

ECUADOR: EASTERN SLOPE OF THE ANDES

JANUARY 26 - FEBRUARY 5, 2021

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Please note that this tour may be taken in combination with *Ecuador: The Best of Amazonia*, January 19-28, 2021. Sign up for both tours and receive a discount!



Antisana Volcano © Paul J. Greenfield

From the lush Amazonian rainforests to the high Andean páramos, Ecuador is indeed a special place, boasting good access to birding habitat, unsurpassed scenic splendor, friendly people, and a stable government. Incredibly, over 1,670 species of birds have been recorded in the country, in an area smaller than the state of Colorado! Among them are many of the most spectacular and distinctive Neotropical species. “Ecuador: Eastern Slope of the Andes” is designed to sample this magnificent avifauna in three choice areas, representing very different ecosystems, and offering a full range of birding possibilities. This trip explores the heart of the magnificent Ecuadorian Andes on its eastern slope. Within easy reach is an incredible transect of habitats, from stunted subalpine scrub and treeless páramo through cool

temperate-zone forest that descends into lush subtropical and foothill cloud forest. Without a doubt, the Andes offer the world's most spectacular mountain birding.

The scenic Andes Mountains are just as complex as the Ecuadorian lowlands, and the forests of these slopes harbor the richest montane avifauna found anywhere. There are few places where birders have access to such an impressive cross-section of these slopes, and Northern Ecuador is perhaps foremost among them for easy access.



Zonation is complex here, and many birds are restricted to narrow elevational bands, not occurring above or below, so we'll bird these spectacular mountains from the páramo to the foothills. Several roads traverse various elevations, offering a fantastic assortment of little-known birds, while trails at Wildsumaco and San Isidro give us access to the lush forest interior. Outstanding in the Andes are the tanagers and hummingbirds, two of the most colorful and entertaining families of birds in the Neotropics, and we will see literally dozens of species of both. Among the long list of other possibilities are such fabulous birds as Torrent Duck, Black-faced Ibis, Sickle-winged & Wattled guans, Andean Condor, Black-and-chestnut Eagle, Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe, Crested & Golden-headed quetzals, Coppery-chested Jacamar, Crimson-mantled Woodpecker, Andean Cock-of-the-rock, and a nice selection of mountain-tanagers.

This tour is designed to show you a wide array of birds, but a few words of caution are prudent. In our many years of birding the tropics we have found that it is extremely important to get out early while the birds are singing and more active. Most days we will be up early, and some days we may be afield all day (especially in the cooler mountains). Accommodations are more than adequate, but some are of necessity relatively simple. This trip has been planned to show you some of the best of Ecuador, but may be too strenuous for those not in good health or not wishing to spend a good portion of their time in the field.

January 26, Day 1: Arrival in Quito. Participants not continuing from *Ecuador: The Best of Amazonia* should plan to arrive in Quito on or before January 26. Most flights to Quito (airport code UIO) from the United States arrive in the evening. Participants wanting to avoid the risk of misconnection, possible flight delays due to bad weather at this time of year, desiring to rest or acclimate prior to the tour (or do some sight-seeing or shopping for souvenirs in Quito) should consider arriving prior to January 26. Upon request, VENT will be happy to assist with hotel reservations and transfers for early arrivals.

NIGHT: Hotel Quito, Quito



Black-faced Ibis

© Paul J. Greenfield

January 27, Day 2: Travel Day to Coca and Wildsumaco. Participants arriving for this tour will be transferred to the airport for a mid-morning flight to Coca, where you will meet the leaders and participants continuing on from *Ecuador: The Best of Amazonia*. After lunch in Coca the group will travel up into the foothills of the east-slope to Wildsumaco Lodge. This lovely lodge has opened up another realm of possibilities for birding the upper tropical zone. We should arrive here with time to settle in and enjoy our first sampling of the hummingbird feeders and perhaps even catch the local toucans giving their late afternoon chorus, or a flight of Red-billed Parrots or Military Macaws en route to their evening roosts. And, by starting in the foothills “at the bottom” of our transect at 4,500 ft., we will be working our way up to the higher elevations through the course of the week.

NIGHT: Wildsumaco Lodge, Wildsumaco Wildlife Sanctuary

January 28 & 29, Days 3-4: Wildsumaco Area. With the opening of Wildsumaco Lodge we finally have a comfortable place to stay in the eastern foothills, off the highway and amidst great habitat at a site chosen and designed by birders. The foothill birds are a unique mix from both the Amazonian tropics and the cooler subtropical regions and this zone has the highest species diversity in the mountains. It is the heart of “the tanager zone,” where these colorful and entertaining birds reach their greatest diversity. Typically, they roam through the forest and edge in fast-moving mixed-flocks, their names only hinting at their beauty; how about Paradise, Golden-eared, Turquoise, Silver-beaked, Orange-eared & Golden, for just a few examples. Numerous other species tag along with these flocks, including Red-headed Barbet, Lafresnaye’s Piculet, foliage-gleaners and woodcreepers, and numerous small flycatchers. Here too are trails allowing access to the forest interior and some of its more secretive inhabitants. Hummingbird feeders attract a surprisingly large number of species, including such rarely-seen foothill specialties as Napo Sabrewing, Ecuadorian Piedtail, Rufous-vented Whitetip and Gould’s Jewelfront. We also have a chance of spotting such spectacular birds as the Coppery-chested Jacamar, Golden-collared Toucanet, Black-mandibled Toucan and Scarlet-breasted Fruiteater here, among many others.

NIGHTS: Wildsumaco Lodge, Wildsumaco Wildlife Sanctuary

January 30, Day 5: Wildsumaco Lodge to Cabañas San Isidro. We depart from the Wildsumaco area shortly after breakfast this morning to retrace our path back upslope to the upper subtropical and temperate zones, stopping as we go for any mixed-species foraging flocks encountered along the way; much of what we do will depend on time and weather conditions as this transect offers impressive diversity. We will begin by birding the lower part of the Wildsumaco entrance road and perhaps the Huacamayo Ridge or the Vinillos entrance road to Antisana National Park. Our goal today will be to find species we have not encountered up to this point, as we climb in elevation, and although deemed a travel day, we are bound to encounter some exciting specialties and perhaps a surprise or two. A sample of what we could encounter includes Andean & Sickle-winged guans, Fasciated Tiger-Heron, Golden-headed or Crested quetzals, Green-backed Trogon, Chestnut-tipped Toucanet, Smoky-brown & Golden-olive woodpeckers, Black Caracara, Speckle-faced/White-capped Parrot, Scaly-naped Amazon, Streaked Tuftedcheek, Black-and-white Tody-Flycatcher, Large-headed Flatbill, Lemon-browed Flycatcher, Dusky Piha, Inca (Green) Jay, Mountain Wren, Chestnut-bellied Thrush, Lacrimose Mountain-Tanager, and Vermilion, Yellow-throated, Grass-green, Blue-capped, Beryl-spangled & Flame-faced tanagers. We plan to arrive at Cabañas San Isidro with plenty of time to settle in and even do a little optional birding—which always produces more than one can imagine. After a delicious dinner (San Isidro has built a reputation for its cuisine) we may want to take a little time to seek out the lodge’s ‘mystery owl’ before turning in for the night.

NIGHT: Cabañas San Isidro, Cosanga

January 31-February 1, Days 6-7: Cabañas San Isidro and Surroundings. At 6,600 ft. in elevation, we find ourselves in the heart of the humid subtropical zone, in all its natural splendor, and we’ll have two full days to explore a wide range of habitats throughout the area. Here’s how Frank Chapman described this Andean ecosystem:

“Every available foot of ground is claimed by parasitic or epiphytic vegetation. This marvelous Subtropical Zone occupies the humid mountain slopes from the upper limit of the Tropical Zone to an altitude of from 8,000 to 9,500 feet and extends from Bolivia to Mexico. It is remarkable not alone for the richness of its life but for the high percentage of species found only within its boundaries. Protective coloration is at a discount in the Subtropical Zone. The density of vegetation protects and, among arboreal birds at least, color unchecked runs riot. Every day brought beautiful creatures we had never seen before.”

Here at San Isidro and its surroundings, we find ourselves in one of the finest sites in the world to bird this rich zone and the possibilities seem endless. At the first hint of dawn, thrushes and Andean Solitaires sing; soon, as it becomes light, the vegetation suddenly comes alive with birds attracted to the lodge lights for insects. Typically Inca (Green) Jays, Russet-backed Oropendolas and Subtropical Caciques arrive first, but soon tanagers, woodcreepers, flowerpiercers, flycatchers, and other small birds arrive, yielding remarkably close looks as they forage close at hand. As the morning progresses, clouds begin to blanket the mountain slopes, bathing the forest in mist. As the clouds appear, the mixed-species foraging flocks around the lodge seem to become most active. Amidst the seemingly endless array of tanagers are such gems as Crimson-mantled Woodpecker, Green-and-black Fruiteater, Handsome & Cinnamon flycatchers, Barred Becard, Black-billed Peppershrike, Black-crested & Russet-crowned warblers, Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager and Bluish Flowerpiercer. To experience a big mixed-species foraging flock in the subtropics is one of the supreme joys—or utmost frustrations—of Neotropical birding. At times these flocks are hard to locate, or the light can be poor and the birds move off rapidly. At other times, however, they linger and forage deliberately, providing a spectacular visual feast as one species after another comes into view. Among the many additional special possibilities in this region are Black-and-chestnut Eagle, Wattled & Sickle-winged guans, Red-billed Parrot, Golden-headed & Crested quetzals, Masked Trogon, Andean Motmot, Powerful Woodpecker, Streak-headed Antbird, Rufous-crowned Tody-Flycatcher (tiny!), and Andean Cock-of-the-rock. The diversity of hummingbirds here is high, and the different species can be spotted zipping around from the understory to the canopy. With such a profusion of flowers to choose from, they are not concentrated and can be frustrating to see at times, but with the help of very active nectar feeders we should be able to secure excellent, even point-blank looks at many of the possible species, including Tawny-bellied Hermit, Lesser Violetear, Speckled Hummingbird, Chestnut-breasted Coronet, Bronzy Inca, Collared Inca, and Long-tailed Sylph. We will also take one afternoon to return to the nearby Vinillos entrance area, which always produces exciting surprises and more opportunities to

encounter Barred Parakeet, Sickle-winged Guan, Crested Quetzal, White-throated (Southern Emerald-) Toucanet, Black-billed Mountain-Toucan, Rusty-winged Barbtail, Sulphur-bellied Tyrannulet, Saffron-crowned Tanager and perhaps Red-breasted Meadowlark (Blackbird).



Long-tailed Sylph © Paul J. Greenfield

NIGHT: Cabañas San Isidro, Cosanga

February 2, Day 8: Cosanga to Papallacta. Taking leave of the Cosanga area, we will spend the morning birding along the nearby ‘Borja Loop’ before we climb higher into the mountains, to the temperate zone. Along the roadside the forest is patchy, but extensive second-growth remains near the road, and sample stops should produce a number of birds restricted to this zone. We might encounter a band of Turquoise Jays or a mixed-species flock with Hooded Mountain-Tanagers, Rufous-breasted Chat-Tyrant, Rufous Wren, Spectacled Whitestart (Redstart), Blue-backed Conebill, Grass-green Tanager, or perhaps even Mountain Caciques. Torrent Ducks and White-capped Dippers are found along the rushing, boulder-strewn rivers and hummingbirds are diverse in this region. A stop at Guango Lodge should yield swarms of hummingbirds around the feeders, perhaps as many as 10 or more species, including the incredible Sword-billed Hummingbird. In the late afternoon we will travel the short distance to our lovely hotel, wooded gardens, and perhaps the most appreciated treat... their inviting private thermal baths.

NIGHT: Termas de Papallacta, Papallacta



Carunculated Caracara © Paul J. Greenfield

February 3, Day 9: Termas Papallacta and Surroundings. Just above Las Termas de Papallacta and the quiet village of Papallacta lie the great peaks and ridges of the eastern Andes. The elfin tree-line forest just above the lodge is home to special hummingbirds that include Buff-winged Starfrontlet, Shining Sunbeam, another chance to find Great Sapphirewing, Rainbow-bearded Thornbill, and Viridian Metaltail, while brilliant Scarlet-bellied & Buff-breasted mountain-tanagers tend to “lead” the sneaky mixed-species flocks of Pearled Treerunners, Agile Tit-Tyrants, White-banded Tyrannulets, Rufous Wrens, Spectacled Whitestarts (Restarts), Blue-backed Conebills, Black-backed Bush-Tanagers, Superciliaried & Black-headed hemispinguses, Pale-naped Brushfinches and other small birds that forage through the shrubbery and stunted trees here. With patience and good fortune, we may even encounter the local and rare Black-chested & Masked mountain-tanagers! We will also head over to the Papallacta Pass, located above timberline in the páramo zone, where strange plants bloom in the tundra-like bogs, and there are isolated stands of elfin *Polylepis* woodland on the protected slopes. Part of today will be spent birding this intriguing environment. With luck and decent weather, we might spot some additional specialties like the Tawny Antpitta, Red-crested Cotinga, and Giant Conebill, among other species that occur this high elevation. At the highest point reached (14,000 ft.), we will conduct a special search for the ptarmigan-like Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe, after which, we will head back for another night at Las Termas de Papallacta for a relaxing soak or down-time before dinner.

NIGHT: Termas Papallacta, Papallacta



Great Sapphirewing © Paul J. Greenfield

February 4, Day 10: Cabañas San Isidro to Quito. Today we will depart from Las Termas de Papallacta, after breakfast, and after an optional bout of early birding above the lodge. We will head off to another area not far to the south and again ascend the eastern ridge of the Andes to Antisana National Park. Here we will explore rich páramo grassland, the La Mica lake, and visit Tambo Condor, with their often active hummingbird feeders, hoping to encounter Giant Hummingbird and Black-tailed Trainbearer. High elevation species we will also be on the lookout for today include Yellow-billed Pintail, Andean Teal, Andean Duck, Silvery Grebe, the scarce and local Black-faced Ibis, the majestic Andean Condor, Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle, Variable Hawk, Cinereous Harrier, Slate-colored Coot, Andean Lapwing, Andean Gull, Black-winged Ground-Dove, Carunculated Caracara,, Aplomado Falcon, Tawny Antpitta, Andean Tit-Spinetail, Many-striped Canastero, Brown-backed Chat-Tyrant, among the many possibilities. We plan to arrive at our hotel in Quito in time to freshen up and meet for our final checklist and farewell dinner. For those passengers who will be taking a late-night flight tonight or early morning flight on February 5, a day-room will be reserved for you, as will airport transfers.

NIGHT: Hotel Quito, Quito

February 5, Day 11: Departure for Home. Transfers will be provided to the airport in time for all departing flights.

TOUR SIZE: This tour will be limited to 14 participants.

TOUR LEADERS: Paul Greenfield and Brian Gibbons



Paul Greenfield grew up near New York City and became interested in birds as a child. He received his B.F.A. from Temple University where he was an art major at the Tyler School of Art. Since 1972, he has lived in Ecuador where his fascination for birds and art has culminated with the completion of 20 years of work illustrating *The Birds of Ecuador*, which he co-authored with Robert Ridgely. He is also co-author of *Birds of Western Ecuador, a Photographic Guide* (Princeton University Press) and is presently working with Bob Ridgely on an App for *The Birds of Ecuador*, which hopefully will be available in 2018. Paul is very involved in saving Ecuador's avian diversity and important habitats through his involvement with various foundations, as well as working with local government and communities to encourage their involvement in the protection of "their" biodiversity and the promotion of birding tourism in Ecuador. He has been showing visitors the birds of this fascinating country for over four decades and has led many Ecuador bird tours. He and his wife, Martha, live in Quito.



Brian Gibbons grew up in suburban Dallas where he began exploring the wild world in local creeks and parks. Chasing butterflies and any animal that was unfortunate enough to cross paths with the Gibbons boys occupied his childhood. A wooden bird feeder kit sparked a flame that was stoked by a gift of the *Golden Guide* and family camping trips to Texas state parks. Thirty years ago Brian attended two VENT camps for young birders. Birds are now his primary interest, but all things wild continue to captivate him. After college, Brian undertook a variety of field biology research jobs that have taken him to the Caribbean, the Bering Sea, and the land of the midnight sun, arctic Alaska. He enjoys working with kids, hoping to spark environmental awareness through birds. For many years Brian's field research has involved bird banding. His most amazing recoveries were a female Wilson's Warbler that had been banded in Alaska and was captured by Brian in Colorado, and a Sooty Tern that perished after a

hurricane on the Texas coast; it had plied the Gulf of Mexico and the oceans of the world for 24 years. Brian's recreational bird-seeking has taken him to Machu Picchu in Peru, the Great Wall in China, the plains of East Africa, and the Himalayas in Nepal. Brian leads birding trips in the United States, Central America, the Caribbean, South Africa, and Europe. As well as being a fanatical birder, he loves capturing birds with photography. He lives in Tucson, Arizona with his wife, Lacreia Johnson, and their son, Grayson.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS: The fee for the tour is **\$3,595** per person in double occupancy from Quito. This includes all meals from breakfast on Day 2 to dinner on Day 10, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, ground transportation during the tour, and guide services provided by the tour leader. The tour fee does not include airfare from your home to Quito and return, airport departure taxes, alcoholic beverages, special gratuities, phone calls, laundry, or items of a personal nature. Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration, a small-party supplement may have to be charged.

The single supplement for the tour is **\$480**. You will be charged a single supplement if you desire single accommodations, or if you prefer to share but have no roommate and we cannot provide one for you.

REGISTRATION & DEPOSIT: To register for this tour, please contact the VENT office. The deposit for this tour is **\$1,000** per person. If you prefer to pay your deposit using a credit card, the deposit must be made with MasterCard, Visa, or American Express at the time of registration. If you would like to pay your deposit by check, money order, or bank transfer, your tour space will be held for 10 days to allow time for the VENT office to receive your deposit and completed registration form. The VENT registration form (available from the VENT office or by download at www.ventbird.com) should be completed, signed, and returned to the VENT office.

PAYMENTS: All tour payments may be made by credit card (MasterCard, Visa, American Express), check, money order, or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). These include initial

deposits, second deposits, interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc. Full payment of the tour fee is due 150 days (August 29, 2020) prior to the tour departure date.

CANCELLATION & REFUNDS: Refunds are made according to the following schedule: If cancellation is made 180 days or more before the tour departure date, a cancellation fee of **\$500** per person will be charged unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months, in which case the cancellation fee will be **\$100** per person. If cancellation is made between 179 and 151 days before departure date, the deposit is not refundable, but any payments covering the balance of the fee will be refunded. If cancellation is made fewer than 150 days before departure date, no refund is available. This policy and fee schedule also applies to pre- and post-tour extensions. **For your protection, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance that covers trip cancellation/interruption.**

If you cancel:

180 days or more before departure date

179 to 151 days before departure date

150 days or less before departure date

Your refund will be:

Your deposit minus \$500*

No refund of the deposit, but any payments on the balance will be refunded

No refund available

*Unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months, in which case the cancellation fee will be \$100 per person. To qualify, cancellation must occur 180 days or more before departure date; deposit transfers must be made at the time of cancellation; and one transfer per deposit.

Upon cancellation of the transportation or travel services, where you, the customer, are not at fault and have not cancelled in violation of the terms and conditions of any of the contract for transportation or travel services, all sums paid to VENT for services not received by you will be promptly refunded by VENT to you unless you otherwise advise VENT in writing. This policy does not apply to air tickets purchased through VENT or to any special arrangements, such as additional hotel nights, that fall outside the services described in the tour itinerary.

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a bond issued by Travelers in the amount of \$50,000. CST #2014998-50.

TRAVEL INSURANCE: To safeguard against losses due to illness, accident, or other unforeseen circumstances, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance as soon as possible after making a deposit. VENT has partnered with Redpoint Resolutions as our preferred travel insurance provider. Through Redpoint, we recommend **Ripcord Rescue Travel Insurance™**. Designed for all types of travelers, Ripcord is among the most highly regarded travel insurance programs available.

Critical benefits of **Ripcord Rescue Travel Insurance** include a completely integrated program with a single contact for emergency services, travel assistance, and insurance claims; **medical evacuation and rescue services** from your point of injury or illness to your hospital of choice; comprehensive travel insurance for **trip cancellation/interruption**, primary medical expense coverage, and much more. **Waiver for pre-existing conditions is available but must be purchased within 14 days of tour deposit.** Optional expanded insurance coverage is available and includes items such as security evacuation coverage in case of a natural disaster or other security events, and a “Cancel for Any Reason” clause (must be purchased within 14 days of tour deposit). Ripcord is available to U.S. and non-U.S. residents.

For a price quote, or to purchase travel insurance, please visit: ripcordrescuetravelinsurance.com/ventbird; or click the **Ripcord Rescue Travel Insurance™** logo on our website (click Help and Trip Insurance); or call +1-415-481-0600. Pricing is based on age, trip cost, trip length, and level of coverage.

FUEL AND FUEL SURCHARGES: In the uncertain, often volatile oil market of late, it is difficult – if not impossible – to predict fuel costs over the long term, and more specifically, at the time of operation of this departure. Our prices are based upon the prevailing fuel rates at the time of itinerary publication. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, if the fuel rates increase significantly, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

AIR INFORMATION: Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT). Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to make any domestic or international air travel arrangements from your home and return. ***Please be sure to check with the VENT office prior to purchasing your air ticket to confirm that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. VENT cannot be responsible for any air ticket penalties.***

BAGGAGE: We suggest that you pack in two small duffel bags, or one duffel and one medium-sized piece of luggage, plus your carry-on bag. As a precaution, please pack your travel documents, binoculars, medications, basic toiletries, and a change of clothes in your carry-on bag.

CLIMATE: In the mountains out from Quito, temperatures are generally pleasant during the day; cool in the early morning, to warm at midday (low 60s to 80s). However, at higher elevations the temperatures can be as low as the 40s on occasion, and you should be prepared to layer for warmth. You might also want to bring gloves and a warm hat if you chill easily. Our two nights at Papallacta may be chilly and we recommend thermal underwear to sleep in. There's a strong likelihood that we will be out in at least some mist or light rain, so a good umbrella and/or rain jacket are essential.

CLOTHING: Dress is casual or informal throughout. Lightweight field clothing is the norm for most areas visited, with thermal underwear and a sweater or jacket for layering for extra warmth. We suggest dark field pants and shirts for forest birding, and lightweight long-sleeved shirts that dry quickly (long sleeves are not essential, but offer additional protection from sun and biting insects). Please wear darker colors, not whites, and avoid startling patterns that frighten the birds. Also important are a hat and sunscreen for sun protection, and a rain jacket, poncho or umbrella. Good footwear is essential, and for this we strongly suggest waterproof hiking boots. Mud boots are not necessary, but at the very least footwear for the field should be rated “water-resistant,” as this is a damp climate and even the dew on the roadside grass will get your feet wet!

At higher elevations the temperatures can be as low as the 40s on occasion (on three days of the tour) and you should be prepared to layer for warmth, with thermal underwear and/or a warm long-sleeved shirt, plus a warm jacket or sweater. You can shed layers as the day warms up (or add them as it cools down). Consider bringing gloves and a warm hat if you know that you chill easily, along with thermal underwear or a flannel nightgown for warmth while sleeping. There is a strong likelihood that we will be out in at least some mist or light rain on the east-slope, so a good umbrella or rain jacket is essential.

Laundry facilities are limited on this tour, but all three lodges can do some laundry in a pinch (may not be one-day service).

CURRENCY: The U.S. dollar is the currency in Ecuador. Cash is needed only for your personal expenses, such as bar bills, laundry, and souvenirs. It is strongly advised that most of your money be in U.S. Dollars. Credit cards are widely accepted in Quito and at Termas Papallacta, but as of this writing they are not accepted at Wildsumaco Lodge, or Cabañas San Isidro.

DOCUMENTS: A passport valid for at least six months beyond your planned departure from Ecuador is required. Visas (are/are not) required for entry by United States citizens. Non-United States citizens should check with their consulate/embassy for instructions.

EQUIPMENT: You should pack a pair of binoculars that are in good repair, along with a belt pack or day pack (for carrying books, sunscreen, extra film, etc.). As a precaution, it is a good idea to pack your binoculars, a change

of clothing, toiletry items, medications and travel documents in your airline carry-on bag. Your leader will have a spotting scope, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so.

HEALTH: If you are taking prescription medication or over-the-counter medicine, be sure to bring an ample supply that will allow you to get through the tour safely. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

As standard travel precautions, you should always be up to date with tetanus shots, and strongly consider inoculations against hepatitis types A and B.

In addition to your physician, a good source of general health information for travelers is the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, which operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers' Information Line (800) CDC-INFO (800-232-4636). You can check the CDC website at www.cdc.gov/travel. Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html (click on Travel Health).

***We strongly recommend the use of Insect Shield® clothing.** Insect Shield is a process by which clothing is treated with an EPA-approved formula of the insect repellent permethrin. Such clothing is highly repellent to insects and provides durable and long-lasting protection, even after dozens of washings. Outdoor wear with Insect Shield protection includes name brands such as Ex Officio and Tilley, and can be purchased at outdoor recreation stores such as REI and from a variety of online retailers. In lieu of Insect Shield clothing, you should consider treating your clothes with permethrin, which has the same effect, and that can be purchased at outdoor recreation stores and from a variety of online retailers.

MISC: Electricity - 110 volts AC, the same as the U.S.

Language - Spanish, with Quechua or Indian dialects; some English.

Time - Eastern Standard Time

Internet – available at San Jose de Puenbo; sporadically available at Wildsumaco Lodge; usually available at Cabanas San Isidro and Termas Papallacta but not always reliable.

SUGGESTED READING: A number of traditional booksellers and online stores list excellent inventories of field guides and other natural history resources that will help prepare you for this tour. We recommend www.amazon.com which has a wide selection; www.buteobooks.com and www.nhbs.com which specialize in ornithology and natural history books; and www.abebooks.com for out-of-print and hard-to-find titles.

Birds, Basic Reference:

Ridgely, Robert S. and Greenfield, Paul J. *The Birds of Ecuador*. Cornell University Press, 2001. This is the “Bible” for anyone interested in Ecuador’s birds. It consists of a two-volume set made up of the Field Guide, with 96 color plates, which include illustrations of basically all the species found in the country. The informative text, designed to help species identification, includes distribution maps for all 1,600 species of Ecuador’s birds. The Status, Distribution and Taxonomy volume treats each of Ecuador’s species with detailed information not included in the Field Guide.

Ridgely, Robert S. and Greenfield, Paul J. *Birds of Ecuador – Field Guide*. Birds in the Hand LLC. This App is the updated version of *The Birds of Ecuador*, including nearly 1,700 species now recorded in this tiny South American country. It can be downloaded through the App Store or Google Play. For more information, connect to the following link: <http://www.birdseyebirding.com/app-pages/birds-of-ecuador-field-guide/> or connect directly to: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/birds-of-ecuador-field-guide/id1194665890> for the App Store; https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.birdseyebirding.birdseye.ecuador&hl=en_US for Google Play

Schulenberg, Stotz, Lane, O'Neill and Parker III. *Birds of Peru*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007. An excellent field guide that has all of the species likely to be seen.

Hilty, Steven L. and William L. Brown. *A Guide to the Birds of Colombia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986. An alternative field guide but does not have everything known from Ecuador.

Birds, Additional Reading:

Hilty, Steven. *Birds of Tropical America*. Shelburne, VT: Chapters Publishing Ltd, 1994. Subtitle: "A watcher's introduction to behavior, breeding and diversity." Highly recommended as the most readable and informative book on many different aspects of bird ecology (and birding!) in the Neotropics.

Ridgely, Robert S. and Guy Tudor. *The Birds of South America: Volume I, the Oscine Passerines*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1989. Excellent reference volumes, with text entries for all species and fantastic illustrations of many. This volume and the next together include all of the passerines.

Ridgely, Robert S. and Guy Tudor. *The Birds of South America: Volume II, the Suboscine Passerines*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1989.

Other:

Emmons, Louise H. *Neotropical Rainforest Mammals: A Field Guide*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990.

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