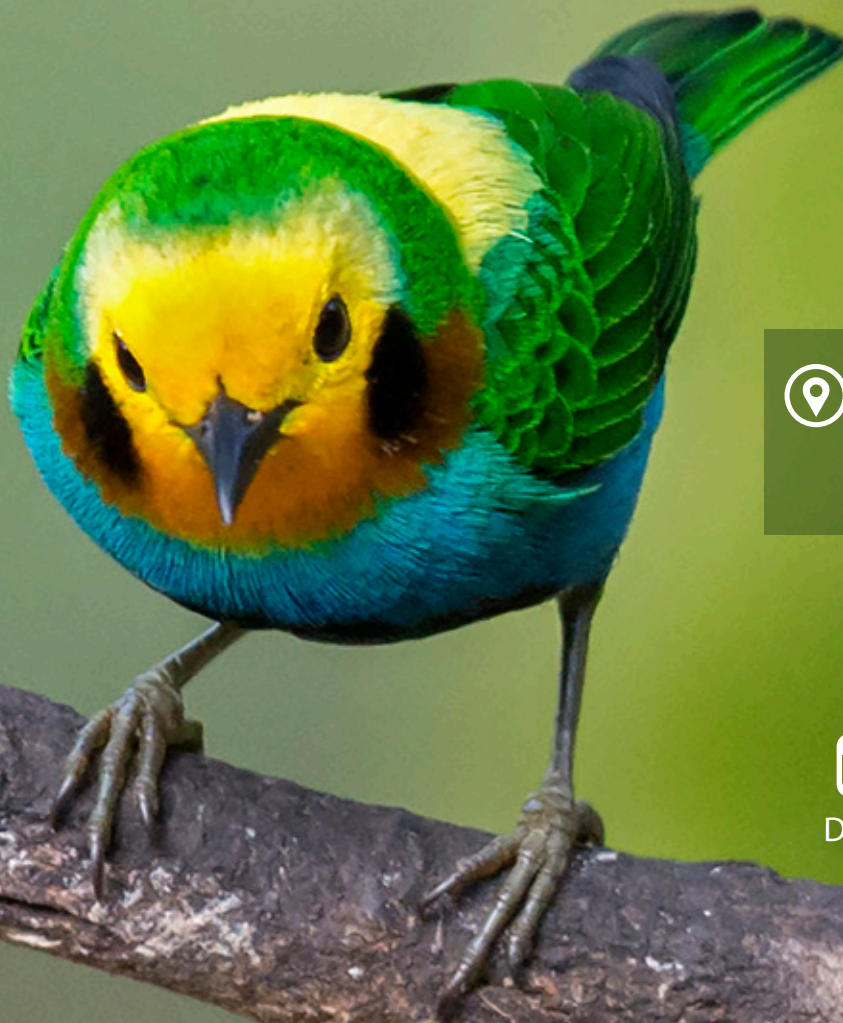




COLOMBIA IS MAGICAL REALISM

ENDEMIC COLOMBIA

THE ANCHICAYA ROAD, WESTERN AND
CENTRAL ANDES, CAUCA VALLEY, SANTA
MARTA MOUNTAINS AND CARIBBEAN



KM 18 - Anchicaya - Sonso Lagoon - Montezuma Lodge - Otun Quimbaya - Rio Blanco Reserve - Los Nevados National Park - Isla Salamanca - Minca - El Dorado Lodge - Tayrona NP - Los Flamencos NP



DAYS

2020

November 15 - December 6

2021

November 15 - December 6

2022

November 15 - December 6



Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta
Christopher Calonje

Colombia is the birdiest country on earth, with more than 1,950 species (almost 20% of the world's total). There are more species of birds in this country than on any other. It is easy to see why. Colombia is tropical, yet it also has ample elevation changes due to the Andes, furthermore it has both the Pacific and Caribbean coasts. Lots of different habitats ensure an abundance of bird species. To be exact, 1,930 species (almost 20% of the world's total in 1% of the landmass), with new species still being discovered, and new records being announced often.

The Old Buenaventura Road which descends from the western Andes to the Pacific Ocean along the Anchicaya River watershed is one of Colombia's newest destinations to open up to birding. The birding along this gradient of insurmountable diversity is such that it inspired Steve Hilty to start work on Field Guide to the Birds of Colombia, the first ornithological field guide for South America.

Another area of equal importance in Colombia's ornithological history is the KM 18 and San Antonio Cloud Forest. More than 100 years ago, Frank Chapman, of the American Museum of Natural History, spent some time researching the bird diversity of this forest. The birding is amazing, with mixed-species flocks of Multicolored, Purplish-mantled, Scrub and Golden-naped Tanagers foraging along side Scaled

Fruiteater, Chestnut-breasted Chlorophonias and Golden-headed and Crested Quetzal.

This tour also takes you to a prolific wetland area in the Cauca Valley in search of an assortment of dry forest species as well as shorebirds and aquatic birds. The Sonso Lagoon is one of Colombia's largest wetland reserves and home to Little and Dwarf Cuckoos, Jet Antbird, Blackish Rail and even the elusive Horned Screamer. With luck one may encounter endemics such as Bar-crested Antshrike, and the endemics Apical Flycatcher and Grayish Piculet.

At the Montezuma Lodge in the Choco Bioregion, a biodiversity hotspot, chances for the endemic Gold-ringed Tanager and Munchique Wood-wren, as well as the recently discovered Alto Pisones Tapaculo. Montezuma is revered as one of the best birding sites in Colombia, specially if you are in the hunt for Choco endemics such as Black Solitaire, Violet-tailed Sylph and Orange-breasted Fruiteater.

The route then climbs to the central Andean range, the Otun-Quimbaya Sanctuary in search of the endemic Cauca Guan and for the best views in the world of Red-ruffed Fruitcrow. At the world-renown Rio Blanco Reserve near Manizales, there are excellent chances for some of the antpittas, plus many other cloud forest and montane birds. After more ascending, one can soak in hot springs overlooking the

scenic Central Andes, and look for species adapted to high elevations in Los Nevados National Park with the beautiful Nevado del Ruiz as a backdrop.

Then itinerary then boards flights towards Colombia's Caribbean coast. The Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta is the highest coastal mountain in the world and one of the most important endemism centers in the world, with 22 species of birds restricted to it. Join us on a search for many of these endemics including Santa Marta Screech-owl, Antpitta, Mountain-tanager, Tapaculo, Foliage-gleaner, Brush-finch, Parakeet, Bush-tyrant, Seedeater, Warbler, and a plethora more!

This trip will also take us to Isla Salamanca and Flamencos National Parks, where birding through mangroves and coastal wetlands, along the ocean and in dry scrub forest should yield species such as the near endemic Buffy Hummingbird, the endemic Chestnut-winged Chachalaca, Russet-throated Puffbird, the near endemic Chestnut Piculet, Bicolored Conebill and Panama Flycatcher.

TOUR LEADERS



ANGEL ORTIZ

Angel Ortiz is from Santa Marta, Colombia. He began guiding in 2007 and has led hundreds of tours to Tayrona National Park and the surrounding Santa Marta region. He is a recent graduate of Audubon's bird guide training program delivered in partnership with Calidris. Since taking the course Angel has become one of the region's "go to" birding guides. Angel worked previously with Aviatur and is a huge soccer fan.

COST

\$ 6,450 per (Double Occupancy). Single Supplement \$900 USD

AIRFARE

Approximately \$900 from the USA, or \$1400 from London, depending on origin, (quoted August 2017).

GROUP SIZE

Maximum 8

NUMBER OF DAYS

22 days total, including estimated travel time.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Lodging will consist of a mix of 3-4 star hotels in cities, a basic lodge in Montezuma, a top-notch birding lodge in El Dorado, and the beach front eco lodge Barlovento, that is touted as one of the best spots to stay in Colombia by the Lonely Planet. There is a river near the lodge at Montezuma and Barlovento, and a pool at the hotels in Buga, Buenaventura, and Baranquilla, so pack your swim wear! We expect relative comfort, hot showers, and excellent local food and provide a nice variety of snacks and purified or bottled drinking water available throughout the trip. Hot water is not available in Barlovento.



JOSE LUNA

Jose Luna was born and raised in the western Andes of Colombia, and has been birding since he was 16. He is the lead local guide for Colombia Birdwatch, and has shined amongst his colleagues for his proficiency in English and his ability to find birds. He enjoys birding and studying birds on his free time, is an avid e-birder, and has worked as a field biologist in numerous thesis projects and expeditions in the Colombia Andes and Choco Bioregion.



Crested Quetzal
Christopher Calonje



Multicolored Tanager
Juan Jose Arango

DAY 1

Arrive in Cali

Guests will be picked up at the airport.

Lodging: Hotel Araucana

DAY 2

The Infamous Km 18 and Cock-of-the-rock Lek

Today we spend the morning around the famous El 18, located on an 1800-meter (5,900-foot) pass 18 kilometers (11 miles) northwest of Cali along the road that connects Cali with the port city of Buenaventura. Birding can be very productive here, and we will look for four endemics – Chestnut Wood-Quail, Colombian Chachalaca, Grayish Piculet and the spectacular Multicolored Tanager. This area is a tanager paradise, where we have a good chance to see Purplish-mantled, Summer, Beryl-spangles, Flame-rumped, Golden, Metallic-green, Saffron-crowned, and Golden-naped tanagers as well as Ashy-throated Bush-Tanager and Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager.

We hope to be dazzled by an impressive show of hummingbirds at a private house along the same road, including the beautifully ornate Long-tailed Sylph, Booted Rackettail, Blue-headed Sapphire, Green Violetear, Fawn-breasted Brilliant, Speckled Hummingbird, White-necked Jacobin. Brown Violetear and Tawny-bellied Hermit. Birding the forest can also produce many near-endemics such as Scrub Tanager, Purple-throated Woodstar, Nariño Tapaculo, Purplish-mantled Tanager and Yellow-headed Manakin.

Here we will may see striking birds such as Green-and-black Fruiteater, Chestnut-breasted and Blue-naped Chlorophonia, the inconspicuous Golden-headed Quetzal, Scarlet-fronted Parakeet, Red-faced Spinetail, Spotted and Rusty-winged Barbtails, Streaked Xenops, and the noisy, inquisitive Crimson-rumped Toucanet. We will also listen and search for species with interesting calls and songs, like the hawk-like whistle of the Scaled Fruiteater, warbling song of Black-billed Peppershrike, and beautiful flute-like song of Andean Solitaire. Other species we may find are Chestnut-breasted Wren, Greenish Puffleg, Montane Woodcreeper, Scale-crested Pygmy-tyrant, and the hyperactive Cinnamon Flycatcher. After birding we head to an afternoon visit to the Andean Cock-of-the-rock lek, which requires a 35 minute hike.

Lodging: Hotel La Araucana





Saffron-crowned Tanager
Juan Jose Arango

Slaty-capped Shrike-vireo
Juan Jose Arango





DAY 3

El Descanso Feeders and Anchicaya Watershed

Perhaps Colombia's most famous birding location, the Anchicaya watershed is located along the edge of the Farallones National Park, one of the most diverse parks on the planet. The birding begins just 40 minutes from the hotel via a paved road that can offer many of the Choco endemics that this mega diverse locality has to offer. Our day on the Anchicaya road will allow time to enjoy the upper portion of the road and some very well-maintained feeders at our breakfast spot where Rufous-throated, Glistening-green and Silver-throated Tanagers are known to occur. The road will surely yield many highly prized species Golden-collared Honeycreeper, White-whiskered Puffbird, Uniform Treehunter, Sooty-headed Wren, Green Thorntail and White-tailed Hillstar..

One of the main targets main targets is Toucan Barbet, sporting 5 different colors elegantly while still having a tough demeanor. We will search the skies for Barred Hawk, Ornate Hawk-eagle and Swallow-tailed Kites, whilst keeping an eye out for the attractive Ornate Flycatcher feeding on low branches. Another mega target is the recently described Pisones Tapaculo. The road can be extremely productive as it rarely disappoints.

Lodging: Araucana Lodge



Green and Black Fruiteater
Christopher Calonje



Blue-naped Chlorophonia
Christopher Calonje

Crimson-rumped Toucanet
Christopher Calonje



Toucan Barbet
Juan Jose Arango



Glistening-green Tanager
Juan Jose Arango



Black-chinned Mountain-tanager
Juan Jose Arango

DAY 4

Lower Anchicaya Watershed

Birding again on this day is done along a lightly traveled road, but this time having the opportunity to explore the lower portion of the road. The "El Danubio" area is host to many interesting species, including the near endemics Rose-faced Parrot and Black-tipped Cotinga, Choco Trogon, Lita Woodpecker and Baudo Guan. The tanagers can be quite a treat, with chances for Scarlet-and-white, Golden-chested, Gray-and-gold, and Scarlet-browed Tanagers among many others. Lunch on the road will provide for a long day of birding, as we seek out other goodies such as Long-tailed Tyrant, Scarlet-rumped Cacique, Lanceolated Monklet, Bay Wren, Cinnamon Woodpecker, Collared Aracari and colonies of Russet-backed Oropendolas.

The area is teeming with many of our friends with the word "ant" in their name, and if we are lucky enough to encounter an ant swarm the action can bring bird such as Stub-tailed, Immaculate, Ocellated, and Bicolored Antbirds as well as Streaked and Pacific Antwren amongst many others.

The road to the Pacific lowlands can be rough but it offers such amazing birding opportunities that it makes the road inconsequential.

Lodging: Araucana Lodge



DAY 5

San Antonio Forest and Andean Cock-of-the-rock Lek

We will spend the morning birding in the pristine cloud forest of the San Antonio Forest. Here we will may see striking birds such as Green-and-black Fruiteater, Chestnut-breasted and Blue-naped Chlorophonia, the inconspicuous Golden-headed Quetzal, Scarlet-fronted Parakeet, Red-faced Spinetail, Spotted and Rusty-winged Barbtails, Streaked Xenops, and the noisy, inquisitive Crimson-rumped Toucanet. We will also listen and search for species with interesting calls and songs, like the hawk-like whistle of the Scaled Fruiteater, warbling song of Black-billed Peppershrike, and beautiful flute-like song of Andean Solitaire. Other species we may find are Chestnut-breasted Wren, Greenish Puffleg, Montane Woodcreeper, Scale-crested Pygmy-tyrant, and the hyperactive Cinnamon Flycatcher.

At 2 pm we will visit an active Andean Cock-of-the-rock lek for some close-up views of this magnificent bird's display. This 25-minute hike will take us down a steep trail to their lek near the river. After the lek we will make our way back to the lodge.

Lodging: Araucana Lodge



White-tailed Hillstar
Christopher Calonje

Golden-collared Honeycreeper
Juan Jose Arango



Orange-breasted Fruiteater
Juan Jose Arango



Brujitas in San Cipriano
Christopher Calonje



DAY 6

San Cipriano and drive to Buga

After a one hour drive to Zaragoza and a pleasant 20 minute ride on “brujitas” (motorcycle-powered wooden carts on rails), one arrives in the town of San Cipriano. The area is a protected reserve and is the source of drinking water for the nearby port city of Buenaventura. Located in the Choco Bioregion, it is known for being one of the wettest places on the planet. Some of the birds that are possible include Choco Toucan, Stripe-billed Aracari, Black-tipped Cotinga (NE), Rose-faced (NE) and Blue-headed Parrots, Spot-crowned and Five-colored Barbet (NE), Broad-billed Motmot, Black-chested Puffbird and Purple-throated Fruitcrow. The area is teeming with Antbirds, with chances to see Ocellated, Jet, Stub-tailed and Bicolored Antbirds. We will leave after lunch and drive to the city of Buga, at 1,000 meters in elevation in the Cuaca Valley in preparation for some wetland birding the following day.

Lodging: Hotel Guadalajara de Buga



Red-headed Barbet
Juan Jose Arango

Apical Flycatcher
Juan Jose Arango



Gray-and-gold Tanager
Juan Jose Arango



Slaty-capped Shrike-vireo
Juan Jose Arango



Purplish-mantled Tanager
Juan Jose Arango



Lita Woodpecker
Juan Jose Arango



Golden-chested Tanager
Juan Jose Arango



Scaled Fruiteater
Juan Jose Arango



Sunrise at Sonso Lagoon
Christopher Calonje



Spectacled Parrotlet
Christopher Calonje



Grayish Piculet
Juan Jose Arango

DAY 7

Sonso Lagoon and Drive to Montezuma Lodge

We will start early to take a 10-minute drive to this wetland gem. It is one of the only remaining wetlands in the Cauca Valley and is teeming with birds, making it one of Colombia's best wetland birding locations. Here we will search the marshes and lagoons that line the Cauca River for Fulvous and Black-bellied Whistling-ducks, Roseate Spoonbill, Glossy Ibis, Anhinga, Little Blue, Coci, and Striated herons, Snowy Egret, Black-necked Stilt and Snail Kite. We are likely to find Wattled Jacana, which have a polyandry mating system, where females mate with many males within a breeding season. Polyandry is a fascinating adaptation that occurs in less than 1% of birds, and is most common in shorebirds.

Other interesting species we might spot include the endemics Apical Flycatcher and Grayish Piculet, Jet Antbird, Blackish Rail, Ruby-topaz Hummingbird, and Horned Screamer. Along riparian areas we may find Greater Ani, Ringed Kingfisher, Crested and Yellow-headed Caracara, Red-crowned and Spot-breasted Woodpeckers, and Cocoa Woodcreeper. Greater Anis are fascinating because two to four unrelated pairs form a nesting group that build a single nest in which all the females lay their eggs and raise the young communally.

Lunch is at the hotel with time to prepare for a 5-hour drive to the Montezuma Lodge, which will require a transfer to 4x4 vehicles.

Lodging: Montezuma Lodge



DAY 8

Higher elevations of Tatama National Park

The Montezuma Lodge offers unsurpassed hospitality and magnificent feeders and birding right from the lodge, and boast a 13 km road of pristine forest that covers a 1,400-meter (4,500 ft) altitudinal gradient. A very early start will have us at the top of the hill by sunrise, in hopes of making the best out of a long day of birding. Our targets at the higher elevation are the endemics Munchique Wood-wren and Chestnut-bellied Flowerpiercer, which should be easy to see in the open areas of the top of the hill. The long descent will provide opportunities for some nice species, including Flame-faced Tanager, Glossy-black Thrush, Barred Fruiteater, Tanager Finch, and Black-and-gold, Rufous-throated, and Golden-chested Tanagers. We will have a picnic lunch along the way to maximize our birding, allowing time to get after forest skullers such as Alto Pisones and Spillman's Tapaculos and Yellow-bellied and Hooded Antpittas. A long day of birding will come with the reward of an exquisite home-cooked meal and a good night's sleep.

Lodging: Montezuma Lodge



Black-and-gold Tanager
Christopher Calonje



Chestnut-bellied Flowerpiercer
Christopher Calonje

Munchique Wood-wren
Christopher Calonje



Silver-throated Tanager
Christopher Calonje

DAY 9

Lower Elevations of Tatama National Park

The park never fails to provide, and seeking out Colombian endemics such as Gold-ringed Tanager and Chestnut Wood-quail can be exhilarating. If the weather is on our side, we will have fantastic views of Cerro Tatama, with hopes of running into species such as the endemic Beautiful Jay, Orange-breasted Fruit-

eater, White-faced Nunbird, Glistening-green Tanager, Streak-capped Treehunter, Linnetaed Foliage-gleaner, Olivaceous Piha, and Indigo Flowerpiercer. River crossing will give us a chance for White-capped Dipper, and we won't have to venture to far from the lodge to have chances for Toucan Barbet, Black Solitaire, Choco Vireo and the beautiful Chestnut-breasted Chlorophonia.

We will arrive at the lodge in time to scope out the hummingbird feeders with visitors such as Violet-tailed Sylph, Empress Brilliant, White-tailed Hillstar, Purple-bibbed Whitetip, Andean Emerald, and the near endemic Purple-throated Woodstar.

Lodging: Montezuma Lodge

DAY 10

Montezuma Lodge and travel to Otun-Quimbaya

After breakfast we will have time to enjoy the banana feeders where Silver-throated Tanager, Buff-throated Saltator, and Golden-naped Tanagers take turns at the bananas in a semi-polite manner. Also, the kitchen staff sets out maize for a population of Blackish Rail that live in a nearby wetland, affording great views of this usually hard-to-see bird. After lunch we will head towards the Otun-Quimbaya Reserve, a 4-hour drive. We will drive through the city of Pereira, and wind along the Otun River, finally arriving at the locally run and rustic lodge.

Lodging: Yarumo Blanco Cabins



Gold-ringed Tanager
Christopher Calonje

Bicolored Antpitta
Christopher Calonje



Bearded Helmetcrest
Christopher Calonje



Golden-fronted Whitestart

Juan Jose Arango

DAY 11

Otun-Quimbaya Flora and Fauna Sanctuary

We will rise predawn to look for Choco endemic Colombian Screech-Owl, and then continue birding at the Otun-Quimbaya Reserve right at the doorsteps of our hotel. The Otun-Quimbaya Reserve is a flora and fauna sanctuary located on the west slope of the Central Cordillera, and is home to the Wax Palm, the tallest palm in the world and the national tree of Colombia. These palms, unlike most other species of palm, thrive at high altitudes and cool climates found here. We will also be received by the sounds of Howler Monkeys and the endangered, endemic Cauca Guan, once believed to be extinct until rediscovery of a population in 1990.

Otun-Quimbaya is also one of the best places in



Hooded Antpitta

Juan Jose Arango

the world to observe Red-ruffed Fruitcrow. We will search for endemics – Chestnut Wood-Quail, recently described Stiles's Tapaculo – and near endemics, like Moustached Antpitta, the handsome Rufous-breasted Flycatcher, and bright-colored Golden-fronted Whitestart. Other impressive birds we hope to find include Three-striped, Russet-crowned, and Canada Warblers, Masked Trogon, Green Jay, Andean Motmot, Blue-naped Chlorophonia, and Orange-bellied Euphonia. We will also look for Black-billed Mountain-Toucan, Chestnut-breasted Wren, Plumbeous-crowned Tyrannulet, Marble-faced and Variegated bristle-tyrants, and Glossy and Masked Flowerpiercers.

The afternoon drive along the Otun River will be devoted to finding the infamous Torrent Duck En route to Manizales, a 3.5-hour drive, a stop at a roadside lake may yield more aquatic species for the list including Pied-billed Grebe and Ruddy Duck. The next two nights are spent at the Rio Blanco Reserve, 30 minutes from Manizales, touted as one of the three best birding sites in the world. Accommodations for the next two nights are rustic, but comfortable and clean, and with unsurpassed hospitality.

Lodging: Rio Blanco Lodge

DAY 12

Rio Blanco

The Rio Blanco Reserve is owned by Aguas de Manizales, the local water company, and is situated along an altitudinal gradient, therefore including a wide variety of ecosystems. We could possibly observe five antpitta species at feeders located within a short hike from the lodge, including the endemic and

endangered Brown-banded, and the elusive Bicolored, Chestnut-crowned, Chestnut-naped, and Slate crowned antpittas. Other feeder visitors seldom seen include Slaty-backed Nightingale Thrush and Stripe-headed Brush-Finch. Additional species observed in Rio Blanco include the uncommon and endangered Rufous-fronted and Golden-plumed Parakeet sand the very rare and sought-after Masked Saltator.

The reserve get boasts many that we may encounter here include Tyrannine Woodcreeper, Golden-fronted Whitestart, Dusky Piha, Lachrymose and Buff-breasted mountain-tanagers, showy Grass-green and White-capped tanagers, Powerful Woodpecker, and the hard to see Ocellated, Blackish, and Spillman's tapaculos. Other less common species that are possible are Long-tailed Black-billed Peppershrike, the handsome Plushcap, Red-hooded Tanager, Mountain Cacique, and the endangered Golden-plumed Parakeet.

Lodging: Rio Blanco Lodge

DAY 13

Rio Blanco and Drive to Los Nevados NP

Today a chance to visit the reserve's several well-maintained hummingbird feeders that attract a great variety of hummingbirds. We hope to see Tourmaline Sunangel, Buff-tailed Coronet, Speckled Hummingbird, Bronzy and Collared Incas, Mountain Velvetbreast, the tiny, slow-flying White-bellied Woodstar, and the showy Long-tailed Sylph. In the afternoon we will drive up the mountain to spend two nights at Hotel Termales del Ruiz, at 11,000 feet, where we can relax in its mineral-rich, medicinal hot springs and enjoy scenic views of the central Andes.

Lodging: Hotel Termales del Ruiz



Violet-crowned Woodnymph
Christopher Calonje



Red-ruffed Fruitcrow
Christopher Calonje



Torrent Duck
Christopher Calonje

Many-striped Canstero
Juan Jose Arango



Purple-thorated Woodstar
Juan Jose Arango



Slaty-backed Chat-tyrant
Juan Jose Arango





Brown-banded Antpitta
Juan Jose Arango



Black-backed Bush-tanager
Juan Jose Arango



Rainbow-bearded Thornbill
Juan Jose Arango



Buff-breasted Mountain-tanager
Juan Jose Arango



Chestnut-crowned Antpitta
Christopher Calonje



Golden-plumed Parakeet
Christopher Calonje

DAY 14

Los Nevados National Park

We will explore Los Nevados National Park, located on the highest part of the Colombian central Andes. We will wind through patches of forest that open up to Paramo, an ecosystem of tropical grasslands above the treeline, toward the picturesque 5,300-meter (17,400-foot) volcano Nevado del Ruiz. The scenery in Paramo is magical and surreal, with velvety Frailejon plants adding to this effect. Frailejon plants belong to the Espeletia genus and are endemic to Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador.

The tour reaches elevations up to 3,950 meters (13,000 feet), so it will be cold. Here the goal is to find species adapted to high elevations like the endemic Buffy Helmetcrest and the near endemic Rainbow-bearded Thornbill, both of which sometimes forage on the ground. Also possible are Viridian Metaltail, Stout-billed Cinclodes, Brown-backed Chat-Tyrant, the beautiful Golden-crowned Tanager, near endemic Black-backed Bush-Tanager, and Glossy Flowerpiercer. We may also find a variety of seedeaters in the Paramo, including Plumbeous Sierra-Finch plus Paramo and Plain-colored seedeaters.

Lodging: Hotel Temales del Ruiz

DAY 15

Los Nevados National Park and flight to Barranquilla

The morning is spent searching for any targets that may have been missed and enjoying the hummingbird feeders at the hotel. There is also a chance to look for the very rare and endangered endemic Rufous-fronted Parakeet along a two-kilometer stretch of road that passes through elfin forest, an ecosystem of dwarfed plants. We also hope to spot the very tame Tawny Antpitta, a common companion in this area.

On the drive down to the Pereira airport the road passes by some interesting spots, including a glacial lake, Laguna Negra, where one may find goodies such as Many-striped Canastero, White-tailed Hawk, the rare Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle, Andean Tit-Spintail, White-chinned Thistletail, Andean or Ruddy Duck, Andean Teal, Grass or Sedge Wren, and Pale-naped Brush-Finch. The afternoon is spent flying to Barranquilla.

Lodging: Hotel Barranquilla Plaza

DAY 16

Isla Salamanca and Drive to El Dorado

We will rise early and spend the morning birding at Isla Salamanca National Park, 35 minutes from Barranquilla, where we will bird the newly rebuilt walkways through the mangroves in search of Sapphire-throated Hummingbird, Bicolored Cpnbill, the common Brown-throated Parakeet, Green-and-rufous Kingfisher, and Yellow-chinned Spinetail among many others. We will also have time to bird some wetlands in the area in search of Northern Screamer and other specialties.

After a morning of birding we will embark on a 2-hour drive to Minca, a quaint little town with nice lodging along the river. Located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Minca is a great location to bird for lower elevation species. We will arrive in town and visit some hummingbird feeders for lunch where Rufous-breasted Hermit, Black-throated Mango, Long-billed Starthroat, the near endemic Red-billed Emerald and Violet-crowned Woodnymph can be found. We will also have time to explore the surroundings in search of birds such as Black-backed Antshrike, Scaled Piculet, Swallow Tanager, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, Keel-billed Toucan, Masked Tityra, and Whooping Motmot.



Chestnut-winged Chachalaca
Juan David Ramirez



Northern Screamer
Christopher Calonje



Russet-throated Puffbird
Juan Jose Arango



Tawny-throated Leaf-tosser
Juan Jose Arango



Blossomcrown
Christopher Calonje

El Dorado Lodge
Christopher Calonje

The afternoon will have you birding through a vast altitudinal gradient, birding different elevations along the road to El Dorado Lodge. Birding up the mountain will surely yield a large number of species, including Golden-winged Sparrow, Rosy Thrush-tanager, Rusty-headed Spinetail, Ruddy Foliage-gleaner, the recently described Santa Marta Foliage-gleaner, Rusty-breasted Antpitta, Santa Marta Tapaculo, Black-backed Antshrike, the magnificently colored Blue-naped Chlorophonia, and the attractive Rufous-capped Warbler.

Lodging: El Dorado Lodge

DAY 17

El Dorado Lodge to Cerro Kennedy

We will rise early and head up to higher elevations towards Cerro Kennedy, in search of these endemics: Santa Marta Parakeet, Santa Marta Warbler, Santa Marta Mountain-tanager, Santa Marta Bush-tyrant and Brown-rumped Tapaculo, among many others. We will have a picnic at high elevation with great views of the Sierra Nevada, and bird along the road on our way down, hoping to run into awe inspiring species such as Swallow Tanager, Grove-billed and Santa Marta Toucanet, Black-chested Jay, the endemic White-lored Warbler, Golden-breasted Fruiteater and the near endemic White-tipped quetzal. After dinner we will certainly scout for the endemic and recently described Santa Marta Screech-owl.

Lodging: El Dorado Lodge

DAY 18

Birding in the vicinity of El Dorado





After breakfast we will have time to enjoy the well-maintained feeders at the lodge. Hummingbirds that visit the feeders include the endemic White-tailed Starfrontlet, White-vented Plumeteer, and Long-tailed Hermit. The bananas attract the endemic Santa Marta Brush-finch and also the endemic Colombian brush-finch, and the many flowers in the garden attract White-sided and Black Fowerpiercer. We will spend some time trying to see Santa Marta Antpitta, a skulker that will definitely take some work. A day of birding near the lodge will have its rewards, a special treat being the near endemic Black-fronted Wood-quail that visit the lodges compost pile in the afternoon.

Lodging: El Dorado Lodge

DAY 19

El Dorado Lodge to Tayrona National Park

We will spend the day birding the road en route to our beach-side hotel to enjoy the beautiful beaches. We will make stops to catch any birds we missed on the way up. We will spend one night at Finca Barlovento, an exquisite lodge right on the beach that is touted as one of the best places to stay in Colombia.

Lodging: Maloka Barlovento



Santa Marta Brush-finch
Christopher Calonje

Santa Marta Antpitta
Angel Ortiz

Santa Marta Screech-owl
Christopher Calonje





Santa Marta Mountain Tanager
Christopher Calonje



Santa Marta Warbler
Christopher Calonje



Rufous Antpitta
Juan Jose Arango

DAY 20

Tayrona National Park and travel to Riohacha

We will have a morning visit to the park, and if all things align for us, the Blue-billed Curassow could show up for us. Otherwise, this is a great place to see some species which we are not as likely to see elsewhere on the trip. One abundant bird that is easiest to see here than anywhere is the stunning Lance-tailed Manakin. Sometimes it can be found with its relative, the White-bearded Manakin. The birds here are varied, from Crane Hawk and Boat-billed Heron to Greater Ani, White-necked Puffbird and Rufous-tailed Jacamars. Blue-headed Parrot is common, and Lineated Woodpeckers are impressive to see as they forage on the large trees.

White-bellied Antbirds belt out their song from the understory, if one is lucky they will even show themselves. The complex songs of Buff-breasted and Bi-colored wrens are heard in the forest, along with the repetitive songs of Scrub Greenlets, nasal sounds of Barred Antshrikes or loud calls of Boat-billed and Streaked flycatchers. It is an active area, full of birds! Crimson-backed Tanagers and the gorgeous Red-legged Honeycreepers give a lot of color to the local flocks. While birding here it is common to see the Cottontop Tamarin, a gorgeous little monkey dwarfed by the less common White-fronted Capuchin. While our visit to Tayrona will be cursory, we will see a lot, and enjoy the company of our trained guides here who will have the pulse on where the birds are. The afternoon will be spent driving to Riohacha, with a stop at a known spot where Double-striped Thick-knee are often seen. Our hotel is right on the beach.

Lodging: Hotel Taroa



White-tailed Starfrontlet
Christopher Calonje



White-bearded Manakin
Christopher Calonje



Double-striped Thick
Christopher Calonje

DAY 21

Los Flamencos National Park and drive to Santa Marta to catch flights to Bogota.

Very close to the city of Riohacha is Los Flamencos and the village of Camarones. This is the west edge of the Guajira desert, where dry forest becomes shorter and sparser and bare dry earth separates the trees from each other. But before you have a mistaken idea of a parched world, Los Flamencos is on the coast and it has shallow waterbodies that fill as the rains come, and evaporate during the dry season. These evaporating ponds concentrate salt, and then brine shrimp bloom which brings in the namesake bird of the park – American Flamingos! Their numbers vary depending on water levels, but they can be here in the hundreds on a good day. If you have not had enough pink, how about the even brighter Scarlet Ibis? They concentrate here as well, with their very close relatives White Ibis. They are so close in fact that every once in a while a hybrid “Pink Ibis” is seen here. Gulls, terns, and many migratory shorebirds are to be found at Los Flamencos.

Retreating to the forest though, one is quite surprised that a series of very attractive regional specialties are found here. The sole South American offshoot of what is really a North American group, the Vermilion Cardinal can be seen here. Nothing prepares you, even if you have backyard Northern Cardinals, for the strik-

ing red of this species, the overdone crest and the very different look to its close relatives from the north. On the ground, a member of a group that is usually very drab and brown, may elicit “wows!” from the crowd – the White-whiskered Spinetail is one heck of a good looking Spinetail.

Pecking in the branches and trilling away is a tiny and colorful woodpecker, the Chestnut Piculet. Sure there are specialties that are more somber in tone, such as the Slender-billed Inezia (Tyrannulet), and White-tipped Inezia. A crowd favorite is the Russet-throated Puffbird (the Bobo or fool bird as the locals call it) who will just sit there, staring back at you as hard as you stare at it. In a crowd of what tend to be relatively greenish or grayish and nondescript birds, the saltators, the uncommon Orinoco Saltator is quite a good looking bird. Don't ask why there are so many good looking birds in this drab desert habitat, just enjoy these wonderful dry forest birds. AAfter lunch, flights from Riohacha to Cali or Bogota.

Lodging: Hotel Hampton by Hilton in Cali or Grand Plaza Hotel in Bogota

DAY 22

Depart Cali or Bogota

Vermilion Cardinal
Christopher Calonje



Black-fronted Wood-quail
Juan Jose Arango



TRIP INCLUDES

Internal Airfare: Pereira-Barranquilla, Riohacha-Bogota OR Riohacha-Cali

Bottled Water Throughout the Trip

Snacks Throughout the Trip

Meals From Breakfast on Day 2 to Breakfast on Day 22

All Lodging (Double Occupancy)

Entrances to Parks and Reserves

Full time regional guide from Day 1 to Day 22. Local guides at many of the sites visited.

Internal Terrestrial Transport From Airport Pickup to Airport Drop-off. No Transport on Day 22

DOES NOT INCLUDE

Tips

Alcoholic Beverages

Insurance

Airfare to Colombia

Laundry



Green-rumped Parrotlet
Christopher Calonje



Orinoco Saltator
Christopher Calonje



White-fringed Antwren
Christopher Calonje



Rufous-throated Tanager

Juan Jose Arango

About the Trip and Physical Requirements & Pace

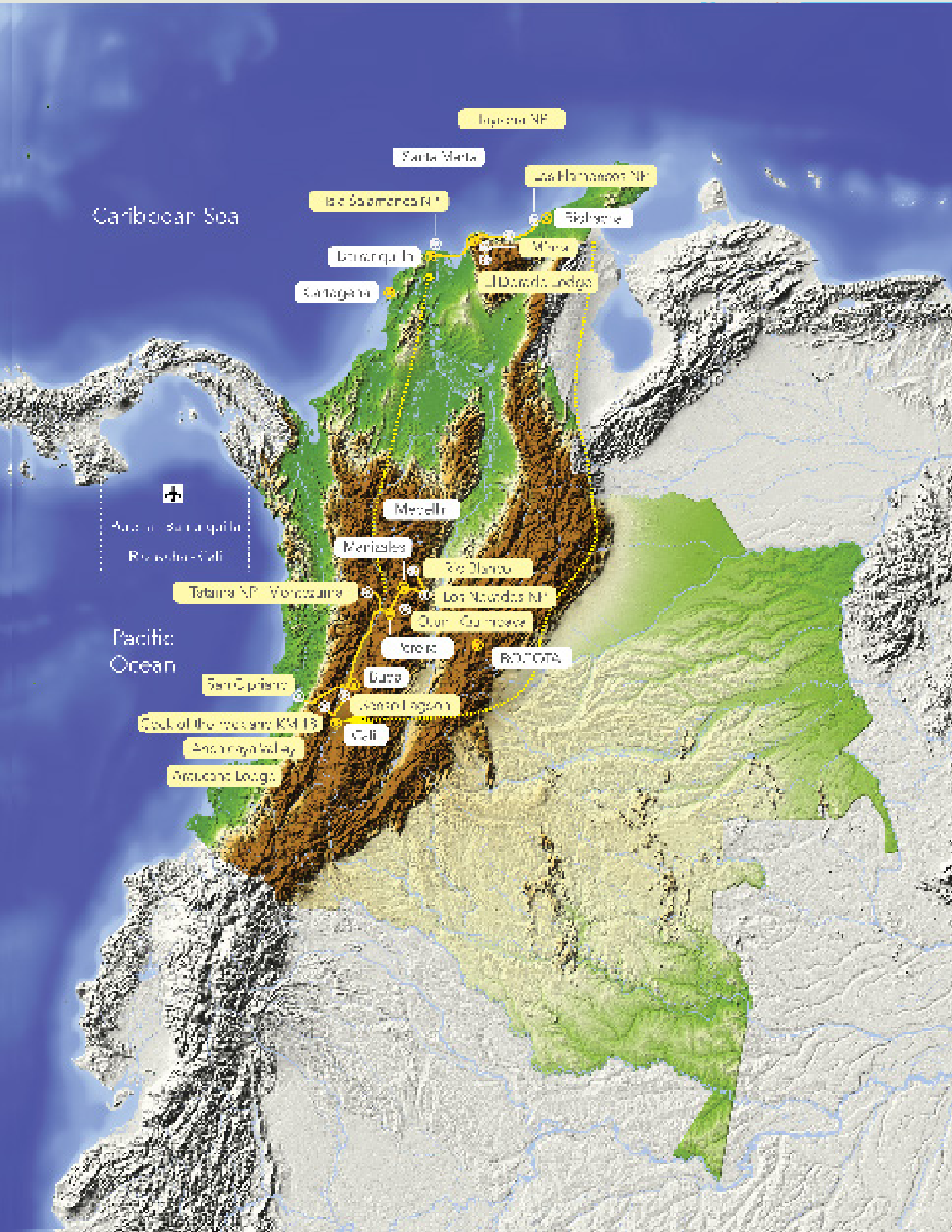
Colombia has an incredible amount of diversity in a small space. In this compact itinerary we will visit two different mountain ranges, a low-lying valley and the high altitude paramo ecosystem.

Please note that we will be sleeping at 11,000 feet for 2 nights during our visit to the paramo ecosystem. We will mostly be birding on dirt roads or wide trails with the vehicle nearby in case participants want to take a rest. Please note that roads may be steep and slippery and we may occasionally venture off into small trails that spur off the roads. We suggest that you generally practice carrying your equipment for the amount of time and distances that you may encounter during this trip so you are well prepared!

We will have purified or bottled drinking water available throughout the trip. One should be prepared for early morning birding, as it is important to be out before it becomes too hot. Whenever possible we shall have an early afternoon break, before continuing out in the late afternoon. Also for those interested in mammals and night birds there will be some opportunities for owling and maybe spotlighting for a mammal or two. Most of our meals will be sit-down meals, although field lunches or even a field dinner is likely somewhere along the trip. If you have specific food allergies, please communicate these to us on signing up. Note that the tour starts in Cali and ends in Bogota, and requires taking two internal flights that are included in the tour price.



White-chinned Thistletail
Christopher Calonje



Caribbean Sea

Iguaza NP

Santa Marta

Los Hornos NP

Las Siamonas NP

El Cajas

El Cajas

Morona

Satagaya

El Dorado Lodge

Medellin

Marizales

Rio Napo

Tatama NP - Volcanario

Los Napos NP

Quim - Guano

Pacific Ocean

Yacora

Baños

San Cristobal

Duro

Cajonuma NP

Cajonuma

San Cayetano

San Cayetano Lodge

San Cayetano

Cajonuma



Slate-crowned Antpitta
Christopher Calonje



Black-crested Antshrike
Juan Jose Arango

Blue-backed Conebill
Juan Jose Arango



Sword-billed Hummingbird
Juan Jose Arango

Plushcap
Juan Jose Arango



Pale-naped brush finch
Christopher Calonje



Great Sapphirewing
Christopher Calonje



Rainbow-beraded Thornbill
Juan Jose Arango



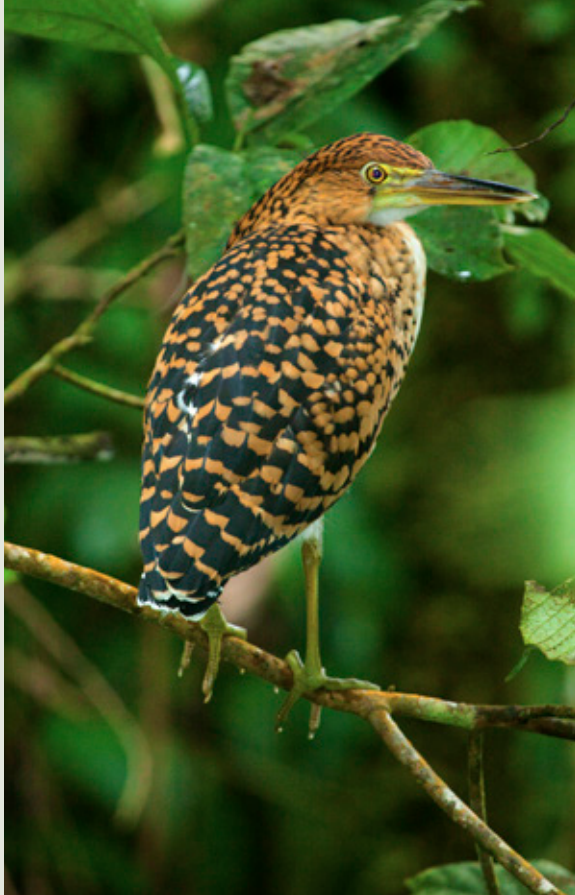
Chestnut-breasted Wren
Juan Jose Arango



Ruby-topaz Hummingbird
Juan Jose Arango



Whooping Motmot
Christopher Calonje



Fasciated Tiger
Christopher Calonje



Pied Puffbird
Christopher Calonje



White-Tipped Quetzal
Christopher Calonje



Black-crowned Antshrike
Christopher Calonje

Tanager Finch
Juan Jose Arango



Bar-crested Antshrike
Juan Jose Arango



Golden-crowned Tanager
Juan Jose Arango





Buff-winged Starfrontlet
Juan Jose Arango



White-capped Tanager
Juan Jose Arango