



## SHOREBIRDS TRANSFORMED

Alvaro Jaramillo

What is it about shorebirds? To a beginning birder it must seem a bit, well, peculiar to see people poring over some dull gray dowitcher poking its oversize bill into a foul-looking muddy patch, when just down the road there are Scarlet Tanagers and Black-throated Blue Warblers in nearly every tree. And I guess it is peculiar—unless you're a shorebird fan.

For some of those fans it's the challenge of identifying the bird that's appealing; for others it's the chance of finding a rare vagrant, a not-so-uncommon occurrence as shorebirds are prone to getting off track and winding up well away from where they should be, sometimes even on the wrong continent. But there's one place where—at least for a short time each year—we can all be shorebird fans, and that's in the far north, in places like Alaska or Churchill.

Indeed, the moment you see an American or Pacific Golden-Plover decked out in golden capes shoot up skyward to perform an aerial dance accompanied by such a voice as you've never heard before, you'll understand what it's all about. Whimbrels may look cumbersome with their long, downcurved bills—typical of curlews—but on the Alaska tundra they pop lightly into the air to serenade a potential mate with the most ethereal flute-like music, and suddenly that plain brown creature is transformed.

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At top, a Long-billed Dowitcher and a Pectoral Sandpiper in Barrow, Alaska where the regularly "dull" shorebirds become performers. (Photo by guide George Armistead)

## First time to Peru? Try Machu Picchu & Abra Malaga

Dan Lane

I'm often asked, "Which is the best introductory tour to Peru?" Given the variety of landscapes and birdlife in this, my favorite country, there's no easy answer...but I have, nevertheless, settled on a definitive one: Machu Picchu & Abra Malaga.

"Why?" you might ask. Well, for one, it's a relatively easy tour, accommodations and food are great, the birds include some real "stonkers" (including about 15 possible Peruvian endemics) but are more manageable than the mega-diversity of the lowland rainforest, and, in case you hadn't already deduced it, we'll enjoy a two-day visit to the world-famous Inca ruins at Machu Picchu, where we'll be accompanied by our local guide for our own personalized tour of the ruins.

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Nothing like grabbing some cocoa to warm up on a cool morning in the Andes! (Photo by guide Dan Lane)

## New Tours for 2011

Jan Pierson

Here's the buzz: our scheduling committee has been hard at work! Included in this issue is our exciting 2011 schedule, and among those 130-plus tours are several important new itineraries to **Colombia, Ecuador, Ghana, Brazil, the Tropical Pacific, and the Pacific Northwest**, as well as a return to **Ethiopia** and **two new combos** in Panama and Brazil. These added tours have had strong initial interest already since going up on our website, so be

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# GuideLines *with Jesse Fagan*



I grew up skateboarding, cruising the streets of Heidelberg, Germany looking to ollie a park bench or thinking about my next trip to Tropicana, a local skatepark where I could ride street ramps and monster half-pipes. My hair was cut short, save for a few long strands in front, and my jeans were baggy. I had dreams of getting sponsored and skating all my life. My mom and stepfather were great about it, letting me figure out both myself and what I wanted to be. Thankfully, they exposed me to other things as well. We went on lots of camping trips in my stepfather's ugly brown Dodge Ram. My early memories of birds—flushing pheasants and noticing blackbirds—were on those camping trips to France, Denmark, Holland, and Austria. I have always had a soft spot for animals, nature in general, and especially birds, but I was a skater (there are photos of me skating below the Eiffel Tower) and the birds could wait for when I was distracted.

I really started "birding" in my late teens. I had given up on skateboarding, my dream of being sponsored replaced by a dream of playing pro football. I played a lot of sports back then, but soon realized that what I really liked was being outdoors. A summer job at a local state park and an encounter with a Pileated Woodpecker opened my eyes to something, an old reality, that I loved birds. I can still see that first Pileated, bounding across overhead, and my heart racing (what was that?!), and I remember vividly the events afterwards: digging out my field guide, looking for the woodpecker page (I knew enough about birds to know it was a woodpecker!), identifying it, and that feeling of, well, sheer enjoyment and accomplishment. I had identified my first bird.

You see, I grew up with skateboards and Nintendo, heavy metal music, and later, girls and sports. I wasn't a young birding protégé and no one I knew was a birder. I had no birding mentors. My early field notes are filled with things like "yellow on sides, likes to chip," and that, folks, was my first

Yellow-rumped Warbler. I learned to bird on my own (listening, taking notes) and eventually I realized that there were more people out there like me, birders that is, and, my God, there were even *companies* that took people out and showed them birds. The guides actually got paid for this! As I progressed, I learned that local birding was very important for my development as an international birder. It was at home that I honed my binocular skills, learned to listen, and learned the seasonal movements and behavior of birds. And then, in 1995 I headed to El Salvador, and my love for that country, northern Central America, and tropical birds grew exponentially.

I don't care how you discovered birding or whether you're a hotshot birder or a novice. Birding is cool in part because it unites us in something that transcends politics, age, or race. Some of my most memorable birding moments don't actually involve birds (gasp!), but rather my buddies and me after a long day in the field, sipping cold beers or a *pisco* sour, laughing, smiling, listening to good music and enjoying life as companions in this small world. Birds bring us together. They put us in awe (think Blackpoll migration, bowerbirds, woodcock displays, and oropendola calls) and they give us security when all else around us seems to be in disarray (what were birds doing on 9/11?).

They call me the Turquoise-browed Motmot, or "Mot" for short, as christened by Bret Whitney, my fellow Field Guides buddy and birder/researcher extraordinaire, on a trip to Brazil. Is it because I am tall, rather solitary, like to shake my tail (I have been known to "cut a rug" or two), or is it because it's the national bird of El Salvador?

I like all those reasons. Bird On.

*Jesse, our Mot, will be guiding a number of Field Guides tours in 2010 and 2011 including Machu Picchu & Abra Malaga, Peru, June 25-July 4 with Dan Lane. For a complete listing of Jesse's upcoming tours, visit our website ([www.fieldguides.com/guides](http://www.fieldguides.com/guides)) and click on Jesse's photo.*

## New Tours for 2011 Continued from page 1

sure to contact our office if you'd like to hold a space or two. Here's the roster of rising stars:

### COLOMBIA: THE CAUCA VALLEY, WESTERN & CENTRAL ANDES

This is the third distinct Colombia itinerary scouted by Richard Webster to complement the two he inaugurated for Field Guides in 2010. Lots of endemics and specialties on two departures: Jan 15-31 or Feb 19-Mar 7, both with Richard plus a local guide.

### PANAMA'S FABULOUS FORTNIGHT

John Rowlett has blended rich rainforest birding of central Panama and Pipeline Road with lovely cloud forest, quetzals, and bellbirds of the west into a new combo itinerary. Two parts: Feb 18-24 (rainforest) or Feb 23-Mar 3 (cloud forest), both with John.

### BRAZIL NUTSHELL: ATLANTIC FOREST, IGUAZU FALLS & THE PANTANAL

A re-working of our popular tour sampling the best of Brazil's birding with two new sites, now including Intervalles, the fabulous falls at Iguazu, and the northern Pantanal. Feb 18-Mar 5 with Marcelo Padua & Jay VanderGaast.

### ECUADOR'S WILD SUMACO LODGE

Check out our March recent photos gallery (accessible from [www.fieldguides.com/2010MarchPhotos](http://www.fieldguides.com/2010MarchPhotos)) to see some great images from our itinerary, which will also hit Antisana, Guango, and San Isidro. Lots of great birds to see! Mar 19-29 with Mitch Lysinger & John Rowlett.

### GHANA

This new tour goes in search of numerous West African specialties as well as Yellow-headed Picathartes. Mar 19-Apr 2 with Phil Gregory, with an Ankasa National Park Extension to Apr 7.

### ETHIOPIA

Terry Stevenson & George Armistead bring this great destination back into our schedule, May 7-27. A remarkable land, with everything from Rouget's Rail and Abyssinian Woodpecker to the 'must-see' Stresemann's Bush-Crow and enigmatic Simien Wolf.

### JAGUAR SPOTTING: PANTANAL & GARDEN OF THE AMAZON

New guide Marcelo Padua offers an exciting new itinerary to the Pantanal at its best, Jul 23-Aug 3. Who wouldn't want to see a fabulous variety of birds and have excellent chances of seeing a Jaguar?

### NEW CALEDONIA, FIJI & VANUATU

The best of birding in the tropical Pacific isles in these endemic-packed destinations with truly unusual highlights such as Orange Dove, Kagu, and Silktail. Sep 11-23 with Phil Gregory.

### PACIFIC NORTHWEST WEEKEND: BIRDING PUGET SOUND

Terry McEaney brings us a new five-day itinerary exploring the best birding of the lovely Puget Sound area out of Seattle, Nov 16-20.

All right, that only leaves about 120 or so other departures to look through in our complete 2011 schedule on **pages 7-9!** Enjoy a little daydreaming, and we look forward to birding with you!



The Pink Cockatoo (also known as Major Mitchell's Cockatoo) is a great bird of the arid Outback of Australia. The OKA, our all terrain birding mobile of the Outback at Chowilla Station. (Photos by guide Phil Gregory)

# A Good Year for the Outback

Things are looking good this year in the Outback, that's the news from Phil Gregory. "It's a very good year to be doing the trip, as conditions are exceptional," Phil writes us. And he forwarded this description he received recently from Outbacker Ian May.

"Nomadic birds are already irrupting and many have brightened up into breeding plumage. There are many hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Budgerigar flocks of up to 100 birds each flying across every imaginable landscape, and the watercourses are full of hollow-searching birds. Cockatiel are also present—though in the hundreds, not tens of thousands. Orange and Crimson chats are in abundance, and it's the same for Pied and Black honeyeaters.

"The Fairywrens (White-winged and Variegated) are looking even brighter than their usual splendor, as are Cinnamon Quail-thrushes. We observed along approximately 200 km of road more than 10 Black Falcons, mostly in pairs and visible later in the day while hunting. Australian Dotterel are in small flocks of 20-plus birds all across the stony gibber plains, and many have paired up and are displaying breeding behavior. Gibberbirds are also common on the gibber, and Banded Plover are in pairs breeding across a vast area of the sandy desert. While we searched for Eyrean Grasswren (unsuccessful probably because of wind), a single Letter-winged Kite calling loudly attracted my attention as it was flying high in a northerly direction."

If you'd like to read more, head to our Outback webpage [www.fieldguides.com/outback](http://www.fieldguides.com/outback), where you may download Phil's itinerary for the tour, September 11-October 3. Or call our Austin office. We'll be happy to mail you a copy of the tour itinerary.

## Focus on Inca Wren

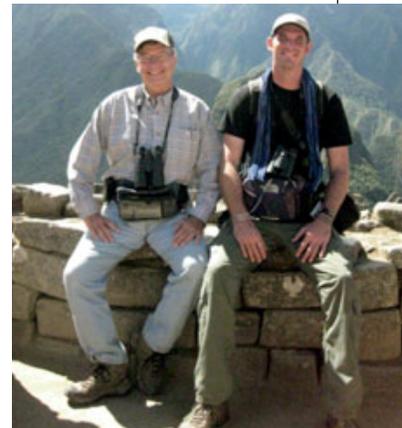
Jesse Fagan

Maybe it isn't so surprising that the most famous Inca site, Machu Picchu, was (re)discovered 50 years before the Inca Wren (*Thryothorus eisenmanni*) was described to science. I mean, the species was first noticed by modern-day ornithologists John O'Neill and the late George Lowery in 1965 while on a visit to Machu Picchu. However, the first specimens of Inca Wren weren't taken until 1974, and it wasn't formally described until the published note by Ted Parker and O'Neill in

1985. Recognizably a member of the Plain-tailed Wren (*T. euophrys*) complex, the Inca Wren is endemic to Peru with a small range on the east slope of the southern Andes. Further field work in preparation for its formal description led as well to the discovery of a new subspecies of Plain-tailed Wren (*T. e. schulenbergi*), first described to science in the same publication. Inca Wrens like to hang out in *Chusquea* bamboo and are, like their duetting congeners, energetically vocal.

Participants have an opportunity to see Inca Wren and experience the famous pre-Columbian ruins of Machu Picchu, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, on either of our *Machu Picchu & Abra Malaga* tours (June 25-July 4 and August 7-16).

Join Dane Lane, co-illustrator and author of *Birds of Peru*, and me on what will surely be a memorable experience.



No, these aren't a couple of Inca Wrens, but our guides John Rowlett and Jesse Fagan, who have just seen one...or are about to go look for one... (Photo by participant Teresa Redmond)

## Last Spaces

### CLASSICAL GREECE

May 2-16, 2010 with Megan Crewe & local guide

### ARIZONA NIGHTBIRDS & MORE

May 6-10, 2010 with Dave Stejskal

### BIRDING PLUS IRELAND IN SPRING: BIRDS, TRADITIONAL MUSIC & PUBS

May 6-16, 2010 with Terry McEneaney & John Rowlett

### SPAIN: LA MANCHA, COTO DONANA & EXTREMADURA

May 7-19, 2010 with Chris Benesh & local guide

### POINT PELEE & ALGONQUIN PROVINCIAL PARK

May 8-17, 2010 with Jay VanderGaast

### CENTRAL PERUVIAN ENDEMIC: THE HIGH ANDES

May 14-31, 2010 with Rose Ann Rowlett & Dan Lane

### BIRDING PLUS NORTH CAROLINA: PETRELS & THE DEEP BLUE SEA

May 15-24, 2010 with George Armistead & Jesse Fagan

## fieldguides.com

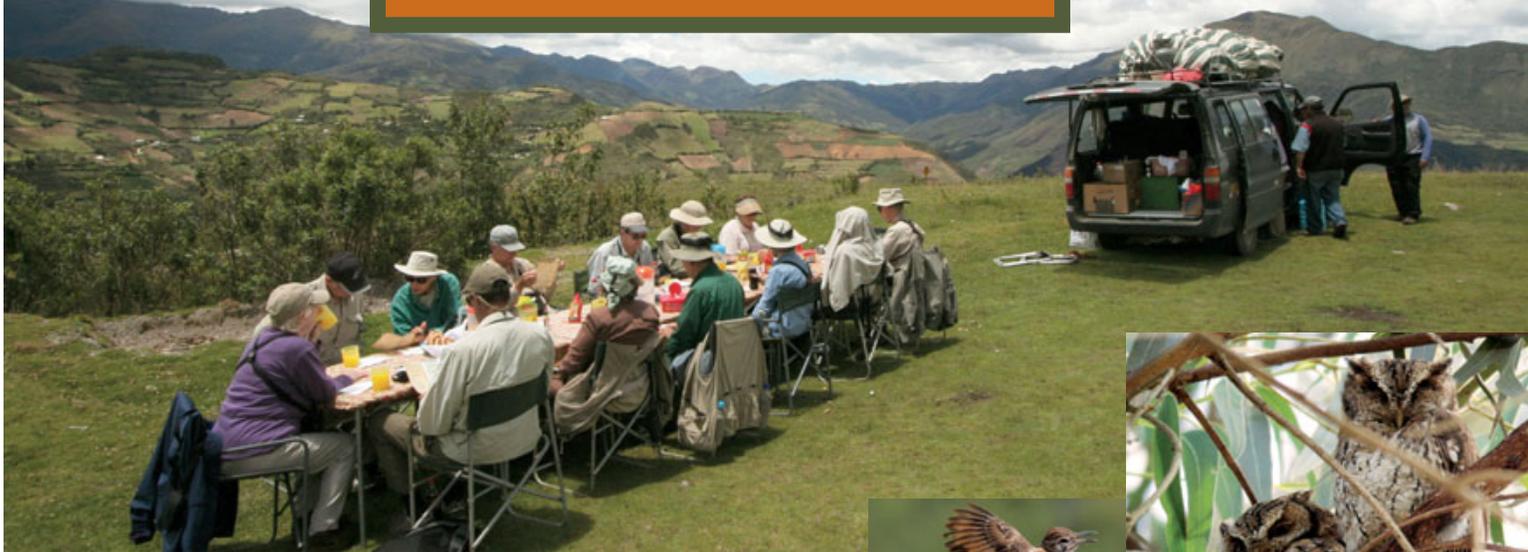
Guide George Armistead has put together a slideshow of photos from his recent Antarctica tour. If you'd like to take a look, go to the [Antarctica: Antarctic Peninsula, South Georgia & the Falklands](http://www.fieldguides.com/antarctica) (www.fieldguides.com/antarctica)



George Armistead

tour page and click on *slideshow* in the left-hand column. You can also read about our planned 2011 Antarctica tour and download the itinerary. Just click on *itineraries* in the right-hand column.

# FRESH FROM THE FIELD



Our **Northern Peru: Endemics Galore** tour is special for the endemics of course, but also because it visits a seldom-traveled bit of this huge and amazing country. It is hard to find a good restaurant at 2900m elevation, so we take the “restaurant” and good food with us, and the mountain views are gorgeous! At right, a Thick-billed Miner displaying at Lomas de Lachay near Lima. Far right, a pair of roosting Koepcke’s Screech-Owls at Estancia Chillo; they’re named for Maria Koepcke, pioneer of Peruvian ornithology. (Photos by guides Richard Webster & Rose Ann Rowlett)



A decade ago, a birding trip to **Colombia** was not possible, but my how things have changed! Now it’s all the rage—not surprisingly as it hosts the largest bird list of any nation on Earth. Here, our recent group at La Vega pointing



towards the ground, which probably means some good skulker! Below left, the widespread Cinnamon Flycatcher is found throughout the Andes, but in Colombia’s Santa Marta Mountains it is all cinnamon on the back. The Santa Marta Brush-Finch (lower right) is a distinctive endemic of this isolated mountain range. We are thrilled to be birding Colombia, and these tours are quickly becoming some of our most popular. (Photos by guide Jesse Fagan)

This new tour visits recently opened **Wildsumaco Lodge** in the foothills of eastern Ecuador. Above, a gorgeous Sparkling Violetear, violet not only on its ear, but also its throat, tail, and belly. At lower left, Sword-billed Hummingbird, with the longest bill relative to its body of any bird, needs no introduction. Below, Masked Flowerpiercer. Many flowerpiercers are black, but this one is electric blue with red eyes! (Photos by guide Richard Webster)

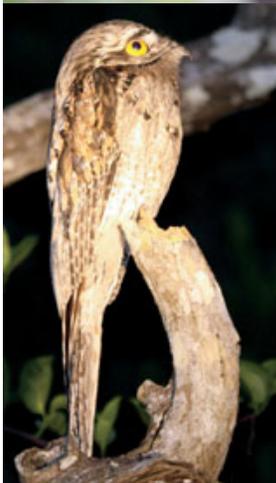




Our **Oman & the UAE: Birding Arabia** tour visits a great part of the world. Fields full of storks, egrets, and wagtails, singing Bushlarks in the taller grass, and Rueppell's Weavers in the palms make for an unexpected scene in the desert! Above left, a Eurasian Curlew reveals its white back and rump. Above right, the common Red-wattled Lapwing is an attractive and noisy species. (Photos by guide George Armistead)



If you picked one country to bird in Southeast Asia, it would be **Thailand**, and the diversity of birdlife is just one of the reasons. Greater Racket-tailed Drongo at left has a striking tail!! At top, a Brown-winged Kingfisher, and below it, a fantastic native pheasant, the male Siamese Fireback. (Photos by guide Dave Stejskal)



Our **Western Mexico: San Blas & the Sinaloa Highlands** continues to impress with great birding, superb food, and a fun time. It's *the* place to see Tufted Jay (top left). This rather northerly tropical jay appears to be most closely related to species from far to the south! The tropical forests of western Mexico hold various specialties as well as some cool but more widespread species such as this Northern Potoo and a Boat-billed Heron. The heron is nocturnal, and although it superficially resembles a night-heron, the two are not closely related. These usually difficult to see birds were found while birding the Rio San Cristobal, above. (Photos by guide Jesse Fagan)

# UPCOMING TOURS

*If you would like details on any trip or trips, please call our office or check our website, where you may download a tour itinerary.*

## June-July

**VIRGINIAS' WARBLERS**—June 2-6 with John Rowlett. Unsurpassed locale for breeding wood-warblers; cool, mountain climate in both beautiful states on our birding tour; optional visit to Monticello.

**ALASKA**—June 3-12 (Part I) and June 11-21 (Part II) with Chris Benesh & Megan Crewe. Comprehensive survey birding tour of spectacular Alaska in two parts: Part I to the Pribilofs and Denali; Part II to Nome, Seward, and Barrow.

**CHURCHILL & SOUTHERN MANITOBA**—June 3-9 (Part I) and June 8-15 (Part II) with John Coons & local guide. A perennial favorite tour among Field Guides travelers; now in two parts, with varied birding through prairie, forest, and tundra; always something exciting to see at Churchill, including Ross's Gull.

**YUKON TO THE ARCTIC OCEAN**—June 5-14 with Jay VanderGaast. Birding tour from Canada's Yukon to the Northwest Territories across wild mountainscapes and unspoiled wilderness to the delta of the Mackenzie River.

**MONTANA: YELLOWSTONE TO GLACIER**—June 10-20 with Terry McEaney & Jesse Fagan. A tour for great western birding and wildlife amidst the scenery of Big Sky country.

**ALASKA**—June 10-19 (Part I) and June 18-28 (Part II) with Dave Stejskal & George Armistead. Comprehensive survey birding tour of spectacular Alaska in two parts: Part I to the Pribilofs and Denali; Part II to Nome, Seward, and Barrow.

**MONTANE ECUADOR**—June 11-20 and July 30-August 8 with Mitch Lysinger. Small-group tour for superb subtropical birding while based at lovely San Isidro Lodge, located among the birds of the east slope, plus two days in west-slope subtropics at the comfortable and birdy Tandayapa Birding Lodge.

**BAFFIN ISLAND: POND INLET**—June 15-24 with John Coons. The excitement of camping at the floe edge with Ivory Gull and other specialty birds and marine mammals in a spectacular 24-hour daylight landscape; perhaps the ultimate arctic birding tour experience for those who love the North Country.

**BORNEO**—June 17-July 4 with Rose Ann Rowlett. Our birding tour features three

prime areas in some of the Earth's richest forests while based in comfort right in the wild.

**RAINFOREST & SAVANNA: ALTA FLORESTA & THE NORTHERN PANTANAL, BRAZIL**—June 18-July 3 with Bret Whitney & Marcelo Padua. A week-long birding tour in pristine rainforest on the beautiful Rio Cristalino combined with the wilds of the Pantanal in search of Hyacinth Macaw, Harpy Eagle, Jabiru, Jaguar, and a large piece of the meaning of life.

**GALAPAGOS**—June 19-29 with Mitch Lysinger & local guide; July 17-27 with Megan Crewe & local guide; and August 7-17 with George Armistead & local guide. A must for any interested naturalist and birder in search of a fascinating set of endemics; small-group birding tour with broad coverage of the islands with plenty of time for the birds, exploring, and photography.

**MACHU PICCHU & ABRA MALAGA, PERU**—June 25-July 4 (Lima Extension: Pucusana, Lomas & Andean Foothills) with Dan Lane & Jesse Fagan and August 7-16 with Dan Lane. Birding tour to southern Peru's east-slope, temperate zone at its best, featuring lots of endemics and scenic Andean puna; also Machu Picchu and great subtropical birding on and near lovely hotel grounds.

**KENYA**—June 25-July 23 with Terry Stevenson. Unsurpassed in its combined wealth of bird life and mammal spectacle; includes the coast. Time-saving internal flights to and from the Masai Mara and from Malindi back to Nairobi.

**AMAZONIAN ECUADOR: SACHA LODGE**—June 29-July 8 with Jay VanderGaast & local guide and July 22-31 with Mitch Lysinger & local guide. One-site birding tour to one of the most comfortable lodges in western Amazonia with some of the birdiest canopy platforms anywhere.

**NEWFOUNDLAND & NOVA SCOTIA**—July 2-12 with Chris Benesh. A birding tour for boreal specialties, seabird colonies, and numerous breeding landbirds in the beautiful Canadian Maritimes.

**MANU WILDLIFE CENTER, PERU**—July 3-15 with Dan Lane and August 3-15 with Pepe Rojas. One-site birding tour to the most species-rich rainforest on Earth. Macaw lick, canopy tower, tapir wallow, and wonderful trails through Amazonian lowlands of Manu Biosphere Reserve.

**PAPUA NEW GUINEA**—July 4-26 (Fiji Extension) with Phil Gregory & Dave Stejskal.

Birds-of-paradise and bowerbirds are the crowning jewels of one of the most remarkable bird faunas, set against a fascinating cultural backdrop far removed from our own. Survey birding tour focusing on forest specialties in diverse and scenic regions.

**PERU'S MAGNETIC NORTH: SPATULETAILS, OWLET LODGE & MORE**—July 14-25 with John Rowlett. A 12-day birding tour for a taste of northern Peru's east-slope Andes, designed for birders with little vacation time and hence unable to take our longer, more diverse NORTHERN PERU tour—or for those who, having delighted in that tour, long for a San Martin reprise!

**NEW CALEDONIA**—July 24-August 2 with Phil Gregory. Specialty birding tour to seek the fascinating, bizarre relict Kagu and other endemics.

**MOUNTAINS OF MANU, PERU**—July 24-August 8 with Rose Ann Rowlett and October 8-23 with Dan Lane. Our in-depth birding tour transect of the higher-elevation half of the Manu Biosphere Reserve and buffer zone, from treeline through temperate and subtropical forests down to rich upper-tropical zone. Spectacular scenery along one of the "birdiest" roads in the world. Extension to outstanding hotel along the forested river below Machu Picchu ruins.

**ARIZONA'S SECOND SPRING**—July 31-August 9 with John Coons. An ideal time for visiting one of the best birding regions in North America: great for local specialties and Mexican vagrants.

**SUMMER COSTA RICA**—July 31-August 15 with Jay VanderGaast. Our "green-season" birding tour for Costa Rica's numerous specialty birds, from Resplendent Quetzals and Three-wattled Bellbirds to Scarlet Macaws; beautiful landscapes with easy travel, good facilities, and welcoming people; a wealth of other interesting natural history.

## August-September

**FRANCE: CAMARGUE & PYRENEES**—September 4-14 with Megan Crewe & Jesse Fagan. Two of Europe's finest birding destinations combined in this wonderful 9-day birding tour, with varied highlights and some great French food.

**SLICE OF CALIFORNIA: SEABIRDS TO SIERRA**—September 4-13 with Chris Benesh. A wonderfully diverse birding tour with a mix of West Coast specialties, montane species, and pelagics in rugged and scenic sites.

**EAST AFRICA HIGHLIGHTS: KENYA & TANZANIA**—September 4-24 with Terry Stevenson. A three-week birding tour combining the richest spots in Kenya and northern Tanzania: an impressive diversity of habitats, many with spectacular scenery.

**CHINA: BEIDAHE & THE TIBETAN PLATEAU**—September 10-28 with Dave Stejskal & Jesper Hornskov. A truly fabulous birding tour adventure, beginning with a tide of stunning autumn migrants at Beidahe and Happy Island and concluding high in the mountains of China's remote Tibetan Plateau.

**BOLIVIA'S AVIAN RICHES**—September 11-26 (Blue-throated Macaw and More Extension) with Dan Lane & George Armistead. Comprehensive survey birding tour of the special bird life of the Bolivian Andes; wonderful mountain scenery.

**RIO NEGRO PARADISE: MANAUS, BRAZIL**—September 11-24 with Bret Whitney & Marcelo Padua. Birding tour to the rainforests and rivers of the mighty Amazon and Rio Negro in an unforgettable mix of forest hikes and live-aboard luxury.

**OUTBACK AUSTRALIA: PLAINS-WANDERER & MORE**—September 11-October 3 with Phil Gregory. Specialty birding tour for some of Australia's least-known birds off the beaten track; several remote areas, starkly beautiful landscapes.

**ECUADOR: RAINFOREST & ANDES**—September 12-26 with Mitch Lysinger. Highlight birding tour of the best of Ecuador's rainforest birding at Sacha Lodge (think cotingas, parrots, antbirds, and canopy towers) combined with two exciting destinations in the Andes, the Mindo/Tandayapa area and San Isidro (think myriad hummingbirds and tanagers, quetzals, and cock-of-the-rock).

**AUSTRALIA**—September 24-October 14 (Pelagics Pre-trip; Part I) with Chris Benesh & Megan Crewe and October 12-27 (Tasmania Extension; Part II) with John Coons & Jesse Fagan. Our Australia birding tour is split into two parts for those who have limited time at their disposal. Part I will cover the environs of Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, southwest Australia, and Alice Springs. Part II will begin in Darwin and continue to Queensland (Cairns, Atherton Tableland, and O'Reilly's Guest House). Both parts combine for a complete bird-tour experience of Australia.

**SERRA DOS TUCANOS, BRAZIL**—September 25-October 5 with John Rowlett. A short but rich birding tour immersion in the avifauna of the Atlantic Forest, based at one lovely site near Rio; designed for birders with little time and hence unable to take our longer, two-part SPECTACULAR SOUTHEAST BRAZIL tour—or for those who have taken that tour and want a brief reprise!

**NEW GUINEA & AUSTRALIA**—September 30-October 18 with Jay VanderGaast. A rich and diverse birding tour sampling of the best sites of New Guinea and Australia.

# 2011 TOUR SCHEDULE

## January

Antarctica: Antarctic Peninsula, South Georgia & the Falklands	Jan 5-26	George Armistead
Southwestern Ecuador Specialties	Jan 8-22	Rose Ann Rowlett
Oman & the UAE: Birding Arabia I	Jan 13-29	Phil Gregory
Amazonian Ecuador: Sacha Lodge I	Jan 14-23	Jay VanderGaast
Colombia: Bogota, the Magdalena Valley & Santa Marta	Jan 15-31	Jesse Fagan & local guide
Colima & Jalisco	Jan 15-23	Chris Benesh & Megan Crewe
Venezuela	Jan 15-29	John Coons
Yellowstone in Winter	Jan 15-23	Terry McEneaney
Thailand	Jan 15-Feb 5	Dave Stejskal & Uthai Treesucon
<b>NEW</b> Colombia: The Cauca Valley, Western & Central Andes I	Jan 15-31	Richard Webster & local guide
Northeast Brazil: Long Live the Lear's!	Jan 16-Feb 5	Bret Whitney & Marcelo Padua
Northern India	Jan 22-Feb 13	Terry Stevenson
Jewels of Ecuador: Hummers, Tanagers & Antpittas I	Jan 22-Feb 8	Mitch Lysinger
Oaxaca	Jan 23-30	Megan Crewe & Dan Lane
Venezuela: Tepuis Endemics	Jan 28-Feb 6	Jay VanderGaast
The Heart of Chile	Jan 29-Feb 12	Peter Burke & Ricardo Matus

## February

Panama's Wild Darien: Cana & Cerro Pirre	Feb 10-19	John Coons
Amazonian Ecuador: Sacha Lodge II	Feb 11-20	Dan Lane
<b>NEW</b> Brazil Nutshell: Atlantic Forest, Iguazu Falls & Pantanal	Feb 18-Mar 5	Marcelo Padua & Jay VanderGaast
<b>NEW</b> Panama's Fabulous Fortnight (Part I)	Feb 18-24	John Rowlett
Trinidad & Tobago I	Feb 19-28	Megan Crewe
<b>NEW</b> Colombia: The Cauca Valley, Western & Central Andes II	Feb 19-Mar 7	Richard Webster & local guide
Cambodia	Feb 19-Mar 3	Phil Gregory
Panama's Canopy Tower I	Feb 19-26	John Coons
Jewels of Ecuador: Hummers, Tanagers & Antpittas II	Feb 19-Mar 8	Mitch Lysinger
Guatemala: Shade-grown Birding	Feb 23-Mar 5	Jesse Fagan
<b>NEW</b> Panama's Fabulous Fortnight (Part II)	Feb 23-Mar 3	John Rowlett
Panama's Canopy Tower II	Feb 26-Mar 5	Chris Benesh

## March

Borneo	Mar 3-20	Rose Ann Rowlett
Suriname	Mar 4-19	Bret Whitney & Dan Lane
Philippines	Mar 5-27	Dave Stejskal & Tim Fisher
Honduras: Land of the Emeralds	Mar 5-13	Jesse Fagan & John Coons
Costa Rica	Mar 12-27	Megan Crewe & local guide
Yucatan & Cozumel	Mar 18-27	John Coons & local guide
Colombia: Santa Marta Escape	Mar 19-27	Richard Webster & local guide
Hawaii	Mar 19-29	George Armistead
<b>NEW</b> Ghana	Mar 19-Apr 2	Phil Gregory
<b>NEW</b> Ecuador's Wildsumaco Lodge	Mar 19-29	Mitch Lysinger & John Rowlett
Ecuador: Rainforest & Andes I	Mar 20-Apr 3	Jay VanderGaast
Spring in South Texas	Mar 26-Apr 3	Chris Benesh
Bahamas: Birds & Butterflies	Mar 29-Apr 3	Jesse Fagan

# 2011 TOUR SCHEDULE

“This was an exceptional tour. John Rowlett’s amazing range and depth of expertise and his energetic leadership were the best features. And of course, the great number and variety of birds. This was my first professionally-led birding tour. I’d definitely travel with John again.”

Dixie Mills, Ecuador 2009



## April

Puerto Rico  
 Namibia & Botswana  
 Colorado Grouse I  
 Bhutan  
 Lesser Antilles  
 Colorado Grouse II  
 Texas Coast Migration Spectacle  
 Texas Hill Country  
 Dominican Republic  
 Texas’s Big Bend & Hill Country

Apr 3-9 George Armistead  
 Apr 5-24 Terry Stevenson  
 Apr 7-17 Megan Crewe & Chris Benesh  
 Apr 8-28 Richard Webster  
 Apr 9-23 Alvaro Jaramillo  
 Apr 14-24 Dan Lane  
 Apr 16-22 John Coons  
 Apr 18-23 John Rowlett  
 Apr 23-30 Jesse Fagan  
 Apr 23-May 2 Chris Benesh & John Coons

## May

**BIRDING PLUS** Ireland in Spring: Birds, Traditional Music & Pubs  
 Arizona Nightbirds & More I  
 Spain: La Mancha, Coto Donana & Extremadura  
**NEW** Ethiopia  
 Arizona Nightbirds & More II  
 Arizona: Birding the Border I  
 Point Pelee Migration Spectacle  
**BIRDING PLUS** North Carolina: Petrels & the Deep Blue Sea  
 Uganda: Shoebill, Rift Endemics & Gorillas  
 Arizona: Birding the Border II

May 5-15 Terry McEneaney & John Rowlett  
 May 5-9 Dave Stejskal  
 May 6-18 Chris Benesh & local guide  
 May 7-27 Terry Stevenson & George Armistead  
 May 12-16 Dave Stejskal  
 May 13-22 John Coons  
 May 14-19 Jay VanderGaast  
 May 14-23 Jesse Fagan  
 May 19-Jun 9 Phil Gregory  
 May 21-30 Dave Stejskal

## June

Virginias’ Warblers  
 Alaska I (Part I)  
 Churchill & Southern Manitoba (Part I)  
 Churchill & Southern Manitoba (Part II)  
 Alaska II (Part I)  
 Montana: Yellowstone to Glacier  
 Borneo  
 Alaska I (Part II)  
 Montane Ecuador I  
 Alaska II (Part II)  
 Galapagos I  
 Rainforest & Savanna: Alta Floresta & the Northern Pantanal, Brazil  
 Machu Picchu & Abra Malaga, Peru  
 Kenya I  
 Papua New Guinea I

Jun 1-5 John Rowlett  
 Jun 2-11 Chris Benesh & George Armistead  
 Jun 2-8 John Coons & local guide  
 Jun 7-14 John Coons & local guide  
 Jun 9-18 Dave Stejskal & Megan Crewe  
 Jun 9-19 Terry McEneaney & Jesse Fagan  
 Jun 9-26 Rose Ann Rowlett  
 Jun 10-20 Chris Benesh & George Armistead  
 Jun 10-19 Mitch Lysinger  
 June 17-27 Dave Stejskal & Megan Crewe  
 Jun 18-28 Jay VanderGaast  
 Jun 24-Jul 9 Bret Whitney & Marcelo Padua  
 Jun 24-Jul 3 Dan Lane  
 Jun 24-Jul 22 Terry Stevenson  
 Jun 26-Jul 18 Phil Gregory

“Flawless logistics, an excellent guide in Phil Gregory, amazing birds—an excellent overall experience.”

Frank Gill & Sally Conyne,  
 Papua New Guinea 2009

## July

Newfoundland & Nova Scotia	Jul 1-11	Chris Benesh
Amazonian Ecuador: Sacha Lodge III	Jul 1-10	Mitch Lysinger
Manu Wildlife Center, Peru I	Jul 2-14	Dan Lane
Galapagos II	Jul 9-19	Megan Crewe
Papua New Guinea II	Jul 10-Aug 1	Jay VanderGaast
Peru's Magnetic North: Spatuletails, Owllet Lodge & More	Jul 13-24	John Rowlett
Machu Picchu & Abra Malaga, Peru	Jul 15-24	Jesse Fagan
Amazonian Ecuador: Sacha Lodge IV	Jul 21-30	Dave Stejskal
Mountains of Manu, Peru	Jul 23-Aug 7	Dan Lane
<b>NEW</b> Jaguar Spotting: Pantanal & Garden of the Amazon	Jul 23-Aug 3	Marcelo Padua
Montane Ecuador II	Jul 29-Aug 7	Rose Ann Rowlett
Summer Costa Rica	Jul 30-Aug 14	Megan Crewe & local guide
Arizona's Second Spring I	Jul 30-Aug 8	John Coons

Mitch Lysinger is a world-class birder, has a wonderful sense of humor, and creates a very enjoyable dynamic among the group members. Your office service also was very good! I will continue to pick Field Guides over others."

Andrew Bunting, Holiday at San Isidro 2009

## August

Galapagos III	Aug 6-16	George Armistead
Arizona's Second Spring II	Aug 6-15	Chris Benesh

## September

Kenya II	Sep 2-30	Terry Stevenson
France: Camargue & Pyrenees	Sep 3-13	Megan Crewe & Jesse Fagan
Slice of California: Seabirds to Sierras	Sep 3-12	Chris Benesh
Morocco	Sep 9-26	George Armistead & Dave Stejskal
Rio Negro Paradise: Manaus, Brazil	Sep 10-23	Bret Whitney & Marcelo Padua
Bolivia's Avian Riches	Sep 10-25	Dan Lane & Jay VanderGaast
Ecuador: Rainforest & Andes II	Sep 11-25	Mitch Lysinger
<b>NEW</b> New Caledonia, Fiji & Vanuatu	Sep 11-23	Phil Gregory
Australia (Part I)	Sep 23-Oct 13	John Coons & second guide
Carajas: Lower Amazonian Brazil	Sep 23-Oct 2	Marcelo Padua
Serra Dos Tucanos, Brazil	Sep 24-Oct 4	John Rowlett

## October

<b>BIRDING PLUS</b> Cape May Megan's Way	Oct 1-7	Megan Crewe
Cristalino Jungle Lodge, Brazil	Oct 3-14	John Rowlett
New Guinea & Australia	Oct 6-24	Phil Gregory
South Africa	Oct 6-29	Terry Stevenson & local guide
Safari Brazil: The Pantanal & More	Oct 8-24	Mitch Lysinger & Marcelo Padua
Australia (Part II)	Oct 11-26	Chris Benesh & Jay VanderGaast
Manu Wildlife Center, Peru II	Oct 15-27	Dan Lane
New Zealand	Oct 27-Nov 14	George Armistead & local guide
Spectacular Southeast Brazil (Part I)	Oct 28-Nov 13	Bret Whitney & Marcelo Padua
Sri Lanka	Oct 30-Nov 15	Megan Crewe
Chile	Oct 30-Nov 19	Alvaro Jaramillo & Ricardo Matus

"The tour was fantastic! George Armistead is an excellent guide, knowledgeable and patient. Can't beat him! And your office service was top notch."

Mel Baughman, Antarctica 2009

"I just love Field Guides tours—they're the best. This one was super! It was my first trip with Rose Ann Rowlett, who was wonderful. Office service was very good. I have become a stalwart Field Guides client."

Colin Clark, Mountains of Manu, Peru 2009

## November

Madagascar, Mauritius & Reunion	Nov 2-30	Phil Gregory & second guide
Louisiana: Red Beans & Yellow Rails	Nov 3-7	Dan Lane
<b>BIRDING PLUS</b> El Salvador & Banding	Nov 5-12	Jesse Fagan
Northern Peru: Endemics Galore	Nov 6-26	Rose Ann Rowlett & Richard Webster
Spectacular Southeast Brazil (Part II)	Nov 11-27	Bret Whitney & Marcelo Padua
Southern India	Nov 13-Dec 4	Terry Stevenson & local guide
Western Mexico: San Blas & the Sinaloa Highlands	Nov 16-26	Chris Benesh & David Mackay
<b>NEW</b> Pacific Northwest Weekend: Birding Puget Sound	Nov 16-20	Terry McEneaney
Guatemala Thanksgiving: Temples of Tikal	Nov 19-28	Jesse Fagan
Holiday at San Isidro, Ecuador	Nov 19-28	Mitch Lysinger

## December

<b>BIRDING PLUS</b> Ireland in Fall: Birds, Traditional Music & Pubs	Dec 1-11	Terry McEneaney
Oman & the UAE: Birding Arabia II	Dec 1-17	George Armistead
Uruguay: Birding the Land of the Gauchos	Dec 3-17	Alvaro Jaramillo
Brazil's Rio Roosevelt: Birding the River of Doubt	Dec 16-29	Bret Whitney
Trinidad & Tobago II	Dec 17-26	Wayne Petersen
Holiday Costa Rica: Rancho Naturalista I	Dec 18-26	Jesse Fagan & local guide
Panama's Canopy Lodge: El Valle De Anton	Dec 27-Jan 3, 2012	Chris Benesh
Oaxaca & the Pacific Coast	Dec 28-Jan 8, 2012	Megan Crewe & Mike Crewe
Panama's Wild Darien: Cana & Cerro Pirre	Dec 29-Jan 7, 2012	John Coons
Arizona Winter Specialties	Dec 30-Jan 4, 2012	Dave Stejskal
Holiday Costa Rica: Rancho Naturalista II	Dec 30-Jan 7, 2012	Jay VanderGaast & local guide

# SHOREBIRDS TRANSFORMED

*Continued from page 1*

Picture your most unassuming friend getting up one day at a Karaoke and blowing everyone away with a talent no one knew existed. This was my experience when I first visited Alaska. I'd always been a fan of shorebirds and I thought I knew a thing or two about them, but in the north they just amazed me. The birds were gorgeous—they danced, they sang, they strutted or just impressed in ways I had not imagined. How many hundreds of Long-billed Dowitchers had I examined at home, scouring every little gray feather for that notch or edge that would confirm the bird as a Long-billed, and not the similar Short-billed. If in birding you can ever have a Susan Boyle moment, I had it in Alaska. Susan, of course, is the rather dowdy Scottish woman who became a star almost overnight as a result of her powerful voice. Barrow, Alaska is where Long-billed Dowitchers became stars for me.

Brick red below with bars and accents throughout, rusty and black with fine white spots above, this bird in breeding plumage is a showstopper. And then, up in the air, Man-O-Man, that voice! It trills and buzzes and makes a complex commotion that sometimes sounds like “dow-it-cherrr...dow-it-cherrr,” as if, clearly proud of himself, he’s proclaiming, “Look at me, at what I am, a dowitcher!!!” But all this magic is shortlived, for in a few weeks the bright feathers will be replaced by gray, the aerial dancing will cease, and the bird must undertake its long and hazardous migration to Central America for the winter.

As we might expect, the lifestyles of shorebirds differ. Most prominent among those with alternative lifestyles are the phalaropes. The females are big and colorful, and they compete with each other for mates. Sounds good from a male perspective, but on the downside, the male is stuck with all the household duties. Once the female lays the eggs, the male incubates and cares for them on his own. On the other side of the coin are those shorebirds that *lek*; males display on an arena and compete for the attentions of visiting females, with a few very successful males siring most of the offspring in that season. In this group, the males do no housework, just hang out with the boys and flirt with the girls. The classic lek is that of the many open-country grouse, prairie chickens and sage grouse (which we see on the *Colorado Grouse* tour!). Buff-breasted Sandpiper, which we saw on last year’s Alaska tour showing off its pearly whites (underwings that is!) to females, is North America’s only true lekking shorebird.

The Pectoral Sandpiper does not have a proper lek, but like the Buff-breasted, is interested in only one thing, mating. His territorial defense and display are pretty amazing. Picture this. You’re out on the tundra when you hear what sounds like a flying saucer in one of those sci-fi films of the 60’s, “Twoot-twoo, twoot-twoo, twoot-twoo, twoot-twoo...” The sound grows



louder and then you see it—a brown bird with its chest puffed out looking almost like a cartoon. The breast of the Pectoral has inflatable air bags that expand and contract during display to create the flying saucer noise. He flies close to the ground, with shallow fluttering wings, moving relatively slowly...almost as if he’s going to stall and flop to the ground. When an amorous female is in the area, the male lands behind her and follows with chest still puffed out while flaring the white in his tail and swaying from side to side. His calls get sharper and change from a hoot to a frenzied wheeze. There’s more motion, more intensity...and if all goes well, she crouches and they mate, and then the whole thing starts over again. What a show!

Alaska is not only a beautiful state—and one with many special birds—but the summer home of many beautiful shorebirds. Seeing them on their nesting grounds is one of the great eye-openers of North American birding. It is absolutely unbelievable, and as I write I’ve begun to envy my colleagues who guide most of our Alaska tours—Chris, Megan, Dave, and George. It’s been several years since I’ve been there, but thinking about those dancing shorebirds has made me want to go back *sooo* bad. Alaska is unforgettable, gripping, and simply fantastic!

*If, like me, you’d like to join one of our tours this year, dates are June 3-12 (Part I) and June 11-21 (Part II) with Chris Benesh & Megan Crewe*

*June 10-19 (Part I) & June 18-28 (Part II) with Dave Stejskal & George Armistead*

*Part I includes the Pribilof Islands and Denali National Park, a true scenic wonder. Part II covers the far north at Nome and Barrow along with Seward (Kenai Fjords National Park) and the Anchorage area. Both tours may be taken separately or combined.*

More images from the Alaska shorebird show! At top, a male Red-necked Phalarope; at center, a male Pectoral Sandpiper with expanded neck sacs getting ready to perform; and at left, a white-cheeked female Red Phalarope. (Photos by guides George Armistead, Mike Crewe, and Chris Benesh)



# First time to Peru? Try Machu Picchu & Abra Malaga

*Continued from page 1*

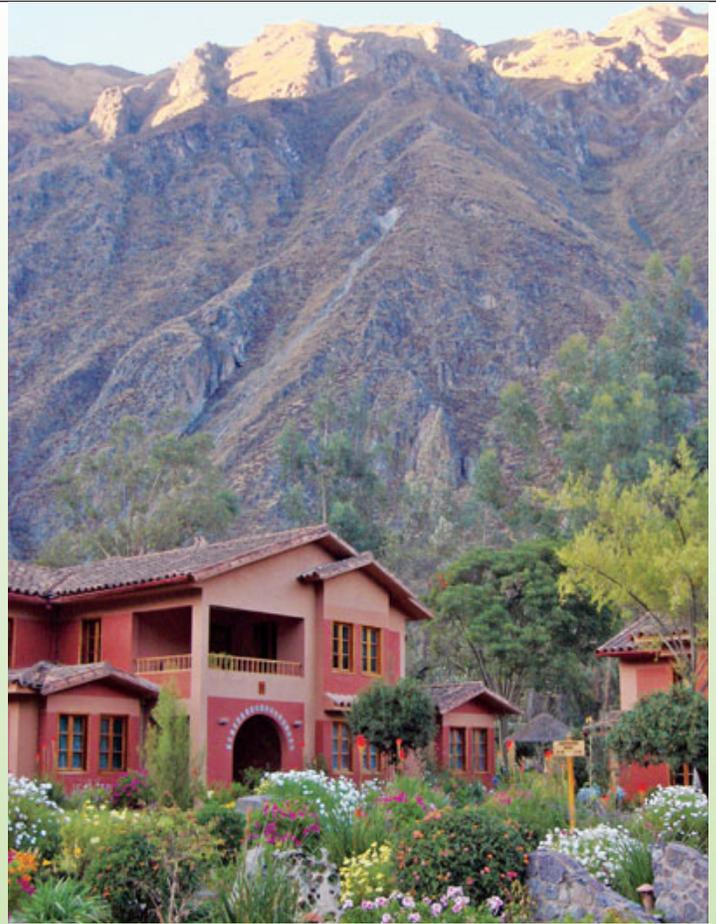
The Cusco Andes of Peru are a great place to get to know the birds and culture of this large and varied country. Here we can experience several different habitat types—from arid temperate valleys to open puna to humid temperate and subtropical forests—and the birds that inhabit them. And of course, we can also enjoy learning a bit about the history of Peru, the cradle of one of the three most important pre-Columbian civilizations in the Americas both in the context of pre-conquest times (before the arrival of the swash-buckling Spaniards) and the present. In so many ways, the people of the region have maintained many aspects of their pre-Columbian culture despite centuries of “westernization”... some still speak only Quechua and farm potatoes and raise sheep and alpacas for wool. (Okay, so I admit the sheep would not be part of the pre-Columbian culture, but you see what I mean.) We are able to enjoy delicacies that are based on native crops (*quinoa*, potato, *matz*), and some more daring participants have even been known to try alpaca and *cuy* (guinea pig), though if these are too exotic for your palate, never fear, Peruvian cuisine can cater to nearly any taste.

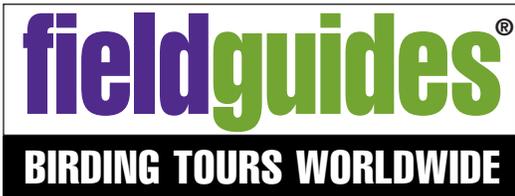
On this tour we see the southern Peruvian Andes in all their glory: from the arid intermontane valleys to the puna to the humid slopes cloaked with temperate and subtropical forests. And, gosh-durn-it, those habitats are just full of birds! Lovely and colorful gems such as the hummingbirds and tanagers abound both at the feeders and in the forests where big mixed-flocks break the apparent stillness, causing a few minutes of chaotic birding. In the drier and more open country, some of the birds of interest have more muted colors, but many of these are endemics and fascinating in their own right.

The scenery—as you might expect—is breathtaking, especially on the train ride from Cusco to Machu Picchu and also on the Abra Malaga section of the tour. At 14,200 feet, Abra Malaga is the low point, or pass, along a ridge of rugged peaks called the Vilcanota Mountains separating elfin treeline and humid temperate forest on the northwest from the dry, shrub-covered slopes of the upper Rio Urubamba Valley. Buffering the upper limits of these habitats is the starkly beautiful puna grassland dotted with llamas, alpacas, and the very occasional cluster of stone houses, corrals, and fences erected by Quechua-speaking families who are somehow accustomed to prospering in what seems to most visitors an inhospitable environment.

So if you've been thinking of visiting Peru and have been wondering which of our many tours to take first, I'd recommend starting with this one, **Machu Picchu & Abra Malaga**. We have two departures scheduled this year, **June 25-July 4** and **August 7-16**, and you can read more and download a tour itinerary on our website. Just head to the Machu Picchu & Abra Malaga tour page. Once you've gotten a toehold on the avifauna and culture of this large and varied country, we'd love to show you more of it. So come along with Jesse Fagan and me this summer—and don't forget your binoculars!

With the Andes dominating the country and dividing the birdlife into various eco-regions, Peru is both birdy and scenic. At top right, some of our comfortable lodgings at Ollantaytambo; middle right, a male Green-tailed Trainbearer—the tail makes this bird; and at right, morning sun on the Andes highlights Peru's natural beauty. (Photos by guides Dan Lane & John Rowlett & participant Richard Stilwell)





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