

**NORTHERN ECUADOR
HUMMINGBIRD & TANAGER EXTRAVAGANZA:
A RELAXED & EASY TOUR**

MARCH 12-21, 2021

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Shining Sunbeam © Paul J. Greenfield

Ecuador is one of the world's top four bird-rich countries, and this exceptional natural wealth can be experienced perhaps best through its incredible hummingbird diversity. During this trip we will be able to observe some 60 different hummingbirds and perhaps 40 distinct tanager species under the most favorable and relaxed viewing conditions found anywhere. This tour has been specifically designed for hummingbird enthusiasts and photographers along with anyone who would like to experience the Neotropics through these spectacular living gems.

This tour follows an easy transect up and over the eastern and western Andean slopes to revel in a spectacle of unimaginable color, glitter and frenzy unlike anything one could ever imagine. This is a world of hummingbirds—these tiny (or not so!) creatures that can fly backwards, sideways, and even upside down, as they feed, battle, and interact with each other at a dizzying pace—and tanagers, characterized by their plethora of vibrant colors. We will concentrate on observing and/or photographing as many species within these intriguing families as possible.



Our journey takes us to a variety of key sites at varied elevations along both slopes of the northern Andes, each maintaining wonderful nectar and fruit feeding stations where we can watch, compare, and enjoy a wide range of species in surprising comfort. We will also take optional walks to explore forest trails and observe flowering plants in search of the few species that don't visit feeders regularly. This is an opportunity to focus on these marvelous creatures in a very relaxed and easy manner. We will stay at comfortable lodges and visit the most renowned hummingbird and tanager localities in northern Ecuador's high tundra-like páramo zone at Antisana and along the Papallacta Pass, temperate-zone forest at Guango Lodge and Cabañas San Isidro, Amazonian foothills at Wildsumaco Lodge, elfin temperate forest at Yanacocha Reserve, the western subtropical and foothill cloud forests of the Mindo-Milpe area, and the Pacific coastal lowlands at Río Silanche Bird Sanctuary among other hot-spots.

The names alone are mouth-watering! Just think—hermits, sylphs, trainbearers, pufflegs, incas, starfrontlet, sapphirewing, sword-bill, sunbeam, coronets, racket-tail, whitetips, hillstars, brilliants, thornbills, woodstars, woodnymphs, jewelfront, emeralds, sapphire and fairies! And what about Glistening-green, Orange-eared, Flame-faced, Golden-eared, Paradise, Emerald, Rufous-throated Golden-crowned & Grass-green tanagers, or Hooded, Lacrimose, Blue-winged, Black-chinned or Scarlet-bellied mountain-tanagers!

This is a perfect itinerary for fanatics, photographers, and even beginners who feel the urge to delve into the world of tropical hummingbirds and tanagers in a light-paced but "full-on" fashion. A mini-disclaimer: This trip is slated as a focus on hummingbirds and tanagers, which it is, but because Ecuador is one of the richest 'bird-countries' on Earth, it is ultimately inevitable that some other

avian creatures will inadvertently slip into view at times. Neither VENT nor your trip leader can be held responsible for these annoying interruptions from a possible raptor, guan, parrot, quetzal, trogon, motmot, puffbird, jacamar, barbet, toucan, woodpecker, furnariid, antbird, cotinga, manakin, jay or other feathered 'nuisance.' Thank you for your understanding!

This tour is one in our series of Relaxed & Easy (R&E) tours. These tours are appropriate for participants who want a slower paced tour, with somewhat fewer hours in the field and light physical activity. They are ideal for persons who prefer a somewhat later start in the morning (typically 7:00 a.m.), a break after lunch and a shorter afternoon outing. They involve only short walks, usually not more than a half mile, and avoid difficult terrain.

March 12, Day 1: Arrival in Quito. Arriving participants will be met at the airport and transferred to our comfortable hotel. If you happen to be interested in sightseeing around the beautiful capital city of Quito or in doing some craft and souvenir shopping, please plan to arrive a day or two in advance. This is also recommended in order to acclimate and to avoid complications in the event of flight delays and lost luggage. Upon request, VENT will be happy to assist with any additional lodging arrangements.

NIGHT: San José de Puenbo, Puenbo

March 13, Day 2: Birding the Antisana Area and Papallacta Pass to Guango Lodge; Then Onward to Wildsumaco Lodge. This morning, after a sumptuous buffet breakfast, we initiate Part I of our journey as we depart from our hotel and head eastward to the temperate zone of the Antisana National Park area, about a half hour away. Here we will search out a few key hummers: the amazing Giant Hummingbird (seven inches long!), Black-tailed & (maybe) Green-tailed trainbearers, Sparkling Violetear, Shining Sunbeam, and the high-elevation Ecuadorian Hillstar. Although there are few tanagers at this elevation, we may come across Blue-and-yellow & Scrub tanagers *en route*, and with some good fortune... the colossal Andean Condor (well, okay, not a hummer/tanager!). We then continue northward, and again to the eastern ridge of the Andean cordillera, and over the often cold and 'tundra-like' páramo zone of Papallacta Pass, reaching a whopping 13,000 ft. in altitude before dropping continuously downslope. Surprisingly, there are quite a few 'new' species of hummingbirds and tanagers to be found throughout this general region. We may be lucky enough to find a few of them, including Blue-mantled Thornbill, Viridian Metaltail, Buff-breasted Mountain-Tanager, and Black-backed Bush-Tanager among the possibilities. We will examine shrubby, second growth scrub habitats from the upper slopes of the central valley to just about timberline, *Polylepis* woodland, páramo shrub and grassland, continuing down into humid temperate forest, as we descend the eastern Andean slopes. Along this stretch, we will reach Guango Lodge by late morning for a brief emersion into the insane frenzy of hummingbird action at the lodge's fabulous nectar feeders and with luck, some flock activity might spring up. Among the many possibilities to be found here, we will especially be watching for Sword-billed Hummingbird, Mountain Avocetbill (rare), Long-tailed Sylph, Collared Inca, Buff-winged Starfrontlet, Buff-tailed and Chestnut-breasted coronets, Tourmaline Sunangel, and White-bellied & Gorgeted woodstars, along with possibilities of Blue-and-black Tanager and Hooded Mountain-Tanager, and Black-eared & Black-capped hemispinguses (actually, bonafide members of the tanager family). We will pull ourselves away from this incredible site to continue our journey



Hooded Mountain-Tanager © Paul J. Greenfield

onward to today's destination in the Amazonian foothills—Wildsumaco Lodge—enjoying a field-lunch/birding stop *en route*.

NIGHT: Wildsumaco Lodge, Sumaco



Green-and-gold Tanager © Paul J. Greenfield

March 14, Day 3: Wildsumaco Lodge and Its Spectacular Birds. This ‘birders’ lodge is set within the fascinating Amazonian foothills and is home to an unbelievable variety of tanagers... and hummingbirds! We will have an entire day to hang out at two separate and awesome nectar feeding stations, one at the lodge itself and the other a short distance away, set up at the forest edge. We will also watch flowering shrubs and trees, and explore roadside habitat and a trail or two in search of hummingbird species that don’t often visit feeders and tanagers that abound in this region. Among the 20-25 hummers we may find here are Green Hermit; White-tipped & Buff-tailed sicklebills; Wire-crested Thorntail; Fawn-breasted, Violet-fronted & Black-throated brilliants; Gould’s Jewelfront; Equatorial Piedtail; Napo Sabrewing; Golden-tailed Sapphire; Many-spotted Hummingbird; Booted (Peruvian) Racket-tail; and Violet-headed Hummingbird. The tanager possibilities seem endless and could include Silver-beaked, Orange-eared, Blue-gray, Palm, Blue-necked, Spotted, Yellow-bellied, Paradise (Wow!), Bay-headed, Golden-eared, Green-and-gold, Golden, Swallow, Summer and Scarlet tanagers along with a ‘pile’ of other members (honeycreepers, flowerpiercers, etc.) of this extensive family. There is also a whole treasure trove of ‘non-target’ species to be found here—Chestnut-fronted & Military macaws, Red-headed & Gilded barbets, six toucan species, and Coppery-chested Jacamar are just a sample!

NIGHT: Wildsumaco Lodge, Sumaco

March 15, Day 4: Early Morning at Wildsumaco Lodge; Drive to Cabañas San Isidro. After some optional pre-breakfast birding and breakfast, we will ascend the eastern Andean slope through spectacular subtropical and temperate forest, climbing in elevation over the Huacamayos Ridge and then descending a bit as we reach Cabañas

San Isidro. We will make a few brief birding stops to check out promising overlooks, birding spots, flowers and feeders *en route* to sample some of the hummers and a possible tanager or two... or three. Aside from its great birding, San Isidro is renowned for its fine cuisine, and after settling in to our rooms, we will sit down to a delicious lunch while hummingbirds swarm at the feeders around the lodge's deck. We will enjoy many of the same hummingbird species we may have seen at Guango a couple of days ago, but with a few new possibilities, namely Tawny-bellied Hermit, Lesser Violetear, and Bronzy Inca, along with a whole new selection of tanagers, which could include Lacrimose Mountain-Tanager; Red-hooded, Saffron-crowned, Flame-faced & Beryl-spangled tanagers among them, and with some good fortune, we might even come across a 'wild' band of White-capped Tanager. Other species we will be on the prowl for include Inca Jay; Andean (Highland) Motmot; Subtropical Cacique; Powerful Woodpecker; and Cinnamon, Golden-crowned & Pale-edged flycatchers. After dinner we will take a little time to try to locate the 'San Isidro Mystery Owl.'

NIGHT: Cabañas San Isidro, Cosanga



Inca (Green) Jay © Paul J. Greenfield

March 16, Day 5: Morning at Cabañas San Isidro; Then Back Over Papallacta Pass to Quito. After a last full morning of tracking down more tanagers and hummingbirds we may not have seen yesterday, we will head off to retrace our tracks for a late afternoon arrival at the capital city of Quito (UNESCO World Heritage Site), at 9,000 ft. altitude, making a few possible birding stops at varying elevations in hopes of finding species we may have missed on our first day.

NIGHT: Hotel Quito, Quito

March 17, Day 6: Drive to the Mindo Valley via Yanacocha and the Paseo del Quinde Ecoroute. We will head out early this morning, initiating Part II of our adventure, to explore the western slope of the Andes. From

Quito, we will drive up and over Pichincha Volcano, accompanied by photogenic panoramas and pastoral Andean vistas, to Yanacocha Reserve, at over 11,000 ft. The entire region is home to an abundant avifauna, including a number of regional endemics, and we will enjoy a pleasant morning walking through magical high-Andean elfin forest and scrubland at this very special site. This is a tried-and-true hummingbird/tanager heaven—or at least a part of it! Nectar and fruit feeders have been set up at Yanacocha and we will take time to enjoy the activity which will be eye-catching and even dizzying at times, to say the least. The unbelievable Sword-billed Hummingbird, Buff-winged Starfrontlet, Sapphire-vented & Golden-breasted pufflegs, Rainbow-bearded Thorntail, Great Sapphirewing, Mountain Velvetbreast, Tyrian Metaltail, and Shining Sunbeam are all possible here as are Scarlet-bellied, Hooded and Black-chested mountain-tanagers—all seeable at point-blank! We may want to enjoy our field-lunch here (depending on weather and timing); we will then continue downslope along the *Paseo del Quinde* Ecoroute (translated roughly as “Hummingbird Drive”), where we will make a key stop at Bellavista Cloud Forest Lodge, perched on a knife-sharp ridge that overlooks the Tandayapa Valley. Here, the impressive nectar feeders bring us face-to-face with yet another *mass* of hummers, including Collared Inca, White-booted Racket-tail and Gorgeted Sunangel, along with periodic visits by a few Blue-winged Mountain-Tanagers. We will have to pry ourselves from this frenzy to continue to our west-slope destination and ‘center of operations’ for the next few days, but we will be on constant watch for the eventual mixed-species foraging flocks that could hold Blue-capped, Grass-green & Blue-and-black tanagers, among other species.

NIGHT: El Séptimo Paraíso, Mindo



Sword-billed Hummingbird © Paul J. Greenfield

March 18-19, Days 7-8: Full Days in the ‘Greater’ Mindo Area. We will wake each morning to the whirr of literally thousands of very special wings as we now find ourselves in the heart of Ecuador’s Chocó bioregional endemism (meaning unique species found nowhere else). The grounds around our lodge are just unbelievable and we will have ample time to enjoy a parade of spectacular hummingbird and tanager species that reside here. Each day, for those who just cannot pull themselves away from this paradise, we will offer the option to remain at the

lodge, enjoying the feeders and surrounding forest and gardens, or join our group for jaunts to a few key, nearby and important sites. We will want to visit Milpe Bird Sanctuary, 'Casa Rolando,' Río Silanche Bird Sanctuary and Suamox, and the *Paseo del Quinde* Ecoroute among other possibilities, with each site offering additional experiences and an array of different species. Some of the many possibilities we'll be searching for include the following hummingbirds—Bronzy, White-whiskered, Baron's, Stripe-throated & Tawny-bellied hermits; Band-tailed Barbthroat; White-tipped Sicklebill; Wedge-billed Hummingbird; Green-fronted Lancebill; Green Thorntail; Green-crowned, Fawn-breasted & Empress brilliants; Green-crowned Woodnymph; Purple-chested Hummingbird; Green & Brown violetears; Western Emerald; Andean Emerald; Brown & Collared incas; Buff-tailed & (the glowing) Velvet-purple coronets; Violet-tailed Sylph; Purple-bibbed Whitetip; Booted Racket-tail; Gorgeted Sunangel; White-bellied, Purple-throated, & Little woodstars; and tanagers—White-shouldered, Tawny-crested White-lined, Lemon-rumped, Fawn-breasted, Glistening-green, Blue-gray, Palm, Golden-naped, Black-capped, Gray-and-gold, Golden-hooded, Blue-necked, Rufous-throated, Beryl-spangled, Metallic-green, Rufous-winged, Bay-headed, Flame-faced, Blue-whiskered (rare), Golden, Emerald, Silver-throated, Swallow, and Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager, among quite a few other members of this diverse family. This area holds one of the richest montane avifaunas found anywhere!

NIGHTS: El Séptimo Paraíso, Mindo



Rufous-throated Tanager © Paul J. Greenfield

March 20, Day 9: Return to Quito via Amagusa-Mashpi Reserve and Alambi Cloud Forest Reserve. We will depart this morning after breakfast on our last field day and initiate our return to Quito, but first by heading farther westward to the Amagusa-Mashpi Reserve, which is owned and managed by a local Ecuadorian couple. This is a special place where nectar and, especially, two sets of plantain banana feeders have been set up; targets here include Glistening-green, Rufous-throated & Moss-backed tanagers, along with Golden-collared Honeycreeper. The incredible Chocó regional cloud forest in this area is quite amazing and we will also take some

time to look for special endemics like Uniform Treehunter, Black Solitaire, Orange-breasted Fruiteater, and Indigo Flowerpiercer, among the many possibilities. We will then return eastward to visit a local friend at Alambi Cloud Forest Reserve to check out his unbelievably active nectar and fruit feeders. This is an impressive site that offers mind-boggling activity and photo ops, if we haven't had enough already! We will then initiate our final push to the big city. This evening we will enjoy our farewell dinner along with the memories of a most memorable extravaganza!

NIGHT: Hotel Quito, Quito



Glistening-green Tanager © Paul J. Greenfield

March 21, Day 10: Departure for Home. A transfer will be provided to the Quito Airport in time for all departures.

RELAXED AND EASY (R&E) TOUR INFORMATION: Relaxed & Easy (R&E) tours are similar to “regular” VENT tours, but set to a slower pace, with somewhat fewer hours in the field and lighter physical activity. They are ideal for participants who prefer a somewhat later start in the morning, a little lengthier afternoon break, and a shorter afternoon outing. Walking is limited to short walks of usually not more than a mile, avoiding difficult terrain. A typical day will begin with breakfast around 6:30-7:00 a.m., followed by birding until about noon. We will attempt to have lunch every day between 12:00 and 1:00 p.m., followed by an afternoon break (when possible). We will resume birding for a couple of hours in the mid-afternoon. On most days we will attempt to provide 45 minutes to an hour for personal time before dinner. We will have dinner between 6:00 and 6:30 p.m. Strenuous physical activity will be avoided, and all walking will be limited to well-marked roads and trails, excluding uneven or rough terrain.

Relaxed & Easy (R&E) refers only to the slower pace of a tour, not to a participant’s birding skills or ability. Accordingly, birders of all levels of ability are welcome, as they are on typical VENT tours; R&E tours should not be mistaken as tours for beginning birders.

TOUR SIZE: This tour will be limited to 8 participants.

TOUR LEADER: Paul Greenfield



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.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS: The fee for the tour is **\$3,775** per person in double occupancy from Quito. This includes all meals from breakfast on Day 2 to breakfast on Day 10, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, ground transportation during the tour, gratuities, 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 this tour is **\$525**. 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 would like 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 (October 13, 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.

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: Soft-sided luggage is recommended. As a precaution, please pack your travel documents, binoculars, medications, basic toiletries, and a change of clothes in your carry-on bag. Check with your airline for restrictions.

CLIMATE: During the tour we will experience the rainy season on the west slope, and dry season on the east slope. The rain is mostly in short intervals and at night, and it rains even in the dry season on the much wetter east slope. The temperature is mostly in the upper 70s by day (perhaps the lower 80s on one day at one lower elevation on the west slope) and upper 50s at night. However, at higher elevations the temperatures can be as low as the 40s on occasion, and you should be prepared to layer for warmth. There is a possibility that we shall be out in at least some mist or light rain; therefore, a good umbrella or rain jacket is essential.

CLOTHING: Dress is casual or informal throughout. Lightweight field clothing is the norm for most areas visited, with a sweater or jacket 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 striking patterns that frighten the birds. Also important are a hat and sunscreen for sun protection, rain jacket, poncho or umbrella. Good footwear is essential, and for this we strongly suggest sturdy waterproof hiking boots. In any case, your footgear for the field should at the very least 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. 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. There is a strong likelihood that we will be out in at least some mist or light rain on both slopes, so a good umbrella or rain jacket is essential.

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. MasterCard, Visa, and Diner’s Club are widely accepted in Quito, as are ATM cards. American Express cards are not always accepted.

DOCUMENTS: A passport valid for at least six months beyond your planned departure from Ecuador is required. Visas are not required for United States citizens. You will be issued a tourist card to be completed on board your flight to Quito. Non-U.S. citizens should check with their consulate/embassy for instructions.

EQUIPMENT: You will want to have a sunhat, sunscreen, and sunglasses for protection from the sun; a belt pack or daypack to carry your field equipment and water bottle; a small flashlight or headlamp; a washcloth or small hand towel; a water bottle; and an alarm clock. Consider bringing an extra pair of binoculars, some between meal snacks (such as trail mix, granola bars, dried fruit, nuts, etc.) and Kleenex or hand wipes. Annoying insects are not very likely in the areas we will be visiting, but you may wish to bring repellent if you are worried about this. Topsisyn gel or alcohol is useful for reducing irritation from bites and stings, as is cortisone cream. Your leader will have a spotting scope; but if you wish to bring your own, that is fine. Again, as a precaution, it is a good idea to pack your binoculars, basic toiletry items, medications, travel documents, and a change of clothing in your carry-on bag. A decent camera (digital is most effective) will be most useful, even if you do *not* consider yourself an experienced photographer.

HEALTH: Malaria is present in parts of Ecuador, including the chloroquine-resistant strain, but not at the locations visited on this tour. Consult with your physician regarding vaccinations and malaria pills. As in most Latin American countries, we recommend drinking only bottled water and using no ice in beverages. Avoid milk products that have not been pasteurized, as well as unpeeled fruits and vegetables.

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 (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.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new_e.html (click on travel 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.

We strongly recommend the use of Insect Shield® clothing on this tour. 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.

For the latest information and news about Zika virus, please visit the website of the CDC:
<https://www.cdc.gov/zika/>

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 Access – free WiFi at San José de Puembo and Hotel Quito; internet access available at Séptimo Paraíso; sporadic availability at Wildsumaco; usually available at San Isidro

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 Paul Greenfield. *The Birds of Ecuador*. Cornell University Press. June, 2001. Primary field guide.

Athanas, Nick and Greenfield, Paul J. *Birds of Western Ecuador, a Photographic Guide*, Princeton University Press, 2016. An excellent photographic field guide and useful complement to *The Birds of Ecuador* that treats over 900 bird species recorded in the western half of the country.

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.

Fjeldsa, Jon and Niels Krabbe. *Birds of the High Andes*. Copenhagen: Zoological Museum, University of Copenhagen; Svendborg, Denmark: Apollo Books, 1990. A good reference book for the birds of the mountains above 7,500 ft., with adequate illustrations, but too large to carry and expensive.

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.

Restall, Robin; Rodner, Clemencia and Miguel Lentino. *Birds of Northern South America*. An identification guide. Volume 2: Plates and Maps. Helms Field Guides. 2006.

Other:

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

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