ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

Ecuador

Pacific Coast Extension

6th January to 10th January 2023 (5 days)

Southern Endemics

10th January to 28th January 2023 (19 days)



Long-wattled Umbrellabird by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Due to incredibly complex geology and topography, southern Ecuador supports one of the most diverse habitat ranges in the world. Within 200 miles of the Pacific Coast, one can travel from the arid xerophytic habitat, through chocó and semi-deciduous tropical forest, over the continental divide's treeless paramos and down to lush, wet, foothill forests of the eastern Andes. Within these varied, pristine habitats, the evolution of many fine endemic species has occurred; and on our comprehensive South Ecuador Endemics tour, we will sample seven distinct habitats in search of these endemics and other specialties. Targets include El Oro and White-breasted Parakeets, El Oro

Tapaculo, Watkins's and the fantastic Jocotoco Antpitta, Pale-naped and White-headed Brushfinches, Henna-hooded Foliage-gleaner, Elegant Crescentchest, White-tailed Jay, the fabulous Long-wattled Umbrellabird, Rainbow Starfrontlet, the vociferous, colourful and extremely localized Orange-throated Tanager.

Very exciting news was the recent discovery of the Blue-throated Hillstar, a distinct species of hummingbird new to science, and we'll attempt to find this highly localized endemic!

THE TOUR AT A GLANCE…

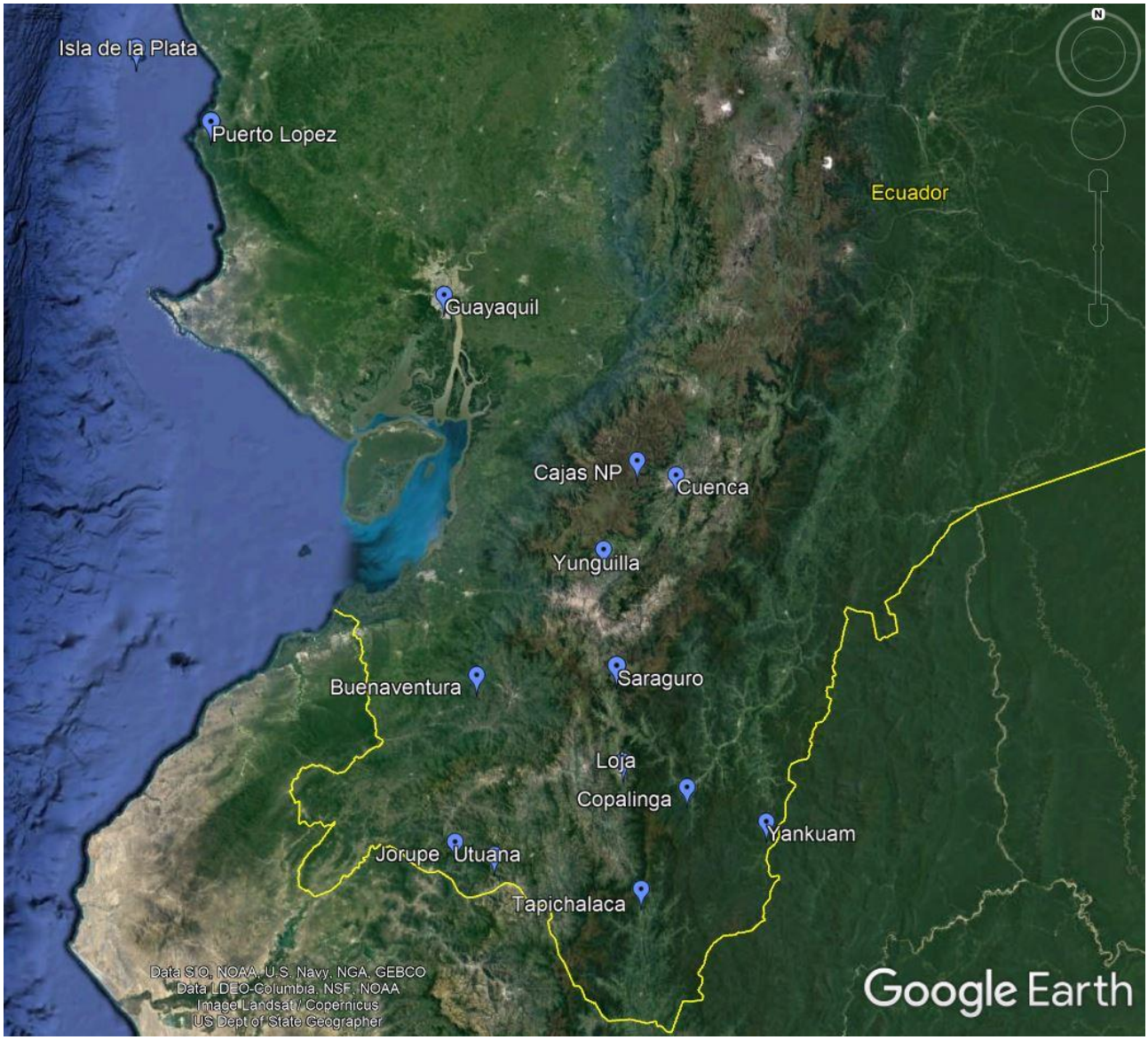
PACIFIC COAST EXTENSION

Day 1	**Arrival in Guayaquil**
Day 2	**Cerro Blanco, Puerto Honda & Mar Bravo**
Day 3	**Pacoa saltpans via Ayampe to Puerto Lopez**
Day 4	**Isla de la Plata**
Day 5	**Ayampe to Guayaquil**

SOUTH ECUADOR MAIN ITINERARY

Day 1	**Arrivals in Guayaquil**
Day 2	**Atahualpa and Ecuasal**
Day 3	**Guayaquil to Cuenca via PN Cajas**
Day 4	**Reserva Yunguilla**
Day 5	**Saraguro area**
Day 6	**Saraguro to Copalinga**
Day 7	**Bombuscaro and Copalinga**
Day 8	**El Zarza to Yankuam**
Day 9 & 10	**Yankuam and the Orange-throated Tanager**
Day 11	**Yankuam to Tapichalaca**
Day 12	**Tapichalaca**
Day 13	**Tapichalaca to Jorupe**
Day 14	**Jorupe**
Day 15	**Utuana**
Day 16	**Jorupe to Buenaventura via Zapotillo**
Days 17 & 18	**Buenaventura**
Day 19	**Buenaventura to Guayaquil and depart**

TOUR MAP…


Isla de la Plata
Puerto Lopez
Ecuador
Guayaquil
Cajas NP
Cuenca
Yunguilla
Buenaventura
Saraguro
Loja
Copalinga
Yankuam
Jorupe
Utuana
Tapichalaca
Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO
Data LDEO-Columbia, NSF, NOAA
Image Landsat / Copernicus
US Dept of State Geographer
Google Earth

Pacific Coast Extension



Nazca Boobies by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Our new pre-tour extension to Southern Ecuador takes us along Ecuador's Pacific shores visiting Isla de la Plata for spectacular encounters with both Blue-footed and Nazca Boobies, possibly also Red-footed Booby, many Magnificent Frigatebirds, the odd Humpback Whale and Red-billed Tropicbird before completing our journey searching for the Endangered endemic Esmeraldas Woodstar, Grey-and-white Tyrannulet, Necklaced Spinetail, Parrot-billed Seedeater, Collared Warbling Finch, Sulphur-throated Finch, Red-lored Amazon, Roseate Spoonbill, Chilean Flamingo and the smallest bird in South America, the Short-tailed Woodstar.

Day 1: Arrivals in Guayaquil. After arriving in Guayaquil, you will be escorted to our fine accommodations, overlooking one of the main plazas of this bustling metropolis. Time permitting, guests are urged to enjoy some time in the surrounding historic blocks or even walk along the newly-renovated *Malecon*. This lovely boardwalk along the Rio Guayas is the heart of the city and even offers some birding and wildlife-viewing opportunities, as Croaking Ground Doves, Great-tailed Grackles, Pacific Parrotlets, Grey-cheeked Parakeets and Guayaquil Iguanas frequent the park areas.

Day 2: Cerro Blanco, Puerto Honda & Mar Bravo. Early this morning, we visit the Cerro Blanco reserve, located just outside Guayaquil. The dry forest habitat is dominated by beautiful *Ceiba* trees and holds some interesting specialities that include Red-masked Parakeet, Grey-cheeked Parakeet, Rufous-headed Chachalaca, Whooping Motmot, Guayaquil Woodpecker, Ecuadorian and Gartered Trogons, Pacific Pygmy Owl and White-tailed Jay. Mixed flocks hold Plain Antvireo, Tropical Gnatcatcher, Yellow-olive Flatbill, Pacific Elaenia, Rufous-browed Peppershrike, Grey-and-gold

Warbler, Streak-headed Woodcreeper, Streaked Saltator and Collared Antshrike. We also have a good chance of seeing Red-lored Amazon (this specific sub-species is often considered a full species by some authorities: Lilacine Amazon).

A stop at Puerto Hondo will see us scanning the mangroves for Rufous-necked Wood Rail, American White Ibis, Roseate Spoonbill, Great-tailed Grackle and Mangrove Warbler before continuing on our way to Salinas. The arid plains of the Santa Elena peninsula hold some new species including Parrot-billed Seedeater, Sulphur-throated Finch, Pearl Kite, Burrowing Owl and Peruvian Thicknee. Our afternoon will be spent at Mar Bravo at the saltpans of Ecuasal. This is a great place with large numbers of shorebirds (with up to 40 species possible) including Grey, Grey-hooded and Kelp Gulls, South American Tern, Chilean Flamingo, Collared and Wilson's Plovers, Surfbird, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, White-cheeked Pintail, Peruvian Pelican and much more.



Guayaquil Woodpecker by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Day 3: Pacoa saltpans via Ayampe to Puerto Lopez. In the early morning, we visit the very tip of the Santa Elena Peninsula, a scenic area known as La Chocolatera. Here we have a scan over the Pacific Ocean for South American Sea Lions, whilst also expecting to get scope views of both Blue-footed and Peruvian Boobies. The surrounding scrubby plains hold West Peruvian Dove, Necklaced Spinetail and Short-tailed Field Tyrant and we may also see the lowland race of Variable Hawk, often considered a separate species.

We will then take the 'ruta del sol' (the sun route) to Ayampe. En route we will make birding stops at the bird-filled Pacoa saltpans where we may find Great Grebe. In the afternoon we will visit the humid coastal forest at Rio Ayampe. It is the key site for the rare endemic Esmeraldas Woodstar, and this time of year we have good chances of finding this major target bird. The forest hosts an interesting mix of humid and dry forest species, including Slaty Antwren, Slaty Becard, Guayaquil Woodpecker, Scarlet-backed Woodpecker, Grey-backed Hawk, Lesser Greenlet, Saffron Siskin, Grey-breasted Flycatcher, Speckle-breasted and Whiskered Wrens, Black-crowned and Great Antshrikes, White-backed Fire-eye, Black-striped Sparrow, Plumbeous-backed Thrush, Black-tailed Flycatcher, Tawny-crowned Pygmy Tyrant and the rare Pacific Royal Flycatcher. If time permits, we might have a look on the scenic beach of Ayampe and search for Short-tailed Field Tyrant if necessary as well as roosting Lesser Nighthawks. We spend the night in the coastal town of Puerto Lopez.



Lesser Nighthawk by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Day 4: Isla de la Plata. Today we visit the offshore island of Isla de la Plata, often referred to as 'the poor man's Galápagos'. The island does show many similarities to the arid islands of the Galápagos archipelago, even in terms of the birdlife. Blue-footed, Red-footed and Nazca Boobies nest on the island and have no fear of humans, thus providing for fabulous photographic opportunities. In fact, Blue-footed Boobies are known to nest right on the trail, so we have to watch out not to step on them! Magnificent Frigatebirds are abundant and a few Red-billed Tropicbird are always around. The scrub on the island also hosts the sought after Short-tailed Woodstar.



Magnificent Frigatebirds by Dušan Brinkhuizen

We shall also look for the *platensis* subspecies of Long-tailed Mockingbird, an island endemic (a possible future split) while other scrub specialities that we could expect to see include Black-and-white Tyrannulet, Collared Warbling Finch, Tawny-crowned Pygmy Tyrant and Baird's Flycatcher. The rare Grey-capped Cuckoo is often present on the island this time of year but we need to get lucky. From the island, Green Sea Turtles are often seen close to shore, while large schools of colourful fish are numerous (snorkelling is available as an optional extra). We depart from the island in the afternoon and on occasion, both Wedge-rumped and Hornby's Storm Petrels have been seen.

Day 5: Ayampe to Guayquil. We head out early to bird the coastal forest at Rio Ayampe again for any species we may have missed. Colombian Crake is a super rare, enigmatic and poorly known species. However, Ayampe has produced very convincing claims of this species.



Blue-footed Booby by Dušan Brinkhuizen

After another action-packed morning, we will head back to Guayaquil where this short but exciting extension comes to an end. This evening we meet up with any new participants joining us on the Southern Ecuador Endemics tour.

South Ecuador Endemics



Jocotoco Antpitta by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Day 1: Arrivals in Guayaquil. After arriving in Guayaquil, you will be escorted to our fine accommodations, overlooking one of the main plazas of this bustling metropolis. Time permitting, guests are urged to enjoy some time in the surrounding historic blocks or even walk along the newly-renovated *Malecon*. This lovely boardwalk along the Rio Guayas is the heart of the city and even offers some birding and wildlife-viewing opportunities, as Croaking Ground Doves, Great-tailed Grackles, Pacific Parrotlets, Grey-cheeked Parakeets and Guayaquil Iguanas frequent the park areas.

Day 2: Atahualpa and Ecuasal. Guayaquil continues to be the best access, for birders, to Ecuador's arid coastal scrub and estuary habitats. The drive of approximately 90 minutes to the coast crosses some very specific arid habitats, characteristic only of Southwest Ecuador and far Northwest Peru. Access is fairly limited to this xerophytic scrub, but we will search out some of the birds' endemic to this habitat such as Necklaced Spinetail, Grey-and-white Tyrannulet (uncommon), Short-tailed Field Tyrant, and the rare Sulphur-throated Finch. Other birds that inhabit the scrubby lowlands include Crimson-breasted Finch (rare), West Peruvian Dove, Short-tailed Woodstar (uncommon), Peruvian Meadowlark, Superciliated Wren, Pearl Kite and Peruvian Thick-knee (rare, but our 2016 tour saw one adult with a chick). We will also visit the Ecuasal lagoons and estuaries (a Ramsar site) in search of Chilean Flamingo, Roseate Spoonbill, White Ibis,



Violet-throated Metaltail by Dušan Brinkhuizen



Pale-headed Brushfinch by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Black-crowned and Yellow-crowned Night-heron, Peruvian Pelican, South American Tern, Grey, Kelp and Grey-hooded Gulls, Magnificent Frigatebird, flyby Peruvian and Blue-footed Boobies, and scores of migrating shorebirds and waterfowl.

Day 3: Guayaquil to Cuenca via PN Cajas. Today we depart Guayaquil early for the drive to Cajas National Park. This park contains a huge expanse of intact, contiguous paramo and high-altitude temperate and polylepis forests. It is home to many sought-after species, top of the list being the highly range-restricted endemic, Violet-throated Metaltail (which can only be found here!). The park also boasts such beauties as Tit-like Dacnis, Blue-mantled Thornbill, Giant Conebill, Rufous-rumped Bush Tyrant, Grey-breasted Mountain Toucan and Andean Pygmy Owl, amongst many others. We will even have a chance to see the recently split Ecuadorian Rail, formerly a subspecies of Virginia rail. The background for this exciting bird experience is a series of 12,000-foot peaks, high rolling grasslands and stunning glacial lakes.

Day 4: Reserva Yunguilla. This morning we visit the Jocotoco Foundation's Yunguilla preserve, home to an icon of recent bird conservation efforts in Ecuador: Pale-headed Brushfinch! With no reported sighting for almost 30 years, many feared extinction; indeed, this population's discovery in the late 90's was considered a "re-discovery" of the species! Fewer than 10 pairs of this endemic were present in the preserve a decade ago, but through subsequent intensive conservation efforts to thwart the Shiny Cowbird's nest invasions, and a hands-off approach to habitat recovery from cattle grazing, the population numbers have risen impressively. Visiting birders can expect, with effort, great views of this once mythical, critically endangered species, which, until recently, was extremely difficult to encounter. In addition, we will be searching the valley for Line-cheeked Spinetail and Chestnut-crowned Antpitta, as well as a few other fine, dry forest species.

Day 5: Saraguro area. Today we explore the exciting but poorly birded highlands of the Saraguro region. The recent discovery of a new species to science, the striking Blue-throated Hillstar, will be our main target for today! We'll be among the first to explore the remote paramos of this region, in the hope to find this Critically Endangered hummingbird. Access to the site could be difficult, but we'll surely do our very best to find this unique and exclusive endemic! Two other top birds that we'll be looking for are Chestnut-bellied Cotinga and Crescent-faced Antpitta.

With luck, we hope to obtain views of these two extremely tricky birds. Other very desirable species that have been recorded in the area, as well as others we may



Crescent-faced Antpitta by Dubi Shapiro

wish to explore along the way, include Red-faced Parrot, Mountain Caracara and Bearded Guan.



Blue-throated Hillstar by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Day 6: Saraguro to Copalinga. The early morning will be likely spent searching for Chestnut-bellied Cotinga and Crescent-faced Antpitta before we start the journey to Loja.

The remainder of the day will be driving to Copalinga with a couple of birding stops en route. If time allows we will do some birding along the old Loja-Zamora road, otherwise known as the Via San Francisco. Some fine lower-subtropical species remain here, despite farming along the road. Anything from Coppery-chested Jacamar to Ecuadorian Tyrannulet is possible on this stretch of road. We plan to arrive at Copalinga in time to enjoy some late-afternoon hummingbird viewing, and if we are very lucky the very rare Grey Tinamou that occasionally visits a corn feeder. At dusk, we will try for Blackish Nightjar.

Day 7: Bombuscaro and Copalinga. Coppery-chested Jacamar, Black-streaked Puffbird, Amazonian Umbrellabird, Andean Cock-of-the-rock…these are just a few of the wonderful birds that we hope to encounter during our full day at Bombuscaro and exploring the trail at Copalinga! Being perfectly situated just 2.5kms from the Bombuscaro entrance to famed Podacarpus National Park, basing our efforts from Copalinga will make for an easy day's visit to the park.

Situated at around 1,100 meters in elevation, Bombuscaro is one of the few places where the visiting birder can access pristine, untouched, foothill forest. A good host of wildlife (from birds to monkeys) representative of the upper Amazon basin is present, co-mingling with flora and fauna typical of lower subtropical elevations. Most of the prime, target birds of this area, however, are restricted to the foothills of the Eastern Andes. The list of hopefuls includes Band-bellied Owl, Chestnut-tipped Toucanet, several species of hummingbirds, White-breasted Parakeet, Lanceolated Monklet, Grey-mantled Wren, Foothill Antwren, Foothill Elaenia, Blue-rumped Manakin, Andean Motmot, and much more besides.



Grey-breasted Mountain Toucan by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Copalinga itself hosts many wonderful species of birds, herps and orchids. The hummingbird feeders attract a few new species including the rare Black-throated Brilliant. On the *Verbena* flowers, we might get Violet-headed Hummingbird and the spectacular Wire-crested Thorntail. If we have any free time, the orchid garden has over 30 species of orchids. Copalinga truly is a paradise, and is always a real treat!

Day 8: El Zarza to Yankuam. In the morning we'll visit El Zarza Wildlife



Golden-eared Tanager by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Refuge located in the Cordillera del Condor. This isolated mountain range hosts several localised species endemic to south east Ecuador and northern Peru. Several rare and amazing species have been seen here including Spectacled Prickletail, Straw-backed Tanager, Roraiman Flycatcher and Jet Manakin. The mixed-species flocks that move through the cloud forest here might yield Golden-eyed Flowerpiercer, Equatorial Greytail, Chestnut-bellied Thrush, Plumbeous-crowned Tyrannulet, Yellow-throated, Golden-eared and the stunning Vermilion Tanager, to mention but a few.

At higher elevations we have chances for the very local Bar-winged Wood Wren, a Cordillera del Condor speciality. The poorly known Subtropical Pygmy Owl has also been reported regularly from this site.

The rest of the day will be spent travelling to Yankuam with some birding stops en route. We hope to arrive at Yankuam with sufficient time to explore the far side of the river, but often enough we arrive just in time to get settled in for dinner. Roadside stops on the way can yield anything from the bamboo-dependent Black-and-white Tody-Flycatcher (Tody-Tyrant) to the typically amazon Blue-crowned Trogon. The day's drive and birding will undoubtedly be loads of fun! And as for the scenery: verdant green blankets of forest broken by huge, tepui-like limestone escarpments towering thousands of feet high. Simply incredible!!

Days 9 & 10: Yankuam, and the Orange-throated Tanager. Yankuam, and the Maycu reserve, are known as THE place to see the legendary Orange-throated Tanager, and we have been successful in finding this magnificent bird on every former visit to the site! Not only can we expect this extremely rare and spectacular species, but avian surprises turn up every year. One of the latest additions to Ecuador's massive bird list, White-bellied Pygmy Tyrant, came from this area, and we have seen it now several times.



Orange-throated Tanager by Dušan Brinkhuizen

We'll start out birding along the main road, up into the tanager's habitat. Along the way we've encountered dozens of great species: Rufous-winged, Ornate and Foothill Antwrens, Fiery-throated Fruiteater, Foothill Schiffornis, Yellow-shouldered Grosbeak, Northern Chestnut-tailed (Zimmer's), White-plumed, Hairy-crested and White-browed Antbirds, Purplish and Great Jacamars, and an amazing array of tanagers can be seen from the road. After we encounter the Orange-throated Tanager, we will continue searching for targets like Bamboo Foliage-gleaner, Golden-winged Tody-Flycatcher, Military Macaw, Gilded and Lemon-throated Barbets, Lettered and Chestnut-eared Aracaris, Grey-tailed Piha and we even



Buff-fronted Owl by Dušan Brinkhuizen

have chances for the bizarre Hoatzin. Either way, this remote, seldom-visited corner of Ecuador will fascinate and delight us!

Day 11: Yankuam to Tapichalaca. Our birding this morning very much depends on our success yesterday. We shall tailor our early morning plans to search for any species that we may still require. We may continue to bird the lower foothills for a couple of hours, alternatively, we may head into the subtropics to look for other specialities. After our early morning exploits, it will take the better part of the day to arrive at our destination, which will suit us just fine as birding and sightseeing along the way will be captivating and wonderful.

Day 12: Tapichalaca. The flagship property of the Jocotoco Foundation, and type locality for the namesake Jocotoco Antpitta, is truly an outstanding place. Ranging in elevation from 2,900m (treeline) down to 1,500m (new Parker tract), the Tapichalaca reserve is home to over 400 bird species, including the near-endemic Bearded Guan, White-breasted (White-necked) Parakeet and Orange-banded Flycatcher. Jocotoco and Chestnut-naped Antpittas are fed worms; the near-endemic Chusquea Tapaculo thrives; Golden-plumed Parakeets nest; Andean Potoos and Chestnut-crested Cotingas are occasionally seen; and the reserve, as well as its prize list of birds, continues to grow!

We will devote a full day to accessing as much of a range in elevation as time and weather will allow. The morning focus will be the trail system ranging above and below the Casa Simpson (main lodge). Some of the birds we hope to encounter on the trails include Bearded Guan, Grey-breasted Mountain Toucan, Barred and Green-and-black Fruiteaters, various furnariids, Slate-crowned, Rufous and Undulated Antpittas, Chusquea Tapaculo, Orange-banded Flycatcher and an incredible list of flocking tanagers.

With luck, we might even come across two enigmatic, spectacular birds of the high Andes – the noisy but scarce White-capped Tanager and the rare and elusive Masked Saltator!

The hummingbird feeders and compost heap near the lodge boast some 20+ possible species: Black-throated Tody-Tyrant, Golden-plumed Parakeet and many more can sometimes be seen right from the porch. If time allows, we will visit middle-to-lower elevation where we might come across Black-chested Fruiteater or Chestnut-crested Cotinga if we are vigilant. A variety of lower subtropical tanagers and flocking species can be seen, on occasion, right from the main road. If time permits, we will venture even lower, towards Palanda, in hopes of picking up a few Marañon endemics, though a trip to Northern Peru is necessary to see the whole array.



Rainbow Starfrontlet by Adam Riley



Elegant Crescentchest by Adam Riley

Day 13: Tapichalaca to Jorupe. Our early morning birding depends on what species we need, and we may decide to hazard a trip up Cerro Toledo for Neblina Metaltail and some high-elevation species including Mouse-colored Thistletail and Paramo Tapaculo. Given the condition of the road and frequent landslides, Cerro Toledo might, however, not be accessible – yet we remain optimistic! We will pass by the arid valley of Catamayo, and if time permits, we will have a try for specialities like Drab Seedeater, Tumbes Sparrow and Elegant Crescentchest. Upon entering the truly deciduous, dry scrub typical of the Tumbes Mountain region, we will search for the handsome Baird's Flycatcher and the very local White-headed Brushfinch.

In case we arrive timely at Jocotoco Foundation's Jorupe Reserve, Amazilia Hummingbird will no doubt entertain us at the feeders, while we listen for Pacific Pygmy Owl, Pale-browed Tinamou and Rufous-necked Wood Rail at dusk. If we're lucky, the local pair of Spectacled Owls will allow us some close views. On our 2016 tour, we encountered the enigmatic Buff-fronted Owl this very evening, and we will certainly try for it again!

Day 14: Jorupe. This is the second of three preserves owned and managed by the Jocotoco Foundation that we will visit during the tour. This particular land was purchased to protect a large tract of Tumbes semi-deciduous forest. The Tumbes region is one of the largest areas of particular endemism on the continent, hosting more than 40 species only found in the various arid and montane habitats of far south-west Ecuador and north-west Peru. During our two full days in this area, we will search out many of these localised species.

As we wander through the fine set of forest trails through the open understory, beneath viny tangles and among bloated ceibas over 100 feet tall, we will look and listen for skulkers such as Pale-browed Tinamou, Watkins's Antpitta and Ochre-bellied Dove. Henna-hooded and Rufous-necked Foliage-gleaners will be teased out of dense brush for close views. The stunning Ecuadorian Trogon is often encountered and viewed at length. Woodpeckers are in evidence, with Guayaquil, Scarlet-backed and Golden-olive, as well as Ecuadorian Piculet to be found. Other enticing species that we will hopefully see include Blackish-headed Spinetail, Speckle-breasted Wren, Short-tailed Swift, White-tailed Jay, Black-



Pale-browed Tinamou by Dušan Brinkhuizen



El Oro Parakeet by Dušan Brinkhuizen

capped Sparrow, Grey-breasted Flycatcher, Tumbes Pewee, Black-and-white Tanager, and, of course, the vocal and lovely Grey-and-gold Warbler!

Nightbirds are a must at Jorupe and we will take advantage, weather dependent, to search for more owls including West Peruvian Screech Owl.

Day 15: Utuana. As the warm air off the Pacific rises (despite the Humboldt Current effects that force such arid climates near the coast), clouds form and rain falls over the higher altitudes of the Andes in the Tumbes.

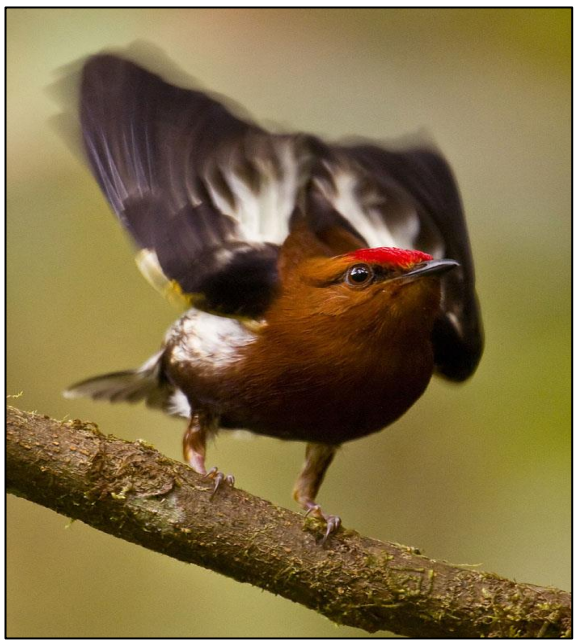
However, the scarce amount of rainfall (most precipitation here is in the form of mist and fog) over Utuana is consistent with endemic patterns lower down. Here, we will look for some real gems, including the showy Rainbow Starfrontlet, Purple-throated Sunangel, Line-cheeked Spinetail, Loja Tyrannulet and fun and vocal Chapman's Antshrike. In this bamboo-laden habitat, rare birds like Jelski's Chat-Tyrant, Grey-headed Antbird and the recently split Piura Hemispingus persist, all of which are high on the list of our target birds representative of the region. Black-cowled Saltator is yet another fancy Tumbes bird to be found here before we visit a local church in the small town of Sozoranga (no particular religious affiliation necessary!) to delight us at this often reliable colony of Chestnut-collared Swallows. During the remainder of the day, we may spend more time at lower elevations in case we missed any important target species yesterday. (**Please note:** In 2016, Utuana was NOT accessible due to a major landslide. However, we did have alternative sites nearby and managed to get most of the above-mentioned targets).

Day 16: Jorupe to Buenaventura via Zapotillo. In the morning, we venture down to the lowest elevation of the Tumbes region in Ecuador. Many specialities are far easier to find here, including West Peruvian Dove, Black-and-white Tanager, Superciliated Wren, Elegant Crescentchest and Baird's Flycatcher. It is also our best chance of finding the impressive and rare Comb Duck. Zapotillo specials include Tumbes Hummingbird and Tumbes Tyrant, but both species can be quite hard to find at this time of year, and their movements are not fully understood. There will be a bit of birding upon nearing Buenaventura, though most of the afternoon will be devoted to travel.



Tumbes Tyrant by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Days 17 & 18: Buenaventura. The host of birds this Jocotoco Foundation preserve protects is simply staggering! It was originally set up to protect the few El Oro Parakeets left in existence, and to rehabilitate their numbers in the wild by pioneering nest-box efforts. During the study of the avifauna of this property in its early stages, an entirely new species was



Club-winged Manakin by Dušan Brinkhuizen

discovered, the El Oro (Ecuadorian) Tapaculo! The reason this preserve boasts well over 300 species within its borders is due to the range of elevation it encompasses. An unmaintained private road cuts through the preserve from nearly 1,200m elevation to under 800m. This transects through pristine habitat, allowing the visiting birder easy walking along one of the best forest tracks in the country.

These two full days at Buenaventura will be dedicated to birding all elevations of the preserve in search of the wonderful myriad of species available. On top of the easy access to the preserve's forests, the lodge itself has one of the finest and most impressive feeding stations in the world. Not only do they feed hummingbirds of 10 species (by the hundreds!) regularly, but honeycreepers, bananaquits, tanagers and even mammals such as Coati's and Agouti's make forays to the banana and sweetwater feeders. Best of all, this can all be enjoyed from the comfort of roomy sofas and comfy recliners. Birding in style, at its finest!

A quick list of some of the more extraordinary and wonderful birds of Buenaventura includes Fasciated Tiger Heron, Grey-backed, Barred and Grey-lined Hawks, Red-masked Parakeet, Rose-faced Parrot (rare), White-tipped Sicklebill, Crowned Woodnymph (the subspecies here is sometimes split as Emerald-bellied Woodnymph) plus 21 other species of hummers!, Golden-headed Quetzal, 3 species of motmot, Barred Puffbird, Crimson-rumped Toucanet, Brown-billed Scythebill, Line-cheeked Spinetail, 4 species of antshrike including Great, 3 species of antbirds including Esmeraldas Antbird, Plain-backed Antpitta, Ochraceous Attila, Pacific Royal Flycatcher, Scaled Fruiteater, the spectacular Long-wattled Umbrellabird, Club-winged Manakin, Song Wren, Brownish Twistwing, White-throated Spadebill – and many, many more!!!

Day 19: Buenaventura to Guayaquil and deaprt. En route to Guayaquil from Buenaventura are two distinctly important bird areas – Manglares Churute and La Tembladera. La Tembladera is a large wetland where we might encounter species like Roseate Spoonbill, Muscovy Duck (genuinely wild birds), two species of Whistling Ducks, Anhinga, Sora and possibly the rare Spotted Rail. The nearby Santa Rosa shrimp ponds are surrounded by scrub and most of the species inhabiting this vegetation can be seen from the dykes around the ponds (sometimes access to the actual shrimp ponds is prohibited but we can still pick up some birds from the public road). Species of interest include Ecuadorian Ground Dove, Superciliated Wren, Pacific (Peruvian) Pygmy Owl, and both Chestnut-throated and Parrot-billed Seedeaters, are possibilities. The ponds themselves host several species of waterfowl, gulls, terns and waders.



Pacific Royal Flycatcher by Dušan Brinkhuizen



Golden-headed Quetzal by Dušan Brinkhuizen

The nearby mangroves have a good site for seeing Rufous-necked Wood Rail in case water levels are low. Manglares Churute and the 20-30 miles of road on either side, harbour some of the best freshwater wetlands in the country. While off-highway access is limited, from the road we often encounter scores of herons and egrets of all types, Snail Kites by the dozen (one time 100+ birds were seen!), and take the time to scope one of the most bizarre birds on the planet: the magnificent Horned Screamer! This strangely disjunct population of Horned Screamer represents the only substantial population of this species outside its home range in the Amazon and Orinoco basins.

Other birds we will search for during quick stops en route include Snowy-throated Kingbird, Jet Antbird and Pacific Royal Flycatcher.

We'll arrive back in Guayaquil in the mid to late afternoon where the tour will conclude.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:

Tour dates, prices, single supplement rates, approximate flight costs 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 5 of the Pacific Coast Extension and from dinner on day 1 to lunch on day 19 for those on the main 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 Amazonia. 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 the rainforest areas the humidity will be high and potentially uncomfortable.
- Cajas, Saraguro, and Cerro Toledo are often cold to very cold and sometimes wet too.
- Some sites on the tour are at high elevation (above 12,000 feet).
- It is important for the comfort of your fellow travellers that you do not over-pack. Kindly stick to 20kgs (44lb) for check in luggage and 8kgs (18lb) for hand luggage.

- This Ecuador tour does 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 basic yet 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 Pacific Coast Extension will depart from Guayaquil 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 early afternoon of day 5 in Guayaquil.

The Main Tour will begin in Guayaquil 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-afternoon of day 19 in Guayaquil. Do not book your international departures before 20:00.

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:

There are two major ports of entry into Ecuador. José Joaquín de Olmedo International Airport, Guayaquil (IATA: GYE), and Mariscal Sucre International Airport, Quito (IATA: UIO). **Please DO NOT book any flights until you have consulted the Rockjumper office for confirmation on the status of the tour.**