Peru

Central: Rare Andean Endemics



White-bellied Cinclodes by Stephan Lorenz

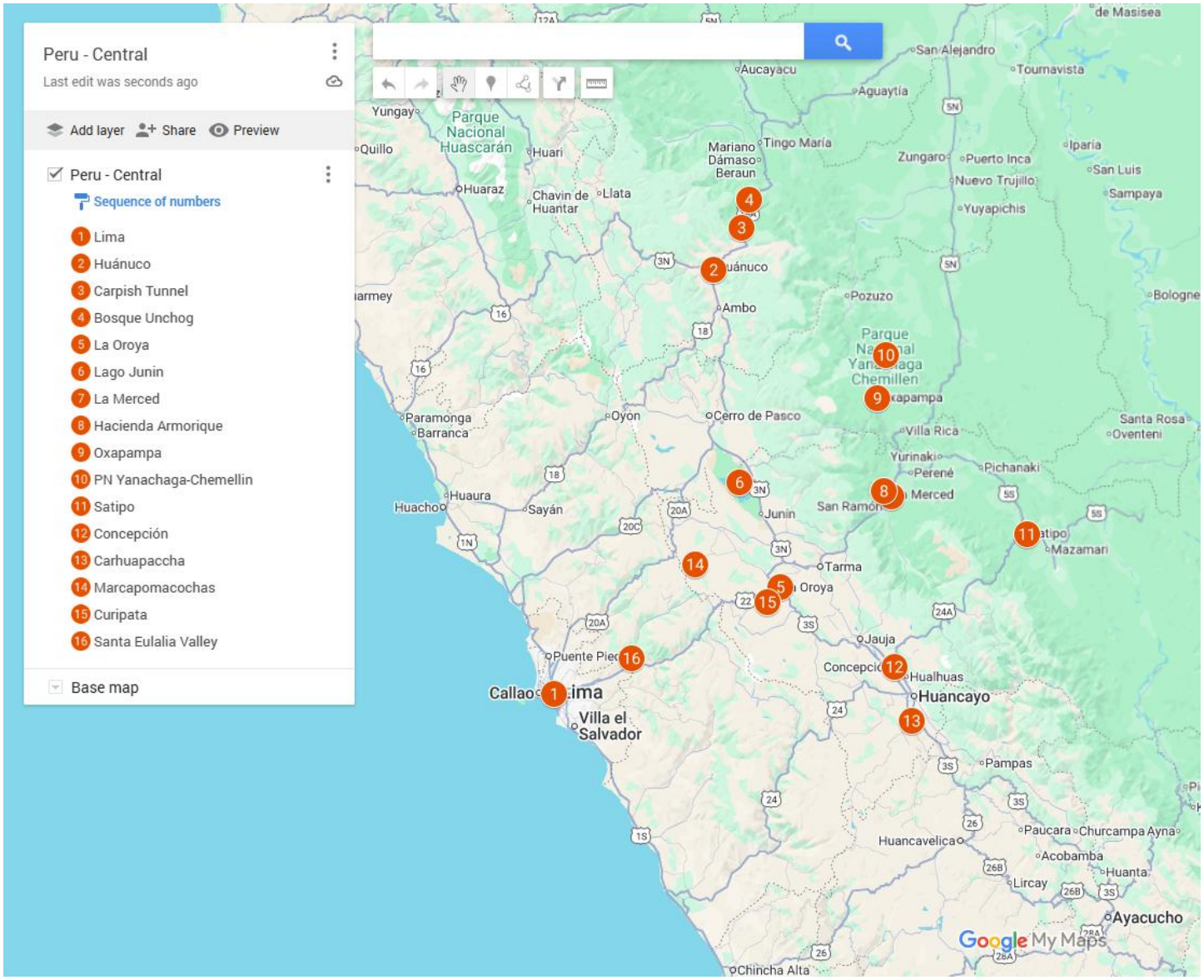
Our tour of Peru's central Andes is designed to search for a wide variety of scare and rare species, many of which are localised endemics, a testament to the rich avian diversity of Peru in general. A mountainous country, Peru's isolated valleys and cordilleras have seen avian evolution at its finest, with many species being described to science in recent years.

We will visit a variety of habitats during our tour, including high-altitude lakes, cloud forests, and Andean grasslands. This will give us the opportunity to find more than 50 endemics, including some of the most sought-after birds in Peru.

Just some of the birds we are targeting include Golden-backed Mountain Tanager, Pardusco, Rufous-browed Hemispingus, Junin Grebe, Creamy-bellied Antwren, Fiery-throated Metaltail, Marcapata Spinetail, Eye-ringed Thistletail, Black-spectacled Brushfinch, several antpittas and tapaculos, Masked Fruiteater, Bay-vented and White-cheeked Cotingas, White-bellied Cinclodes, 'Pasco' Wood Quail, 'Western' Bearded Mountaineer, Cloud-forest Screech Owl, Tit-like Dacnis, Yellow-scarfed Tanager and Diademed Sandpiper-Plover.

Itinerary & Map

Day 1	**Arrival in Lima**
Day 2	**Lima, flight to Huánuco. Panao area**
Day 3	**Carpish Tunnel & Paty Trail**
Day 4	**Bosque Unchog**
Day 5	**Huánuco to Junín**
Day 6	**Boat ride on Lago Junín, travel to La Merced. Birding Hacienda Armorique**
Day 7	**Hacienda Armorique**
Day 8	**La Merced to Oxapampa via Bosque Shollet**
Day 9	**Parque Nacional Yanachaga-Chemellin**
Day 10	**Oxapampa (Ulcumano Lodge)**
Day 11	**Oxapampa to Satipo Road**
Day 12	**Satipo Road to Apalla Calabaza**
Day 13	**Apalla Calabaza to Concepción**
Day 14	**Mantaro Valley & Carhuapaccha**
Day 15	**Concepción to Curipata via Marcapomacochas**
Day 16	**Santa Eulalia Valley to Lima, final departure**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Sequence of numbers
1 Lima
2 Huánuco
3 Carpish Tunnel
4 Bosque Unchog
5 La Oroya
6 Lago Junin
7 La Merced
8 Hacienda Armorique
9 Oxapampa
10 PN Yanachaga-Chemellin
11 Satipo
12 Concepción
13 Carhuapaccha
14 Marcapomacochas
15 Curipata
16 Santa Eulalia Valley
Base map
Parque Nacional Huascarán
Parque Nacional Yanachaga Chemillen
Huancayo
Ayacucho
Google My Maps

Birding sites in detail



Golden-backed Mountain Tanager by Stephan Lorenz

Panao. We'll spend some time in the Panao area looking for the newly described Panao Antpitta (split from Rufous Antpitta complex). Whilst here, we may also find Violet-throated Starfrontlet, Curve-billed Tinamou, White-bellied Woodstar, Tschudi's Tapaculo, Line-cheeked Spinetail, Brown-flanked Tanager and Black-throated Flowerpiercer.

Carpish Tunnel & Paty Trail. The Carpish Tunnel was a famous upper montane forest site. Years of clearing for hydrangea flowers farming has taken its toll, but the site still produces worthwhile birding. Taken in combination with the nearby Paty Trail, we'll pivot between both sites.

Key species around Carpish Tunnel are Tschudi's Tapaculo, Chestnut Antpitta, White-browed Hemispingus, Plushcap, Brown-flanked Tanager, Andean Pygmy Owl, Yellow-billed Cacique, Smoky Bush Tyrant and Montane Woodcreeper.

A short walk on the Paty Trail should reveal Peruvian Wren, more chances for Chestnut Antpitta and Bay Antpitta, White-collared Jay, Crimson-mantled Woodpecker, Tricolored Brushfinch, Peruvian Tyrannulet, Band-tailed and Masked Fruiteaters, Inca Flycatcher, Bay-vented Cotinga, Flame-faced Tanager and Unstreaked Tit-Tyrant.

Bosque Unchog. Early starts are required to get up to the mountains above Huanuco, and reach this key birding site. These remote wet elfin forests are home to some of the most sought-after birds in Peru, including the endemic Golden-backed Mountain Tanager, Bay-vented Cotinga, and Pardusco.

Pardusco is also relatively common, and it can be found in small flocks, whereas Bay-vented Cotinga is very sparsely distributed, and it can be difficult to find. The very attractive Golden-backed Mountain Tanager can also prove elusive. They tend to wake up and start moving about once the sun rises, moving quite substantial distances between feeding areas, so we are likely to be engaged in a game of sit and wait, for them to move about.

Whilst targeting the above mentioned endemics, we are sure to see a good number of other species such as



Bay-vented Cotinga by Stephan Lorenz



Rufous-browed Hemispingus by Stephan Lorenz

Rufous-browed Hemispingus, Coppery Metaltail, localised Neblina Tapaculo, Line-fronted Canastero, Ochraceous-breasted Flycatcher, Rufous-breasted Chat-Tyrant, Sword-billed Hummingbird, Large-footed Tapaculo, Chachapoyas Antpitta (which was part of the Rufous Antpitta complex pre-split), Tschudi's Tapaculo, White-chinned Thistletail, Many-striped Canastero, Kalinowski's Chat-Tyrant, Red-rumped Bush Tyrant, Paramo Pipit, Blue-backed Conebill, Golden-collared Tanager, Yellow-scarfed Tanager, Buff-breasted Mountain Tanager, Curve-billed Tinamou, and Andean Snipe.

Although scarce, we may see the distinctive 'Coppery-naped' sub-species of Sapphire-vented Puffleg, a potential future split.

To reach Bosque Unchog, we will drive up narrow road to the small village of Cochabamba, from where we will hike to the forest. The road below Cochabamba gives us an opportunity to find the endemic, Brown-flanked Tanager (which we may also find on the Satipo Road).

Huánuco to La Oroya. We'll beging our drive to La Oroya by making a short stop in some cacti habitat to search for the secretive, endemic Rufous-backed Inca. Powerful rivers hold both Torrent Duck and White-capped Dipper, whilst grassland plains closer to Junín may produce our first Vicuñas of the tour.

Lago Junín. This is the second largest lake in Peru behind the massive Lake Titicaca. Lago Junín also holds a flightless endemic, the Junín Grebe, which lives and breeds in the floating reed beds far from shore. We'll head out on a small boat in search of this declining endemic, working our way through the far more numerous (and visually similar) Silver Grebes.



Junin Grebe by Rob Williams

Other more typical species we can expect to find include Wren-like Rushbird, Many-colored Rush Tyrant, Andean Avocet, Puna Plover, Chilean Flamingo, Puna and Cinnamon Teals and Andean Gull. If we are lucky, we may flush the distinctive sub-species of Black Rail (Junín Rail).

The rocky and scrubby shoreline has several attractions such as



Creamy-bellied Antwren by Rob Williams

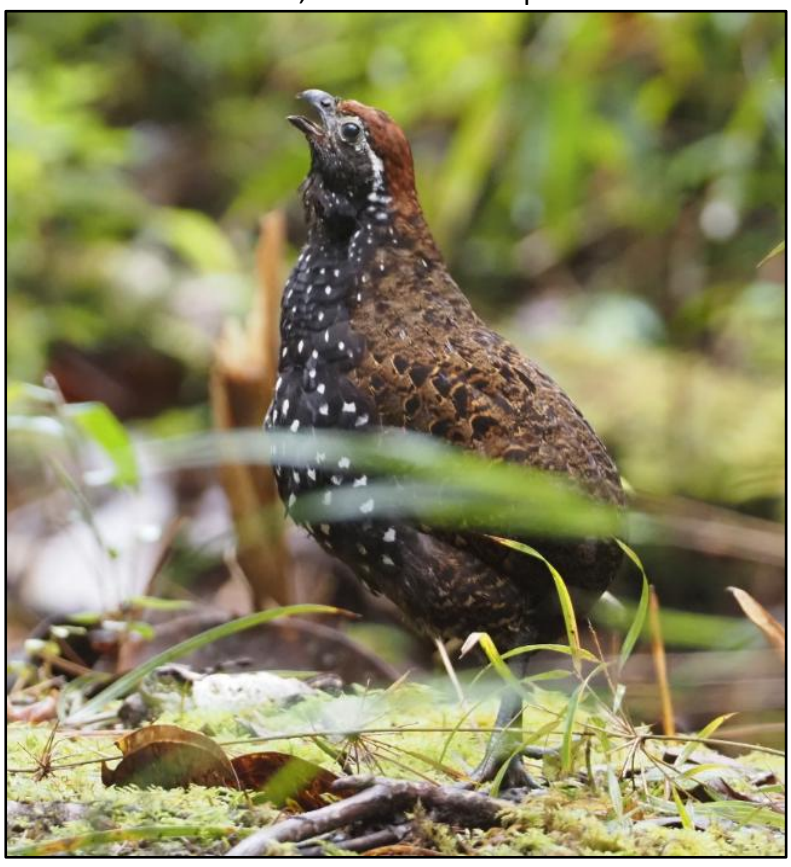
Junín Canastero, Black-breasted Hillstar, Black Siskin, Black-billed Shrike-Tyrant, endemic Dark-winged Miner, and Andean Negrito.

Hacienda Armorique. This coffee farm recently opened itself to ecotourism, allowing access to stands of quality montane forest. Of primary interest is the rare Cloud-forest Screech Owl which is reliable here. We have more chances for the endemic Creamy-bellied Antwren, endemic Rufous-webbed Brilliant, endemic Green-and-white Hummingbird, the 'Blue-chinned' sub-species of Versicolored Barbet (a probable future split), Cabanis's Spinetail, Rufous-capped Nunlet, endemic Cerulean-capped and Round-tailed Manakins and Bluish-fronted Jacamar.

We'll also be searching for more widespread, but tricky species such as Tataupa Tinamou, Inambari Woodcreepers, Lanceolated Monklet, Short-tailed Antthrush, Wattled Guan, Stripe-chested Antwren and Blackish Antbird.

Bosque Schollet. Fast becoming a key cloud forest site close to Villa Rica, our time at Bosque Shollet is sure to turn up several entertaining species such as the endemic Masked Fruiteater, stunning, Crimson-bellied Woodpecker, Trilling Tapaculo, Bluish Flowerpiercer, Golden-collared and Yellow-scarfed Tanagers, and if we're lucky, the range restricted Cloud-forest Screech Owl. Bamboo thickets have played host to the scarce Peruvian Treehunter, and even the mega Maroon-chested Ground Dove if conditions are right.

Villa Rica. The scattered shade coffee plantations near to Villa Rica hold several Amazonian species reaching the edge of their distribution here, but we are primarily looking for the endemic Creamy-bellied Antwren, as well as Cabanis's Spinetail, Rusty-fronted Tody-Flycatcher, White-bellied Pygmy Tyrant and Cerulean-capped Manakin. Commoner species we may expect to find are Blue-headed and Red-billed Parrots, Peruvian Tyrannulet, Silver-beaked, Blue-necked, Paradise and Silver-backed Tanagers, Black-faced Dacnis and Greyish Saltator.



Pasco Wood Quail by Stephan Lorenz



Ceruluean-capped Manakin by Rob Williams

Parque Nacional Yanachaga-Chemellin. Our primary reason for visiting this stunning reserve is the newly discovered, but undescribed Pasco Wood Quail. We'll look out for mixed flocks that usually contain Versicolored Barbet, Streaked Tuftedcheek, Montane Woodcreeper, Ocellated Piculet, and Capped Conebill. We may also find Chestnut-capped Brushfinch in the thicker undergrowth or White-throated Quail-Dove moving quietly along the trail.

Grass-Green, Flame-Faced, Saffron-Crowned, and Rufous-Crested Tanagers as well as Black-eared Hemispingus, Russet-Crowned and Three-Striped Warblers, Golden-Headed Quetzal, Masked Trogon and Crimson-bellied Woodpecker may reveal themselves, whilst we'd need some luck to see the elusive Black-streaked Puffbird.

Ulcumano Lodge. This secluded ecolodge protects over 100 hectares of threatened East Andean Cloud forest. We'll bird the ground of the lodge and nearby surrounds for several key species inlcuding Bay Antpitta, Masked Fruiteater, Rufous-vented Tapaculo, Chestnut-crested Cotinga and the White-eared Solitaire. In the evening, we'll head out to find the elusive Cloudforest Screech Owl if we have not already seen it.

Whilst searchign for our targets species, we will also be looking for Crimson-bellied Woodpecker, Blackish Antbird, Jet Manakin, Slaty-backed and Speckled Nightingale-Thrushes, Golden-browed Chat-Tyrant, Peruvian Tyrannulet, and Peruvian Wren.

Satipo Road – Upper. Similar in many ways to the more famous Manu Road further south, though not nearly as pristine, this long and winding dirt road cuts through a series of deep valleys, creating a diverse and isolated habitat that is home to a number of endemis and potential new species. We'll be searching primarily for Fiery-throated Metaltail, Eye-ringed Thistletail, Marcapata Spinetail, Tschudi's Tapaculo, Junín Antpitta, Jalca Tapaculo, and Junín Tapaculo.

We should also come across several mixed flocks containing the eye-catching Lacrimose Mountain Tanager, 'Peruvian' Citrine Warbler (a probable future split), Tit-like Dacnis, Grey-breasted Mountain Toucan, Grass Green Tanager, and endemic Inca Flycatcher.



Junin Antpitta by Stephan Lorenz



Black-spectacled Brushfinches by Rob Williams

Satipo Road – Lower. The lower parts of the road are home to Scarlet-bellied Mountain Tanager, 'Streak-crowned or Cerulean-streaked' sub-species of Buff-breasted Mountain Tanager, Flame-faced, Golden, Paradise and Bay-headed Tanagers, Blue-banded Toucanet, Streaked Tuftedcheek, Peruvian Wren, 'Taczanowski's' sub-species of Slaty Brushfinch (a probable future split), Barred Fruiteater, Crimson-mantled Woodpecker, Dusky-green Oropendola, Ocellated Piculet, Andean Cock-of-the-rock and Amazonian Umbrellabird.

Mantaro Valley. An early departure will see us on the road towards Andamarca, a small village in the dry Rio Mantaro Valley. We'll be searching for the recently described and endemic Black-spectacled Brushfinch and Junin Antpitta, as well as endemic Creamy-crested Spinetail, whilst bamboo patches are host to 'Mantaro' Wren, a possible new species to science.

Further down the road, we'll search drier habitat for another undescribed and potential new species, 'Mantaro' Thornbird. There is also a population of Azara's Spinetail that could be elevated to full species status 'Mantaro' Spinetail, as well as the endemic, Brown-flanked Tanager, Fiery-throated Metaltail and Jalca Tapaculo to search for, in case we missed any of them earlier.

Carhuapaccha. We'll visit this new site just south of Huancayo along the banks of the Rio Mantaro for the 'Western' Bearded Mountaineer, a very likely split. Other species we may come across include Black-winged Ground Dove, Giant Hummingbird, Creamy-crested Spinetail, Hooded Siskin and Black-throated Flowerpiercer.

Marcopomacochas. The high-altitude bogs off us a good chance of seeing the highly sought after Diademed Sandpiper-Plover*, critically endangered White-bellied Cinclodes, and near endemic Olivaceous Thornbill. While the high elevation of around 4, 500masl (over 14,800ft) may present a physical challenge, the stunning scenery and the chance to observe these special birds make it well worth the effort.



Diademed Sandpiper-Plover by Bobby Wilcox



Black Metaltail by Stephan Lorenz

The unique ecosystem also supports Grey-breasted and Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe and the Dark-winged Miner. As we explore the bogs and surrounding areas, we can expect to find Andean Goose, Crested Duck, Mountain Caracara, and many others.

*Aberrant weather and the general elusive nature of this species means our chances of success are +-60% during a single visit. We thus use a lodge at high altitude to maximise our time in the area.

Santa Eulalia Valley. Descending towards Lima, we'll enjoy some final exciting birding through this scenic canyon. Our primary targets are the endangered Rufous-breasted Warbling Finch and the rare White-cheeked Cotinga. Finding one of these special birds would be a great success! We'll also be on the lookout for the endemic, Black-breasted Woodpecker, Great Inca Finch, Bronze-tailed Comet, Black Metaltail, Rusty-bellied Brushfinch and Canyon Canastero.

Malecón Ancon. Time permitting, we may make a short stop at here to search for Inca Tern, Belcher's and Grey Gulls, West Peruvian Dove, several waders, Peruvian Booby, Peruvian Pelican and with luck, Guanay Cormorant.

Tour Grading & Key

Overall Ease		This is a moderate to difficult tour. You should have a GOOD level of fitness, stamina & be in good health. Not suitable for dedicated or avid photographers; inexperienced birders; or anyone with mobility or health challenges.
Birding Ease		Moderate to demanding. Bird density is low, often in forest. Several difficult target species that may require repeat efforts.
Accommodation		Comfortable in the large towns to basic on the Satipo Road. Several lodges at altitude (one at 3900m), many do not have heating.
Walking / Trails		Mostly roadside birding with some moderate to difficult hikes in cloud forest (most are optional)
Vehicles / Roads		Reasonable quality tarred roads between cities & towns, tracks & gravel roads in rural areas. 4x4 vehicles used on some days. Many long drives on winding roads & high passes.
Photography		Reasonable, typical cloud forest conditions of variable light and frequent cloud.
Annoyances		Some birding at high altitude. Twisting drives can led to motion illness.

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 dinner on day 16;
- All lodgings (including day room on day 16)
- 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.**

- This tour DOES require a GOOD level of fitness and stamina. Participants should also be in good general health. Much of the forest birding will be done on foot and may require walking for several hours at a time.
- We will be away from modern medical facilities for much of this tour.
- This tour is designed to be an intensive birding experience, and we will attempt to obtain good views of as many endemic bird species as possible.
- Due to the nature of some trails, a collapsible hiking pole may be beneficial.
- Long drives on most days of the tour.
- Several nights are spent at altitude, where temperatures are likely to be cold (+-0°C). Some hotels do not have heating, instead providing several blankets.
- Domestic flights have a baggage limit of 15kg per person for checked luggage and 5kg for hand luggage.

Arrival and Departure Details

The tour starts in Lima on day 1 with a welcome dinner. The tour will conclude after dinner of day 16 at an airport hotel.

As most international flights depart late in the evening or very early morning, we have included a hotel room for the night of the last day to ensure you are able to pack and rest suitably after dinner before departing.

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.

Jorge Chávez International Airport (IATA: LIM), Lima is the main port of entry and departure for this tour.

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.