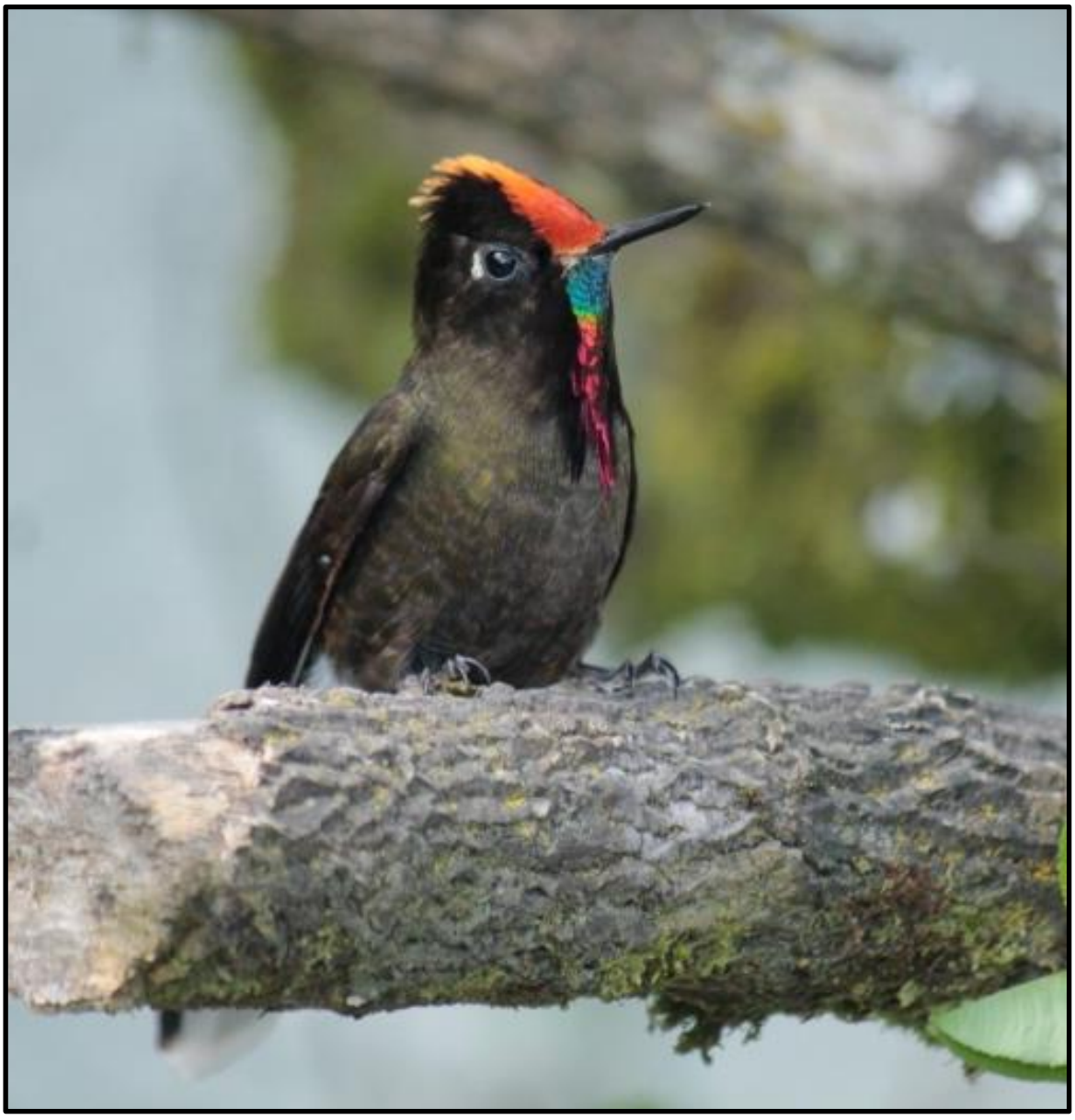
Colombia – Northern Andes

Bogota & Surrounds

Central Andes

Santa Marta Extension



Rainbow-bearded Thornbill by Stephan Lorenz

Colombia has more species of birds than any other country - a staggering 1900 species are to be found within the confines of this incredible nation; of which, at least 89 are endemic. This huge diversity of species results from the equally diverse range of habitats: three Andean Cordilleras (Western, Central and Eastern Andes), two inter-Andean valleys (the Cauca and Magdalena Valleys), the lowland forests of the Amazon and Orinoco regions, the isolated snow-capped Santa Marta Mountains, the Pacific and Caribbean coasts, deserts and lakes, and the rich wet forests of the Chocó all help to make it one of the most exciting countries to bird on earth!

Our series of northern Andes tours focus on the bulk of endemics that Colombia has to offer, working our way through the Central and Eastern Andean ranges, Magdalena, and Cauca Valleys, as well as the dry Guajira desert and the impressive Santa Marta Mountains.

The Bogota and surrounds tour take us to the Eastern Andes sites of Laguna Pedro Palo, Laguna Tabacal, Chingaza, BioAndina, Sumapaz, Chicaque and Tororoi for Black Inca, Turquoise Dacnis, Flame-winged Parakeet, Green-bearded Helmetcrest, Cundinimarca Antpitta, Apolinar's Wren, Bogota Rail and Moustached Brushfinch.

The Central Andes tour takes in Otun-Quimbaya, Finca Cortaderal, Rio Blanco, Hacienda el Bosque and PNN Los Nevados for Cauca Guan, Red-ruffed Fruitcrow, Chestnut Wood Quail, Crescent-faced, Brown-banded, Slaty-crowned, Moustached & Bicolored Antpittas, Fuertes's & Rusty-faced Parrots, Golden-plumed & Rufous-fronted Parakeets, Cocoa Thrush, Crimson-mantled Woodpecker, Masked Saltator, Black-thighed Puffleg, Golden-crowned Tanager, Buffy Helmetcrest and Viridian Metaltail.

Our Santa Marta tour takes us to the Santa Marta Mountains and the Guajira Peninsula on the northern coast of Colombia. The Santa Marta massif is an isolated mountain range, and its snow-capped peaks are the highest coastal mountains in the world. It is also one of the most endemic-rich regions of South America, hosting nearly 50 endemic and regional specialities plus numerous endemic subspecies several of which, upon further taxonomic review, are likely to be elevated to full species status in the future.

Itinerary & Map

Bogota & Surrounds

Day 1	**Arrival in Bogota**
Day 2	**Laguna Pedro Palo & Chicaque**
Day 3	**Laguna Tabacal & Jardin Encantado**
Day 4	**BioAndina & PNN Chingaza**
Day 5	**Sumapaz to Villavicencio**
Day 6	**Reserva Tororoi to Bogota**
Day 7	**Final departure**

Central Andes

Day 1	**Arrival in Pereira, transfer to Otun-Quimbaya area**
Day 2	**Otun-Quimbaya to Santa Rosa de Cabal**
Day 3	**Finca Cortaderal to Hotel Tinamu**
Day 4	**Hotel Tinamu to Rio Blanco**
Day 5	**Rio Blanco**
Day 6	**Hacienda el Bosque**
Day 7	**PNN Los Nevados del Ruiz & Termales del Ruiz to Pereira**
Day 8	**Final departure**

Santa Marta

Day 1	**Arrival in Barranquilla**
Day 2	**Barranquilla to Santa Marta via PNN Isla Salamanca**
Day 3	**San Lorenzo Ridge**
Day 4	**Santa Marta to Minca**
Day 5	**Minca to Riohacha via Los Camarones and the Guajira Peninsula**
Day 6	**Riohacha to Bogota via PNN Los Flamencos & final departure**

Central Andes



Santa Marta


Guajira Peninsula
Riohacha
Los Flamencos
Minca
Barranquilla
Santa Marta
Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO
Image Landsat / Copernicus
Google Earth

Birding sites in detail

Laguna Pedro Palo. This is an excellent site to acclimatise ourselves to the Andean altitudes at about 6,500 feet. Located on a saddle in the sub-Andean Forest belt on the western slope of the Eastern Cordilleras, Laguna Pedro Palo offers excellent cloud forest birding with a chance to find several localised endemics. Top on our list will be the endemic Black Inca that feeds on flowering bromeliads, and the rare Turquoise Dacnis that often associates with mixed tanager flocks.



Black Inca by Clayton Burne

Along the muddy edge of the lake lurk White-throated Crakes, while activity in the surrounding forest edge might produce Ash-browed and Stripe-breasted Spinetails, the tiny Olivaceous Piculet, Montane Foliage-gleaner, Mountain and Yellow-bellied Elaenias, Sooty-headed Tyrannulet, and a profusion of colourful tanagers such as Golden, Metallic-green, and Blue-necked.

Grey-breasted Wood-wren can often be located by its explosive song, and we will try to lure the scarce Moustached Puffbird into view. While walking along a dirt track, we will also keep our eyes peeled for fruiting trees likely to attract White-throated Toucanet, with a supporting cast including Fawn-breasted Tanager, the extravagant Red-headed Barbet and Blue-naped Chlorophonia. In the undergrowth, subtle movement might reveal Three-striped Warblers scouring through a thicket or the active Moustached Brushfinch. Although never common throughout its patchy distribution, we will also watch for White-rumped Hawk soaring overhead.
-striped Warblers scouring through a thicket or the active Moustached Brush Finch. Although never common throughout its patchy distribution, we will also watch for White-rumped Hawk soaring overhead.

Chicaque. A small number of conveniently placed hummingbird feeders provides an excellent assortment of species including Green and Sparking Violetears, Buff-tailed Coronet, Collared Inca, the very tricky Golden-bellied Starfrontlet, Tourmaline Sunangel and Glowing Puffleg. We shall no doubt take a short walk along the dirt roads searching for other gems that might include Rufous Spinetail, Black-crested Warbler, Golden-fronted Whitestart, Pale-naped Brushfinch, Blue-capped Tanager, Capped Conebill, Grey-breasted Wood Wren, Superciliaried Hemispingus and Blackish Tapaculo.



Indigo-capped Hummingbird by Stephan Lorenz

Laguna Tabacal. We day trip this small reserve protecting a forest patch surrounding a beautiful crater lake of Laguna Tabacal. Here we will search for the local race of Rusty-breasted Antpitta, Checker-throated Antwren, the stunning Rosy Thrush-Tanager, Grey-throated Warbler, White-bellied Antbird, Short-tailed Emerald, Stripe-breasted Spinetail and perhaps Blue-lored Antbird if we find an understory flock.

Jardin Encantado. Near the town of San Francisco, we will visit the aptly named Enchanted Gardens, a private home where our hostess tirelessly tends to over 30 hummingbird feeders that swarm with activity. Here we can expect to be dazzled by dozens of busy hummers including the endemic Indigo-capped Hummingbird, Green and Sparkling Violetears, Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, Green Hermit, minuscule White-bellied and Gorgeted Woodstars (seasonal), White-necked Jacobin, Crowned Woodnymph and a chance for the elusive Ruby-topaz Hummingbird (seasonal) - all at point blank range!



Flame-winged Parakeet by Clayton Burne

PNN Chingaza. We'll begin birding the lower subtropical forests before gradually working our way to higher altitudes. The trill of the endemic Rufous-browed Conebill may start off the morning, the skulky Pale-bellied Tapaculo should make an appearance, and we will attempt to lure the endemic Silvery-throated Spinetail into view. The white-faced form of Golden-fronted Whitestart is an especially smart addition to the avifauna at this elevation, while flowers are likely to attract a variety of hummingbirds such as the near-endemic Coppery-bellied and Glowing Pufflegs, Purple-backed Thornbill, the apparently nomadic Amethyst-throated Sunangel, and with luck, we might even find the near-endemic Blue-throated Starfrontlet.



Green-bearded Helmetcrest by Adam Riley

BioAndina. We'll make our way to the higher elevation paramo of BioAndina in search of the endemic Flame-winged Parakeet (flying in noisy flocks over remnant forest patches), the oversized Undulated Antpitta in the densely vegetated gullies and several other key species such as Blue-throated Starfrontlet, Glowing Puffleg, White-capped Tanager, Masked and Glossy Flowerpiercers, the brilliant, Scarlet-bellied Mountain Tanager, Black-capped Hemispingus, Pale-naped and Slaty Brushfinches, White-chinned Thistletail, Streak-throated Bush Tyrant, Black-capped Tyrannulet and Black-crested Warbler. The skulking Muisca

Antpitta (formerly part of the 'Rufous' complex), can usually be seen with persistence, and we will be scanning carefully for the localised Bronze-tailed Thornbill.



Apolinar's Wren by Adam Riley

Observatorio de Colibries. Time permitting, we'll drop into this site which has several hummingbird feeders, where up to 14 different hummingbird species visit through the day (seasonally). We can expect to find Green-tailed and Black-tailed Trainbearers, Sword-billed Hummingbird, Blue-throated Starfrontlet, Great Sapphirewing, White-bellied Woodstar, Lesser and Sparkling Violetears and Longuemare's Sunangel amongst others.

Sumapaz. We make our way into the high elfin forests of Sumapaz National Park. As we reach the paramo, *Espeletia* flowers and terrestrial bromeliads characterize the landscape. It is here that we shall be searching for Green-bearded Helmetcrest, recently elevated to full species status. Our quest for the helmetcrest will likely have us panning through other hummingbirds, with Great Sapphirewing, Bronze-tailed Thornbill, Shining Sunbeam and Blue-throated Starfrontlet all possible.

We will some time searching for Apolinar's Wren, which unusually inhabits the high altitude paramo here, in comparison to those found around Bogota who inhabit lower altitude marshes. These marshes are a reliable location for Bogota Rail, which will hopefully expose itself for good views. Tawny Antpitta is rather common, as are Chestnut-winged Cinclodes and Many-striped Canastero, while we would need a small dose of luck to find White-capped Tanager, Ochre-breasted Brushfinch and Black-chested Mountain Tanager.



Ochre-breasted Brushfinch by Tuomas Seimola

Reserva Tororoi. Another exciting morning beckons as we set out to find one of the rarest endemics of Colombia, the tiny Cundinamarca Antpitta. A short drive will take us to Refugio del Tororoi near the village of Guaybetal. A recently established feeding station might help us have good views of both Cundinimarca and Muisca Antpittas, before we start working the denser forest for such targets as Ochre-breasted Brushfinch, Brown-breasted Parakeet, Greater Schythebill, White-capped Tanager, Black-collared Jay, Golden-headed Quetzal and possibly Ocellated Tapaculo in the process.

Otun-Quimbaya. Situated at 1 800 meters, this sanctuary in the Western Cordillera is one of the few sites known for Cauca Guan. Once presumed extinct, this species was only rediscovered in 1994; and with protection, this guan is now relatively common in the reserve, as is the more widespread Sickle-winged Guan. The scarce Wattled Guan also occurs and sometimes gives away its presence with an unlikely loud rising trill. Hoffmann's Two-toed Sloth can sometimes be spotted casually lounging in a roadside Cecropia, a tree that also provides fruits for the impressive crimson-fronted race of Red-ruffed Fruitcrow, here at perhaps its highest density anywhere in South America. With luck, we may stumble across the gaudy Multicolored Tanager.



Cauca Guan by Adam Riley

The forests come alive in the morning with the songs of Chestnut Wood Quail, enthusiastic Chestnut-breasted Wren, and reticent Moustached Antpitta hiding in the dark gullies. The deep, booming calls of Red-ruffed Fruitcrow will likely be a regular sound as we search for these secretive specialities and sift through mixed flocks containing Crimson-rumped Toucanet, White-throated Daggerbill, Spotted Barbtail, Montane Foliage-gleaner, Streaked Xenops and a nice assortment of localised *tyrannids*, including Plumbeous-crowned Tyrannulet, Variegated Bristle Tyrant, and Rufous-breasted Flycatcher. Colonies of Acorn Woodpeckers can be conspicuous as we scan the river below for Torrent Duck, and we will keep an eye out for Pale-eyed Thrush and Andean Solitaire, both excellent songsters that are often found perched motionless on high tree limbs.

Finca Cortaderal. This remnant patch of high Andean Forest is one of the last refuges for Fuertes's (Indigo-winged) Parrot. The species was only rediscovered in 2002, nearly 90 years after it was last seen. Whilst searching for the parrots, we shall also be keeping an eye out for Golden-plumed Parakeet, White-capped Tanager, Bicolored Antpitta, Ocellated Tapaculo, Bar-bellied Woodpecker, Agile Tit-Tyrant, Grey-breasted Mountain Toucan, Black-thighed Puffleg, Purple-backed Thornbill, and a huge host of Tanagers.



Fuertes's Parrot by David Hoddinott

Hotel Tinamu. Most of the surrounding area is dedicated to shade-grown coffee and agricultural. The reserve is a mosaic of shade grown coffee, forest, and secondary scrub. This is an excellent site to see the rarely recorded Cocoa Thrush, as well as actually see Little Tinamou rather than just hear it! We'll also be looking for Cocoa Woodcreeper, Grey-headed Dove, Golden-collared Manakin, Moustached Puffbird, Jet Antbird, Great Antshrike, Scrub Tanager, Scaled Antpitta, Spectacled Parrotlet and Colombian Chachalaca.

We should have some time to enjoy the hummingbird feeders, where we may see White-necked Jacobin, Green Hermit, Steely-vented and Rufous-tailed Hummingbirds, Black-throated Mango and White-vented Plumeleteer.

Rio Blanco. This beautiful reserve is situated above the city of Manizales. Here there are over a dozen active hummingbird feeders along a wooden balcony that is lined with flowers, and these glitter with hummingbirds that include gems such as Long-tailed Sylph, Buff-tailed Coronet, Speckled Hummingbird, the boldly patterned Collared Inca and Tourmaline Sunangel. Finding an Andean Guan or even the oversized monotypic White-capped Tanager that can sometimes be seen from the balcony of the lodge would be a typical way to start the morning in Rio Blanco.



Brown-banded Antpitta by Clayton Burne

Our main quest for the day, however – and certainly one of the highlights of the entire trip – will be the rarely-seen antpittas, which have been patiently habituated to come to earthworm feeding stations that are active very early in the morning. The reserve features several of these 'antpitta feeders' where worms are placed out every day to attract these secretive birds, and here we have a chance to marvel at these fascinating but normally extremely difficult understory dwellers – sometimes only at an arms-length away! Ornately patterned Chestnut-crowned Antpitta and the endemic Brown-banded Antpitta are usually present, but we might also have a visit from the tiny vine-loving Slaty-crowned Antpitta, Chestnut-naped Antpitta, and occasionally even the vocal but sneaky near-endemic Bicolored Antpitta. As these special birds are accustomed to a human presence at these sites, we often obtain exceptional studies (and photographs!) not just of the antpittas themselves, but also of their interesting behaviour as they stuff their bills with worms to feed hungry chicks or sometimes even hop across our feet! Other species that regularly visit the antpitta feeders include Grey-browed Brushfinch, the beautiful Green-and-black Fruiteater and Great Thrush.



Bicolored Antpitta by Clayton Burne

The wide pathways within the reserve offer excellent access to the pristine cloud forest, where we will watch for the secretive Tawny-breasted Tinamou crossing the track, Golden-headed Quetzal perched motionlessly on a fern-covered branch, Crimson-mantled Woodpecker (arguably the world's most beautiful woodpecker!), and peer into the undergrowth for skulking Blackish, Spillmann's and Ash-colored Tapaculos.

We might also locate a fruiting tree where several species of parrots could be in attendance, including the scarce Golden-plumed Parakeet, Scaly-naped Amazon and the endangered Rusty-faced Parrot (this being its type

location where it was first discovered). Mixed flocks here are sometimes composed of fifty plus species all swarming together in excited movements with intense sound at all levels of the mossy forest and have the potential to leave us dizzy! Just a few of the possibilities include Buff-breasted and Blue-winged Mountain Tanagers, Yellow-billed Cacique, Pearled Treerunner, Black-eared Hemispingus, Streaked Tuftedcheek, Pale-edged Flycatcher, Dusky Piha, Smoke-colored Pewee, the bright Plushcap that prefers dense bamboo, Grey-hooded Bush Tanager, Smoky Bush Tyrant, White-banded and White-tailed Tyrannulets, the white capped form of Capped Conebill, bright Blue-and-black Tanager, Sepia-browed Wren creeping through the vines, Streaked Xenops, Slaty-backed and Yellow-bellied Chat-Tyrants, and a wide range of other warblers, tyrants, spinetails, and tanagers.



Buffy Helmetcrest by David Hoddinott

Continued birding inside this fantastic reserve throughout the day could produce specialities such as the tiny but colourful Rufous-crowned Tody-Flycatcher, Mountain Wren, Powerful Woodpecker (giving its distinctive double tap), and colourful Masked Trogon. Although we will need considerable luck on our side, we also have possibilities for rarities such as Masked Saltator.



Crescent-faced Antpitta by Forrest Rowland

Hacienda El Bosque. This cattle ranch has two tricky *Grallaridae* to find, in the form of Equatorial and Crescent-faced Antpittas. As we head into the forest, we'll also be keeping our eyes open for other desirable species such as Grey-breasted Mountain Toucan, Barred Fruiteater, Grey-browed Brushfinch, Yellow-bellied Chat Tyrant, Black-thighed Puffleg and Sword-billed Hummingbird

Los Nevados National Park. The snow-covered Ruiz Volcano and Los Nevados National Park give us access to pristine, stunted elfin forest and flowering Paramo scrub situated well above 13 000 feet. Whilst being spoilt by the spectacular scenery, we will seek our primary target at this high elevation, the unique range-restricted Buffy Helmetcrest (split from Bearded). This spectacular hummingbird 'trap lines', which means that it visits the same flowers at regular intervals on its circuit, and we will carefully watch the known areas of its territory. Tawny Antpittas can sometimes be ridiculously tame here, while other specialities we will be searching for include Paramo

Tapaculo, Andean Tit-Spinetail, Stout-billed Cinclodes, Grass Wren, Plain-colored Seedeater and Many-striped Canastero.

Once above the treeline, in the alpine grasslands dotted with Espletia Sunflowers (known locally as *frailejones*) and Puya Yuccas, Andean Condors and Black-chested Buzzard-Eagles soar overhead, the delightful Buffy Helmetcrest flits from flower to flower, and various skulkers like Stout-billed Cinclodes, Andean Tit-Spinetail, Many-striped Canastero and Tawny Antpitta call from the scrub. It will be a unique experience to walk this high, over 12 000ft in elevation, amongst the highest peaks and volcanoes in the country. We'll ward off the typically cold outside temperatures with a cup of Coca tea or a hot Sugar Cane drink.



Rufous-fronted Parakeet by Clayton Burne

Termales del Ruiz road. Time permitting, we may spend a few hours birding the lower sections of the Termales del Ruiz road. Here we will search for usually difficult species such as Golden-breasted and Black-thighed Pufflegs, Rainbow-bearded Thornbill and Viridian Metaltail, as well as commoner species such as Great Sapphirewing, Buff-winged Starfrontlet and Shining Sunbeam. If lucky, we might run into a flock of the endemic Rufous-fronted Parakeet.

PNN Isla Salamanca. We will begin our tour by searching for perhaps the most range-restricted hummingbird species of the week: Sapphire-bellied Hummingbird! The mangroves and scrub of the Isla Salamanca National Park harbour some very special birds as well, with Panamanian Flycatcher, Golden-green Woodpecker, Stripe-backed Wren, Black-collared Hawk, American Pygmy and Green-and-rufous Kingfishers, Bicolored Conebill, some 9 species of migrant Wood Warblers from North America, Bronze-brown Cowbird and the extremely localised, Chestnut-winged Chachalaca, being just some of the avian possibilities! We even have a chance of finding the recently described Turquoise-winged Parrotlet. Combine that with a huge array of herons, terns, gulls and shorebirds frequenting the many estuaries and mudflats we will traverse, and we are sure to have one whopping morning to start our tour off with a bang!



Sapphire-bellied Hummingbird by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Santa Marta. The isolated Santa Marta Mountain range supports a phenomenal array of biodiversity, including numerous endemics and localised bird

specialities, although it is a relatively small range of accessible forest since much of the territory has sadly been deforested for agriculture.



Santa Marta Blossomcrown by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Winding our way up through the foothills, we can begin sifting through mega flocks that often swarm with activity, typically including an abundance of migrant warblers, tanagers, vireos, grosbeaks and flycatchers, plus resident species such as the scarce Coppery Emerald, White-bearded Manakin, Sooty-capped Hermit, Rusty-breasted Antpitta, Crested Oropendola, Rufous-breasted Wren, Black-striped Sparrow, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, and the smart-looking Golden-winged Sparrow that prefers areas of denser undergrowth.

The lodge hummingbird feeders buzz with activity, with the likes of White-tailed Starfrontlet and tiny Santa Marta Woodstar, the endemic race of Tyrian Metaltail, and sometimes a surprise such as Lazuline Sabrewing. We will also have a look for Santa Marta Antpitta, which sometimes visits a nearby feeding station, and enjoy at least one evening walk through the forest nearby to search for Mottled Owl and the recently described Santa Marta Screech Owl.

El Dorado. Time permitting, we may stop in at El Dorado to check the compost heap for the scarce Black-fronted Wood Quail, Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush, Black-hooded Thrush, gaudy Blue-naped Chlorophonia and Sierra Nevada Brushfinch.

Santa Marta – San Lorenzo Ridge. Higher up on the mountain, after ascending to almost 3 000m (10 000ft) in elevation, we have the chance to continue collecting our suite of highland endemics. Although notoriously flighty, we can watch for noisy flocks of Santa Marta Parakeet, the more cooperative Rusty-headed Spinetail and furtive Brown-rumped Tapaculo. The lively Yellow-crowned Whitestart is normally in regular attendance with mixed flocks, which also contain the colourful Santa Marta Mountain Tanager and sometimes a few Santa Marta Warblers showing off their complex facial patterns. White-tipped Quetzal can often be located by its barking call, as we continue locating species such as White-throated (Santa Marta) Toucanet, Rufous-and-white Wren, the brightly coloured Golden-breasted Fruiteater, Yellow-legged Thrush, Hermit Wood Wren,



Santa Marta Screech Owl by Rob Williams

Barred Forest Falcon, shy Lined Quail-Dove, and Grey-throated Leaftosser. At these higher elevations, we can try our luck coaxing into view the tricky Sierra Nevada Antpitta (formerly part of the 'Rufous' complex). Two especially difficult endemics that are also present but only in excruciatingly small numbers are the tiny Black-backed Thornbill, which prefers smaller flowers at the highest elevations, and the scarce Santa Marta Bush Tyrant that occasionally joins mixed bird flocks.



Santa Marta Bush Tyrant by Forrest Rowland

Minca & surrounds. Attracting national tourists, foreign hikers, bikers and birders alike, Minca's charm is undeniable. It is very conveniently located in the foothills of the Santa Marta Mountains. While few of the birds in and around Minca are true endemics, many are rare and range-restricted, or just plain beautiful!

As we descend towards Minca, we'll again pass innumerable waterfalls cascading along the mountain slope where we shall try to tease out the sneaky Santa Marta Tapaculo before turning our attention to other endemics, including the recently split Santa Marta Blossomcrown, Santa Marta Brushfinch, the arboreal Streak-capped Spinetail, Santa Marta Antbird, Scarlet-fronted Parakeet, Spectacled Tyrannulet, often secretive Santa Marta Foliage-gleaner, and White-lored Warbler. We'll try to catch up with any special birds we may still be searching for, including Rosy Thrush-Tanager, Groove-billed Toucanet, Rufous-and-white Wren, or Coopmans's Tyrannulet.

Around the village itself, we will be looking for Coppery Emerald, Rufous Nightjar, Keel-billed Toucan, Black-backed Antshrike, Pale-eyed Pygmy Tyrant, Pearly-vented Tody-Tyrant, the striking Lance-tailed Manakin, Rufous-breasted and Rufous-and-white Wrens, and the boldly coloured Golden-winged Sparrow.

Hummingbird feeders around our lodge typically hold Steely-vented Hummingbird, White-necked Jacobin, and Rufous-tailed Hummingbird.



Santa Marta Antpitta by Adam Riley

Minca to the Guajira Peninsula. We'll change gears and begin heading eastward into the increasingly arid Guajira Peninsula. Along our route, we might make a few opportunistic stops at sites for the localised Rufous-vented Chachalaca, Double-striped Thick-knee, or a chance for Lance-tailed Manakin in the dense vine tangles.

Guajira Peninsula. The cactus-studded scrub and xerophytic vegetation support several Colombian near endemics that share only a minuscule corner, barely accessible, in north-western Venezuela. We'll begin birding this unique habitat for specialities including the surprisingly attractive White-whiskered Spinetail, Grey Pileated Finch,

noisy Caribbean (Pale-legged) Hornero and the sometimes ridiculously tame Russet-throated Puffbird. Ferruginous Pygmy Owl is quite common in this habitat, and while imitating its calls we are likely to attract mobbing species such as the endemic sub-species of Black-crested Antshrike, Red-billed Emerald, Slender-billed Inezia, Pearly-vented Tody-Tyrant, and Yellow Oriole amongst others.



Vermilion Cardinal by Clayton Burne

Los Flamencos National Park. It doesn't take long for the temperature to warm up in these desert conditions, so we plan to be inside Los Flamencos National Park at daybreak to hear the dawn chorus and take advantage of the cooler conditions. One of our primary targets will be the outrageous Vermilion Cardinal that is often first heard singing before seen with its flashy elongated crest. Striped Cuckoo can often be heard singing from a great distance, and we should watch for small flocks of Green-rumped Parrotlet flying past, along with the more common Bare-eyed Pigeon. Ferruginous Pygmy Owl imitations should continue to produce activity as things begin to warm up, with possibilities including Trinidad Euphonia, Slender-billed and Pale-tipped Inezia, Glaucous Tanager, Dwarf Cuckoo, Brown-crested Flycatcher, migrant Prothonotary Warbler, Grey Kingbird, Straight-billed Woodcreeper, and Northern Scrub Flycatcher. Four more localised specialities we'll be targeting this morning include the sharply patterned Orinoco Saltator, localised Buffy Hummingbird, Chestnut Piculet and the difficult Tocuyo Sparrow.

Looking out over the Caribbean Sea, the myriad of coastal lagoons and coastal mudflats can produce a wide variety of terns, gulls, migrant waders, pelicans, stilts, frigatebirds, and egrets. Scanning over these marshlands, we may be able to pick out three particularly attractive species, namely the stately American Flamingo, Roseate Spoonbill, and the incandescent Scarlet Ibis. From the beach, we should also find Carib Grackles and maybe a few migrant Purple Martins mixed in with the resident Brown-chested Martins. Other birds here include Reddish Egrets dancing across the shallows, American White Ibis, Semipalmated and Grey Plovers, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Wilson's Plover, Semipalmated and Western Sandpipers, and Wood Stork.

Tour Grading & Key

Overall Ease		Moderate. Endemic and target focussed trip. Not suitable for dedicated photographers; inexperienced birders; or anyone with mobility or health challenges.
Birding Ease		Moderate. Several skulkers and low-density targets that require repeated efforts.
Accommodation		Comfortable, some lodgings are simple/basic.
Walking / Trails		Moderate, mostly on flat ground with variable substrate. High altitude walking is mostly downhill or kept to short distances.
Vehicles / Roads		Several drives, some long or impacted by heavy city traffic. Mostly sealed roads between towns, changing to dirt in remoter areas. Mountain passes & eroded dirt roads can be bumpy. Risk of landslides & road closures.
Photography		Good to good+. Typical forest lighting difficulties. Several feeders.
Annoyances		Temperatures vary from hot & humid, to cold at altitude. Rain is to be expected. Very hot on the Guajira Peninsula.

Financial Arrangements and Important Notes

Tour dates, prices, single supplement, approximate flight costs and tour spaces are displayed on our website.

Tour inclusions:

- All meals from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 7 of the Bogota & surrounds tour;
- All meals from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 8 of the Central Andes tour;
- All meals from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 6 of the Santa Marta tour;
- Bottled drinking water;
- All lodgings;
- All ground transportation during the tour;
- All reserve entrance fees;
- All guiding services
- Tips for local guides, drivers and services.

Tour exclusions:

- Visa fees;
- ANY flights;
- Any beverages (including mini-bar charges at hotels);
- Optional excursions;
- Special gratuities;
- 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.

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 you feel that they have given you excellent service, it is entirely appropriate to tip them at your discretion.

- **Due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, we quote our tours in 4 currencies. The tour price is 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. The same applies to approximate flight and single supplement rates.**
- **Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registrations, a small group supplement will be offered to confirm the tour.**
- **Tour prices are subject to unforeseen increases in tour related costs and may have to be adjusted as a result.**
- **The designated tour leader/s may be changed at short due to unforeseen circumstances.**
- **The itinerary is indicative only. Changes may need to be made to the order in which the tour is conducted, or some of the venues we visit closer to departure. We will attempt to adhere as close to the original program as possible.**

- These tours involve some moderate to arduous walking and hiking. We will be at high altitude on some days and many days we will be on our feet for most of the day. Guests must be in good health fitness to undertake these tours.
- If you have any physical limitations or medical conditions of any sort, please let the Rockjumper office know in advance of the tour.
- We will be birding in some remote areas well away from modern medical facilities.
- The hotels are of comfortable standard throughout. We no longer regularly use El Dorado Lodge on Santa Marta due to a marked deviation of their birding focus.
- Transport is by small coach or minibus, and the roads are mostly in good condition. However, due to the nature of the topography, there is the possibility of landslides interfering with our trip, though we have minimised this risk by undertaking the tour during the drier season.
- There will be times where we switch to smaller 4x4 vehicles where necessary.
- Traffic in and around the larger cities of Bogota and Medellin is often heavy, which impacts our time in vehicles.
- We expect the weather to be mostly dry and often sunny; it can be hot and occasionally humid in the lowlands.
- At higher elevations, it can be quite cold, especially at night. There is likely to be some rain, which can be heavy.
- Our guides are experienced Neotropical birders who have led numerous tours to Latin America.

Arrival and Departure Details

The Bogota & surrounds tour will depart from Bogotá on day 1 and, as it is an arrival day, you are welcome to arrive any time before 17:00. The tour will conclude in Bogota after breakfast on day 7.

The Central Andes tour will depart from Matecaña International Airport, Pereira (IATA: PEI) on day 1 with a group transfer to Otun-Quimbaya in the early afternoon. The tour will conclude here after breakfast on day 8.

The Santa Marta tour will depart from Barranquilla International Airport on day 1 and, as this is an arrival day you are welcome to arrive at any time. The tour will conclude after a mid-morning flight from Riohacha to Bogota.

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.

El Dorado International Airport, Bogotá (IATA: BOG) is the main port of entry and exit for international flights to Colombia.

Visa requirements differ by country, nationality of the traveller and duration and purpose of your intended stay. It may be necessary to obtain a visa or an electronic travel authorization in advance of your travel. It is therefore vitally important that you check with your travel agent/consulate/embassy for exact visa requirements.

DO NOT book any flights until the Rockjumper Team have officially confirmed the tour.