



Natural Selections

BIRDING, WILDLIFE, AND PHOTO TOURS



Multicoloured Tanager

Birds of Colombia Photo Expedition; The Western Andes

10 Nights/11 Days

This photo expedition takes us on a journey through the hills and valleys of Colombia's western Andes, visiting top locations for dazzling bird photography opportunities near Cali, Valle del Cauca, and Manizales, and Caldas, with opportunities to see and photograph some of the region's rare and endemic species.

Highlights and targets of this expedition include the endemic Multi-colored Tanager, Chestnut Wood Quail and Rainbow-bearded Thornbill. Other targets are Toucan Barbet, Guira Tanager, as many as five different antpitta species including Crescent-faced, Equatorial, State-crowned, Bi-colored and Chestnut-crowned, and a visit to a Golden-collared Manakin lek, Toucans, Tanagers, and many, many more.

Our focus will be the Valle del Cauca, a strangely flat and elevated basin over 1000m elevation. This valley and surrounding cloud-forested mountains are home to over 800 species of Colombia's 1,850+ species (with 79 endemics) making it an ideal birding location, with easy travel along the basin, and accessible forays into the mountains to see higher elevation species.

Key features of the area are the number of private landowners who are collectively increasing areas protected from land use changes, and maintaining natural flora and fauna, along with the various National Parks.

It is these local efforts that are becoming particularly efficient at attracting visitors of both human and avian kind, making it viable to leave the habitat and birds predominantly unmolested. Most make use of feeders to attract the grand variety of multi-colored tanagers, glittering hummingbirds and other special species into view, creating ideal opportunities for photography.

Tour Overview

Day 1: Arrive Cali, Colombia (CLO), transfer to Araucana
Day 2: Araucana Hummingbirds and Tanagers
Day 3: La Florida Hummingbirds, Tanagers, Honeycreepers
Day 4: La Florida to Buga
Day 5: Laguna Sonso Nature Reserve
Day 6: El Color de Mis Reves, Toucans, Antpittas
Day 7: El Color de Mis Reves to Termales del Ruiz Hummingbirds, Tanagers
Day 8: Hacienda el Bosque Hummingbirds and Toucans
Days 9 and 10: Hotel Tinamú Motmots, Tanagers, Woodpeckers
Day 11: Depart Cali, Colombia (CLO).



Crimson-rumped Toucanet

10 Night/11 Day Itinerary:

Day 1, Arrive Cali:

Arrival today to the city of Cali in the morning or early afternoon for a 1hr30 drive west up into Andean Cloud Forest interspersed amongst coffee plantations and other agricultural activities to our first destination of where we will spend the afternoon photographing birds that visit the garden. Species here include a number of Colombian endemics such as; Colombian Chachalaca, Greyish Piculet and Apical Flycatcher, as well as gems such as Crimson-rumped Toucanet & Acorn Woodpecker.

Meals: Dinner
Lodging at Araucana Lodge

Day 2, Araucana Lodge:

In the morning well take a short, 1-hour drive to a site in the cloud forest where the main target is the stunning Toucan Barbet as well as a range of hummingbirds and

tanagers. Species here include; Sickle-winged Guan; White-necked Jacobin; White-whiskered Hermit; Brown Violetear; Green Thorntail; Velvet-purple Coronet; Rufous-gaped Hillstar; Empress Brilliant; Crowned Woodnymph; Andean Emerald; Red-headed Barbet; Crimson-rumped Toucanet; Orange-bellied Euphonia; Tricolored Brushfinch; Chestnut-headed Oropendola; White-lined Tanager; Flame-rumped Tanager; Black-chinned Mountain Tanager; Glistening-green Tanager; Rufous-throated Tanager; Golden Tanager; Silver-throated Tanager; Green Honeycreeper and more.

The set up here is an array of sugar water and banana feeders arranged in small, densely vegetated area on the slopes of the mountain. Our sheltered photo area has three different levels from which to view the feeders set at different heights.

If the action here is such that we don't want to leave, there is the

option to stay all day. Otherwise, we'll return to Araucana for more afternoon photography around the gardens.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Araucana Lodge

Day 3, La Florida:

We'll have a full day at La Florida, 2000m elevation, photographing in a private garden that has focused on creating excellent opportunities and where we hope to see yet more endemics like the Chestnut Wood-Quail, Multicolored Tanager, and Colombian Chachalaca, as well as Sickie-winged Guan; Long-tailed Sylph; Greenish Puffleg; Booted Racket-tail; Purple-throated Woodstar; Western Emerald; Andean Motmot; Red-headed Barbet; Crimson-rumped Toucanet; Acorn Woodpecker; Green Jay; Orange-bellied Euphonia; Chestnut-capped Brushfinch; White-naped Brushfinch; Flame-rumped Tanager; Blue-winged Mountain Tanager; Golden-naped Tanager;

Rainbow-bearded Thornbill



Saffron-crowned Tanager; Golden Tanager; Green Honeycreeper, and many more.

We have the choice to remain at the gardens to photograph the various species of hummingbird, flowerpiercers, and other birds that visit, or we can wait patiently in the hide for visits from barbets, woodpeckers, euphonias, brushfinches, honeycreepers and tanagers.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Araucana Lodge

Day 4, La Florida to Buga:

Today we'll spend a second morning at La Florida before beginning our 2-hour transfer northwards to the town of Buga at 1000m elevation. As this afternoon is mainly for travel, we don't have any stops planned, but will arrive in time for dinner and rest in order to be close to tomorrow's activities at Lake Sonso.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Hotel Guadalajara

Day 5, Laguna Sonso Nature Reserve:

This morning will be spent around Laguna Sonso Nature Reserve where the main target is the incredibly cute and near endemic Spectacled Parrotlet. We'll be following our guide here along trails, through woodland and wetland habitat, and to a few view points over the wetland areas used by the Spectacled Parrotlet. We have also had success here with Common Nighthawk and Common Potoo in the past.

Diversity rules here, and other species in this wetland/edge habitat include; Horned Screamer; Black-bellied Whistling Duck; Fulvous Whistling Duck; Orinoco Goose; Greater Ani; Smooth-billed Ani; Striped Cuckoo; Little Cuckoo; Dwarf Cuckoo; Lesser Nighthawk; Common Nighthawk; Common Potoo; Gray-cowled Woodrail; Common Gallinule; Purple Gallinule; Limpkin; Black-necked Stilt; Southern Lapwing; Wattled Jacana; Solitary Sandpiper; Anhinga; Neotropical Cormorant; Cocoli Heron; Great Egret; Snowy Egret; Striated Heron; Black-crowned Night Heron; Glossy Ibis; Bare-faced Ibis; Buff-necked Ibis; Osprey; Snail Kite; Ringed Kingfisher; Amazon Kingfisher; Green Kingfisher; Grayish Piculet; Red-crowned Woodpecker; Crimson-crested Woodpecker; Lineated Woodpecker; Spot-breasted Woodpecker; Yellow-headed Caracara; Blue-headed Parrot; Bar-crested Antshrike; Jet

Antbird; Cocoa Woodcreeper; Steak-headed Woodcreeper; Common Tody-flycatcher; Yellow-olive Flycatcher; Pied Water-Tyrant; Apical Flycatcher; Streaked Flycatcher; Tropical Kingbird; Fork-tailed Flycatcher; Southern Rough-winged Swallow; Red-breasted Meadowlark; Yellow Oriole; Oriole Blackbird; Tropical Parula; Masked Cardinal, and more.

We'll return to town for lunch before a 4-hour drive north to the town of Manizales located in the central chain of the Andean mountains. Our next two nights' accommodations on the eastern outskirts of Manizales will be a glamping site for a bit of rustic luxury and excellent bird photography.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Birds Eye View Lodge

Day 6, El Color de Mis Reves:

Today will be a full day in the fragmented cloud forests of El Color de Mis Reves starting with the property's Antpitta bonanza where Chestnut-crowned, Bicolored and Slate-crowned Antpittas are commonly seen and photographed. There are also a series of hummingbird and fruit feeders here which are frequented by Black-billed and Gray-breasted Mountain Toucans, Emerald Toucanet; Bicolored Antpitta; Slate crowned Antpitta; Chestnut-crowned Antpitta; Green-and-black Fruiteater; Sword-billed hummingbird; Tourmaline Sunangel; Hooded Mountain Tanager; Ocellated Tapaculo;



Crescentchest Antpitta

Grass-green Tanager; Black-collared Jay; and others. Andean Pygmy Owl and Hooded Mountain-tanager have starred here as well in the past.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at El Color de Mis Reves Tent Camp

Day 7, Color de mis Reves to Termales del Ruiz:

We'll enjoy a final morning session at Color de mis Reves before our transfer to Termales del Ruiz at 3500m for an afternoon of photography. Here, a small trail system weaves amongst the thermal waters, waterfalls and viewpoints. An array of feeders at the property are excellent for various hummers and tanagers. There are some absolute avian gems at this site, including the crowned jewel, the Rainbow-bearded Thornbill.

Other species here include Tourmaline Sunangel; Purple-

backed Thornbill; Viridian Metaltail; Black-thighed Puffleg; Golden-breasted Puffleg; Shining Sunbeam; Buff-winged Starfrontlet; Mountain Velvetbreast; Great Sapphirewing; Pale-naped Brushfinch; Golden-fronted Redstart; Lacrimose Mountain Tanager; Scarlet-bellied Mountain Tanager; Masked Flowerpiercer, and more.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Hacienda El Bosque

Day 8, Hacienda El Bosque.

Today will be a full day at Hacienda El Bosque, at 3,100m elevation. The hacienda is a functioning dairy farm, so the habitat is more open with hilly patches of forest. We'll begin at distinct sites within walking distance from each other that are visited by the leggy Equatorial Antpitta and the extremely attractive, tiny Crescent-faced Antpitta. There is also a setup of sugar water feeders here which brings in a variety of



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Grey-breasted Mountain-Toucan

hummingbirds not the least of which are the Buff-winged Starfrontlet and the impressive Sword-billed Hummingbird. Grey-breasted Toucans come to a separate site where they are drawn in by fruit feeders.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Hacienda El Bosque Cabins*

Day 9 and 10, Hotel Tinamú.

Here we head west towards our final stop at Hotel Tinamú 1,200m, where we'll have two days to check reliable Potoo roosting spots, take advantage of a variety of fruit feeders, and visit at least one Golden-collared Manakin lek. Habitat here are coffee and banana plantations that are returning to natural forest, providing a very bird-rich environment. Our foci here we will be photographic opportunities for species such as Little Tinamu; Colombian Chachalaca; Common Potoo; White-necked Jacobin; Green Hermit; Black-throated Mango; White-vented Plumeteer;

Steely-vented Hummingbird; Rufous-tailed Hummingbird; Andean Motmot; Moustached Puffbird; Acorn Woodpecker; Red-crowned Woodpecker; Lineated Woodpecker; Blue-headed Parrot; Spectacled Parrotlet; Bar-crested Antshrike; Cocoa Woodcreeper; Streak-headed Woodcreeper; Golden-collared Manakin; Cocoa Thrush; Clay-colored Thrush; Black-billed Thrush; Thick-billed Euphonia; Summer Tanager; Rose-breasted Grosbeak; Gray-headed Tanager; Crimson-backed Tanager; Blue-gray Tanager; Palm Tanager; Scrub Tanager; Blue-necked Tanager; Bay-headed Tanager; Green Honeycreeper; Guira Tanager among others.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Hotel Tinamú*

Day 11, Transfer to Cali Airport (CLO).

Today is departure day and we will bid farewell to the Hotel Tinamú, leaving in time to arrive Cali for our flights home.

Drive time is about 4 hours.

Meals: Breakfast

Included for the duration of this itinerary:

In-country accommodations, meals as indicated, ground transportation, tours, meals, guide and entrance fees are included.

Not Included:

Personal items such as alcoholic beverages, gift shop, tips, laundry, any medical expenses, etc. are not included. International and any local flights are not included. Travel insurance is not included.

Travel insurance:

We recommend purchasing travel insurance. In the event that you need to cancel your trip due to medical or other reasons, this insurance will protect you.



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**Casa C-213, Col. Marisol,
1era Etapa, 2da Cuadra,
La Ceiba, Honduras**

Tel: 504-9563-9689

info@naturalselectionstours.com

www.naturalselectionstours.com