

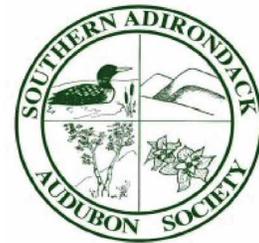


Violet-bellied Hummingbird by Reinier Munguia

ECUADOR

Birding at the Chocó-Andes Region
with Southern Adirondack Audubon Society

October 26 - November 4, 2020



Per square mile, Ecuador has the highest biodiversity in the world, including some 1,640 species of birds, many of which are rare and endemic. Discover the amazing avian fauna of Ecuador's Andean landscapes on this 9-day adventure. With assistance from an expert guide, encounter a variety of birds, plants, and other wildlife while traversing a selection of Ecuador's 50 different ecosystems. The program begins with a journey to Alambi Cloud Forest Reserve, encompassing several different habitats over two major valleys. Also experience the Milpe Bird Sanctuary in the Chocó Andean foothills, considered one of the finest sites in all of Ecuador. Along the way, observe wild antpittas being hand-fed, view the snow-capped Antisana Volcano, and visit the workshop of a famous Ecuadorian ornithologist and artist.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore diverse habitats at varying elevations at national and private reserves, including Alambi Cloud Forest Reserve, the subtropical rainforest at Milpe Bird Sanctuary, páramo ecosystem at Antisana Ecological Reserve, and more.
- Seek out some of Ecuador's approximately 130 hummingbird species, including the Giant Hummingbird, Black-tailed Trainbearer, Sword-billed Hummingbird, Tourmaline Sunangel, and Glowing Puffleg.
- Identify other target species like the Andean Condor, Andean Cock-of-the-rock, Long-wattled Umbrellabird, Chocó Trogon, and dozens of tanagers.



ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

OCTOBER 26 - QUITO

Upon arrival in Quito, you'll be met by your guide and transferred to the hotel. Check-in is available at 2 pm. *Overnight at Rincón de Puembo.*

OCTOBER 27 - MINDO

Depart from the hotel early in the morning for Mindo via the Yanacocha and Quinde Eco-route for birding. Arrive to Yanacocha, a moss-clad temperate forest and Polylepis woodland on the side of Volcán Pichincha located at an altitude of approximately 10,000 ft. Yanacocha is the last refuge of the emblematic bird of Quito: the Black-breasted puffleg (categorized as critically endangered). Other birds seen in the area are Black-chested and Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanagers, the Golden-breasted and Sapphire-vented Pufflegs, the Great Sapphirewing and Sword-billed Hummingbird. Enjoy lunch at the reserve and continue through the Eco-route, with several stops along the way to watch some of the birds like the Toucan barbet, The Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan and the Beautiful Jay. While heading to a lower altitude you'll reach subtropical forest and see birds like the Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager and White-winged Brush-Finch. Visit Alambi Cloud Forest Reserve for hummingbird observation. The reserve sits over two major valleys and covers a large range of altitudes (4,750 to 7,210 ft) with several different habitats. Alambi has a recorded list of 250 species of birds and 32 hummingbirds seen either at the feeders or in the reserve. Continue to Mindo for check-in, program orientation, dinner and overnight. *Overnight at Sachatamia Lodge. (BLD)*

OCTOBER 28 - MINDO

This morning visit Milpe Bird Sanctuary, located in the subtropical rainforest. Milpe Bird Sanctuary covers 49 acres with an altitudinal range of 3,350 to 3,770 ft. Located in the Chocó Andean foothills, Los Bancos Milpe is in a Birdlife International defined Important Bird Area (IBA), and birding guides consider this one of the finest sites in all of Ecuador. Many of the most

spectacular Chocó endemics are protected here, including Plumbeous Forest-Falcon, Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan, Glistening-green Tanager, Chocó Trogon, Clubwinged Manakin, and Long-wattled Umbrellabird, to name just a few. This site is also known for sightings of the rare Moss-backed Tanager. In the afternoon visit San Tadeo Feeders where you can easily see a dozen different tanagers, anacaris, toucanets, and barbets. Return to the hotel for dinner. *Overnight at Sachatamia Lodge. (BLD)*

OCTOBER 29 - MINDO

Mashi- Amagusa is the last foothill forest that directly connects to the lower subtropical western forest of Ecuador. Its unique location makes it particularly attractive for birders looking for the highest biodiversity regions with chocó endemic birds. The altitude range is 2,450 to 5,600 ft. Chocó endemics that can be seen in the reserve or along the road include Rose-faced Parrot, Orange-fronted Barbet, Toucan Barbet, Orange-breasted Fruiteater, Moss-backed Tanager, Choco Vireo, Long-wattled Umbrellabird and brightly-colored passerines like Indigo Flowerpiercer. Boxed lunch during the excursion. In the afternoon return to the lodge. *Overnight at Sachatamia Lodge. (BLD)*

OCTOBER 30 - MINDO

Depart early from the hotel for the one hour drive to Pedro Vicente Maldonado where the Río Silanche Reserve is located. This important site is one of the last remaining accessible forest remnants found in this key life-zone. It is situated in hilly lowland forest at an altitude between 985-1,150 ft. The main feature at Río Silanche is its incredible birding: mixed species foraging flocks, packed with many important Chocó regional endemic species. We will spend much of the day here searching for species like Purple-chested Hummingbird, Gray and Gold Tanagers, Orange-fronted barbet, Stub-tailed Antbird, Black-tipped Cotinga, Slate-throated Gnatcatcher, Scarlet-breasted Tanager, Scarlet-and-white Tanager, Blue-whiskered Tanager. Continue to Mirador Río Blanco for lunch. This place is a birder's dream and great for spotting tanagers. Return to the lodge in the late afternoon. *Overnight at Sachatamia Lodge. (BLD)*

OCTOBER 31 - SANGOLQUI

Early in the morning depart towards Refugio Paz de las Aves

located near Nanegalito (13 miles northeast of Mindo, at 4,590 ft). Angel Paz is the owner of this magical place. Paz is a resident of the Nanegalito area who decided to protect his property and convert it into an Antpitta and Cock-of-the-rock sanctuary. In recent years the reserve has become popular as it is easy to spot at least three species of Antipittas: Great, Yellow-breasted and Mustached Antpitta. Other birds seen in the area are the Crested and Golden-headed Quetzals. En route make an additional stop in Quito at the Mitad del Mundo Monument and then continue to the hotel in Sangolqui. Dinner and overnight at the hotel this evening. *Overnight at Hacienda La Carriona. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 1 - COSANGA

Full morning of birding along the trails at Antisana Ecological Reserve (11,500 ft). Located between the Andes and the Amazon lowlands, the privately owned Antisana Ecological Reserve's 297,000 acres have varied ecological zones ranging from páramo to lowland rainforest. More than 70 bird species can be found here, including the Andean Condor, Giant Hummingbird, Carunculated Caracara, Black-faced Ibis, Speckled Teal, Andean Duck, Silvery Grebe, Slate-colored Coot, Andean Gull, Andean Lapwing, and Aplomado Falcon. The snow-capped Antisana Volcano is the fourth highest peak in Ecuador with an altitude of 18,900 feet, adding to the breathtaking Andean scenery that can be enjoyed along the lower elevation trails. In the afternoon continue to Cabañas San Isidro. This private reserve forms an important bridge between the Antisana and Gran Sumaco Reserves, and the area boasts a bird list of about 330 species, many of which are more easily found here than anywhere else in the country. *Overnight at San Isidro Lodge. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 2 - COSANGA

This morning explore the area accompanied by your guide. San Isidro Lodge is situated at about 6,726 ft. above sea level, but the trails lead through elevations ranging from 7,874 feet all the way down to 6,069 feet, making this an ideal base to observe Andean birds from the lower reaches of the temperate zone down into the heart of the subtropical zone. Among the rarities here are Highland Tinamou, Bicolored Antvireo, Peruvian Antpitta, and Whitefaced Nunbird. Commonly spotted species include Powerful Woodpecker, Smoky Bush-Tyrant, Inca Jay, Black-billed Peppershrike, Wattled Guan, and Glossy-black Thrush. Look for Sickle-winged Guan, Masked Trogon, Andean Motmot, Streak-capped and Striped Treehunters, Long-tailed Antbird, Slatecrowned Antpitta, Black-chested Fruiteater, Palefooted Swallow, and a variety of colorful tanagers among the mixed understory. *Overnight at San Isidro Lodge. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 3 - QUITO

After breakfast, check out of San Isidro and continue to Guango Lodge. Located about one hour away from San Isidro, Guango lies at an elevation of about 8,858 ft. on Ecuador's eastern slope. This area is classified as humid temperate forest, a habitat distinctly different from San Isidro and is characterized by its more stunted trees, thicker canopy, cooler climate, and different bird and plant composition. The hummingbird feeders here are especially popular, with some of the more noteworthy species being Mountain Velvetbreast, Sword-billed Hummingbird, Tourmaline Sunangel, Golden-breasted and Glowing Pufflegs, Mountain Avocetbill, and White-bellied and Gorgeted Woodstars. Other birds of particular interest that are seen regularly include the Andean Guan, Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan, Turquoise Jay, Scarlet-bellied, Lacrimose, Buff-breasted and Hooded Mountain-Tanagers, Gray-hooded Bush-Tanager, Black-headed, Black-capped and Black-eared Hemispingus and

Slaty Brush-Finch. Enjoy lunch at Guango and in the afternoon continue to the Cumbayá Valley to visit the house of the famous Ecuadorian ornithologist Juan Manuel Carrion. Juan Manuel is also a nature artist, actively involved in conservation as executor of communication and environmental education projects. He is a pioneer in publishing illustrated books on birds of Ecuador and has been recognized as "the painter of the birds of Ecuador." Visit his gardens and workshop to see local birds and admire his wonderful artwork. Enjoy a lecture given by a local ornithologist to learn more about some of the several species seen throughout the program. Afterwards continue the drive to the hotel. This evening reflect on the journey during a farewell dinner. *Overnight at Rincón de Puembo. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 4 - DEPARTURE

After breakfast transfer to the airport for your flight(s) home. (B)

LAND PRICING

\$2,750 (minimum of 7 participants)

Price includes accommodations, meals, entrance fees, and activities as indicated in the itinerary, private transportation unless otherwise noted in itinerary, non-alcoholic beverages with meals, full-time guide for duration of the program, bottled water on the bus and donation to SAAS.

Does not international airfare, include gratuities or items of a personal nature.

TRAVEL PROTECTION

Holbrook Travel purchases Travel Protection on behalf of all participants traveling in 2018 or beyond. These plans help provide coverage once the trip has departed and offer benefits for Baggage/Personal Effects, Accident & Sickness Medical Expenses, Emergency Evacuation and more.

Optional additional coverage is available in the form of the Group Deluxe Plan, which offers benefits for Trip Cancellation/ Interruption, in addition to many other insurance benefits and non-insurance assistance services. If interested in this optional plan, we can provide you with rates and plan details.

THE FINE PRINT

Price is based on double occupancy. For a single room throughout the trip, add \$295 per person. A \$200 per person non-refundable deposit and enrollment form are required to reserve your space on the trip. Final non-refundable payment is due July 23, 2020.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENROLL:

Visit holbrook.travel/saas-ec20 or contact Jen Hajj at 800-451-7111 x353 or email jenhajj@holbrooktravel.com



Mindo Cloud Forest



Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager by Reinier Munguia



Masked Flowerpiercer by Reinier Munguia



Andean Cock-of-the-rock by Chris Burney



Sword-billed Hummingbird by Reinier Munguia