

ITINERARY
BOLIVIA'S AVIAN RICHES
November 14-30, 2021
Bountiful Beni Post-Trip Extension
November 30-December 5, 2021



Blue-crowned Parakeets are just one of more than 20 parrot species we might see on this tour. These large parakeets have an interesting distribution, with one population resident in eastern Bolivia. Photograph by guide Dan Lane.

We include here information for those interested in the 2021 Field Guides Bolivia's Avian Riches 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

These additional materials will be made available to those who register for the tour:

- an annotated list of the birds recorded on a previous year's Field Guides trip to the area, with comments by guide(s) on notable species or sightings (may be downloaded from our website)
- 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 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

With some 1300 species, landlocked Bolivia supports more than forty percent of South America's bird diversity. From a sky full of Andean Condors to a beautiful endemic macaw in a cactus-clad rain-shadow desert; from a flightless grebe on Lake Titicaca to dazzling hummers and a host of endemics in the high *Polylepis* forest and puna; and from impressive antpittas and mixed-species tanager flocks in humid montane forest to lowland Chaco savannas with fantastic rheas and

seriemas, Bolivia offers an exciting chance truly to immerse oneself in the marvelous bird life of the Andes. And, sometimes to the surprise of birders—so few have been to Bolivia—our accommodations and transportation are good.

Bolivia is home to fewer than twenty endemic species of birds, but this figure is misleading because we regularly see another 100-plus species confined to a variety of rather limited ecosystems that overlap political boundaries, species that may not be seen readily by birders elsewhere. Indeed, our groups have been privileged to see the Diademed Tapaculo well, a distinctly marked species discovered by Bret Whitney while scouting for a previous tour. A tyrannulet we usually see in the Santa Cruz area has only recently been formally described (after various researchers waded through a nomenclatural quagmire)! No doubt, new discoveries still await us in Bolivia.

With aesthetic highlights varying from *seeable* tinamous and tapaculos to shy but often responsive Slaty Gnateaters and Giant Antshrikes, incredible Hooded Mountain-Toucan, the must-see-to-believe Black-hooded Sunbeam, the superb Olive-crowned Crescentchest, dazzling and exhilarating flocks of Hooded and Scarlet-bellied mountain-tanagers to subtly beautiful Whistling Herons and Scissor-tailed Nightjars, our efforts will be rewarded. We begin our birding in the lowlands at Santa Cruz and work our way slowly westward and northward before ascending the altiplano to end in La Paz. En route we will visit both the Serranía de Siberia, cloaked in a lush cloudforest at elevations of 8000 to 9000 feet at the southern limit for numerous forms of Andean birds, including the endemic Rufous-faced Antpitta, and the arid valleys of the Rio Mizque, with its surrounding cliffs furnishing nesting sites to some of the remaining 3000 Red-fronted Macaws, surely among the most beautiful of the macaws. In the nearby rain-shadow desert, the endemic Bolivian Earthcreeper scoots over rocks and cacti, while White-tipped Plantcutters clip leaves with their pruning-shear bills. Between this lovely area and Cochabamba await such specialties as Maquis Canastero and the strange Bolivian Blackbird. We end in the moist Yungas forests of the north, with their varied temperate and subtropical avian beauties. **Bolivia's Avian Riches** is a tour that brings scenic and avian variety and surprises every day.

Our **Extension** after the tour will seek out the threatened Blue-throated Macaw as well as an additional 250 or so species, including the rare and seldom-seen Crowned Eagle.



Bolivian Earthcreeper is an endemic found in dry valleys of south-central Bolivia. We'll look for them near Comarapa. Photograph by participant Jose Padilla-Lopez.

All participants will be required to confirm they will have completed a full COVID vaccination course at least two weeks prior to the tour (if you are getting a two-dose vaccine, this means you must receive your second dose two weeks prior to departure). Having a vaccinated group will greatly diminish but not eliminate the possibility of the group and individual participants being adversely affected by COVID-19. **We are requiring all of our staff guides to be vaccinated.** Note too that many travel destinations are or soon will be requiring proof of vaccination for entry to bypass testing delays or quarantine, and that entry requirements for a destination can change at any time.

We want to be sure you are on the right tour! Below is a description of the physical requirements of the tour. If you are concerned about the difficulty, please contact us about this and be sure to fully explain your concerns. We want to make sure you have a wonderful time with us, so if you are uncomfortable with the requirements, just let us know and we can help you find a better fitting tour! Field Guides will not charge you a change or cancellation fee if you opt out within 10 days of depositing.

Physical requirements of this tour

- **TRAILS & WALKING:** Moderate amounts of walking, much of it on paved roads or well-groomed tracks or trails; some walking in altiplano habitat, where footing can be uneven. Hikes in steep terrain are short and few, and we try to walk downhill (with the bus following) whenever possible, especially when birding the higher elevations. The longest walks may be about 2 miles in distance (Refugio Los Volcanes), but most are much shorter.
- **POTENTIAL CHALLENGES:** We cover much ground on this tour, and some days will feature long periods of time in the bus. On some days, we will do much roadside birding with regular getting in and out of the bus. Elevation (which see) is an issue, but we will try to acclimate over the course of the tour. Roads are dusty, so a face mask may be of use if you are susceptible to respiratory issues. Winding montane roads with sharp drop-offs are unavoidable on this tour.
- **PACE:** Some mornings, we will have an early breakfast (5 am) in our lodging, but many mornings we will depart early (4 am) and have a picnic breakfast (6-7 am) followed by birding, with a break for lunch (also usually a picnic). In the afternoons, we often bird again or travel to our next destination; if we have lunch at our lodging, we will endeavor to have a post-lunch siesta.
- **ELEVATION:** We will begin the tour at lower elevations around Santa Cruz, ascending from there through the foothills and mountainous areas, reaching our maximum elevations at around 15,000 feet (near Cochabamba and La Paz). At most sites, we will be sleeping at elevations below 8000 feet, but in La Paz city, we will be at about 12,000 feet for three nights. Our gradual ascent usually allows us to acclimate comfortably to higher elevation over the course of the tour, and few clients suffer any issues. Nevertheless, those prone to altitude sickness should take precautions, and having Diamox on hand is recommended.
- **WEATHER:** Temperatures are often chilly in higher elevations (down mid 30s F on one morning outside La Paz), whereas the lowest elevations can be hot (90s F in Beni or near Santa Cruz). Typically, we will experience a range of 50-85 F at most sites. Rain showers are a possibility, and even snow at our highest elevations is not impossible.
- **VEHICLE SEATING:** So that each participant has equal opportunity during our travel, we employ a seat rotation system on all tours. Participants will need to be flexible enough to maneuver to the back of the vehicle on occasion, though with a full-sized bus, this is not difficult (note: we use 4x4 vehicles on the extension). Those who experience motion sickness will need to bring adequate medication for the duration of the tour, as we are not able to reserve forward seats for medical conditions. There WILL be windy montane roads!
- **BATHROOM BREAKS:** Bolivia does not have good infrastructure involving such things as comfortable, clean public restrooms. For much of this tour, participants must be prepared to make a comfort stop in nature, as there are no alternatives (most gas station bathrooms are perhaps worse than a field stop!).
- **OPTING OUT:** Where we are staying multiple days in the same lodging, participants can easily opt to sit out a day or sometimes a half-day. This will not be possible on days when we are changing locations.

Additional information

We would be remiss if we did not inform you that Bolivia has been the scene of political unrest in recent years. Several of the tours we have operated in the past few years have been affected, so the possibility exists that this tour will as well. Economic, political, and cultural issues occasionally pop up, especially in the hinterlands. Normally, these issues are dealt with by blocking roads, particularly the highways between Santa Cruz and Cochabamba—a cultural boundary between the “Cambas” of the lowlands, and the “Collas” of the highlands. Our ground crew has been excellent in keeping us informed about the presence of road-blocks and alternative ways around them, but there have nevertheless been delays and even days lost. We will do all in our power to minimize the effect on our tour as we have successfully done in the past, but you should be aware that we may have to shuffle our itinerary around should such a situation arise.

If you are uncertain about whether this tour is a good match for your abilities, please don't hesitate to contact our office; if they cannot directly answer your queries, they will put you in touch with one of the guides.

About the Birding Areas



Our tour of Bolivia takes us through an astounding diversity of Andean habitats in three of the country's nine *departamentos* (equivalent to states in the US). In conformation with Remsen and Traylor's *An Annotated List of the Birds of Bolivia* (1989; Buteo Books) and Asociación Armonía's *A Birdlist of Bolivia* (Fifth edition, 2003), the best overall references for the distribution of Bolivian birds, we will discuss birding areas on a departmental basis. This will help you get oriented and gain an understanding of the types of habitat and general terrain we'll visit on each segment of the tour. Species of birds endemic to Bolivia, as well as those occurring primarily in Bolivia and rarely seen—at least on tours—beyond Bolivia's borders, are indicated by an asterisk (*).

Santa Cruz—Larger than most European countries and three South American countries, the department of Santa Cruz covers a vast expanse of territory near the heart of South America. From its eastern border with Amazonian Brazil through a labyrinth of desert inter-Andean valleys to its western reaches cloaked in dark, mossy cloudforests, incredible Santa Cruz harbors one of the most diverse avifaunas of any region on the globe. During the course of several days of birding in Santa Cruz, we'll explore gallery woodland, marsh, grassland, and Chaco-like

shrubland near the city of Santa Cruz at about 1500 feet, semi-humid forest on the lower slopes of the Andes, arid inter-Andean valleys characterized by an abundance of thorny legumes and columnar cacti at about 5500 feet, and dense cloudforest at 8000 to 8500 feet. For the sake of preparation, here are some of the most exciting birds we'll seek in the lowlands near **Santa Cruz**: Greater Rhea, Red-winged Tinamou, White-bellied Nothura*, Whistling Heron, Savanna Hawk, Red-legged Seriema, Picazuro Pigeon, Golden-collared Macaw, Guira Cuckoo, Blue-crowned Motmot, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, White Woodpecker, Campo Flicker, Chotoy Spinetail, White-lored Spinetail (this population previously thought to be part of Plain-crowned Spinetail), Common and Greater thornbirds, Red-billed Scythebill, Bolivian Slaty-Antshrike*, Fawn-breasted Wren, Saffron Finch, and the related, but markedly different Red-crested and Red-capped cardinals.

We'll be spending two nights at a very scenic valley near the village of Bermejo, surrounded by looming red sandstone mesas at our lodge of Refugio Los Volcanes (not sure why it's named that, there are no volcanoes in the area). After the hustle and bustle of Santa Cruz city, it will be quite a change to hear almost no mechanical noises and have a clear view of the night sky! The walls of the valley are cloaked in the last of the semi-humid Amazonian foothill forest that turns drier as one turns the "bend of the Andes" just south of here, so many foothill birds' distributions end within a few kilometers of this site. Species such as Brown and Gray tinamous, Blue-throated Piping-Guan and Dusky-legged Guan, Large-tailed Dove, Turquoise-fronted Parrot, Military Macaw, and large swarms of Mitred Parakeet can be heard and seen around the lodge. Forest species such as White-backed Fire-eye, the secretive Slaty Gnateater, Short-tailed Antthrush, Moustached Wren, Two-banded Warbler, Black-goggled Tanager, and others can be surprisingly easy to see, and we even have a chance at the rather rare Bolivian Recurvebill if we are lucky! A nearby lake has been a good place to see the rare and local Masked Duck, but they have declined there in recent years, so we'll have to keep our fingers crossed. The marsh around the lake can still yield some surprises, including migrants and lowland waterbirds near their upper elevational limit.

In the Andean foothills and in the semi-deciduous woodlands and shrub-desert near **Comarapa** we hope to see Andean Condor (sometimes lots of them!), King Vulture, Green-cheeked Parakeet*, Cliff Parakeet* (potential split from Monk Parakeet), Blue-fronted Parrot, Scissor-tailed Nightjar, Buff-bellied Hermit*, Spot-backed Puffbird, Ocellated Piculet, White-fronted, Striped, "Golden-breasted" (presently lumped with Green-barred), and Cream-backed woodpeckers,

Narrow-billed Woodcreeper, Sooty-fronted, Ochre-cheeked, and Stripe-crowned spinetails, Bolivian Earthcreeper*, Chestnut-backed and Rufous-capped antshrikes, White-tipped Plantcutter, Greater Wagtail-Tyrant, Cliff Flycatcher, White-winged Black-Tyrant, Plush-crested Jay, Gray-crested Finch*, Ringed and Black-capped warbling-finches, and Ultramarine Grosbeak. Certainly the most special bird we'll strive to see near Tambo, however, is the Red-fronted Macaw*. This large green macaw, highlighted with scarlet forehead and underwings, brilliant blue primaries and tail, and flaming orange epaulets, is not only one of the most spectacular of all macaws, it also ranks among the rarest birds in South America. It is estimated that fewer than 3000 Red-fronted Macaws remain in the wild, restricted to arid canyons in the central Bolivian Andes. The birds are erratic, moving long distances tracking food supplies, but with perseverance and a little luck, we could come away with excellent views of these magnificent birds.

West of Tambo, in **westernmost Santa Cruz department**, are shrub-clad slopes with a patchwork of alders and cultivated fields to 8500 feet. Then, around a bend, where clouds often spill over from the east slope, lies humid montane cloudforest with tall, epiphyte-laden trees and beautiful flowers. In these habitats we'll seek Andean Tinamou, Huayco Tinamou* (a recent split from Red-winged Tinamou; with a very different vocalization), Violet-throated Starfrontlet, Blue-capped Puffleg*, Red-tailed Comet, Spot-breasted Thornbird, Giant Antshrike, Rufous-faced Antpitta*, Trilling Tapaculo (a recent split from Unicolored), Olive-crowned Crescentchest, Chestnut-crested Cotinga, Brown-capped Redstart, Blue-winged and Chestnut-bellied mountain-tanagers, Great Pampa-Finch, Bolivian*, Rufous-sided, and Rusty-browed warbling-finches, and Gray-bellied Flower-piercer*.

In September, the lowlands of Santa Cruz can be alive with wintering and migrating Austral migrants—a phenomenon little studied in the south. These include many species found in the poorly studied Chaco and Monte Desert of Argentina such as White-banded Mockingbird, Rufous Casiornis, Cinereous Tyrant, and Hudson's Black-Tyrant. We'll have nearly two full days of birding in the Santa Cruz area, ensuring more time for the lowland specialties—and offering a chance to experience the Austral migrants.



We'll look for the impressive Giant Antshrike in the cloudforests of the Santa Cruz department. Females, such as this lovely individual, are a warm cinnamon-brown, while the males are striking gray, black, and white. Photograph by guide Dan Lane.

Cochabamba—Straddling the section of the Andes known as the Cordillera Cochabamba and offering a well-developed network of roads (although we can't say as much for the condition of some of them), the department of Cochabamba offers excellent access to all of the important Andean habitats from upper tropical, subtropical, and temperate forest on the wet Amazonian slope to arid temperate scrub, puna grassland, and *Polylepis* woodland on the dry intermontane side. We'll have five days to bird this striking diversity of habitats, ranging in elevation from as low as 3000 feet to as high as

around 13,000 feet. Just where we bird on each day will depend as much upon the weather as anything; we usually have to dodge some rain showers or fog by going up or down the wet slope. Although it is smaller than most of the other departments, Cochabamba harbors more of the Bolivian endemic birds than any other! We'll prioritize these specialties, enjoying everything else we see along the way. That means spending most of our time in the intermontane valleys and on the forested east slope down to upper tropical elevations, mostly 3000 feet and up.

Intermontane possibilities include Andean Tinamou, Torrent Duck, Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle, Wedge-tailed Hillstar*, Andean Hillstar, Giant Hummingbird, Red-tailed Comet, Large-tailed Dove, Bare-faced Ground-Dove, Gray-hooded Parakeet, Rock and Plain-breasted earthcreepers, White-winged Cinclodes, Tawny and Brown-capped tit-spinetails, Maquis*, Creamy-breasted (Rusty-vented), and Scribble-tailed canasteros, d'Orbigny's and White-browed chat-tyrants, Rufous-webbed Tyrant (scarce), Brown-backed Mockingbird*, Fulvous-headed Brush-Finch, Giant Conebill (rare), Rufous-bellied Saltator*, Black-hooded Sierra-Finch, Short-tailed Finch* (scarce), Bolivian Warbling-Finch*, Cochabamba Mountain-Finch*, Citron-headed* (rare), Greenish, and Bright-rumped yellow-finches, Gray-bellied Flower-piercer*, and Bolivian Blackbird*.

Just a few of the many birds we'll hope to see in the **Chapare** (the geographic region of Cochabamba department that lies on the forested Amazonian slope of the Andes, from treeline down to the lowlands) are Solitary (rare) and Black-and-chestnut (rare) eagles, Black-winged* (rare) and Speckle-faced (Plum-crowned) parrots, Yungas Pygmy-Owl*, Violet-fronted Brilliant, Black-hooded Sunbeam*, Bronzy and Collared (Gould's) incas, Amethyst-throated Sunangel, Booted Racket-tail, Scaled Metaltail*, Long-tailed Sylph, Crested and Golden-headed quetzals, Masked Trogon, Versicolored Barbet, Blue-banded* and Chestnut-tipped (scarce) toucanets, Hooded Mountain-Toucan*, Crimson-mantled Woodpecker, Olive-backed Woodcreeper, Black-throated Thistletail*, *, Montane Foliage-gleaner, Upland Antshrike*, Yellow-rumped Antwren* (rare), White-throated Antpitta* (tough), Rufous Antpitta (of the distinct-sounding race *cochabambae*), Slaty Gnateater*, Bolivian ("Southern White-crowned") Tapaculo* (*Scytalopus bolivianus*, a split from Rufous-vented; a tough skulker), Andean Cock-of-the-rock, Yungas Manakin, Yungas Tody-Tyrant* (scarce), Sclater's, Bolivian, and Buff-banded* tyrannulets, Rufous-bellied Bush-Tyrant, Band-tailed Fruiteater*, White-capped Dipper, Andean and White-eared solitaires, White-browed Conebill, Orange-browed* (rare) and Three-striped hemispinguses, Hooded and Scarlet-bellied mountain-tanagers, Golden-collared Tanager, Saffron-crowned, Blue-necked, Blue-and-black, and Green-throated* (scarce) tanagers, and Moustached and Deep-blue flower-piercers.



One of the rarest and most unusual birds we'll look for is the Titicaca Grebe. This flightless grebe is endemic to Lake Titicaca and one other lake in the La Paz region, and we've seen them well on previous tours. Photograph by guide Jesse Fagan.

La Paz—Like Cochabamba, La Paz encompasses a tremendous transect of habitats on both wet and dry slopes of the Andes. Our birding in La Paz will take us over the high pass (around 15,500 feet) at La Cumbre to the humid temperate and subtropical forests on the east slope. One of these mornings, following more than two weeks of acclimatization to the

altitude, we'll take advantage of the rare access to the beautiful, high pincushion bogs provided by **La Cumbre** itself. Another important venue in La Paz is fabled **Lago Titicaca** with its endemic, flightless Titicaca Grebe*. Nearly four full days of birding in La Paz should produce a number of the following: Ornate Tinamou, Darwin's Nothura, Puna and Andean ibises, Puna Snipe, Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe (very scarce), Black-winged Ground-Dove, Andean Hillstar, Berlepsch's* and Streak-throated canasteros, Pearled Treerunner, Black-throated Thistletail*, Light-crowned Spinetail*, Puna Tapaculo* (*simonsi*, a recent split from Magellanic Tapaculo), several species of ground-tyrants (including the big White-fronted), White-collared Jay, Fulvous (split from Sepia-brown) Wren*, Correndera Pipit, Short-billed Pipit, Grass-green and Golden-collared tanagers, Hooded and Scarlet-bellied mountain-tanagers, Orange-browed* (scarce), Superciliated, and Three-striped hemispinguses, Black-throated Flower-piercer, Plushcap (scarce), Peruvian Sierra-Finch, White-winged Diuca-Finch, Short-tailed Finch* (rare), Black Siskin, and Mountain Cacique. And there is a special treat in store for us one morning: we usually see a distinctive, white-browed tapaculo, the Diademed, which has only recently (1994) been described to science! Bret Whitney discovered this beautiful bird here in February 1992—just prior to our Field Guides tour—and our luck seeing it has been excellent, sometimes from as close as five feet!



*The Orange-browed Hemispingus is a lovely small tanager that we've seen well on recent tours.
Photograph by guide Dan Lane.*

Bountiful Beni Extension—Much of the Department of Beni is in a life zone known as the Llanos de los Moxos or Moxos savanna. This habitat is a mix of dry woodlands, riparian gallery forest, grasslands, and palm savannas. It is seasonally flooded, and our visit is timed at the height of the dry season. It is in islands of palms in this sea of grass where the endemic and critically endangered (estimated to number about 300 individuals in the wild) Blue-throated Macaw is found. For many years this spectacular macaw was known only from specimens and live birds in the possession of parrot collectors, caught by poachers in unknown areas. It was only in the mid-1990s that biologists and conservationists discovered where the few birds still resided. The wonderful aspect of this extension is that we get into this little-known part of South America, which is rich, rich, rich in diversity!

Our ground crew from Santa Cruz will meet us and transport us between our attractive hotel to various areas around the city of Trinidad. Some of these outings will be half-day, returning to the hotel for lunch and a break, but one or two may be all-day endeavors with a picnic lunch. Some of the goodies that we'll search for during our visit, besides the fabulous Blue-throated Macaw*, are Crowned Eagle, Orinoco Goose, Plain Softtail (the endemic nominate race *fusciceps*), Cinereous-breasted Spinetail, Sulphur-bellied Tyrant-Manakin, Hudson's Black-Tyrant, Unicolored Thrush* (secretive), Dark-throated Seedeater, and the endemic *boliviensis* race of Velvet-fronted Grackle. Interestingly, some

species from these parts of Bolivia are well differentiated from those found elsewhere in South America and may prove to be separate species. For those who like to see large numbers of big birds, the Beni is a must, and is easily comparable to the Pantanal and Llanos for its spectacle!



We'll bird the altiplano near La Paz amidst llamas and flocks of flamingos on the lakes. Photograph by guide Dan Lane.

Itinerary for Bolivia's Avian Riches

Days 1-2, Sun-Mon, 14-15 Nov. To Santa Cruz. Most flights from the US are overnight flights so you will arrive in Santa Cruz the morning of Day 2. Upon landing, have your binoculars handy: the Viru-Viru Airport (named for a local plant), north of town, is surrounded by beautiful grassland, and it's hard to get out of it without seeing something exciting, perhaps Red-winged Tinamou, Burrowing Owls, a Whistling Heron, or even a Gray-and-chestnut (Rufous-rumped) Seedeater at this time of year.

Assuming an on-time arrival (which is not always the case), we may want to bird some nearby woodland in order to absorb some new birds for a couple of hours. (You'll have access to your luggage and to nice restrooms at the airport if you need to grab optics or an item of clothing.) We'll check into our rooms and have lunch and a nap at our air-conditioned hotel before doing some more birding in the late afternoon.

If you are arriving separately from the group and are not arriving at or about the same time as the recommended group flight, please plan to make your own way to the hotel where we will meet for lunch. (Taxis are available.) Night in Santa Cruz.

Day 3, Tue, 16 Nov. Santa Cruz to Bermejo. Out of deference to the lowland climate, we will bird early at an interesting reserve near the city called the Lomas de Arena (a nearby area of Chaco-like campos and marshy savannas, but best known for some impressive sand dunes). After lunch, we'll leave the Santa Cruz area and head west into the foothills where a very different habitat will greet us. We will be spending two nights at a nice, quiet lodge "off the beaten path" called Refugio los Volcanes. It lies at the bottom of a very scenic valley with tall, impressive red sandstone cliffs surrounding it, and an interesting semi-deciduous foothill forest. Night at Refugio los Volcanes.

Day 4, Wed, 17 Nov. Refugio los Volcanes. This day will be spent walking the trails around the lodge and birding this interesting foothill forest that basically represents the southernmost extent of "Amazonian" foothill habitat. Here, we should encounter mixed flocks with flycatchers, tanagers, antwrens, etc., hear Tataupa Tinamou, Large-tailed (or Yungas or White-faced) Dove, and watch for the diminutive White-bellied Pygmy-Tyrant, the loud Yungas Manakin, and the rare Blue-browed Tanager. In these forests, Two-banded Warblers are virtually guaranteed, Ochre-cheeked Spinetail, Black-capped Antwren, Moustached Wren, and even Slaty Gnateater are present, and we'll make an effort to see them all. This

area is excellent for parrots, including Mitred, Green-cheeked, and Yellow-chevroned parakeets, and, if we are lucky, a Military Macaw could show up. Some Bolivian specialties that we'll try for here will be the very rare and local Bolivian Recurvebill, and the equally rare Ashy Antwren. Remember to enjoy the serenity of the site because most of the other lodges on the tour are in cities! Night at Refugio los Volcanes.

Day 5, Thu, 18 Nov. Bermejo to Comarapa. We'll depart Refugio los Volcanes shortly after breakfast, and may pop in to a nearby pond where Masked Duck and other waterbirds can be found in semi-humid forest on the lower mountain slopes along the road.

Continuing westward, with a birding stop or two along the way (and a picnic lunch), we'll enter a zone of arid inter-Andean valleys lying within a rain shadow formed by the surrounding mountains. Around late afternoon we'll pull into the little village of Comarapa where the dry, cactus-spiked gullies that dominate the landscape lend the region that distinctive, haunting character that only deserts possess. This part of Bolivia is completely undeveloped and far from any town that amounts to more than a crossroads. We will be staying at a basic but comfortable hotel here. Night at Hotel Paraiso.

Days 6-7, Fri-Sat, 19-20 Nov. Comarapa/Siberia area. Birding the hot, dry habitats near Comarapa dictates that we concentrate our efforts in the early morning and late afternoon. It is here that we will try to encounter the fabulous Red-fronted Macaw, the endemic Cliff Parakeet (may soon be split from Monk Parakeet), Bolivian Earthcreeper, and a number of other specialists found only in this habitat. On one day, however, we'll go to a very different habitat—the cloudforests of the Serranía de Siberia, straddling the border of Santa Cruz and Cochabamba departments. Just a couple of hours west of Comarapa, the serranía is high enough (8000-9000 feet) to catch the last of the moisture-laden easterlies. This is the southernmost of the Andes' humid "tropical" cloudforest, and as such, it marks the southern terminus in the distribution of numerous species of high-elevation forest birds. Siberia is a fascinating region that each year rewards us not only with the expected, but usually a surprise or two as well. Birding will be along level roads and on trails (with some climbing near Siberia) in both the arid zone and in the cloudforest. The cloudforest trails are sometimes muddy, although not too long or particularly steep. Waterproof footwear and raingear are recommended. Nights at Hotel Paraiso.



We've seen the impressive Cream-backed Woodpecker near Comarapa. This one is a female; however, on our 2018 tour we had great views of both sexes. Photograph by guide Willy Perez.

Day 8, Sun, 21 Nov. To Cochabamba. Following an early morning birding stop, probably in the Siberia cloudforest, we'll drive to Cochabamba with a picnic lunch and at least two important birding stops in dry, temperate scrub along the way. We'll be lodged in a fine hotel in the old city of Cochabamba (about 8300 feet) for the next five nights. Night in Cochabamba.

Days 9-12, Mon-Thu, 22-25 Nov. Cochabamba/Chapare area. We'll have four whole days to bird the Cochabamba region, which is an important one for Bolivian endemics. Probably our first morning, we will visit the nearby Cerro Tunari. This is a mountain just northwest of the city where we'll have access to the drier montane habitats on the rain-shadow-side of the ridge. Good hiking boots are usually best for this area. Birds such as Bolivian Blackbird, Fulvous-headed Brush-Finch, Bolivian and Rufous-sided warbling-finches, and Rufous-bellied Saltator will be among the species we're likely to enjoy during our picnic breakfast. Farther upslope, Wedge-tailed Hillstar, Red-tailed Comet, Striped Woodpecker, Creamy-breasted and Maquis canasteros, and Rock and Bolivian earthcreepers live in the arid scrub that is dotted with cactus. Higher still, we enter a *Polylepis* woodland where Giant Conebill, Brown-capped and Tawny tit-spinetails, and perhaps Andean or Gray-hooded parakeets will show themselves to us. Finally, we will climb into the puna zone (11,000 to 13,000 feet) where we will have our first experience with thin air, ground-tyrants, White-winged Duica-Finches, Andean Lapwings, and llama and alpaca herds that dot this foreboding landscape.

On the next three days, our efforts will be concentrated on the humid east slope of the Andes, which holds one of the richest avifaunas in the world. We'll need to depart Cochabamba very early on these days in order to be in the best birding areas as the sun comes up. After a picnic breakfast, we'll watch an impressive burst of activity among hummers, flower-piercers, furnariids, and flocking tanagers as the sun bathes the slopes at treeline. Weather permitting, we'll spend one entire day in the temperate forest zone, birding the bamboo flocks and hoping for such rarities as Hooded Mountain-Toucan and Chestnut-crested Cotinga in the forest below. We'll try some side roads and trails that take us into the alluring forest. Roadside and forest trail birding is not strenuous, but it is important to be prepared for rain (and to have waterproof footwear with you on the bus). To maximize our time in the field, we'll prepare picnic meals and be back at the hotel for dinner. Nights in Cochabamba.



In the high elevations near La Paz, we'll look for the White-winged Duica-Finch. This bird is one of the few that nest at such high elevations, and evidence suggests that they build their nests directly on patches of ice!
Photograph by participants David and Judy Smith.

Day 13, Fri, 26 Nov. Cochabamba to La Paz. This morning, we will send off our bags with our driver and carry only what we'll need for an easy morning of birding at a great "local patch" at the edge of Cochabamba city: Laguna Alalay. This lake has provided some exceptional records for Bolivia—it is the first (and only?) locality in the country for Red-fronted Coot, which only showed up less than a decade ago, it is also a great place to see ducks such as Red Shoveler, Red-billed Pochard, and even the rare Silver Teal, as well as Puna and White-faced ibis, Yellow-winged Blackbird, Many-colored Rush-Tyrant, Wren-like Rushbird, and the lovely Plumbeous Rail. The local form of Great Kiskadee is a giant and washed out, and it occurs higher here in Bolivia than anywhere else in its range!

After lunch, we'll fly to La Paz—avoiding a long, dusty drive—arriving at our hotel at about the same time as our bags that came overland. Night in La Paz.

Day 14, Sat, 27 Nov. La Paz to Coroico. We'll drive a long transect, birding a variety of locales ranging from high puna bogs, *altiplano*, and high Andean cloudforest. The road that takes us over the pass at La Cumbre continues down to the lowlands, traversing some interesting forest at upper elevations along the way. It's a narrow, winding road, affording breathtaking vistas of distant ridges and steep-walled valleys shrouded in clouds at every turn. We will spend one night in a hotel at the bottom of this road to give us a morning in the lower elevations, with the option of leaving our larger luggage at our hotel in La Paz that night. Night in Coroico.

Day 15, Sun, 28 Nov. Coroico to La Paz. Today we'll return to La Paz, concentrating on the lower elevations of the *yungas*, or cloudforest, and checking for birds we may have missed yesterday on our way down. There are a lot of birds in this area, so it will be a busy morning trying to encounter as many of them as possible! Night in La Paz.

Day 16, Mon, 29 Nov. Titicaca and Sorata. Today, our final day birding in Bolivia, we'll want to bird the altiplano west of La Paz and the margins of Lago Titicaca. Here we hope to find many waterbirds, among them the flightless Titicaca Grebe (Short-winged Grebe), which is endemic to Lakes Titicaca and Popoo. We'll travel over a mountain range towards the town of Sorata for a chance at the rare and endemic Berlepsch's Canastero and the enormous Giant Coot. Night in La Paz.

Day 17, Tue, 30 Nov. Flight La Paz/Miami and home. Those ending the tour here will can depart La Paz at any time today. ¡Vayan bien!



The endemic Blue-throated Macaw is critically endangered, with only a few hundred individuals remaining in the wild. Private ranches are providing nest boxes and working to improve habitat for these gorgeous and charismatic birds. We'll visit one of these places near Trinidad. Photograph by guide Dan Lane.

Itinerary for Bountiful Beni Post-tour Extension

Day 1, Tue, 30 Nov. To Trinidad. We'll catch our local flight to Trinidad this morning and arrive mid-morning at the Trinidad airport. For the extension, we recommend including a small, collapsible duffel so you can repack light clothing for five days of warm weather, rubber boots, a sweater (important—cold fronts are still possible this time of year!), and raingear. If you would like to leave larger luggage with our staff in La Paz, they will drive it to Santa Cruz, where it will be waiting at our hotel on Day 5. In the afternoon, we'll be transferred to our hotel on the edge of town. Night in Trinidad.

Days 2-4, Wed-Fri, 1-3 Dec. Trinidad area. We'll be departing early (pre-dawn) each morning and exploring different habitats around the city of Trinidad, looking for various highlights of the Beni region. One of the top targets on our list will be the endemic and highly endangered Blue-throated Macaw. We know of a small population near the city in a recently preserved Estancia (ranch), and this will likely be one of our first destinations. Included will be visits to the open country of Llanos de los Moxos, dotted with pools of water that could be convulsing with aquatic birds such as herons, ibis, storks, screamers, Limpkins, Black-collared Hawks, Snail Kites, etc. We'll also visit gallery forest, the southern vestiges of the Amazon rainforest, the thread through the grassland and deciduous scrub along the larger rivers. Here, we should see some tyrants, antbirds, woodcreepers, and tanagers that do not venture away from the evergreen forest. Nights outside of Trinidad.

Day 5, Sat, 4 Dec. Return to Santa Cruz. We'll have this morning to bird around Trinidad. Our flight will depart in the afternoon to Santa Cruz. Night in Santa Cruz.

Day 6, Fri, 5 Dec. Flight Santa Cruz home. You can depart Santa Cruz at anytime this morning. ¡Vayan bien!

About Your Guides

Dan Lane grew up in New Jersey, where his interest in birds surfaced early. He was an active birder there from age eight through college, after which he moved to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, to pursue a master's degree studying Neotropical ornithology at Louisiana State University. Since receiving his degree in 1999, Dan has remained at LSU as a research associate, participating in research expeditions to South America (especially Peru) almost annually. He has been involved in the discovery of several birds new to science and is one of the authors of and an artist for the recently released field guide, *Birds of Peru*.

Dan is particularly interested in bird systematics, biogeography, and vocal variation, and is an avid recorder of bird voices; he and colleagues hope to put out a companion sound publication to the Birds of Peru soon. He also dabbles in bird art, and his works have been reproduced in several magazines, journals, and books (not to mention several Field Guides t-shirts!). Meanwhile, he has been guiding tours since 1999. He joined Field Guides in 2006 and has been very pleased to be part of the "FG family." You can find a link to Dan's current Field Guides schedule, as well as more about his artwork and other interests at his personal home page <http://www.museum.lsu.edu/lane.html>.

Micah Riegner grew up exploring the Central Arizona Highlands and was fortunate to have parents who took him along on college field courses ranging from the coast of Mexico to the mountains of Costa Rica, where encounters with tinamous, barbets, and jacamars launched him into the birding world at a young age. During his time at Prescott College, he made annual pilgrimages to Amazonia, where he worked as a guide and participated in expeditions, mostly in Brazil. For his master's degree, he studied the foraging ecology of Amazonian woodcreepers. When he's not in the field, he tries to make time to paint birds and other creatures that spark his interest.

Micah guided tours with Bret Whitney, John Coons, Dan Lane, and Tom Johnson before joining Field Guides full time in 2019. Micah is a generous guide with an easy laugh and is eager to share his love of birds and nature in the years to come. We know you will have a great time traveling with him, too!

Visit <https://fieldguides.com/our-staff/> for complete tour schedules for Dan and Micah; just click on their photos.

"Dan Lane is superior in all aspects as a guide—excellent recognition of bird sounds, patient in drawing birds in for views, able to relate to group members with relaxed courtesy and helpfulness. We rate Field Guides the highest." J.N. & E. H., Amazonian Ecuador: Sacha Lodge

"Micah Riegner was a delightful last-minute addition to the tour with Bret Whitney and Tom Johnson, and he added tremendous value. He was attentive to everyone and performed as though he'd worked together with Bret and Tom for years.... terrific!" D. R.; Great Rivers of the Amazon II

Financial Information

FEE: \$6850 from Santa Cruz

Bountiful Beni Extension—\$2250 from Santa Cruz (see note below)

DEPOSIT: \$700

FINAL PAYMENT DUE: August 16, 2021

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT (Optional*): \$500 for the main tour; \$200 for the extension

LIMIT: 12

Other Things You Need to Know

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

ACCOMMODATIONS: In the Comarapa region, which is mostly undeveloped and far from any town that amounts to more than a crossroads, we will be staying at a basic but comfortable hotel. At Bermejo, the lodge has limited occupancy and may have only generator-based electricity (probably only available for a few hours a day), but is clean and comfortable. Hotels for the rest of the regular tour range from good to excellent.

Accommodations for two nights of the **Extension** will be in the small guesthouse of a working cattle ranch. There are several rooms with a mix of queen and single beds under mosquito netting and shared bathrooms. The food and birding are great here!

A NOTE ON ALTITUDE: We will reach elevations in excess of 15,000 feet on this tour, but only after some time for altitude acclimatization. We will take our time at the high elevations.

DOCUMENTS: A current **passport** is necessary for US citizens to enter Bolivia. We recommend that your passport be valid for at least 6 months beyond the dates of your visit, as regulations vary from country to country, and are subject to change. You will also need an **International Certificate of Vaccination for Yellow Fever** to enter Bolivia. The vaccination is good for 10 years and can be obtained at your local travel clinic or from your physician.

If you are not a US citizen, please check with the Bolivian 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: Field Guides is a 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. We recommend carrying a small, collapsible duffel bag that can take a few days' changes of clothing for the extension and on the main tour for our visit to Coroico, while larger bags are stored in Santa Cruz or La Paz (respectively).

TOUR INCLUSIONS/EXCLUSIONS: The **tour fee** is \$6850 for one person in double occupancy* from Santa Cruz. It includes all lodging from Day 2 through Day 16, all meals from lunch on Day 2 through breakfast on Day 17, all ground transportation, entrance fees, and the guide services of the tour leader(s). 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 fee for the **Bountiful Beni Extension** is \$2250 for one person in double occupancy* from Santa Cruz. It includes all lodging from Day 1 of the extension through Day 5 of the extension, all meals from lunch on Day 1 through breakfast on Day 6, all ground transportation, the flights from Santa Cruz to Trinidad and return, entrance fees, tips for baggage handling and meals service, and the guide services of the tour leader(s).

The above fees do not include your airfare to and from Bolivia, 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 \$500, and \$200 for the extension. 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).

*If you have a trusted friend, relative, or significant other with whom you wish to share a room on tour, please let us know and your tour manager will make that assignment. However, due to recommendations from the CDC, Field Guides is not currently pairing roommates who do not know each other, and the single supplement will apply if you do not have a roommate. As of this writing (July 9, 2021), we are reviewing these CDC recommendations carefully and often and will let you know if anything changes.

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, the guide in training will be taking a seat in the van or bus. 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, please [contact our office](#). Our office will be in touch with you by email by the next business day (Mon-Fri) with instructions on how to complete our new electronic registration form and medical questionnaire. (We are no longer accepting the paper version.)

Please mail your **deposit of \$700** per person, or see our Payment Options at <https://fieldguides.com/payment-options/>. **Full payment** of the tour fee is due 120 days prior to departure, or **by August 16, 2021**. **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.**

Please note that if you are traveling on a tour **outside your country of domicile** (for example, outside the US for US residents), we will require **proof of travel insurance**. 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.

Field Guides reserves the right 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. If you are traveling on a tour **outside your country of domicile** (for example, outside the US for US residents), we will **require proof of travel insurance**. Because we must remit early (and substantial) tour deposits to our suppliers, you acknowledge and agree that we will not issue a 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 information from us 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, and emergency medical transportation. If you purchase the insurance prior to, or within 24 hours of making final payment for the tour, and cover all non-refundable parts of the trip (including any non-refundable flights and in some cases, other arrangements), pre-existing conditions are covered. You may purchase your CSA policy on-line by visiting our website at <https://fieldguides.com/trip-cancellation-insurance/> and clicking the link to CSA. The CSA webpage also includes a contact number.

Currently we are unable to offer CSA insurance policies to residents of New York and Hawaii. We have had clients provide positive feedback after acquiring insurance thru InsureMyTrip (<https://www.insuremytrip.com/>) in the past, and would suggest that company as an alternative. When purchasing insurance with a company other than CSA, you will want to understand whether the timing of your purchase will affect coverage before paying your first deposit. Insurance purchase requirements can vary from company to company, and such requirements could limit your options if you do not look into this until making your final payment for your tour. Please let us know if you have any questions about this.

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. You acknowledge and agree that Field Guides Incorporated is not responsible 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.

NCP 7/2020

1/18DFL; no update needed after 2018 tour; 7/21peg