Ecuador has long been regarded as the planet’s hummingbird and tanager epicenter, and on this exciting sequel to our Northern Ecuador Extravaganza, we’ll experience many of southern Ecuador’s prime habitats and ecosystems while in pursuit of these spectacular living gems that exemplify the glory of the Neotropics. This trip has been designed specifically for birding enthusiasts and photographers, along with anyone sporting a whim for the joys of Neotropical birding and a special focus on color and glitter! Of the nearly 200 species of hummingbirds and tanagers (including their allies) found in this region, we hope to enjoy well over half of them, including many of the same actors present on our “Northern” tour, along with a whole new cast of superstars!
In the high temperate and páramo-zone elevations of El Cajas National Park, we’ll search for mixed foraging flocks and their attendant tanagers and scan flowering trees and shrubs for an array of hummingbirds with names as angelic as their appearances, including Green-tailed Trainbearer, Shining Sunbeam, Ecuadorian Hillstar, Mountain Velvetbreast, Great Saphirewing, Sword-billed Hummingbird, Purple-throated Sunangel, and Viridian Metaltail. We will focus especially on locating the Violet-throated Metaltail, one of South America’s most range-restricted hummers. Tanagers could include Hooded and Scarlet-bellied mountain-tanagers, Grass-green and Blue-and-black tanagers, Tit-like Dacnis, and Giant Conebill. A number of other specialties might show up as well, among them, Bearded Guan, Andean Condor, Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan, and Giant Conebill to name just a few.

In the Amazonian foothills, a region of exceptional diversity, at the lovely Copalinga Lodge, the many possibilities can be overwhelming. With a list far too extensive to present here, consider this tiny sample: Orange-eared, Green-and-gold, Yellow-bellied, Turquoise, Blue-necked, Paradise, Golden-Violet-throated Metaltail eared, Golden, Spotted, and Saffron-crowned tanagers; Golden-collared Honeycreeper; along with Green and Gray-chinned hermits; Buff-tailed and White-tipped sicklebills;
Violet-headed Hummingbird; Wire-crested Thorntail; Spangled Coquette; Peruvian Racket-tail; Black-eared Fairy; Violet-fronted and Black-throated brilliants; Glittering-throated Emerald; and Golden-tailed Sapphire. We could even be distracted by a parade of parakeets, jacamars, umbrellabirds, cocks-of-the-rock, manakins, and more.

At the Jocotoco Foundation’s Tapichalaca Reserve, the nectar feeders and temperate-zone vegetation should be alive with birds. Some of the new hummingbirds we’ll seek include Andean Emerald, Fawn-breasted Brilliant, Collared Inca, Buff-winged Starfrontlet, Chestnut-breasted Coronet, Amethyst-throated and Flame-throated sunangels, Glowing Puffleg, Tyrian Metaltail, and Rainbow-bearded and Rufous-capped thornbills. Tanagers could include Red-hooded and Grass-green, along with Hooded & Lacrimose mountain-tanager. This area is also home to many other specialties—including the recently discovered Jocotoco Antpitta—and we will offer an optional walk in hopes of locating some key species. We will also venture to lower elevations not far from the reserve where we may run into some upper Amazonian and Marañón valley species; Silver-backed, Straw-backed, and Buff-bellied tanagers are possibilities.

At the Jocotoco Foundation-owned Buenaventura Reserve, the nectar feeders and flowers at Umbrellabird Lodge teem with a diversity of hummingbird species that include such beauties as Band-tailed Barbthroat, Stripe-throated and White-whiskered hermits, Green Thorntail, Emerald-bellied Woodnymph, Violet-bellied Hummingbird, White-vented Plumeleteer, Velvet-purple Coronet, Gorgeted Sunangel, Violet-tailed Sylph, and Purple-crowned Fairy. We will also keep our “eyes peeled” for Gray-backed Hawk; El Oro and Red-masked parakeets; Bronze-winged Parrot; Crimson-rumped Toucanet; Pale-mandibled Araçari; Long-wattled Umbrellabird; Club-winged Manakin; Fawn-breasted, Rufous-throated, Silver-throated, Bay-headed & Blue-necked tanagers; and Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager.

This tour has been designed to show you a wide array of birds, with a particular focus on hummingbirds and tanagers, but a few words of caution are prudent. In our many years of birding the neotropics, 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 will be afield all day; especially due to some fairly long road-trips between sites. Overall, our travel and birding will be varied, including some walking and optional hiking on forest trails and along roadside habitats, from the tropical lowlands and foothills to higher elevations in temperate elfin forests and tundra-like páramo. We can expect heat and humidity at lower elevations, while some rain and fog are also possible, especially along the Andean slopes (which, of course, is why these forests are so incomparably lush) and cold weather is the norm in the thin air of the highlands. Accommodations are generally comfortable and more than adequate (the best in the region), but are of necessity often 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.

Our 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 non-hummingbirds 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 creature. Thank you for your understanding!

August 25, Day 1: Arrival to the Coastal City of Guayaquil. Participants are encouraged to fly to Guayaquil on either American Airlines from Miami or United/Copa from Houston, which are scheduled to arrive in the evening.
or LATAM from New York, which arrives in the early morning. Upon arrival at Guayaquil’s Joaquín de Olmedo International Airport (airport code GYE), you will be met and transferred to our hotel. Please note that your departure on Day 2 is fairly early. If you feel you need time to acclimate to the time zone or to avoid complications with baggage, you may want to arrive a day early. Upon request the VENT office will be happy to assist with early arrival hotel and airport transfer arrangements.

NIGHT: Hotel Continental, Guayaquil

**August 26, Day 2: Morning Departure from Guayaquil; Drive towards the Andean City of Cuenca; Remainder of the Day Birding at El Cajas National Park.** Today, after an early breakfast, we initiate our journey with a drive towards the charming Andean city and Ecuador’s cultural capital, Cuenca; its colonial center was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1999. We will first head south through coastal wetlands and semi-humid and humid zones before heading east as we climb the southwestern slope of the Andes to our first day’s destination. We reach upper temperate and páramo zone habitats in the highlands as we approach El Cajas National Park, where we will stop to work shrubby second growth, scrub and humid temperate woodland and forest edge from just about timberline to *Polylepis* woodland and páramo shrub and grassland in search of our first Andean hummingbird/tanager species. There are no nectar or fruit feeding stations in this area—but fear-not, we will be duly spoiled by them a bit later on—and we will check out flowering shrubs and trees here in hopes of spotting several specialties. Surprisingly, or not so, there are quite a few pretty fantastic species to be found here, and we will work at finding several of them: Sparkling Violetear; Mountain Velvetbreast; Black-tailed & Green-tailed trainbearers; Tyrian Metaltail; the range-restricted and endemic Violet-throated Metaltail; Collared Inca; Buff-winged Starfrontlet; Shining Sunbeam; the relatively huge (for a hummingbird!) Great Saphirewing; Scarlet-bellied, Hooded and Buff-breasted mountain-tanagers; and Blue-and-black Tanager among them. As we climb a bit more in elevation into the páramo zone, we will look for the enigmatic Ecuadorian Hillstar at its favored food-source—the *Chuquiragua* shrub—and the tiny-billed Blue-mantled Thornbill (which often feeds on the ground!) along with the rare and local tanager-ally—Tit-like Dacnis. This should turn out to be a really fun-packed
day, and happily, we will spend the night in this same area, with plans to settle in and do some leisure birding around the grounds of our lodge.

NIGHT: Dos Chorreras, El Cajas National Park

**August 27, Day 3: Morning at El Cajas’s Llaviucu Lagoon Area; Afternoon Drive South and Then Eastward to the Andean Foothills at Zamora.** After a hearty breakfast, we will pack up and first head a bit downslope to the Llaviucu sector of El Cajas National Park. Depending on how Day 2 went, we may still want to try for Violet-throated Metaltail along with some other species *en route.* Llaviucu is a lovely area that holds many exciting treasures and, of course, we will be hummer-hunting as one of our main goals, with the chance of finding species like Purple-throated Sunangel, Rainbow Starfrontlet, Sapphire-vented Puffleg, White-bellied Woodstar, Collared Inca, Shining Sunbeam and with some luck, the stunning Purple-backed Thornbill (the shortest-billed hummingbird of all!). Among possible high-Andean tanagers, we’ll look for the beautiful Grass-green. Please be warned that several other species may turn up as we walk through shrubby areas, woodland, lake-side marshland and the lake itself: Andean Guan, Masked Trogon, Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan and a whole selection of smaller highland species are plentiful here, not to mention some high-elevation water fowl.

By late morning we will depart southward through the highlands towards the city of Loja and then due east as we descend the eastern Andean slope to the quaint town of Zamora, nestled in the humid foothills of the western Amazon Basin. We will make a few key stops along the way in a variety of habitats—we will look for Giant Hummingbird, for example, as we travel through the arid Oña Valley—enjoying a field-lunch and more exciting birding before we reach our lodge by mid-to-late afternoon. We will then settle into our rooms with time to check out this site’s impressive nectar and fruit feeders along with some productive *Verbena* shrubs.

NIGHT: Copalinga Lodge, Zamora
August 28-29, Days 4-5: Two Days at Copalinga Lodge and the Bombuscaro Entrance Area of Podocarpus National Park. This pleasant lodge is set within the mega-rich Amazonian foothills and is home to a spectacular variety of birds, including, of course, a nice selection of hummingbirds and tanagers! We will spend much of our days enjoying the feeding station set up just outside the open-air dining area, which will surely be entertaining; we will visit the Bombuscaro entrance area of Podocarpus National Park, located just a short distance up the road; and check out flowering trees and shrubs in the area, including Heliconia, for the chance of finding White-tipped and maybe even Buff-tailed sicklebills. Other hummingbird species we will be aiming for include Pale-tailed Barbthroat; Green, Great-billed & Gray-chinned hermits; Green-fronted Lancebill; Wire-crested Thorntail; Spangled Coquette; Brown & Lesser violetears; Fawn-breasted, Violet-fronted & Black-throated brilliants; Golden-tailed Sapphire; Many-spotted Hummingbird; Glittering-throated Emerald; Fork-tailed Woodnymph; Black-eared Fairy; Blue-tailed Emerald; Violet-headed Hummingbird; and, with luck, Peruvian (Booted) Racket-tail, Equatorial Piedtail, and Napo Sabrewing. This is a particularly rich tanager region and we’ll watch plantain feeders and forest edge for Magpie, Silver-beaked, White-shouldered, Guira, Paradise, Golden-eared, Orange-eared, Bay-headed, Green-and-gold, Spotted & Blue-necked tanagers among the many possibilities. Alas, our eyes may get diverted to many other amazing birds—think White-breasted Parakeet, Amazonian Umbrellabird, and Andean Cock-of-the-rock—along with several manakins (i.e., White-crowned, Blue-rumped & Striped), just to mention a very few.

NIGHTS: Copalinga Lodge, Zamora

August 30, Day 6: Morning at Copalinga; Then Drive Back to the Andean Highlands and South to Tapichalaca Reserve. After some morning hummingbirds, tanagers and whatever else shows up, we will pack up and head off to retrace our steps back upslope to the highland city of Loja and then due south (yes, farther south!) to the Jocotoco Foundation’s Tapichalaca Reserve, with a few stops en route to take in the ever-changing scenery, allow us to stretch our legs, and maybe spot more hummers and tanagers. We will be looking out for Andean Emerald, Glowing & Greenish pufflegs, Purple-collared Woodstar, Viridian & Tyrian metaltails, perhaps Neblina Metaltail, Rainbow-bearded Thornbill, and Long-tailed Sylph as we pass through a variety of distinctive habitats. We’ll also keep our “eyes peeled,” as we advance along this ever changing transect, for mixed foraging...
flocks and their attendant tanagers. We will reach our lodge, Casa Simpson, in the afternoon, in time to enjoy some hummingbird feeder action.

NIGHT: Casa Simpson, Tapichalaca Reserve

**August 31, Day 7: All-day at Tapichalaca Reserve.** Today, we will enjoy the active nectar feeders set up around our lodge, and additionally, we will offer an optional hike along a mountain trail to the famous Jocotoco Antpitta feeding station; this special antpitta (aren’t they all?) was discovered not too many years ago, generating much excitement in ornithological circles and in the birding world in general. This walk will provide the opportunity to see a variety of high-Andean bird species as we come across a mixed foraging flock and listen for a number of understory skulkers. Back at the feeders, we will look forward to several high-elevation hummingbirds—including Tawny-bellied Hermit, Speckled Hummingbird, Mountain Velvetbreast, Great Saphirewing, Collared Inca, Buff-winged Starfrontlet, Chestnut-breasted Coronet, Amethyst-throated & Flame-throated sunangels, Rufous-capped Thornbill, and Long-tailed Sylph—and around the lodge, we will watch for mixed foraging flocks and a variety of temperate-zone tanagers—Blue-and black; Red-hooded & Golden-crowned tanagers; Scarlet-bellied, Lacrimose & Hooded mountain-tanagers. In the afternoon, we will head to lower elevations around the villages of Valladolid and Palanda, an area that harbors many upper Amazonian and Marañón valley species of interest, which could include Silver-backed, Straw-backed & Buff-bellied tanagers.
September 1, Day 8: Drive Northward to Buenaventura Lodge. This morning we will depart from Tapichalaca Reserve after breakfast and drive northwestward to the Buenaventura Reserve, which is set in a remnant stretch of rich humid foothill cloud-forest not far from the quaint town of Piñas in the El Oro Province. This is an area of high endemism with an impressive number of unique species, many tied to the world’s richest Chocó endemic bioregion. *En route* we may make a few roadside stops before reaching the upper section of the reserve, where we will check out some active nectar feeders before working our way to Umbrellabird Lodge in time to do some exciting birding and check out the incredibly active nectar feeders—there is a whole lot to see here!

NIGHT: Umbrellabird Lodge, Buenaventura Reserve
September 2-3, Days 9-10: Two Days at Buenaventura Lodge. We will enjoy two full days at this incredibly birdy reserve. Among the possible hummingbirds are White-whiskered, Baron’s & Stripe-throated hermits; White-tipped Sicklebill; White-necked Jacobin; Brown Violetear; Green Thorntail; Emerald-bellied Woodnymph; Violet-bellied Hummingbird; Rufous-tailed Hummingbird; Amazilia Hummingbird; Andean Emerald; Ecuadorian (White-vented) Plumeleteer; Purple-bibbed Whitetip; Green-crowned Brilliant; Fawn-breasted Brilliant; Brown Inca; Velvet-purple Coronet; Violet-tailed Sylph; Wedge-billed Hummingbird; Purple-crowned Fairy; and Long-billed Starthroat. Tanagers can also be numerous here and we will watch for Blue & Yellow-tufted dacnises; Fawn-breasted, Guira, Rufous-throated, Golden, Silver-throated, Flame-faced, Golden-naped, Beryl-spangled, Blue-necked, Speckled, Bay-headed, & Swallow tanagers; Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager; and so on! We will also offer optional walks in hopes of locating an impressive number of specialties including Gray-backed Hawk, Rufous-headed Chachalaca, the endemic El Oro Parakeet, Bronze-winged Parrot, Red-masked, & Gray-cheeked parakeets, Chocó & Chestnut-mandibled toucans, Long-wattled Umbrellabird, Club-winged Manakin and a plethora of flycatchers, antbirds and furnariids.
September 4, Day 11: Morning at Buenaventura Lodge; Drive to Guayaquil. We will have a final morning to enjoy the hummingbirds, tanagers and other forest denizens in this wonderful reserve. After lunch we will pack up and drive back to Guayaquil—backtracking part of the way we traveled on Day 2—arriving in the afternoon at our hotel in time for some R&R, before our final checklist session and farewell dinner. Some of our participants may depart tonight.

NIGHT: Hotel Continental, Guayaquil

September 5, Day 12: Departure Day; Optional Morning of Birding at Cerro Blanco Reserve. Transfers will be provided to Guayaquil’s Joaquin de Olmedo International Airport in time for all morning departures. For those participants scheduled for an evening flight, an optional morning birding trip will be offered to the nearby Cerro Blanco Reserve.

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 $3,595 per person in double occupancy from Guayaquil. This includes all meals from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 12, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, ground transportation during the tour, gratuities, and guide services provided by the tour leader. It does not include airfare from your home to Guayaquil 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 $495. 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 initial deposit for this tour is $500 per person. If you would like to pay your initial 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. If you prefer to pay the initial deposit using a credit card, your deposit must be made with MasterCard, Visa, or American Express at the time of registration. The VENT registration form (available from the VENT office or by download at [www.ventbird.com](http://www.ventbird.com)) should then be completed, signed, and returned to the VENT office.

**PAYMENTS:** Initial tour deposits may be made by MasterCard, Visa, American Express, check, money order, or bank transfer. All other tour payments, including second deposits, interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc., must be made by check, money order, or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). Full payment of the tour fee is due 120 days prior to the tour departure date.

**CANCELLATION POLICY:** Cancellation penalties and refunds are based on the following schedule: if cancellation is made 120 days or more before the tour departure date, a cancellation fee of $250 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 fewer than 120 days before departure date, no refund is available. This policy and fee schedule also applies to pre-trip and post-trip extensions. *We strongly recommend the purchase of trip cancellation insurance for your protection.*

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*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.

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 fees and restrictions.

**CLIMATE:** During the tour we will experience the dry or ‘local summer’ season in the southwestern lowlands with, at most, some mist in certain areas; on the more humid western Andean slope, especially at Buenaventura, we may experience some fog and perhaps a little rain. The east slope will present wetter conditions, with rain being present mostly in short intervals and often mostly at night. Highland areas throughout more humid areas in the Andes (e.g., Tapichalaca Reserve) may present rain. The coastal lowlands will be cooler in the mornings (low 70s) and will warm up quickly by mid-morning, possibly reaching the 90s by midday. In the foothills, temperatures will range mostly in the upper 70s by day and upper 50s at night. However, at higher elevations (especially at El Cajas National Park) the temperatures can fall to 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 at higher elevations. 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 in areas with damp climate, 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 (especially in the morning) 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 sturdy umbrella or rain jacket is essential.

ADDITIONAL DRESS CONSIDERATIONS: Bring a warm jacket or sweater, layers, and thermal underwear for the cool high-mountain locations; clothing that you can wash yourself and which dries quickly is preferred. Layering is a good idea; you can begin the morning with a thermal shirt, outer shirt, sweater and jacket if need be, and then shed layers as the day warms up. We will be spending much time leisurely studying hummingbirds at nectar feeders and nearby flowering shrubs and trees, but optional walks will be offered on most days, mostly along forest trails and along gravel roads, and for this we strongly suggest sturdy waterproof hiking boots. You may find lightweight sneakers, loafers or sandals useful for wear around our different lodges.

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 (Note: traveler's checks are NOT recommended in Ecuador). ATMs are available in many locations. MasterCard and Visa are generally accepted at larger businesses.

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 Guayaquil. 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. Topsyn gel or alcohol is useful for reducing irritation from bites and stings, as is cortisone cream. Your leaders 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.

Zika Virus – This tour visits an area or areas where Zika virus is known to occur or could occur; however, we believe the risk to VENT travelers is extremely low. The Zika virus is a mosquito-borne infection transmitted by mosquitoes of the genus *Aedes*, and is related to other tropical diseases: Dengue, Yellow Fever, and West Nile virus. This type of mosquito bites during the day and typically is found in areas of dense human habitation where sanitation and drainage of standing water is poor. Zika virus presents the greatest threat to women of childbearing age. For others who become infected, the effects are usually nonexistent to mild, although some people exhibit...
symptoms such as mild fever, rashes, joint and muscle pain, and red eyes. If infected, the best treatment is plenty of rest, nourishment, and other supportive care. There is no vaccine to prevent or cure the disease; however, Zika virus is not contagious and, therefore, cannot be transmitted through air, food, or water.

Your safety is our highest priority, and we want to emphasize that the best way to avoid Zika virus (and other mosquito-borne diseases), is to take appropriate precautions in avoiding mosquito bites:

- Stay informed about the Zika virus
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants, socks and shoes, and a hat*
- Use effective insect repellents (those containing DEET) and reapply regularly

*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.

For the latest information and news about Zika virus, please visit the website of the CDC:

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.

**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 Service - Available in the public areas of the lodges
Laundry Service - Available throughout the tour

**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:**


**Birds, Additional Reading:**


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.


**Other:**


**TIPPING:** Tipping (restaurant staff, porters, drivers, local guides) is included on VENT tours. However, if you feel one or both of your VENT leaders or any local guides have given you exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that tips are not expected and are entirely optional. Tips should be given directly to your tour leader; they should not be sent to the VENT office.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc. (VENT) and/or its Agents act only as agents for the passenger in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. VENT and its agents can accept no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger, as tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. The right is reserved to substitute hotels of similar category for those indicated and to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary or caused by changes in air schedules. The right is reserved to cancel any tour prior to departure, in which case full refund will constitute full settlement to the passenger. The right is reserved to substitute leaders on any tour. When this is necessary, notification will be given to tour members. No refund will be made for any unused portion of the tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. The prices of the tours are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on October 12, 2018 and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change therein. The right is reserved to decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of any tour. Baggage is at owner’s risk entirely. The airlines concerned and their agents and affiliates are not to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time passengers are not on board their aircraft. The passenger ticket in use by said airlines, when issued, shall constitute the sole contract between the airlines and the purchaser of these tickets and/or passenger. The services of any I.A.T.A.N. carrier may be used for these tours, and transportation within the United States may be provided by any member carrier of the Airline Reporting Corporation.
SOUTHERN ECUADOR
HUMMINGBIRD & TANAGER EXTRAVAGANZA

AUGUST 25-SEPTEMBER 5, 2019
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Ecuador has long been regarded as the planet’s hummingbird and tanager epicenter, and on this exciting sequel to our Northern Ecuador Extravaganza, we’ll experience many of southern Ecuador’s prime habitats and ecosystems while in pursuit of these spectacular living gems that exemplify the glory of the Neotropics. This trip has been designed specifically for birding enthusiasts and photographers, along with anyone sporting a whim for the joys of Neotropical birding and a special focus on color and glitter! Of the nearly 200 species of hummingbirds and tanagers (including their allies) found in this region, we hope to enjoy well over half of them, including many of the same actors present on our “Northern” tour, along with a whole new cast of superstars!
In the high temperate and páramo-zone elevations of El Cajas National Park, we’ll search for mixed foraging flocks and their attendant tanagers and scan flowering trees and shrubs for an array of hummingbirds with names as angelic as their appearances, including Green-tailed Trainbearer, Shining Sunbeam, Ecuadorian Hillstar, Mountain Velvetbreast, Great Sapphirewing, Sword-billed Hummingbird, Purple-throated Sunangel, and Viridian Metaltail. We will focus especially on locating the Violet-throated Metaltail, one of South America’s most range-restricted hummers. Tanagers could include Hooded and Scarlet-bellied mountain-tanagers, Grass-green and Blue-and-black tanagers, Tit-like Dacnis, and Giant Conebill. A number of other specialties might show up as well, among them, Bearded Guan, Andean Condor, Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan, and Giant Conebill to name just a few.

In the Amazonian foothills, a region of exceptional diversity, at the lovely Copalinga Lodge, the many possibilities can be overwhelming. With a list far too extensive to present here, consider this tiny sample: Orange-eared, Green-and-gold, Yellow-bellied, Turquoise, Blue-necked, Paradise, Golden-Violet-throated Metaltail eared, Golden, Spotted, and Saffron-crowned tanagers; Golden-collared Honeycreeper; along with Green and Gray-chinned hermits; Buff-tailed and White-tipped sicklebills;
Violet-headed Hummingbird; Wire-crested Thorntail; Spangled Coquette; Peruvian Racket-tail; Black-eared Fairy; Violet-fronted and Black-throated brilliants; Glittering-throated Emerald; and Golden-tailed Sapphire. We could even be distracted by a parade of parakeets, jacamars, umbrellabirds, cocks-of-the-rock, manakins, and more.

At the Jocotoco Foundation’s Tapichalaca Reserve, the nectar feeders and temperate-zone vegetation should be alive with birds. Some of the new hummingbirds we’ll seek include Andean Emerald, Fawn-breasted Brilliant, Collared Inca, Buff-winged Starfrontlet, Chestnut-breasted Coronet, Amethyst-throated and Flame-throated sunangels, Glowing Puffleg, Tyrian Metaltail, and Rainbow-bearded Rufous-capped thornbills. Tanagers could include Red-hooded and Grass-green, along with Hooded & Lacrimose mountain-tanager. This area is also home to many other specialties—including the recently discovered Jocotoco Antpitta—and we will offer an optional walk in hopes of locating some key species. We will also venture to lower elevations not far from the reserve where we may run into some upper Amazonian and Marañón valley species; Silver-backed, Straw-backed, and Buff-bellied tanagers are possibilities.

At the Jocotoco Foundation-owned Buenaventura Reserve, the nectar feeders and flowers at Umbrellabird Lodge teem with a diversity of hummingbird species that include such beauties as Band-tailed Barthroat, Stripe-throated and White-whiskered hermits, Green Thorntail, Emerald-bellied Woodnymph, Violet-bellied Hummingbird, White-vented Plumeleteer, Velvet-purple Coronet, Gorgeted Sunangel, Violet-tailed Sylph, and Purple-crowned Fairy. We will also keep our “eyes peeled” for Gray-backed Hawk; El Oro and Red-masked parakeets; Bronze-winged Parrot; Crimson-rumped Toucanet; Pale-mandibled Araçari; Long-wattled Umbrellabird; Club-winged Manakin; Fawn-breasted, Rufous-throated, Silver-throated, Bay-headed & Blue-necked tanagers; and Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager.

This tour has been designed to show you a wide array of birds, with a particular focus on hummingbirds and tanagers, but a few words of caution are prudent. In our many years of birding the neotropics, 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 will be afield all day; especially due to some fairly long road-trips between sites. Overall, our travel and birding will be varied, including some walking and optional hiking on forest trails and along roadside habitats, from the tropical lowlands and foothills to higher elevations in temperate elfin forests and tundra-like páramo. We can expect heat and humidity at lower elevations, while some rain and fog are also possible, especially along the Andean slopes (which, of course, is why these forests are so incomparably lush) and cold weather is the norm in the thin air of the highlands. Accommodations are generally comfortable and more than adequate (the best in the region), but are of necessity often 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.

Our 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 non-hummingbirds 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 creature. Thank you for your understanding!

August 25, Day 1: Arrival to the Coastal City of Guayaquil. Participants are encouraged to fly to Guayaquil on either American Airlines from Miami or United/Copa from Houston, which are scheduled to arrive in the evening.
or LATAM from New York, which arrives in the early morning. Upon arrival at Guayaquil’s Joaquín de Olmedo International Airport (airport code GYE), you will be met and transferred to our hotel. Please note that your departure on Day 2 is fairly early. If you feel you need time to acclimate to the time zone or to avoid complications with baggage, you may want to arrive a day early. Upon request the VENT office will be happy to assist with early arrival hotel and airport transfer arrangements.

NIGHT: Hotel Continental, Guayaquil

August 26, Day 2: Morning Departure from Guayaquil; Drive towards the Andean City of Cuenca; Remainder of the Day Birding at El Cajas National Park. Today, after an early breakfast, we initiate our journey with a drive towards the charming Andean city and Ecuador’s cultural capital, Cuenca; its colonial center was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1999. We will first head south through coastal wetlands and semi-humid and humid zones before heading east as we climb the southwestern slope of the Andes to our first day’s destination. We reach upper temperate and páramo zone habitats in the highlands as we approach El Cajas National Park, where we will stop to work shrubby second growth, scrub and humid temperate woodland and forest edge from just about timberline to Polylepis woodland and páramo shrub and grassland in search of our first Andean hummingbird/tanager species. There are no nectar or fruit feeding stations in this area—but fear-not, we will be duly spoiled by them a bit later on—and we will check out flowering shrubs and trees here in hopes of spotting several specialties. Surprisingly, or not so, there are quite a few pretty fantastic species to be found here, and we will work at finding several of them: Sparkling Violetear; Mountain Velvetbreast; Black-tailed & Green-tailed trainbearers; Tyrian Metaltail; the range-restricted and endemic Violet-throated Metaltail; Collared Inca; Buff-winged Starfrontlet; Shining Sunbeam; the relatively huge (for a hummingbird!) Great Saphirewing; Scarlet-bellied, Hooded and Buff-breasted mountain-tanagers; and Blue-and-black Tanager among them. As we climb a bit more in elevation into the páramo zone, we will look for the enigmatic Ecuadorian Hillstar at its favored food-source—the Chuquiragua shrub—and the tiny-billed Blue-mantled Thornbill (which often feeds on the ground!) along with the rare and local tanager-ally—Tit-like Dacnis. This should turn out to be a really fun-packed...
day, and happily, we will spend the night in this same area, with plans to settle in and do some leisure birding around the grounds of our lodge.

NIGHT: Dos Chorreras, El Cajas National Park

**August 27, Day 3: Morning at El Cajas’s Llaviucu Lagoon Area; Afternoon Drive South and Then Eastward to the Andean Foothills at Zamora.** After a hearty breakfast, we will pack up and first head a bit downslope to the Llaviucu sector of El Cajas National Park. Depending on how Day 2 went, we may still want to try for Violet-throated Metaltail along with some other species *en route*. Llaviucu is a lovely area that holds many exciting treasures and, of course, we will be hummer-hunting as one of our main goals, with the chance of finding species like Purple-throated Sunangel, Rainbow Starfrontlet, Sapphire-vented Puffleg, White-bellied Woodstar, Collared Inca, Shining Sunbeam and with some luck, the stunning Purple-backed Thornbill (the shortest-billed hummingbird of all!). Among possible high-Andean tanagers, we’ll look for the beautiful Grass-green. Please be warned that several other species may turn up as we walk through shubby areas, woodland, lake-side marshland and the lake itself: Andean Guan, Masked Trogon, Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan and a whole selection of smaller highland species are plentiful here, not to mention some high-elevation water fowl.

By late morning we will depart southward through the highlands towards the city of Loja and then due east as we descend the eastern Andean slope to the quaint town of Zamora, nestled in the humid foothills of the western Amazon Basin. We will make a few key stops along the way in a variety of habitats—we will look for Giant Hummingbird, for example, as we travel through the arid Oña Valley—enjoying a field-lunch and more exciting birding before we reach our lodge by mid-to-late afternoon. We will then settle into our rooms with time to check out this site’s impressive nectar and fruit feeders along with some productive *Verbena* shrubs.

NIGHT: Copalinga Lodge, Zamora
August 28-29, Days 4-5: Two Days at Copalinga Lodge and the Bombuscaro Entrance Area of Podocarpus National Park. This pleasant lodge is set within the mega-rich Amazonian foothills and is home to a spectacular variety of birds, including, of course, a nice selection of hummingbirds and tanagers! We will spend much of our days enjoying the feeding station set up just outside the open-air dining area, which will surely be entertaining; we will visit the Bombuscaro entrance area of Podocarpus National Park, located just a short distance up the road; and check out flowering trees and shrubs in the area, including *Heliconia*, for the chance of finding White-tipped and maybe even Buff-tailed sicklebills. Other hummingbird species we will be aiming for include Pale-tailed Barbthroat; Green, Great-billed & Gray-chinned hermits; Green-fronted Lancebill; Wire-crested Thortail; Spangled Coquette; Brown & Lesser violetears; Fawn-breasted, Violet-fronted & Black-throated brilliants; Golden-tailed Sapphire; Many-spotted Hummingbird; Glittering-throated Emerald; Fork-tailed Woodnymph; Black-eared Fairy; Blue-tailed Emerald; Violet-headed Hummingbird; and, with luck, Peruvian (Booted) Racket-tail, Equatorial Piedtail, and Napo Sabrewing. This is a particularly rich tanager region and we’ll watch plantain feeders and forest edge for Magpie, Silver-beaked, White-shouldered, Guira, Paradise, Golden-eared, Orange-eared, Bay-headed, Green-and-gold, Spotted & Blue-necked tanagers among the many possibilities. Alas, our eyes may get diverted to many other amazing birds—think White-breasted Parakeet, Amazonian Umbrellabird, and Andean Cock-of-the-rock—along with several manakins (i.e., White-crowned, Blue-rumped & Striped), just to mention a very few.

NIGHTS: Copalinga Lodge, Zamora

August 30, Day 6: Morning at Copalinga; Then Drive Back to the Andean Highlands and South to Tapichalaca Reserve. After some morning hummingbirds, tanagers and whatever else shows up, we will pack up and head off to retrace our steps back upslope to the highland city of Loja and then due south (yes, farther south!) to the Jocotoco Foundation’s Tapichalaca Reserve, with a few stops *en route* to take in the ever-changing scenery, allow us to stretch our legs, and maybe spot more hummers and tanagers. We will be looking out for Andean Emerald, Glowing & Greenish pufflegs, Purple-collared Woodstar, Viridian & Tyrian metaltails, perhaps Neblina Metal tail, Rainbow-bearded Thornbill, and Long-tailed Sylph as we pass through a variety of distinctive habitats. We’ll also keep our “eyes peeled,” as we advance along this ever changing transect, for mixed foraging.
flocks and their attendant tanagers. We will reach our lodge, Casa Simpson, in the afternoon, in time to enjoy some hummingbird feeder action.

NIGHT: Casa Simpson, Tapichalaca Reserve

August 31, Day 7: All-day at Tapichalaca Reserve. Today, we will enjoy the active nectar feeders set up around our lodge, and additionally, we will offer an optional hike along a mountain trail to the famous Jocotoco Antpitta feeding station; this special antpitta (aren’t they all?) was discovered not too many years ago, generating much excitement in ornithological circles and in the birding world in general. This walk will provide the opportunity to see a variety of high-Andean bird species as we come across a mixed foraging flock and listen for a number of understory skulkers. Back at the feeders, we will look forward to several high-elevation hummingbirds—including Tawny-bellied Hermit, Speckled Hummingbird, Mountain Velvetbreast, Great Saphirewing, Collared Inca, Buff-winged Starfrontlet, Chestnut-breasted Coronet, Amethyst-throated & Flame-throated sunangels, Rufous-capped Thornbill, and Long-tailed Sylph—and around the lodge, we will watch for mixed foraging flocks and a variety of temperate-zone tanagers—Blue-and black; Red-hooded & Golden-crowned tanagers; Scarlet-bellied, Lacrimose & Hooded mountain-tanagers. In the afternoon, we will head to lower elevations around the villages of Valladolid and Palanda, an area that harbors many upper Amazonian and Marañón valley species of interest, which could include Silver-backed, Straw-backed & Buff-bellied tanagers.
September 1, Day 8: Drive Northward to Buenaventura Lodge. This morning we will depart from Tapichalaca Reserve after breakfast and drive northwestward to the Buenaventura Reserve, which is set in a remnant stretch of rich humid foothill cloud-forest not far from the quaint town of Piñas in the El Oro Province. This is an area of high endemism with an impressive number of unique species, many tied to the world’s richest Chocó endemic bioregion. En route we may make a few roadside stops before reaching the upper section of the reserve, where we will check out some active nectar feeders before working our way to Umbrellabird Lodge in time to do some exciting birding and check out the incredibly active nectar feeders—there is a whole lot to see here!

NIGHT: Umbrellabird Lodge, Buenaventura Reserve
September 2-3, Days 9-10: Two Days at Buenaventura Lodge. We will enjoy two full days at this incredibly birdy reserve. Among the possible hummingbirds are White-whiskered, Baron’s & Stripe-throated hermits; White-tipped Sicklebill; White-necked Jacobin; Brown Violetear; Green Thorntail; Emerald-bellied Woodnymph; Violet-bellied Hummingbird; Rufous-tailed Hummingbird; Amazilia Hummingbird; Andean Emerald; Ecuadorian (White-vented) Plumeleteer; Purple-bibbed Whitetip; Green-crowned Brilliant; Fawn-breasted Brilliant; Brown Inca; Velvet-purple Coronet; Violet-tailed Sylph; Wedge-billed Hummingbird; Purple-crowned Fairy; and Long-billed Starthroat. Tanagers can also be numerous here and we will watch for Blue & Yellow-tufted dacnises; Fawn-breasted, Guira, Rufous-throated, Golden, Silver-throated, Flame-faced, Golden-naped, Beryl-spangled, Blue-necked, Speckled, Bay-headed, & Swallow tanagers; Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager; and so on! We will also offer optional walks in hopes of locating an impressive number of specialties including Gray-backed Hawk, Rufous-headed Chachalaca, the endemic El Oro Parakeet, Bronze-winged Parrot, Red-masked, & Gray-cheeked parakeets, Chocó & Chestnut-mandibled toucans, Long-wattled Umbrellabird, Club-winged Manakin and a plethora of flycatchers, antbirds and furnariids.
September 4, Day 11: Morning at Buenaventura Lodge; Drive to Guayaquil. We will have a final morning to enjoy the hummingbirds, tanagers and other forest denizens in this wonderful reserve. After lunch we will pack up and drive back to Guayaquil—backtracking part of the way we traveled on Day 2—arriving in the afternoon at our hotel in time for some R&R, before our final checklist session and farewell dinner. Some of our participants may depart tonight.

NIGHT: Hotel Continental, Guayaquil

September 5, Day 12: Departure Day; Optional Morning of Birding at Cerro Blanco Reserve. Transfers will be provided to Guayaquil’s Joaquín de Olmedo International Airport in time for all morning departures. For those participants scheduled for an evening flight, an optional morning birding trip will be offered to the nearby Cerro Blanco Reserve.

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 **$3,595** per person in double occupancy from Guayaquil. This includes all meals from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 12, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, ground transportation during the tour, gratuities, and guide services provided by the tour leader. It does not include airfare from your home to Guayaquil 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 **$495**. 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 initial deposit for this tour is **$500** per person. If you would like to pay your initial 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. If you prefer to pay the initial deposit using a credit card, your deposit must be made with MasterCard, Visa, or American Express at the time of registration. The VENT registration form (available from the VENT office or by download at [www.ventbird.com](http://www.ventbird.com)) should then be completed, signed, and returned to the VENT office.

**PAYMENTS:** Initial tour deposits may be made by MasterCard, Visa, American Express, check, money order, or bank transfer. All other tour payments, including second deposits, interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc., must be made by check, money order, or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). Full payment of the tour fee is due 120 days prior to the tour departure date.

**CANCELLATION POLICY:** Cancellation penalties and refunds are based on the following schedule: if cancellation is made 120 days or more before the tour departure date, a cancellation fee of **$250** 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 fewer than 120 days before departure date, no refund is available. This policy and fee schedule also applies to pre-trip and post-trip extensions. *We strongly recommend the purchase of trip cancellation insurance for your protection.*

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*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.

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 fees and restrictions.

**CLIMATE:** During the tour we will experience the dry or ‘local summer’ season in the southwestern lowlands with, at most, some mist in certain areas; on the more humid western Andean slope, especially at Buenaventura, we may experience some fog and perhaps a little rain. The east slope will present wetter conditions, with rain being present mostly in short intervals and often mostly at night. Highland areas throughout more humid areas in the Andes (e.g., Tapichalaca Reserve) may present rain. The coastal lowlands will be cooler in the mornings (low 70s) and will warm up quickly by mid-morning, possibly reaching the 90s by midday. In the foothills, temperatures will range mostly in the upper 70s by day and upper 50s at night. However, at higher elevations (especially at El Cajas National Park) the temperatures can fall to 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 at higher elevations. 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 footwear for the field should at the very least be rated “water resistant,” as in areas with damp climate, 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 (especially in the morning) 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 sturdy umbrella or rain jacket is essential.

**ADDITIONAL DRESS CONSIDERATIONS:** Bring a warm jacket or sweater, layers, and thermal underwear for the cool high-mountain locations; clothing that you can wash yourself and which dries quickly is preferred. Layering is a good idea; you can begin the morning with a thermal shirt, outer shirt, sweater and jacket if need be, and then shed layers as the day warms up. We will be spending much time leisurely studying hummingbirds at nectar feeders and nearby flowering shrubs and trees, but optional walks will be offered on most days, mostly along forest trails and along gravel roads, and for this we strongly suggest sturdy waterproof hiking boots. You may find lightweight sneakers, loafers or sandals useful for wear around our different lodges.

**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 (Note: traveler's checks are NOT recommended in Ecuador). ATMs are available in many locations. MasterCard and Visa are generally accepted at larger businesses.

**DOCUMENTS:** A passport valid for at least six months beyond your planned departure from Ecuador is required. Visa are not required for United States citizens. You will be issued a tourist card to be completed on board your flight to Guayaquil. 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. Topsyn gel or alcohol is useful for reducing irritation from bites and stings, as is cortisone cream. Your leaders 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.

**Zika Virus** – This tour visits an area or areas where Zika virus is known to occur or could occur; however, we believe the risk to VENT travelers is extremely low. The Zika virus is a mosquito-borne infection transmitted by mosquitoes of the genus *Aedes,* and is related to other tropical diseases: Dengue, Yellow Fever, and West Nile virus. This type of mosquito bites during the day and typically is found in areas of dense human habitation where sanitation and drainage of standing water is poor. Zika virus presents the greatest threat to women of childbearing age. For others who become infected, the effects are usually nonexistent to mild, although some people exhibit
symptoms such as mild fever, rashes, joint and muscle pain, and red eyes. If infected, the best treatment is plenty of rest, nourishment, and other supportive care. There is no vaccine to prevent or cure the disease; however, Zika virus is not contagious and, therefore, cannot be transmitted through air, food, or water.

Your safety is our highest priority, and we want to emphasize that the best way to avoid Zika virus (and other mosquito-borne diseases), is to take appropriate precautions in avoiding mosquito bites:

- Stay informed about the Zika virus
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants, socks and shoes, and a hat*
- Use effective insect repellents (those containing DEET) and reapply regularly

*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.

For the latest information and news about Zika virus, please visit the website of the CDC:

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-INF0 (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.

**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 Service - Available in the public areas of the lodges
- Laundry Service - Available throughout the tour

**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:**


**Birds, Additional Reading:**


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.


**Other:**


**TIPPING:** Tipping (restaurant staff, porters, drivers, local guides) is included on VENT tours. However, if you feel one or both of your VENT leaders or any local guides have given you exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that tips are not expected and are entirely optional. Tips should be given directly to your tour leader; they should not be sent to the VENT office.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc. (VENT) and/or its Agents act only as agents for the passenger in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. VENT and its agents can accept no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger, as tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. The right is reserved to substitute hotels of similar category for those indicated and to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary or caused by changes in air schedules. The right is reserved to cancel any tour prior to departure, in which case full refund will constitute full settlement to the passenger. The right is reserved to substitute leaders on any tour. When this is necessary, notification will be given to tour members. No refund will be made for any unused portion of the tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. The prices of the tours are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on October 12, 2018 and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change therein. The right is reserved to decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of any tour. Baggage is at owner’s risk entirely. The airlines concerned and their agents and affiliates are not to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time passengers are not on board their aircraft. The passenger ticket in use by said airlines, when issued, shall constitute the sole contract between the airlines and the purchaser of these tickets and/or passenger. The services of any I.A.T.A.N. carrier may be used for these tours, and transportation within the United States may be provided by any member carrier of the Airline Reporting Corporation.