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B I R D I N G T O U R S W O R L D W I D E

My Ecuador Highlights

Willy Perez

A few months ago I moved with my family from our home in Ecuador to England—a chance to be back in my wife's native country. The change has been really interesting, but I have to confess to feeling homesick, especially when I think about Ecuador's birdlife. It's fun to see Blackbirds, Robins, and Blue Tits, which are all beautiful in their way, but I do feel an increasing excitement as I look forward to my rich and varied 2013 tours in Ecuador. The incredible range of altitudes there provides homes to so many different and fascinating species with their extraordinary displays and colors. I have had the privilege of growing up surrounded by bird song and of experiencing many fascinating examples of bird behavior. The following are just a few of my favorite highlights—experiences I hope to recapture or exceed on my eight tours to beautiful Ecuador in 2013.

When I think of colorful birds, what comes to mind is a species known locally as the *Yumbo*, or clown of seven colors; in English, it's the Toucan Barbet, even though it is not a Toucan and is no longer considered a Barbet. None of this matters when you see it in real life and when you hear it sing its stunning duet. We'll have our eyes and ears peeled on the *Jewels of Ecuador*, *Montane Ecuador*, and *Rainforest & Andes* tours, and we should see this fantastic bird.



Ecuador highlights include the Long-tailed Sylph at top left, the Toucan Barbet, left, and of course, Willy Perez. (Photos by participants Bob Sprague & Amy Levengood and guide Rose Ann Rowlett)

What's next? Well, you've no doubt heard of an umbrellabird—but sounds unreal doesn't it?! Yet there are such birds and they are bizarre. I call them the Elvis birds for their hilarious hairstyles, but local people call them the *Pajaro Toro*, or Bullbird, because their calls sound like the mooing of a bull. There are three species of umbrellabird, two of which are found in Ecuador—the Long-wattled and the Amazonian—and each can be seen on several tours. But it is the Long-wattled that is my favorite, mostly because I love to watch it as it

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Revelation in Peru: Discovering the Tambopata

Pepe Rojas

I grew up in coastal Lima, and nothing in my experience could have ever prepared me for my first trip to the Tambopata rainforest in southeastern Peru. It was a revelation. I was a college kid at the time, looking to escape the endless noise, crowded streets, and hustle and bustle of life in a big city, and absolutely everything about the rainforest was new to me. The smells, the plants, the insects—even the air had a different taste! Without question, however, the most striking sensation came from the sounds. How can I even describe the feelings I had upon hearing that cacophony and diversity of sounds exploding to life during the dawn chorus in the Amazon?

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Black-capped Parakeet photographed by guide John Rowlett.

RECENT WORDS FROM YOU

Jan Pierson

Thanks for sending all the great feedback!

"Pepe Rojas was absolutely delightful: very enthusiastic, very concerned that everyone see a particular bird, full of interesting information about Peru, its food and culture." K.Z., Peru's Magnetic North

"Our guide Willy Perez was friendly, helpful, always upbeat, and made sure that everyone saw the birds. I plan to go wherever Willy goes." D.L., Montane Ecuador

"My overall Alaska tour experience was absolutely fantastic. The best part was how well Chris Benesh and Jesse Fagan took care of us...I'm trying to think of constructive criticisms but, really, I can't come up with anything. The entire process, from start to finish met or exceeded my expectations." C.D., Alaska

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GUIDELINES

An Owlet in My Tent

Dan Lane

Northern Peru holds a particularly dear place in my heart, as I have spent quite a lot of time there while on museum expeditions with LSU. This varied and exciting part of the country is finally starting to get the recognition it deserves in the international birding community with two showcase birds: Marvelous Spatuletail and Long-whiskered Owlet, both of which were difficult, if not downright impossible, to see on a birding tour only ten years ago! In fact, it was ten years ago, in 2002, that I first visited the area around Abra Patricia as part of an LSU expedition sent to explore those mountains. Despite the discovery of several new species to science there in the 1970s and early 1980s, the region had been only superficially studied, and we wished to know more about that incredible avifauna. High on our list of things to encounter was, of course, the infamous Long-whiskered Owlet, *Xenoglaux loweryi*! (Is *Xenoglaux* a skin condition?) This little ball of feathers had only been encountered twice before: its initial discovery in 1976 and a second encounter in 1979, both by LSU Museum researchers, and both times only involving birds captured in mistnets (not encountered free-flying in the field). The species was described in 1977 by my friend and mentor John O'Neill, and its scientific name honored the founder and director of the LSU Museum, George Lowery. We were determined to find the bird again, and to figure out what it does and how it sounds!

After over a month at a camp in the muddy cloud forest studying the birds at elevations at the low (1800-2000m) and high end (2900-3200m) of what we could access in the area near Abra Patricia, we were stumped. Where was the owlet? Well, we decided we needed to put nets in the middle elevations (2600m). Our field hands, among

them the venerable Manuel Sanchez, who was the first person to see the owlet in 1976 when he pulled it out of a mistnet, knew that a great way to capture birds is to place nets on ridge tops. Birds, as they move, have to cross these ridges, and often even canopy birds will fly over them at very low heights. So, our nets were placed on ridges here as well. Lo and behold, within a few days of placing nets on these ridges, one of our assistants returned to camp with a cloth bag containing a small owl with no tail to speak of, but with long bristles around the facial disk!

One of my primary goals was to obtain sound recordings of the vocalizations of this bird, so I brought the captive owl to my tent and spent the night with my microphone trained on it. No results. A few days later, a second owl was brought in, and I tried again. Silence. Finally, about a week later, our Peruvian field assistants told me that they had had a third bird in their tent, and that it sang at 5:30 a.m. I brought the bird back to the main camp and this time released it inside my tent. I installed some sticks for perches near the top of my dome tent's roof. Again I spent the night barely asleep with my cassette recorder on and ready to record with one touch of a button.

This third owlet was remarkably active! Rather than seeming concerned about being in this unnatural world, it dropped to the floor of my tent and returned to the sticks as if it were hunting the cockroaches it no doubt heard crawling in the leaf litter under my tent. On a few occasions, it landed on my head, even once walking from my cheek to my chin before returning to its stick perch higher up. At about 10 p.m., it gave a single call, but I wasn't able to switch on my recorder and I missed it. At 5:30 a.m. I decided to take a chance (I only had the one cassette), and flipped off the 'pause' button on my recorder. The spindles started turning. Sure enough, only a few minutes later, the little owl started to call, giving a low, gruff "wOOo" sound about once every 20 seconds. A smile spread across my face as the tape captured this sound for posterity...



Above, looking out at the cloud forest from Owllet Lodge; and clockwise from above left, some birds of Abra Patricia, Marvelous Spatuletail, Long-whiskered Owllet, and Emerald-bellied Puffleg. (Photos by guide Richard Webster)

finally! The voice of the Long-whiskered Owllet was known! By dawn, once my cassette ran out, and the bird fell silent again, I dragged myself out of my now owl-poop-covered sleeping bag, handed the owllet to one of the other researchers in the camp, and packed my gear to return to the mid-elevation satellite camp. I was going to make every effort to see this incredible animal in the field! But this is a difficult bird to see—though it appears to be more widespread than was originally thought. At one point during the following nights, I thought I heard a distant reply, but playback had no effect. The forest was tall and thick, and if a sparrow-sized owl had flown in, I couldn't detect it!

So my efforts to be the first to see Long-whiskered Owllet in the wild were frustratingly inconclusive, but they were not all for naught. It wasn't until 2007 that the species was actually seen in the field, and the recordings I made from that captive bird were very important for finding the bird then, and at other sites. Next summer will be my first opportunity to return to Abra Patricia since the owllet has begun to be seen in the field, though it has proved very difficult to see well, and involves a long hike to the area where it's been found.

I'm still hopeful, though. How about you? Join me on **Peru's Magnetic North**, and even if we don't see this lovely bird, there are still many other wonderful birds we may discover and enjoy watching with the same awe.

We have two tours visiting the Abra Patricia area this year:
Peru's Magnetic North: Spatuletails, Owllet Lodge & More,
 June 25-July 6 with Dan Lane & Pepe Rojas
Northern Peru: Endemics Galore, November 3-23 with Richard Webster & Pepe Rojas

My Ecuador Highlights *Continued from page 1*

inflates its very long wattle as it moos. It's an impressive audio-visual experience! The *Southwestern Ecuador Specialties* tour is especially good for this one.

Third up are antbirds, definitely one of the highlights of the Amazon, particularly when you get to see for yourself a huge army ant swarm with attending antbirds and other species. What an experience it is to be at the edge of thousands of army ants searching for food; the swarm, with many creatures trying to escape from its path, sounds almost like rain. Suddenly you catch sight of a White-plumed, Hairy-crested, Lunulated, or Bicolored Antbird—they seem to be dancing—but in fact they are eating the insects that are fleeing from the ants. And in Ecuador, we now have the opportunity to see what were



You see an odd shape up in a tree...um, what on earth is that? Then you notice a beak and an eye (top left) and two feet on the branch, and...OMG it's a BIRD! Look, pale quills in the wing, and what's that weird thing hanging down... UMBRELLABIRD! A Long-wattled one, to be precise, and very, very cool. (Photo by Rose Ann Rowlett on our Southwestern Ecuador Specialties tour)

once known as the secret birds—the antpittas—in a whole new way. Thanks to Angel Paz, the Antpitta Whisperer, we are able to see the birds feeding or walking down a trail in front of us, something that was most unlikely just six years ago. Even the Giant, a species that was essentially unknown in life until about twenty years ago, is possible. Angel's technique has been emulated by others, and we now have fantastic close-up antpitta experiences on many of our Ecuador tours.

As amazing as it is to bird on the forest floor, birding from a tower in or above the canopy opens up a whole new world of activity. We might come face to face with birds swooping and flying right past us, and sometimes we see tanagers drinking water from bromeliads or feeding or even nesting only a few meters away. What a privilege! It's a highlight experience on our *Sacha Lodge* and *Rainforest & Andes* tours.

I am a complete manakin fan, and I confess that I'm a little jealous that Marcelo (Padua) is already called the Manakin, since I want to be one too! These birds are so much fun to watch—they are small, fast, chunky, and have fascinating behavior (just like me without the chunky). In Ecuador you see perfect dance routines from the Wire-tailed, Golden-headed, and White-bearded, but my absolute favorite is the Club-winged Manakin, the only bird known to produce a musical sound with its wings. Best of all, we get to see manakins on all our Ecuador tours!

Why don't we re-create some of these highlight experiences together, or discover some exciting new ones? Come and join me on one of my 2013 tours—I'd love to share all these incredible sights and sounds with you.

Willy's 2013 Ecuador tours for the second half of the year include:
Montane Ecuador: Cloudforests Of the Andes, Jun 7-16
Galapagos: An Intimate Look At Darwin's Islands, Jun 15-25
Ecuador: Rainforest & Andes, Sep 8-22
Ecuador's Shiripuno Lodge: Heartland Of the Waorani,
 Sep 28-Oct 7 with Mitch Lysinger

FRESH FROM THE FIELD



Birds and wine go together like, well, birds and wine, and France is definitely a great place to combine these two pleasures, as our recent **France: Camargue & Pyrenees** tour discovered. A robust Cabernet would go well with the rugged glacial valley at Port de Boucharo, perhaps a delicate rosé to accompany the lovely Greater Flamingos in the Camargue, or maybe a fruity Chardonnay paired with a sweet European Honey Buzzard. You might want to book a spot now to join Megan for the 2013 outing so you can try your own wine/bird pairings. It's sure to be delicious! (Photos by guide Jesse Fagan)



Australia may be better known for its crazy mammals (platypus, koala, wombat...) and large flightless birds (cassowary and emu), but it also has its share of colorful small birds, too. Guides Chris Benesh and Jesse Fagan managed to snap a few of these bright sprites on our 2012 **Australia** tour. Above, a Blue-breasted Fairywren, so-named because names like "Superb" and "Splendid" were already taken, the latter name usurped by the gorgeous blue critter below right. Below left is one of a bunch of lovely little finches known as firetails; this one is a Red-browed Firetail.

Arizona is such a great state for birding, and it's no wonder when you take into consideration that it has two springs! Participant Jeff Wahl went on the first of our two **Arizona's Second Spring** offerings and came back with these great photos of some Arizona specialties. Clockwise from top left: a Spotted Owl causes a stir in Miller Canyon; a close up of a desert specialist, the Gila Woodpecker; an incredible study of a Five-striped Sparrow, a mostly Mexican species that just creeps into Arizona.





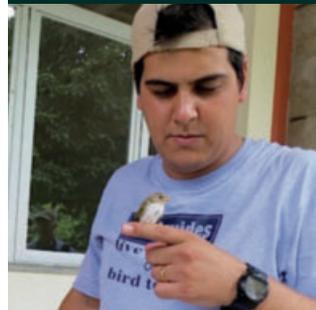
Birding in the tropics isn't all heat and humidity, as the group pictured here on our recent **Bolivia's Avian Riches** tour can attest! In the high Andes, there isn't much about the weather that seems tropical, though even in the mountains the birds still have a tropical flavor, as evidenced by the stunning Hooded Mountain-Tanager (above left). The extension to the Beni got folks to some decidedly more tropical areas of Bolivia, where they searched successfully for the very scarce Blue-throated Macaw (above right) along with a bunch of other superb tropical birds! (Photos by guide Dan Lane and tour participants David & Judy Smith)



A week of cruising and birding in the Amazon basin while staying aboard a comfortable boat with excellent service and food sounds like paradise, **Rio Negro Paradise: Manaus, Brazil** that is. This year's tour saw guides Bret Whitney and Marcelo Padua serve up a bounty of spectacular and highly sought-after species, a few of which are pictured here. Clockwise from top are a fantastic Wire-tailed Manakin on his display perch in the understory, a stripey male Cherrie's Antwren, and the unbelievable Crimson Topaz. Meanwhile Marcelo demonstrates his bird-whispering skills with the help of a young Red-eyed Vireo. (Photos by guides Bret Whitney & Marcelo Padua and tour participant David Bates)



Birding the best of two countries, a small group of people joined guide Phil Gregory on this year's **New Guinea & Australia** tour. Phil reports that they had "lots of lucky finds and unexpected bonus birds" in addition to the regular, expected species. Among the lucky finds were the Squatter Pigeon at top, now a scarce and declining species, and the Baillon's Crake at right (any crake out in the open like that is lucky!). The Regent Bowerbird, above, is one of the regulars, albeit a spectacular one, and it may even sit on your head at O'Reilly's! (Photos by guide Phil Gregory)



FRESH FROM THE FIELD



Our **Sri Lanka** tour enjoyed its sophomore outing this year, and from the sounds of things, guide Megan Crewe and her group had another wonderful visit to this mystic island nation. A few of the memorable sightings are shown here, clockwise from left: a large Leopard lounges on a roadside rock, offering great views; a stunning male Indian Peafowl shows off his impressive tail; the cool and misty highlands of the Horton Plains NP, home to such tantalizing specialties as Ceylon Whistling-Thrush, Kashmir Flycatcher, and Jerdon's Baza. (Photos by guide Megan Crewe and tour participant Kristine Wallstrom)



Sticking with this page's island theme, Chris Benesh recently returned from **New Zealand**, where his group enjoyed excellent encounters with many of the specialties, including views of two kiwi species (always tough!). In addition to kiwis, New Zealand is renowned for its pelagic birding opportunities, and the tour's two pelagics got the group some superb views of such specialties as the New Zealand Storm-Petrel (flanked by two White-faced Storm-Petrels) in the top photo. This species was rediscovered in 2003 after having been considered extinct since about 1850! Another pelagic highlight was the surprise Chatham Albatross seen below. For the landlubbers, the endemic New Zealand Falcon at right also put on a wonderful show for our group! (Photos by guide Chris Benesh)

Another relatively new tour offering, now in its third year, is our **New Caledonia, Fiji & Vanuatu** trip, visiting these three relatively little-birded island groups. And it was another successful offering, with many wonderful sightings, including a very good showing from the star bird, the Kagu, on New Caledonia. Other endemics are perhaps less well-known, but still worthy of attention; just check out the amazing Cloven-feathered Dove (far right) and (Ouvea) Horned Parakeet at right. An added bonus of this tour, the rare opportunity to bird right on the International Date Line, which Phil and his group are straddling on the island of Taveuni, Fiji, in the top photo. (Photos by guide Phil Gregory)





This year saw us once again offering two departures of our popular **Louisiana: Yellow Rails & Crawfish Tails** tour. The Yellow Rails might be the biggest draw, but there's no shortage of other great birds. Guides Dan Lane and Eric Hynes provided these images of some of the other stars. Clockwise from left: a real southeast specialty and a US endemic to boot, the very local Bachman's Sparrow; a group of lounging American White Pelicans dwarfs the surrounding hordes of American Avocets; a bold Clapper Rail tries to steal the spotlight from his little cousin. (Photos by guides Dan Lane & Eric Hynes)

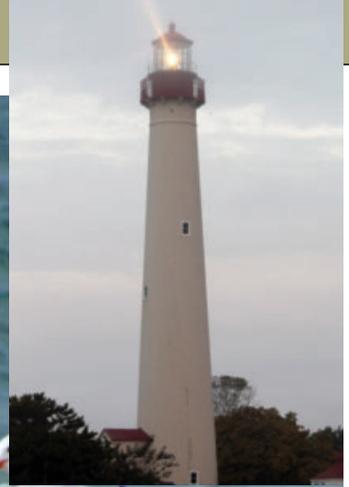


Dave Stejskal recently returned from leading our 2012 **Southern Argentina** tour, and judging from his photos, it looks like it was a superb trip. From a birding standpoint, there were such attractions as the endemic and lovely Rusty-backed Monjita at left and the White-bellied Seedsnipe, arguably the toughest of the seed-snipers to find and restricted to the far south of Argentina and Chile. For a bit of variety, Dave also provided the image of the adorably homely Southern Elephant Seal at center. This tour will be taking 2013 off, but look for it back on the 2014 schedule.

California is as diverse a state as any, and our **Slice of California** tour offers a great sampling of the state's varied habitats. From pelagic birding offering the likes of the Black-footed Albatross at near right, across the Sierra to the dry interior of the Mono Basin (where the American Avocets in the center photo were snapped) there is a lot to see. Just look at how happy tour participant John Finnigan is in the photo at far right. This could be you in 2013! (Photos by guide Chris Benesh)



FRESH FROM THE FIELD



According to Megan Crewe "There are few places in the world that rival Cape May for the sheer spectacle of migration," and this year's **Cape May Megan's Way** tour enjoyed the spectacle in a big way, with two big cold fronts forcing thousands of southbound migrants into the region. Tour participant Dixie Mills provided the images seen here, a large mixed flock of Royal and Forster's terns and the Cape May lighthouse, a local landmark visible from many parts of the region.



Single-site tours are popular, and one that has been drawing a lot of attention recently is our trip to **Serra dos Tucanos, Brazil**, led once again by veteran John Rowlett. What's the big attraction of this tour, other than Pepper's expert and enthusiastic guidance? Incredible scenery for one, such as the magnificently rugged Finger of God at Orgaos NP at top, and of course a bunch of great birds, including the stunning Brazilian Ruby at right and such localized Atlantic Forest specialties as the Three-toed Jacamar (above left). Pepper loves this place and will be heading back down in 2013; you might want to join him and discover Tucanos appeal for yourself! (Photos by guide John Rowlett)



Birds with lots of bright primary colors are always popular, but as these three photos from our recent **Northwestern Argentina** tour prove, some of the most beautiful birds are mainly monochrome. From top to bottom, the three stunners are: the incomparable Diademed Sandpiper-Plover, an unusually bold male Giant Antshrike, and the rare, local, and wonderfully-named Strange-tailed Tyrant. (Photos by guide Dave Stejskal)



UPCOMING TOURS

For details on any trip or trips, please call our office or check our web site, where you may download tour itineraries.

March-April

Philippines—March 1-24, 2013 (Visayan Islands & Mindoro Extension) with Dave Stejskal & local guide. Survey tour of the endemic-rich Philippines (Luzon, Palawan, and northeastern Mindanao) with an excellent chance to see the critically endangered Great Philippine Eagle.

Honduras: Land of the Emeralds—March 2-10, 2013 with Jesse Fagan. For the endemic Honduran Emerald plus arid Pacific slope, Central Highland, and Caribbean lowland coverage; nearly 300 species!

Brazil Nutshell: Intervalles, Iguazu Falls & the Pantanal—March 2-16, 2013 with Marcelo Padua & John Coons. We'll hit three of Brazil's premier birding venues, staying several nights at each to ensure an unhurried pace as we rack up some 400 species of birds.

Southwestern Ecuador Specialties: Jocotoco Foundation Reserves—March 7-21, 2013 with Mitch Lysinger. The many specialties of the southwest, in particular the very local endemics of the humid foothills and mountains, and Tumbesian specialties.

Borneo I—March 11-28, 2013 with Rose Ann Rowlett & local guide. Three prime areas on this tour to some of the Earth's richest forests while based in comfort right in the wild.

Bahamas: Birds & Butterflies—March 12-17, 2013 with Jesse Fagan. Small-group tour for three Bahamian endemics, several Caribbean endemics, a few early migrants, Kirtland's Warbler, and a sampling of West Indian butterflies; exciting birding at a relaxed pace.

Ecuador's Wildsumaco Lodge—March 15-25, 2013 with Willy Perez. Our tour exploring the riches of the eastern Andean foothills of northern Ecuador for numerous specialties at Wildsumaco Lodge.

Colombia: Santa Marta Escape—March 16-24, 2013 with Richard Webster & local guide. An easier subset of Bogota, the Magdalena Valley & Santa Marta, reached by a direct flight from Miami with a couple more days for a more leisurely approach.

Costa Rica—March 16-31, 2013 with Megan Crewe & local guide. Resplendent Quetzals, Three-wattled Bellbirds, Scarlet Macaws in a beautiful country with easy travel.

Dominican Republic—March 17-24, 2013 with Jesse Fagan & local guide. Short tour for many specialties and endemics including the unusual Palmchat.

Ecuador: Rainforest & Andes I—March 17-31, 2013 with John Rowlett. The best of Ecuador's rainforest birding at Sacha Lodge combined with two exciting destinations in the Andes, the Mindo/Tandayapa area and San Isidro.

Spring in South Texas—March 23-31, 2013 with Chris Benesh. Magnificent Whooping Cranes, lots of South Texas specialties, and spring hawk migration on this exciting birding tour.

Birding Plus: Birds & Wines of Chile and Argentina—March 23-April 6, 2013 with Marcelo Padua & local guide. A new March tour combining an exploration of the great birds and vineyards of these two wonderful countries!

Ghana I—March 23-April 8, 2013 with Phil Gregory & local guide. In search of numerous West African specialties as well as White-necked Rockfowl.

Puerto Rico—March 24-30, 2013 with Eric Hynes & Pepe Rojas. A week of respite to a very birdy and beautiful Caribbean island, a mix of North American and local culture and cuisine; 16 endemic birds and a number of other Caribbean specialties.

Lesser Antilles—March 30-April 14, 2013 with Jesse Fagan. All the accessible endemics (many highly endangered) of the southern Caribbean on 10 attractive islands.

Namibia & Botswana—April 2-21, 2013 with Terry Stevenson. Southwestern Africa's bird specialties, striking scenery, wilderness, and the famed game of Etosha and the Okavango.

Bhutan—April 5-24, 2013 with Richard Webster. Spellbinding birding amidst awe-inspiring landscapes on a journey through the lush forests and mountains of this "lost" Himalayan kingdom.

Colorado Grouse I—April 7-17, 2013 with Dan Lane. A short tour to seek out the state's prairie-chicken and grouse species.

Ghana II—April 10-26, 2013 with Phil Gregory. In search of numerous West African specialties as well as White-necked Rockfowl.

Texas Coast Migration Spectacle I—April 13-19, 2013 with John Coons. The migration mecca of High Island plus specialties of the Big Thicket and myriad waterbirds and shorebirds.

Colorado Grouse II—April 14-24, 2013 with Megan Crewe. A short tour to seek out the state's prairie-chicken and grouse species.

Birding Plus: Scotland: Famous Grouse in the Land of Whisky—April 19-May 1, 2013 with John Rowlett & Hugh Buck. Imbibing Highland Scotland's famous grouse, distilling birds in the Hebrides, sorting out crossbills, and sampling Scottish whisky and bagpipe culture sum up the smooth shots to be taken on this Birding Plus tour.

Texas Coast Migration Spectacle II—April 20-26, 2013 with John Coons. The migration mecca of High Island plus specialties of the Big Thicket and myriad waterbirds and shorebirds.

Texas's Big Bend & Hill Country—April 20-29, 2013 with Chris Benesh & Pepe Rojas. Colima and Golden-cheeked warblers, Montezuma Quail, and other southern borderland specialties in Texas's grand desert mountain landscapes.

Arizona Nightbirds & More I—April 25-29, 2013 with Dave Stejskal. A short tour focused on this area's many owl and nightjar specialties.

Birding Plus: Do the Charleston! Spring in South Carolina—April 27-May 4, 2013 with Jesse Fagan. Our new tour combining spring migration and a touch of the mountains with lovely and historic Charleston, South Carolina.

May-June

Spain: La Mancha, Coto Donana & Extremadura—May 3-15, 2013 with Megan Crewe & Willy Perez. To La Mancha, famous Coto Donana, Extremadura, and the Gredos Mountains for some of Europe's best birding.

Ethiopia: Endemic Birds & Ethiopian Wolf—May 3-23, 2013 (Lalibela Extension) with Richard Webster & Phil Gregory. A remarkable journey through a remarkable land, from Rift Valley lakes to the Bale Mountains and south for Prince Ruspoli's Turaco and the strange Stresemann's Bush-Crow.

China: Manchuria & the Tibetan Plateau—May 4-25, 2013 with Dave Stejskal & local guide. A truly fabulous birding adventure—one that begins with the draw of six possible crane species and a multitude of coveted waterbirds and scarce landbirds in Manchuria and concludes high in the mountains of the remote northeastern Tibetan Plateau in search of, among many others, the monotypic Przevalski's Rosefinch.

Arizona Nightbirds & More II—May 9-13, 2013 with Chris Benesh. A short tour focused on this area's many owl and nightjar specialties.

Birding Plus: Ireland in Spring: Birds, Traditional Music & Pubs—May 9-19, 2013 with Terry McEneaney & local guide. The birds, culture, music, and pubs of this beautiful country in spring.

Arizona: Birding the Border I—May 10-19, 2013 with John Coons. One of the most exciting destinations in North America with a backdrop of spectacular mountain scenery.

Point Pelee Migration Spectacle—May 11-18, 2013 with Peter Burke. Exciting migration birding at several premier hotspots on the Lake Erie shore.

Arizona: Birding the Border II—May 17-26, 2013 with Chris Benesh. Birding tour to one of the most exciting destinations in North America with a backdrop of spectacular mountain scenery.

Uganda: Shoebill, Rift Endemics & Gorillas—May 23-June 13, 2013 with Terry Stevenson & Jesse Fagan. The rare Shoebill and a wealth of other birds and many Central African specialties, combined with opportunities to trek for Chimps and Mountain Gorillas.

Brazil's Rio Roosevelt: Birding the River of Doubt—May 25-June 7, 2013 with Bret Whitney. A birding adventure on the remote Rio Roosevelt in the spirit of Teddy himself, as we search for bushbirds, ant swarms, and, of course, the unknown.

Virginias' Warblers—May 29-June 2, 2013 with John Rowlett. Unsurpassed locale for breeding wood-warblers; cool, mountain climate in both beautiful states.

Alaska I—May 31-June 8, 2013 (Part I) and June 7-17, 2013 (Part II) with Megan Crewe & Pepe Rojas. Survey tour in two parts: Part I to the Pribilofs and Denali; Part II to Nome, Seward, and Barrow.

Northern Arizona's Canyons & Condor—June 1-6, 2013 with John Coons. This new tour features mountain and high desert birds of the western US amidst stunning scenery with California Condors at the Grand Canyon, all guided by our own Flagstaff-based resident expert, John Coons.

Borneo II—June 6-23, 2013 with Dave Stejskal. Three prime areas on this tour to some of the

Earth's richest forests while based in comfort right in the wild.

Alaska II—June 7-15, 2013 (Part I) and June 14-24, 2013 (Part II) with Chris Benesh & Eric Hynes. Survey birding tour in two parts: Part I to the Pribilofs and Denali; Part II to Nome, Seward, and Barrow.

Montana Ecuador: Cloudforests of the Andes I—June 7-16, 2013 with Willy Perez. Superb Andean subtropical birding on both East and West slopes.

Montana: Yellowstone to Glacier—June 13-23, 2013 with Terry McEneaney & John Coons. Great western birding and wildlife amidst the scenery of Big Sky country.

Rainforest & Savanna: Alta Floresta & the Northern Pantanal, Brazil—June 14-30, 2013 with Marcelo Padua. 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: An Intimate Look at Darwin's Islands I—June 15-25, 2013 with Willy Perez. A must for any naturalist and birder; small-group, broad coverage of the islands with plenty of time for the birds, exploring, and photography.

Peru's Magnetic North: Spatuletails, Owllet Lodge & More—June 25-July 6, 2013 with Dan Lane & Pepe Rojas. A 12-day taste of northern Peru's east-slope Andes! Five nights at Long-whiskered Owllet Lodge; much time in the field, yet no camping.

Amazonian Ecuador: Sacha Lodge II—June 28-July 7, 2013 with Willy Perez. One-site tour to one of the most comfortable lodges in western Amazonia with some of the birdiest canopy platforms anywhere.

Newfoundland & Nova Scotia—June 28-July 8, 2013 with Chris Benesh. Boreal specialties, seabird colonies, and numerous breeding landbirds in the beautiful Canadian Maritimes.

July (A partial listing)

Papua New Guinea—June 30-July 18, 2013 with Phil Gregory. Birds-of-paradise and bowerbirds are the crown jewels of one of the most remarkable bird faunas, set against a fascinating cultural backdrop far removed from our own.

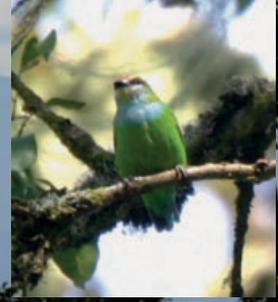
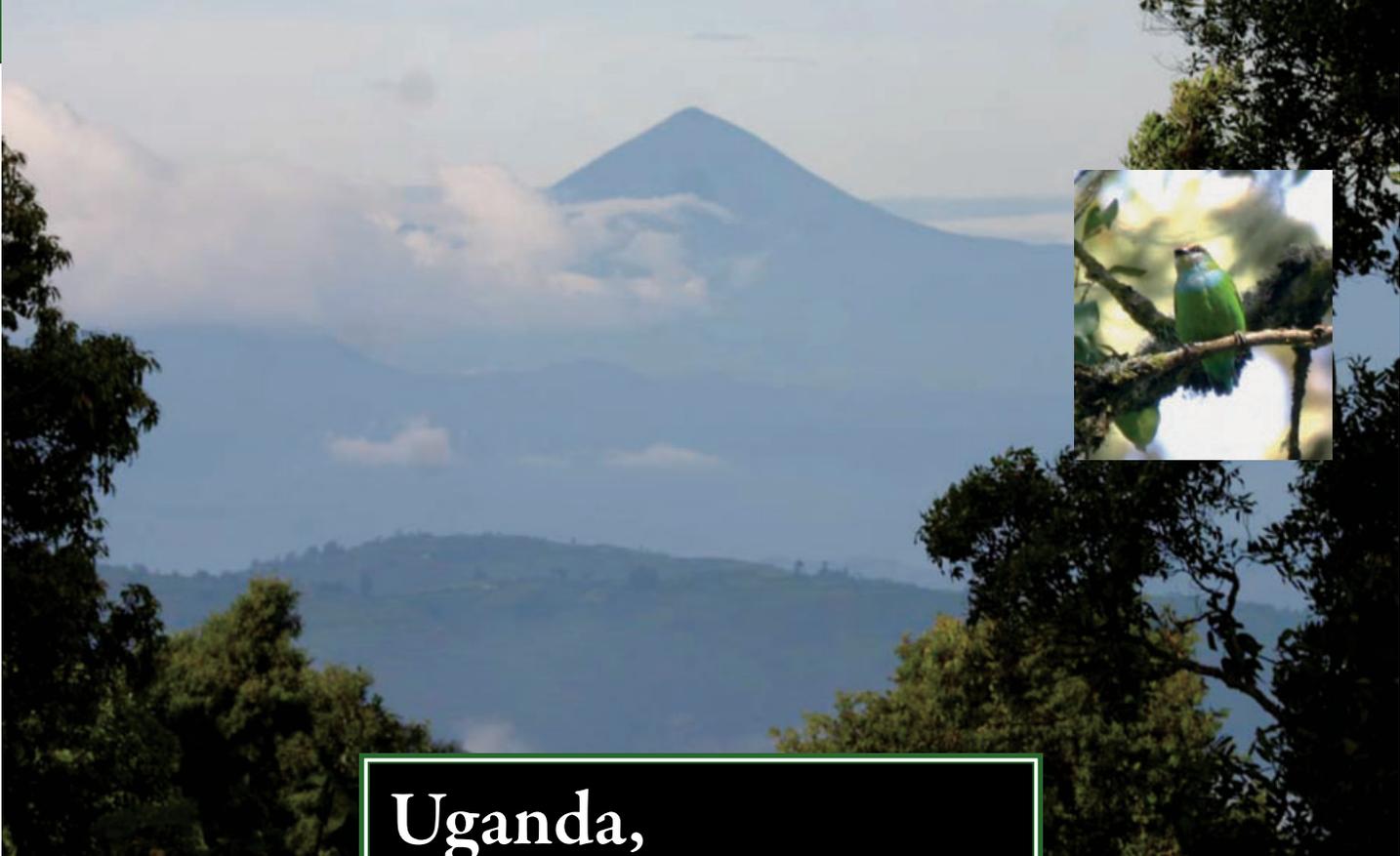
Kenya Highlights—July 3-21, 2013 with Terry Stevenson. Kenya's best birding and mammal viewing areas in less than 3 weeks.

Machu Picchu & Abra Malaga, Peru I—July 5-14, 2013 with Jesse Fagan. Southern Peru's east-slope, temperate birding at its best, featuring lots of endemics and scenic Andean puna; also Machu Picchu and great subtropical birding on and near lovely hotel grounds.

Galapagos: An Intimate Look at Darwin's Islands II—July 6-16, 2013 with Eric Hynes. A must for any naturalist and birder; small-group tour with broad coverage of the islands with plenty of time for the birds, exploring, and photography.

Spitsbergen & Svalbard Archipelago: A Cruise to the Norwegian Arctic—July 10-22, 2013 with John Coons. A high-arctic adventure aboard a comfortable vessel for fantastic seabirds, marine mammals including Walrus and Polar Bear, and fabulous scenery.

Mountains Of Manu, Peru—July 13-28, 2013 with Rose Ann Rowlett & Pepe Rojas. Transect of the higher-elevation half of the Manu Biosphere Reserve.



Uganda, the Pearl of Africa

A host of Albertine Rift endemic birds, the magnificent Shoebill, and excellent chances of close encounters with both Chimps and Gorillas are just a few of the reasons why so many birders now visit Uganda. The genuinely friendly people, fabulous scenery, and good accommodations that past participants have not expected but frequently commented on are further bonuses. But it is, of course, the birds that are the main attraction for most of us....

Terry Stevenson, our Field Guide and principal author of the "Field Guide to the Birds of East Africa: Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi" will be leading the UGANDA: SHOEBILL, RIFT ENDEMIC & GORILLAS tour, scheduled for May 23 to June 13. He'll be joined by Jesse Fagan. For complete details, call our office or visit our web site.

A view from Ruhija, high in the Bwindi-Impenetrable Forest. Many species are found in this higher altitude forest, the rarest perhaps being the near mythical but hard-to-find Grauer's (African Green) Broadbill (inset). Others that are more likely include Handsome Francolin, Yellow-rumped and Western tinkerbirds, Tullberg's Woodpecker, Archer's Robin-Chat, Ruwenzori Batis, Stripe-breasted Tit, Blue-headed, Regal, and Purple-breasted sunbirds, the stunning Doherty's Bushshrike, and perhaps Oriole Finch. (Photos by guide Phil Gregory)



The prehistoric-looking Shoebill, one of the signature birds of the tour, is in a family all its own; the male can be as tall as five feet, though three-and-a-half to four-and-a-half is more common. The Shoebill is possible on our first day around Entebbe, though we also have opportunities for it later in the tour. (Photo by guide Phil Gregory)



A male Abyssinian Ground-Hornbill is a huge creature with a red throat patch—the female's is blue—that we'll look for in the grasslands of Murchison Falls National Park. (Photo by guide Phil Gregory)



Kingfishers are a treat on this trip, with at least 11 species possible. This lovely little African Pygmy-Kingfisher was at Queen Elizabeth National Park. (Photo by guide Phil Gregory)



Gorillas, gorillas! There's almost nowhere else to see Mountain Gorillas as reliably or as well as Uganda's vast Bwindi-Impenetrable Forest. It is an extraordinary experience but does involve a fairly strenuous half-day trek—well worth the effort, most would agree. (Photo by participant Paul Thomas)

Revelation in Peru: Discovering the Tambopata

Continued from page 1

One of my most vivid memories from that trip comes from a morning I spent hiking the trails alone. Suddenly, I was enveloped by a very sweet, smooth, almost haunting melody that reverberated through the trees and drenched the entire forest with sound. Having no idea what creature could possibly produce such a sound, I halfway expected to come across Pan around the next bend of the trail, sitting on a stump playing his flute! I learned later that what I was hearing was the enchanting song of the Musician Wren. Something powerful was triggered in me, a passion born, and I knew I was hooked!

I took that first trip to Tambopata over twenty years ago. In the time since, after countless visits to watch birds in the area, I have discovered many other amazing things, including:

Six species of colorful and raucous macaws mixing it up at the largest clay lick known to science.

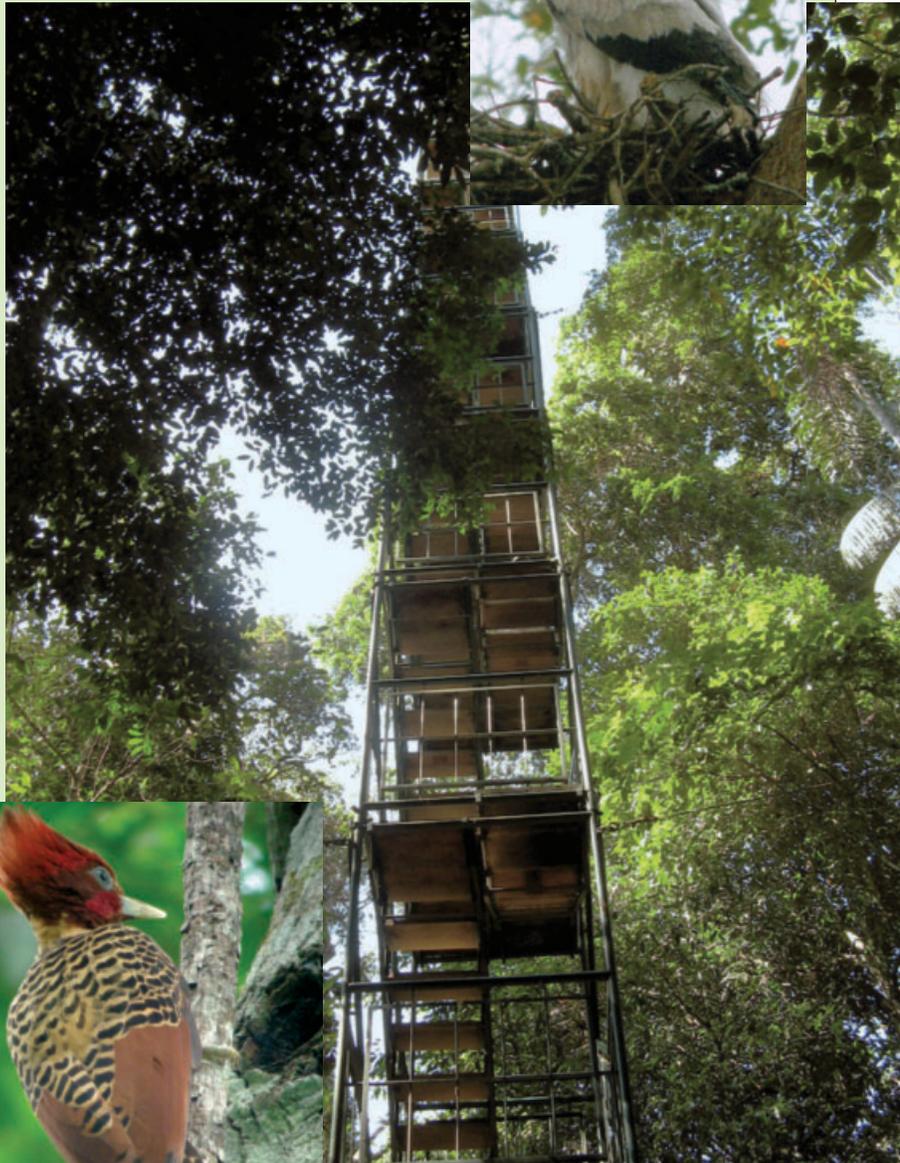
Wonderful stands of giant bamboo with virtually all of the exclusive group of birds called “bamboo specialists,” White-cheeked Tody-Flycatcher to Rufous-headed Woodpecker and Manu, White-lined, and Goeldi’s Antbirds.

Species with restricted ranges like the Rufous-fronted Anthrush, Scarlet-hooded Barbet, and White-throated Jacamar, among many others.

Species that have become scarcer and harder to see in the Amazon, such as Pale-winged Trumpeters, Razor-billed Curassows, and Orinoco Geese—not to mention the potential to see a Harpy Eagle!

Remembering my own first experience in Tambopata, I have difficulty, to this day, finding words to convey the incredible chorus of sounds and magnificent sights in the Amazon. Rather than attempt the impossible, let me persuade you to *share* this truly spectacular place with me on Dave’s and my upcoming trip to Tambopata, departing in late July. We hope you’ll join us!

Peruvian Rainforests of the Tambopata is scheduled for July 27-August 9 and will be co-led by Pepe and Dave Stejskal.



Clockwise from bottom left: You can see why he’s called the Curl-crested Aracari; Rufous-headed Woodpecker, a scarce bamboo specialist; the canopy tower at Posada Amazonas stretches up through the trees to the sky; a juvenile Harpy Eagle peers down at us; and a Pale-winged Trumpeter. (Photos by guides John Rowlett & Rose Ann Rowlett and participant John Collins)



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Peru From Top to Bottom

There's simply an amazing diversity to be found in Peru, from tropical rainforest and cloudforest to the altiplano and the heights of Machu Picchu. We'd love to take you there.

Our 2013 Peru Schedule:

- Peru's Magnetic North: Spatuletails, Owlet Lodge & More, June 25-July 6 with Dan Lane & Pepe Rojas
- Machu Picchu & Abra Malaga, July 5-14 and August 8-17 with Jesse Fagan
- Mountains of Manu, July 13-28 with Rose Ann Rowlett & Pepe Rojas
- Peruvian Rainforests of the Tambopata: Macaw Lick Extraordinaire, July 27-August 9 with Dave Stejskal & Pepe Rojas
- Northern Peru: Endemics Galore, November 3-23 with Richard Webster & Pepe Rojas
- Iquitos, Peru: Canopy Walkways & Ancient Forests, December 21-January 1 with Dan Lane & Pepe Rojas

