



Nazca Boobies (*Sula granti*) by Eric Lindberg



# GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS

ABOARD M/C TIP TOP II

AUDUBON ALASKA | LED BY NILS WARNOCK

February 28 - March 10, 2018

*Curious and unafraid wildlife, unique geological features, specially adapted endemic flora, and a fascinating history of human habitation characterize the Galápagos Islands. Join Audubon Alaska and embark on an unforgettable expedition aboard the comfortable 16-passenger M/C Tip Top II into the captivating world of sea lions, Blue-footed Boobies, and marine iguanas. Explore the biodiversity, habitats, and landscapes of the world-renowned archipelago that inspired Charles Darwin's theory of evolution.*

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit a flamingo lagoon at Playa Las Bachas and take some time to swim, snorkel, or kayak while you are there.
- Explore Sullivan Bay for a feel of the volcanic origins of the archipelago.
- Seek out frigatebirds, herons, mockingbirds, boobies, shorebirds, sea turtles, marine iguanas, and more at Darwin's Bay and Prince Philip's Steps.
- Observe snails, sponges, hermit crabs, shore birds, and sea lions at James Bay.
- Learn about the archipelago's ongoing research and conservation issues including invasive species and poaching.

## ABOUT AUDUBON ALASKA

Join us on a wildlife-viewing adventure of a lifetime. By traveling with Audubon Alaska, you will have an intimate, unique experience abroad, focused on nature, wildlife, and birds. You'll travel with local guides and naturalists, Audubon Alaska staff, and like-minded people who care about birds and wild places. As part of the trip, you'll support bird conservation in Alaska through a tax-deductible donation to Audubon Alaska. Birds across the globe rely on habitat in Alaska. Audubon Alaska works to protect bird, wildlife, and habitat they depend on.

# ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

## FEBRUARY 28 - QUITO

After a long day of travel, arrive in Quito where you will be met and escorted to your hotel. *Overnight at Sheraton Quito.*

## MARCH 1 - QUITO

After breakfast this morning, take a city tour of Quito, including a visit to the Middle of the World Monument, or visit Bellavista Cloud Forest Reserve. *Overnight at Sheraton Quito. (BLD)*

## MARCH 2 - GALÁPAGOS

Fly from mainland Ecuador to Baltra. After boarding your yacht, the M/C Tip Top II, attend your first orientation and enjoy a light snack. Disembark at Playa Las Bachas and visit a flamingo lagoon. Optional time is offered each day for swimming, snorkeling and/or kayaking. Attend an evening orientation about the origin and evolution of the Galápagos Islands, and have a welcome cocktail with the entire crew, followed by dinner. Each night during the cruise there will be an orientation to discuss the events of the day and the next day's plans. *Overnight aboard M/C Tip Top II. (BLD)*

## MARCH 3 - GALÁPAGOS

After breakfast, go ashore at Sullivan Bay, a perfect place to get a feel for the volcanic origin of the islands. Return to the boat for lunch, followed by a landing on Bartolomé Island in the afternoon to hike to the summit. During the hike, it's possible to observe colonies of marine iguanas and lava lizards, and on the summit you'll see an impressive view of the surrounding islands, including the eroded tuff cone of Pinnacle Rock. *Overnight aboard M/C Tip Top II. (BLD)*

## MARCH 4 - GALÁPAGOS

Today go for a panga boat ride and disembark on Prince Philip's Steps (El Barranco) to walk and observe the interesting lives of the birds here. Enjoy lunch aboard the boat. Later in the afternoon, visit Darwin Bay, home to frigatebirds, herons, mockingbirds, boobies, shorebirds, sea turtles, marine iguanas and more. Tonight attend an orientation to learn about conservation efforts to protect the islands. *Overnight aboard M/C Tip Top II. (BLD)*

## MARCH 5 - GALÁPAGOS

After breakfast, visit James Bay (Puerto Egas) for an opportunity to observe sponges, snails, hermit crabs, a variety of shorebirds, the endemic four-eyed blenny, marine iguanas, and sea lions. This afternoon, the boat navigates around Buccaneer Cove (Caleta Bucanero), an area with steep cliffs and dark beaches. This was a popular place for 17th and 18th century buccaneers to careen their vessels. The cliffs and pinnacle are used as nesting areas by several species of sea birds. Walk along a coastal trail to visit an abandoned salt mine. *Overnight aboard M/C Tip Top II. (BLD)*

## MARCH 6 - GALÁPAGOS

This morning take a panga boat ride to Punta Vicente Roca for a chance to observe sea lions, marine iguanas, Blue-footed and Masked Boobies, and Flightless Cormorants. Stop at Punta Espinoza in the afternoon to observe a large colony of sea lions, marine iguanas, Flightless Cormorants, and interesting lava cactus. *Overnight aboard M/C Tip Top II. (BLD)*

## MARCH 7 - GALÁPAGOS

Visit Urbina Bay, a coral area with land iguanas, Flightless Cormorants, and giant tortoises. Return to the yacht for lunch. In the afternoon, take a panga boat ride around the islets of Elizabeth Bay to look for marine iguanas, marine turtles, seabirds, shorebirds, herons, Galápagos Penguins, and Blue-footed Boobies. *Overnight aboard M/C Tip Top II. (BLD)*

## MARCH 8 - GALÁPAGOS

Today begins with a landing at Las Tintoreras near Puerto Villamil. The islet has a small bay of calm, turquoise waters home to hundreds

of marine iguanas, sea turtles, sea lions, Galápagos Penguins, rays, and often white-tipped reef sharks. Then, go on an optional expedition to Sierra Negra Volcano, which has a crater six miles in diameter. Take a 45-minute bus ride to the highlands of Isabela and walk along the slopes of the volcano. The trail will take you to Volcán Chico (on the northeast of Sierra Negra Volcano), a fissure composed of scum and lava. The sulfur, iron, and cooled magma create a colorful landscape. Return to the yacht for lunch. This afternoon, visit the breeding center Arnaldo Tupiza to observe native plants and tortoises of different ages and sizes and learn about the reproduction of giant tortoises. Next, visit the Wall of Tears, a historic site that was a penal colony for 13 years, where as punishment, prisoners built a wall with huge blocks of lava. There you may see lava lizards, Galápagos finches and hawks. Before returning to the yacht, visit Los Humedales to see a series of lagoons, mangrove species, flamingos, and numerous migratory birds. *Overnight aboard M/C Tip Top II. (BLD)*

## MARCH 9 - GUAYAQUIL

After breakfast, visit the Charles Darwin Research Station and its Interpretive Center. Later, travel by bus and ferry to the Baltra airport for your flight to Guayaquil. A light lunch is served during the flight. Spend the afternoon at your leisure before farewell dinner at the hotel. *Overnight at Hotel Oro Verde. (BLD)*

## MARCH 10 - DEPARTURE

Today transfer to the airport for your flight home. (B)

## MEET YOUR LEADER

**Nils Warnock** is Audubon Alaska's state director. As chief executive officer, Nils leads all of Audubon's programs and initiatives related to Alaska. Nils has a PhD in Ecology from the University of California at Davis and San Diego State University, and he serves as an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Wildlife at Humboldt State University. Most recently, he was a Wildlife Specialist for the Wildlife Health Center at the University of California, Davis. From 1998–2008, Nils was Co-Director of the Wetlands Ecology Division at PRBO Conservation Science. Nils has studied shorebirds and waterfowl across Alaska. He has published extensively, especially on the ecology of shorebirds, including more than 50 scientific articles in peer-reviewed books and journals, as well as articles in popular magazines such as Natural History and Birding.



## PROGRAM PRICING

**\$5,325** per person

Cost includes meals, non-alcoholic beverages, full-time guide, accommodations, in-country transportation, activities as mentioned, and a \$350 donation to Audubon Alaska.

Does not include international airfare, gratuities, or items of a personal nature. Estimated airfare from Anchorage is \$1,325 (as of March 2017).

## THE FINE PRINT

*Price is based on double occupancy; a limited number of single rooms may be available at additional cost. A \$350 per person deposit and enrollment form is required to secure your space on the trip. This deposit is refundable minus a \$100 cancellation fee until October 31, 2017. Non-refundable final payment is due November 25, 2017. Travel/trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended. For more information call Travel Insured at 800-243-3174. Holbrook Travel's agency number is 15849.*

## FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENROLL:

Visit [holbrook.travellaudubonalaska-gps18](http://holbrook.travellaudubonalaska-gps18) or contact Debbie Sturdivant Jordan at 866-748-6146 or [debbie@holbrooktravel.com](mailto:debbie@holbrooktravel.com)