



*Field Guides Tour Report*

## Galapagos: An Intimate Look at Darwin's Islands II 2019

Jul 6, 2019 to Jul 16, 2019

Willy Perez & local guide

*For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).*



*Waved Albatross are rather funny when they are on land and doing their displays, but they are magnificent fliers. We were able to see them both on land, and in the air!  
Photo by guide Willy Perez.*

This was the second Field Guides tour to the Galapagos in 2019 and I have to say that it was a success. Everything worked out well and our boat, the Nemo III, was a perfect home and allowed us to visit every island possible. We were very busy doing panga rides where Penguins and Marine Iguanas were so close. We walked to places where thousands of Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrels were flying around. We watched a wonderful display of Waved Albatross. We worked hard to try to see every Finch possible in our itinerary; some of them were very easy to identify, like the Large-ground Finch.

We also witnessed some of the oddities that happen in the Galapagos, like the Flightless Cormorant that has lost the ability to fly because they just don't need it anymore; evolution is crazy. Nocturnal Gulls following the boat in the pitch dark. Even the Galapagos Rail and the Paint-billed Crake showed up so nicely that I couldn't believe it.

We went to the islands mainly for birds, but the reptiles were amazing, too. Marine and Land Iguanas, many species of Lava Lizards and of course, the Giant Galapagos Tortoise were superb. We also had delicious food, and Ivan and Fabricio (the chefs) made the most superb fruit and veggie carved ornaments to decorate the table; they were very impressive....

I want to say thank you to the crew of the Nemo, but also thank you to our super nice local guide and friend Peter, who did a great job along the way. Finally, I want to say thank you to all of you, who took this adventure by the hand and made it into a success. I hope that i will see you again soon.

Keep birding.

All the best Willy.

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### KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: \* = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a =

## BIRDS

### *Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)*

**WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAIL (GALAPAGOS)** (*Anas bahamensis galapagensis*) – Normally we see more of this species, but this trip we had very few of them. We saw them only in Isabela when we visited the lagoons at Puerto Villamil.

### *Phoenicopteridae (Flamingos)*

**AMERICAN FLAMINGO** (*Phoenicopus ruber*) – Great views of several individuals at Puerto Villamil in Isabela.

### *Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)*

**GALAPAGOS DOVE** (*Zenaida galapagoensis*) – This endemic dove was present on most of the Islands. [E]

**EARED DOVE** (*Zenaida auriculata*) – Very common in Quito.

### *Cuculidae (Cuckoos)*

**SMOOTH-BILLED ANI** (*Crotophaga ani*) – Introduced onto the islands, they are one of the big problems for the endemic species. [H]

**DARK-BILLED CUCKOO** (*Coccyzus melacoryphus*) – This handsome bird was seen twice during our trip.

### *Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)*

**SPARKLING VIOLETEAR** (*Colibri coruscans*) – Great looks at the San Jose garden hotel in Quito.

**BLACK-TAILED TRAINBEARER** (*Lesbia victoriae*) – Nice males and females at San Jose.

**WHITE-BELLIED WOODSTAR** (*Chaetocercus mulsant*) – Seen in Quito.

**WESTERN EMERALD** (*Chlorostilbon melanorhynchus*) – A super iridescent male was seen in Quito.

### *Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)*

**PAINT-BILLED CRAKE** (*Mustelirallus erythropus*) – A pair came out of the bushes during our walk in Floreana.

**COMMON GALLINULE** (*Gallinula galeata*)

**GALAPAGOS RAIL** (*Laterallus spilonota*) – The best view ever, a pair crossed the small road when we went up to Isabela Island. [E]

### *Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)*

**BLACK-NECKED STILT** (*Himantopus mexicanus*)

### *Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)*

**AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER** (*Haematopus palliatus galapagensis*) – Few seen along the way.

### *Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)*

**WANDERING TATTLER** (*Tringa incana*)

### *Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)*

**SWALLOW-TAILED GULL** (*Creagrus furcatus*) – A very pretty gull that we saw several times.

**LAUGHING GULL** (*Leucophaeus atricilla*)

**LAVA GULL** (*Leucophaeus fuliginosus*) – This rare endemic gull was present in different places but never numerous. [E]

**BROWN NODDY** (*Anous stolidus galapagensis*) – The most common bird on the trip.

### *Phaethontidae (Tropicbirds)*

**RED-BILLED TROPICBIRD** (*Phaethon aethereus mesonauta*) – It was fantastic to see this superb bird, especially during our visit to Espanola.

### *Spheniscidae (Penguins)*

**GALAPAGOS PENGUIN** (*Spheniscus mendiculus*) – We had the most amazing time with these small penguins when a pair started to come to the panga and almost got inside..... Gail and Fran loved them! [E]

### *Diomedidae (Albatrosses)*

**WAVED ALBATROSS** (*Phoebastria irrorata*) – The displays of some pairs were very funny and we watched them for some time, but the flying birds were even better as they were so close to us.

### *Oceanitidae (Southern Storm-Petrels)*

**ELLIOT'S STORM-PETREL** (*Oceanites gracilis galapagoensis*) – Always following the boat, almost every day.

**WHITE-FACED STORM-PETREL** (*Pelagodroma marina*) – We had a quick but nice look of this rare bird in the Galapagos.

### *Hydrobatidae (Northern Storm-Petrels)*

**BAND-RUMPED STORM-PETREL** (*Oceanodroma castro*) – Very few along the way.

**WEDGE-RUMPED STORM-PETREL** (*Oceanodroma tethys tethys*) – The most impressive colony of birds that we saw, with thousands of them in Genovesa.

### *Procellariidae (Shearwaters and Petrels)*

**GALAPAGOS PETREL** (*Pterodroma phaeopygia*) – Several nice looks during our sailing times.

**PARKINSON'S PETREL** (*Procellaria parkinsoni*) – This was a really nice surprise for us and one of the favorites for Mike.

**GALAPAGOS SHEARWATER** (*Puffinus subalaris*) – Another very common bird that we saw every day.

### *Fregatidae (Frigatebirds)*

**MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD** (*Fregata magnificens*)

**GREAT FRIGATEBIRD** (*Fregata minor ridgwayi*) – Less common but still saw them a lot.

*Sulidae (Boobies and Gannets).*

**NAZCA BOOBY** (*Sula granti*) – The largest of the 3 boobies species, Genovesa and Espanola had several birds nesting.

**BLUE-FOOTED BOOBY** (*Sula nebouxii excisa*) – We saw some pairs displaying which was really nice.

**RED-FOOTED BOOBY (EASTERN PACIFIC)** (*Sula sula websteri*) – We saw them mostly in Genovesa and few flying near the boat.

*Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags).*

**FLIGHTLESS CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax harrisi*) – Punta Vicente Roca was the first place that we saw them, but also many were nesting at Punta Espinoza in Fernandina. [E]

*Pelecanidae (Pelicans).*

**BROWN PELICAN (GALAPAGOS)** (*Pelecanus occidentalis urinator*)

*Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns).*

**GREAT BLUE HERON (BLUE FORM)** (*Ardea herodias cognata*)

**GREAT EGRET** (*Ardea alba*)

**CATTLE EGRET** (*Bubulcus ibis*)

**STRIATED HERON (GALAPAGOS)** (*Butorides striata sundevalli*) – Very well hidden, especially the one that some people call Lava Heron, but they didn't escape from our sharp eyes. [E]

**YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (GALAPAGOS)** (*Nyctanassa violacea pauper*)

*Cathartidae (New World Vultures).*

**BLACK VULTURE** (*Coragyps atratus*) – Seen in Quito.

*Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites).*

**GALAPAGOS HAWK** (*Buteo galapagoensis*) – The best sighting was one with a chick at Espanola. [E]

*Tytonidae (Barn-Owls).*

**BARN OWL (GALAPAGOS)** (*Tyto alba punctatissima*) – We had to work hard for this and visit a place that was not on our plan but it worked out nicely. One was just sitting inside a lava tunnel in Rancho Manzanillo.

*Strigidae (Owls).*

**SHORT-EARED OWL (GALAPAGOS)** (*Asio flammeus galapagoensis*) – We witnessed a special nature moment when one of these owls got a Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrel. It was quite sad to see it, but incredible at the same time.

*Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras).*

**AMERICAN KESTREL** (*Falco sparverius*) – Some in the Garden of San Jose hotel in Quito.

*Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers).*

**SOUTHERN BEARDESS-TYRANULET** (*Camptostoma obsoletum*) – Quito.

**VERMILION FLYCATCHER (GALAPAGOS)** (*Pyrocephalus rubinus nanus*) – A nice pair was seen during our visit to Isabela.

**GALAPAGOS FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus magnirostris*) – Common on different islands. [E]

**TROPICAL KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – The Hotel Garden in Quito.

*Hirundinidae (Swallows).*

**BLUE-AND-WHITE SWALLOW** (*Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*)

**GALAPAGOS MARTIN** (*Progne modesta*) – We got lucky with this sometimes hard bird to see; four of them were just flying above the roof in the airport just after we got out of the main building. [E]

*Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies).*

**GREAT THRUSH** (*Turdus fuscater*) – Very numerous in Quito.

*Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers).*

**GALAPAGOS MOCKINGBIRD** (*Mimus parvulus*) – The most widespread of the 4 species that we saw on different islands. [E]

**FLOREANA MOCKINGBIRD** (*Mimus trifasciatus*) – Great views of a pair at Champion islet in Floreana. [E]

**ESPANOLA MOCKINGBIRD** (*Mimus macdonaldi*) – We had great time when they welcomed us during our visit to Espanola. [E]

**SAN CRISTOBAL MOCKINGBIRD** (*Mimus melanotis*) – The usual place worked well for us with few birds around. [E]

*Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies).*

**GOLDEN-RUMPED EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia cyanocephala*) – Males and females at the garden in Quito.

**HOODED SISKIN** (*Spinus magellanicus*)

*Passerellidae (New World Sparrows).*

**RUFIOUS-COLLARED SPARROW** (*Zonotrichia capensis*)

*Icteridae (Troupials and Allies).*

**GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE** (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) – Few seen in Guayaquil airport.

*Parulidae (New World Warblers).*

**YELLOW WARBLER (GALAPAGOS)** (*Setophaga petechia aureola*) – The most fabulous bird, and we saw it every day in the Galapagos.

*Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies).*

**BLUE-AND-YELLOW TANAGER** (*Pipraeidea bonariensis*) – Scope views of a male at Garden hotel in Quito.

**SCRUB TANAGER** (*Tangara vitriolina*) – Car park of the hotel in Quito, great.

**RUSTY FLOWERPIERCER** (*Diglossa sittoides*) – Same as the previous species.

**GREEN WARBLER-FINCH** (*Certhidea olivacea*) – We saw this species in Isabela and Santa Cruz. [E]  
**GRAY WARBLER-FINCH** (*Certhidea fusca mentalis*) – Superb views in Genovesa. [E]  
**GRAY WARBLER-FINCH** (*Certhidea fusca luteola*) – Many piercing flowers at San Cristobal. [E]  
**GRAY WARBLER-FINCH** (*Certhidea fusca bifasciata*) – Nice looks of some working in the lichen at Santa Fe island.  
**GRAY WARBLER-FINCH** (*Certhidea fusca cinerascens*) – Some were seen at Espanola. [E]  
**VEGETARIAN FINCH** (*Platyspiza crassirostris*) – Superb looks at a male eating leaves in the highlands of Isabela. [E]  
**WOODPECKER FINCH (PALLIDUS/PRODUCTUS)** (*Camarhynchus pallidus pallidus*) – We saw this subspecies in Santa Cruz, one even was using the stick. [E]  
**WOODPECKER FINCH (PALLIDUS/PRODUCTUS)** (*Camarhynchus pallidus productus*) – We saw one in Isabela feeding on a banana flower. [E]  
**WOODPECKER FINCH (STRIATIPECTA)** (*Camarhynchus pallidus striatipecta*) – Some seen at San Cristobal. [E]  
**LARGE TREE-FINCH** (*Camarhynchus psittacula psittacula*) – Nice looks of a male at Santa Cruz. [E]  
**MEDIUM TREE-FINCH** (*Camarhynchus pauper*) – We went to the highlands of Floreana to see this very rare species, and the trip payed off with nice looks at a pair of them. [E]  
**SMALL TREE-FINCH** (*Camarhynchus parvulus parvulus*) – We saw this species several times in different islands. [E]  
**SMALL TREE-FINCH** (*Camarhynchus parvulus salvini*) – This is the sub-species that we saw at San Cristobal. [E]  
**SMALL GROUND-FINCH** (*Geospiza fuliginosa*) – Many places along the way. [E]  
**LARGE GROUND-FINCH** (*Geospiza magnirostris*) – We had great looks of this unique finch at Genovesa. [E]  
**GENOVESA GROUND-FINCH** (*Geospiza acutirostris*) – Excellent views several times during our visit to Genovesa island. [E]  
**COMMON CACTUS-FINCH** (*Geospiza scandens intermedia*) – We saw them several times but the best was at Isabela when we saw one eating fruit. [E]  
**MEDIUM GROUND-FINCH** (*Geospiza fortis*) – Another common bird that we saw many times. [E]  
**ESPANOLA GROUND-FINCH** (*Geospiza conirostris*) – Great views of this island endemic. [E]  
**GENOVESA CACTUS-FINCH** (*Geospiza propinqua propinqua*) – We really saw the comical shape of the bill of this unique bird. [E]

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## MAMMALS

**BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN** (*Tursiops truncatus*) – Some seen in front of the boat.

**SHORT-BEAKED COMMON DOLPHIN** (*Delphinus delphis*)

**BRYDE'S WHALE** (*Balaenoptera edeni*)

**FIN WHALE** (*Balaenoptera physalus*)

**"GALAPAGOS" SEA LION** (*Zalophus californianus wollebacki*)

**GALAPAGOS FUR SEAL** (*Arctocephalus galapagoensis*) [E]

### *Herps*

**MARINE IGUANA** (*Amblyrhynchus cristatus*) [E]

**LAND IGUANA** (*Conolophus subcristatus*) [E]

**GALAPAGOS LAVA LIZARD** (*Microlophus albemarlensis*) [E]

**ESPANOLA LAVA LIZARD** (*Microlophus delanonis*) [E]

**FLOREANA LAVA LIZARD** (*Microlophus grayi*) [E]

**SAN CRISTOBAL LAVA LIZARD** (*Microlophus bivattatus*) [E]

**GALAPAGOS (GIANT) TORTOISE** (*Geochelone elephantopus*) – The best sites were at Rancho Primicias in Santa Cruz. [E]

**GREEN SEA TURTLE** (*Chelonia mydas*)

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## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

There were a lot of other species of wildlife that we saw on our tour.

Santa Fe Land Iguana

Santa Cruz Lava Lizard

Spotted Eagle Ray

Sally Light-foot Crab

Moorish Idol

King Angel Fish

Razor Surgeonfish

Giant Damsel fish

Galapagos Ringtail Damsel fish

Panamic Sargent Major

Blue-chin Parrotfish

Azure Parrotfish

Cortez Rainbow Wrasse

Panamic-fanged Blenny

Giant Hawkfish

Orange-sided Triggerfish

Flag Cabrilia

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**Totals for the tour: 86 bird taxa and 6 mammal taxa**