



The three Colombian Andes: Central, Western and Eastern Cordillera

Plus some of Chocó bioregion and Cauca valley specialties

Endemics Everywhere

14 birding days



Chestnut capped Piha - Photo: Edwin Acevedo

Introduction

The Andes, a sui generis mountain ecosystem and one of the most biodiverse on the earth; when the Spanish conquerors arrived to this land they were astonished with unparalleled nature and complex geography.

Home of precious flying jewels in the form of Hummingbirds, colorful and lovely Tanagers, enigmatic Tapaculos, shy Antpittas; charismatic Puffbirds and Fruiteaters, gracious Parrots; powerful raptors and many other feathered forms displaying every morning diverse and complex songs through the mist of the forest, thanking for a new day; while others dive in active mixed flocks scrutinizing every neck of the woods.

Colombia was honored with these three Andes, that in general, share similarity species; but at the same time exhibit outstanding different species, especially when you compare both slopes of each mountain range, that's way you will find specialties everywhere what makes of this tour a must in the neotropic; it offers you the opportunity to find those bird singularities and richness, since we visit the best spots in the country to find the endemic, near endemic; highlights and those ones that you would enjoy every time if you had the chance. Let you delighted with the color, sounds and forms of our avifauna where surprising explosive mixed flocks and breathtaking views of quiet species that will catch us for unforgettable moments.

We will be moving from premontane to Páramo ecosystem, passing through montane and highland forest with a bonus of some specialties from dry forest in Cauca river valley.

In general the temperatures range in premontane forest: 18-24 °C/64.4-75.2 °F, montane forest: 6-12 °C/42.8-53.6 °F and highland forest to Páramo ecosystem: 5-10 °C / 41-50 °F.

Welcome to meet the Andean Colombia birds!

Itinerary

Day 0: Pick up at the airport in Medellín and then hotel and some info to contextualize.

Hotel: Hacienda hotel La Extremadura - HW, Wifi, AC available



Day 1: We left the hotel heading to a dam area called **Porce** (Premontane forest), here there chances for: Sooty Ant-Tanager (E), Tody Motmot, Slaty-winged Foliage-gleaner, Black-crowned Antbird, Great Antshrike, Purple-throated Fruitcrow and some aquatic species.

Broad-billed Motmot - Photo: Edwin Acevedo

Then we continue to the northern of the Central Andes to **Piha Reserve** (Premontane forest), in Anorí municipality; it is located on an area where a tremendously rare and very restricted bird was discovered some years ago: Chestnut-capped Piha, endemic to the country and only found in some localities around this area and no other place in Colombia; this reserve was created to preserve the habitat of this species.

Night: Piha lodge - HW, Wifi available

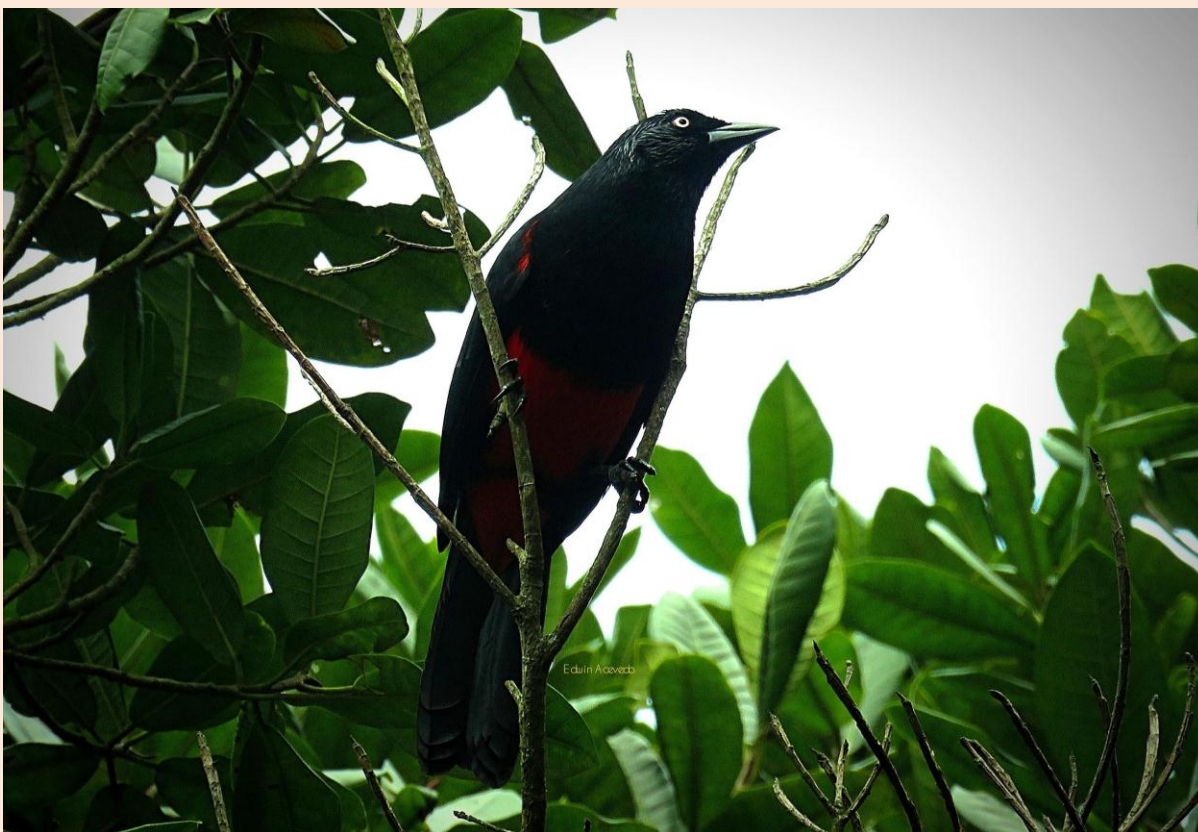
Day 2: We will be spending all day on the trails reserve, putting our attention to meet the main protagonist of the reserve: Chestnut-capped Piha (E), and also others of high interest: Stiles's Tapaculo(E), Parker's Antbird (E) Purplish-mantled Tanager (NE), Sooty-headed Wren (NE), Moustached Puffbird, Uniform Antshrike, Plain Antvireo, Chestnut-crowned

Gnateater, White-winged Tanager, Black-winged Saltator, Yellow-throated Bush-Tanager and many more...

Night: Piha lodge

Day 3: This morning while having a invigorative breakfast on the outdoor eating room in the lodge, we can delight with: White-necked Jacobin, Green-crowned Brilliant, White-bellied Woodstar, Collared Inca, Brown Violetear, Steely-vented Hummingbird, Andean Emerald; Bar-crested Antshrike (NE), Scrub Tanager (NE), Speckled Tanager; after, we will work on a different trial this morning for some species missed the day before.

After lunch we left to Medellin city doing some birding stops on the way back for: White mantled Barbet (E), Black-headed Brush-finch (NE)...



Red-bellied Grackle - Photo: Edwin Acevedo

Night: Hacienda hotel La Extremadura - HW, Wifi, AC available

Day 4 : Early in the morning we will visit **La Romera reserve** in Sabaneta Municipality (Premontane to low montane forest), very near from Medellín city; there we will be enjoying flocks of the vivacious and endemic Red-bellied Grackle, the hiding Stiles's Tapaculo (E) and Colombian Chachalaca (E).



Sharpening our eyes we can find the lovely and near endemic Yellow-headed Manakin plus other species of premontane forest as: Greenish Puffleg, Emerald Toucanet, Chestnut-capped Brush-finch, Common Chlorospingus, Russet-backed Oropendola and more wings...

Black-billed Mountain Toucan - Photo: Edwin Acevedo

Then we move to Jardín municipality; but stopping before in **Cauca river valley** area (Dry forest) for its specialties, here we will be working on the endemics: Antioquia Wren which it is one of the last species discovered on field in Colombia; Grayish Piculet and Apical Flycatcher, after continue to Jardín municipality in Western Andes.

Night in Jardín: Hotel La Casona - HW, Wifi, AC available

Day 5 : Very early in the morning our birding begin in the Yellow-eared Parrot reserve for views of this endemic and endangered Parrot, we will be working all day long in the reserve for more birds as: Black-billed Mountain Toucan, Grass-green Tanager, Golden-crowned Tanager, Hooded-mountain Tanager, Green and Black Fruiteater, Sword-billed Hummingbird, Tourmaline Sunangel and many more birds of montane forest.

Night in Jardín: Hotel La Casona - HW, Wifi, AC available



Day 6 : This morning our targets focus on the small **Cock-of-the rock reserve** (Premontane forest) for insuperable close up of this classic and astonishing Andean bird on its lek , and we may meet also Crested Ant-Tanager (E), Colombia Chachalaca (E), Red-headed Barbet, Bronze-winged Parrot, Flame-rumped Tanager, Andean Motmot....and more species of the coffee region.

Crimson-mantled Woodpecker – Photo: Edwin Acevedo

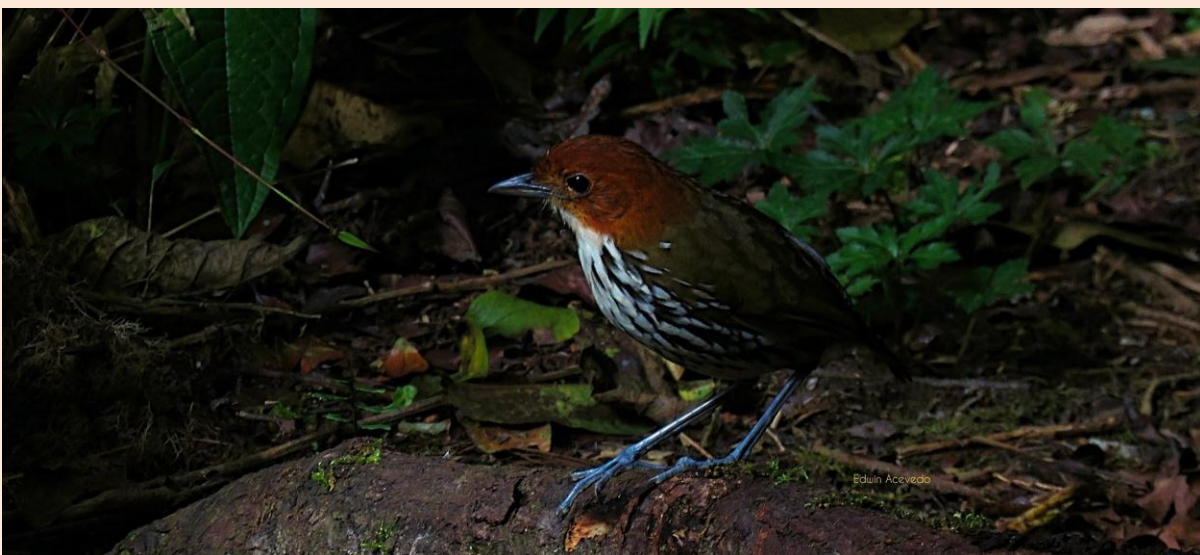


Andean Cock-of-the-rock - Photo: Edwin Acevedo

We will continue to the central Andes to Rio Blanco reserve in Manizales (Montane forest)

Night: Río Blanco lodge - HW, AC available

Day 7 : Without any doubt, the main reason to visit this place is to have very clear approaches of the Antpittas here: Brown-banded (E), Bicolored, Chestnut-crowned and Slate-crowned Antpitta are served in front for your delight; the birding keep its level with the enigmatic: Masked Saltator (NT), Golden-plumed Parakeet (EN), Sword-billed and Wedge-billed Hummingbird, Long-tailed Sylph, Buff-breasted Mountain Tanager, Blue-winged Mountain Tanager, White-capped Tanager, White-capped Dipper...



Chestnut-crowned Antpitta - Photo: Edwin Acevedo

Night: Río Blanco lodge - HW, AC available

Day 8: We left the reserve very early in the morning to translate to **Los Nevados National Park** (Highland forest to Páramo ecosystem), here very restricted species are to be enjoyed; let's focus on nice views of the endemic and very restricted: Buffy Helmetcrest; with luck Rufous-fronted Parakeet (E) (VU), Tawny Antpitta hanging around, Andean Tit-Spintail, White-chinned Thistletail, Stout-billed Cinclodes, Sedge Wren...



If the sky is clear our eyes will keep scanning for the majestic Andean Condor and Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle.

Buff-breasted Mountain-Tanager - Photo: Edwin Acevedo

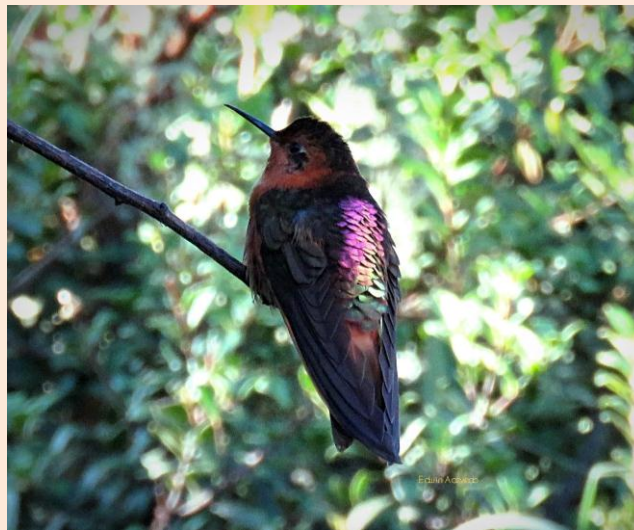


Slaty-backed Chat-Tyrant - Photo: Edwin Acevedo

After a hot beverage, we descent a little to the treeline zone to work in and around the hotel Termales (Highland forest) for real jewels: Black-thighed and Golden-breasted Puffleg,



Buff-winged Starfrontlet



Shining Sunbeam - Photos: Edwin Acevedo

both (NE) (NT), the filigrane made wings with: Rainbow-bearded Thornbill and also Buff- Buff- winged Starfronted, Great-sapphirewing Viridian Metaltail and many more...

After lunch, birding along of an old road for other species of montane forest as different species of Mountain Tanagers; then we continue to the Western Andes to Montezuma farm in Tatamá NP (Premontane to Montane forest)

Night: Montezuma lodge - HW available

Day 9: Montezuma reserve - Tatamá National Park

Visit this place is always a deep nice feeling, the mystic and pristine forest really steal your attention and keeps extraordinary feathered surprises; its owners are skilled guides very committed to conservation; birding develops under the ancient and silent view of the Cerro Tatamá and captivating premontane very wet forest on the Chocó bioregion in the Tatamá National Park.



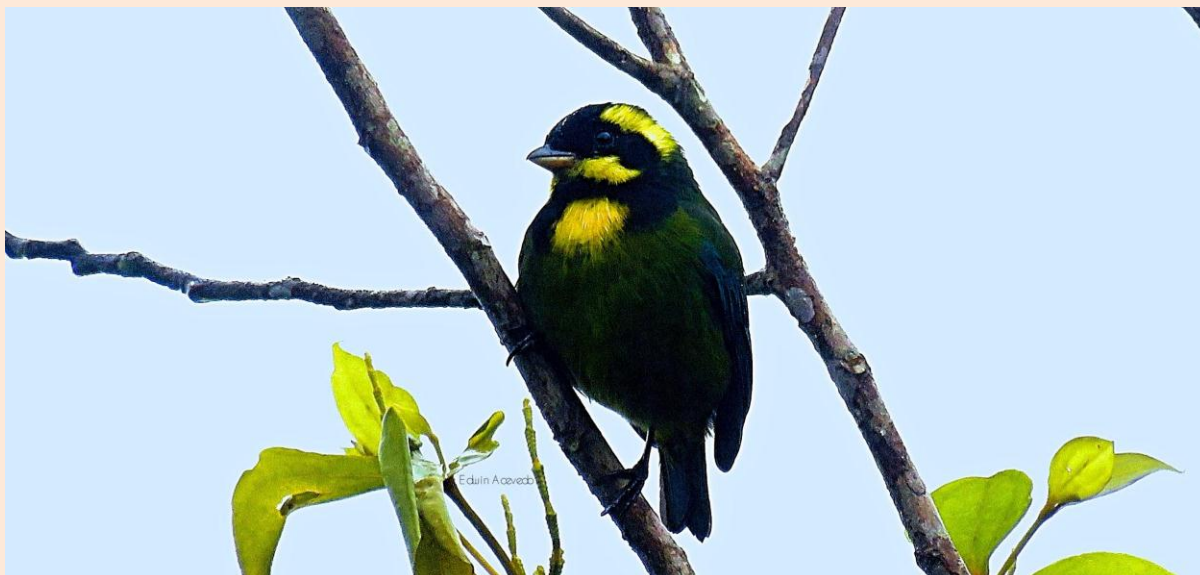
Chestnut-bellied Flowerpiercer - Photo: Edwin Acevedo

After around 40 minutes on 4x4 vehicle our morning begins in the high part of the reserve, where the Tatamá hill: The “Old grandfather” keeps sleeping; captivating views of this giant we hope to have this day.

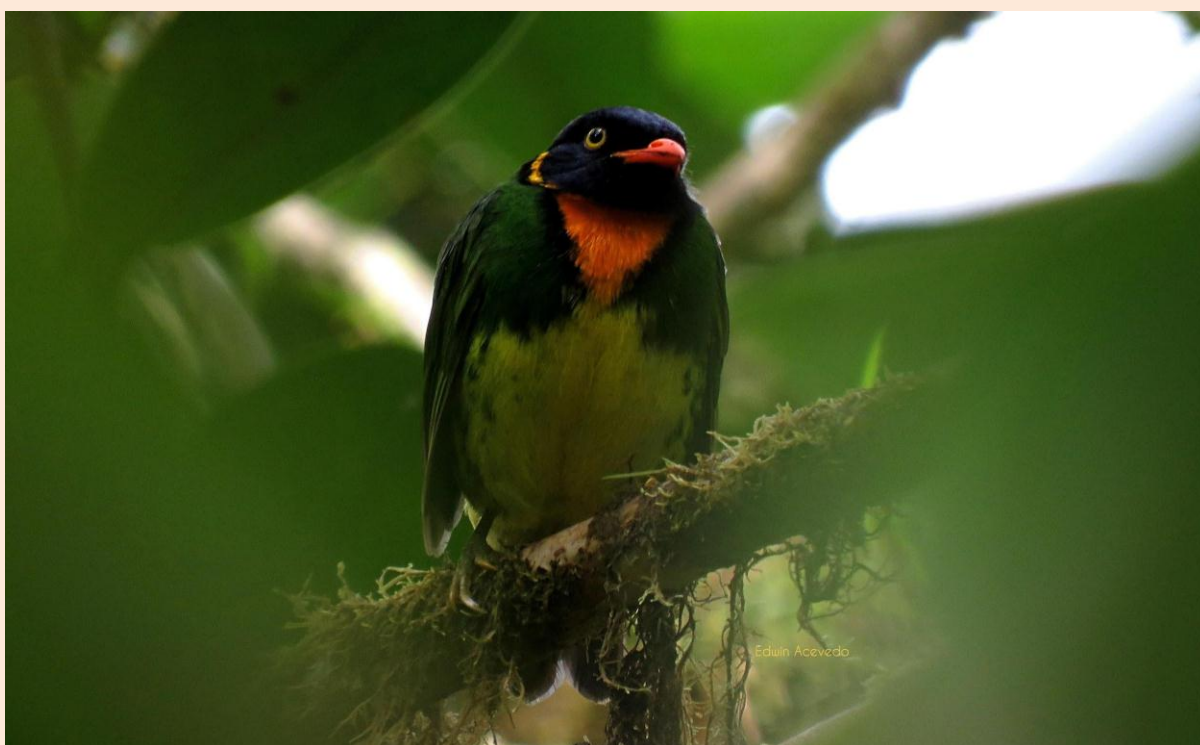
We start working on Endemic Chestnut-bellied flowerPiercer found only in a few localities on this cordillera, then it would be nice to heard one of the extraordinary song repertoires of the endemic Munchique-Wood Wren; the morning keeps getting better with great chances to meet the unique and mythical Gold-ringed and Black-and-gold Tanagers (E), the new describe Tatamá Tapaculo (E), Bluish Flowerpiercer, a tasty encounters of many near endemic : Velvet-Purple Coronet, Violet-tailed Sylph, Brown Inca, Toucan Barbet: It is always a pleasure to see its well-combined coloured feathers and hear its horning sound; Bicolored Antvireo, Choco Vireo and the adorable: Orange-breasted Fruiteater; we will also work patiently on the singular: Ocellated Tapaculo, Buffy Tuftedcheek, the adorable: Orange-breasted Fruiteater; nourished mixed flocks will catch us with: Glistening-green, Rufous-throated, Silver-throated, Beryl-spangled and Black-capped Tanager, Bluish Flowerpiercer, Olivaceous Piha, Bronze-olive Pygmy-Tyrant, Chestnut-breasted Chlorophonia, Rufous-naped greenlet, Red-faced Spinetail, Lineated-Foliage-gleaner, Ornate Flycatcher, Black-winged Saltator, Dusky and Yellow-throated Bush-Tanagers and many more surprises;

This day we will have picnic breakfast and lunch.

Night: Montezuma lodge - HW available

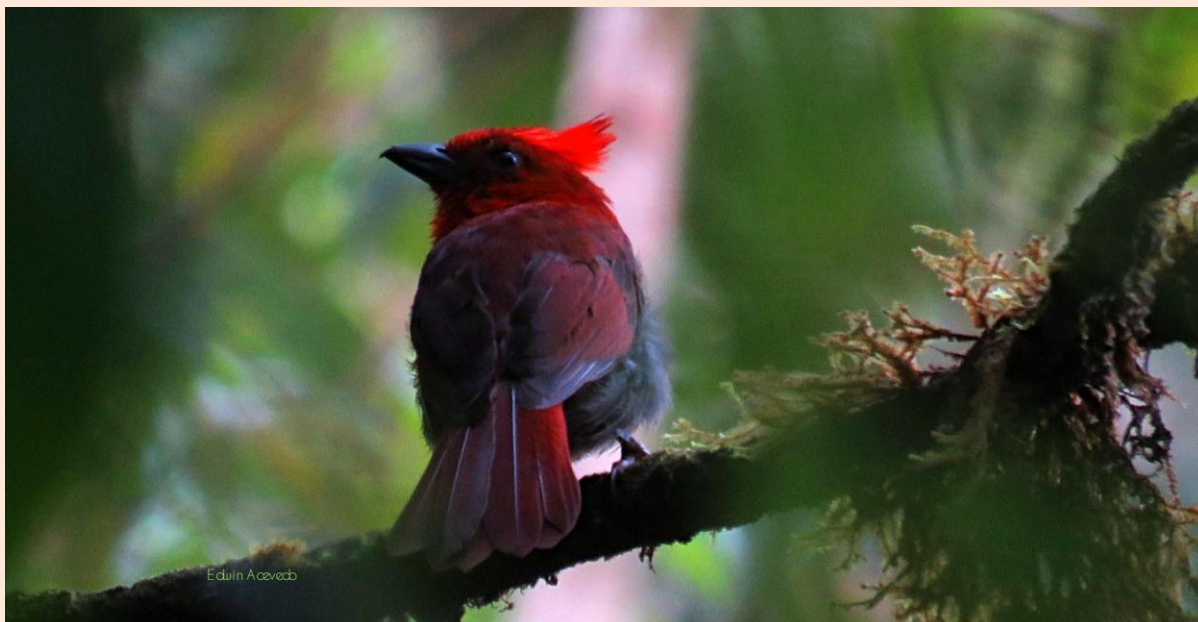


Gold-ringed Tanager - Photo: Edwin Acevedo



Orange-breasted Fruiteater - Photo: Edwin Acevedo

Day 10: From the middle part of the road to the low part, big chances open up for: endemic as Parker's Antbird, Crested Ant-Tanager, and the near endemic: Purplish-mantled Tanager, Black Solitaire, Yellow-collared Chlorophonia, Sooty-headed Wren, the purity of: Beautiful Jay; we also will work on Golden-headed Quetzal, Colombia screech Owl, a gathered group of Lemon-browed Flycatcher, Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant, Nariño Tapaculo, Marble-faced Bristle-tyrant, Tricoloured Brush-Finch...more wings on our aim.



Crested Ant-Tanager - Photo: Edwin Acevedo

Day 11: This last morning here, we focus on the low part of the reserve and around the lodge: Grayish Piculet (E), Crested Ant-Tanager (E), Yellow-vented Woodpecker, Olive Finch, both forms of Flame-rumped Tanager: Lemon rumped and Scarlet rumped Tanagers, Andean Solitaire, Orange-bellied Euphonia; on the feeders the richness is unparalleled, some of the precious jewels: Purple-bibbed Whitetip, Purple-throated Woodstar, White-tailed Hillstar, Violet-tailed Sylph, Empress Brilliant, Crowned Woodnymph plus some Tanagers.

After lunch we moved to the central Andes to **Sanctuary of flora and fauna Otún Quimbaya** (Premontane forest)

Night: Otún Quimbaya lodge - HW, Wifi available

Day 12: A beautiful morning open up its arms and offers us one the few populations of the Endemic and endangered: Cauca Guan; nourished mixed flock holds one of much sought after and charismatic bird of Colombia: Multicolored Tanager (E) plus other colorful species which paint the moment with: Golden-naped, Metallic-green and Saffron crowned Tanager, our senses will be truly touch if chestnut-breasted Wren plays its melancholic voice, Red-ruffed Fruitcrow appearing everywhere, White-crowned Tapaculo, Torrent duck are other targets here.



Cauca Guan - Photo: Edwin Acevedo

In the afternoon we will fly to Bogotá city where more specialties are waiting for us.

Night in Bogotá: Hotel Vilar América - HW, Wifi, AC available



Pearled Treerunner - Photo: Edwin Acevedo

Night in Bogotá: Hotel Vilar América - HW, Wifi available

Day 13: This morning of birding will be centered on **Chicaque natural park** (Montane forest), there are chances for the endemic: Black Inca and Silvery-throated Spinetail; let's pay attention to mixed flocks holding the Near endemic: Moustached Brush-Finch and Rufous-browed Conebill (For some people considered an Endemic species) and other attractive species as: Ash-browed Spinetail, Plushcap, Flame-faced Tanager, Black Flowerpiercer, Pale-naped Brush-Finch; Black-crested and three-stripe Warblers...

Also Andean Guan, Southern Emerald Toucanet and Green and black Fruiteater

Around the flowers and at a few feeders: Golden-bellied Starfrontlet, Red-bellied Emerald (Both near endemic), Glowing Puffleg, Booted-Racket-tail and many more...

After special morning we leave to **Jardin Encantado (Enchanted Garden)**(Premontane forest) an incredible house holding many hummingbird feeders that will really impact your senses, just seat down with a cup of coffee and enjoy of the party : Indigo-capped Hummingbird (Endemic), Ruby-topaz Hummingbird, Geoffroy's Wedgebill, Gorgeted and White-bellied Woodstar, Lesser and Sparkling Violetear; White-necked Jacobin, Pale-bellied Hermit, White-vented Plumeleater, Crowned Woodnymph, Black-throated Mango and many other winged gems.

Night in Bogotá: Hotel Vilar América - HW, Wifi available

Day 14: Sumapaz National Park (Highland to Páramo ecosystem): This is the last morning of the tour; so to farewell this lovely experience in Colombia mountains we will move here to work on the endemic: Bogota Rail and Apolinar's Marsh Wren plus the incredible and endemic Green-bearded Helmetcrest and other hummingbirds as Shining Sunbeam, Black-tailed Trainbearer and Bronze-tailed Thornbill, White-chinned thistletail, Andean Tit-spinetail, Many striped Canastero and some Tanagers as Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanager, Black Flowerpiercer, Plumbeous Sierra-Finch; and the relaxed Blue-winged Teal, Andean Teal and Ruddy Duck plus Tawny Antpitta, Chestnut-winged Cinclodes, Sedge Wren and many more wings. We also will visit a spot to encounter a flock of a very localized, vulnerable and endemic species: Brown-breasted Parakeet, found only in this mountain range.

Then we leave to the airport for going back home*

* In case your flight is only in the morning or you want to fly the day after finishing the tour, we will deal with you to make the adjustments necessary for your night in Bogotá.

Price

2-3 participants: 4.000 USD/Birder

4-5 participants: 3.400 USD/Birder

6-7 Participants: 3.100 USD/Birder

***Double accommodation**

What's included? Complete logistics, full time professional birding guidance, one local guide for: Otún Quimbaya sanctuary and Rio Blanco (Mandatory in both reserves), overnight in: Hotels, natural reserves (double occupancy in all of them), food: From the breakfast of day one until dinner in day 14 (3 meals, drinks/day and water, snacks), ground transportation airport-hotels-airport, two domestic flights (Pereira-Bogotá)

Not included: Travel insurance, medical cost or hospitalization, excess baggage charges, laundry, calls, Tips, or anything of personal nature.



Black Solitaire - Photo: Edwin Acevedo



Golden-headed Quetzal - Photo: Edwin Acevedo

Methods of Payment: There are some options in order to make the first deposit: 30% of total price and then rest of payment: 70%

Wire bank transfer

Money transfer agencies

*We can agree which one is better

*We invite you to read the terms and conditions in the birding with us section.

Pace of Tour: This is a very comfortable and accessible tour, most of the trails and roads we walk are flat, a few have slopes mainly in Piha reserve; but very walkable; no special physical requirements are needed to be part of it. We will be walking in alternance of shadow and sun. Temperatures in Piha, Medellín, Jardín, Montezuma and Otún Quimbaya can be ranging 18-24 °C/64.4-75.2 °F. While in Río Blanco, Nevados NP and Bogotá area 6-14 °C/42.8-57.2 °F.

Birding days begin around 5:00 am; but a couple of mornings we'll have to be up earlier. Coffee or a hot beverage will be taken before leaving the hotel, most of the breakfasts will be taken in the field, while picnic lunch will be taken in field and others at hotels, lodges or restaurants along the roads; water and snacks are provided every day. The group will typically return to the hotel or lodges between 6:00 and 7:00 p.m., with dinner generally starting between 7:00 and 7:30 pm. We will check the bird list before or after dinner.

*There are a few mosquitoes in that period in places we visit, just for the flies! Bring a good insect repellent.

More information

Accommodation

In Medellín we will stay at the typical and comfortable hotel Hacienda extremadura (HW, Wifi, AC available); in Bogotá Hotel Vilar América (HW, Wifi, AC available), Singles accommodation depends on the availability. Do not hesitate to ask if interested.

Food: Most of the Colombian food is based on grains (beans, lentils, rice, etc) soups, potatoes, yucca along with flesh (Beef, pork, chicken and fish), steak and salads. There is a variety of dishes from those found in the main cities of the country to traditional of each region. For those vegetarians, we can make arrangements to provide you with tasty dishes of that kind.

Drinks: Natural juice or soft drink is provided at dinner, and coffee or tea as well. Bottled water and snacks are provided in field.

*Given the case that you have any food Allergies/Requirements please let us know.

Transportation: depending on the size group we will moved on van or 4x4 vehicles. In Jardín, Montezuma and Chingaza 4x4 vehicles are required.

Smoking: If you are a smoker we demand respect for those who do not, especially in the vehicles or when the group is gathered for meals, checklists, etc. If you are sharing a room with a nonsmoker, please do not smoke in the room. If you smoke in the field, do so while being away and downwind from the group.

Entering COLOMBIA: US citizens must present a passport valid at the time of entry and with at least one blank page for an entry stamp. No visa is required for US citizens visiting Colombia for 90 days or less. Visitors from other countries may need a visa; please contact your nearest Colombian embassy or consulate for further information.

A safety country: In the last years our country has been undergoing an important social transformation, the recent peace agreement has been really important for the nation; new birding areas are opening to be explored and visited, terrorism has disappeared in most of

the whole country although there are scarce offensive actions on remote places but it not affect tours or international visitors; birding is growing and growing here which is reflected on the dozens of birding tours carried out in the country each year; Colombia is safe and fantastic; are you ready for an unparalleled birding here?. We are also, Colombia is open and ready for your birding!

*More info will be sent once you decide to take this great tour

*if you have any question or doubt, don't hesitate to ask to nativebirdingcolombia@gmail.com



Chestnut-breasted Chlorophonia - Photo: Edwin Acevedo



Rufous-breasted Chat-Tyrant



Pale-naped Brushfinch – Photos: Edwin Acevedo



Scarlet-fronted Parakeet – Photo: Edwin Acevedo

Let's joint to the Flock

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