



Natural Selections

BIRDING, WILDLIFE, AND PHOTO TOURS



Long-tailed Sylph

Birding Ecuador from West to East

13 Nights/14 Days

This combined birding tour starts in Quito, takes us northwest over Zuro Loma at 3,500 meters above sea level, descends to Silanche Reserve at 350 meters, before swinging back east to Papallacta at 3,850 meters and Sumaco at 1,400 meters, before turning back to Quito at completion. This incredible range of elevations and habitats allows us access to well over 500 species of birds (including 65 species of hummingbirds) from lowland rain forest to cloud forest to páramo (high-altitude grassland). The differences in habitat and bird diversity between the western and eastern Andes is remarkable, and each day will be a new adventure with new species. At all of our lodges, we'll be able to appreciate the uniquely beautiful biodiversity of Ecuador, enjoy some of the best birding in the western hemisphere, and with our visit, contribute to the conservation of it all.

Tour Overview

Day 1: Arrival in Quito (UIO)

Days 2: Zuro Loma and Septimo Paraiso Lodge

Day 3: Silanche Reserve and Milpe Bird Sanctuary:

Day 4: Mashpi Reserve

Day 5: Santa Rosa Reserve

Day 6: Paz de las Antipittas Reserve

Day 6: Quito

Day 7: Antizana National Park

Day 8: Guango Lodge to San Isidro Lodge

Day 9: San Isidro Lodge

Day 10: Ayaguacu Reserve

Days 11, 12: Wildsumaco Lodge

Day 13: Quito

Day 14: Departure from Quito (UIO)

13 Night/14 Day Itinerary:

Day 1, Arrival:

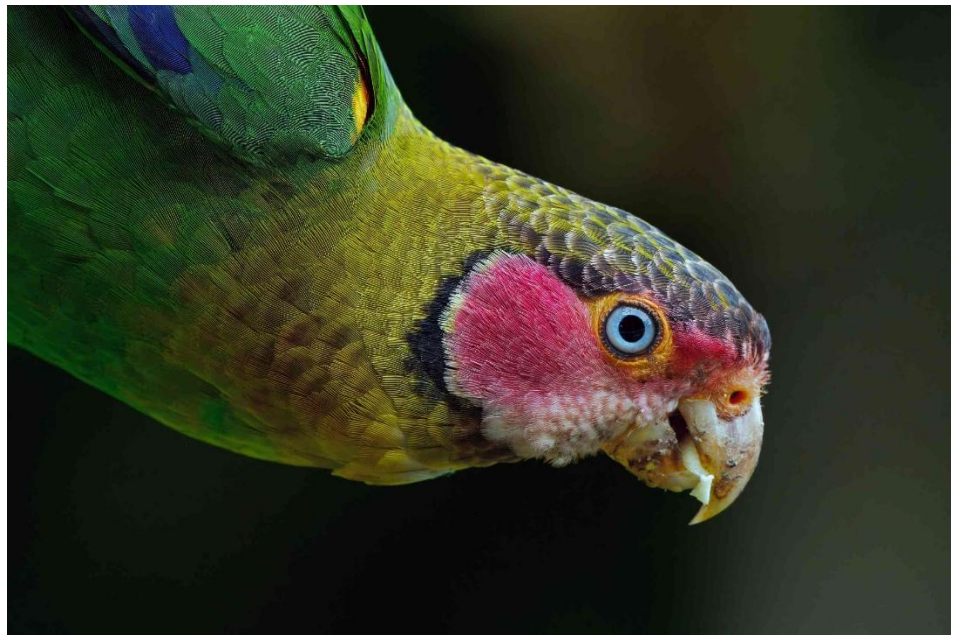
Upon arrival, we will meet you at the airport and transfer to your hotel.

Lodging at San Jose de Puembo

Meals: Dinner

Day 2, Zuro Loma to Septimo Paraiso Lodge:

After breakfast, we will drive to Zuro Loma Reserve there we will enjoy how the local people care for the local Chestnut-naped and Equatorial Antpittas, Barred Fruiteater, Andean Guan, Yellow-breasted Brush-Finches and more, plus we will see and photograph the amazing Sword-billed Hummingbird, Buff-winged Starfrontlet, Mountain Velvetbreast, Sapphire-vented Puffleg, Tyrian Metaltail, Black-tailed Trainbearer and many more species. We will



Rose-face Parrot

enjoy a picnic lunch, while taking in a grandiose montane vista, and from there will begin the drive to Mindo via the Old Nono Mindo Road, birding along the way. This road offers spectacular views of the forest and excellent birding/photo opportunities with the possibility of such sought-after birds such as Torrent Duck and White-capped Dipper.

Lodging at Septimo Paraiso

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 3, Silanche Reserve and Milpe Bird Sanctuary:

After an early breakfast, we will drive downslope to the Silanche Reserve. At 300 meters, this is the lowest preserve we will visit, and we will spend a few hours at the Canopy Tower looking for Choco endemics such as Scarlet-breasted Dacnis, Rufous-winged and Blue-whiskered Tanagers, Scarlet-browed Tanager, Gray and Gold Tanager, Tawny-crested Tanager, Blue-necked Tanager and others.

In the afternoon, we will visit the Milpe Bird Sanctuary to search for Choco endemics such as Moss-backed, Rufous-throated, and Glistening-green Tanagers, as well as Club-winged Manakin.

Lodging at Septimo Paraiso

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 4, Mashpi Reserve:

After breakfast, we will drive to the world famous Mashpi Reserve there we will look for Moss-backed, Glistening-green, and Rufous-throated Tanagers, Velvet-purple Coronet, Black Solitaire, Indigo Flowerpiercer, Orange-breasted Fruiteater, and many more. From here we will make an hour's drive to the Oilbird Cave in hopes of seeing this enigmatic bird! Ecuador is the best place to see and photograph this unusual and storied species.

Lodging at Septimo Paraiso

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 5, Santa Rosa Reserve:

Today, we will visit Santa Rosa Reserve, primarily for the endemic Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan and Gorgeted Sunangel while hoping to see and photograph the rare Hoary Puffleg. In addition to 15 additional species of hummingbird here, we will look for the Striped Treehunter, Tri-colored or Choco Brush-Finch, Golden-headed Quetzal, Green and Black Fruiteater, Flame-faced, Blue-capped, Black-capped and Golden Tanagers as well as many more species.

After Santa Rosa, we will head to the Paseo del Quinde Road (the old Nono-Mindo road) looking for dazzling mixed flocks found in this area.

Lodging at Septimo Paraiso

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 6, Paz de las Antpittas Reseve:

Early this morning we will head to Paz de las Antpittas Reserve to observe the Andean Cock of the Rocks at their lek, where males assemble during the mating season and engage in competitive displays that attract females. Afterwards we will join Angel (the owner of the reserve) as he draws his "charges" in for breakfast (Maria the Giant Antpitta, Willi the Yellow-breasted Antpitta, and Susan the Moustached Antpitta)! We will enjoy our breakfast here and will spend the remainder of the morning birding around the reserve, heading back to Quito in the afternoon.



White-bellied Antpitta

Lodging in Quito

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7, Antizana National Park:

After breakfast, we will head for Antizana National Park where we will search for Andean Condor, Black-faced Ibis, Paramo Pipit, Black-winged Ground Dove, and other paramo specialties. On our way to Papallacta Pass we will target the Giant Hummingbird, which feeds on the strange Puya Puya plant, then take the Old Papallacta Route to look for Viridian Metaltail and the rare Red-rumped Bush-Tyrant.

When we get to the pass, our main targets will be the Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe and the Ecuadorian Hillstar. Afterwards we will explore the unique Polylepis Forest (the only tree hardy enough to grow at an altitude of over 2,800 meters) and look for mixed flocks which commonly include such sought-after birds as; Giant Conebill,

White-chinned Thistletail, Black-backed Bush Tanager, and others. Then we will take a short hike to Suco Lake in search of Silvery Grebe and other waterbirds before arriving at our lodge for the night.

Lodging at Guango Lodge

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 8, Guango Feeders to San Isidro Lodge:

The feeders at Guango allow "in-your-face" views of many highly sought-after hummingbirds, the star of which is the amazing Sword-billed Hummingbird! Other special hummers here include Chestnut-breasted Coronet, Mountain Velvetbreast, Tourlamine Sunangel, and Mountain Avocetbill. We will walk the nearby trails looking for mixed flocks and also check the Papallacta River for Torrent Duck and White-capped Dipper.

After, we will drive to San Isidro in the afternoon and on the way, stop to visit some highly productive

hummingbird feeders where Peruvian Racket-tail, Violet-fronted brilliant, Long-tailed Sylph, Speckled Hummingbird, Gorgeted and White-bellied Woodstar and others are commonly seen.

*Lodging at San Isidro Lodge
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

Day 9, San Isidro Lodge:

Today before breakfast we will enjoy birds at the feeders such as Cinnamon Flycatcher, Masked Trogon, Inca Jay, Pale-edged Flycatcher, Mountain Wren, and many more, before taking a short walk to a very special White-bellied Antpitta feeding area.

After a great morning of birding, we will enjoy our delicious breakfast and then spend the day exploring the trails around the lodge grounds and gardens, looking for such gems as Crested Quetzal, and Andean Cock-of-the-rock, among others. Few birds can compete with the tanagers when it comes to "feathered jewelry", and we will

search for as many as we can find, including White-capped, Saffron-crowned, Golden-naped, Beryl-spangled, Blue-and-black, and Blue-winged Mountain Tanagers. Come nightfall, we will search for the "San Isidro Owl", the lodge's famous "mystery owl" which may eventually be designated a new species!

*Lodging at San Isidro Lodge
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

Day 10, Ayaguacu Reserve:

After an early breakfast we will drive to Ayaguacu Reserve where the White-lored Antpitta is predictably coming into feeding areas, allowing for fantastic views. While there, we'll also look for the Black-bellied Thorntail, before continuing on to the Loreto Road in the foothills of the Andes, known for its wide variety of birds such as Paradise, Orange-eared, Golden-eared, and Magpie Tanagers, as well as Blue-naped Chlorophonia, Cliff Flycatcher, Orange-breasted Falcon, Golden-Collared Toucanet

and others, including some of the amazing mixed flocks seen in this forest.

*Lodging at Wildsumaco Lodge
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

Day 11, 12: Wildsumaco Lodge:

After enjoying an early breakfast, we will explore the trails and nearby road, both of which are very good for mixed flocks containing Coppery-chested Jacamar, Gray-tailed Piha, Blue-rumped Manakin, and more. We'll also enjoy the hummingbird feeders here, where at least 15 species are seen, included Napo Sabrewing, Ecuadorian Piedtail, Many-spotted Hummmingbird, Booted Racket-tail (orange legs), and much more. At dusk, we will try for Band-bellied Owl and Foothill Screech Owl.

While here, we'll continue to look for species such as Chestnut-crowned Gnateater, Golden-collared Toucanet, White-tipped Sicklebill, Blackish Rail, Red-billed Tyrannulet, Yellow-breasted Antwren, Rufous-naped Greenlet, Coraya Wren, Foothill Antwren, Rufous-breasted Piculet, Golden-collared Honeycreeper, and more species of tanagers including Magpie, White-lined, Silver-beaked, Blue-browed, Orange-eared, Spotted, Yellow-bellied and Golden-eared.

*Lodging at Wildsumaco Lodge
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*



Torrent Ducks



Black-faced Antbird



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Day 13, Return to Quito, birding along the way:

After breakfast, we will bird our way back to Quito, along the way trying for any species that we may have missed during our trip, making various stops along the way.

Lodging in Quito

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 14, Departure:

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for flights home.

Meals: Breakfast

Included for the duration of this itinerary:

In-country transportation, bilingual birding guide and driver fees, lodging, meals starting with dinner on the first day through breakfast on the last day, entrance fees to all reserves visited.

Not Included:

Airport taxes, tips, souvenirs, alcoholic beverages, laundry, activities and accommodations not mentioned and other items of a personal nature.

Travel insurance:

We highly recommend you obtain travel insurance. In the event that you need to cancel your trip due to medical or other reasons, this insurance will protect you. For details, please see

<https://www.naturalselectionstours.com/travel-insurance/>