



COSTA RICA: OPERATION RUBYTHROAT

HUMMINGBIRD EXPEDITION (EAST)

with Dr. Bill Hilton Jr.

October 31-November 8, 2018



holbrook.travel/rubythroat-cr30

Join the 30th expedition!

Each winter since 2004-05, Dr. Bill Hilton Jr., executive director of Hilton Pond Center for Piedmont Natural History, has offered excursions for teachers, citizen scientists, and other nature enthusiasts to Central America to observe and band Ruby-throated Hummingbirds (RTHU) on their wintering grounds. An internationally recognized hummingbird expert and educator-naturalist, Hilton is the only scientist conducting long-term systematic studies of RTHU in Central America, and together with teams of citizen scientists has banded more than 1,500 RTHU in Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Belize, and El Salvador — far more than the 46 that had ever been captured prior to Hilton's first expedition in 2004.

No field experience is necessary, just a willingness to help discover new information about ruby-throats on the other end of their migratory route.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Become a partner in science by assisting with the capture and banding of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds (RTHU).
- Learn about RTHU and other Neotropical migrant and resident bird species through in-hand views and comprehensive presentations.
- Enjoy opportunities for nature photography.
- Discover and appreciate Costa Rican history and culture.
- Earn optional graduate credit (and/or CEUs for educators).
- For more information visit hiltonpond.org or rubythroat.org.

ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

OCTOBER 31 - ARRIVAL & PARAÍSO

Fly to San José's modern international airport (plan to arrive no later than 2 pm), where you'll be met by trip leader Dr. Bill Hilton Jr. Depart for Paraíso Orocay Lodge and have some time this afternoon to get settled and unpack. Watch the sunset over nearby volcanic mountains (daily). Supper at lodge is followed by an evening orientation. *Overnight at Paraíso Orocay Lodge. (D)*

NOVEMBER 1 - UJARRÁS/TAPANTÍ

Have breakfast at a local restaurant and then continue to the study site at Ujarrás chayote plantations. Typical procedure: Erect mist nets and traps; capture, band, measure, photograph, color mark, and release Ruby-throated Hummingbirds (RTHU); record observations of RTHU behavior. Have lunch at a local restaurant. This afternoon take a bus trip to Tapantí National Park and the adjoining reserves that cover hundreds of square miles of unspoiled cloud forest that reach all the way to Panama. Waterfalls are a highlight, as are diverse birds and wildlife. Supper at lodge. Evening instruction. *Overnight at Paraíso Orocay Lodge. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 2 - UJARRÁS/ LANKESTER GARDEN

Morning field work at chayote farms. Afternoon bus trip to Lankester Gardens to tour a comprehensive collection of orchids and take a walk on the facility's well-designed interpretive trails. Watch for large assemblages of ducks and other waterbirds in the adjoining pond. After the evening meeting, embark on a night walk to view nocturnal creatures (as weather and time allow). *Overnight at Paraíso Orocay Lodge. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 3 - UJARRÁS/FINCA CRISTINA

Morning field work at chayote farms. This afternoon take a bus trip to Finca Cristina for lunch and a behind-the-scenes look at a fully certified shade-grown and organic coffee farm. Tour the farm with Linda Moyher to see how shade-grown coffee helps over 300 species of both resident and neotropical migratory birds by providing habitat. Linda will also explain how organic farming allows coffee to be grown with minimal negative impact on the local environment by not using chemical fertilizers, fungicides, herbicides, or insecticides. Ernie Carman will reveal some of his custom-made coffee milling and roasting equipment. Opportunity to purchase freshly roasted organic coffee to take home. Continue evening discussions and presentations. *Overnight at Paraíso Orocay Lodge. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 4 - UJARRÁS/QUINTA GALEON

Take an all-day trip to Quinta Galeon Lodge in Jardín, with birding and natural history stops along the way. Quinta Galeon is home to more than a dozen species of hummingbirds that come to feeding stations for up-close viewing and photography. Quinta Galeon is located on the northwest corner of Los Quezales National Park, within Costa Rica's ecologically diverse Cordillera de Talamanca. Enjoy expansive views from this mountainside perch high above Santa Maria, the heart of coffee country. Local hummers at Quinta Galeon include the Magenta-throated Woodstar, White-throated Mountain-gem, Green-crowned Brilliant, Violet Sabrewing, Steely-vented Hummingbird, and Scintillant Hummingbird. Have lunch on the hummingbird veranda. *Overnight at Paraíso Orocay Lodge. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 5 - UJARRÁS/IRAZÚ VOLCANO

Morning field work at chayote farms. Afternoon bus trip to Irazú Volcano National Park, whose summit is above the tree line and resembles an alien moonscape. Irazú, the tallest of Costa Rica's volcanoes, last erupted in 1994. Today it has several craters, one filled with brilliantly colored rain-fed water and rimmed by gnarled, scorched trees. At nearly 10,000 feet, the view from Irazú in all directions is breathtaking. The endemic Volcano Hummingbird and Volcano Junco are target birds for Irazú. There's also a chance for Resplendent Quetzals and other highland species. Evening presentations. *Overnight at Paraíso Orocay Lodge. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 6 - UJARRÁS/CHURCH RUINS

Morning field work at chayote farms. Afternoon in Ujarrás to visit the ruins of one of the oldest churches in Costa Rica, Iglesia de Nuestra Señora de la Limpia Concepción, built during early colonial times, in the 1650s. Explore

nearby natural areas, including riparian habitats. Evening presentations. *Overnight at Paraíso Orocay Lodge. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 7 - UJARRÁS/QUELITALES

Morning field work at chayote farms. Lunch at Quelitales with a visit to the town of Orosí, one of the wettest places in tropical Costa Rica. Look for Bat Falcons in the gorge below the dam that forms the lake. This is your last chance to buy Costa Rica souvenirs at the shops in Orosí. This afternoon take a nature walk in the area. Evening discussion of the banding results, tally of bird species seen, and "Farewell Fiesta." *Overnight at Paraíso Orocay Lodge. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 8 - SAN JOSÉ & DEPARTURE

Transfer to the San José airport by bus. Early afternoon flights home. (B)

ABOUT YOUR LEADER



Dr. Bill Hilton Jr. defines himself as an "educator-naturalist," with a lifetime dedicated to teaching about the wonders and beauty of nature. Hilton has a B.A. in Philosophy from Newberry College, an M.A.T. in Biology from Winthrop University, an M.S. in Ecology and Behavioral Biology from the University of Minnesota, and an honorary doctorate (D.Sci.) from his undergraduate alma mater. He is based in South Carolina at Hilton Pond Center for Piedmont Natural History, a non-profit research, education, and conservation organization he founded

in 1982. Hilton is also a celebrated writer, having been published numerous times in major newspapers and periodicals. His ongoing series of photo essays about nature phenomena entitled "This Week at Hilton Pond" has a large international following.

In the neotropics, Bill is assisted by Ernesto M. Carman, one of the most competent and accomplished young naturalists and bird guides in Central America. Ernesto is bilingual and has dual citizenship in the U.S. and Costa Rica; he lives on and helps operate an organic shade-grown coffee farm (Finca Cristina) at Paraíso, east of Cartago.

PROGRAM PRICING

\$2,475 (12 participants)

Cost includes accommodations, activities, meals, entrance fees, in-country transportation, and full-time guide.

Cost does not include international airfare, gratuities, or items of a personal nature. Holbrook can assist with flight arrangements if desired.

TRAVEL PROTECTION

Holbrook Travel purchases Travel Protection on behalf of all participants traveling in 2018 or beyond. 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. Visit holbrooktravel.com/travelprotection 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.

THE FINE PRINT

Cost is based on double occupancy; for a single room throughout the trip add \$355 per person. A \$200 per person non-refundable deposit and completed enrollment form are required by July 3, 2018 to hold your space on the trip. This deposit is refundable minus a \$100 cancellation fee until July 28, 2018, at which time final non-refundable payment is due. A portion of your trip fees will be tax-deductible.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENROLL:

Visit holbrook.travel/rubythroat-cr30 or contact Sandy Schmidt at schmidt@holbrooktravel.com or 877-907-5360.