other shorebirds: Large numbers of northern shorebirds spend the boreal winter in coastal locations throughout Panama, so any number of species could stray to the central Canal area.

Common Tern: Uncommon in this area, but has been seen following large ships in transit on the Canal.

Other gulls and terns: A number of species of gulls and terns can be found along Panama's coast, both as resident and migrating/wintering birds, and a number of species have been recorded along the Canal moving from one coast to the other.

Rock Pigeon: Thankfully rare away from the Panama City area.

Pale-vented Pigeon: Common, easily seen around Gamboa and just about any open habitat in the area.

Scaled Pigeon: Common, although not always easy to spot due to its sedentary habits. Most easily spotted from the Canopy Tower, perched near the tops of trees.

Short-billed Pigeon: Uncommon and rather sedentary, best found by voice along Pipeline Road.

Ruddy Ground-Dove: Abundant and widespread, especially in and around the village of Gamboa.

Blue Ground-Dove: Quite rare in the area, with occasional sightings by careful observers along Old Gamboa Road.

White-tipped Dove: Common, easily found in open and disturbed habitats.

Gray-chested Dove: Uncommon- common; a forest dove, will often spook at an observer's approach, may be seen walking on the forest floor.

Ruddy Quail-Dove: Rare resident of forested areas; most likely along Pipeline Road, but wary and not easily-approached.

Brown-throated Parakeet: Rare; a recent sighting near the entrance of Old Gamboa Road was quite unusual for the area- not to be expected.

Orange-chinned Parakeet: Abundant and widespread, found in almost any habitat, and particularly easy around the village of Gamboa.

Brown-hooded Parrot: Uncommon in the area, but seen with some regularity along Pipeline Road and from atop the Canopy Tower. Identification of large parrots is easier with some knowledge of flight calls.

Blue-headed Parrot: Common, most easily seen at dawn and dusk when leaving and returning to nighttime roosts.

Red-ored Parrot: Common, see previous species. “Cracker-JACK” flight call is quite distinctive.

Mealy Parrot: Common; the Canopy Tower is a particularly good place from which to observe parrots in flight, but the village of Gamboa can also be quite nice in this regard.

Squirrel Cuckoo: Common, with some patience seen almost anywhere in the area except the deepest forest.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: An uncommon migrant, but the most likely transient cuckoo to be seen in the Canal area. Coccyzus cuckoos in this region should be carefully observed, as both Black-billed and Mangrove Cuckoos have been rarely recorded in the area, and a handful of more exotic species could potentially stray from the south.

Pheasant Cuckoo: Rare but regular on Pipeline Road and Semaphore Hill; most likely to be found during the dry season, when its song rings loudly through the forest, and breeding birds may occasionally be seen engaging in bizarre courtship displays.



Rufous-vented Ground-Cuckoo: very rare, virtually always associated with army ant swarms; most likely along Pipeline Road, less so on Semaphore Hill. A host of recent sightings (accompanied by brilliant photos) has more to do with extraordinary effort on the part of the observers rather than the abundance of the species.

Greater Ani: Common in areas around water; should be found at Ammo Dump or Summit Ponds. Occasionally associates with army ant swarms on Pipeline Road.

Smooth-billed Ani: The common small ani in the lowlands, should be seen in any open habitat and around the village of Gamboa.

Tropical Screech-Owl: Uncommon and local in the area; should be found around the village of Gamboa and similar locations with light woodlands.

Choco (Vermiculated) Screech-Owl: Uncommon; this distinctive subspecies (possibly full species) is present in small numbers in dense forest, particularly on Semaphore Hill. It is quite shy and often grows silent when playback is employed.

Spectacled Owl: Uncommon, but known to breed on Old Gamboa Road and in the forest at the edge of the village of Gamboa. This species is often diurnally active, and as such is particularly susceptible to disturbance. Great care should be taken to minimize human impact on these birds, particularly those on Old Gamboa Road, who are impacted by the work on the expansion of the Panama Canal.

Mottled Owl: Uncommon -common; the most often heard owl in the area, although they favor dense patches of vegetation and can be quite difficult to actually spot. The Canopy Tower, Gamboa proper, and the entrance of Pipeline Road are all good spots for this species.

Crested, Striped, and Black-and-white Owls: All three of these species are quite rare in the area, and are only reported sporadically. Striped Owl prefers grassland edge habitat, and is most likely near the entrance of Old Gamboa Road. The other two are owls of the forest, and might be found deeper on OGR or on Pipeline Road. A more thorough study of nocturnal species in the area is certainly warranted.

Short-tailed Nighthawk: Rare; reported in past years from Pipeline Road, but I am unaware of many recent sightings. Again, more careful nocturnal studies of the area might reveal more info regarding the status of this and other species.

Lesser Nighthawk: Common; may be found roosting in trees along the Canal in Gamboa.

Common Nighthawk: Rare, much more of a foothills bird. May be seen in this area in migration, perhaps most likely from atop the Canopy Tower.

Common Pauraque: Common, may be easily found sitting on roads in the village of Gamboa and near the entrance of Old Gamboa Road.

Chuck-Will's-Widow: A rare wintering bird in the region, though perhaps simply hard to find; as with all nightjars, knowledge of vocalizations is a plus.



Rufous Nightjar: A rare but regular forest nightjar, in this region most likely to be found at dawn within the first kilometer or so from the entrance of Pipeline Road, although it has been found on Old Gamboa Road as well.

Great Potoo: Uncommon; always present in forested areas but hard to find.

Night tours may yield birds in flight, they may be heard in early mornings from atop the Canopy Tower, and lucky (and skilled birders) may find one roosting in the daytime.

Common Potoo: Uncommon; possibilities much as for previous species.

Oilbird: Very rare; there have been a handful of records from the central Canal area, inviting speculation that an undiscovered nesting cave exists in the region. Not to be expected.

Black Swift: Very rare; this northern migrant has been reported by skilled observers on a few occasions in recent years from atop the Canopy Tower. It is quite possible that some of these individuals were White-chinned Swifts from the south, but be warned that the identification of *Cypseloides* swifts is difficult in the field even for the most experienced birders.

White-collared Swift: Rare in the Canal area, but unmistakable when present. As with any of the rarer swifts in the region, finding them is a matter of good luck and having one eye on the sky at all times!

Chimney Swift: An uncommon passage migrant in the area, best seen from the Canopy Tower or other high vantage point.

Vaux's Swift: Status uncertain; there are scattered reports from the Canopy Tower, which may indicate that the species (which breeds in western Panama) undergoes a short range migration, or these may be long-distance migrants from the north.

Short-tailed Swift: Common, although care must be taken in distinguishing this from the following (more abundant) species.

Band-rumped Swift: The most common swift in the area, should be seen just about anywhere with a clear view of the sky.

Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift: Marginally less-common than the preceding two species, easiest to see from atop the Canopy Tower, although possible elsewhere.

Long-billed Hermit: Common in forested areas- not much of a feeder bird, more likely to be encountered in more wild areas. The large hermit-type hummingbird to be expected in the area, although Rufous-breasted Hermit and Band-tailed Barbthroat are possible on the deepest reaches of Pipeline Road.

Stripe-throated Hermit: Common, mostly in forested areas; often seen feeding on small "Hot Lips" flowers along Pipeline Road.

White-necked Jacobin: A common and aggressive feeder bird throughout the area; undergoes an altitudinal migration, so numbers vary locally from month-to-month.

Black-throated Mango: Uncommon, but readily found in open areas near water, such as at Summit Ponds and the Ammo Dump.

Garden Emerald: A fairly common species of the Pacific lowlands, but scarce in the Canal area; I recently spotted one in the village of Gamboa, and, as this is a species of towns and gardens, it may be expanding its range.

Crowned Woodnymph: Uncommon; more of a foothills species, in this region most likely to be found in the lower foothills deep on Pipeline Road.

Violet-bellied Hummingbird: Common, may often be found at feeders.

Blue-chested Hummingbird: Common, easily found at feeders and under more natural conditions.

Snowy-bellied Hummingbird: A common and widespread species in the country, at feeders and elsewhere.

Rufous-tailed Hummingbird: Common; prefers open habitats, thus most easily found near the start of Old Gamboa Road and around Gamboa village.

White-vented Plumeleteer: Common, easily seen at feeders.

Purple-crowned Fairy: Uncommon, but should be seen on Pipeline Road, less often on Semaphore Hill; often feeds high on flowering trees.

White-tailed Trogon: Common; this and the following four species of trogons will often all be seen on a single trip to Pipeline Road, with a little patience and knowledge of vocalizations.

Gartered Trogon: Common; favors areas around water more than the other local trogon species, and therefore is easier to find on Old Gamboa Road than other areas.

Black-throated Trogon: Common; see above species. Semaphore Hill may also offer any of the trogon species of the area.

Black-tailed Trogon: Perhaps marginally less common than the other trogons, but not too hard to find on Pipeline.

Slaty-tailed Trogon: The most common and cosmopolitan trogon of the region, and the most likely to be found in residential areas.

Whooping Motmot: Common; prefers lightly-wooded areas, and therefore most easily found at the start of Old Gamboa Road, before the entrance to Pipeline Road, and around Gamboa itself.

Rufous Motmot: Common; found in forested areas throughout, and, as with the following species, hard to miss in a dawn chorus almost anywhere.

Broad-billed Motmot: Common, see above species. Most likely motmot to found around army ant swarms.

Ringed Kingfisher: Common, may be found in any area with water; this species is the most common kingfisher along the Canal.

Belted Kingfisher: A rare-uncommon migrant during the northern winter months.

Amazon Kingfisher: Common in any area with water; on a good day all five resident kingfishers may be seen along Old Gamboa Road and Summit Ponds.

Green Kingfisher: Probably the most common kingfisher in te area, as it may be found on small stream such as those along Semaphore Hill and Pipeline Road, as well as the more open bodies of water.



Green-and-rufous Kingfisher: Rare, with few recent reports; to find this shy kingfisher one most likely hike up one of the streams crossing Pipeline Road, something attempted by few visiting birders.

American Pygmy Kingfisher: Uncommon, but often found along Old Gamboa Road; also possible of smaller streams along Pipeline.

Barred Puffbird: Vagrant; one record from the start of Pipeline Road- not to be expected.

White-necked Puffbird: Uncommon, but present in forested areas throughout; patience is required, as with all puffbirds.

Black-breasted Puffbird: Uncommon; its interesting song may oftn be heard as part of a dawn chorus.

Pied Puffbird: Uncommon; very much a Caribbean-slope bird, and as such is best found on the second half of Pipeline Road.

White-whiskered Puffbird: Uncommon, but the most often seen puffbird species, largely because it is not as arboreal as the rest, and is often found in attendance at army any swarms. Best found on Semaphore Hill.

Great Jacamar: Rare, and apparently declining in the region, although a few recent sightings on Pipeline Road give hope that it may be rebounding. Also seen occasionally on Plantation Trail and the lower parts of Semaphore Hill.



Collared Aracari: Common and widespread in the area; as with all of the toucans, the observation decks at the Canopy Tower and Rainforest Discovery Center may offer eye-level views of these stunning birds.

Keel-billed Toucan: Common, should be found throughout.

Yellow-throated Toucan: Common, should be looked for calling from atop tall, bare trees.

Olivaceous Piculet: Rare; this tiny woodpecker has been seen a few times around the Ammo Dump Ponds and elsewhere locally, but is not to be expected.

Black-cheeked Woodpecker: Common, but may take a bit of searching; likely in forest edge habitat.

Red-crowned Woodpecker: The most common woodpecker of the area, should be found easily in Gamboa village and elsewhere.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: A rare wintering bird in the Canal area, not to be expected.

Cinnamon Woodpecker: Common by voice in forested areas, especially on Pipeline Road, but can be hard to see.

Lineated Woodpecker: The more common large woodpecker of the area, most likely to be found in open and semi-disturbed habitat.

Crimson-crested Woodpecker: Uncommon-common; most likely in quality forests of Pipeline Road and Semaphore Hill.

Buff-throated Foliage-Gleaner: Rare, found with a great deal of effort on the deepest reaches of Pipeline Road.

Plain Xenops: Common in mixed flocks in forested areas throughout.

Tawny-throated Leaf-tosser: Rare, a tough find on the second half of Pipeline Road.

Scaly-throated Leaf-tosser: Uncommon in forested areas; of late has been found fairly often in the first kilometer or two of Pipeline Road.

Plain-brown Woodcreeper: Common in forested areas throughout; also known to attend army ant swarms.

Ruddy Woodcreeper: Very rare in forested areas, with only occasional sightings from Semaphore Hill and Pipeline Road.

Olivaceous Woodcreeper: Rare-uncommon, although numbers may be on the rise; best bet as of late seems to be the higher parts of Semaphore Hill near the Canopy Tower.

Long-tailed Woodcreeper: Rare; there are past records of this species from the second half of Pipeline Road, but I am unaware of any recent reports. May be confused with more common woodcreepers.



Wedge-billed Woodcreeper: Rare-uncommon in this area; most likely on the deeper parts of Pipeline Road, although it has been reported in other forested areas.

Northern Barred-Woodcreeper: Uncommon in forested areas throughout; a good bet at dawn on the early parts of Pipeline Road, where it vocalizes constantly and often responds to even poor imitations.

Cocoa Woodcreeper: The most common woodcreeper in the area, to be found in both forested areas and more lightly- wooded habitat.

Black-striped Woodcreeper: Uncommon; most likely to be found on Pipeline Road.

Streak-headed Woodcreeper: Uncommon; prefers open and lightly-wooded areas more than other woodcreepers. Most likely to be found at Summit Gardens or before the entrance to Old Gamboa Road.

Fasciated Antshrike: Common in both forested areas and forest edge throughout.

Great Antshrike: Rare-uncommon in this area; favors dense undergrowth, a possibility in the last stretch before the entrance to Pipeline Road.

Barred Antshrike: Common; favors forest edge and lightly-wooded habitat, even in populated areas.

Black-crowned Antshrike: Common in both forests and light woodlands throughout; the easiest antshrike to find in the area.

Spot-crowned Antwren: Uncommon in forested areas; most likely on Pipeline Road. Often found in mixed-species flocks.

Moustached Antwren: Rare-uncommon on Pipeline Road; a tough find due to its habit of foraging in the mid-to-high levels of the canopy.

Checker-throated Antwren: Common, easily found in mixed flocks in forested areas throughout.

White-flanked Antwren: Common, although not as much so as the previous and next species. May be confused with the much more abundant Dot-winged Antwren.

Dot-winged Antwren: The most common small antbird of the area; easily found in mixed flocks, active and gregarious.

Dusky Antbird: Common in forested areas and edge habitat throughout, including on Old Gamboa Road. Especially common in the first kilometer or so of Pipeline Road.

Jet Antbird: Uncommon, in this area found exclusively in the semideciduous woodland on Old Gamboa Road. Most easily located by its distinctive vocalization.

White-bellied Antbird: Common in forest edge and light woodlands throughout, but more easily heard than seen, as it characteristically skulks in dense undergrowth. Old Gamboa Road may be your best bet.

Chestnut-backed Antbird: Common in forested areas; often responds to whistled imitations of its "Come-HERE!" call.

Spotted Antbird: Common in forested areas throughout, often accompanying army ant swarms. Plantation Trail seems to be the best place for this species.

Wing-banded Antbird: Very rare on Pipeline Road; was formerly uncommon, but its population underwent a precipitous decline in the last decade or so. A handful of sightings in the last year or so gives hope that a rebound of sorts may be underway. Not to be expected.

Bicolored Antbird: Common in forested areas, often in the company of army ant swarms, where it is almost invariably the most abundant species.

Ocellated Antbird: Uncommon in forested areas, and most often seen in the company of army ant swarms. Both Semaphore Hill and Pipeline Road can be good for this species.

Black-faced Antthrush: Common in forested areas, including Old Gamboa Road, but tough to spot as it walks on the forest floor. Its vocalization is a familiar sound of the forest.

Streak-chested Antpitta: Uncommon on Pipeline Road, particularly in the stretch between the first and second bridges. Spotting this species requires patience and tenacity, and probably stepping off the trail into the forest itself.

Brown-capped Tyrannulet: Common in forest edge and light woodlands throughout; perhaps most easily seen from atop the Canopy Tower. As with all tyrannulets, can be tough to locate and identify, and knowledge of vocalizations is a big plus.

Southern Beardless-Tyrannulet: Common in light woodlands and more open areas, perhaps most readily located on Old Gamboa Road, as is true for the following two species.

Yellow Tyrannulet: Common, again in borders and more open areas.

Yellow-crowned Tyrannulet: Common, same habitat as above. Can be very vocal.

Forest Elaenia: Uncommon; favors forested areas, and may be best found on Old Gamboa Road. Forages in highest parts of the canopy and is thus hard to spot.

Gray Elaenia: Rare-uncommon on Pipeline Road, more possible as one gets farther in from the entrance. Forages in treetops in mixed flocks; knowledge of its vocalizations almost a must.

Greenish Elaenia: Common in second-growth and light woodland; as with the above elaenias is a tough find, but the best bet seems to be on Old Gamboa Road.

Yellow-bellied Elaenia: A common bird of open and lightly-wooded areas throughout, including populated areas.

Lesser Elaenia: Uncommon; occupies similar habitat as the above species, although less likely in towns and villages. Care should be taken in distinguishing these two very similar species.

Ochre-bellied Flycatcher: Uncommon, mostly in forested areas; Pipeline Road and Plantation Trail are best bets.

Yellow-green Tyrannulet: Rare; this endemic species may be found occasionally on Old Gamboa Road, but is much easier to find at Parque Metropolitano in Panama City.

Paltry Tyrannulet: The most common and widespread tyrannulet in Panama, may be found in almost any habitat, with exception of the deepest forest.

Black-capped Pygmy-Tyrant: Uncommon in forested areas; this, the world's smallest passerine, can be incredibly hard to see clearly, as it zips around the canopy like a pinball. Semaphore Hill and Pipeline Road are best bets for this fascinating species.



Pale-eyed Pygmy-Tyrant: Rare-uncommon, in this area most likely along Old Gamboa Road.

Southern Bentbill: Common in forested areas throughout, should be seen.

Slate-headed Tody-Tyrant: Uncommon in the area, favoring thickets in areas of light woodland. Old Gamboa Road might be your best bet.

Common Tody-Flycatcher: Rather common in light woodlands, edge habitat, and residential gardens throughout the area.

Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher: Uncommon in the area, favoring forest edge and second-growth woodlands. Much more common in appropriate habitat on the Caribbean side of the Canal. Sporadically common in the immediate area of the Canopy Tower.

Brownish Twistwing: Uncommon on Pipeline Road, but found with regularity in the dense forest past the Juan Grande bridge.

Olivaceous Flatbill: Uncommon-common on Semaphore Hill and Pipeline Road; may accompany mixed flocks, but it is rather sedentary in its habits.



Yellow-olive Flycatcher: Common in deciduous woodland, which means in this area Old Gamboa Road in the place to go. Best distinguished from the following species by voice and habitat.

Yellow-margined Flycatcher: Uncommon in humid forest throughout, meaning Pipeline Road and Semaphore Hill, especially the former.

Golden-crowned Spadebill: Uncommon on the first kilometer or so of Plantation Trail, occasionally on the lower portions of Semaphore Hill. Always present, but terribly difficult to spot- knowledge of voice is quite helpful.

Royal Flycatcher: Rare in forest edge and second-growth woodland; sightings have come from many sites within this area, but the pattern of appearance is rather erratic. Not to be expected, although of late it has been heard quite often in the bamboo stand on Old Gamboa Road.

Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher: Common in forested areas throughout. Often accompanies mixed flocks.

Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher: Uncommon in humid forest throughout; once you get past the entrance of Pipeline Road, a small flycatcher flashing a yellow rump and fanning its wings is probably this species.

Black-tailed Flycatcher: Uncommon; very similar in habit and appearance and habit to the previous species, but favors lighter woodland and edge habitat.

Bran-colored Flycatcher: Rare in this area, with most sightings coming from the grassy areas around and on Old Gamboa Road.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Uncommon northern migrant; usually a transient, and the few individuals that over-winter usually remain at higher elevations.

Western Wood-Pewee: The more common of the two migrant wood-pewees in Panama; generally a transient, but a few probably overwinter.

Eastern Wood-Pewee: Probably marginally less common than the previous species, from which it usually can only be distinguished by voice. During the peak migration period you are almost certain to see northern wood-pewees in the Gamboa area, but you may not be able to identify them.

Tropical Pewee: A rather uncommon resident in this area, as it prefers open and shrubby habitat, both of which are in short supply around Gamboa. Try the edges of Old Gamboa Road.

Acadian Flycatcher: The most common migrant empidonax flycatcher in the region- the 'default empid', if you will. May be seen in the northern winter in a variety of habitats.

Other Empidonax Flycatchers: Yellow-bellied, Alder, and Willow Flycatchers have all been recorded in the area, but, as any North American birder can tell you, conclusively identifying empids without hearing them call is extremely difficult. Many empids seen in Panama can only be confidently assigned to genus.

Bright-rumped Attila: Common; you will almost certainly hear this species in forested areas, as it seems to sing endlessly (and loudly)- seeing one is another matter entirely. A perch atop the Canopy Tower gives you a fighting chance.

Choco Sirystes: Very rare on Pipeline Road; reports are few and far between, but certainly the deeper stretches of the road would offer the best hope.

Rufous Mourner: Uncommon, mostly on Pipeline Road, but seen with regularity. Possibly confused with other large-ish rufous-brown flycatcher-types of the area.

Dusky-capped Flycatcher: Common throughout, in most wooded habitat- also helpfully vocal.

Panama Flycatcher: Common, favoring lighter woodland and semi-open habitat more than the preceding species. Old Gamboa Road is usually good for it.

Great Crested Flycatcher: A fairly common wintering species in almost any habitat throughout; care should be taken distinguishing this from the preceding species.

Lesser Kiskadee: Common, strongly preferring areas near open water; usually rather easy to see at the Ammo Dump Ponds and especially Summit Ponds.

Great Kiskadee: Common in the area, mostly in open areas and even around the village of Gamboa.



Boat-billed Flycatcher: Common, generally preferring slightly more wooded areas than the preceding species.

Rusty-margined Flycatcher: Very common in open areas throughout, especially around water; Old Gamboa Road is a great place for careful study for this species and its look-alikes. Best distinguished from the following species by voice.

Social Flycatcher: Abundant in open areas throughout, even around habitation.

White-ringed Flycatcher: Rare on Pipeline Road; similar in appearance to the previous two species, but exclusively a bird of mature humid forest. This species is a treetopper, and a very tough find.

Streaked Flycatcher: Common in light woodlands and other semi-open areas throughout.

Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher: An uncommon but regular passage migrant. During these months care must be taken in distinguishing this bird from the previous species.

Piratic Flycatcher: A common breeder in light woodlands and forest borders; Summit Gardens and the immediate Gamboa area seem particularly good for this species. Migrates to South American for a couple of months late in the rainy season (late Oct.- Dec.).

Tropical Kingbird: One the most abundant birds of the region, in open areas, light woodlands, towns, and roadsides.

Eastern Kingbird: A common transient throughout; large flocks may be found in appropriate months at forest borders and around water.

Gray Kingbird: A rare migrant in this immediate area, uncommon elsewhere in Panama; coastal areas give you a much better shot at this species.

Fork-tailed Flycatcher: Uncommon in this area due to lack of suitable habitat; the village of Gamboa usually has a few pairs around. The superficially-similar Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, a rare migrant, has been recorded in the Canal area on a few occasions and should be watched for in the northern winter months.

Sapayoa: Very rare on Pipeline Road, with no recent reports; guidebooks suggest wading up the streams that cross Pipeline to seek out this species. Hey, if you've got the energy and a good pair of Wellies, give it a shot!

Russet-winged Schiffornis: Uncommon in forested areas; generally located by its distinctive whistle, and may respond well to imitations.

Rufous Piha: Rare-uncommon on Pipeline Road, best located by its distinctive piercing call. Distinguished from look-alike mourners by larger size and stockier build.

Speckled Mourner: Rare to uncommon on Pipeline Road, and a tough find; generally a paler bird from the very similar Rufous Mourner.

Cinnamon Becard: Generally rare-uncommon in this area, although a few recent sightings on the grounds of the Rainforest Discovery Center and nearby areas suggest that this species might occupy a micro-habitat there.

White-winged Becard: Uncommon but regular in light woodland; Old Gamboa Road seems to be the best spot for this species. One-colored Becard, a species of eastern Panama, has appeared in the area as a vagrant a couple of times.

Masked Tityra: Common throughout in most habitats, but generally perches high atop tree in more open areas.

Black-crowned Tityra: Uncommon and very local; in this area only found with any regularity at Summit Gardens, where it may be found perched at woodland edges.



Blue Cotinga: Uncommon, but a specialty of the area, generally at the forest edge. The Canopy Tower has always been good for this species, and the new tower at the Rainforest Discovery Center seems to also provide good views of cotingas perched high in the treetops.

Purple-throated Fruitcrow: Common in forested areas, especially on Pipeline Road and Plantation Trail.

Golden-collared Manakin: Common in forested and wooded areas throughout, but seems to prefer light woodlands, and is easiest to find on Old Gamboa Road.

Lance-tailed Manakin: Uncommon; prefers semi-deciduous habitat, so Old Gamboa Road is the place to go in this area. Much easier to find at Parque Metropolitano in Panama City.

Blue-crowned Manakin: Common in forested areas, although the start of Plantation Trail seems to be the best spot.

Red-capped Manakin: The most common manakin in the area, fairly easy to find in forested areas throughout.



Yellow-throated Vireo: A fairly common wintering species throughout Panama, although more common in the foothills than the lowlands of the Canal area.

Philadelphia Vireo: A rare to uncommon wintering species in central Panama, much more prevalent in the western highlands.

Red-eyed Vireo: A very common migrant to and from wintering grounds to the south, with a few individuals staying for the winter in Panama.

Yellow-green Vireo: A common breeder in light woodlands, open areas, and gardens throughout. This species migrates south for much of the rainy season (absent Oct.- Jan.).

Black-whiskered Vireo: Vagrant in Panama; there are records from Semaphore Hill, but caution must be taken in distinguishing this rare species with the common transient Red-eyed Vireo.

Scrub Greenlet: Uncommon-common in scrubby areas and light woodlands; Old Gamboa Road is probably your best bet.

Tawny-crowned Greenlet: Rare in forested areas, most likely to be found on Pipeline Road.

Golden-fronted Greenlet: Uncommon-common in scrubby and semi-open areas; again, most likely on Old Gamboa Road.

Lesser Greenlet: Common in forested areas and light woodlands throughout; should be seen without much trouble.

Green Shrike-Vireo: Common in forested areas; conspicuous by its constant calling, but can be maddeningly difficult to see. The Canopy Tower is a good bet for the impatient.

Black-chested Jay: Common in forest and woodlands, even semi-open habitat throughout. Summit Gardens is a good place to observe this species in the open.

Purple Martin: A somewhat common transient in spring and (especially) fall migration periods; may be found anywhere in the area, but the Canopy Tower is certainly the best vantage point from which to see this species.

Gray-breasted Martin: The most common swallow of the region, especially easy to see in populated areas.

Brown-chested Martin: A rare and unpredictable southern migrant, possible from May-September; one might best identify this species from a high location such as the Canopy Tower or the observation tower at the Rainforest Discovery Center.

Mangrove Swallow: A common resident, especially in areas with water; the Summit Ponds are a particularly good spot for this species.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: A fairly common migrant during the northern winter months; care should be taken in separating this species from the following, but the Gamboa area has proven to be a generally good locale for closer study of the distinction.

Southern Rough-winged Swallow: A common resident in open areas throughout.

Other Swallows: A number of swallow species may be found in the area: Bank Swallow, Cliff Swallow, and Barn Swallow are uncommon-common migrants in the region, although they are all more easily found in coastal locales. The same holds true for Cave Swallow, which is somewhat rare but perhaps overlooked. Both White-thighed Swallow and Blue-and-white Swallow, both considered foothills species, have also been recorded on several occasions in the Canal area.

Black-bellied Wren: A common but hard-to-see resident of wooded areas throughout, perhaps best found on Old Gamboa Road.

Bay Wren: Somewhat uncommon in the Canal area; most easily found around water, such as along Old Gamboa Road or the streams crossing Pipeline Road. Much more easily found in the foothills to the east and west.

Rufous-breasted Wren: Uncommon-common in more lightly wooded areas in the region; as with most Panamanian wrens, knowledge of voice is quite helpful.

Rufous-and-white Wren: Locally uncommon and quite secretive; Old Gamboa Road is the best spot, but this species is significantly easier to find at Parque Metropolitano in Panama City (a generally excellent spot for wrens).

Buff-breasted Wren: Uncommon and local, but usually found at Summit Gardens (where it favors tall stands of bamboo) and similar habitats on the grounds on Gamboa Rainforest Resort.

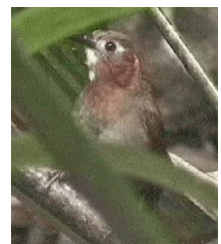
Isthmian Wren: Fairly common in open areas with patches of ground cover; Old Gamboa Road and the edges of the Ammo Dump Ponds are usually good for this species.

House Wren: A common and gregarious species in habitated areas.

White-breasted Wood-Wren: A fairly common species in forested areas throughout, best located by voice.

Scaly-breasted Wren: A secretive and somewhat rare species in the area; most likely to be found deep on Pipeline Road, and even there hard to spot- much more common in the foothills.

Song Wren: An uncommon species in forested areas, best tracked down by its distinctive sing-song vocalization; Pipeline Road is probably the best locale.



Tawny-faced Gnatwren: An uncommon species in forested areas, probably best found on Pipeline Road.

Long-billed Gnatwren: A common resident in forested areas throughout, almost certain to be seen with a little work and knowledge of its song.

Tropical Gnatcatcher: Common in forest borders and light woodlands throughout; it is a treetopper, but should be found with modest effort.

Gray-cheeked Thrush: An uncommon transient during migration periods (especially fall) in central Panama, with perhaps a few birds lingering for the northern winter.

Swainson's Thrush: The most common northern transient thrush in Panama, with a few birds overwintering. Veery and Wood Thrush have also been recorded in the Canal area, but both species are quite scarce.

Clay-colored Robin: A common and widespread resident in disturbed habitat throughout, including populated areas.

Gray Catbird: A quite uncommon winter resident in central Panama, which represents the southern edge of its normal range.

Tropical Mockingbird: A common resident of open habitat, especially in residential areas.

Cedar Waxwing: A very rare winter visitor in the Canal area; not to be expected.

Transient and Wintering Wood-Warblers: A number of species of wood-warblers migrate through Panama, with many staying through the northern winter. Among these are: Bay-breasted Warbler (probably the most common over-wintering species); Golden-winged Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, American Redstart, Prothonotary Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Kentucky Warbler (all fairly common- common in winter); Magnolia Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Canada Warbler (all more common as transients); and rare-uncommon species such as Blue-winged Warbler, Northern Parula, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler,

Prairie Warbler, Palm Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Ovenbird, Louisiana Waterthrush, Mourning Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, and Hooded Warbler. Other species are possible as well, so keep your eyes peeled. And remember that many species of warbler may be in winter plumage or molting at this time of year, and many first-year birds with confusing plumages may be present as well.

Rufous-capped Warbler: More of a foothills species, but in the Canal area locally common in light woodlands and edge habitat; Old Gamboa Road is probably the best locale.

Buff-rumped Warbler: Rare-uncommon in this region; always found along streams and rivers, with most sightings in the Canal area from Plantation Trail and the rivers crossing Pipeline Road.



Bananaquit: A common and gregarious species throughout most of its range, but can be surprisingly hard to find in the Canal area; most sightings from Pipeline Road.

Rosy Thrush-Tanager: A common but inconspicuous resident in s s e semideciduous habitat, in this area found with some effort on Old Gamboa Road (easier to find at Parque Metropolitano in Panama City).

Carmioli's Tanager: An uncommon species in the area, generally found deep on Pipeline Road, where the eastern foothills dip into the Canal area.

Gray-headed Tanager: A fairly common species in forested areas throughout, almost always found in the company of army ant swarms.

Sulphur-rumped Tanager: A rare-uncommon species in this region, found only on the second half of Pipeline Road, at the edge of the eastern foothills.

White-shouldered Tanager: One of the more common tanagers of forested and lightly-wooded areas throughout.

White-lined Tanager: A fairly uncommon and local bird in lightly-wooded areas, perhaps most likely at Old Gamboa Road.

Red-throated Ant-Tanager: A common and conspicuous species in forests and forest edge throughout; easy to find near the entrance of Pipeline Road, where lucky observers may enjoy its lovely dawn song.

Summer Tanager: A fairly common wintering species throughout, most likely in more open areas.

Scarlet Tanager: A rare-uncommon transient and wintering species in the area, generally a tough find. There is also a single record of Western Tanager from the Canopy Tower, at the southern edge of its range.

Crimson-backed Tanager: A very common resident of open areas throughout, including residential areas.

Flame-rumped Tanager: A fairly uncommon species in the area (more easy to find in the foothills); perhaps best found at fruit feeders in the town of Gamboa.

Blue-gray Tanager: A very common species of open areas and edge habitat throughout. Not to be missed.



Palm Tanager: A very common species in the area; this and the preceding species will often frequent fruit feeders.

Plain-colored Tanager: Common in lightly-wooded and edge habitats throughout.

Bay-headed Tanager: More of a foothills species, this stunning tanager is most likely to be found deep on Pipeline Road.

Golden-hooded Tanager: A common bird of open and lightly-wooded areas throughout.

Blue Dacnis: A fairly common species of forest edge and light woodlands throughout.



Green Honeycreeper: A common species of almost any wooded habitat throughout; often the most conspicuous member of mixed flocks in the treetops.

Shining Honeycreeper: A Caribbean-slope species, best found on the deeper parts of Pipeline Road, although it occasionally wanders farther south.

Red-legged Honeycreeper: A more common species in the foothills, and often surprisingly local in the Canal area; may be most easily-observed at fruit feeders in more residential areas.

Blue-black Grassquit: A common species of open areas; the best spots for this and other species of seedeaters are the Ammo Dump Ponds and grassy areas around Old Gamboa Road.

Slate-colored Seedeater: A strangely local species anywhere in Panama; formerly common in areas with bamboo along Pipeline Road, but I am unaware of any recent sightings.

Variable Seedeater: Probably the most common seedeater of the region, easily-found in grassy and residential areas throughout.

Yellow-bellied Seedeater: A fairly common resident in grassy areas, easiest to find at the edge of the Ammo Dump Ponds.

Ruddy-breasted Seedeater: Somewhat uncommon in the area, but regularly found at the aforementioned grassy sites.

Thick-billed Seed-Finch: Yet another common species of grassy areas throughout. Please note

that all of the female seedeaters can be hard to identify, and are best distinguished by their association with males of their species.

Orange-billed Sparrow: A fairly common but inconspicuous species in forested areas; the best local spot seems to be near the start of the Plantation Trail.



Black-striped Sparrow: A fairly common but local species in the area; quite often found around the Ammo Dump Ponds.

Streaked Saltator: A fairly common resident of lightly-wooded and open areas throughout; I've often found this species around the Ammo Dump Ponds and on Old Gamboa Road.

Buff-throated Saltator: The most common saltator of the region, but surprisingly skittish; more likely in wooded areas, which means it may be harder to see than the preceding species.

Black-headed Saltator: More of a Caribbean-slope species, but it has been found occasionally along Pipeline Road.

Slate-colored Grosbeak: An uncommon species of forested areas throughout, but when present conspicuous by voice. Most likely on Semaphore Hill or Pipeline Road.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: An uncommon-common transient in edge habitat and lightly-wooded areas throughout.

Blue-black Grosbeak: A common but skulking (and often frustrating) species of forested areas throughout; knowledge of its voice is quite helpful.

Great-tailed Grackle: An abundant resident of disturbed areas throughout, particularly residential areas- not to be missed.

Shiny Cowbird: Fairly common in open habitat, although more associated with agricultural areas, which are few and far between around Gamboa.

Bronzed Cowbird: As with the preceding species, most likely in agricultural areas; to be looked for in any open habitat. Expanding its range from the west.

Giant Cowbird: Uncommon and local; it is a brood parasite exclusively of oropendolas and caciques, so if one finds a nesting colony of these birds you are likely to find the cowbird. Summit Gardens has been a generally good spot.

Orchard Oriole: A fairly common wintering species in somewhat open areas throughout.

Yellow-backed Oriole: The most common oriole in the area, likely in semi-open and lightly-wooded areas throughout.

Orange-crowned Oriole: A species of eastern Panama, but it has wandered to the Gamboa area; a boat trip on the Chagres River probably offers the best chance of finding this species.

Yellow-tailed Oriole: Rather uncommon in the area, most often found near water; Ammo Dump Ponds has been a good spot for this species.

Baltimore Oriole: A fairly common winter resident in lightly-wooded and open areas throughout.

Yellow-billed Cacique: The least common cacique of the region, a skulker in forest edge habitat.

Scarlet-rumped Cacique: Quite common and conspicuous in forest edge and lightly-wooded habitat; easy to find on Semaphore Hill and the early parts of Pipeline Road.

Yellow-rumped Cacique: Common and conspicuous in more open areas throughout; a good-sized colony can usually be found at Summit Gardens, and recently near the Ammo Dump Ponds.

Chestnut-headed Oropendola: A very common species, found in almost any habitat throughout.



Yellow-crowned Euphonia: Common, more associated with open areas than other euphonias, likely to be found on Old Gamboa Road and at the Ammo D Dump Ponds.

Thick-billed Euphonia: The most widespread euphonia of the area, often found at fruit feeders. Care should be taken distinguishing the various euphonias of the area.

Fulvous-vented Euphonia: Uncommon and apparently seasonal in the area; the Canopy Tower and Semaphore Hill seem to be the best locale for this species, which often raises its tail to show off its namesake attribute.

White-vented Euphonia: Uncommon in forested areas; quite similar to the preceding species, but habitat is a key, as this species is most likely to be found on the deeper reaches of Pipeline Road.

Lesser Goldfinch: Uncommon and local in the area, perhaps most likely to be found associating with seedeaters at previously-mentioned grassy hotspots.

Enjoy your visit to Panamá!

