ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

Ecuador – Northern I

Choco Cloud Forest I

11th February to 18th February 2023 (8 days)

Eastern Andes: Paramo and Cloud Forest I

18th February to 24th February 2023 (7 days)



Toucan Barbet by Jonathan Rossouw

Due to its diverse habitat array, ranging from the high Andes to excellent lowland rainforest, north-western South America has the highest avian diversity in the world. Ecuador is fortuitously situated within the heart of this fantastic ecological region, boasting a bird list of just over 1700 species! Furthermore, its small size, good infrastructure, unsurpassable scenery and friendly people make Ecuador one of the planet's most delightful birding destinations!

THE TOUR AT A GLANCE…

CHOCÓ CLOUD FOREST

Day 1	**Arrival in Quito**
Day 2	**Yanacocha to Bellavista**
Day 3	**Reserva Las Gralarias & Bellavista to Mindo**
Day 4	**Refugio Paz de las Aves & Chontal**
Day 5	**Reserva Amagusa & Mashpi Road**
Day 6	**Rio Silanche**
Day 7	**Long-wattled Umbrellabird & Milpe reserve**
Day 8	**Mindo area to Quito**

EASTERN ANDES: PARAMO & CLOUD FOREST

Day 1	**Arrival in Quito**
Day 2	**Day trip to Antisana**
Day 3	**Papallacta to Guango Lodge**
Day 4	**Guango Lodge to Cabañas San Isidro**
Day 5	**Cabañas San Isidro**
Day 6	**Day trip to Guacamayos Ridge**
Day 7	**Cabañas San Isidro to Quito**

TOUR MAP…



Choco Cloud Forest



Giant Antpitta by Dubi Shapiro

This classic tour covers all the important birding sites found north-west of the capital city of Quito. This area is part of the Chocó bioregion that hosts a great number of endemics and specialities that are only shared with neighbouring areas of Colombia to the north. We will be based in the Tandayapa and Mindo valleys from where we will set out to bird the various renowned private reserves, affording us an outstanding opportunity to support local conservation projects for long-term habitat protection. A wide array of habitats will be birded, starting with the mystical elfin forest of the temperate zone, followed by bird-rich subtropical cloud forests. We will also venture deeper into tropical foothill forests to reach the mega-diverse lowlands. Iconic species that we will be searching for include Andean Cock-of-the-rock, Giant Antpitta, Plate-billed Mountain and Chocó Toucans, Toucan Barbet, Long-wattled Umbrellabird, Club-winged Manakin, Glistening-green Tanager, Orange-breasted and Scaled Fruiteaters and Velvet-purple Coronet, to mention but a few. In case rarities such as Banded Ground Cuckoo or Rufous-crowned Antpitta show up in the area, we will do our very best to fit in a twitch. A great network of birding reserves together with excellent infrastructure, unsurpassable scenery and friendly people make the Northwest of Ecuador one of the planet's most delightful birding destinations.

Day 1: Arrival in Quito. Guests arriving from their various points of origin will be greeted at the airport, and transported to our hotel accommodations in Quito. A fine dinner in Quito will be our kick-off to this tour!



Orange-breasted Fruiteater by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Day 2: Yanacocha to Bellavista. Today we travel to the north-western flanks of the Pichincha Volcano, climbing to an altitude of approximately 3 500m (11000ft). We wind our way up a gravel road where we will have a full morning's birding in the temperate zone of the western Andes. This spectacular area is especially productive for hummingbirds, and we can expect to find numerous representatives, including the incredible Sword-billed Hummingbird, Rainbow-bearded and the scarce Purple-Mantled Thornbills, Sapphire-vented and Golden-breasted Puffleg and, if we are extremely lucky, the endemic, inexplicably rare and critically endangered Black-breasted Puffleg. Other possible species we may find as we sift through the twisted vegetation and open shrubby habitat include Andean Pygmy Owl (often located by its diurnal call), stunning Hooded and Black-chested Mountain Tanagers, and the equally striking Golden-crowned Tanager. Andean Guan, Superciliaried Hemispingus, White-chinned Thistletail, Blue-backed Conebill, Crowned Chat-Tyrant, and the beautiful, but shy Barred Fruiteater are also very likely.

After lunch, we will bird along the winding roadway into the Cloud forests of the old Nono-Mindo road. This road connects with the Tandayapa valley, and if time permits, we will look for mixed-species flocks at these middle elevations. We aim to arrive in Reserva las Gralarias before dark so that we can experience another large set of hummingbird species as they buzz around the lodge's feeders.

Day 3: Reserva Las Gralarias & Bellavista to Mindo. Deep in the heart of the cloud forest, Bellavista is a protected reserve surrounded by outstanding habitat that provides access to the mature forest canopy. An early morning start will take us to the top of the Tandayapa valley for the dawn chorus at. Mixed-species flocks often hold the conspicuous Cinnamon Flycatcher, White-tailed Tyrannulet, Montane Woodcreeper, gaudy Flame-faced and Beryl-spangled Tanagers, Capped Conebill, Streaked Tuftedcheek, Plushcap, Green-and-black Fruiteater, Spectacled Whitestart and the beautiful Masked Trogon. Spillmann's Tapaculo is easy to hear, but harder to see in the dense undergrowth, as is the sought-after Ocellated Tapaculo. Other delightful specialities that we'll be looking for include the amazing Plate-billed Mountain Toucan, the stunning Grass-green Tanager, Crested and Golden-headed Quetzals, Powerful Woodpecker, Turquoise Jay, Pacific Hornero, Plain-tailed Wren and Streak-headed Antbird. Rare species that we may come across include White-faced Nunbird, Slaty Finch, Black-and-



Ocellated Tapaculo by Dušan Brinkhuizen

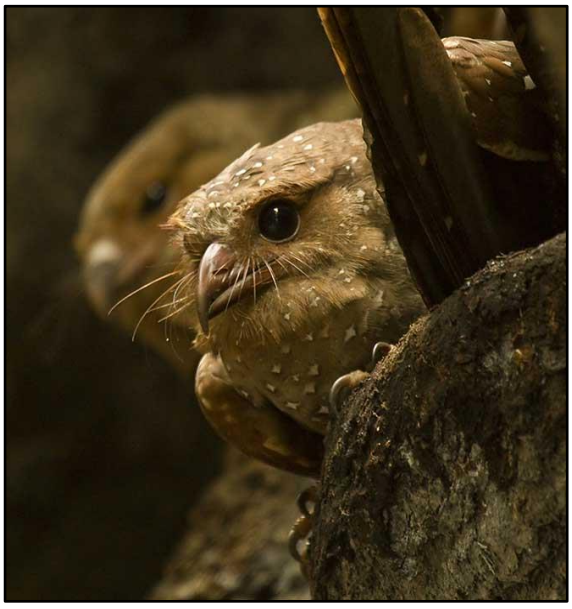


Rufous-breasted Antthrush by Dušan Brinkhuizen

chestnut Eagle and the retiring Tanager Finch. We will also spend a little more time at the lodge feeders, taking in such gems as Violet-tailed Sylph, Gorgeted Sunangel, the tiny Purple-throated Woodstar and the exquisite White-booted Racket-tail. In the afternoon, we will bird our way down to our luxurious accommodations in the Mindo valley, which is no less a hummingbird paradise than Reserva Las Gralarias!

Day 4: Refugio Paz de las Aves & Chontal. This morning we will visit the famous Refugio Paz de Las Aves, a private cloud forest reserve and perhaps the most amazing bird show on earth. Walking along the forest trails, we will be searching for some of the more difficult forest undergrowth skulkers on Earth. A number of years ago, the entrepreneurial Ecuadorians brothers, Angel & Rodrigo Paz managed to coax a number of mega species into view through the use of daily feeding rituals! One of the stars of the show is undoubtedly the goliath Giant Antpitta, which often approaches to within only a few feet! Other specialities include Dark-backed Wood Quail, Ochre-breasted and Yellow-breasted Antpittas, Rufous-breasted Antthrush and Nariño Tapaculo as well as the more widespread species such as Sickle-winged Guan and Golden-winged Manakin. We will also visit a lek with a regularly attending population of Andean Cock-of-the-rock, one of the gaudiest of all South American birds! Along the way, we may find a fruiting tree attended by Crimson-rumped Toucanet, Scaled Fruiteater, the elusive Olivaceous Piha and the stunning Toucan Barbet. Lyre-tailed Nightjars are regularly found on their day roost here and rarities have included White-faced Nunbird, Cloud-forest Pygmy Owl, Ecuadorian Seedeater and Black-and-chestnut Eagle.

In the afternoon, we will travel to lower elevations of the Guayllabamba drainage to look for Oilbirds, another iconic monotypic family species from South America. We will visit a day roost of these bizarre looking creatures that are in fact nocturnal and strictly frugivorous. Like bats, they are known to use echolocation for navigating in the dark, something unique among birds. Other species of interest that we may encounter nearby include Striped Cuckoo, Pale-mandibled Aracari, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, Band-backed and Whiskered Wrens, Pacific Antwren and White-backed Fire-eye.



Oilbird by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Day 5: Reserva Amagusa and Mashpi Road. This newly discovered area holds some of the finest Chocó endemic cloud forest species. At the Amagusa Reserve, we will visit the fruit feeders where we have excellent chances of seeing the increasingly-rare Moss-backed Tanager, as well as a host of other, no less attractive, Tanager species,



Andean Cock-of-the-rock by Dušan Brinkhuizen

including Glistening-green, Black-chinned Mountain, Rufous-throated, Lemon-rumped, Flame-faced, Golden-naped and Golden. Crimson-rumped Toucanet and White-throated Quail-Dove also frequently squeeze into the tanager cast. The hummingbird feeders attract spectacular species such as Velvet-purple Coronet, Violet-tailed Sylph, Brown Inca, Purple-bibbed Whitetip and Empress Brilliant, all stunning Chocó endemics. If it is not too foggy (which is often the case at this cloud forest site) photographic opportunities will be outstanding.

We move on to the more famous Mashpi Road, which provides easy birding and access to elevations ranging from 1,600m down to 900m (5,000 – 3,000ft). We will be targeting endemics at several sites along the road, primarily looking for mixed-species flocks which often hold rare species such as Indigo Flowerpiercer, Chocó Vireo, Pacific Tuftedcheek, Uniform Treehunter and Orange-breasted Fruiteater. Stunners like Toucan Barbet and Glistening-green Tanager can be common in these flocks. If we get really lucky we might run into Black or Rufous-brown Solitaires which are present but rather secretive. In the understory, we will look for Zeledon's and Esmeraldas Antbirds amongst others. Rose-faced Parrot and Blue-fronted Parrotlet frequently fly by, but we'll need a bit of luck to see them perched. We start to reach lowland forest as we descend the lowest parts of the road with goodies such as Grey-and-gold Tanager, Scarlet-browed Tanager, Orange-fronted Barbet and Barred Puffbird. Very rare birds that have been seen here in the past include Banded Ground Cuckoo, Rufous-crowned Antpitta and Baudo Guan!

Day 6: Rio Silanche. Today we will be exploring the lower areas of the Chocó region (500m / 1600ft) searching for specials that are only shared with adjacent Colombia. These forests are sadly disappearing at an alarming rate due to a combination of logging, mining and expansion of oil palm plantations. The canopy tower in the Rio Silanche Bird Sanctuary (Mindo Cloud Forest Foundation) provides good views of the forest canopy and we will spend some time here sifting carefully through the canopy for mixed-species flocks (with patience, they usually move by every hour). Targets in these flocks include Scarlet-breasted and Scarlet-thighed Dacnis, Blue-whiskered, Grey-and-gold, Golden-hooded, Bay-headed, Rufous-winged and Scarlet-browed Tanagers, Slate-throated Gnatcatcher, Brown-capped Tyrannulet and Yellow-margined Flatbill. Larger birds in the forest are represented by Chocó, White-



Sword-billed Hummingbird by Dušan Brinkhuizen



Long-wattled Umbrellabird by Dušan Brinkhuizen

tailed, Black-throated and Collared Trogons, Cinnamon, Black-cheeked, Guayaquil and Crimson-bellied (rare) Woodpeckers, Dusky Pigeon, Chocó Toucan, Pale-mandibled Aracari, White-whiskered Puffbird, Orange-fronted Barbet, Black-striped and Northern Barred Woodcreepers, to name but a few. Hummingbirds that are commonly observed at this reserve include Purple-chested and Blue-chested Hummingbirds, White-whiskered Hermit and Band-tailed Barbthroat. The understory flocks often hold goodies like Checker-throated, Dot-winged and White-flanked Antwren, Tawny-faced Gnatwren and Black-crowned Antshrike while the understory skulkers here include Chestnut-backed and Bicolored Antbirds, Black-headed Antthrush and Southern Nightingale-Wren. Rare birds that we have seen in the area (sometimes frequently) include Scaly-throated Leaftosser, Black-tipped Cotinga, Brown Wood Rail, Plumbeous Hawk and Berlepsch's Tinamou!

Day 7: Long-wattled Umbrellabird & Milpe reserve. Today we have an early start to reach a Long-wattled Umbrellabird site near San Miguel de Los Bancos. A local community protects a small patch of forest where we have a good chance of seeing this spectacular, but rare Chocó endemic. In the early morning, several individuals often disperse from the forest patch and if we get lucky birds might perch nearby our viewpoint. After (hopefully) seeing this major target species we will also look for other local rarities such us Cloud Forest Pygmy Owl, Rose-faced Parrot and Black Solitaire.

We then continue to Milpe, another key reserve of the Mindo Cloud Forest Foundation which is one of the best sites in the world to see the Chocó endemic Club-winged Manakin. This bird is famous for producing a funny, computer-like buzzing sound with its wings! Fortunately, the species is often easy to locate - though there are some seasonal movements. Along the trails, we have good chances of running into large mixed-species flocks that contain Chocó Warbler, Tropical Parula, Slate-throated Whitestart, Chocó Tyrannulet, Tawny-rumped Myiobius, Slaty Antwren, Spotted and Wedge-billed Woodcreepers, Brown-billed Scythebill, Buff-fronted, Ruddy and Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaners, Western Woodhaunter, Cinnamon and One-colored Becards, Silver-throated, Bay-headed, Rufous-throated, White-winged, White-shouldered and Ochre-breasted Tanagers, Yellow-tufted Dacnis, Yellow-collared Chlorophonia and many more! The banana feeders can be a true spectacle (although activity



Scarlet-breasted Dacnis by Dušan Brinkhuizen



Glistening-green Tanager by Dušan Brinkhuizen

is highly seasonal), with stunners like Red-headed Barbet, Pale-mandibled Aracari, Chocó Toucan, Black-cheeked Woodpecker, Rufous Motmot, Orange-billed Sparrow, Orange-bellied and Thick-billed Euphonias, Silver-throated, Rufous-throated, Blue-grey, White-lined and Blue-necked Tanagers all feeding at close range! The hummingbird feeders attract gems like White-necked Jacobin, Crowned Woodnymph, Green-crowned Brilliant, Andean Emerald and the tiny Green Thorntail. The adjacent Milpe Gardens has a great trail through mature foothill forest where we will continue to look for specialities. Rare birds that we have encountered here include Indigo-crowned Quail-Dove, Lanceolated Monklet, Orange-crested Flycatcher, Chocó Trogon, Scaly-throated Leaftosser, Crimson-bellied Woodpecker and Spotted Nightingale-Thrush.

Day 8: Mindo area to Quito. Today we'll work on the missing pieces of the puzzle and seek for bird species that might have eluded us before. The mid-elevation cloud forest of the lodge grounds can be very productive for species like Zeledon's Antbird, Rufous-rumped Antwren, Wattled Guan, Yellow-collared Chlorophonia and Golden-winged Manakin. The Mindo Valley itself holds nice riparian habitat with species like Bran-colored Flycatcher, Fawn-breasted Tanager, Slaty Spinetail and the recently described Coopman's Elaenia. At the fast-flowing rivers we can search for specialties such as Torrent Tyrannulet, White-capped Dipper, and if lucky, the stunning Sunbittern. We might also decide to revisit the old Nono-Mindo road for higher elevation species such as Tanager Finch, Grass-green Tanager and Ocellated Tapaculo.

In the afternoon we will travel back to Quito, where those continuing onwards to our **Eastern Andes: Paramo and Cloud Forest Tour** will meet for dinner, while others will be transferred to Quito Airport for your international departures.

Eastern Andes: Paramo and Cloud Forest



Ecuadorian Hillstar by Dubi Shapiro



Carunculated Caracara by Dušan Brinkhuizen

This tour is a great introduction to birding the mighty Andes of South America. We will be exploring the vast east slope for local specialities, and will visit a wide array of fascinating habitats and elevations. Travelling from snow-capped volcanoes down to pristine cloud forests will be not only an incredible experience, but will also offer superb birding and scenery every day!

Stunning species that we will be searching for include Andean Condor, Carunculated Caracara, Ecuadorian Hillstar, Giant Hummingbird, Sword-billed Hummingbird, Torrent Duck, Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe, Grey-breasted Mountain Toucan, Inca Jay, White-bellied Antpitta, the San Isidro "mystery" Owl, Golden-headed and Crested Quetzals and Masked Trogon, to mention a few! Rare species that we will also be searching for include Andean Ibis, Andean Potoo, Red-rumped Bush Tyrant, Greater Scythebill, Bicolored Antvireo, Peruvian and Crescent-faced Antpittas, White-capped Tanager and Masked Mountain Tanager. A great network of birding reserves, together with good infrastructure, unsurpassable scenery, fine dining and friendly people make the eastern Andes of Ecuador another key destination on the world birding circuit.

Day 1: Arrival in Quito. Guests will be greeted at the airport and transported to our hotel accommodations in Quito, while others will be arriving at our hotel from our connecting **Choco Cloud Forest Tour**. A fine dinner will be our start to this great tour!



Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe
by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Day 2: Day trip to Antisana. We leave downtown Quito this morning and ascend the Andes, arriving at the Antisana Reserve situated high in the Andes at an elevation of approximately 4 000m (13 000ft). Visiting the tundra-like Paramo habitat surrounding the astonishing snow-capped Antisana Volcano will no doubt be an unforgettable experience, not only because of the breathtaking scenery but also because it offers us a great opportunity for finding the majestic Andean Condor. A truly iconic species of the South American Andes, it is also Ecuador's national bird! We will also be seeking out the near-endemic Carunculated Caracara, Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle, endemic Ecuadorian Hillstar, both Stout-billed and Chestnut-winged Cinclodes, Many-striped Canastero, Plumbeous Sierra Finch, Variable Hawk, Black-winged Ground Dove, Andean Gull, Andean Lapwing, Black-billed Shrike-Tyrant, Paramo Ground Tyrant, Paramo Pipit and the rare Andean Ibis.

At La Mica, a beautiful lake at the base of the Antisana Volcano, we will scan for Andean Teal, Andean Duck, Yellow-billed Pintail, Andean Coot, Silvery Grebe and perhaps a few migrant shorebirds. We will also be on the lookout for rare raptors that occur here such as Aplomado Falcon and Cinereous Harrier. Scrubby habitat at lower elevations may turn up a number of gems such as Shining Sunbeam and Black-tailed Trainbearer, and the unrivalled Giant Hummingbird - the largest hummer on the planet! The reserve also gives us good chances for Andean Fox and White-tailed Deer. Today will be full of photographic opportunities, and the relaxed birding will make for a glorious kick-off in the high Andes.



Grey-breasted Mountain Toucan
by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Day 3: Papallacta to Guango Lodge. Today we start birding the treeline scrub and paramo on the western slope of the eastern Andes. The habitat is fairly similar to Antisana, although some different species can be found here. Our priorities include Paramo Tapaculo, the rare Rainbow-bearded Thornbill, Blue-mantled Thornbill, Andean Tit-Spinetail, and Tawny Antpitta. Weather permitting, we will drive up to the antennas to look for the highly sought-after Rufous-bellied

Seedsnipe, a unique and well-camouflaged shorebird that is only found in Ecuador at this particular site. If we get lucky, we also may also find the equally desirable Giant Conebill in *Polylepis* forest at a slightly lower elevation. The rare Red-rumped Bush Tyrant is known to show up at the pass on occasion.



Masked Mountain Tanager by Dušan Brinkhuizen

At Papallacta Lake, we will swiftly scan for ducks and waterbirds, which might yield a few new species. The habitat surrounding the lake is good for mixed-species flocks which often include White-throated Tyrannulet, Spectacled Whitestart, Cinereous and Blue-backed Conebills, the localised Black-backed Bush Tanager, Buff-breasted and Scarlet-bellied Mountain Tanagers, Golden-crowned Tanager, Pale-naped Brushfinch and the rare Agile Tit-Tyrant. Similar mixed-species flocks will be looked for along the road to the Cayambe-Coca reserve, where we also have a good chance of finding such rarities as Masked and Black-chested Mountain Tanagers. Viridian Metaltail and Great Sapphirewing are regular at the treeline, and if we get lucky, we may convince a Rufous Antpitta, or the even rarer Crescent-faced Antpitta into view. The enigmatic Spectacled Bear has been seen in the area multiple times, so fingers crossed! In the afternoon we will descend to our comfortable lodge and enjoy a number of new species of hummingbirds that visit the feeders.

Day 4: Guango Lodge to Cabañas San Isidro. This morning we will bird the grounds of Guango Lodge, which covers excellent temperate forest habitat at roughly 2 800m (9 200ft). Key targets that we will be looking for include Grey-hooded Bush Tanager, Hooded and Lacrimose Mountain Tanagers, Blue-and-black Tanager, White-banded Tyrannulet, Rufous-breasted Chat-Tyrant, Slaty Brushfinch, Turquoise Jay and Northern Mountain Cacique. At the fast-flowing river, we will try for specialities such as Torrent Duck, White-capped Dipper and Torrent Tyrannulet. Grey-breasted Mountain Toucan and Andean Guan are frequently seen here, and much rarer species such as Mountain Avocetbill, Dusky Piha and Red-hooded Tanager are also possible.



White-capped Tanager by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Guango is well-known for hummingbirds, with the spectacular Sword-billed Hummingbird, Collared Inca, Long-tailed Sylph, Tourmaline Sunangel, Chestnut-breasted and Buff-tailed Coronets, Speckled Hummingbird, Tyrian Metaltail, White-bellied Woodstar and the scarce Glowing Puffleg all visiting the copious feeders. In the afternoon we will descend the

valley to lower elevation, sub-tropical cloud forests and our very comfortable lodge of Cabañas San Isidro.



Greater Scythebill by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Day 5: Cabañas San Isidro. Cabañas San Isidro is a privately owned reserve that protects large tracts of pristine subtropical cloud forest at an elevation of 2 100m (6 800ft). The superb birding, great lodging and exquisite cuisine make it a true birder's paradise. In the morning, we will first target the garden birds that can be easily observed foraging at the garden lights. At night the lights attract insects, and during the morning we have a good chance to observe a feeding frenzy of insectivorous species! Inca Jay, Masked Trogon, Subtropical Cacique, Russet-backed Oropendola, Crimson-mantled Woodpecker, Black-billed Peppershrike, Slate-throated and Spectacled Whitestart, Brown-capped Vireo, Russet-crowned Warbler, Black-eared Hemispingus, Mountain Wren, Common Bush Tanager, Pale-edged and Cinnamon Flycatchers, Smoke-colored Pewee, White-tailed Tyrannulet, Montane and Olive-backed Woodcreeper frequently converge on the lights to hoover up the insect smorgasbord.

The extensive trail system gives us access to primary forest where we will search for understory skulkers such as White-bellied Antpitta and Long-tailed Tapaculo. Large canopy flocks might yield Marbled-faced and Variegated Bristle Tyrants, Sulphur-bellied Tyrannulet, Barred Becard, Pearled Treerunner, Streaked Tuftedcheek, Blue-winged Mountain, Saffron-crowned, Beryl-spangled, Flame-faced and Black-capped Tanagers, Chestnut-breasted Chlorophonia, Bluish Flowerpiercer, Golden-collared Honeycreeper and Green-and-black Fruiteater. We also have a good chance of coming across some of the rare species found here such as Bicolored Antvireo and Peruvian Antpitta. Birding the nearby Las Caucheras road is often very productive with great canopy flocks that include the likes of White-capped Parrot, Crested Quetzal and Andean Motmot.



Chestnut-bellied Coronet by Clayton Burne

The feeders at the lodge attract a good number and diversity of hummingbirds, including the spectacular Long-tailed Sylph, Collared and Bronzy Inca, Fawn-breasted Brilliant, Chestnut-breasted Coronet, Speckled Hummingbird, Green and Sparkling Violetear (seasonal) and sometimes the rather cute Gorgeted Woodstar. After dusk, we will search for nocturnal species, with our main target being the San Isidro "mystery" Owl, a possible split from Black-banded Owl. Other species we hope to find include Andean Potoo and Rufous-bellied Nighthawk.

Day 6: Day Trip to Guacamayos Ridge. The Guacamayos Ridge provides some of the best cloud forest birding in the country. The ridge drops all the

way to the Amazonian basin, boasting an extraordinary level of biodiversity. However, it is also one of the rainiest and consequently cloudiest places on the east slope, as it is the first ridge where the warm Amazonian clouds strike the Andes. In the morning, we will bird the upper stretch of the trail which is slightly higher in elevation than Cabañas San Isidro (2 200m / 7 200ft). Target species that we will be looking for include Slate-crowned Antpitta, Flammulated Treehunter, Handsome Flycatcher, Grass-green Tanager, Rufous-headed Pygmy-Tyrant, Sepia-brown Wren and Black-capped Hemispingus. If we are very lucky, we might get the spectacular White-capped Tanager or Black-billed Mountain Toucan which are both frequently seen here. We will also be on the lookout for one of the 'mega' mixed-species flocks that often pass by. While carefully sifting through the flock, we may find the ultra-rare Greater Scythebill. Guacamayos is perhaps the best place in the world to see it! We leave the afternoon program open for several options depending on the weather and possible target species that we may still require.

Day 7: Cabañas San Isidro to Quito. We have a few more hours this morning to bird around the lodge grounds before the tour concludes with a transfer back to Quito International Airport for your international departures.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:

Tour dates, prices, single supplement rates, approximate flight costs (where applicable) and spaces available for this tour are displayed on our website. Please see under IMPORTANT NOTES.

The tour fee includes:

- All meals from dinner on day 1 to lunch on day 8 of the Choco Cloud Forest tour; from dinner on day 1 to lunch on day 7 of the Eastern Andes: Paramo & Cloud Forest tour;
- Bottled drinking water;
- All lodgings;
- Ground transportation (including boat transfers);
- Extra activities mentioned in the itinerary;
- All national park and other reserve entrance fees; and
- All guiding services (including tips for local guides and services.)

The tour fee does not include:

- Visa fees;
- **ANY** flights;
- Any drinks;
- Special gratuities; and
- Telephone calls, laundry and other items of a personal nature.

Single Supplement: The single supplement cost for this tour will be charged if you wish to have single accommodation. If RBL cannot provide you with a rooming partner for these nights although you choose to share, the single supplement will become applicable. We will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that a rooming partner is found if you do wish to share.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

a) Due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, we quote our tours in 4 currencies. The tour price is however fixed only in the currency printed in bold, and the actual cost in the other currencies listed will be adjusted according to prevailing exchange rates at the time of final invoicing (usually 4 months before the tour.) The same applies to approximate flight and single supplement rates, which are also quoted in the respective fixed currency.

b) Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration a small party supplement will have to be charged.

c) Furthermore, these costs are subject to unforeseen increases in tour related costs and may have to be adjusted as a result.

d) Lastly, we may be forced to change or alter the itinerary and / or the designated Rockjumper leader/s at short or no notice due to unforeseen circumstances; please be aware that we will attempt to adhere as close to the original program as possible.

Please note:

- In some areas, it may be very hot, especially in the Amazonian lowlands. We will thus make good use of the early mornings and will have many early starts to avoid, as far as possible, birding in the middle of the day. Furthermore, in rainforest areas the humidity will be high and potentially uncomfortable.

- It is important for the comfort of your fellow travellers that you do not over-pack. Kindly stick to 20 kg (44 lb) for check in luggage and 8 kg (+-18 lb) for hand luggage.
- These Ecuador tours do not require a high level of fitness, but participants should be in good general health as most of the birding will be done on foot, and may require walking for several hours at a time. Guests will be notified when longer walks may be undertaken. If you have any physical limitations, please notify us in advance of departure.
- Accommodation throughout the trip is of a good standard, and the hotels and resorts that we make use of range from comfortable to rather luxurious. There is no camping on this trip.

Tipping: As noted above, gratuities (drivers, hotel staff, restaurants etc) are included on this tour. However, this does NOT include your Rockjumper leader/s. If, therefore, you feel that he/they have given you excellent service, it is entirely appropriate to tip them.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE DETAILS:

This tour **does not** include **ANY** airfares. The Choco Cloud Forest tour will begin in Quito on Day 1, and as this is scheduled as an arrival day, you are free to arrive at any time before 17:00. The tour will conclude in the mid to late afternoon of day 8 at Quito International Airport.

The Eastern Andes: Paramo & Cloud Forest tour will begin in Quito on Day 1, as this is scheduled as an arrival day, you are free to arrive at any time before 17:00. The tour will conclude after breakfast on day 7 with a transfer back to Quito.

The above information in respect of arrivals and departures is a guide only. Precise arrival and departure information will be sent to you in your **Tour Confirmation** package once the tour has been officially confirmed. If you wish to arrive early and/or depart late and would like assistance in this regard, kindly contact the Rockjumper office.

FLIGHTS:

Mariscal Sucre International Airport, Quito (IATA: UIO), Quito is the major port of entry into Ecuador for this tour. **Please DO NOT book any flights until you have consulted the Rockjumper office for confirmation on the status of the tour.**