



Natural Selections

BIRDING, WILDLIFE, AND PHOTO TOURS



Pale-mandibled Aracari

Ecuador Photo Workshop with Lee Hoy

9 Nights/10 Days

This dream-come-true, tropical photo workshop is designed to maximize our time by staying at two main lodges on the western side of the Andes! Both offer outstanding wildlife and macro opportunities, and with time for photography both day and night, you are sure to capture visually compelling images of hummingbirds, toucans, barbets, frogs, insects, parrots, and so much more! This workshop is focused on teaching you how to capture creative images of subjects. At one of our lodges, we will even have the chance for- macro- photography of hummingbirds! Yes, we will use macro lenses to photograph hummingbirds inches from our lenses! You will feel the wind from their wings as you capture their portrait so close you can see the rain drops on their head!

We will do daytime and nighttime walks for macro photography focusing on the incredible frogs, snakes, insects, and arachnids of these habitats! Both destinations offer amazing photography subjects all around our rooms! You will have time to practice your creativity and enjoying the beauty in which we are immersed. If you have a non-photographer spouse who just enjoys watching nature, this would be a relaxing and easy trip for them to join you! This is a simple itinerary with great food, great photography, and the beauty of Ecuador at our doorsteps!

Tour Overview

Day 1: Arrival in Quito (UIO) and San Jose de Puembo

Days 2: Zuro Loma and Mashpi Amagusa Reserve

Days 3, 4: Mashpi Amagusa Resee

Day 5: Mashpi Amagusa to Septimo Paraiso

Day 6: Septimo Paraiso

Day 7: Choco Toucan Reserve

Day 8: Tutti Frutti Reserve

Day 9: Long-wattled Umbrellabird and Tambo Condor

Day 10: Chakana Reserve and departure (UIO)

9 Night/10 Day Itinerary:

Day 1, Arrival:

Participants should plan to arrive in Quito before 5:00 p.m. in order to attend the opening dinner.

Transfers from the airport to the San Jose de Puembo are provided.

Lodging at San Jose de Puembo

Meals: Dinner at 7:00 p.m.

Day 2, Mashpi Amagusa:

After an early morning departure and a 2-hour drive, we will arrive at the Zuro Loma Reserve which is a high Andean cloud forest reserve where our photographic subjects will include some secretive but beautiful birds such as the Chestnut-naped and Equatorial



Mashpi Amagusa Beetle

Antpitta, Barred Fruiteater, Andean Guan, Yellow-breasted Brush-finch, and several species of hummingbirds such as the highly sought-after Sword-billed Hummingbird. Other species of hummingbird we'll target with our cameras include Buff-winged Starfrontlet, Mountain Velvet-breast, Sapphire-vented Puffleg, Tyrian Metaltail, and Black-tailed Trainbearer.

Of course, changing elevations in Ecuador also means a new variety of tanagers which are some of the most spectacularly colored avian subjects. Species such as Scarlet-bellied Mountain-tanager and Blue-capped Tanagers are common here and most of these birds are all seen at the same photography blind!

After our photography and a picnic lunch at Zuro Loma, we will then depart for Mashpi Amagusa Reserve which is about a 2.5 hour drive.

Lodging at Mashpi Amagusa Reserve

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 3, Mashpi Amagusa:

Mashpi Amagusa Reserve has both fruit and insect feeders which draw in a tremendous variety of birds including some endemics and hard to photograph species. We will spend the morning (prior to breakfast) photographing at this blind and for a bit after breakfast. Our avian targets will include the endemic Moss-backed, Glistening



Crowned Woodnymph

green, and Rufous-throated Tanagers, Velvet-purple Coronet, Orange-breasted Fruiteater, Crimson-rumped Toucanet and Rose-faced Parrots are seen here, to name just a few. With luck, we will have a Tayra (cloud-forest predator in the weasel family) make an appearance.

After lunch and a break to charge batteries and download images, we will explore a short distance from the lodge to look for the Green-fronted Lancebill which is a hummingbird that doesn't come to feeders but stays near montane streams. We will also look for the White-tipped Sicklebill which is a very unique and highly sought-after hummingbird.

After dinner, an optional night hike for macro photography will take us back to the same areas where we sought the Lance-bill Hummingbird to look for special frogs, reptiles and insects.

Lodging at Mashpi Amagusa Reserve

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Oilbird

Day 4, Mashpi Amagusa and Sachaguatusa Reserves:

We will enjoy another morning at the reserve photographing some species that we may have missed prior, like Black Solitaire and Oranged-breasted Fruiteater. Afterwards, we will drive a short distance to the Sachaguatusa Reserve where the Emerald, Gray and Gold and Rufous-throated tanager are found and photographed, as well as Choco Toucan, Pale-mandibled Aracari which visit the feeders here.

After dinner, we will go on yet another optional night hike for macro photography for tropical amphibians, reptiles, and insects.

Lodging at Mashpi Amagusa Reserve

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 5, Oilbirds and Cock-of-the-rock:

Following another morning photographing at the Mashpi Amagusa Reserve blinds, we will depart the reserve and head to a location 90-minutes' drive to photograph the very unusual and bizarre Oilbird. This species roosts in caves and is a nocturnal fruit eater. After we have enjoyed our time with Oilbirds, we will then

head to a very special lek (80-minute drive) to photograph the brilliant and unforgettable Andean Cock-of-the-rock. These birds are generally active from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm. (NOTE: We will confirm with the owner of the lek to see if the birds are active on the lek and if not, we will continue to our final destination for the day, Septimo Paraiso.

After dinner, we'll offer an optional macro photography outing in search of the other worldly-looking Pinocchio Anole and the Ecuadorian Anole, as well as other reptiles and amphibians.

Lodging at Septimo Paraiso

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 6, Septimo Paraiso:

Our adventure begins with a full day at Septimo Paraiso where we begin by photographing at an insect blind where our targets include the cute Masked trogon, Russet-crowned Warbler, Turquoise Jay, Slate-throated Redstart, Slaty-backed Nightingale thrush, Strong-billed and Montane Woodcreeper, and others.

After breakfast we will search for and hope to photograph the endemic Plate-billed Mountain-toucan and Gorgeted Sunangel and, we'll especially hope to see and photograph the rare Hoary Puffleg and up to fifteen more species of hummingbirds. Other interesting species we might photograph include the Striped-treehunter, Choco Brush-finch, Green-and-black Fruiteater, and we

can't forget the ever-colorful tanagers including Flame-faced, Blue-capped, Golden, and Black-capped.

There will be plenty of time for those who wish to photograph hummingbirds with multi-flash setups.

Lodging at Septimo Paraiso

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7, Choco Toucan Reserve:

In the morning we will head for a location that gives us one of the most interesting hummingbird photography experiences, and that is the chance of being super close and using a macro lens! We'll be up-close and very personal with species like the Green Thorntail, Green-crowned Brilliant, and Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, plus the very colorful Crowned-woodnymph and White-necked Jacobin.

This location offers us a chance to also photograph many toucans and aracarís! For the more adventurous photographer, see if you can catch one in flight! This location also offers even more tanagers for images that pop! After a full day of photographing at Choco Toucan Reserve, we will return to Septimo Paraiso and have another optional macro outing to search for Pinocchio and Ecuadorian Anoles as well as other reptile, amphibian, and insect subjects.

Lodging at Septimo Paraiso

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 8, Tutti Frutti Reserve:

The feeders at Guango allow "in-
Departing after breakfast, we will drive about 50 minutes to the Tutti Frutti Reserve for some wonderful photographic opportunities! This relatively new location attracts a variety of birds including Black-cheeked, Golden-olive, and Lineated Woodpeckers, Orange-

fronted and Red-headed Barbets, and Dusky-faced Tanager. In addition, there are a plethora of gorgeous hummingbirds such as Long-billed Starthroat, Purple-chested Hummingbird, White-necked Jacobin, and many more.

We will spend most of the day here and will arrive back in the afternoon to Septimo Paraiso in time for possible relaxing or enjoying photo opportunities around the grounds.

Lodging at Septimo Paraiso

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 9, Umbrellabirds to Tambo Condor:

This morning will find us seeking to photograph the Long-wattled Umbrellabird if it is active at a particular hide. If it hasn't been



Pinocchio Anole

regular, we will seek to photograph some of the other species we might have missed. After our photography outing, we will drive to Tambo Condor on the other side of Quito, which about 3 to 3.5 hours depending on traffic in Quito.

Lodging at Tambo Condor

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 10, Andean Condors and Departure:

Early in the morning, we will head to Chakana Reserve in hopes of photographing the iconic Andean Condor! The drive is about 25 minutes to the reserve and after a short walk we will be on the lookout for this spectacular bird. If road conditions are not ideal, we will use a 4x4 vehicle to get to the location. In addition to the condor, we will watch for Carunculated Caracara, Ecuadorian Hillstar, Giant Hummingbird, Many-striped Canastero, Tawny Antpitta and more.

After we conclude this outing, we will drive approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes to the Quito airport in the afternoon for flights home.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Included for the duration of this itinerary:

In-country transportation, bilingual naturalist and photo guide and driver fees, lodging, meals starting with dinner on the first day through lunch 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/>



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