

Southern Ecuador: Birding & Nature With Naturalist Journeys & Caligo Ventures



Feb. 18 – Mar. 3, 2021

W/ Sani Lodge Ext. Mar. 4 – 9

866.900.1146

800.426.7781

520.558.1146

naturalistjourneys@gmail.com

www.naturalistjourneys.com

or find us on Facebook at

Naturalist Journeys, LLC





The Andes Mountains of Southern Ecuador are a highly complex system of mountain-ridges and valleys, providing a great variety of habitats within a small geographic area. For decades, birders have recognized the region's rich biodiversity; now lodgings at the Jocotoco Foundation Reserves make it possible to stay in incredible places with nature close at hand.

We stay in two Jocotoco Foundation reserves, at Buenaventura, in the foothills of the western side of the Andes, and at Tapichalaca, adjacent to the magnificent Podocarpus National Park on the upper montane from eastern Ecuador. The delightful Copalinga Lodge affords us access to the subtropical areas of Podocarpus National Park. Finally, we enjoy the windswept paramos of Cajas National Park.

At Buenaventura we have the chance to see the beautiful and scarce El Oro Parakeet, only discovered in 1980. Here we can also find the elusive and iconic Long-wattled Umbrellabird. At Tapichalaca Reserve we look for the stunning Jocotoco Antpitta, discovered only in 1997! We should see large mixed flocks of some of the most colorful tanagers on the continent. Peppered among the flocks are manakins, flycatchers, fruiteaters, becards, and more. The extension of Podocarpus National Park protects the largest remaining patches of Polylepis forest in south Ecuador, as well as the high terrain of the paramo. Perhaps (with luck) we find Spectacled Bear!

Tour Highlights

- ✓ Enjoy a lovely stay in Quito at the beginning and end of the tour. Here the feathered specialties are Scrub Tanager and Purple-collared Woodstar
- ✓ Visit Cajas National Park near Cuenca, where the upper paramo is dotted with over 250 lakes and patches of montane vegetation
- ✓ Explore the Jocotoco Foundation's Buenaventura Reserve looking for the Ecuadorian endemic, El Oro Parakeet and the elusive Long-wattled Umbrellabird, as well as several other Chococoan and Tumbesian specialties
- ✓ Visit Tapichalaca Reserve looking for Jocotoco Antpitta, Golden-plumed Parakeet, White-capped Tanager, and Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan
- ✓ Explore the upper cloudforests of Podocarpus National Park in search of Giant Conebill, the endemic Bearded Guan, Rufous-capped Thornbill, and several Mountain-Tanagers
- ✓ Relax and enjoy great birding at Cabinas Ecologicas Copalinga, with hummingbird feeding frenzies right outside the dining room

Tour Summary

14-Day / 13-Night Ecuadorian Birding & Nature Tour w/
Andrea Molina
\$4890, from Quito
Airport is Mariscal Sucre International (UIO)

Itinerary



Thurs., Feb. 18 Arrivals in Quito

Welcome to Ecuador! You are met by one of our local operator's staff on your arrival in Quito for a short drive to our cozy B&B, San Jose Garden Hotel (or similar). It is known for its lovely birding gardens and its convenient distance to the airport. Most flights arrive in the evening; many have dinner on the plane before landing, but if you arrive earlier, you can have a tasty homemade dinner at our hotel.

Accommodations at San Jose Garden Hotel or similar

Fri., Feb. 19 Flight to Cuenca | Dos Chorreras Lodge | Cajas National Park

After breakfast and birding on PBG's grounds, we are taken to the airport to our short flight to Cuenca. Upon landing, our driver is waiting to transport us to our lodge, Dos Chorreras, at the buffer area of Cajas National Park (+11,000 feet). Last year our group stopped here for lunch and loved it so much we just had to add it to our accommodations for this tour!

After arriving at Dos Chorreras, we have a chance to stretch our legs and check the lodge's for some feathered friends of the upper montane forests. We enjoy lunch at Dos Chorreras and then in the afternoon we have our first drive to the upper montane forest and paramos of Llaviucu on Cajas National Park. We begin to see some of the specialties as we make the climb, including the globally threatened Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan and the Ecuadorian endemic and globally endangered Violet-throated Metaltail. We also see wetland birds like Andean Ruddy-Duck and Ecuadorian Rail. After our first introduction to the forests and paramos of southern Ecuador, we head back to our cozy lodge for dinner and to go over our list for the day before turning in for the night.

Accommodations at Dos Chorreras Lodge (B,L,D)

Sat., Feb. 20 Cajas National Park | Dos Chorreras

Today we visit a different section of Cajas National Park. This 70,000 acre protected area, established in 1996 and just west of Cuenca, is dotted by over 250 lakes. In this extensive paramo's grasslands and patches of Polypelis trees, we search for magnificent Tit-like Dacnis, Giant Conebill, Variable Hawk, Carunculated Caracara, and high elevation hummingbirds such as Rainbow Starfrontlet, Sword-billed Hummingbird, Shining Sunbeam, and Ecuadorian Hillstar.

On the picturesque lakes, we hope to find Andean Ruddy-Duck, Yellow-billed Pintail, and Andean Teal. We take time to examine the unique vegetation of the paramo; at this time of year many of the shrubs should be in bloom. Other plants grow close to the ground, exhibiting hairs and other adaptations to the often cold and wet



climate. Spires of “Puya” bromeliads make perfect perches for Black-tailed Trainbearer, Giant Hummingbird, Stout-billed Cincloides, and Paramo Ground-Tyrant. Several patches of Polylepis forest occur here as well, so we look for specialties of this habitat. This is a great area to bird and hike — atop the world of the southern Andes. We lunch at Dos Chorreras again, then in the afternoon we can have the chance to visit Cajas National Park again to search for any specialties we may have missed this the morning. Dinner tonight is at Dos Chorreras. *Accommodations at Dos Chorreras Lodge (B,L,D)*

Sun., Feb. 21 Cajas National Park to Vilcabamba

After breakfast, we start our drive from Cajas National Park to Vilcabamba on the Catamayo dry valley. We break of the drive with several birding stops along the way. Here we hope to find Pacific Parrotlet among the scrub forest and agricultural fields, along with Parrot-billed and Dull-colored Seedeaters, Collared Warbling-Finch, Band-tailed Sierra-Finch, and the endemic Tumbes Sparrow, the unique Elegant Crescentchest, and Three-banded Warbler. We enjoy a picnic lunch in the field.

We spend the night in Vilcabamba, a scenic place named for the Kichwa word for Sacred Valley; at 5000 feet above sea level, it hosts a perfect, warm climate. Its residents seem to thrive — Vilcabamba is known for its many residents who reach 100 years of age and more! Pure air and water contribute to longevity — or perhaps it’s the waters of the local hot springs! Two rivers join here to form the Vilcabamba River: the Chambo and the Yambala.

Birders know Vilcabamba as a place to search for Plumbeous Rail, often found in wet areas close to the road. The lower valley provides a picturesque mosaic of corn and sugar cane fields, interspersed with fruit orchards, greenhouses for growing flowers, and cattle pastures. You are sure to enjoy a bit of free time exploring this delightful and small town. On our afternoon driving in the outskirts of Vilcabamba, we may find Ecuadorian Piculet and Collared Antshrike on vegetation patches. We enjoy dinner at the lodge tonight.

Accommodations in Vilcabamba (B,L,D)

Mon., Feb. 22 Travel Day to Tapichalaca Reserve | Birding en Route to Podocarpus National Park

After breakfast, we set off this morning for Tapichalaca, taking our time and birding along the way to try for more endemic birds on the dry Vilcabamba Valley, including Pacific Pygmy-Owl and Tawny-crowned Pygmy-Tyrant. We travel about 165 miles, crossing the eastern slopes of the Andes, visiting elfin forest and upper montane forest habitats. En route, we explore a river where we may find Plumbeous Rail. On the upper parts,



tanagers like Golden-crowned Tanager and Lacrimose Mountain-Tanager are our goals and we keep our eyes peeled for more hummingbirds like Glowing Puffleg, Rufous-capped Thornbill, and Neblina Metaltail.

We arrive at the reserve and over the next few days we search for Jocotoco Antpitta, Golden-Plumed Parakeet, and White-capped Tanager. Tapichalaca is situated on eastern Andean slopes where it gains the influence of Amazonia (Marañon) species. On trails, we search for Golden-plumed Parakeet, the extremely rare Chestnut-crested Cotinga, and the uncommon Dusky Piha. Hummingbird feeders surround the main house, as does temperate cloud forest. With sunny weather, a kaleidoscope of butterflies may emerge. This tour supports conservation, and we are pleased that our use of the lodge benefits the reserve.

Our lodge is a two-story home with rooms and private baths.

Accommodations at Casa Simpson, Tapichalaca Reserve (B,L,D)

Tues., Feb. 23 Tapichalaca Reserve

Today we work our way up from about 3,300 feet to 7,200 feet in upper montane forest, exploring new habitat from our first days. Just a few years ago, the Jocotoco Antpitta was discovered here; the Jocotoco Foundation was created to preserve this pristine area and its birds. The local reserve rangers feed this amazing bird every morning around 8:00 AM; we congregate in a special place designated to watch this very unique bird as it feeds. We also have the chance to watch other antpittas, like Chestnut-naped, Rufous, and Slate-crowned Antpittas. The trail to the antpitta feeding station is not difficult and well worth the walk. Other nice birds today include Golden-plumed Parakeet, White-capped Tanager, Gray-breasted Mountain Toucan, Turquoise Jay, Black-throated Tody-tyrant, Grass-green Tanager, Buff-breasted Mountain Tanager, and others.

Lunch today is at the reserve, and then in the afternoon we try one of the trails searching for more birds like Orange-banded Flycatcher.

Accommodations at Casa Simpson, Tapichalaca Reserve (B,L,D)

Wed., Feb. 24 Valladolid Valley | Tapichalaca Reserve

At dawn, sounds of the forest lure you from bed; the hummingbird feeders are abuzz and we have the chance to see Collared Inca, Amethyst-throated, and Flame-throated Sunangel, and of course the bossy Chestnut-breasted Coronet. A favorite of many, though wide-spread throughout Ecuador, is the incredible Long-tailed Sylph. Enjoy good Ecuadorian coffee from the porch with a spectacular view of the valley below. Plant life around the lodge is



fascinating as well; with luck, several species of orchids and bromeliads are in bloom. This morning we venture to lower elevations to explore the Valladolid Valley, about seven and a half miles south of Tapichalaca towards the Peruvian border. This area, with several patches of woodland and scrub to explore, gives us access to a number of species not found elsewhere in Ecuador, notably: Black-faced Tanager, Marañón Thrush, Straw-backed Tanager, and more.

In the afternoon, we venture to higher reaches of neighboring Podocarpus National Park, learning more about the unique Polylepis forest and spending time in the often-windswept paramo. The elusive Giant Conebill is closely tied to this type of habitat. The endemic Bearded Guan and several tanagers, including Plushcap, Red-hooded Tanager, and Black-headed Hemispingus, are some of the montane birds to look for. At dusk, we watch for some nocturnal birds, including Swallow-tailed Nightjar. In this remote location, listening for the eerie call of Andean Potoo is a treat, and if it's a clear night, enjoy a sky of ten thousand stars.
Accommodations at Casa Simpson, Tapichalaca Reserve (B,L,D)

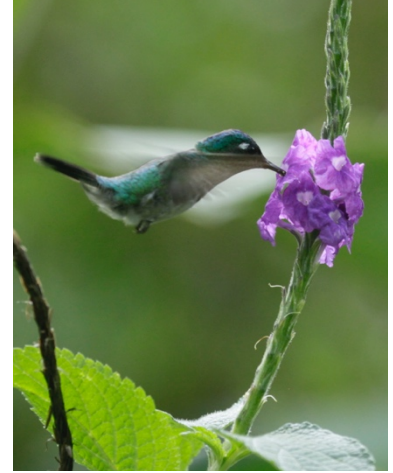
Thurs., Feb. 25 Tapichalaca | Cajanuma | Zamora | Copalinga

After breakfast we drive towards the western side of Zamora-Chinchi province. We take our time and make several birding stops en route. We enjoy a picnic lunch in the field at the upper part of Podocarpus National Park in the area named Cajanuma (+11000 feet).

After lunch we continue driving to Loja, adding birding stops on the old Loja-Zamora road. Here, we have the chance to spot birds like Paradise Tanager, Cliff Flycatcher, and Andean Cock-of-the-rock. Zamora county is the capital of the province; this region is key to our trip for adding tropical elements that extend into the Amazonian foothills. Copalinga Lodge, nestled in at 3000 feet above sea level here, is strategically situated in more open second-growth habitat with gardens and near the forest of the lower areas of Podocarpus National Park.

Our cabins are surrounded by gardens and feature private baths and balconies. At a comfortable elevation, we can explore trails right out our door to see orchids, bromeliads, and a host of colorful birds of the subtropical humid forest. Tanagers are particularly abundant; we look for Green and Gold, Blue-necked, Golden, Orange-eared, and Spotted Tanagers. There are also mixed flocks of the complex Furnarid clan: spinetails, foliage-gleaners, woodcreepers, and xenops. After a group dinner, enjoy the starry skies and revel in the peace and quiet of this unique part of the country.

Accommodation at Cabañas Ecológicas Copalinga, adjacent to Podocarpus NP (B,L,D)



Fri., Feb. 26 Zamora | Bombuscaro-Podocarpus National Park | Copalinga

With coffee on the porch before breakfast, we find new hummingbirds right before our eyes. These include Wire-crested Thorntail, Violet-headed Hummingbird, Green Hermit, and Black-throated and Violet-fronted Brilliants. Breakfast is served within view of the birds. This morning we walk trails in the Bombuscaro section of Podocarpus National Park looking for two range-restricted species: The Coppery-chested Jacamar and Foothill Elaenia. Highland Motmot is the largest of its clan, and with luck we find Black-billed Treehunter probing on moss- and lichen-clad tree limbs.

Along a rushing stream we may find White-capped Dipper or possibly a pair of Torrent Duck. In lush forests, Black-streaked Puffbird and Lanceolated Monklet are sit-and-wait insect predators; with luck we might find one of earth's more bizarre species, the Amazonia Umbrellabird, as well as fruiteaters and manakins.

In the afternoon we gather to discuss some the region's rich biodiversity. On the afternoon we can pay a visit to neighborhood areas near Zamora to pick-up more Amazonian birds. Sunset finds us gathering in the common area of our lodge, sharing delights of the day, tales of other journeys, and yes, counting up our species! Enjoy a dinner of fresh local foods prepared by our hosts.

Accommodations at Cabañas Ecológicas Copalinga (B,L,D)

Sat., Feb. 27

Old Zamora-Loja Road | Catamayo Valley | Buenaventura Reserve

After an early breakfast we have to hit the road towards the cloudforest of southwestern Ecuador. We make several stops en route on the eastern slope while driving to Loja, plus stops on the dry valley towards El Oro province mountains. Lunch today is in the field. This long ride is well worth it; we have the chance to pick up Tumbesian endemics like Gray-cheeked Parakeet, Black-cowled Saltator, and Chapman's Antshrike, and Chocóan endemics like Choco Toucan and Club-winged Manakin.

We arrive in the late afternoon to the Umbrella Bird Lodge and Buenaventura Reserve. This evening we check the gardens and feeders on the property, which attract an array of hummingbirds that includes Green Thorntail, Violet-bellied Hummingbird, Emerald-bellied Woodnymph, White-necked Jacobin, and Green-fronted Brilliant. We enjoy these colorful creatures at close range!

Our lodgings are comfortable private rooms with private facilities. We love supporting the Jocotoco Foundation with our stay, and find the lush forest a prime location that compensates for any lack of luxury. Our stay also benefits important work of the reserve, a place that you are sure to treasure.



Tonight we enjoy dinner at the Umbrellabird Lodge.

Accommodations at the Jocotoco Foundation's Umbrellabird Lodge, Buenaventura Reserve (B,L,D)

Sun., Feb. 28 Umbrellabird Lodge | Buenaventura Reserve

Today we enjoy a full day birding at Umbrellabird Lodge. This lodge it is located at the union of two endemic bird areas, Choco and Tumbes. We enjoy a walk on a beautiful trail looking for the iconic Choco endemic and endangered, Long-wattled Umbrellabird; there is a lek on this trail and we take the time to understand more about the ecology and behavior of this endangered bird. We then enjoy a delicious local breakfast and all the activity at the fruit and hummingbird feeders. There are fruit trees around the main building where we can spot several species when feeding in a mixed flock.

This reserve was established in 2000, and through major efforts by the Jocotoco Foundation, it has grown to almost 4000 acres of cloudforest in this endangered region on the western Andean slope. Birding at this location is truly amazing — some of the best in South America. While walking trails here we should find spectacular birds, including Golden-headed Quetzal, the endemic Guayaquil Woodpecker, Bronze-winged Parrot and Red-masked Parakeet, Red-headed Barbet, and Scaled Fruiteater. We are sure to make time to watch the unusual behavior at the leks of Club-winged Manakin and the Long-wattled Umbrellabird.

Accommodations at Umbrellabird Lodge, (B,L,D)

Mon., Mar. 1 Upper Buenaventura Reserve

Today we look for birds on the upper areas of the reserve. Our goals today are two Ecuadorian endemic and rare birds, El Oro Tapaculo and El Oro Parakeet. Additionally, we watch for other birds like Violet-tailed Sylph, Brown Inca, and Gorgeted Sunangel. This area is also the habitat for montane birds like Pacific Tuftedcheek, Flame-faced Tanager, Chocó Brushfinch, Ochre-breasted Tanager, and rare and endangered raptors like Gray-backed Hawk and Ornate Hawk-Eagle.

After lunch we look for birds of the lower areas of the reserve, like Ecuadorian Plumeteer, Gartered Trogon, and Ochraceous Attila.

Accommodations at Umbrellabird Lodge, (B,L,D)



Tues., Mar. 2 Drive to Guayaquil | Flight to Quito

We are up early this morning, grabbing breakfast by 5:00 AM. We drive today to Guayaquil for flights back to Quito, and want as much time as we can to bird the lowlands and wetlands of western Ecuador along the way. The wetlands of La Tembladera are our main stop to look for birds like Horned Screamer, Pinnated Bittern, and Comb Duck among other wetland related birds and some Tumbesian endemics. After our wetlands stop, we drive to the mangroves and forests to Manglares-Churute Ecological Reserve. We enjoy a picnic lunch in the field at the reserve, then keep looking for birds like Jet Antbird, Humboldt's Sapphire, and Ecuadorian Trogon. After this last stop we drive into Guayaquil City for our flight to Quito in the afternoon.

We return to Quito by 7:00 PM and enjoy a farewell dinner at our hotel. If anyone is new to Quito and would like additional time here, this is easy to arrange, and we are happy to make recommendations. Our final evening is at the hotel's restaurant, where we enjoy a farewell dinner and celebrate our adventures in Ecuador. You can leave on a late flight tonight (several depart before or after midnight) or an early flight tomorrow.

Accommodations at Puenbo Birding Garden (B,L,D)

Wed., Mar. 3 Departures or Antisana Day Trip or Sani Lodge Extension

For Those With Early Departures

You may depart today from the International airport at a time convenient for you; end of services. *(B)*

For Those With Late Departures or For Those on the Extension

For those on the Sani Lodge extension, or for those that depart late today, we can arrange a day trip for you to Antisana National Park for an additional cost. Please let us know if this is of interest to you. If you are on the extension but do not opt for the day trip, today is at leisure around PBG. Rest up and enjoy the birds.

Antisana Day Trip

After an early breakfast, we hit the road again for an introduction to the northern Andean paramos on Antisana Ecological Reserve. Here, we look for birds like Paramo Pipit and Many-striped and Streak-backed Canasteros, among others. Bonuses are the Andean Condor, Silvery Grebe, and Aplomado Falcon. Also, the localized and endangered Andean Ibis is one of the key species we watch for today. We enjoy a delicious lunch at Tambocondor, a small local farm with a great view of the rock walls where Andean Condors roost and nest. This place offers the chance to spot Giant Hummingbird, too!

After lunch, we head back to our hotel. Here we can arrange a day room for you to use prior to your flight; enjoy dinner at PBG before your transfer to the airport. If necessary, we can drop you directly at the airport on the way back from our Antisana outing. *(B,L,D)*



Sani Lodge Extension

Thurs., Mar. 4 Quito to Sani Lodge

After a short flight to the lowland city of Coca, staff from Sani Lodge meet us and take us to a dock, where we board a large, covered motorized canoe for the 2.5 hour journey down the Napo River. There isn't much in the way of photo opportunities during this transfer, but the ride is lovely, so just sit back and relax. Upon arrival at Sani's dock, you have a chance to unpack and get ready. Here in the virgin Amazon rainforest, you never know when something amazing will pop into view and it pays to be prepared!

The path to Sani goes along a boardwalk through seasonally flooded várzea forest to another dock at the edge of the Challuayacu River, a small channel that winds through beautiful swamp forest to an oxbow lake. Five species of kingfisher occur here along with herons and other water-loving species. Shy species like Cocha Antshrike can sometimes be lured into view, and while the dark rainforest makes the photography challenging, with persistence, the right gear, and a little luck, great shots are possible. We have lunch at Sani and spend the afternoon either on the lake or river, or around the lodge depending on activity. We have four nights total based at Sani Lodge.

Accommodations at Sani Lodge (L,D)

Fri., Mar. 5 – Sun., Mar. 7 Full Days Based out of Sani Lodge

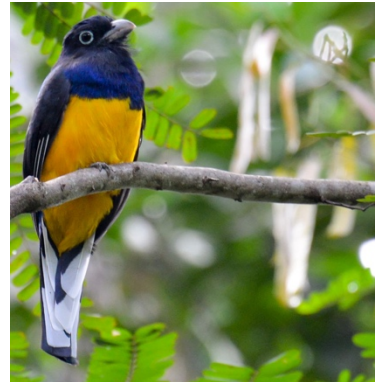
The day-to-day activities here are highly subject to change based on current conditions. Local guides keep up with the current hotspots, and their knowledge is vital in deciding where best to spend our days. Below are some of the most likely areas we visit during our time at Sani Lodge.

The Lodge Clearing

The Sani clearing can be a great place to see and photograph numerous colorful species, especially if any trees are fruiting. White-chinned Jacamar, Scarlet-crowned Barbet, various toucans and aracarís, Orange-crested Manakin, Gray-fronted Dove, Masked Crimson and Silver-beaked Tanagers, Purple Honeycreeper, and Golden-bellied Euphonia are some of the possibilities. This is a great area to spend time during the heat of the day, which can be slow in other locations.

Oxbow Lake & Challuayacu River

Using canoes or a floating platform/blind suitable for camera tripods, we work the edge of the oxbow lake, which is great for seeing Hoatzin, Black-capped Donacobius, Rufescent Tiger-Heron, Capped Heron, Pale-vented Pigeon, White-winged Swallow, Lesser Kiskadee, and more. There is usually plenty of light to work with and the photography is easier than in the forest. The Challuayacu River is darker but offers the chance for perched hummingbirds, manakins, various antbirds, and even monkeys and sloths.



Observation Tower

Sani's observation tower is built into an enormous kapok tree, and the platform is the largest we've ever seen, allowing for lots of space to move around for the perfect sighting. Activity can vary, but if a mixed flock comes through, this can be one of the best places in Sani to get great views and photos. Some birds we have seen there include Many-banded Aracari, Paradise and Opal-crowned Tanagers, Great Jacamar, Yellow-billed and White-fronted Nunbirds, Gilded and Lemon-throated Barbets, Cinnamon-throated and Buff-throated Woodcreepers, Black-tailed and Green-backed Trogons, and Black-tailed Tityra, Cinnamon Attila, though many more are possible. Near the tower, there is a blind for the photographers among us that offers good chances to photograph the dapper Wire-tailed Manakin. More blinds may be installed in the future as well.

Yasuní Parrot Licks

Not far from Sani Lodge are the famous clay licks that on dry days bring in hundreds and hundreds of parrots. If you are a photographer, **flash is not allowed here, so a very fast lens and a tripod are recommended.** The first clay lick is active early, and is great for Yellow-crowned, Mealy, and Blue-headed Parrots, as well as Dusky-headed Parakeet. Another lick is a 20-minute walk into the forest and offers a chance at some rare species like Orange-cheeked Parrot, Scarlet-shouldered Parrotlet, and Scarlet Macaw, among the hordes of Cobalt-winged Parakeets.

Napo River Islands

River islands hold a totally different set of birds, and the scrub and young forest makes the lighting easier than inside the rainforest. It can be good to spend a few hours looking for specialties, including Oriole Blackbird, Black-and-white Antbird, Castelnau's Antshrike, and Lesser Wagtail-Tyrant. Occasionally a roosting Striped Owl can be found here.

Roosting Nightbird Stakeouts

Local guides usually know where at least some nightbirds are sleeping during the day, such as Common and Great Potoo, Tropical and Tawny-bellied Screech-owl, and Crested and Mottled Owls. Sometimes they are partly obscured or badly backlit, but other times they show very well, allowing for nice views. It's always worth checking them out.



Night Photography & Walks

Numerous bizarre insects, colorful frogs and reptiles, and other macro targets can be found on a night walk behind the lodge. If you are into macro photography or want to try it out for the first time, it's a lot of fun. Of course, there is also a chance for a nightbird or even a Night Monkey as well.

Mon., Mar. 8 Sani Lodge to Quito

Depending on flight schedules, there may be time for some early morning birding before we must travel back up the Napo River to Coca for flights back to Quito, where we spend our final night. Flight schedules are variable—sometimes we are back in Quito by lunch, giving you the afternoon to relax; other times flights don't arrive until late afternoon or evening.

Accommodations at Puenbo Birding Garden (B,L,D)

Tues., Mar. 9 Departures

Depart at your leisure this morning with transfers to the airport. *(B)*

Guide Andrea Molina



Andrea is an Ecuadorian bird guide who has been guiding since 2006. She started as a local guide at the Bellavista Reserve cloud forest in Ecuador and then was recruited by Neblina Forest as a guide in 2010. Since then, Andrea has trained in Brazil, Peru, and other locations in Ecuador. Her good energy and kind touch with clients, as well as her good ears and great eye for birds, ensures her groups have an excellent experience. Andrea lives in Ecuador with her family.

Cost of the Journey

Plan Ahead!

Protect yourself with Allianz Travel Insurance. Their website will show a grid of tour cost and your age category for you to make selections. As of January 2017, Naturalist Journeys pays 100% of your flight carbon offset.

Travel Information

Please plan to arrive in Quito, Ecuador, to the Mariscal Sucre International Airport (UIO), on February 18. For your departure, you return to Quito on the tour's last day, March 2.

You may book one of the several flights that leave just before or after midnight, but please make sure you check those near-midnight flight times and dates carefully! If you prefer a daytime flight, it is easy to take you to the airport from our hotel, but we suggest a flight after 9:00 AM on March 3 (if you are not taking the extension), since it is suggested that you be at the airport three hours ahead of your flight, thus something like 6:00 AM is a very awkward time.

If you plan to join the Sani Lodge extension, please plan departing flights home at your leisure on March 9.

Cost of the Journey

Cost of the tour, from Quito, Ecuador, is \$4890 DBL / \$5270 SGL. Tour price includes: 13 nights' accommodations, airport transfers, and professional guide services. It includes land transportation within Ecuador, park and reserve entrance fees, pre-departure information and services, miscellaneous program expenses, accommodation and meals at all lodges, private transport, and private bilingual bird/naturalist guide.

Cost of the March 4 Antisana day trip is \$240 per person and includes meals, guide, park fees, and airport transfer. Cost of the Sani Lodge extension is \$1790 DBL / \$2310 SGL + the cost of air (we expect this to be about \$200 per person), based on double occupancy.

Cost of the main tour does not include your international flights to Quito or your internal flights in Ecuador, though we do book the internal flights for you. This fee will not exceed \$400 per person and if a saving occurs it will be passed on to you. The tour cost does not include items of a personal nature such as beverages from the bar, portage, laundry, phone calls, or gift items. We also recommend a gratuity for maid service, and for our local drivers and guides, which is left to your discretion.

Photo Credits

Andean Cock-of-the-rock, Greg Smith (GS); Choco Toucan, Peg Abbott (PA); Orchids, Naturalist Journeys Stock (NJS); Market Day, PA; Jocotoco Antpitta, Carlos Sanchez (CS); Spectacled Bear, courtesy Neblina Forest; Butterflies, CS; Slate-crowned Antpitta, GS; Green Honeycreeper, NJS; Naturalist Journeys Group in Ecuador, NJS; Dos Chorreras Grounds, courtesy hosteriadoschorreras.com; Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan, NJS; Giant Hummingbird, CS; Bromeliads, NJS; Dos Chorreras Dining Room, courtesy hosteriadoschorreras.com; Plumbeous Rail, PA; Jocotoco Antpitta, CS; Butterfly, CS; Andean Scenic, courtesy Neblina Forest; Grass-green Tanager, PA; Chestnut-breasted Coronet; Chestnut-crowned Antpitta, GS; Andean Potoo, Miguel Lezama, courtesy Neblina Forest; Andean Cock-of-the-rock, Miguel Lezama, courtesy Neblina Forest; Violet-headed Hummingbird, PA; Torrent Duck, PA; Choco Toucan, PA; Coati, CS; White-necked Jacobins, Sandy Sorkin; Horned Screamer, PA; Pinnated Bittern, Dave Ramdass.

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