



Natural Selections

BIRDING, WILDLIFE, AND PHOTO TOURS



Orange Oriole

Birding the Heart of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula

8 Nights/9 Days

This guided birdwatching tour is specifically designed to showcase the incredible biodiversity, and endemic avian treasures of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula. This region is a world-class birding destination because it serves as a unique crossroads where tropical rainforests meet coastal wetlands and ancient Mayan history. From the colonial charm of Mérida to the rich mangroves of Río Lagartos and the turquoise shores of Cozumel Island, our journey visits the peninsula's best birding "hotspots." You will explore private reserves like "Uxuxubi Al Natural" and remote archaeological sites like Kohunlich, where the lack of crowds allows for an intimate connection with nature amidst towering temples and lush jungle canopies.

What makes this tour truly exceptional is the seamless blend of habitat variety and specialized targeting of regional endemics. We move from the arid scrub of the north coast home to Yucatan Wrens, Mexican Sheartails and Yucatan Gnatcatchers, to the humid tropical forests of the south, where colorful toucans and trogons thrive. Whether we are gliding through mangroves on a sunset boat ride or catching the early ferry to seek out island endemics, this itinerary ensures you experience the very best of the Yucatan's natural heritage, complemented by comfortable eco-lodges and authentic local hospitality.

Tour Overview

Day 1: Arrive Merida Airport (MID), transfer to hotel

Day 2: Misnebalam and the Yucatan coast

Day 3: Merida to Rio Lagartos

Day 4: Rio Lagartos to Valladolid

Day 5: Cozumel

Day 6: Uxuxubi al Natural to Sijil Noh Ha Reserve

Day 7: Sijil Noh Ha to Bacalar

Day 8: Kohunlich Archaeological Site, return to Merida

Day 9: Departure



American Flamingo

8 Night/9 Day Itinerary:

Day 1, Arrival:

Arrive Merida and transfer to hotel in time for dinner.

Meals: Dinner

Lodging at Holiday Inn Express or similar.

Day 2, Birding Misnebalam and the Yucatan coast:

Starting in Merida, we'll make the 20-minute drive to Misnebalam, reaching an old road with pastures and ranches and which is very good for many of the Yucatan endemics. Then we'll make a 15-minute drive to the coast for water birds, plus flycatchers, orioles, flamingos and chances for Yucatan Wren and Yucatan Gnatcatcher. Top birds we'll look for today will be: Black-throated Bobwhite, Yucatan Flycatcher, Yucatan Woodpecker, Gray-throated Chat, Orange Oriole, Yucatan Wren, Yucatan Gnatcatcher, Turquoise-browed Motmot, Yucatan Jay, Mexican

Sheartail, Hooded Oriole, and Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture.

We'll rest through the hottest part of the day, and in the afternoon make a 30-minute drive towards the north coast of the Yucatan for some more birding there, with good chances for Zenaida Dove, Clapper Rail and Ruddy Crake. Other top birds today include: Ruddy Crake, Clapper Rail, Mexican Sheartail, Yucatan Wren, Yucatan Gnatcatcher, Zenaida Dove, and Hooded Oriole.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging at Holiday Inn Express or similar.

Day 3, Birding Merida to Rio Lagartos:

We'll enjoy some morning birding near the Mérida area, and after brunch, leave towards the Rio Lagartos Biosphere Reserve to check in at our hotel and do an evening boat ride, with chances for many aquatic birds, plus a try for

the endemic Yucatan Nightjar.

Top birds we'll hope for today include: American Flamingo, Yucatan Nightjar, Boat-billed Heron, Roseate Spoonbill, Semipalmated Plover, Black-bellied Plover, Ruddy Turnstone, White-rumped Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Western Sandpiper, Laughing Gull, Black Skimmer, Least Tern, Gull-billed Tern, Caspian Tern, Forster's Tern, Royal Tern, Magnificent Frigatebird, Anhinga, Reddish Egret, Osprey, Common Black Hawk and many more.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging in Villa de Pescadores in Rio Lagartos

Day 4, Birding Rio Lagartos to Valladolid:

We'll begin with morning birding in Rio Lagartos, visiting the San Salvador Road, where we will look for endemic birds like the Black-throated Bobwhite, Yucatan Wren, Yucatan Woodpecker and Mexican



Black-Throated Bobwhite

Sheartail, with chances of spotting other sought-after birds like the Lesser Roadrunner, Gray-crowned Yellowthroat, Cinnamon Hummingbird, Northern Jacana, Wood Stork, Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, Crested Caracara, Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet, Vermilion Flycatcher, Mangrove Vireo and of course Warblers.

We'll return to the hotel for lunch/brunch and to get ready for a short drive to Valladolid, where we'll check in at the hotel, drop our stuff and get ready for birding the area this afternoon.

Top birds today include: Red-billed Pigeon, Common Ground Dove, Canivet's Emerald, Roadside Hawk, Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl, Yucatan Woodpecker, Golden-olive Woodpecker, Yellow-lored Parrot, Yellow-olive Flatbill, Dusky-capped Flycatcher, Yucatan Jay, Spot-breasted Wren, Olive Sparrow, Hooded Oriole, Orange Oriole, Altamira Oriole, Bronzed Cowbird, Rose-throated Tanager, Blue-black

Grassquit, Yucatan Poorwill, Middle American Screech-Owl.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging in Hotel Okaan near Valladolid.

Day 5, Cozumel:

We'll leave our hotel in Valladolid very early to catch the first ferry to Cozumel Island, make the 40-minute crossing and begin birding, our goal being to see all of the Cozumel endemics during the first half of the day. We'll have brunch on Cozumel, and then return to the mainland, heading 45 minutes south to Akumal for birding there.

Top birds today include: Cozumel Emerald, Cozumel Vireo, Cozumel Wren, Bananaquit, Western Spindalis, Caribbean Elaenia, White-crowned Pigeon, Black Catbird, Golden Warbler, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (Cozumel), Yucatan Vireo, Green-breasted Mango.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging in Casa Akumal*

Day 6, Uxuxubi al Natural to Sijil Noh Ha Reserve:

Today begins with birding "Uxuxubi al Natural" for a half day. Uxuxubi al Natural is a private reserve in Akumal with several trails and roads where we will have chances to spot quite a few good birds.

Top birds here include: Ocellated Turkey, Squirrel Cuckoo, Vaux's Swift, Wedge-tailed Sabrewing, White-bellied Emerald, Russet-naped Wood-Rail, Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, Roadside Hawk, Black-headed Trogon, Lesson's Motmot, Keel-billed Toucan, Pale-billed Woodpecker, Lineated Woodpecker, Olive-throated Parakeet, Barred Antshrike, Gray-collared Becard, Northern Bentbill, Northern Beardless Tyrannulet, Bright-rumped Atilla, Brown Jay, Cave Swallow, Yellow-tailed Oriole, Black-headed Saltator and more.

After lunch we'll head towards Felipe Carrillo Puerto to the Sijil Noh Ha Reserve where we'll spend the night and ready ourselves for birding here the next morning.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging in Casa Pak'lu'um Cabañas

Day 7, Sijil Noh Ha to Bacalar:

Today is a full morning of birding the Sijil Noh Ha Reserve for the morning and heading towards Bacalar after lunch.

Top birds here are many and include: Scaled Pigeon, Squirrel Cuckoo, White-bellied Emerald, Wedge-tailed Sabrewing, Buff-



Yucatan Jay

bellied Hummingbird, Roadside Hawk, Collared Aracari, Keel-billed Toucan, Smoky-brown Woodpecker, Olive-throated Parakeet, White-fronted Amazon, Yellow-lored Amazon, White-crowned Parrot, Bright-rumped Añlla, Lesser Greenlet, Tawny-crowned Greenlet, Green-backed Sparrow, Mangrove Swallow, Long-billed Gnatwren, White-bellied Wren, Yellow-billed Cacique, Gray-throated Chat, Rose-throated Becard, Yucatan Flycatcher, Black-cowled Oriole, Blue Bunzng, and others.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging at Villas Ecotucan

Day 8, Birding Kohunlich Archaeological Site, return to Merida:

We'll leave the hotel around 5 am in the morning for a 1-hour drive to the Kohunlich Archaeological Site. This remote archaeological site is a very good birding spot for many tropical species and it's often

empty, so we may have the ruins for ourselves. Some of the key birds we expect here include: Bat Falcon, White-crowned Parrot, Red-lored Parrot, Scaled Pigeon, Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, Pale-billed Woodpecker, Tropical Royal Flycatcher, Lesser Greenlet, Yellow-throated Euphonia and more tropical delights.

After birding the ruins, we'll return to Mérida (4–5-hour drive back), arriving at approximately 6 PM depending on traffic.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging at Holiday Inn Express or similar

Day 9, Departure:

Transfers to the airport and international flights home.

Included for the duration of this itinerary:

Accommodations, meals from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 9, soft drinks at meals, airport transfers, all ground transportation, tools, entrance fees, local guides, boat transportation.

Not Included:

International/domestic flights, travel insurance, any airport taxes or entry/departure fees, alcoholic beverages, souvenirs, laundry, tips, or other items of a personal nature.

Travel insurance is recommended for this and all travel. Please see <https://www.naturalselectionstours.com/travel-insurance/for-details>



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