HONDURAS: THE LODGE AT PICO BONITO MARCH 17–24, 2018

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VICTOR EMANUEL NATURE TOURS, INC. 2525 WALLINGWOOD DRIVE, SUITE 1003 AUSTIN, TEXAS 78746 WWW.VENTBIRD.COM Every day of our Honduras Pico Bonito tour was a unique birding adventure from the moment we arrived until the end of the last afternoon. The staff at Pico Bonito welcomed us with open arms and fruitful drinks. In addition to delectable dining experiences every day, our top-notch local guide, Olbin Benjarano, took extraordinarily good care of us. The entire visit to Honduras was above and beyond, and it all started with our first footsteps at the lodge entrance.



Pico Bonito

Our first day of birding was a local one. The Lodge at Pico Bonito offers truly outstanding birding opportunities right on site. After a deliciously hearty breakfast complemented by the ambience of chattery Social Flycatchers and many tropical hummingbirds feeding about, we headed to the vast wooded trails moments away.

A colorful whirlwind of butterflies were feeding throughout the flowers as birds vocalized high and low among the canopies. A pair of gorgeous Lesson's Motmots barked nearby as Collared Araçaris flew high overhead in search of fruit. The view from the nearby Toucan Tower left us in awe, and we had only

been birding for half an hour. Standing atop the tower, dense trees surrounded us to the west; below us was the rushing Rio Coloradito; and to the east and south were the vast wooded mountains of Pico Bonito. A Keel-billed Toucan fed nearby as Spot-breasted Wrens sang cheerfully below us. A lone Brownhooded Parrot flew by, showing off its cherry-red underwings. Before lunch we explored additional trails. Clay-colored Thrushes, the national bird of Costa Rica, fed on the forest floor. After lunch a raucous group of Brown Jays flew through the lower canopy, and with a little persistence we were treated to wonderful views of a male Lovely Cotinga, as well as a Great Potoo. A little siesta in the

afternoon was followed by a hike through the woods, where we experienced the presence of two Vermiculated Screech-Owls. What a day, and what a start to this birding adventure!

On the second day of the tour we headed towards Rio Santiago Nature Resort. Even before arriving at the resort itself, numerous birding spots were visited. Small patches of cleared forests created habitat for birds of the forest edges. A pair of Masked Tityras checked out an old cavity carved into a tall snag. Saltators of both the Black-headed and Buffthroated varieties flew among the islands of bushes. White-collared Seedeaters fed on the tiniest of seeds throughout the ground,



Violet Sabrewing

complemented by nearby Variable Seedeaters. Giant Cowbirds flew over our heads during this exciting birding commotion.

We hiked along the wild and seldom-traveled roads once inside the resort. An immature King Vulture was savored as it flew right over our heads! Wedge-billed Woodcreepers and Streak-headed Woodcreepers fed among the tree trunks. An exceptionally cooperative Black-cheeked Woodpecker put on a show for us as it fed nearby. The midday sun was getting toasty, and we headed to the main hummingbird feeding station where we cooled ourselves in the presence of a shaded shelter and gazed at dozens of hummingbird feeders that surrounded us. The small Stripe-throated Hermit visited the feeders sparingly, as did the large and vibrant Green-breasted Mangos. Scaly-breasted Hummingbirds showed off their scalloped feathers of dusky-gray as the large Violet Sabrewings tried to steal the show. The hummingbird extravaganza here was spectacular. We tallied ten hummingbird species from this shaded afternoon break!



Altamira Oriole starting a nest

Our next day was the trek of looking for Honduras' one endemic bird species, the Honduran Emerald. Due to the vast mountain expanses south and east of the Lodge at Pico Bonito, our shortest route to the Aguan Valley was a three-hour commute. While en route we made several stops that included a delicious breakfast on-the-go topped with locally-grown fruit. A highsoaring Hook-billed Kite was seen, as were Roadside Hawks. A pair of Double-striped Thick-knees, a very uncommon sight, was seen among a pasture where cattle grazed. As the landscape blended away from rainforest and more into arid brushland, we found a

gorgeous Altamira Oriole building a nest. We witnessed this bird assembling the first few strands of grass for its pendulate nest to be. One of the ponds we visited was home to Painted Buntings and Blueblack Grassquits along the perimeter!

Within minutes of arriving at the Honduran Emerald Reserve, we had spectacular views of this amazing endemic. Not only is the Honduran Emerald unique to Honduras, but it is also endangered due to habitat elimination for human uses. The views of this breathtaking species continued for at least 15 minutes. The Honduran Emeralds delighted our eyes as they provided both great looks in the binoculars and even grander looks through the scopes. After much enjoyment of this species we found a nesting White-lored Gnatcatcher, another specialty of this arid environment. On our hike we admired the sun-scorched vegetation and the array



Honduran Emerald

of cacti. A cautious Lesser Roadrunner was seen running along a brush line. Their mournful "yodeling" calls are bizarrely unique. We picked up amazing views of a Black-and-white Owl on the drive back to the lodge.

The upcoming day held for a unique adventure, even by Honduran birding experiences. We took an old banana train to Cuero y Salado Wildlife Refuge. Little Blue Herons fed among the marshes and Roadside

Hawks patrolled the skies as the train pushed forth. Families of Groove-billed Anis scurried throughout the bushes. An extra special moment was finding a very obliging perched Bat Falcon. After the fun ride to the boat launch, we enjoyed a fun morning of birding by boat. Howler Monkeys roared through the tree tops. One even came down to have a drink of water, right in front of our boat! With a little persistence we found a Sungrebe paddling around. Green Herons kept a close eye on the water's surface while Northern Jacanas carefully waltzed across massive lily pads. Several Bare-throated Tiger-Herons perched proudly among the



Banana Train

tallest barren branches. Spotting a Northern Potoo was icing on the cake. One Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture was picked out of a group of Turkey Vultures. After a fun morning of birding by train and by boat, we savored a delicious lunch at the lodge, followed by a solid afternoon of on-site birding within minutes of cabins.

The next morning we enjoyed yet another amazing on-site breakfast as a whirlwind of tropical birds fed just beyond our reach. Tiny Olive-backed Euphonias gobbled down berries at amazing rates. It was the



Rainforest

day for the loop trail. An exciting hike was in store. We had our optics and bottled water ready to go for several miles of hiking throughout the steep hillsides of lush green life. A Tody Motmot stole the show from the start as it called proudly along a branch deep in the shadows. White-breasted Wood-Wrens chatted in the thickets. Wintering American Redstarts flitted energetically among the branches as a Red-crowned Ant-Tanager fed at eye level. A Cocoa Woodcreeper zig-zagged its way up a tree trunk. There is SO MUCH LIFE that resides throughout the property of the Lodge at Pico Bonito! The morning hike worked up an appetite for another fantastic lunch to come.

Our last day of birding came all too soon. We started out by driving to the Lancetilla Botanical Gardens where trails meandered through large forests, with lively rivers that fed the woods. The tiny Olivaceous Piculet, a petite member of the woodpeckers, made a chattery appearance for our group. A snappy lek of White-collared Manakins was observed, as was a Black-striped Sparrow. High in the trees sat a delicately-plumaged Blue Ground-Dove. Despite intermittent rains throughout the morning hours, we had stellar views of a Rufous-tailed Jacamar, showing off the vibrant greens and reds that accompanied this tiny bird's lengthy bill.

Our entire experience in Honduras was a thrill. Every day had its charm, and the people we connected with were inviting and happy to make us feel at home. It's an understatement to say birding from The Lodge at Pico Bonito is amazing!

Lodge at Pico Bonito	LPB
Rio Santiago Nature Resort	RS
Cuero y Salado	CS
Credia Park	CP
Aguan Valley	AV
Lancetilla Botanical Gardens	LBG

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	
Tinamous	Tinamidae	
Great Tinamou	Tinamus major	LBG
Little Tinamou	Crypturellus soui	LPB
Slaty-breasted Tinamou	Crypturellus boucardi	LPB
Guans, Chachalacas & Curassows	Cracidae	
Plain Chachalaca	Ortalis vetula	RS, LBG
New World Quail	Odontophoridae	
Spot-bellied Bobwhite	Colinus leucopogon	AV
Grebes	Podicipedidae	
Pigeons and Doves	Columbidae	
Rock Pigeon (I)	Columba livia	CP, CS, LBG
Pale-vented Pigeon	Patagioenas cayennensis	CP, CS, LBG
Red-billed Pigeon	Patagioenas flavirostris	Seen every day, many at LPB
Inca Dove	Columbina inca	RS, AV, CS
Common Ground-Dove	Columbina passerina	AV
Ruddy Ground-Dove	Columbina talpacoti	AV, CS
Blue Ground-Dove	Claravis pretiosa	LPB, LBG
White-tipped Dove	Leptotila verreauxi	AV
Gray-chested Dove	Leptotila cassinii	RS, LPB,
White-winged Dove	Zenaida asiatica	LPB, CP, LBG
Cuckoos	Cuculidae	
Squirrel Cuckoo	Piaya cayana	CS, LPB
Lesser Roadrunner	Geococcyx velox	AV
Groove-billed Ani	Crotophaga sulcirostris	RS, AV, CS, LPB
Nightjars	Caprimulgidae	
Lesser Nighthawk	Chordeiles acutipennis	CS, LPB
Common Pauraque	Nyctidromus albicollis	LPB
Potoos	Nyctibiidae	
Great Potoo	Nyctibius grandis	RS, LPB,
Northern Potoo	Nyctibius jamaicensis	CS
Swifts	Apodidae	
White-collared Swift	Streptoprocne zonaris	LPB, CP, CS,
Vaux's Swift	Chaetura vauxi	LPB
Hummingbirds	Trochilidae	

White-necked Jacobin	Florisuga mellivora	LPB, RS, LBG
Long-billed Hermit	Phaethornis longirostris	LBP, RS, LBG
Stripe-throated Hermit	Phaethornis striigularis	RS
Purple-crowned Fairy	Heliothryx barroti	LPB
Green-breasted Mango	Anthracothorax prevostii	RS
Violet-headed Hummingbird	Klais guimeti	LPB
Scaly-breasted Hummingbird	Phaeochroa cuvierii	RS
Violet Sabrewing	Campylopterus hemileucurus	LPB, RS
Stripe-tailed Hummingbird	Eupherusa eximia	RS
Crowned Woodnymph	Thalurania colombica	LPB, RS, LBG
White-bellied Emerald	Amazilia candida	RS
Honduran Emerald (E)	Amazilia luciae	AV
Rufous-tailed Hummingbird	Amazilia tzacatl	LPB, RS, CS
Cinnamon Hummingbird	Amazilia rutila	AV
Sungrebe	Heliornithidae	
Sungrebe	Heliornis fulica	CS
Thick-knees	Burhinidae	
Double-striped Thick-knee	Burhinus histriatus	AV
Jacanas	Jacanidae	
Northern Jacana	Jacana spinosa	CS, on a pond while commuting to AV
Sandpipers and Allies	Scolopacidae	03, on a point while commuting to AV
Spotted Sandpiper	Actitis macularius	CS
Solitary Sandpiper	Tringa solitaria	CS
Gulls, Terns and Skimmers	Laridae	63
Royal Tern	Thalasseus maximus	La Ceiba
Storks	Ciconiidae	La Gelba
Wood Stork		
	Mycteria americana	La Ceiba, CS
Cormorants	Phalacrocoracidae	00
Neotropic Cormorant	Phalacrocorax brasilianus	CS
Anhinga	Anhingidae	20
Anhinga	Anhinga anhinga	CS
Herons, Egrets and Bitterns	Ardeidae	22
Bare-throated Tiger-Heron	Tigrisoma mexicanum	CS
Great Egret	Ardea alba	RS, CS, LBG
Snowy Egret	Egretta thula	LBG
Little Blue Heron	Egretta caerulea	CS
Cattle Egret	Bubulcus ibis	RS, CS, LBG
Green Heron	Butorides virescens	RS, CS
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	Nyctanassa violacea	CS
New World Vultures	Cathartidae	
Black Vulture	Coragyps atratus	LPB, RS, AV, CS
Turkey Vulture	Cathartes aura	Seen every day
Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture	Cathartes burrovianus	CS
King Vulture	Sarcoramphus papa	RS
Osprey	Pandionidae	
Osprey	Pandion haliaetus	La Ceiba
Hawks, Eagles and Kites	Accipitridae	
Hook-billed Kite	Chondrohierax uncinatus	Commute to AV
White-tailed Kite	Elanus leucurus	CP, CS
Common Black Hawk	Buteogallus anthracinus	CS
Great Black Hawk	Buteogallus urubitinga	CS
Roadside Hawk	Rupornis magnirostris	CS, commute to AV

Gray Hawk Short-tailed Hawk Owls Vermiculated Screech-Owl Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl Mottled Owl Black-and-white Owl Trogons Slaty-tailed Trogon Black-headed Trogon Gartered Trogon Black-throated Trogon **Motmots** Tody Motmot Lesson's Motmot Turquoise-browed Motmot Broad-billed Motmot Kingfishers **Ringed Kingfisher** Belted Kingfisher Amazon Kingfisher Green Kingfisher Puffbirds White-necked Puffbird Jacamars Rufous-tailed Jacamar Toucans Collared Aracari Keel-billed Toucan Woodpeckers **Olivaceous Piculet** Black-cheeked Woodpecker Golden-fronted Woodpecker Chestnut-colored Woodpecker Lineated Woodpecker Pale-billed Woodpecker **Falcons and Caracaras** Crested Caracara American Kestrel Bat Falcon African & New World Parrots Olive-throated Parakeet Brown-hooded Parrot White-crowned Parrot White-fronted Parrot Red-lored Parrot **Typical Antbirds** Great Antshrike Dusky Antbird **Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers** Tawny-winged Woodcreeper Wedge-billed Woodcreeper

Buteo plagiatus Buteo brachyurus Strigidae Megascops guatemalae Glaucidium brasilianum Ciccaba virgata Ciccaba nigrolineata Trogonidae Trogon massena Trogon melanocephalus Trogon caligatus Trogon rufus Momotidae Hylomanes momotula Momotus lessoni Eumomota superciliosa Electron platyrhynchum Alcedinidae Megaceryle torquata Megaceryle alcyon Chloroceryle amazona Chloroceryle americana Bucconidae Notharchus hyperrhynchus Galbulidae Galbula ruficauda Ramphastidae Pteroglossus torquatus Ramphastos sulfuratus Picidae Picumnus olivaceus Melanerpes pucherani Melanerpes aurifrons Celeus castaneus Dryocopus lineatus Campephilus guatemalensis Falconidae Caracara cheriway Falco sparverius Falco rufigularis Psittacidae Eupsittula nana Pvrilia haematotis Pionus senilis Amazona albifrons Amazona autumnalis Thamnophilidae Taraba major Cercomacroides tyrannina Furnariidae Dendrocincla anabatina Glyphorynchus spirurus

LPB Commute to AV LPB LPB, RS LPB night hike La Ceiba LPB, RS LPB. LBG LPB, LBG LPB LPB Seen/heard every day at LPB! LPB. RS LPB... A rare bird, heard daily, with outstanding looks one afternoon! CS CS RS RS, CS LPB LBG LPB. CS LPB, RS LBG LPB, RS Seen every day LPB, RS. Local pair showed great views at LPB! Commute to AV CS RS, AV, CS AV CS, LBG LPB, RS, AC, LBG LPB LPB, RS AV CS, LBG LBPB, LBG LBG LPB

RS, LPB

Cocoa Woodcreeper Ivory-billed Woodcreeper Streak-headed Woodcreeper Plain Xenops Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner **Tyrant Flycatchers** Yellow-bellied Tyrannulet Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet Greenish Elaenia Ochre-bellied Flycatcher Common Tody-Flycatcher Yellow-olive Flycatcher Black Phoebe Bright-rumped Attila Rufous Mourner Dusky-capped Flycatcher Great Crested Flycatcher Great Kiskadee Boat-billed Flycatcher Social Flycatcher **Tropical Kingbird** Fork-tailed Flycatcher Becards, Tityras & Allies Rose-throated Becard Masked Tityra Black-crowned Tityra Cotingas Lovely Cotinga Manakins White-collared Manakin Red-capped Manakin Vireos Green Shrike-Vireo Lesser Greenlet White-eyed Vireo Yellow-throated Vireo Philadelphia Vireo Red-eyed Vireo **Crows, Jays and Magpies** Brown Jay **Swallows** Gray-breasted Martin Mangrove Swallow Barn Swallow Wrens House Wren Spot-breasted Wren White-bellied Wren White-breasted Wood-Wren Gnatcatchers Long-billed Gnatwren White-lored Gnatcatcher

LPB Xiphorhynchus susurrans Xiphorhynchus flavigaster LPB Lepidocolaptes souleyetii RS Xenops minutus LPB Automolus ochrolaemus LPB Tyrannidae Ornithion semiflavum RS Camptostoma imberbe CS LBG Myiopagis viridicata Mionectes oleagineus LPB RS Todirostrum cinereum RS, LPB Tolmomyias sulphurescens RS Sayornis nigricans LPB Attila spadiceus LPB Rhytipterna holerythra LPB, RS, LBG Myiarchus tuberculifer Myiarchus crinitus LPB, RS, CS, LBG Pair nesting close to LPB restaurant. Seen/heard Pitangus sulphuratus every day Megarynchus pitangua LPB LPB Myiozetetes similis RS, CP, CS, LBG Tyrannus melancholicus Tyrannus savana Commute to AV Tityridae RS Pachyramphus aglaiae LPB, RS Tityra semifasciata LPB Tityra inquisitor Cotingidae Cotinga amabilis LPB Pipridae LPB Manacus candei LPB. LBG Ceratopipra mentalis Vireonidae LPB Vireolanius pulchellus Pachyslyvia decurtatus LPB Vireo griseus CS LBG Vireo flavifrons Vireo philadelphicus LPB Vireo olivaceus LPB Corvidae Psilorhinus morio LPB, RS Hirundinidae Commute to AV, LPB Progne chalybea Tachvcineta albilinea Commute to AV Hirundo rustica CS Troglodytidae RS, CP Troglodytes aedon Pheugopedius maculipectus AV LPB Uropsila leucogastra LPB, RS Henicorhina leucosticta Polioptilidae Ramphocaenus melanurus RS. LPB Polioptila albiloris AV

Tropical Gnatcatcher Thrushes and Allies Wood Thrush Clay-colored Thrush **Mockingbirds and Thrashers** Gray Catbird Tropical Mockingbird **Old World Sparrows** House Sparrow (I) Siskins, Crossbills and Allies Scrub Euphonia Olive-backed Euphonia White-vented Euphonia **New World Sparrows** Black-striped Sparrow **Troupials and Allies** Eastern Meadowlark Chestnut-headed Oropendola Montezuma Oropendola Black-cowled Oriole Orchard Oriole Altamira Oriole **Baltimore** Oriole Bronzed Cowbird Giant Cowbird Melodious Blackbird Great-tailed Grackle New World Warblers Worm-eating Warbler Northern Waterthrush Blue-winged Warbler Black-and-white Warbler Prothonotary Warbler Tennessee Warbler Gray-crowned Yellowthroat Kentucky Warbler Hooded Warbler American Redstart Northern Parula Magnolia Warbler Yellow Warbler Chestnut-sided Warbler Yellow-rumped Warbler Black-throated Green Warbler **Cardinals and Allies** Summer Tanager Red-crowned Ant-Tanager Red-throated Ant-Tanager Rose-breasted Grosbeak Blue-black Grosbeak Painted Bunting Blue Bunting

Polioptila plumbea Turdidae Hylocichla mustelina Turdus grayi Mimidae Dumetella carolinensis Mimus gilvus Passeridae Passer domesticus Fringillidae Euphonia affinis Euphonia gouldi Euphonia minuta Passerellidae Arremonops conirostris Icteridae Sturnella magna Psarocolius wagleri Psarocolius montezuma Icterus prosthemelas Icterus spurius Icterus gularis Icterus galbula Molothrus aeneus Molothrus oryzivorus Dives dives **Ouiscalus** mexicanus Parulidae Helmitheros vermivorum Parkesia noveboracensis Vermivora cyanoptera Mniotilta varia Protonotaria citrea Oreothlypis peregrina Geothlypis poliocephala Geothlypis formosa Setophaga citrina Setophaga ruticilla Setophaga americana Setophaga magnolia Setophaga petechia Setophaga pensylvanica Setophaga coronata Setophaga virens Cardinalidae Piranga rubra Habia rubica Habia fuscicauda Pheucticus ludovicianus Cyanocompsa cyanoides Passerina ciris Cyanocompsa parallina

LPB. LBG LPB, RS, LBG, fairly common winter resident Seen every day at LPB LPB, RS, CS, LBG AV Commute to AV LPB, RS LPB, RS, CS, LBG LPB, RS, CS LBG Commute to AV LPB. RS LPB, RS, CS, LBG LPB Commute to AV, CS, LPB Commute to AV LPB, RS, commute to AV RS, commute to AV, LBG RS, CS LPB, RS, commute to AV, LBG RS, AV, CS, LPB RS, LPB CS, LPB, LBG LBG RS, LBG CS RS, LBG Commute to AV RS. LPB CS, LBG LPB, RS, LBG LPB LPB, RS, CS, LBG LPB, RS, CS, LBG LPB, RS, LBG Commute to AV LPB LPB, RS, CS, LBG LPB LPB, CS, LBG CP, LPB LPB Commute to AV Commute to AV

Tanagers and Allies Thraupidae Blue-gray Tanager Thraupis episcopus LPB, RS, Commute to AV Yellow-winged Tanager Thraupis abbas RS, Commute to CS, LPB, LBG Golden-hooded Tanager Tangara larvata LBG LPB, RS, CS Green Honeycreeper Chlorophanes spiza Blue-black Grassquit Commute to AV Volatinia jacarina White-shouldered Tanager Tachyphonus luctuosus LPB Black-throated Shrike-Tanager LBG Lanio aurantius Crimson-collared Tanager LBG Ramphocelus sanguinolentus Passerini's Tanager Ramphocelus passerinii LBG Red-legged Honeycreeper LPB, RS, CS Cyanerpes cyaneus Yellow-faced Grassquit LBG Tiaris olivaceus Thick-billed Seed-Finch LBG Sporophila funerea Variable Seedeater Sporophila corvina RS White-collared Seedeater RS, commute to AV, LBG Sporophila torqueola Black-headed Saltator Saltator atriceps RS Buff-throated Saltator Saltator maximus RS, LBG MAMMALS Large Monkeys Atelidae Mantled Howler Monkey Alouatta palliata CS Squirrels, Prairie Dogs & Marmots Sciuridae Variegated Squirrel LPB, RS Sciurus variegatoides Agoutis Dasyproctidae Central American Agouti LPB Dasyprocta punctata Sheath-tailed Bats Emballonuridae Long-nosed (Proboscis) Bat Rhynchonycteris naso CS Weasels Mustelidae Basalisk Lizard LPB, RS Basiliscus basiliscus Norops Lizard LPB Norops mariarum Raccoons Procyonidae Raccoon Procyon lotor CS BUTTERFLIES Blue Morpho Morpho menelaus LPB Erato Heliconian LPB Heliconius erato Tiger-winged Heliconian Heliconius ismenius LPB Juno Longwing LPB Dione juno Owl-eyed Butterfly LPB Caligo eurilochus Pink Cattleheart LPB Parides iphidamus Julia Longwing Dryas iulia LPB Orange-winged Cracker LPB LPB Green Iguana Iguana iguana