

ITINERARY
COLOMBIA: SANTA MARTA ESCAPE
February 24 - March 4, 2018



The Sapphire-bellied Hummingbird inhabits mangrove forests in a small area of the northern Caribbean coast of Colombia. Recent Field Guides groups have been able to get good looks at this very rare hummer. Photograph by guide Richard Webster.

We include here information for those interested in the 2018 Field Guides Colombia: Santa Marta Escape tour:

- a general introduction to the tour
- a description of the birding areas to be visited on the tour
- an abbreviated daily itinerary with some indication of the nature of each day's birding outings

Those who register for the tour will be sent this additional material:

- a detailed information bulletin with important logistical information and answers to questions regarding accommodations, air arrangements, clothing, currency, customs and immigration, documents, health precautions, and personal items
- a list of the birds seen on a recent tour (may be downloaded from our website)
- a reference list
- a Field Guides checklist for preparing for and keeping track of the birds we see on the tour
- after the conclusion of the tour, a list of birds seen on the tour

The Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta is reputed to be the tallest mountain close to the ocean and to have the highest concentration of continental range-restricted birds in the world. How do you measure this stuff? In any case, we will accept the claims as true because they are good for business, and we will tell you about the great new lodge at ProAves' Reserva Natural de las Aves ("RNA") El Dorado that makes visiting this famous birding spot so much easier than Field Guides' first planned tour to this area in 1992. Rooms with private facilities have a view of the Caribbean and the towns far below, and are just a minute through the lovely gardens from the main lodge. And if you are looking for avian gold, El Dorado is the place. Located at 6300 feet (1900m), the lodge is near the center of the reserve, which extends from 3000 to 8700 feet (900 to 2600m) on the San Lorenzo ridge, an outlying ridge above the town of Santa Marta. All but two

(Santa Marta Wren, Blue-bearded Helmetcrest) of the Sierra's endemics occur on this ridge, although one is exceptionally rare (here and in the main Sierra: the endangered Santa Marta Sabrewing) and another is rare and erratic (Black-backed Thornbill). We have a good chance for the remainder, although species such as woodstars and antpittas present their own challenges.

We would like to take you to look for the Santa Marta Wren, Blue-bearded Helmetcrest, and other high-elevation inhabitants of the Sierra, but there is no usable road into the central massif. It is also rough country, and not just topographically. For centuries the Sierra Nevada has been a place for people to hide from the law, and that has not changed. Fortunately, at our El Dorado, the road from Santa Marta ends in a series of communication towers and an army camp, and the San Lorenzo ridge is a safe area. As for the main Sierra, the best we can do is hope for a clear morning from the ridge top so that we can photograph the snowy peaks that rise to over 19,000 feet (5700m). As for the security situation on the rest of the tour, these are parts of Colombia that have been on the mend for years, and we will see the hustle and bustle of a resurgent Colombia. Our local agent has resident employees in the area and extensive experience bringing groups here, and we will get their reports should there be any alterations based on changes in the security situation.

"Endemics" does not just mean little, brown jobs (LBJs). The fifteen or so species that have long been considered endemic are not only distinct, but often striking. White-tailed Starfrontlet is bold (both sexes, different as they are). Santa Marta Warbler (Vulnerable) is really different. Santa Marta Parakeet (Endangered), Santa Marta (Black-cheeked) Mountain-Tanager, and Yellow-crowned Redstart (Whitstart) are variations on a theme, but they are fine themes. Santa Marta Bush-Tyrant (Endangered) and Santa Marta Antpitta (Vulnerable) aren't quetzals, but they are OK. Brown-rumped and Santa Marta tapaculos are emphatically LGJs (G = gray), but you can't have everything. But hey, the Rusty-headed Spinetail (Vulnerable) and Santa Marta Brush-Finch are nice. And the distinctive genus of blossomcrowns has just been split: Santa Marta Blossomcrown (Vulnerable) is an understory hummingbird that requires some sharp eyes to find, even in the planted gardens that are our best chance.



As its name suggests, the Santa Marta Antpitta is found only in the Santa Marta area. This is one of the species that has become habituated to come to feeding stations, allowing good looks at a normally shy bird. Photograph by guide Richard Webster.

The factoid about "continental range-restricted birds" has the qualifier of "continental"; many oceanic islands have more endemics. Of course the Sierra Nevada is an island of a different kind, a biogeographic island on land, hence the endemism, with over 60 named avian taxa. The Sierra de Perija, the somewhat depauperate northern extent of the main Andes and itself a center of endemism, is a mere 35 miles (60 kilometers) from the southwestern flank of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, and the full richness of the eastern Andes is a further 140 miles (200 km) away. While the lowlands are certainly a barrier to avian dispersal, much remains to be understood about the birds of the Sierra. For instance, is the lack of bush-tanagers (along with the limited selection of *Tangara* tanagers) because these species are poor colonizers, or because despite the lushness of the Sierra's forests, not enough tanager essentials (fruiting trees, insects) have also colonized this continental island?

A visit to the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta will also allow us to play taxonomist. While we will look hardest for the endemic species accepted by all, we will look for everything on the mountain because we are birders who enjoy seeing as much as possible. In the process we will see montane taxa that range from being indistinguishable from populations in the Andes to those considered endemic species by all authorities. In between are some subspecies that seem particularly intriguing, differing in appearance and voice, such as Masked Trogon and Montane Woodcreeper, while in others the differences are noticeable but seem "cosmetic," such as Tyrian Metaltail, Emerald Toucanet, and extra-cinnamon Cinnamon Flycatcher. Other great tropical birds with local representatives include Sickle-winged Guan, Strong-billed Woodcreeper, and Swallow Tanager. In one intriguing case, two subspecies of Gray-breasted Wood-Wren occur, one above the other on the slopes; surely one must be a separate species (as proposed in a recent paper, and widely accepted as Santa Marta Wood-Wren in 2016), but should it be both? These are judgment calls, about which there will be many opinions; we will point out every bird we can find, and leave with not just a high concentration of checkmarks in front of range-restricted taxa, but an appreciation for the island biology of the Sierra.

While most of the region's birds had been found by the time of W. E. Clyde Todd & M. A. Carriker Jr.'s classic *The Birds of the Santa Marta Region of Colombia: A Study in Altitudinal Distribution* (1922), the age of discovery is not over. An undescribed species of screech-owl has been found around our lodge; it is most likely the mystery screech-owl on which Todd and Carriker reported on the basis of one distinctive specimen, but now its voice and appearance are well known, and we will try to see it. Niels Krabbe's recent studies, published in 2008, demonstrated that what had been treated as a subspecies of Ruddy Foliage-gleaner is a distinct species, Santa Marta Foliage-gleaner, and further genetic studies have merged it into *Clibanornis* with Canebrake Groundcreeper; we will search for this skulking endemic. A 2012 study elevated the Santa Marta (Long-tailed) Antbird to species status; this endemic is unusual for the group in inhabiting lower-elevation bracken rather than bamboo.

The affinities of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta are not just with the Andes to the south, but also with the cordillera of Venezuela. Some species also seen in the Venezuelan ranges are Band-tailed Guan, the stunning White-tipped Quetzal, Groove-billed Toucanet, Rusty-breasted Antpitta (nominate), Venezuelan (Paltry/Specious) Tyrannulet (scarce here), Golden-breasted Fruiteater (also in the northwestern Andes), Yellow-legged and Black-hooded thrushes, and Black-headed Tanager. Many of these are characteristic of moist, not wet, forests.

The habitats of the Sierra are a complicated mix of dry and wet, depending on rainfall distributed in relation to exposure to moist winds. The upper parts of the San Lorenzo ridge catch the clouds and support wet forest, but lower down, and generally to the north and east, many areas are drier. As you would expect, endemism decreases at lower elevations, but the semi-deciduous forests at lower elevations do support some local and special birds, including Military Macaw (we need a lucky flyover, but they are around; Vulnerable), Coppery Emerald (an erratic altitudinal migrant), Black-backed Antshrike, Pale-eyed Pygmy-Tyrant, Rosy Thrush-Tanager (tough), and the gorgeous Golden-winged Sparrow. Other birds in these areas include Steely-vented Hummingbird, White-vented Plumeleteer, White-bearded Manakin, Golden-fronted Greenlet, Long-billed Gnatwren, and Rufous-capped Warbler. More mesic areas of the lowlands and lower slopes support a variety of classic tropical species, including King Vulture, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, Keel-billed Toucan, Collared Aracari, Crimson-crested Woodpecker, Boat-billed Flycatcher, Rufous-breasted and Rufous-and-white (great voice) wrens, and Crimson-backed Tanager. These lower slopes have suffered more than a century of abuse, and birds that have retreated to remote patches include a mystery tinamou (a Red-legged type) and the critically endangered Blue-billed Curassow; nor do we expect to see Crested Guans, which were seen by Carriker a century ago at a rate of 40-50 in a "half-day's tramp through the woods."



The Scarlet-fronted Parakeet is one of 11 parrot species we may encounter. Photograph by guide Cory Gregory.

About the Physical Requirements & Pace: There are no major difficulties with this tour; it is the easiest one we offer to Colombia. Lowland birding is on the level, plus or minus a steep bank or two, and mountain birding is primarily along a rocky, at times steep, track (less often on well-maintained trails, rarely a short bushwhack) (at elevations up to 8700 feet or 2600m). Distances walked will be short; the biggest requirement is an ability to be on your feet for substantial periods of time (like all morning) on uneven ground like jeep tracks. We will be energetic about time in the field, with early (at least two very early, 4:30 a.m.) starts to catch the activity and, in the lowlands, beat the heat. There will be siesta time in the mountains (where afternoons are often gloomy and slow), and nap time in the vehicle in the lowlands. Afternoons are difficult birding in most areas, and our approach will be more relaxed than in the morning with optional afternoon birding activities. While birding, bathrooms will be bushes. You will also need to be flexible about getting in and out of, and bouncing along in, old 4WD vehicles our entire time in the mountains; it is a rough, 90-minute crawl up to the top of the ridge.



Guide Cory Gregory points out a bird near El Dorado Lodge on a recent Field Guides tour. Photograph by participant Chuck Holliday.

The reserve lodge is new, simple, and small, with private facilities; singles cannot be guaranteed (and are unlikely); electricity can be intermittent. The hotel in Riohacha has cold-water showers (one night; warm, lowland climate), and may be noisy (think earplugs). The hotel in Barranquilla is good. In many ways it is like visits to neighboring countries 15 or 20 years ago, which were perfectly acceptable traveling and great birding.

The food is good, and with only a few brief exceptions, during all our tours individual health has been good. At the two lodges the menu will be fixed. At restaurants in the larger cities and hotels, the usual choices are available, with an emphasis on good seafood. Breakfasts are a weak point but sufficient; early breakfasts are one of the last things to evolve in the ecotourism world; restaurant lunches and dinners are often huge. Overall, the foregoing is overly negative; there is plenty of tasty food over this trip, and you won't lose weight unless you work at it.

The focus will be on the endemics and specialties, but we will generally look at the widespread species

because we like looking at birds, and widespread species are often what is in front of us. While many will take this tour because of the allure of "Santa Marta X, Y, & Z" and an opportunity to sample Colombia, this trip is several things, including a good introduction to the birds of South America (most Neotropical families are well represented in the region) and a species-packed escape from a week of work and the mud or snow of winter, and there is no requirement other than an enthusiasm for birding and the out-of-doors.

Driving time is modest on the scale of Colombia tours (this is a big country!), and even on travel days there is more birding than driving. Transportation on the rocky road up the San Lorenzo ridge is in 4WD vehicles that have seen better days; expect functionality, not great comfort. And if road conditions are even rougher than when we first approached the area in the mid-1980s, the golden lining (remember, this is El Dorado) is that it discourages the residents of Santa Marta from bipping up the mountain any time they feel like a picnic in the cool mountains.

About the Birding Areas & Related Subjects

Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta—We have already had two pages on the subject, so there won't be too much more. To set the scene a little more, the evergreen forests on the San Lorenzo ridge can be divided, very roughly, into "lower" and "upper," and the lodge is near the upper end of "lower." We will bird several times on foot by walking along the road near the lodge and on its trails, but also go by vehicle a little lower to get even more into the "lower" zone. Many endemics and specialties are only to be found one to two thousand feet higher, and we will drive up to the upper ridgeline at least once, probably twice, and bird these higher elevations, where the forest is more stunted and the bamboo even thicker. While the reserve and adjacent areas are hardly pristine, many areas are in fine shape and the forest intact for long stretches, making the scene for birding good for both quality and ambience. And the scattered clearings and disturbed areas are not

without birding benefits, ranging from higher densities of fruiting shrubs to the types of habitats that a number of species prefer, such as the Santa Marta Antpitta, one of those "thicket" (not forest) antpittas. In 2016, two fires burned about 30% of the area that we normally bird on top of the ridge (and none of the lower areas). We still saw almost all the birds, and most also occur in smaller numbers in areas a little lower. We don't know what the long-term changes will be from the fire or a major hurricane that took a few trees in 2016, but believe that the birding will continue to be more than good enough for an exciting visit.



Parque Nacional Isla Salamanca: Coastal Habitats—Isla Salamanca is a barrier island separating the Caribbean from a huge lagoon, Ciénega Grande. It stretches from near Santa Marta to the mouth of the Rio Magdalena near Barranquilla. We will try to get off the busy two-lane highway wherever possible to sample a variety of habitats including saltwater ponds, freshwater marshes, mangroves, scrubby woodland, and open fields. At one of the park stations, we will poke as far as we can into the mangroves, where a boardwalk has now been partially reconstructed. If we can hit one or two of the right little flocks, we could find a prize like Chestnut Piculet or Golden-green Woodpecker (*xanthochlorus*), and other birds here include Common Black-Hawk, Straight-billed Woodcreeper, Black-crested Antshrike, Northern Scrub-Flycatcher, and Bicolored Conebill. Another hoped for species is the Critically Endangered Sapphire-bellied Hummingbird, known only from a couple of specimens from the mangroves of this area, and now lost for more than a century; on several occasions, we, and others, have recently seen birds that appear to be this species, and not the nearby, and similar, Sapphire-throated Hummingbird.

Freshwater marshes on the inland side of the road have Lesser Yellow-headed Vultures, Snail Kites and Limpkins (must be apple snails galore out there), a variety of widespread herons and migrant ducks and shorebirds, Purple Gallinule, five species of kingfisher, Yellow-chinned Spinetail, and Pied Water-Tyrant. Open areas with scattered trees host a variety of widespread species, such as Spot-breasted Woodpecker, Cattle Tyrant, and Bicolored Wren. Along with widespread icterids like Yellow-hooded Blackbird and Carib and Great-tailed grackles, we could find Bronzed Cowbird, the only population in South America (*armenti*; "Bronze-brown" Cowbird).

Guajira Peninsula: Coastal Desert—Along the shores of the Caribbean away from the moist lower slopes of the Sierra, little rain falls and a coastal desert is to be found. The main peninsula still has some 'wild west' elements, but it is feasible to travel as far east as the placid (but noisy!) town of Riohacha. There we will bird along the road to Parque Nacional Los Flamencos, where in the coastal lagoon we may well see the flamencos (flamingos), although they are most often a distant shimmer of pink. At closer range will be an assortment of waterbirds, potentially including Reddish Egret (white and dark morphs), Magnificent Frigatebird, a few migrant shorebirds, and a half dozen species of gull and tern. But we will only check the lagoon after we have invested substantial time in the dry scrub, where regional endemics (also occurring in northern Venezuela) are Rufous-vented Chachalaca (potentially noisy, but furtive), Bare-eyed Pigeon, Buffy Hummingbird, Russet-throated Puffbird, Chestnut Piculet (scarce), White-whiskered Spinetail (lovely and fairly common), Slender-billed Inezia, Glaucous Tanager (scarce), Orinocan Saltator, and Vermilion Cardinal (uncommon; threatened by the pet trade). We may also see Blue-crowned Parakeet, Green-rumped Parrotlet, Red-billed Emerald (*nitens*), Pale-legged Hornero, Black-crested Antshrike, (Northern) White-fringed Antwren (*intermedia*), Pale-tipped Inezia, the widespread Vermilion and Brown-crested flycatchers, Tropical Mockingbird, Tropical Gnatcatcher (*plumbiceps*), Scrub Greenlet, Pileated Finch, Grayish Saltator, Yellow Oriole, and Trinidad Euphonia.

North American Migrants—The primary reason to visit Colombia is not to see North American migrants, but it can be a fun and interesting aspect of the trip. While the variety and numbers are not like parts of Central America, Colombia is still the home to a fair variety. In addition to the waterbirds at the coastal lagoons and marshes, some of the more regular species include Great Crested Flycatcher, Gray Kingbird, Red-eyed Vireo, Tennessee, Yellow, Blackburnian, Prothonotary (arriving in August), and Black-and-white warblers, Northern Waterthrush, American Redstart, Summer Tanager, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. North Americans tend to think of them as "our birds" because they breed around us, but most

of them actually spend more time on the wintering grounds than the breeding grounds. Most species have a distinct winter ecology, for instance Prothonotary Warblers love mangroves, Yellow Warblers occur in open habitats in the lowlands, and Blackburnians prefer montane forests above 5000 feet (1500m).

Mammals—Mammals are scarce on this trip. If we are lucky, we could see Night Monkeys in the evening near the El Dorado lodge, and Venezuelan Red Howler Monkeys are often heard in the nearby forests. There is doubtless some species of squirrel in our future, and we will probably be lucky with something else (a Crab-eating Raccoon in the mangroves? a Crab-eating Fox in the garden?), but fur will be in short supply in comparison with feathers.

Itinerary for Colombia: Santa Marta Escape

Day 1, Sat, 24 Feb. Arrival in Barranquilla. This tour is scheduled around a direct flight from Miami to Barranquilla. Other flight schedules could involve an arrival in Bogota or Panama, with a flight to Barranquilla. Some may wish to arrive a day early, either to rest up or to tour the historic city of Barranquilla. If several coming early are interested, we can offer a half-day of birding on Isla Salamanca; check with the office. Transfers will be scheduled from the airport to our hotel in Barranquilla.

Day 2, Sun, 25 Feb. Barranquilla to Riohacha. We will start the morning with a dawn search for Chestnut-winged Chachalaca, and continue after breakfast with an exploration of the mangrove habitats of Parque Nacional Isla Salamanca en route to Santa Marta. After lunch we will continue eastward to Riohacha, stopping in the late afternoon for a first taste of birding in the coastal desert and perhaps a quick check of the lagoon. This is the most rushed day of the trip, and the most travel time, but altering our allocation of time is not a better bet. Night in Riohacha.

Day 3, Mon, 26 Feb. Riohacha to Minca. We will take advantage of the calmer and cooler early-morning hours (a.k.a. an early start) to explore scrub and woodland patches near Camarones, aided by a guide from the local community. After lunch on the beach we will drive west along the coastal hills, watching the transition to steadily wetter habitats. Late afternoon will find us back near Santa Marta, where we will climb a short ways into the foothills to our comfortable lodge (and its great hummingbird feeders) at the edge of the small town of Minca (2000 feet; 600m). Night at Hotel Minca.

Day 4, Tue, 27 Feb. Minca to RNA El Dorado and El Dorado Lodge. We will be up early for breakfast and a bird walk in the nearby woodland. Later we will venture by 4WD vehicle upslope a short ways, returning for lunch at our hotel, and then in the afternoon drive the last two hours to the lodge, making a few stops along the way. Night at El Dorado Lodge.

Days 5-7, Wed-Fri, 28 Feb - 2 Mar. El Dorado Lodge and San Lorenzo ridge. Our general routine will be an early (pre-dawn, perhaps 4:30 a.m., on the one or two mornings we go to the top of the ridge) departure; a simple picnic breakfast; a focused morning of birding; lunch at the lodge; a break after lunch; and more birding in the late afternoon, followed by happy hour and the list and dinner at the lodge. On at least one evening we will look for nightbirds.

There will also be plenty of time to enjoy the birds in the garden, where the photographic opportunities are excellent, as Crowned Woodnymphs (*colombica*) and Green Violetears throng the hummingbird feeders, rarer hummingbirds are realistic (White-tailed Starfrontlet,

Santa Marta Woodstar, and, exceptionally, Black-backed Thornbill), Blue-naped Chlorophonias and Black-capped Tanagers come to the fruit, and many gorgeous flowers are stationary targets. There are always a few Santa Marta Brush-Finches about, and the scraps behind the kitchen attract Sierra Nevada Brush-Finches (*basilicus*); the folks that live there can be expected to say that the Black-fronted Wood-Quail (Vulnerable) were there yesterday, and they undoubtedly



The lovely Santa Marta Brush-Finch is another specialty of northern Colombia. Photograph by guide Cory Gregory.

were! In 2014, 2015, and 2016 yesterday was today, and the Wood-Quail were even coming to a feeder at the corner of the lodge, but after several years of successful antpitta feeding, the local bird or pair had vanished (eaten by a predator?) in early 2015. In other words, it can be boom or bust in certain departments, but this is always a wonderful place. The lodge is in a small clearing and the forested road extends above and below, easy birding territory for those with more energy during breaks, and there are a couple of trails on which one or two quiet birders can surprise Lined Quail-Dove or Gray-throated Leaf-tosser. Nights at El Dorado Lodge.



*The Blue-naped Chlorophonia is a common and beautiful resident of the El Dorado Lodge gardens.
Photograph by guide Richard Webster.*

Day 8, Sat, 3 Mar. El Dorado Lodge to Barranquilla. Where we bird this morning will depend on what we are missing, but in general we will be working our way down the mountain, checking forest patches for the morning. Following lunch and a short break at the Hotel Minca, we will finally exit the mountains and drive west along the coast from Santa Marta to Barranquilla, arriving around 5:00 p.m., with time to re-pack for flights tomorrow. Our day will conclude with a farewell dinner at a pleasant restaurant near the hotel. Night in Barranquilla.

Day 9, Sun, 4 Mar. Barranquilla to Home. We will transfer to the airport after breakfast at the hotel.

About Your Guides

Richard Webster and his partner, Rose Ann Rowlett live between tours in a refurbished home in Portal, Arizona, where they reside at the sufferance of the true masters of the place, the Acorn Woodpeckers. Richard claims that his heart is in the American tropics, oscillating rapidly between the Andes and Amazonia, but his increasingly frequent and enthusiastic journeys to other continents betray his love for birds and birding everywhere. A much-neglected manuscript on southern California's birds is receiving more attention as he reduces his tour schedule. Richard has been guiding tours to Santa Marta yearly since 2010.

Tour participants comment frequently on Richard's wide-ranging knowledge of birds (toward which end he has burdened his sagging shelves with many more books, journals, and papers than he could ever read), and they appreciate his eager willingness to share that knowledge. He stays in shape by chasing away the cows, which are the cost of preferring open range that allows the deer and peccaries to roam freely in the absence of fences. Current preoccupations are still a re-re-re-recurring drought and playing with the trail camera that reveals the Gray Foxes, Black Bears, Bobcats, and Mountain Lions that traverse the yard overnight.

*“Our guide, **Richard Webster**, was outstanding, the birding was excellent, food and accommodations were good, the Santa Marta mountains were beautiful, and the other participants were pleasant companions.” J.S.,
Colombia: Santa Marta Escape*

Cory Gregory started learning birds on flashcards at the age of three, but it wasn't until the ripe age of ten that things started to get more serious. Since then he has traveled to Central and South America, Australia, and all 50 states to try to get his fill of birding (and it hasn't worked yet!).

Cory earned a B.S. in zoology in Michigan, where he also worked for Whitefish Point Bird Observatory for several seasons. He then ventured to Iowa State University, where he earned a M.S. studying Long-billed Curlews in Nebraska. As an avid shorebird ecologist, he has handled more than 2000 shorebirds of more than 30 species.

After finishing school, Cory worked for several organizations as a shorebird ecologist and guided on St. Paul Island in the Pribilofs of Alaska for the 2014 and 2015 seasons. It was on St. Paul that his dream of stumbling on a first North American record was finally fulfilled. Cory is currently based out of Missouri where, when not on tour, he pursues his interest in birds, butterflies, and dragonflies with abandon.

Cory has co-lead Field Guides groups to Arizona, Cape May, Texas, Peru, and Australia and has a busy and wide-ranging schedule coming up for 2017-18 --from the US and Canada to Mexico, Costa Rica, Panama, and Peru.

“Cory was a delight. He is making a fine guide. ... He is very agreeable, made sure that we all saw the bird in the scope, and was just a pleasure to be around. He also knows his birds, and calls.”
G. G. Costa Rica

Visit <http://fieldguides.com/guides> for the guide's complete tour schedules; just click on their photos.

Financial Information

FEE: \$4075 from Barranquilla

DEPOSIT: \$400 per person

FINAL PAYMENT DUE: October 27, 2017

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT (Optional): \$425 (*Singles at the El Dorado Lodge cannot be guaranteed.*)

LIMIT: 8

Other Things You Need to Know

TOUR MANAGER: The manager for this tour is Caroline Lewis. Caroline will be happy to assist you in preparing for the tour. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call her!

DOCUMENTS: A current passport valid six months beyond the date of your return is necessary for US citizens to enter Colombia. If you are not a US citizen, please check with the Colombian consulate nearest you for entry requirements. Information about consulates and entry requirements is generally available online or you can contact us and we will be happy to look this up for you. Passports should have an adequate number of blank pages for the entire journey. Some countries require a blank page for their stamp and as a precaution it is best to have one blank page per country you will visit or transit.

AIR ARRANGEMENTS: There are direct flights from Miami to Barranquilla and flights via Panama City or Bogota on other carriers. You may plan to arrive at any time on Day 1 and depart at any time on Day 9. Many may wish to arrive a day early to avoid travel delays from winter weather, etc.; if more than a few are interested, we can arrange a local birding excursion.

Field Guides is a full service travel agency and your tour manager will be happy to assist you with flights to join this tour. Field Guides does not charge a service fee for these services to clients booking a tour. However, we understand that tech-savvy clients often prefer to shop online or that you may wish to use mileage to purchase tickets. Regardless of which method you choose, your tour manager will be happy to provide assistance regarding ticket prices and schedules, along with rental cars and extra hotel nights as needed.

Please be sure to check with your tour manager prior to purchasing your ticket to make sure the flights you have chosen will work well with the tour itinerary and that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. Once purchased, most airline tickets are non-refundable and carry a penalty to change. Field Guides cannot be responsible for these fees.

Also, it is imperative that we receive a copy of your comprehensive flight itinerary—including any and all flights not covered in the tour fee—so that we may track you in the event of missed connections, delays, or other mishaps.

LUGGAGE: Please be aware that many airlines have recently modified their luggage policies and are charging additional fees for checked bags. Updates could easily occur before your departure, so you may wish to contact your airline to verify the policy. Additional charges for bags on any flights, whether these are covered by the tour fee or not, will be the client's responsibility.

TOUR INCLUSIONS/EXCLUSIONS: The tour fee is \$4075 for one person in double occupancy from Barranquilla. It includes all lodging from Day 1 through Day 8, all meals from dinner on Day 1 through breakfast on Day 9, all ground transportation, entrance fees, and the guide services of the tour leader. Tipping at group meals and for drivers, porters, and local guides is included in your tour fee and will be handled for the group by your Field Guides leader(s). However, if you would like to recognize your Field Guides leader(s) or any local guide(s) for exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that such tips are optional and not expected.

The above fee does not include your airfare to and from Colombia, airport taxes, visa fees, any checked or carry-on baggage charges imposed by the airlines, any alcoholic beverages, optional tips to local drivers, phone calls, laundry, or other items of a personal nature.

The **single supplement** for the tour is \$425. *Singles at the El Dorado Lodge cannot be guaranteed.* If you do not have a roommate but wish to share, we will try to pair you with a roommate from the tour; but if none is available, you will be billed for the single supplement. Our tour fees are based on double occupancy; one-half the cost of a double room is priced into the tour fee. The single supplement is calculated by taking the actual cost of a single room and subtracting one-half the cost of a double room (plus any applicable taxes).

TOUR LIMITS: Our limits are firm and we don't exceed the limit by one to accommodate a couple when only one space remains open. However, on occasion, we will send along a guide in training on a tour. In these cases, one seat in the van or bus will be taken by the guide in training. Our guides will have a rotation system within the vehicle so that clients share the inconvenience equally. We hope this minor inconvenience will be more than offset by the advantages of having another guide along.

TOUR REGISTRATION: To register for this tour, complete the Registration/Release and Indemnity form and return it with a **deposit of \$400** per person. If registering by phone, a deposit must be received within fourteen days, or the space will be released. **Full payment** of the tour fee is due 120 days prior to departure, or **by October 27, 2017. We will bill you for the final payment at either 120 days or when the tour has reached sufficient subscription to operate, whichever date comes later.** Since the cost of your trip insurance and airline tickets is generally non-refundable, please do not finalize these purchases until you have received final billing for the tour or have been advised that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate by your tour manager.

SMOKING: Almost all of our clients prefer a smoke-free environment. If you smoke, please be sensitive to the group and refrain from smoking at meals, in vehicles, and in proximity to the group on trails and elsewhere.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Refund of deposit and payment, less \$100 handling fee, will be made if cancellation is received up to 120 days before departure. If cancellation occurs between 119 and 70 days before the departure date, 50% of the tour fee is refundable. Thereafter, all deposits and payments are not refundable.

This policy only applies to payments made to Field Guides for tour fees (and any services included in those fees). Airline tickets not included in the tour fee and purchased separately often carry penalties for cancellation or change, or are sometimes totally non-refundable. Additionally, if you take out trip insurance the cost of the insurance is not refundable so it is best to purchase the policy just prior to making full payment for the tour or at the time you purchase airline tickets, depending upon the airlines restrictions.

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 in case of emergency another guide for the original one.

TRIP CANCELLATION & MEDICAL EMERGENCY INSURANCE: We strongly recommend you consider purchasing trip cancellation (including medical emergency) insurance to cover your investment in case of injury or illness to you or your family prior to or during a trip. Because we must remit early (and substantial) tour deposits to our suppliers, we cannot offer any refund when cancellation occurs within 70 days of departure, and only a partial refund from 70 to 119 days prior to departure (see CANCELLATION POLICY). In addition, the Department of State strongly urges Americans to consult with their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to confirm whether their policy applies overseas and if it will cover emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation. US medical insurance plans seldom cover health costs

incurred outside the United States unless supplemental coverage is purchased. Furthermore, US Medicare and Medicaid programs do not provide payment for medical services outside the United States.

When making a decision regarding health insurance, Americans should consider that many foreign doctors and hospitals require payment in cash prior to providing service and that a medical evacuation to the United States may cost well in excess of \$50,000. Uninsured travelers who require medical care overseas often face extreme difficulties. When consulting with your insurer prior to your trip, please ascertain whether payment will be made to the overseas healthcare provider or whether you will be reimbursed later for expenses that you incur.

US citizens will receive from us a brochure regarding optional tour cancellation/emergency medical insurance. Our agent, CSA, will insure for trip cancellation and interruption, medical coverage, travel delay, baggage loss and delay, 24-hour accident protection, and emergency medical transportation. If you purchase the insurance when making final payment for the tour, and cover all non-refundable parts of the trip (including any non-refundable flights), pre-existing conditions are covered. The CSA brochure includes a contact number; you may also purchase your CSA policy on-line by visiting our website at www.fieldguides.com/travelinsurance.htm and clicking the link to CSA. Please note, once the insurance is purchased it is non-refundable, so please check with your tour manager prior to making the purchase to assure the tour will operate as scheduled. Citizens of other countries are urged to consult their insurance broker.

RESPONSIBILITY: For and in consideration of the opportunity to participate in the tour, each tour participant and each parent or legal guardian of a tour participant who is under 18 agrees to release, indemnify, and hold harmless Field Guides Incorporated, its agents, servants, employees, shareholders, officers, directors, attorneys, and contractors as more fully set forth in the Release and Indemnity Agreement on the reverse side of the registration form. Field Guides Incorporated acts only as an agent for the passenger in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, or other means, and assumes no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity caused by defect in such vehicles or for any reason whatsoever, including the acts, defaults, or bankruptcies of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. Field Guides Incorporated accepts 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. The tour participant shall bear all such losses and expenses. Field Guides Incorporated reserves the right 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. Field Guides Incorporated reserves the right to decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of any tour. Baggage is at owner's risk entirely.

Participants should be in good health and should consult a physician before undertaking a tour. If you have questions about the physical requirements of a tour, please contact our office for further information. Participants should prepare for the tour by reading the detailed itinerary, the information bulletin, and other pertinent matter provided by Field Guides. Each participant is responsible for bringing appropriate clothing and equipment as recommended in our bulletins.

THE RECEIPT OF YOUR TOUR DEPOSIT SHALL BE DEEMED TO BE CONSENT TO THE ABOVE CONDITIONS. EACH TOUR PARTICIPANT AND EACH PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OF A TOUR PARTICIPANT WHO IS UNDER 18 SHALL SIGN AND DELIVER THE RELEASE AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION.

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