

ITINERARY  
**BOLIVIA'S AVIAN RICHES**  
*September 5-21, 2025*



*We'll stay at lodge in the Mizque River Valley where Red-Fronted Macaws breed on the sandstone cliffs. These beautiful birds are listed as Critically Endangered, and are endemic to this small region of Bolivia. Photograph by guide Micah Riegner.*

*We include here information for those interested in the 2025 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 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

**W**ith 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 *Polylophus* 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 Gnatcatchers 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.



*We've gotten some great views of Diademed Tapaculo on our tour. This bird is a range-restricted inhabitant of forests near the tree-line on the eastern slopes of the Andes from southern Peru to central Bolivia. It is one of four tapaculo species we might find. Photograph by participant Sid England.*

*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:** For the most part, this tour involves easy to moderately strenuous 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 and most strenuous walks may be about 7 miles in distance at Refugio Los Volcanes—where all birding will be on foot—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 is an issue, but we will try to acclimate over the course of the tour. **ROADS ARE DUSTY** and at some sites the dry season is when people burn vegetation and there can be smoke in the air, 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:** This is a fast-paced tour with long days and very little downtime. 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 (7-8 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 1000 ft) 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 and Titicaca, 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 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. 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 tinamou, 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** and the **Mizque River Valley** we hope to see Andean Condor (sometimes lots of them!), King Vulture, Green-cheeked Parakeet\*, Cliff Parakeet\* (future 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 in this area 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 just over 1000 Red-fronted Macaws remain in the wild, restricted to arid canyons in the central Bolivian Andes. We will be spending a night at the **Red-fronted Macaw Lodge**, a community-run lodge and conservation initiative right at the most important nesting cliffs for the species. The macaws show up at the cliffs in the late afternoon along with Cliff Parakeets, Mitred Parakeets, Turquoise-fronted Parrots and Bolivian Blackbirds—it's quite an auditory and visual show!

West of Comarapa, in near the town of **Siberia**, 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\*.



*The Giant Antshrike is one of the cloud-forest dwellers we'll watch for near Siberia.  
Photograph by participant Jeff Hopkins.*

**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 chatyrants, 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.



*Furnariids are a large part of the South American avifauna, and we'll see quite a few on this tour, including the Scribble-tailed Canastero seen here. Photograph by participant Kirsten Tucker.*

**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), Superciliaried, 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!



*Wedge-tailed Hillstar is a high-elevation near-endemic. These hummingbirds are found primarily in southern Bolivia, and just barely extend their range into northern Argentina. Photograph by participant Donald Brubaker.*

## Itinerary for Bolivia's Avian Riches

**Day 1, Fri, 5 Sep. Flights to Santa Cruz.** (*Please note the tour begins in Santa Cruz and ends in La Paz.*) Plan to arrive in Santa Cruz's Viru-Viru Airport (named for a local plant) on this day. Our ground crew will pick you up and take you to the Hotel Camino Real where you will spend the night.

**Day 2, Sat, 6 Sep. Birding around Santa Cruz.** We will meet in the hotel lobby at **5:30 am** and we'll drive back to the Viru-Viru Airport north of town where we'll have our first group breakfast and begin birding the beautiful grasslands around the airport. This will be our best shot at a few savanna species on our tour: species such as Red-winged Tinamou, Burrowing Owls, Whistling Heron, White-tailed Hawk, and White-eared Puffbird can be here... and watch for the big flightless Greater Rheas as they parade across the open areas here! After a few hours birding this area, we will relocate to a patch of nearby woodland, home to Bolivian Slaty-Antshrike. Then we'll have lunch and a nap at our air-conditioned hotel and we'll continue birding the Santa Cruz area, stopping first at Laguna Guapilo for White-winged Coot, then the Santa Cruz Botanical Gardens for the late afternoon. Night in Santa Cruz at Camino Real Hotel.

**Day 3, Sun, 7 Sep. 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. Refugio los Volcanes 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, Mon, 8 Sep. 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, Tue, 9 Sep. 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 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 in Comarapa.

**Day 6, Wed 10 Sep.** Just 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. Some of the many birds we may encounter this day include Giant Antshrike, Olive-crowned Crescentchest, Red-tailed Comet and Great Pampa Finch. Night in Comarapa.



*We've seen the impressive Cream-backed Woodpecker near Comarapa. This wonderful pair was seen well on our 2018 tour.  
Photograph by participant Jose Padilla-Lopez.*

**Day 7, Thu 11 Sep. To the Red-fronted Macaw Lodge** This day we will pack up and bird the lower elevation desert habitats around Comarapa searching for things like Cream-backed Woodpecker, Bolivian Earthcreeper, Greater Wagtail-Tyrant, White-tipped Plantcutter, Gray-crested Finch, Streak-fronted Thornbird and Stripe-crowned Spinetail. We will drop to the town of Saipina, then wind our way up the Mizque River Valley to the Red-fronted Macaw Lodge where we'll spend the afternoon birding along the cliffs where the macaws, congregate. Rooms are limited at the lodge, so we might need to have singles double up for the night. Night at Red-fronted Macaw Lodge(double occupancy only).



**Day 8, Fri, 12 Sep. To Cochabamba.** Following a morning session with the Red-fronted Macaws and other desert specialties, we will pack up and drive to Cochabamba where we'll be lodged in a fine hotel for the next five nights. Night in Cochabamba at Hotel Aranjuez.

**Days 9-12, Sat-Tues, 13-16 Sep. 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 at Hotel Aranjuez.



*In the high elevations near La Paz, we'll look for the White-winged Diuca-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, Wed, 17 Sep. 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 at Hotel Ritz.

**Day 14, Thu, 18 Sep. 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 in Rio Selva Resort.

**Day 15, Fri, 19 Sep. Coroico to Titicaca.** Today we'll return to the highlands, 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 Hotel Inca Utama on the shore of Lake Titicaca.



*We might see all three South American flamingo species, Chilean, James's and Andean, at Lake Titicaca.  
Photograph by guide Dan Lane.*

**Day 16, Sat, 20 Sep. Titicaca and Sorata.** Today, our final day birding in Bolivia, we'll bird the altiplano 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 Hotel Inca Utama on the shore of Lake Titicaca.

**Day 17, Sun, 21 Sep. Flights home.** We will drive folks to the La Paz airport early this morning for departure flights home. ¡Que les 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>.

*"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*

Second guide TBA.

Visit <https://fieldguides.com/our-staff/> for complete tour schedules for all of our guides; just click on their photos.

## Financial Information

**FEE:** \$8225 from Santa Cruz

**DEPOSIT:** \$825

**FINAL PAYMENT DUE:** March 9, 2025

**SINGLE SUPPLEMENT (Optional):** \$550 (singles may not be available at Red-fronted Macaw Lodge)

**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!

**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.

**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. If you are a US citizen, you need to have a Bolivian **visa** in order to enter the country. We recommend doing this before you travel to the country, but it can be done upon your arrival in Santa Cruz airport as you pass through the immigration checkpoint.

**Please check the Bolivian immigration webpage** for the current requirements for entering the country: <https://www.boliviawdc.org/en-us/consular-affairs/visas/tourist-visa>. You will need a Bolivian visa. This webpage will provide the instructions of what you will need to have to obtain the visa. Recently, the Bolivian embassies in the USA have been slow or unresponsive to clients requesting the visa, so it may be best to have all the required documents and money

in hand when you arrive at the Immigration counter in Santa Cruz to obtain the visa there. This is usually fairly straightforward if you have all required items in hand.

You may 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:** *Please note the tour begins in Santa Cruz and ends in La Paz. Flights from La Paz typically pass through Santa Cruz for refueling before international departures.* 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.

**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.

**TOUR INCLUSIONS/EXCLUSIONS:** The **tour fee** is \$8225 for one person in double occupancy from Santa Cruz. It includes all lodging from Day 1 through Day 16, all meals from breakfast 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 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 \$550. NOTE: Single accommodations may not be possible for our one night stay at Red-fronted Macaw Lodge. 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, 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 us at [fieldguides.com/contact-us/](http://fieldguides.com/contact-us/). 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 \$825** per person, or see <https://fieldguides.com/payment-options/> for our Payment Options. **Full payment** of the tour fee is due 180 days prior to departure, or **by March 9, 2025**. **We will bill you for the final payment at either 180 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.

**CANCELLATION POLICY:** Refund of deposit and full payment, less \$100 handling fee, will be made if cancellation is received up to 180 days before departure. If cancellation occurs between 179 and 90 days before the departure date, 50% of the full tour fee is non-refundable, which would include the full deposit if the final payment has not yet been paid. Thereafter, all deposits and payments are not refundable and non-transferable.

Our cancellation policy only applies to payments made to Field Guides for tour (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 that 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 airline's restrictions.

The right is reserved to cancel any tour prior to departure. In most such cases, full refund will constitute full settlement to the passenger. Note this exception, however: If you have been advised pre-tour that there is a non-refundable portion of your tour fee no matter the reason for Field Guides cancellation of the tour, that portion will not be refunded. 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, you acknowledge and agree that we will not issue a refund when cancellation occurs outside of our cancellation policy as published in the itinerary (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 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.

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