



Natural Selections

BIRDING, WILDLIFE, AND PHOTO TOURS



Black-crested Tit Tyrant

Southern Ecuador; A Kaleidoscope of Bird Diversity

14 Nights/15 Days

Southern Ecuador is considered one of the most biodiverse places in the world. Podocarpus National Park alone supports over 600 species of birds. We will visit habitats ranging from tropical dry forest and tropical rainforest to Chocó and Tumbesian forests, as well as Polylepis forests and páramo habitats—all within a small part of Ecuador.

And along our visit, we will be contributing to conservation efforts in southern Ecuador, especially in the reserves of the Jocotoco Foundation. Thanks to the discovery of the Jocotoco Antpitta in southern Ecuador, the area is now protected, particularly in areas where endangered or vulnerable birds live. These include the Jocotoco Antpitta, the Golden Parakeet, the Pale-browed Tinamou, the Long-wattled Umbrellabird, the Pale-headed Brushfinch, the White-headed Brushfinch, the Rainbow Starfrontlet, the Purple-throated Sunangel, the White-necked Parakeet, the Gray Tinamou, and the Violet-throated Metaltail, to name a few.

Tour Overview

Day 1: Arrival, night Guayaquil

Day 2: Manglares Churute

Days 3, 4: Umbrella Bird Lodge

Day 5, 6: Jorupe Reserve

Day 7: Vilcabamba

Days 8, 9: Tapichalaca Reserve

Days 10, 11: Bomboscaro

Day 12: Saraguro

Day 13: Cuenca

Day 14: Guayaquil

Day 15: Flights home

14 Night/15 Day Itinerary:

Day 1, Arrival:

After arriving in Guayaquil, you will be picked up at the airport and transferred to your hotel.

*Lodging at Gran Hotel, Guayaquil
Dinner on your own this evening*

Day 2, Manglares Churute:

After an early breakfast we will drive to Manglares Churute an area surrounded by marshes and dry forest. Our target bird here is the



Jocotoco Antpitta

prehistoric-looking Horned Screamer (as this is the only place in Ecuador where the bird breeds), but while there we will also look for, Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Least Grebe, Snail Kite, Savannah Hawk, Wattled Jacana, White-throated Crake, Masked Water-Tyrant, Peruvian Meadowlark, and Pacific Pygmy-Owl. After lunch we will embark on the four-hour drive to Santa Isabel.

*Lodging at Hosteria Agua y Sol
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

Day 3, Long-wattled Umbrellabird:

This morning we will search for one of Ecuador's (and the world's) most threatened species, the Pale-headed Brushfinch, rediscovered here by Niels Krabbe. This is the only known population of this Ecuadorian endemic. We will also have a chance at locating Purple-collared and Little Woodstars. After lunch we will travel to the Umbrella Bird Lodge, where we will search for the lodge's namesake, the Long-wattled Umbrellabird.

*Lodging at Umbrella Bird Lodge
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

Day 4, Umbrella Bird Lodge:

We will have a full day at Umbrella Bird Lodge, where we will walk the trails in search of El Oro Parakeet and El Oro Tapaculo, two more Ecuadorian endemics. We will also have plenty of time to enjoy the lodge's hummingbird feeders; who knows what may show up!

*Lodging at Umbrella Bird Lodge
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

Day 5, Jorupe Reserve:

Today, we will visit Santa Rosa. After an early breakfast we will spend the morning combing the trails for any species that we may have missed the previous day. After lunch we will travel to Macara, where we will spend the next two nights at the Jorupe Reserve. On the way we will make a special stop to look for Tumbes Swift, White-headed Brushfinch, and Tumbes Swallow.

*Lodging at Jorupe Reserve
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

Day 6, Jorupe Reserve to Utuana Reserve:

After breakfast we will explore the reserve's trails in search of Tumbesian specialties such as Watkin's Antpitta, Henna-hooded and Rufous-necked Foliage-Gleaners, and Gray-breasted Flycatcher. After lunch we will drive up to the Utuana Reserve, where at this higher elevation we hope to find Rainbow Starfrontlet, Purple-throated Sunangel, Piura Hemispingus, Black-crested Tit-Tyrant, Chapman's Antshrike, and Gray-headed Antbird.

*Lodging at Jorupe Reserve
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

Day 7, Utuana to Loja:

After an early breakfast, we will return to the Utuana Reserve to clean up any species we may have missed yesterday. Then we will travel to Loja, stopping en route at Catamayo (also known as “Finch Heaven”) to look for Tumbes Sparrow, Drab Seedeater.

Lodging in Vilcabamba

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 8, Podocarpus National Park to Tapichalaca Reserve:

After breakfast we will visit the Cajanuma area of Podocarpus National Park, looking for Black-headed Hemispingus, Blue-backed Conebill, Gray-breasted mountain Toucan, Plushcap, Golden-crowned Tanager, Lacrimose mountain Tanager, and the hard-to-find Masked mountain Tanager. After a tasty lunch in the town of Vilcabamba (also known as the “Valley of Longevity”), we will begin the 2.5-hour drive to the Tapichalaca Reserve, where we will spend the next two nights. Upon arrival we will be free to relax and enjoy the hummingbird feeders!

Lodging at Casa Simpson.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 9, Quebrada Honda to Valladolid:

This morning we will hike the Quebrada Honda Trail to a very special feeder area where “Panchito” the Jocotoco Antpitta comes in for his breakfast! Other tough-to-see targets we will search for include Ocellated, Ash-colored,



Pale Mandibled Aracari

and Chusquea Tapaculos. After lunch we will road-bird on the way to the town of Valladolid, where we will search for Marañon Thrush. As darkness approaches, we will try for Andean Potoo and Rufous-bellied Nighthawk.

Lodging at Casa Simpson.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 10, Bomboscaro:

After an early breakfast we will spend the morning birding the lodge grounds in search of anything we may have missed. After lunch we will drive to Bomboscaro and the Copa Linga Lodge, where we will spend the next two nights. We will have time this afternoon to search the lodge grounds for Wire-crested Thorntail, Spangled Coquette, and Violet-fronted and Black-throated Brilliants.

Lodging at Copalinga Lodge

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 11, Bomboscaro:

We will spend the day birding the Bomboscaro area, where we hope to find such target species as Amazonian Umbrellabird, Coppery-chested Jacamar, Highland Motmot, Andean Cock-of-the-rock (the orange eastern race), and Olive Finch. In addition, there’s always the possibility of a tanager flock that will include such gems as Paradise, Green-and-gold, Yellow-bellied, Spotted, Magpie, and Fulvous-crested Tanagers.

Lodging at Copalinga Lodge

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 12, Yanzatza to Saraguro:

This morning we will drive to Yanzatza to look for the Cute Spangled Coquette and we will be birding around that area and after lunch we will drive to Saraguro.

Lodging in Saraguro

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 13, Cerro Arcos to Cuenca:

We will have an early start to go to Cerro Arcos, where is the home of the new Hummingbird for the Science and endemic to Ecuador The Blue-throated Hillstar. And then we will head for the beautiful city of Cuenca, which was declared a World Cultural Heritage Site in 1999.

Lodging in Cuenca

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 14, El Cajas National Park and return to Guayaquil:

After breakfast we will start the hour-long drive to El Cajas National Park, where we will search for Tit-like Dacnis, Violet-throated Metaltail, Red-rumped Bush-Tyrant, Bar-winged and Stout-billed Cinclodes, and Giant Conebill, Ecuadorian Hillstar at Toredora Lake (12,000 ft) we will have a chance to see Andean Ruddy Duck, Andean Coot, and Andean Teal, and if the day is sunny, Andean Condor as well. We head back to Guayaquil in the afternoon.

Lodging in Guayaquil

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 15, Departure:

After breakfast, flights home.

Meals: Breakfast



White-tailed Jay

Included for the duration of this itinerary:

In-country transportation, bilingual bird/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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