COLOMBIA

CENTRAL ANDES FLYWAY EXPEDITION

with Bexar Audubon Society

January 24 - February 4, 2021

With over 1,900 avian species—more than any other country in the world—Colombia is a birder’s paradise waiting to be discovered. This 10-day program focuses on the highlights of the Central Andes region, famed for its high level of species diversity, including the Otún Quimbaya Flora and Fauna Sanctuary, Rio Blanco Reserve, and Los Nevados National Park. Explore Andean cloud forest, farmland, páramo, and wetland habitats in search of an array of tropical avifauna, including flycatchers, hummingbirds, tanagers, toucans, and more. Throughout your journey, meet members of the local community and learn about conservation efforts to use birding as a sustainable development resource.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

• Seek out a variety of Colombia’s rare and endemic species, such as the Cauca Guan, Chestnut Wood-Quail, Crested Ant-Tanager, and Buffy Helmetcrest.

• Hike the forest paths of Otún Quimbaya Flora and Fauna Sanctuary by night for the chance to see a variety of owls, including the endemic Colombian Screech-Owl.

• Watch the antpitta feeders in Rio Blanco Natural Reserve, a designated Important Bird Area, and look for large mixed flocks in this area.

• Meet with members of the Yarumo Blanco Foundation and learn about their involvement with Audubon’s guide training and the development of the Central Andes Birding Trail.

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ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

JANUARY 24 - BOGOTÁ
Upon arrival at the Bogotá International Airport, you’ll be met and transferred to your hotel. This is an arrival day; no meals are included. Check-in starts at 3:00 pm. Overnight at Hilton Garden Inn.

JANUARY 25 - BOGOTÁ
Breakfast and orientation at the hotel before departing to visit La Florida Park. La Florida Park is a wetland area outside Bogotá where it is possible to see very important birds of the highlands savanna, such as Bogota Rail, Apolinar’s Wren, Silvery-throated Spinetail, Noble Snipe, Subtropical Doradito, and more. After La Florida, visit the “Jardín Encantado” (Enchanted Garden) hummingbird house in San Francisco, for the unique experience of seeing 16 different species of hummingbirds up close, such as the Indigo-capped Hummingbird, Gorged Woodstar and White-bellied Woodstar. Overnight at Hilton Garden Inn. (BLD)

JANUARY 26 - BOGOTÁ
Rise early this morning for birding in Chingaza National Park, a large mountainous area in the highlands of the Eastern Andes Cordillera. The habitat consists of montane cloud forest, high-elevation lakes, and specialized páramo covered by a vast expanse of frailejones (a type of perennial shrub in the sunflower family), and a staple of the páramo ecosystem. Breakfast and lunch will be in the field, allowing you to focus on birding in the elfin forest of this enormous national treasure. Birding is primarily along the main access road. About 17 miles from Bogotá, the road traverses temperate scrub mixed with Chusquea bamboo. This habitat is home to Bronze-tailed Thornbill, Longuemare’s Sunangel, Coppery-bellied Puffleg, and Rufous-browed Conebill, all near-endemics found only in the highlands of Colombia and Venezuela. In the afternoon, visit La Calera Hummingbird Garden in the cloud forest to see some great species of hummingbird, including Sword-billed Hummingbird, Glowing Puffleg, and Black-tailed and Green-tailed Trainbearers. Other birds of interest today include Purple-backed Thornbill, Paramo Seedeater, Plushcap, Pale-naped Brush-Finch, Smoky Bush-Tyrant, Black-billed Mountain-Toucan, Black-headed Hemispingus, and many more. Overnight at Hilton Garden Inn. (BLD)

JANUARY 27 - OTÚN QUIMBAYA
After breakfast, transfer to the airport for the domestic flight to Pereira. Upon arrival, continue approximately one hour to Otún Quimbaya Fauna and Flora Sanctuary, with birding en route. Located on the western slope of the central mountain range, Otún Quimbaya protects the middle basin of the Otún River and the Andean and high Andean forests surrounding it. The site

has been reforested for more than 40 years, creating connectivity with the well-preserved forests of the upper part of Los Nevados National Natural Park and resulting in a biological corridor of great importance in the Central Andes. Some birds that are possible in Otún are Cauca Guan, Chestnut-wood Quail, Torrent Duck, Colombian Screech-Owl, Emerald Toucanet, Hooded Ani Pitta, Rufous-breasted Flycatcher, Flame-rumped Tanager, Scrub Tanager, Red-ruffed Fruitcrow, Multicolored Tanager, Crested Ant-Tanager, and White-capped Tanager—just a few of the 400 species that have been recorded here. It is also common to see large Andean mammals, such as mountain tapir and sometimes spectacled bear. Please note: our lodge tonight is rustic; anticipate possible shared bathroom. Wi-Fi is not available at the lodge. Overnight at Lodge at Otún Quimbaya. (BLD)

JANUARY 28 - OTÚN QUIMBAYA
Spend two days birding in Otún Quimbaya, with owlng at night around the lodge. Bird along the main road to La Pastora and the garden around the main house, occasionally entering the forest using the national park trails. Meet with members of the Yarumo Blanco Foundation, which manages Otún Quimbaya Fauna and Flora Sanctuary and was heavily involved with the Audubon International Alliances Program training and development of the Andean Birding Trail. Yarumo Blanco is a prime example of community- and bird-based tourism. All members of the foundation are local farmers who have made an unparalleled effort to make Otún one of the best sanctuaries in the country. Learn about their award-winning work in communitarian conservation and social development. If time and schedules permit, also meet one of the national park rangers, who will explain a bit about the activity of national parks and the government’s role in conservation. Overnight at Lodge at Otún Quimbaya. (BLD)

JANUARY 29 - OTÚN QUIMBAYA
Another day of outstanding birding in the Otún Quimbaya Reserve. Overnight at Lodge at Otún Quimbaya. (BLD)

JANUARY 30 - MANIZALES
Embark for Pereira, with birding along the way, including a stop by the Otún River to look for Torrent Duck, Black-capped Dipper, and Torrent Tyrannulet. After lunch, continue to Tinamú Nature Reserve, about one hour from the city of Manizales in the village of San Peregrino. This area is focused on the production of shade-grown coffee and different agricultural products. The Tinamú Nature Reserve is a mosaic of shade-grown coffee, secondary growth, and patches of native forest, with feeders near the lodge to attract different species. Inside the reserve, there is a network of trails with medium difficulty level, offering great opportunities to see species not found at the feeders. Overnight at Tinamú Lodge. (BLD)
LAND PRICING
$4,825 (based on a minimum of 6 participants)
Cost includes internal flights, meals, accommodations, entrance fees, and activities as indicated in the itinerary, in-country flights, private transportation, bottled water on the bus, full-time guide, donation to Bexar Audubon Society and National Audubon Society, departure tax, and carbon offset.
Does not include international airfare, estimated at $859 from San Antonio, tips and gratuities, alcoholic beverages, or items of a personal nature. Other departure cities available.

THE FINE PRINT
Cost is based on double occupancy; a limited number of single rooms may be available for an additional cost of $615 per person. A $500 per person deposit and enrollment form are required to reserve your space on the trip. This deposit is refundable excluding a $300 cancellation fee until October 21, 2020 at which time non-refundable final payment is due.

TRAVEL PROTECTION
Holbrook Travel purchases Travel Protection on behalf of all participants. These plans help provide coverage once the trip has departed and offer benefits for Baggage/Personal Effects, Accident & Sickness Medical Expenses, Emergency Evacuation and more. Refer to the Plan Document for more details.
Optional additional coverage is available in the form of the Group Deluxe Plan, which offers benefits for Trip Cancellation/ Interruption, in addition to many other insurance benefits and non-insurance assistance services. If interested in this optional plan, we can provide you with rates and plan details.

JANUARY 31 - MANIZALES
Spend a full day birding in Tinamú Reserve and exploring the action at the amazing hummingbird feeders near the rooms and inside the forest. Some important species include Guira Tanager, Moustached Puffbird, Common Potoo, Golden-collared Manakin, Andean Motmot, Jet Antbird, Great Antshrike, Bay-headed Tanager, Scrub Tanager, Blue-necked Tanager, Gray-fronted Dove, Scaled Antpitta, Spectacled Parrotlet, Red-headed Barbet, and Colombian Chachalaca. Overnight at Tinamú Lodge. (BLD)

FEBRUARY 1 - NEVADO DEL RUIZ
Rise early to visit Rio Blanco Reserve, a BirdLife International IBA (Important Bird Area) and one of the best places in the world to see antpittas. The reserve is in a cloud forest that belongs to the city of Manizales, protected for years to conserve the water resources that supply the city. No less than 450 species of birds have been recorded here, many of them endemic and with ranges of restricted distribution. Target species include Brown-banded Antpitta, Bicolored Antpitta, Chestnut-crowned Antpitta, Slate-crowned Antpitta, Black-billed Mountain-Toucan, Powerful Woodpecker, Long-tailed Sylph, Wedge-billed Hummingbird, White-capped Tanager, White-capped Dipper, and Dusky Pilea. Have lunch here and enjoy the hummingbird and tanager feeders. After lunch, continue to the high elevations (13,000 feet) of Los Nevados National Park (Nevado del Ruiz), an incredible páramo in the Central Andes with many special birds and amazing landscapes. Later this afternoon, arrive at Termas del Ruiz, with time for birding around the lodge trails and feeders or to take advantage of the magnificent thermal baths. Overnight at Termas del Ruiz. (BLD)

FEBRUARY 2 - NEVADO DEL RUIZ
Today, search for birds in Los Nevados National Park, with some time to enjoy the thermal pools and hotel amenities. Some of today’s specialties include Buffy Helmetcrest, Many-striped Canastero, White-chinned Thistletail, Tawny Antpitta, Plumbeous Sierra-Finch, Stout-billed Cinclocodes, Glossy Flowerpiercer, Andean Lapwing, Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle, Rainbow-bearded Thornbill, Greater Sapphirewing, Buff-winged Starfrontlet, and Black-thighed Puffleg. The park is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful places in the country; the landscape is framed by snow-capped peaks that constitute three active volcanoes: El Ruiz, Santa Isabel, and Tolima. In addition to great birding, the flora is another draw, featuring an immensity of rare and unique species. Overnight at Termas del Ruiz. (BLD)

FEBRUARY 3 - BOGOTÁ
This morning, go birding in the cloud forest at a different reserve, Hacienda El Bosque, and learn about the CHEC community project. The reserve is characterized by having large patches of high Andean cloud forest mixed with livestock paddocks and potato fields. There is a chance to see Purple-backed Thornbill, Crescent-faced Antpitta, Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan, Golden-breasted Puffleg, Sword-billed Hummingbird, Bar-bellied Woodpecker, Golden-plumed Parakeet, Ocellated Tapaculo, Black-collared Jay, Rufous Wren, Hooded Mountain-Tanager, Plushtail, and Capped Conebill. This afternoon, travel to Pereira for a flight back to Bogotá. Overnight at Hilton Garden Inn. (BLD)

FEBRUARY 4 - DEPART
Transfer to the airport for your flight home. Check-out starts at 12:00pm. (B)
FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENROLL

Visit bolbrook.travel/bexar-andes21 or contact Sandy Schmidt at 877-907-5360 or schmidt@bolbrooktravel.com