

Northwest Peru:

Hummingbirds and Maranon & Tumbesian Endemics

November 3rd - November 17th, 2019

Cost: \$5800.00 CAN from Cajamarca

Airfare to Cajamarca not included. Costs include accommodation from Nov 3rd to Nov 17th (14 nights), meals, transportation and guide fees. Alcoholic drinks and tips not included. This trip is limited to six participants plus the two guides. We feel strongly in providing personalized service and sharing our knowledge with others. The single supplement \$700.

Overview

If you enjoy seeing a lot of beautiful hummingbird species including some of the world's most spectacular species i.e. **Marvelous Spatuletail** and **Royal Sunangel**; and enjoy searching for unique birds in one of the most important endemic centres in the world, this trip is for you. Traversing a variety of habitats in beautiful scenery expect a lot of species 400+. The multitude of habitats includes elfin forest, puna, dry Maranon scrub, stunted palm forest, east slope subtropical forest, savanna, and Tumbesian deciduous forest. In addition to the many endemics and range-restricted species occurring on this tour many star birds a few being: Sickle-winged Guan, Sword-billed Hummingbird, Long-whiskered Owllet, Oilbird, Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan, Point-tailed Palmcreeper, Ochre-fronted and Chestnut Antpitta, Red-ruffed Fruitcrow, Andean Cock-of-the-Rock, Fiery-breasted Fruiteater, White-browed Purpletuft, Slaty-backed Chat-Tyrant, White-capped, Grass-green, Yellow-scarfed and Yellow-throated Tanager, Golden-collared Honeycreeper etc.

Peru is known as a birders paradise with an astounding 1,800 species, almost 20% of the world's birds! Peru simply has it all. Join us for an amazing journey in gorgeous scenery, traversing the Maranon drainage (a major barrier to north-south Andean bird distribution), up the Utcubamba valley, east to the bird-rich east Andean slope, then back to the semi-humid scrub of the west Peruvian Andes, finally descending to the dry deciduous forest of the coast.

Expect a lot of species and an excellent number of Tumbesian and Maranon Endemics.

General

Accommodation will vary from good to excellent including hacienda style Peruvian ranches/lodges all with emphasis on locations conducive to birding. Lodgings are selected with comfort in mind, combined with beautiful surroundings. Birding and nature study will be conducted along roadsides and good trails/ into forest with trails considered easy to moderate walking. Walks will be at a slow and leisurely pace that is best for locating birds and allowing nature study and photography.

Peru is gaining a world-renowned culinary reputation. Participants will have an opportunity to sample some of this great food in Lima and at some of the lodgings. Food will generally consist of a hearty breakfast, picnic lunches and a sit down dinner.

Itinerary

Nov 3: The tour starts in the beautiful colonial town of Cajamarca at 2,700 m situated in northwestern Peru. Overnight Cajamarca.

Nov 4: We begin with an early morning drive to the small Andean town of San Marcos to seek out the extremely localized endemic Great Spinetail. Montane scrub, riparian habitat, and dry forest offer other interesting species including Spot-throated Hummingbird, White-winged Black-Tyrant, and another excellent Marañon endemic, the Buff-bridled Inca-Finch.

In late afternoon we visit Rio Chonta outside of Cajamarca to search for another extremely localized endemic the Grey-bellied Comet. This hummingbird is associated with *bromeliad* spikes and important food source. Overnight Cajamarca.

Nov 5: From Cajamarca we head east to the nice town of Celendin, stopping en route in habitat near the small puebla of La Encanada for Rufous-eared Brush-finch, and then the Cruz Conga area for the *cajamarcae* form of Rufous Antpitta. Other good birds like the enigmatic White-tailed Shrike-Tyrant, Rufous-webbed Tyrant and the endemic Baron's Spinetail and Black-crested Tit-Tyrant occur. Overnight Celendin.

Nov 6: The famous stretch of road from Celendin to Leimebamba will take us through spectacular scenery beginning at a pass 3,095 m elevation down through the dry habitats of the Marañon valley 2,000 m below, then ascending up back into humid forest patches. Roadside stops east of Celendin at semi-humid forest and scrub will allow us to search for specialties like Chestnut-crowned Antpitta, Jelski's Chat-Tyrant, Black-crested Tit-Tyrant, and Gray-winged Inca-Finch.

As we descend habitat becomes much drier offering other endemics such as Black-necked Woodpecker, Chestnut-backed Thornbird, Buff-bellied Tanager, and Marañon Thrush. Situated along the Rio Marañon in a beautiful but dry habitat, Balsas is one of the best sites for four endemics: Peruvian Pigeon, Yellow-faced Parrotlet, Marañon Thrush and Buff-bridled Inca-Finch. Following lunch we continue our drive to Leimebamba stopping at roadside forest patches if time allows. Overnight Leimebamba.

Nov 7: The small pleasant, cobble-stoned town of Leimebamba lies at the head of the Rio Utcubamba valley at 2,000 m and is home to a great museum displaying recently discovered pre-Incan mummies. Following early morning forest-birding in search of the endemic bamboo-associated Russet-mantled Softtail, Blackish Tapaculo and others like Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan, Coppery Metaltail, Rufous-capped Antshrike, and Black-capped Tyrannulet we will visit the museum. Hummingbird feeders outside the museum attract several species including gems like the Rainbow Starfrontlet, and Little Inca that can be enjoyed while having cake and coffee!

Compared to Machu Picchu due to their impressive size and state of preservation the Chachapoyan ruins of Kuelap are a must see site and excellent example of Peruvian culture. En route to La Florida we will stop to visit the ruins and bird the semi-humid montane scrub surrounding them. Overnight La Florida.

Nov 8: Located close to the picturesque Lago Pomacochas, the town of La Florida is only minutes away from Huembo, an ecological easement with ECOAN hummingbird feeders boasting perhaps one of the most spectacular hummingbirds in the world – the Marvelous Spatuletail. Viewing a Spatuletail displaying male is a site not to be missed. Thankfully this amazing hummer forage, display and feed here and are easily viewed year-round at the hummingbird feeders. Other species found nearby include Sickie-winged Guan and Red-ruffed Fruitcrow. Following a visit to the feeders with the many attending hummers we will travel east to Moyobamba traversing the Cordillera Del Colan on a paved highway, stopping at some key areas en route.

Stunted ridge top cloud forests at the Abra Patricia pass are rich in birds including several range-restricted species, notably another great hummer the Royal Sunangel, and others like Cinnamon-breasted Tody-Tyrant and Bar-winged Wood-Wren. Further downslope upper tropical species are found including the Peruvian endemic Speckle-chested Piculet and Ash-throated Antwren. Several stops will be made along this amazingly bird-rich road to search for the above-mentioned species as we head to Waqanki Lodge outside Moyobamba.

Nov 9: Known for its orchids and well-developed hummingbird feeders Waqanki Lodge is the ideal location to explore the varied habitats around Moyobamba. In addition to the many hummingbird species going to the feeders, trails give access to higher elevation forest with goodies like Mishana Tyrannulet, Black-and-White Tody-Tyrant, and Fiery-breasted Fruiteater. After a mornings birding at the lodge ground and trails we will explore the open savanna areas of Moyobamba in search of Orange-backed Troupial, Point-tailed Palmcreeper in Mauritia Palms, and other birds associated with successional habitats. Overnight Waqanki Lodge.

Nov 10: An early morning visit to Morro de Calzada an isolated peak west of Moyobamba will reward us with an interesting selection of species. Second growth and marshy habitat en route hosts Russet-crowned Crake, Cinereous-breasted Spinetail, Stripe-necked Tody-Tyrant and if lucky Pale-eyed Blackbird. Walking upslope through the stunted varril forest might yield Lafrasnaye's Piculet, the tiny endemic Mishana Tyrannulet, Stripe-necked, Pearly-vented and the rare Buff-throated Tody-Tyrant, White-browed Purpletuft, Black-faced Tanager, and Wedge-tailed Grassfinch. Of course possibilities abound in the varied habitats including both Striped and Fiery-capped Manakins regularly seen.

After lunch we head for the town of Aguas Verdes at 1100 m elevation to bird lower montane and white sand forest, and second growth scrub. Many interesting and specialized species occur in these habitats including Buckley's Forest-Falcon, Rufous-breasted Wood-Quail, Napo Sabrewing, Ecuadorian Piedtail, Zimmer's Antbird, Scaled Fruiteater, Blackish Pewee, and Red-shouldered, Black-bellied and Burnished-Buff Tanager. Following an afternoon of sampling this rich area we travel upslope to the fantastically situated Owlet Lodge at Abra Patricia (the pass at 2300 m).

Nov 11 - 12: Located in the Abra Patricia-Alto Nieva Private Conservation Area protecting 24,000 acres of cloud forest the Owlet Lodge is situated in one of the premier birding sites in Peru and therefore the world. The lodge boasts miles of trails, a canopy tower, and fruit and hummingbird feeders at the visitor center and bungalows. With about 300 species found in the area including 23 species considered globally threatened there is much to see. Two full days will be spent in the area's trails searching for the endangered Ochre-fronted Antpitta, and other threatened birds such as Royal Sunangel, Johnson's and Ochre-breasted Tody-Tyrant, and Pale-billed Antpitta. Night birding is excellent with Long-whiskered Owlet and Cinnamon Screech-Owl regularly heard and seen during walks to known territories. Other possibilities include Rufous-banded Owl, White-throated Screech-Owl and Andean Potoo. Overnight Owlet Lodge.

Nov 13: We spend another morning seeking of birds of the cloud forest at the superb Owlet Lodge area. Some of the many possibilities include Hooded Tinamou, Sickle-winged Guan, White-tipped Sicklebill, Tawny-bellied Hermit, Royal Sunangel, Emerald-bellied Puffleg, Crested Quetzal, White-faced Nunbird, Jet Manakin, Green-and-black Fruiteater, Andean Cock-of-the-rock, Red-ruffed Fruitcrow, Rufous-headed Pygmy-Tyrant, Lulu's Tody-Tyrant, Fulvous-breasted Flatbill, Golden-browed and Slaty-backed Chat-Tyrant, Pale-billed, Rusty-tinged, Rusty-breasted and Ochre-fronted Antpitta, White-collared Jay, Sharpe's and Chestnut-breasted Wren, White-capped, Grass Green, Yellow-throated and Yellow-scarfed Tanager.

In the afternoon we travel west to the middle Maranon town of Jaen for a stay at Gotas de Agua, a private reserve operated by Luciano Troyes and family. Rich in Maranon endemics and set in spectacular scenery this accommodation is an excellent stop between the hotspots to the east and the coastal Tumbesian sites.

Nov 14: Featuring an open dining area overlooking bird feeders, a small observation tower, and many trails with spectacular overlooks, Gotas de Agua Lodge is the perfect place to search out the area's many Maranon endemics. Tataupa Tinamou, Streaked Saltator and Red-crested Finch go to the feeders at the observation tower, and Spot-throated Hummingbird to the feeders at the lodge. All day will be spent searching for the many specialties, which include Little Inca-Finch, Maranon Crescentchest, Maranon and Chinchipe Spinetail, and Peruvian Pigeon.

Nov 15: An early start from Jaen will allow us to bird Abra Porculla at a good time. This humid pass holds several species in the montane scrub not found elsewhere along the route and is one of the best for Piura Chat-Tyrant with many other good species present, like Gray-chinned Hermit, Ecuadorian Piculet, Henna-hooded Foliage-gleaner, Bay-crowned and White-headed Brush-Finch and Black-cowled Saltator.

En route to Chaparri a stop will be made at Pomac Historical Society protecting old mesquite forest with several picturesque veteran trees. Dry forest specialists include Scarlet-backed Woodpecker, Necklaced Spinetail, Collared Antshrike, Gra-and-White Tyannulet, Peruvian Plantcutter, Tumbes Swallow and White-edged Oriole.

Nov 15: A private conservation area, the local community of Santa Catalina de Chonghoyape owns Chaparri. The Lodge offers good accommodation and access to Tumbesian deciduous forest and it's

specialties. Many good species can be found including Peruvian Screech-Owl, Peruvian Pygmy-Owl, Guayaquil Woodpecker, Tumbes Tyrant, Rufous Flycatcher, Snowy-throated Kingbird, Black-and-White Tanager, Cinereous Finch, Sulphur-throated Finch, and White-headed Brush-Finch.

Nov 16: Another morning spent searching for the area's many Tumbesian specialties. Three good trails give access to forest and other habitats that boast good birding all day. From Chaparri Lodge we head back to our lodging in Cajamarca for evening tour wrap-up.

Nov 17: Flight home.

Trip Booking:

Interested participants **must book prior to Jan 15, 2019** due to the very high demand for accommodation at some localities.

We have limited our trip to 6 participants in order to provide an intimate and personal experience. To reserve the trip we require a \$700 CAN per person deposit. The first 6 people we receive a deposit from will be advised and further trip specific information will be sent to them. The balance of payment is 120 days before your trip departure. Payments are accepted through personal cheque or money transfer.

Cancellation and Refund:

We receive your notice of cancellation more than 120 days prior to your trip departure: you will receive 100% of your refund; between 90-120 days you receive 50% of your final payment; after 90 days no refund.

Please note: Thomas Plath Environmental Services reserves the right to cancel your trip at any time, purchasing cancellation insurance on your flight is essential. This policy protects us from unforeseen emergency events i.e. sickness, death in family.