Guatemala

Eastern Slope Extension

1st February to 4th February 2024 (4 days)

Central American Specialities

4th February to 16th February 2024 (13 days)

Tikal Extension

16th February to 21st February 2024 (6 days)



Horned Guan by Adam Riley

Spectacular volcanoes and fabulous highland lakes form a brilliant backdrop to our Guatemala – Central American Specialities tour. While this region is probably best known for its shade coffee production, local people have over time developed a strong environmental bond and an understanding of ecotourism that has resulted in much of the highland forests being protected. Even the coffee fincas offer superb birding, and the host of special birds we will search for include one of the world's most prized birds - Horned Guan as well as the gorgeous Pink-headed Warbler, fabulous Resplendent Quetzal, Blue-throated Motmot, Blue-and-white Mockingbird, Rufous-collared Thrush, Slender Sheartail, Goldman's Warbler, Bushy-crested and Black-throated Jay, Black-capped Swallow, Buffy-crowned Wood Partridge, Green-throated Mountaingem, Long-tailed Manakin and Azure-rumped (Cabanis's) Tanager. This tour offers the very best of Guatemalan birding, along with comfortable lodgings, delicious fare and fabulous scenery throughout!

Our short extension to Guatemala's eastern slope puts us in position to find some very tricky and range restricted specials of the dry Motagua Valley as well as the pristine cloud forest of Biotopo Quetzal and Mayan town of Coban. A host of interesting, extraordinarily beautiful and specialist species await.

Our Tikal Extension not only takes time to explore the remarkable Mayan temple complexes and cities that dominate this region (both Tikal and lesser known Yaxha are visited), but also to target such highly sought-after species as the remarkable Ocellated Turkey, Black-throated Shrike-Tanager, Pale-billed Woodpecker, Orange-breasted Falcon, Mayan Antthrush, Northern Royal Flycatcher and the impressive Great Curassow! This northern Petén region of Guatemala is covered in extensive lowland rainforest, harbouring many special birds of the Yucatan Peninsula and other more widespread forest species, most of which will represent new species for our tour. The birding here is superb and this extension is highly recommended for its birding, mammal viewing and fascinating historical insights

Itinerary & Map

Eastern Slope Extension

Day 1	**Arrive in Guatemala City**
Day 2	**Guatemala City to Biotopo Quetzal via Talpetate**
Day 3	**Biotopo Quetzal to Chajbaoc**
Day 4	**Finca las Nubes to Antigua Guatemala**

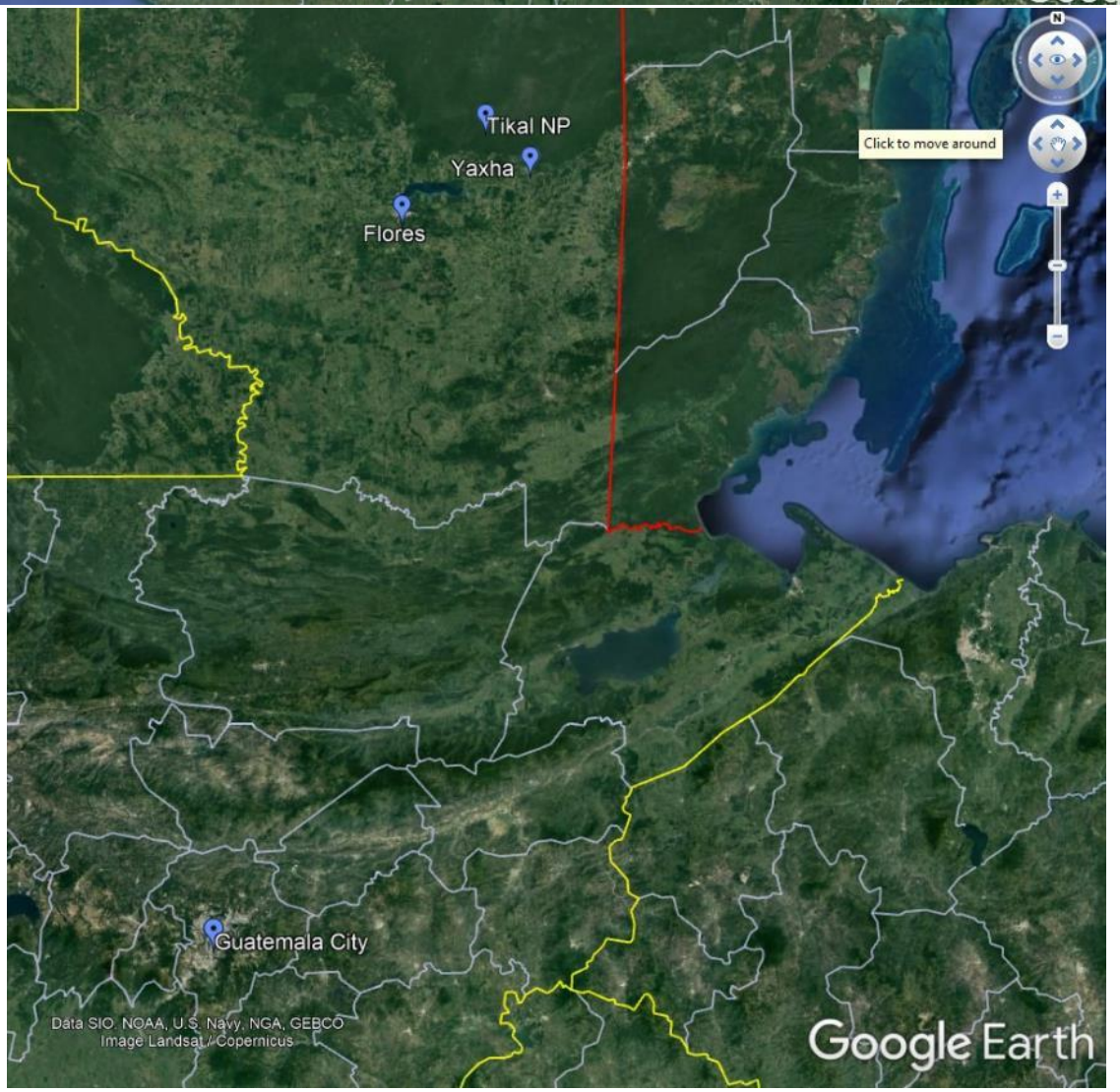
Central American Specialities

Day 1	**Arrive in Antigua Guatemala**
Day 2	**Finca el Pilar to San Marcos**
Day 3	**Refugio del Quetzal to Volcán Tacana**
Day 4	**Volcán Tacana**
Day 5	**Unión Reforma to Huehuetenango**
Day 6	**Todos los Santos Cuchamatanes**
Day 7	**Huehuetenango to Fuentes Georginas**
Day 8	**Fuentes Georginas to Santiago Atitlan via Panajachel**
Day 9	**Mirador Rey Tepepul to Los Tarrales**
Days 10 & 11	**Las Tarrales**
Day 12	**Las Tarrales to Antigua Guatemala via Finca el Zapote**
Day 13	**Cerro Alux, transfer to Guatemala City Airport & depart**

Tikal Extension

Day 1	**Guatemala City and afternoon flight to Flores**
Day 2	**Flores to Tikal National Park via Yaxha**
Day 3	**Tikal National Park**
Day 4	**Day in Tikal National Park and afternoon transfer to Flores**
Day 5	**Villa Maya, afternoon flight to Guatemala City**
Day 6	**Final departure**


Todos los Santos
Coban
Huehuetenango
Biotopo Quetzal
Volcan Tacana
Motagua Valley
Fuentes Georginas
Lago Atitlan
Guatemala City
Las Tarrales
Antigua Guatemala
Finca El Pilar
Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO
Image Landsat / Copernicus
Google Earth


Tikal NP
Yaxha
Flores
Click to move around
Guatemala City
Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO
Image Landsat / Copernicus
Google Earth

Birding sites in detail



Resplendent Quetzal by Adam Riley

Motagua valley. This arid environment in the Motagua Valley holds a small number of interesting species which we will search for on a private finca. One of our most wanted birds this morning will be Lesser Roadrunner, and we hope to connect with this secretive species. Another fascinating cuckoo occurs here, the secretive Lesser Ground Cuckoo, which will require some luck and patience. Russet-crowned Motmot is another stunning highlight while other specialties of the dry forest include Nutting's Flycatcher, Northern Beardless Tyrannulet, White-lored Gnatcatcher, Rufous-naped Wren, Streak-backed Oriole, Stripe-headed Sparrow and Varied Bunting. White-fronted Amazon may be seen flying overhead while soaring Black Hawk-Eagle is a possibility as the day heats up.

Biotopo Quetzal. This exciting cloud forest destination holds an impressive number of Resplendent Quetzal, which will be our primary target. Other species of interest include Green-throated Mountaingem, Northern Tufted Flycatcher, Unicolored Jay, Crescent-chested Warbler and Blue-crowned Chlorophonia. We'll also be hoping to connect with the handsome Azure-hooded Jay and Black-headed Nightingale-Thrush. In addition to the many resident specialties, there are huge numbers of overwintering songbirds in the area. One species that we can be on the lookout for is the endangered Golden-cheeked Warbler that winters here in small numbers

In the evening, we'll try to find the reclusive Fulvous Owl or Bearded Screech Owl.



Lesser Roadrunner by Owen Deutsch

Chajbaoc. This beautiful cloud forest location close to Cobán holds a slightly different suite of species to Biotopo. Here we will be searching for Collared Trogon, Violet Sabrewing, Little and Strip-throated Hermits, Azure-crowned Hummingbird, Lesson's Motmot, Scaled



Brown-backed Solitaire in full song by Adam Riley

Antpitta, Golden-olive Woodpecker, Northern Bentbill, Slate-colored Solitaire, Bushy-crested Jay, Orange-billed Nightingale Thrush and Crimson-collared Tanager.

Finca las Nubes. Finca Las Nubes is one of the oldest operational coffee fincas in Guatemala, dating back to the 1830's! After driving our way up through coffee plantations, we'll spend the morning birding from a platform situated on the edge of an excellent patch of cloud forest. This forest supports a healthy population of the dazzling Resplendent Quetzal, the national bird, emblem and name of Guatemala's currency. Las Nubes is in particular a great site for the rare Azure-rumped Tanager, which we will search for in fruiting trees. Other targets include Crested Guan, secretive Barred and Collared Forest Falcons, Band-tailed Pigeon, White-winged Quail-Dove, Barred Parakeet (numerous fly-over views were obtained during previous Rockjumper tours of this widespread, but very difficult montane bamboo specialist), Mountain Pygmy Owl, Ruddy and Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaners, Spot-crowned and Spotted Woodcreepers, Green-throated Mountaingem, the aptly named Rivoli's Hummingbird, Collared Trogon, Emerald Toucanet, the near-endemic and shy Rufous-browed Wren, Grey-breasted Wood Wren, Spotted and Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush, White-throated Thrush, Yellowish and Northern Tufted Flycatcher, stunning Elegant (or Blue-hooded) Euphonia, Blue-crowned Chlorophonia, the difficult Fan-tailed and Golden-browed Warblers, Chestnut-capped and White-naped Brush Finch, Cedar Waxwing, Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer and Hooded Grosbeak. We will also keep our eyes peeled for soaring Black Hawk-Eagle and the stunning Ornate Hawk-Eagle, which perches in isolated large trees, even in the coffee plantations.

El Pilar. The atmosphere around Antigua Guatemala is made rather more dramatic by three surrounding volcanoes (one of them active and smoking) that loom over the town. Early this morning we will head to Finca el Pilar, a private shade-coffee farm perched on a nearby hillside above the city.

Much of the natural forest habitat here is protected as a conservation area and visitors are welcome to walk the region's numerous trails. We can anticipate many exciting and colourful species! Hummingbird feeders situated on the lower slopes are swarmed by a profusion of highland species, often gathering in large numbers. Several species can be seen, including White-eared, Azure-crowned, Berylline, and Rivoli's Hummingbirds, Green-throated Mountaingem and the near endemic Rufous and Violet Sabrewings.



Chestnut-sided Shrike-Vireo by Lev Frid

The lower slopes are also home to Bushy-crested Jay and Emerald Toucanet, while mixed flocks may include Rose-throated Becard, Squirrel Cuckoo, Dusky-capped Flycatcher, scarce Chestnut-sided Shrike-Vireo, Acorn,



Pink-headed Warbler by Lev Frid

Velasquez's, Golden-olive and Hairy Woodpeckers, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and the unique Guatemalan sub-species of Northern Flicker (a possible future armchair tick!). Even the scarce Collared Forest Falcon or White-breasted Hawk might put in an appearance. In the scrubby undergrowth, we'll look for the shy White-naped Brushfinch as well as Inca and White-tipped Doves, Ruddy Foliage-gleaner and Rufous-capped Warbler.

Driving up to a higher elevation of around 2 000m (6 600ft), a convenient car park will allow spectacular views overlooking the volcanoes Agua, Acatenango and the smoking Fuego. A different selection of birds occur in the drier forest habitat, including Spot-crowned and Spotted Woodcreeper (a potential future split), Northern Tufted Flycatcher, the distinctive local race of Plumbeous Vireo, plus Blue-headed and Hutton's Vireos, Flame-colored Tanager, Hooded Grosbeak, families of Eastern Bluebirds, Rufous-collared and Black Thrush, Hermit, MacGillivray's, Red-faced and Golden-browed Warblers, Black-vented Oriole, Black-headed Siskin and, if we are really lucky, Singing Quail.

Refugio del Quetzal. This cloud forest is home to several specials, including the sought-after Resplendent Quetzal. However, of primary concern are two scare and very tricky species in Azure-rumped (Cabanis's) Tanager and Emerald-chinned Hummingbird. While prioritising these species, we should also run into several more regular inhabitants including Lesson's Motmot, Green-throated Mountaingem and Violet Sabrewing, Collared Trogon, Emerald Toucanet, Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaner, Brown-backed Solitaire (which must surely issue one of the richest calls in all the bird world!), Slate-throated Whitestart (of the orange bellied, Central American race) and Grey-breasted Wood Wren. If we are fortunate, we may observe some of the more difficult denizens of these verdant forests, including Spotted Wood Quail, Scaled Antpitta, Highland Guan (most easily located by its bizarre call), Barred Parakeet, White-faced Quail-Dove or Blue-crowned Chlorophonia.

Volcán Tacana. The mighty Tacana Volcano is an imposing figure on the landscape. At a height of 4,060 meters above sea level it is the second highest volcano in Central America and spans across the borders of both Guatemala and Mexico. We will spend the day birding the upper flanks of this mighty volcano. We have come to this little visited area near the border with Mexico in the hopes of finding that most coveted of all of Guatemala's birds, the one and only Horned Guan. This spectacular and Endangered species is now found in only a few highland forests across western Guatemala and nearby Chiapas, Mexico. Almost all these sites require a strenuous walk to access the proper habitat, but here at Tacana there is road access to 3,500 meters above sea level! Today we will be searching for this enigmatic bird and have a very good chance to find it after just a short walk. While this would be the obvious highlight of our day (and indeed our entire trip!), other species we will be on the lookout for today include a mouth-watering selection: Highland Guan, Singing Quail, Amethyst-throated, Garnet-throated and Wine-



Goldman's Warbler by Lev Frid



Black-capped Siskin by Lev Frid

throated Hummingbirds, Mountain Trogon, Blue-throated Motmot, Chestnut-sided Shrike Vireo, Black-throated Jay, Rufous-browed Wren, Ruddy-capped Nightingale-thrush and Blue-and-white Mockingbird.

Unión Reforma. The lower slopes are home to the incredible Pink-headed Warbler, while Black-throated Jays and mixed flocks are readily seen. Several migratory warblers including Townsend's, Wilson's, Crescent-chested and Golden-browed scramble through the canopy alongside Blue-headed Vireo, Spot-crowned Woodcreeper and Broad-tailed Hummingbirds. More open habitat will likely reveal Yellow-eyed Junco and Spotted Towhee.

Todos los Santos Cuchamatanes. The Cuchamatanes are one of the highest mountain ranges of Central America. Here a high elevation grassland is punctuated by juniper forests and is the home to Goldman's Warbler. Nowadays it is widely regarded as a distinct species (formerly considered to be part of the Yellow-rumped Warbler) and was considered Guatemala's only true endemic until a small population was discovered in neighbouring Mexico. The species is common in this beautiful but highly specialized habitat so we can expect plenty of sightings this morning! There are many other high-elevation species to search for here as well such as Black-capped Siskin, Yellow-eyed Junco, Spotted Towhee, Buff-breasted Flycatcher, Eastern Bluebird, Rufous-collared Robin, Broad-tailed Hummingbird, Northern Raven, Hutton's Vireo, Brown Creeper, the gorgeous all-blue subspecies of Steller's Jay, Olive Warbler, "Plain" Pine Siskin, Red Crossbill and Golden-crowned Kinglet. Many of these species are here at their southernmost limit and are represented by subspecies that look quite different to their more northerly counterparts. An outside chance for Ocellated Quail, which can be found sparingly throughout the drier highland habitats of Guatemala.

Fuentes Georginas. Fuentes Georginas are a series of hot springs near the city of Quetzaltenango. Mixed flocks in this area can hold Pink-headed Warbler, numbers of Grey Silky Flycatcher, Common Bush Tanager, White-naped Brushfinch, Slate-throated Whitestart, Golden-browed Warbler, Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer and other flock-haunting passerines. Major targets here include Unicolored Jay and numerous species of hummingbirds, such as the large and showy Garnet-throated Hummingbird and Amethyst-throated Hummingbird. Highland Guans might be among the many species offering below-eye-level views. The undoubted showcase bird of the site, however, is likely to be the stunning Wine-throated Hummingbird and we have excellent chances at seeing this tiny hummingbird whose gorget glows pink in the sunlight.



Azure-rumped Tanager by Lev Frid

Early morning will give us our bets chance of getting views of Ruddy-capped Nightingale-thrush, Chestnut-capped Brushfinch, Rufous-browed Wren and Brown-backed Solitaire before they melt back into the thick forests for the day. Some of the trickier species of the area include Black-throated Jay, Ruddy Foliage-gleaner, Blue-throated Motmot and possibly even Maroon-chested Ground Dove.



Ornate Hawk-Eagle by Lev Frid

Panajachel. Panajachel is a small town situated on the shores of Lake Atitlan. Here we will sample some secondary habitats outside of town where we hope to catch up with Slender Sheartail, one of the trickiest hummers in the world! If the right flowers are blooming, there is also the chance of the equally difficult Sparkling-tailed Woodstar. Some of the more regular denizens of the scrub include Lesser Goldfinch, Prevost's Ground Sparrow, and a host of boreal migrant flycatchers, warblers, orioles, and tanagers. There is a chance here of the tricky Blue-and-white Mockingbird, and one of the most sought-after species in the area: Belted Flycatcher. With a range restricted to montane dry valley scrub in Guatemala and neighbouring far-south Mexico, this bird is on most folks' wish list. Given its unique crest and plumage (let's face it, many flycatchers aren't as showy as this one) the species will definitely warrant a thorough search in the area.

Mirador Rey Tepepul. Mirador Rey Tepepul will give us opportunities to see Highland Guan, Sparkling-tailed Woodstar, Emerald-chinned Hummingbird, the fantastic Resplendent Quetzal, Black Thrush, Blue-and-white Mockingbird, Bar-winged Oriole and Azure-rumped (Cabanis's) Tanager amongst others, should we still be missing any of these species or be hoping for better views.

Las Tarrales. The finca of Las Tarrales is the result of three generations of concerted conservation efforts to allow the bird and other wildlife populations to successfully regenerate. Employing local Kaqchikel families living within the protected area, the reserve sustains itself by cultivating ornamental plants as well as the processing of its shade-grown coffee. Birdlife abounds in the gardens around our accommodations and an active feeding station attracts the likes of Cinnamon Hummingbird, Velasquez's Woodpecker, Lesson's Motmot, Yellow-winged, Blue-grey and Summer Tanagers, numbers of Red-legged Honeycreeper, Melodious Blackbird, Yellow-throated Euphonia, Black-headed Saltator, Rufous-naped Wren and the striking White-throated Magpie-Jay. Great photographic opportunities indeed!



Tody Motmot by Lev Frid

Our time will be spent walking a ridgeline trail on the lower slopes of Los Tarrales. Here our main targets include the stunning Long-tailed Manakin, which is best located in fruiting trees, the elaborately patterned *occipitalis* subspecies of White-eared Ground Sparrow (a



Torquoise-browed Motmot by Adam Riley

possible future split), furtive Tody Motmot, drab Guatemalan Tyrannulet, White-bellied Emerald and Gartered Trogon (a split from Violaceous) and leks of Blue-throated Sapphires (Goldentail). This is also a good site for three species of cracid – the localised Highland Guan and White-bellied Chachalaca along with the more widespread Crested Guan.

In the afternoons, we will concentrate on the trails closer to our lodge, where we will bird more open country. Birds are abundant here and species we may encounter include raucous family parties of White-bellied Chachalacas, flocks of Orange-fronted, Orange-chinned and Pacific Parakeets, small groups of Yellow-naped Amazon, Collared Forest Falcon, elongated Squirrel Cuckoo, Ferruginous Pygmy Owl, Blue-tailed and Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, the stunning Long-billed Starthroat, entertaining Collared Aracaris, the sought-after Turquoise-browed Motmot, Lineated, Smoky-brown and Golden-olive Woodpeckers, Rufous-breasted Spinetail, Barred Antshrike, Greenish Elaenia, Northern Beardless Tyrannulet, Common Tody-Flycatcher, Least, Yellow-bellied, Boat-billed, Great Crested and Brown-crested Flycatchers, ever-present Tropical Kingbirds, strident Great Kiskadees, Masked Tityra, Rose-throated Becard, Spot-breasted, Rufous-and-white and House Wrens, Long-billed Gnatwren, Blue-grey Gnatcatcher, furtive White-throated Thrush, Scrub Euphonia, a plethora of migrant and resident warblers including Tennessee, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, American Yellow, Black-throated Green, Townsend's, Black-and-white, Wilson's and Rufous-capped Warblers, Ovenbird, the taxonomically challenging Yellow-breasted Chat (now in its own unique family), Spot-breasted, Baltimore and melodious Altamira Orioles, near-endemic Prevost's Ground Sparrow, Western and stunning White-winged Tanagers, and both Indigo and the multi-coloured Painted Bunting.

Raptors are also a feature here and our previous tours have recorded Cooper's, Broad-winged, Short-tailed, Red-tailed, White, Grey, Roadside and Great Black Hawks, Black Hawk-Eagle, Northern Crested Caracara, Laughing Falcon, Bat Falcon and the magnificent King Vulture. On the mammal front, Central American Agouti, White-nosed Coati, Variegated Squirrel, Grey Fox and White-tailed Deer are distinct possibilities. A nocturnal foray here could produce Mottled and Black-and-white Owls, Northern Potoo and Common Pauraque.

Finca el Zapote. This finca sits on the slopes of the mighty Fuego Volcano. In this varied edge habitat, we'll likely tally close to 100 species in just a few hours! Highlights are likely to include Emerald-chinned Hummingbird, Least Grebe, Long-billed Starthroat, Collared Araçari, Ruddy Crake, Rufous-naped Wren, Turquoise-browed Motmot and Ruddy Foliage-gleaner amongst others. Migrants tend to be abundant, with more exciting possibilities such as Golden-winged Warbler, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Painted Bunting and even Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher.



Wine-throated Hummingbird by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Cerro Alux. This cool pine-oak forest sits just outside Guatemala City, making it a very convenient birding

site when moving to or from the city. Covering more than 5 000 hectares at an elevation of 2 200m, we will only be scratching the surface during our time here. We'll focus on any specialities we may still require such as Rufous-browed Wren, Blue-and-white Mockingbird or Black-capped Swallow, whilst more widespread species include Golden-browed Warbler, Grey Silky Flycatcher, Chestnut-sided Shrike-Vireo and Hooded Grosbeak.



Orange-breasted Falcon by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Yaxha. The ancient city of Yaxha is now situated within an extensive national park protecting vast rainforests and named for an adjacent lake ('Yaxha' means blue-green water). This city was the 3rd largest Mayan centre, reaching its peak between 250-600AD and supporting an estimated population of 42,000 people. Yaxha was rediscovered in 1904 and the site contains over 500 structures, including a twin pyramid temple complex.

We will spend the morning birding around these fascinating structures, and at times base ourselves on top of the buildings where we will obtain a superb view of the towering forest canopy. Birds are abundant here, mostly offering a new suite of lowland rainforest denizens, and visitors far less numerous than at the more famous Tikal, all adding to the magical experience. Species seen here on previous Rockjumper tours include Crane Hawk, Olive-throated Parakeet, White-crowned Parrot, Red-lored and Mealy Amazons, Wedge-tailed Sabrewing, White-necked Jacobin, Purple-crowned Fairy, Slaty-tailed Trogon, Lesson's Motmot, White-whiskered Puffbird, the multi-coloured Keel-billed Toucan, impressive Pale-billed Woodpecker, Olivaceous, Strong-billed and army ant swarm-loving Ruddy Woodcreeper, secretive Mayan Antthrush, attractive Eye-ringed Flatbill, Bright-rumped Attila, the lovely Olive-backed Euphonia, Golden-crowned Warbler and Grey-headed Tanager (another ant swarm specialist). Yaxha also supports healthy populations of the impressively loud Guatemalan Black Howler Monkey and agile Geoffroy's Spider Monkeys, which will no doubt entertain us.

Tikal National Park. Believed to have supported over three million people at its peak, Tikal was once one of the major cultural, military and population centres of the Mayan civilisation. The Tikal temple complex and main city cover an area of more than 16 square kilometres (6.2 square miles) and includes about 3,000 structures; though the residential area of Tikal covers an estimated 60 square kilometres (23 square miles), all of which now falls within the 570 square kilometre (220 square miles) Tikal National Park. The city itself is believed to have supported up to 90,000 people but the site was abandoned in the latter part of the 10th century, mostly due to the lack of water – remarkably the city relied entirely on rainfall! For centuries it lay untouched as the rainforest regenerated and swallowed it up, covering all the temples and other buildings. Now much of the city has been restored, although thousands of structures are still buried under mounds of dirt and covered in trees. Tikal was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1979 and it now attracts thousands of visitors annually.



White-fronted Amazon by Owen Deutsch



White-collared Manakin by Adam Riley

During our time here, we should soon become acquainted with the more common denizens of this remarkable park, including flocks of unbelievably patterned and remarkably tame Ocellated Turkeys. This stunning gamebird is one of only two species of turkey and is restricted to the Yucatan Peninsula. Another gamebird species that is commonly encountered in flocks here is Plain Chachalaca, while we should also observe the impressive Great Curassow and Crested Guan during our time at Tikal. The strident yet melodious bubbling call of Montezuma Oropendola will be bursting around us as these attractive icterids prepare themselves for roosting in large flocks. Brown Jays will also be obvious, another common bird of open spaces. The pond area near our lodge holds some interesting birds including the nocturnal Boat-billed Heron (such a distinctive bird that it used to be considered the sole member of a unique family), Limpkins and if we are lucky, Ruddy Crake and Grey-necked Wood Rail. Here we can also observe the uncommon Morelet's Crocodile, another Yucatan endemic.

We will spend a full day exploring this remarkable city and temple complex in the company of a local historical guide who will describe the Mayan civilisation to us and explain the significance of Tikal and the buildings that we pass, as well as the way of life and religion of the Mayan people. At the same time, we will be on the constant lookout for new birds. It's an exciting feeling to have these grand ruins towering over us while birding through this reserve that teems with wildlife. In the late afternoon, we will climb to the top of the highest temple-pyramid in Tikal (measuring 70m (230ft) and completed in 731AD), in fact, the highest pre-Columbian structure in the Americas, and gaze out over an endless vista of tropical rainforests broken only by Mayan temples – a truly breath-taking experience that will no doubt be a lifelong memory! On top of this, we also stand an excellent chance of observing one of the world's rarest raptors, the dashing Orange-breasted Falcon!

All the species mentioned under Yaxha are possible, and we will also keep an eye out for the shy Great Tinamou, Grey-headed Dove, Brown-hooded Parrot, rare White-fronted Amazon, Stripe-throated Hermit, Black-headed Trogon, Chestnut-colored Woodpecker, Plain Xenops, Tawny-winged, Northern Barred and Ivory-billed Woodcreepers, Plain Antvireo, diminutive Yellow-bellied Tyrannulet, purring Northern Bentbill, cute Stub-tailed Spadebill, a variety of flycatchers including Ochre-bellied, Slate-headed Tody, Sepia-capped and the sought-after Northern Royal, both Rufous Mourner and the lookalike Rufous Piha, Red-capped and White-collared Manakins, Northern Schiffornis, the canopy dwelling Lesser and understory occupying Tawny-crowned Greenlets, Northern Rough-winged Swallow (the distinctive Ridgeway's subspecies), White-breasted Wood and White-bellied Wrens, White-bellied Emerald, active Long-billed Gnatwren, Black-cowled Oriole, the localised Black-throated Shrike-Tanager, Green Honeycreeper, Red-crowned and Red-throated Ant Tanagers and Blue Bunting.



Pale-billed Woodpecker by Owen Deutsch



Stub-tailed Spadebill by Adam Riley

The grounds around Tikal also teem with a host of North American migrant warblers, flycatchers, vireos, orioles, tanagers and grosbeaks, with notable species including White-eyed and Yellow-throated Vireos, Wood and Swainson's Thrushes, Blue-winged, Golden-winged, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Green, Kentucky, Hooded and Worm-eating Warblers, American Redstart, Ovenbird and both Northern and Louisiana Waterthrush.

Tougher species that we will be search for include the secretive Thicket and Slaty-breasted Tinamous (more likely to be heard than seen), the attractive Scaled and Short-billed Pigeons, Blue Ground Dove and Ruddy Quail-Dove, Canivet's Emerald, White-necked Puffbird, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, Scaly-throated Leaftosser, Barred Antshrike, Dot-winged Antwren, Ruddy-tailed, Sulphur-rumped and Yucatan Flycatchers, Mangrove Vireo, Green and the localised Yucatan Jay, Green-backed Sparrow, Rose-throated Tanager, Black-faced and Blue-black Grosbeaks, the stunning yet tricky Grey-throated Chat, Blue Bunting and Yellow-billed Cacique. This region is also excellent for raptors, and we will keep an eye out for King Vulture, Black and Ornate Hawk-Eagle, Crested Eagle if we are extremely fortunate, Northern Crested Caracara, Grey, White, Roadside and Black-collared Hawks, Double-toothed, Plumbeous and Grey-headed Kites, Laughing Falcon, Barred and Collared Forest Falcons, and American Kestrel.

Mammals are prolific, and besides the howler and spider monkeys, we should observe inquisitive bands of White-nosed Coati, which occur here in great densities, Central American Agouti, Red Brocket Deer and Grey Fox. Jaguar and other rare species occur, but we would be extremely lucky to observe any of these!

A nocturnal walk back to our lodge should provide us with Mottled Owl and, if we are fortunate, Middle American Screech and Black-and-white Owls, and possibly even Yucatan Poorwill.

Villa Maya. The lodge is situated on the shores of a small lake where we can expect to see a few waterbirds including, with some luck, Ruddy Crake. Several miles of trails access various habitats on the grounds and easy walking gives us access to a variety of habitats from secondary forests to swamps. Species we can be on the lookout for include Scaled Pigeon, American Pygmy Kingfisher, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, Blue Ground Dove and Great Antshrike. Even Agami Heron is sometimes seen on the lodge grounds! One of the specialties we can also target, should we have missed it in Tikal is Grey-throated Chat.



Yucatan Jay by Clayton Burne

Tour Grading & Key

Overall Ease		Moderate. The main tour is a target focussed trip. Not suitable for dedicated photographers; inexperienced birders; or anyone with mobility or health challenges. The Tikal extension is slower paced.
Birding Ease		Moderate, with mostly forest birding. A number of skulkers and low-density targets.
Accommodation		Comfortable, some lodges are reasonably simple.
Walking / Trails		The main tour can be challenging due to a combination of reasonably high altitude and forest trails that can be steep in parts, as well as slippery after rain.
Vehicles / Roads		A number of drives, some long. Mostly sealed roads between towns, changing to dirt in remoter areas. Mountain passes and eroded dirt roads can be bumpy. Most roads are winding.
Photography		Average to good. Many species are seen within the forest or in the canopy.
Annoyances		Winding roads can cause motion sickness, some small biting insects. The lowlands around Tikal can be hot and very humid.

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 lunch on day 4 on the Eastern Slope Extension;
- All meals from dinner on day 1 to lunch on day 13 on the main tour;
- All meals from dinner on day 1 to lunch on day 6 on the Tikal Extension;
- 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 made 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.**

- Some of our time is spent in vehicles, and we do have a couple of lengthy drives to get to the best birding sites. The more luggage you pack the less room there is in the vehicle, so it is important for the comfort of your fellow travellers that you do not over-pack. Please limit yourself to one medium-sized suitcase or duffel bag (20 kg / 44 lb) and one carry-on bag, as space in the vehicles is limited.
- We will be birding the mountainous areas of Guatemala on foot, along forest trails that are steep and, depending on weather conditions, sometimes slippery. A generally good level of fitness is required for this tour.
- One of the sites we visit is over 10,000 feet in altitude.
- Even though distances from location to location are relatively short, there can be some long driving days due to the condition of some roads, as well as the mountainous nature of the areas we visit.

Arrival and Departure Details

The Eastern Slope Extension will begin with an arrival day into Guatemala City on day 1. The tour will conclude in the late afternoon on day 4 at our hotel in Antigua Guatemala.

The Central American Specialities tour will begin from Guatemala City on day 1 with a transfer to our hotel in Antigua Guatemala. Day 1 is scheduled as an arrival day, but you should have arrived at Guatemala City Airport by the early afternoon for the group transfer to Antigua Guatemala. The tour will conclude late afternoon on day 13 at La Aurora International Airport, Guatemala City (GUA).

The Tikal Extension will depart from La Aurora International Airport on day 1 (Day 13 of the Main tour), and will conclude after breakfast at the same airport 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.

La Aurora International Airport, Guatemala City (IATA: GUA) is the main port of entry for international flights into and out of Guatemala and is well serviced by most of North America's and Europe's major airlines.

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. The following website provides detailed information about visa eligibility and assistance with online applications options where viable: Visa HQ for Travel

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