ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

Panama

Darién Extension

13th March to 18th March 2024 (6 days)

Best of Birding Panama

18th March to 26th March 2024 (9 days)

Chiriquí Extension

26th March to 31st March 2024 (6 days)



Golden-collared Manakin by George L. Armistead

The gateway between South and Central America, Panama's privileged location makes it one of the most spectacular birding destinations in the world. With a unique combination of Neotropical specialities from both North and South America, this is also an incredibly friendly land, where the sun rises over the Caribbean and sets in the Pacific.

On our Best of Panama tour, we will explore some of the most accessible rainforests and high-altitude

cloud forests the country has to offer. The native flora is simply stunning, and more than 10,000 species have already been identified within the country! Around 930 bird species – more than the number found in North America and Europe combined – make their home in this tropical paradise. With roughly 29% of its territory protected within 15 nature reserves, Panama is fast becoming a must-visit destination for birders and nature travellers the world over. We look forward to having you join us on this unforgettable birding and wildlife experience in the tropical forests of Central America!

THE TOUR AT A GLANCE…

DARIÉN EXTENSION

Day 1	**Arrivals in Panama City**
Day 2	**Panama City to the Darien via Nusagandi and San Francisco**
Day 3 to 5	**Darien & surrounds**
Day 6	**Darien to Panama City and depart**

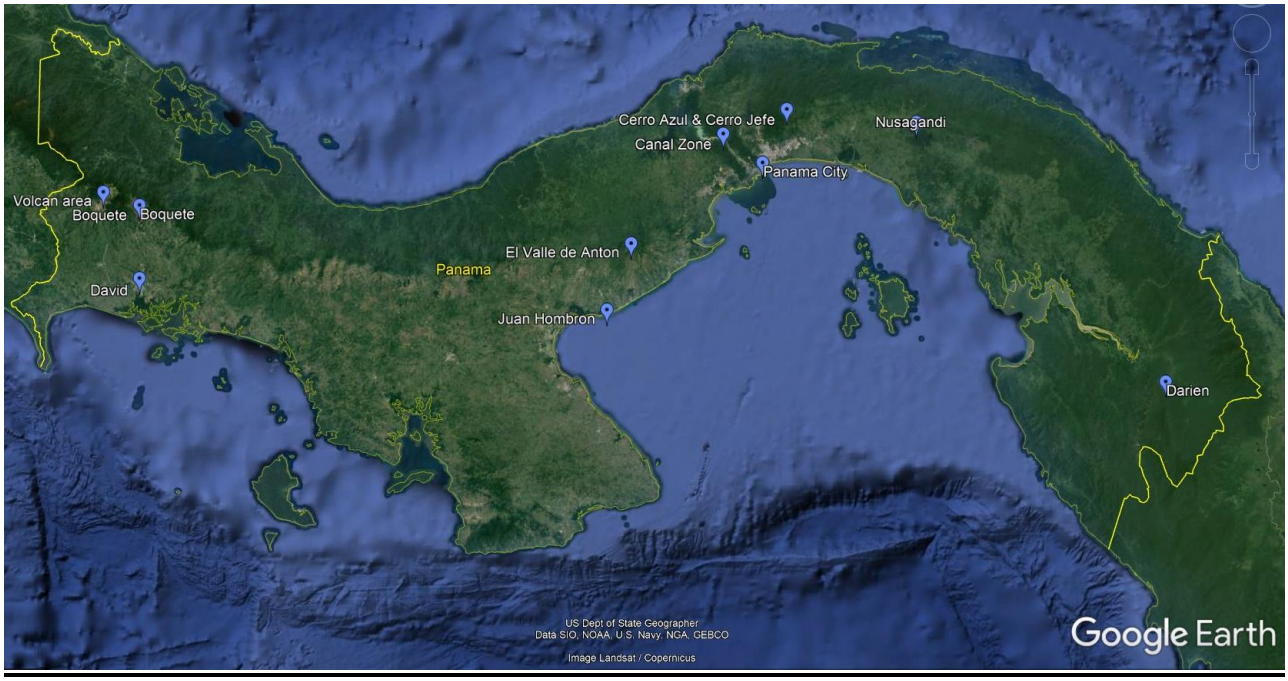
THE ITINERARY

Day 1	**Arrivals in Panama City**
Day 2	**Cerro Azul and environs**
Day 3	**Semaphore Hill Road, Ammo Dump Pond & Soberania National Park**
Day 4	**Pipeline Road & Rainforest Discovery Centre**
Day 5	**Metropolitan National Park and transfer to Valle de Anton**
Day 6	**Cerro Gaital National Park**
Day 7	**El Chiru, Santa Clara and Juan Hombron**
Day 8	**Altos del Maria**
Day 9	**Valle de Anton to Panama City**

CHIRIQUÍ HIGHLANDS EXTENSION

Day 1	**Panama City to Boquete via flight to David**
Day 2	**Fortuna and surrounds**
Day 3	**Volcan Baru & Boquete area**
Day 4	**Boquete to Volcan via Sendero Los Quetzales**
Day 5	**La Amistad National Park and Los Lagos de Volcan**
Day 6	**Volcan to Panama City via David**

TOUR ROUTE MAP…



Panama - Darién Extension



White-fronted Nunbird by David Hoddinott

Those who decide to join us on our Darién Extension will have the chance to explore one of Central America's most remote wildernesses. The Province of Darién is located east of the Panama Canal, on the border of neighbouring Colombia and nowhere else in Panama does nature express itself so abundantly than in this region of isolated wilderness! We will be spending our time in the little-explored northern forested lowlands of the Darién. Very few birders have visited here and already

some very exciting species, including Panama's national bird, the huge and majestic Harpy Eagle, as well as Crested Eagle, Red-throated Caracara, Bare-crowned and Dull-mantled Antbirds, Black Antshrike, Black Oropendola, Double-banded Greytail, Dusky-backed Jacamar, Spectacled Parrotlet, Grey-cheeked Nunlet and Spot-breasted Woodpecker, among dozens of other Darién and Choco avian specialities, have been found in the locations that we will be birding. Further surprises are no doubt to be expected!

After departing Panama City, we head off to our lodgings in the Darién. Day by day, we will explore some of the best birding locations along the end of the Pan-American Highway and expect to see another Several species found nowhere else in Panama! We hope to have you join us on this fantastic beginning to our Panamanian tropical birding adventure!!



Sapayoa by Rich Lindie

Day 1: Arrivals in Panama City. Today is scheduled as an arrival day in Panama City. Our hotel is conveniently located near to Tocumen International Airport allowing for a short transfer and some relaxation before the Darien Extension kicks off properly tomorrow morning. While acclimatising to the tropical heat, we may find a number of common Central American species in the gardens such as Great-tailed Grackle, Clay-colored Thrush, Variable Seedeater, Tropical Kingbird, Blue-grey Tanager and Rufous-tailed Hummingbird. This evening we will all meet for dinner to discuss our forthcoming adventures.

Day 2: Panama City to the Darien via Nusagandi and San Francisco. We're off to an early start this morning to make our way east to Darién! We will head out along the Pan-American Highway and as day breaks, we will keep our eyes open along the way for Savanna Hawk, Northern Crested Caracara and other roadside birds. Our first stop will be in Nusagandi, where the extensive Caribbean rainforest is home to some of our most-wanted species. Along these wet trails, we will search for the enigmatic Sapayoa, as well as White-eared Conebill, Slate-throated Gnatcatcher, Green Hermit, Green Honeycreeper, Stripe-throated Wren, Carmiol's, Rufous-winged and Sulphur-rumped Tanager, Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner and Blue-fronted Parrotlet.



Snowy-bellied Hummingbird by George L. Armistead

Continuing along the Pan-American Highway, we will stop at Bayano Lake, Panama's second largest lake, which supports a large colony of Neotropic Cormorants, and is a good place to look for Cocoi Heron, Anhinga, Purple Gallinule and Pied Water Tyrant. A short trail leading from the water's edge is a great place to search for Black Antshrike, Bare-crowned Antbird and

Rufous-winged Antwren. We will stop at the Rio Mono Bridge not far from the lake, where the surrounding forest is home to One-colored Becard, Orange-crowned Oriole, Blue Cotinga, Pied Puffbird, Blue Ground Dove and more. We'll scan the river below for Green-and-rufous Kingfisher and Fasciated Tiger Heron. Heading east from here, we will next stop in Torti, just before entering into the province of Darién. While enjoying a delicious Panamanian lunch, we'll watch the hummingbird feeders for Scaly-breasted Hummingbird and Long-billed Starthroat, amongst others.

After a re-energising lunch, we will make our way across the border into Panama's easternmost and largest province – Darién. We will carry on to our hotel, where we should arrive before dusk in good time to get settled into our surroundings.



Grey-cheeked Nunlet by Rich Lindie

Days 3 to 5: Darien & surrounds. Over the next three full days, we shall take advantage of several quiet roads and trails within the Darién. As the sun rises over eastern Panama on our first morning in the Darien, we will start by scanning the towering treetops for Keel-billed and Yellow-throated Toucans, Red-lored Amazon, Red-lored Amazon, Black and Crested Oropendolas, Red-throated Caracara, White-headed Wren, Sooty-headed Tyrannulet, Barred Puffbird, Pale-bellied Hermit, Golden-headed and Golden-collared Manakins, White-fronted Nunbird, Black-billed Flycatcher, Sooty-headed Tyrannulet, Orange-crowned Oriole, Black Antshrike, Grey-cheeked Nunlet, Double-banded Greytail and Ochre-lored Flatbill. Semiplumbeous Hawk, Slaty-backed Forest Falcon and Ornate Hawk-Eagle are also possible.



Harpy Eagle by Rich Lindie

In the afternoon, we may visit Las Lagunas Road, a countryside road through open farmland, dry scrub and roadside habitat. Along the roadsides, we hope to see Striped Cuckoo, Red-breasted Blackbird, Spot-breasted Woodpecker, White-headed Wren, Yellow-breasted Flycatcher, Giant, Shiny and Bronzed Cowbirds, Southern Lapwing, Muscovy Duck, and Laughing and Aplomado Falcons, while even Little and Dwarf Cuckoos have been seen in thickets along this road. We will also scan the pond at the end of the road for Black-capped Donacobius (a bird that has proven taxonomically challenging to classify in recent years due to uncertain affinities) and Yellow-hooded Blackbird. As dusk approaches, we shall scout around for nocturnal denizens of the forest including Short-tailed Nighthawk and Black-and-white Owl.

On at least one morning, we shall explore areas near the Chucunaque River, whilst another will be dedicated to a search for the mighty Harpy Eagle –

most likely in Darien National Park. Our birding activities then depend, to a large extent, on which species we still desire views of.



Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth by George L. Armistead

Day 6: Darien to Panama City. For our last morning in the Darién, we will head over to the property of the Tierra Nueva Foundation. This large property houses a technical school with a focus on applications in agriculture and is working towards sustainable development for the people of Darién. The property protects extensive mature secondary growth rainforest, and we will spend a few hours exploring the trails in hopes of finding Black-billed Flycatcher, Red-rumped and Golden-green Woodpeckers, Slaty-backed Forest Falcon, Spot-crowned Barbet, Purple-throated Fruitcrow, Cinnamon, One-colored and Cinereous Becards, the eastern race of the Chestnut-backed Antbird (which shows white spots on the wings), White-eared Conebill, Orange-crowned Oriole and, if we are very lucky, perhaps even a spectacular Great Curassow! After lunch, we begin our journey back to Panama City where the tour will conclude in the late afternoon at Tocumen International Airport. For some this will be the end of their birding expedition to Panama, while the rest of us continue onwards to the Best of Birding Panama main tour.

Best of Birding Panama



Rufous-crested Coquette by Rich Lindie

Pipeline Road, Ammo Dump Ponds, Rainforest Discovery Centre, and the Parque Metropolitano Panama are among the most famous birding sites in Panama, if not in all of Central America. The diversity and quality of birds and birding in the area very near to the Panamanian Capital makes this area perhaps the most convenient and fruitful birding anywhere in Latin America. Some 350 species can be found within a 30-mile radius of the city.



Rosy Thrush-Tanager by Adam Riley

Day 1: Arrivals in Panama City. Today is set aside as an arrival day. For some, this will be the start of their Panamanian adventure, while for others, we will arrive in Panama City after a stunning week in the Darién! This evening we stay at our conveniently located lodgings in Panama City!

Day 2: Cerro Azul and environs. An early start will have us travelling east of Panama City to the foothills of Chagres National Park. Here, a completely different climate and, more importantly, a different suite of birds await us! We will ascend into the foothills of Cerro Azul (750 m) and Cerro Jefe (1,000 m). These peaks, covered in elfin cloud forest, are home to some special birds, including Bay-headed, Speckled, Rufous-winged and Black-and-yellow Tanagers, the endemic Stripe-cheeked Woodpecker, Yellow-eared Toucanet and Russet Antshrike.

Aside from all these glorious birds, one of the main

draw cards to this area are the hummingbirds; we will visit some of the gardens and residences in the area, as their feeders attract dozens of White-necked Jacobin, Snowy-bellied and Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, endemic Violet-capped Hummingbird, Rufous-crested Coquette, Green Hermit, Crowned Woodnymph, Violet-headed and Blue-chested Hummingbird, and both White-vented and Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer. Hummingbirds are not the only denizens prevalent at these easy meals, with Rufous-capped Warbler, Black-cheeked Woodpecker, Blue-grey, Crimson-backed, Summer, Palm and Bay-headed Tanager, alongside Shining, Red-legged and Green Honeycreeper, and both Thick-billed and Yellow-crowned Euphonia taking advantage.

Day 3: Semaphore Hill Road, Ammo Dump Ponds & Soberania National Park. After an early breakfast, we will head down to Semaphore Hill, surrounded on either side by lowland humid rainforest, searching for forest species that may include up to 5 species of trogon, Fasciated and Black-crowned Antshrikes, Red-capped and Blue-crowned Manakins, Broad-billed and Rufous Motmots, White-whiskered Puffbird, Double-toothed Kite, Spotted Antbird, Great Tinamou, Black-faced Antthrush, and many flycatchers, including Bright-rumped Attila, Yellow-margined and Olivaceous Flatbills, Dot-winged, White-flanked and Checker-throated Antwrens, Olivaceous Woodcreeper and White-shouldered Tanager.



Violet-headed Hummingbird by Rich Lindie

After lunch, we shall visit the nearby Ammo Dump Ponds, a large water body replete with surrounding wetlands and forest, offering a great variety of birds to be seen! Rufescent Tiger Heron, Little Blue Heron, White-throated Crake, Snail Kite, Wattled Jacana, Boat-billed Heron, Grey-necked Wood Rail, Ringed, Amazon and Green Kingfishers, along with American Pygmy Kingfisher, can be found in and around the pond. The surrounding areas are great habitats for Greater and Smooth-billed Anis, Black-striped Sparrow, Crimson-backed and Blue-grey Tanagers, Variable, Yellow-bellied and Ruddy-breasted Seedeaters, Grey-breasted Martin, Mangrove and Southern Rough-winged Swallows, Streaked Flycatcher and Tropical Kingbird, all of which are commonly found here. Over the Panama Canal,



Dot-winged Antwren by Adam Riley

we will watch for Magnificent Frigatebird and Brown Pelican.

Day 4: Pipeline Road & Rainforest Discovery Centre. After an early dawn breakfast, we will head out for a full day of birding along the world famous Pipeline Road! First, we shall head to the private Rainforest Discovery Centre, giving us access to the 40-metre high canopy tower, perhaps one of the best towers in all of Central America, never mind Panama. This is sure to be a major highlight, even for those of you who don't like heights very much. With the canopy at eye level, we can look forward to a host of species normally seen in flight or from below only. Red-lored Amazon, Sclaed Pigeon, Blue-headed Parrot, giant Keel-billed and Yellow-throated Toucans, Collared Aracari and one of our major targets for the day, Blue Cotinga.



Stripe-cheeked Woodpecker by Adam Riley

Canopy flocks often contain hidden gems, so we shall be on the lookout for Green Shrike-Vireo, Black-chested Jay, White-necked Puffbird, Slaty-tailed Trogon, Yellow-rumped Cacique and the diminutive jewel, Red-legged Honeycreeper.

After thoroughly gorging ourselves on a healthy treat of new species, we shall return to terra firme and spend the remainder of the day walking the Pipeline Road. This old dirt road, built to access a pipeline installed along the canal during World War II, is now surrounded by some of the best mature secondary forests in all of Central America! Over 400 bird species have been recorded here. As we walk along the first portion of the road through Caribbean slope forest, we hope to see a plethora of forest species including White-bellied Antbird, Little Tinamou, Black-bellied Wren, Southern Bentbill, Golden-collared Manakin, Purple-throated Fruitcrow, White-winged Becard, Crimson-crested and Lineated Woodpeckers, White-tailed Trogon, Russet-winged Schiffornis and Streak-chested Antpitta! We also hope to come across an ant swarm, where Spotted, Bicolored and Ocellated Antbirds, Northern Barred Woodcreeper, Song Wren, Grey-headed Tanager and others gather for a feeding frenzy. Pipeline Road is, in addition, a great place to search for rainforest mammals, including White-faced Capuchin, White-nosed Coati and Northern Tamandua. If we are lucky, we may find a number of other specialities, including Speckled Mourner, Spot-crowned Antvireo and Moustached Antwren. The rare Rufous-vented Ground Cuckoo is occasionally seen here too.



Green Shrike-Vireo by George L. Armistead

Day 5: Metropolitan Park and transfer to Valle de Anton. We will start our day by driving to the

outskirts of Panama City and visiting the Metropolitan National Park. This is the largest tropical forest park found within city limits, in all of Latin America. While not particularly large, only 232 hectares, the park has a staggering species record with a bird list in excess of 250, 45 species of mammals and more than 280 species of tree.

High on our list of target species here is the endemic Panamanian Tyrannulet, whilst this is also a fabulous location to get good views of Lance-tailed Manakin. With a little luck, we could also find the desirable Rosy Thrush-Tanager, Fasciated Antshrike, Southern Bentbill or Tiny Hawk. If we find a mixed feeding flock, the action could well erupt with Lesser and Scrub Greenlet cavorting amongst migrant warblers, Slaty-tailed, White-tailed and Gartered Trogon, Dusky and White-bellied Antbird, Yellow-crowned and Brown-capped Tyrannulet, Greenish Elaenia, Panamanian and Streaked Flycatchers, up to 5 species of wren, and a host of migrant warblers, including Black-and-white, Bay-breasted, Yellow and Chestnut-sided.



Tody Motmot by Adam Riley

After a good few hours of birding in the park, it will be time to leave Panama City and head west to Valle de Anton. Approximately two hours down the Panamerican Highway, we should reach the foothills of western Panama in time for lunch.
After a delicious meal, we will set out to explore the nearby trails that traverse the dark understory of foothill forest. We will be searching for Garden Emerald, Rufous-capped Warbler, Tawny-crested Tanager, Tawny-capped Euphonia and Bay Wren amongst others. The rare and spectacular Rufous-vented Ground Cuckoo follows swarms of army ants through these forest trails, but we will consider ourselves extraordinarily lucky to come across one.

Day 6: Cerro Gaital. After breakfast this morning, we will head up the hill to Cerro Gaital. At an elevation of 1,000m, it is covered in dense, humid cloud forests. We will walk a rocky trail through the forest, a great place to search for Blue-throated Toucanet, Plain Antvireo, Scale-crested Pygmy Tyrant, Collared Trogon (orange-bellied form), Barred Forest Falcon, White-tipped Sicklebill, Green Hermit, Green-crowned Brilliant, Scarlet-thighed Dacnis, White-ruffed Manakin, Common Bush Tanager, Slaty Antwren, Northern Schiffornis and Spotted Barbtail, while even Scaled Antpitta has been seen here!



Raptor Migration by George L. Armistead

After lunch, we will head out to the Cara Iguana Trail, where a blend of dry forest and open area gives us the opportunity to find

some different species, including Lance-tailed Manakin, Tody Motmot, Rufous-breasted Wren, Lesser Elaenia, Yellow-olive Flatbill, Panamanian Flycatcher, Barred Antshrike, White-bellied Antbird, Garden Emerald, Long-billed Gnatwren, Pale-eyed Pygmy Tyrant and a number of migrants including Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Green and Worm-eating Warblers.



Yellow-eared Toucanet by Adam Riley

Day 7: El Chiru, Santa Clara and Juan Hombron. After an early breakfast, we will head down to El Chiru and Juan Hombron in the Pacific lowlands, where dry forest, scrubby fields and sandy beaches meet the Pacific Ocean. At El Chiru, we will search out the dry forest specialists, including Pale-eyed Pygmy Tyrant, Golden-fronted Greenlet, the near-endemic Veraguan Mango, Crested Bobwhite, Northern Scrub Flycatcher, Mouse-colored Tyrannulet, Rufous-browed Peppershrike, Plain-breasted and Blue Ground Doves, Red-breasted Blackbird, Striped Cuckoo, Yellow-crowned Amazon and Brown-throated Parakeet. We may take a picnic lunch at the popular Santa Clara beach, where we will spend some time scanning the beach and open water for Cabot's, Royal and Elegant Terns, Franklin's and Laughing Gulls, Nazca and Brown Booby, Least, Western and Spotted Sandpipers, Sanderling, Willet and Whimbrel. We hope to find Sapphire-throated Hummingbird working the coastal shrubbery.

Then we will head off to the rice fields of Juan Hombron to search for a number of scarce Panamanian raptors including Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, Savanna Hawk, Pearl Kite and Aplomado Falcon, as well as the more common Yellow-headed and Northern Crested Caracaras and Roadside, Grey-lined and Short-tailed Hawks. Other Pacific lowland species we hope to find today include Southern Lapwing, Tricolored Heron, Wood Stork, Glossy Ibis, Ferruginous Pygmy Owl, Straight-billed Woodcreeper and Pale-breasted Spinetail. After a day's birding in the dry lowlands, we will head back up to our lodgings in Valle de Anton, where the cooler foothills provide some respite from the coastal heat.



Black-crowned Antpitta by Adam Riley

Day 8: Altos del Maria. This morning we will head up Altos del Maria, one of the highest elevations we will reach on our tour. As dawn breaks over the highlands, the spectacular mountains blanketed in cloud forest, vast valleys and towering cliffs come into view.

Ascending the excellent paved roads, we will climb a ridge to roughly 1,100m, where lush, mist-laden cloud forest and an enticing variety of highland forest birds await us. Some of the species we will be looking for

here are Black-crowned and Streak-chested Antpittas, Black Guan, White Hawk, Ornate Hawk-Eagle, Brown-hooded Parrot, Spotted Woodcreeper, Red-faced Spinetail, Ochraceous Wren, Spotted Barbtail, White-vented Euphonia, Yellow-eared Toucanet, Grey-breasted Wood Wren, Pale-vented Thrush, Tufted Flycatcher, Sulphur-rumped Myiobius, Smoky-brown Woodpecker and even the bizarre Brown-billed Scythebill is seen here regularly. Hummingbirds are a common sight in these highlands, and we hope to find Green Hermit, Band-tailed Barbthroat, White-tailed Emerald, Green-crowned Brilliant, Purple-throated Mountaingem, White-tipped Sicklebill and the exquisite Snowcap (very rare)! After a picnic lunch alongside a small lake, we will drop down into a valley and then up the ridge on the opposite side, reaching some large swathes of mature humid forest, where we will explore the forests and roadside spots in search of even more forest birds before heading back to our lodgings for a final celebratory dinner together.



Lance-tailed Manakin by Adam Riley

Day 9: Valle de Anton to Panama City. This morning we depart Valle de Anton after breakfast and make the return journey to Panama City, where the main tour will conclude. For some this will be the end of their birding expedition to Panama, while the rest of us continue onwards to the Chiriqui Highlands in western Panama for the start of our extension to this stunning birding area.

Chiriquí Highlands Extension



Resplendent Quetzal by Lou Hegedus

The Western Highlands of this fascinating country are part of a chain of volcanic mountains straddling the Panamanian and Costa Rican border. They host a unique and interesting avifauna that includes many regional highland endemics, and some of the world's most spectacularly beautiful birds! We will try to locate as many of the 50+ highland endemic species as time permits. One of the obvious targets will be the awe-inspiring Resplendent Quetzal, along with a host of highland hummingbirds, tanagers, trogons and many others! We will visit the lush mid-elevations of the Caribbean slope, which harbours a very different suite of birds to those seen thus far, where possibilities may include the bizarre Bare-necked Umbrellabird, Emerald and Rufous-winged Tanagers and White-bellied Mountaingem whilst also dedicating time to finding the recently split Chiriqui Yellowthroat.



Admirable Hummingbird by Clayton Burne

Day 1: Panama City to Boquete via flight to David. We begin our extension with a short midday flight from Panama City to the bustling, ever-expanding city of David. The capital of Chiriqui Province is now the second largest city in the country, and home to all of the agricultural education and development of the country. This region, with habitats spanning from coast to coast, with the tallest mountain peaks in Panama between, grows every conceivable kind of fruit, vegetable and grain.



Volcano Junco by Clayton Burne

Despite being far removed from the central government, infrastructure in the Chiriqui is fantastic. Recently, this area has become very popular with expats, and with local tourism within Panama. Our visit will benefit from the great infrastructure developed over the past 10-15 years, including wonderful accommodations, food and very decent roads. We can expect to arrive at our lodgings in Boquete this evening in time for a welcoming dinner.

Day 2: La Fortuna and surrounds. We'll have an early breakfast before heading out to bird the surrounds of Fortuna. Fortuna is one of very few sites in Panama with accessible mid-elevation Caribbean slope forest. Though too numerous to list here, some of the specialities we hope to see include White-bellied Mountaingem, Green-crowned Brilliant, Red-fronted Parrotlet, Snowcap (very rare), Brown-billed Scythebill, Dull-mantled Antbird, Rufous-browed Tyrannulet, Golden-bellied Flycatcher, Blue-and-gold, Spangle-cheeked and Emerald Tanagers.

We will also visit the mid-elevation forests near Willy Mazu for Bare-necked Umbrellabird, Barred Hawk, Sulphur-winged Parakeet, Rufous Piha, Passerini's, Carmiol's and Dusky-faced Tanager and Montezuma Oropendola. More time spent higher up the pass may reveal Azure-hooded Jay, Golden-olive Woodpecker, Golden-bellied Flycatcher, Black-striped (Costa Rican) and Mourning Warbler and Spangle-cheeked Tanager.

Day 3: Boquete area & Volcan Baru. What an exciting day we have in store, as we head up Vulcan Baru. This dormant volcano is the highest point in Panama, and is one of the only places in the world where one can view both the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea with the naked eye. Under normal circumstances, this is a 12-14hour hike, climbing over 2000m in vertical elevation. We won't be doing that of course, making use of specially adapted 4x4 vehicles to reach the summit in a little over two hours instead. First, however, we will explore birding sites in and around Boquete, where a relaxed morning of birding will help keep us fresh for an afternoon and evening on the volcano itself.



White-bellied Mountaingem by Adam Riley

Birding action on the volcano is, of course, mostly restricted to the upper bamboo forests and stunted growth near the summit, where severely range restricted species such as Timberline Wren, Volcano Hummingbird, Sooty Thrush and Volcano Junco occur, alongside other specials, like Ruddy Treerunner, Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush and Large-footed Finch. Returning from the summit after dark, we will attemot to find the diminutive Unspotted Saw-Whet Owl, Costa

Rican Pygmy Owl, Dusky Nightjar and Bare-shanked Owl, before retrning to the hotel.



Wrenthrush by Adam Riley

Day 4: Sendero Los Quetzales. This trail offers great access to the heart of the bromeliad and moss-laden cloud forests and oak highlands habitat that is home to a huge number of range-restricted species found only in the highlands of nearby Costa Rica and Panama. High on our list of desirable species are those endemic to these forests. The early morning should reveal an immediate haul of Purple-throated and White-throated Mountaingem, Slaty Flowerpiercer and Yellow-winged Vireo.

The gaudy bird show will continue as we climb in elevation, with any number of exciting new species such as Black Guan, Band-tailed and Ruddy Pigeon, White-collared and Vaux's Swifts, Lesser Violetear, Admirable, Scintillant and Volcano Hummingbird, Resplendent Quetzal, Prong-billed Barbet, Blue-throated Toucanet, Acorn and Hairy Woodpecker, Silvery-fronted Tapaculo, Spot-crowned Woodcreeper, Buffy Tuftedcheek, Lineated Foliage-gleaner, Streak-breasted Treehunter, Mountain Elaenia, Dark Pewee, Brown-capped Vireo, Ochraceous Wren, Grey-breasted Wood-Wren, Black-faced Solitaire, Black-billed, Ruddy-capped and Slaty-backed Nightingale-Thrush, Mountain Thrush, Black-and-Yellow Phainoptila, gorgeous Long-tailed Silky Flycatchers, Flame-throated, Black-throated Green and Black-cheeked Warbler, Slate-throated and Collared Whitestart, Sooty-capped and Common Bush Tanager,Yellow-thighed Finch, White-naped Brushfinch, Flame-colored Tanager, Elegant Euphonia and Yellow-bellied Siskin.

Day 5: Boqueron, Cerro Punta region, and Los Lagos de Volcan. Early this morning, we head out to the southern and western slopes of Volcan Baru. A number of special birds are possible in the area, including Black-hooded Antshrike, Spot-crowned Euphonia, Cherrie's Tanager, Costa Rican Brushfinch, Riverside Wren, Orange-collared Manakin and Charming Humminbird – all of which we have a good chance of encountering.

In the late afternoon we shall head to the lower elevations of Los Lagos de Volcán, three shallow volcanic lakes surrounded by remnant woodland. This well-known site has some great native habitat surrounding a few old crater lakes. Forests, marshes and grasslands make this a fabulous birding site with a diverse array of great foothill and montane species. The water itself attracts little more than the odd coot or Northern Jacana. The star attraction here is the Chiriqui Yellowthroat, which is known from but very few sites anywhere on Earth. While searching for the



Yellow-thighed Finch by Adam Riley



Chiriqui Yellowthroat by Dušan Brinkhuizen

yellowthroat, we may also come across new trip species such as Crested Guan, Bronzy Hermit, White-tailed Emerald, Scaly-throated and Buff-throated Foliage-gleaners, Pale-breasted Spinetail, Ochre-bellied and Slaty-capped Flycatcher and Yellow-throated Vireo.

We shall return to our lodgings near Boquete for our final night in Panama. A celebratory dinner is surely in order, after what will have been a fun filled and action packed birding adventure across the entire country.

Day 6: Flight from David to Panama City for final departures. After breakfast this morning, we make our way back to David.

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 below.

This includes:

- All meals from dinner on day 1 to lunch on day 6 of the Darien Extension, from dinner on day 1 to lunch on day 9 of the main tour, and from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 6 of the Chiriqui extension;
- Drinking water;
- All lodgings during the tour;
- All ground transportation;
- All national park and other reserve entrance fees; and
- All guiding services (including tips for local guides and services).

This excludes:

- **ANY** flights and airport/departure taxes;
- Visa fees;
- Any beverages;
- 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.

Tipping: As noted above, gratuities are included on this tour. However, this does NOT include your Rockjumper leader. If, therefore, you feel that he has given you excellent service, it is entirely appropriate to tip him.

Please Note:

- It can be hot, with harsh sun in some areas of Panama, especially along the coast, so please come prepared with hats and sun cream for protection. Humidity levels are also high throughout most of the country, especially in the Darién.
- Temperatures can be very cold, to freezing atop Volcan Baru on the Chiriqui Extension.
- The drive up Volcan Baru is in specialised 4x4 vehicles. This is however a taxing and uncomfortable drive which should not be considered by any participants that have back problems or are pregnant. Medication to counter motion sickness is strongly recommended.
- Mosquitoes and tiny bloodsucking flies can be numerous at times and it's advisable to pack a good supply of DEET or another effective insect repellent.
- There are some long days in the field taking advantage of available habitat, but overall the tour pace is relaxed and the walking is easy.
- Accommodation throughout the trip is quite comfortable and a variety of western and local cuisines are available throughout the tour.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE DETAILS:

This tour **does not** include **any** airfares. Day 1 of the Darien Extension is an arrival day, and as such, you are free to arrive at any time, but preferably before 15:00. The tour will conclude in Panama City in the late afternoon of day 6.

The Best of Birding Panama tour begins with an arrival day for any participants starting with this tour. Again, it is recommended that you arrive in Panama City by 15:00 in order to be transferred to our lodgings in the Gamboa area. The tour will conclude in Panama City by mid-morning of day 9.

The Chiriqui Extension begins on day 1 with a mid-day flight from Panama City to David. The tour will conclude in Panama City after a mid-day flight from David on Day 6.

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:

Tocumen International Airport, Panama City (IATA: PTY) is the main port of entry for international flights into Panama and is serviced by several international carriers. **Please DO NOT book any flights until you have consulted the Rockjumper office for confirmation on the status of the tour.**