



Ocellated Turkey by Dick Daniels



MEXICO

THE YUCATÁN PENINSULA WITH GEORGIA AUDUBON

November 11 - 21, 2021



Pack your binoculars and embark on this 11-day birding adventure to the environmentally diverse Yucatán Peninsula. Witness native birds soar above the stunning ruins of San Gervasio, Becán, Chacchoben, and other archaeological sites on this journey through the Maya world. Heads will turn at every point of this expedition as you look for magnificent endemic, resident, and migratory species. From trail hikes to boat rides, birders will have an opportunity to participate in a variety of outdoor activities while learning about the history of the Maya and the birds that call the Yucatán Peninsula home.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit several archaeological sites and learn about ancient Maya culture while looking for avifauna in the surrounding forests.
- Seek out endemic species like the Yucatan Vireo, Yucatan Woodpecker, Yucatan Parrot, Cozumel Emerald, Mexican Sheartail, and more.
- Search for avifauna in Calakmul Biosphere Reserve, home to approximately 350 bird species.
- Embark on a boat ride around beautiful Bacalar Lagoon, nicknamed the "Lake of Seven Colors."
- Attend several lectures to learn more about the birds of Cozumel and the Yucatan Peninsula.



Yucatan Woodpecker by Alexander Dzib

ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

NOVEMBER 11 - COZUMEL

Upon arrival at the Cozumel International Airport, after clearing customs and collecting your luggage, you will be met and transferred to your hotel. Attend an orientation meeting and have dinner at the hotel. Hotel check-in available at 3 pm. *Overnight at Villablanca Garden Beach Hotel. (D)*

NOVEMBER 12 - COZUMEL

This morning meet for breakfast in the hotel restaurant at 7 am. Afterward set out for birding at the San Gervasio archaeological site on the north side of the island. The site, whose pre-Columbian name means “flat rock in the place of the swallows” was once a Maya religious center and administrative seat for the entire island. Watch for species like the Yucatan Vireo, Yucatan Woodpecker, Bananaquit, Cozumel Emerald, Green-breasted Mango, Ruddy Ground-Dove, Mangrove Cuckoo, and Cozumel Wren. For those who wish, there will be the opportunity to snorkel for an hour and a half (at additional cost of \$65 per person) before lunch at a local restaurant. This afternoon, transfer to Cozumel’s south for more birding. Later, return to the hotel with time to freshen up before a lecture to learn about the birds of Cozumel. Dinner at the hotel. *Overnight at Villablanca Garden Beach Hotel. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 13 - CHETUMAL

Begin the day with early morning birding around the hotel gardens. After breakfast check out and take the ferry from the pier in Cozumel to Playa del Carmen on the mainland; from there, continue south to Vigía Chico, an abandoned coastal village. The trip takes you through Sian Ka’an, a Biosphere Reserve and UNESCO World Heritage Site characterized by tropical forests, mangroves, savannas, and wetlands, with more than 300 bird species. Potential sightings include Ocellated Turkey, Jabiru, Great Curassow, Roseate Spoonbill, Gray-headed Chat, Orange Oriole, Scaled Pigeon, Yucatan Parrot, Bananaquit, Red-legged Honeycreeper, Rose-throated Tanager, Gray-headed Tanager, Snail Kite, and 15 heron species, plus wildlife such as howler and spider monkeys, tapirs, crocodiles, margays, and ocelots. Lunch in the nearby town of Felipe Carrillo Puerto. In the afternoon, go birding around the large temples and platforms of the Chacchoben site and watch for Red-lored Parrot, Groove-billed Ani, Yucatan Jay, Yucatan Vireo, Black-headed Trogon, Pale-billed Woodpecker, and Red-crowned Ant-Tanager, among others. Continue to your hotel on beautiful Bacalar Lagoon—known as the “Lake of Seven Colors” due to its different shades of blue. *Overnight at Fiesta Inn. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 14 - CHETUMAL

After breakfast, take a boat ride around Bacalar Lagoon. You may see Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Neotropic Cormorant, Limpkin, Northern Jacana, Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, and White-fronted Parrot. Return to the pier and visit the colonial Fort of San Felipe for more birding. Lunch at a local restaurant, then return to the hotel for time at leisure to relax or watch for avian visitors in the hotel gardens. This evening, attend a lecture on birding in the Yucatán before dinner at the hotel. *Overnight at Fiesta Inn. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 15 - XPUHIL

Check out after breakfast and head further inland toward Xpuhil, stopping for birding en route at the Noh-Bec site. Noh-Bec is a community-owned tropical reserve located around the Noh-Bec lagoon. Some target species here include Brown-hooded Parrot, White-crowned Parrot, Lineated Woodpecker, Plain Chachalaca, Purple Gallinule, Pale-billed Woodpecker, Royal Flycatcher, Green Kingfisher, Greenish Elaenia, Boat-billed Flycatcher, Stub-tailed Spadebill, Collared-Trogon, Black-headed Trogon, Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl, and Blue Ground-Dove. Continue to Xpuhil for lunch and then transfer about four miles west to Becán for a field trip in the ruins. This site was once the political, economic, and religious center of the area known today as Rio Bec. One distinguishing characteristic of Becán is the presence of moats and protective walls surrounding the city, features not commonly found in Maya architecture. The pyramids and temples in Becán were built in clusters around three main plazas and also include a small but well-preserved ball court. Some buildings still have remnants of the detailed facades that once graced their walls, giving insight into what the city must have looked like at its peak. A variety of warblers, tanagers, hummingbirds, and raptors can be seen here. Check in at the hotel this afternoon, with time for birding around the hotel’s gardens. Keep your eyes open for Crested Guan, Great Curassow, Russet-naped Wood-Rail, and Thicket Tinamou. *Overnight at Chicanna Ecovillage Resort. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 16 - XPUHIL

Set out with a boxed breakfast for birding at Calakmul Biosphere Reserve this morning. Calakmul is part of the largest extension of tropical forest outside the Amazon Basin and is home to many endangered mammals and an impressive 350 bird species. Within the reserve is the Calakmul archaeological site; the top of the complex’s great pyramid offers a good vantage point to look for soaring raptors, such as Hook-billed and Gray-headed Kites, Hawk Eagles, and the magnificent King Vulture, which is the symbol of Calakmul. Other possibilities include regional endemic species such as the Ocellated Turkey and Rose-throated Tanager, as well as vulnerable birds like the Great Curassow.



Pyramid of the Magician - Uxmal by Laura Vick



Bare-throated Tiger-Heron by Debbie Sturdivant Jordan

Have a picnic lunch before returning to the hotel for more birding around the hotel gardens this afternoon before dinner. *Overnight at Chicanna Ecovillage Resort. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 17 - UXMAL

Early morning birding at the hotel. Check out and head to the ruins at Hochob, a small but interesting Maya site. Hochob is an excellent example of the Chenes architectural style, which flourished from about AD 100 to 1000 and is distinguished by smaller courtyards and ceremonial platforms and a lack of large pyramids. In the forests around Hochob you may be able to see Yucatan Bobwhite, Lesser Roadrunner, Indigo Bunting, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Yucatan Woodpecker, Turquoise-browed Motmot, Lesson's Motmot, and Fork-tailed Flycatcher. Enjoy a picnic lunch on site, then continue the drive north to Uxmal. Check in at your hotel with time for birding around the grounds before dinner. *Overnight at Hotel Maya Uxmal. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 18 - UXMAL

Morning birding at Uxmal site. Known as 'the three times built,' it is one of the most impressive and majestic Maya archeological sites in Yucatan. Its beauty is characterized by low horizontal palaces set around courtyards or quadrangles, which are decorated with highly detailed rich sculptures made from thousands of small and perfectly polished stones set in geometric mosaics of perfection unmatched in the entire Maya area. The city encompasses 15 groups of buildings, spread from north to south. The city contains the Pyramid of the Magician, with its Plaza of the Birds, the Nunnery Quadrangle, the Ball Court, the Governor's Palace, the Great Pyramid and the Palomar and the North Group, the Old House, the Graveyard and the Temple of the Dongs. In the afternoon transfer to Hacienda Yunku for birding around the property. Return to Hotel Maya Uxmal for dinner and a lecture on birding in the Yucatan. *Overnight at Hotel Maya Uxmal. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 19 - CELESTUN

Begin the day with early morning birding, then have breakfast and check out. Depart for Celestún on the peninsula's northwestern coast with a roadside stop for birding in the Chunchucmil community where you may see Lesser Roadrunner, Russet-naped Wood-Rail, Northern Jacana, Squirrel Cuckoo, Caribbean Dove, and Blue-black Grassquit, among others. Upon

arrival in Celestún, have lunch and check in at your beachfront hotel. There will be a chance to seek out some species endemic to the north coast, such as Yucatan Wren and Mexican Sheartail as well as others like Yucatan Bobwhite, Yucatan Woodpecker, Black Catbird, White-lored Gnatcatcher, Buff-bellied Hummingbird, Cinnamon Hummingbird, Mangrove Warbler, and Common Tody-Flycatcher. Next, listen to a lecture on local flamingo conservation efforts. Dinner at the hotel. *Overnight at Celestun Hotel. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 20 - MÉRIDA

Take a birding walk before breakfast then transfer to the pier for a boat ride down the Ria Celestún. Target species are the elusive Rufous-necked Wood-Rail, Lesson's Motmot, Common Black Hawk, Yellow-tailed Oriole, Roseate Spoonbill, Boat-billed Heron, and White Ibis. Also look for Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, American Pygmy Kingfisher, Bare-throated Tiger-Heron, and others. Lunch in town then transfer to Mérida for check-in at the hotel. Farewell dinner this evening. *Overnight at Hotel Casa del Balam. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 21 - DEPART

After breakfast transfer to the Mérida International Airport for return flights home or continue on to the extension program. *(B)*

MEET YOUR LEADER



Adam Betuel

A nature enthusiast for as long as he can remember, Adam was officially introduced to the world of birds and birdwatching at age 16 while taking a summer class at Ohio State University. From that point on, he never looked back. While as an undergraduate at Ohio State, Adam worked at the Museum of Biodiversity and met graduate students who allowed him to assist on a variety of projects. During the summers, Adam conducted research on Purple Martins in North Carolina and species diversity across the country of Paraguay. After earning his B.S., he then worked for the University of Florida on multiple field studies across the state. Adam next conducted his graduate work at Indiana State University. There he studied the White-throated Sparrow, spending each breeding season in the Adirondacks of Upstate New York. Upon leaving Indiana State, Adam became the first ever conservation director for the Atlanta Audubon Society, now Georgia Audubon. For Georgia Audubon, Adam works on making Georgia more bird-friendly through habitat restoration, window collision reduction, field research, community science, and education. Adam also organizes trips for Georgia Audubon, leading groups across the state, the Southeast, and internationally.

He has been published in peer-reviewed literature, appeared on Adult Swim's Stupid Morning BS, is on the board of the conservation organization Para la Tierra, and once tried (successfully) to scare away an approaching bull with a cane. Adam loves all things birds but is especially fond of New World sparrows, eBird, Big Days, and breeding behavior. When not enjoying birds, Adam likes spending time with his family, a good craft beer, cooking, and exploring new destinations.

MAIN PROGRAM LAND PRICING

\$2,625 (based on a minimum of 8 participants)

Cost includes meals, accommodations, and activities as indicated in the itinerary, in-country transportation, full-time guide for duration of program, all tips/gratuities except for main guide and driver, bottled water on the bus, and carbon offset.

Does not include international airfare, estimated at \$810 from Atlanta, gratuities for main guide and driver, or items of a personal nature. Other departure cities are available.

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.

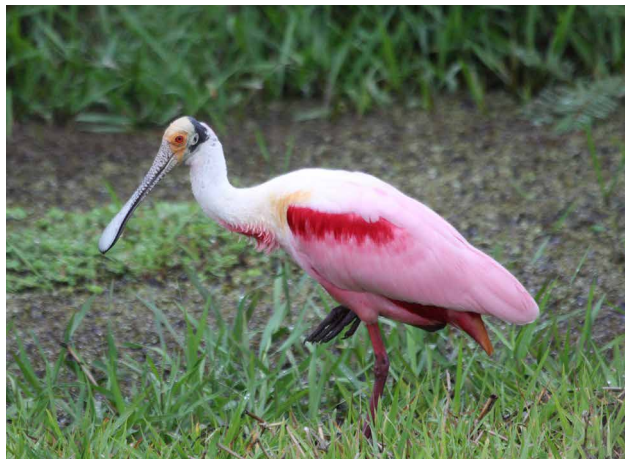
Optional additional coverage is available in the form of the Group Deluxe Plan, which offers benefits for Trip Cancellation/Interruption, in addition to many other insurance benefits and non-insurance assistance services. If interested in this optional plan, we can provide you with rates and plan details.

MAIN PROGRAM FINE PRINT

Cost is based on double occupancy; for a single room throughout the trip add \$400 per person. A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form are required to reserve your space on the trip. This deposit is refundable until August 8, 2021, at which time non-refundable final payment is due.



This program includes optional carbon offsetting with ClimateSafe. Learn more at holbrooktravel.com/climatesafe



Roseate Spoonbill by Alexander Dzib

OPTIONAL POST-TRIP EXTENSION

Chichén Itzá | November 21-24, 2021

NOVEMBER 21 - CHICHÉN ITZÁ

After breakfast depart for Chichén Itzá. En route stop at Mayapan archeological site for birding and exploration of the ruins. Continue to Pisté for lunch before arriving at the hotel. Check in and enjoy birding around the hotel gardens and trails. Dinner at the hotel. *Overnight at Hotel Mayaland Chichen. (LD)*

NOVEMBER 22 - CHICHÉN ITZÁ

Early morning birding. After breakfast, visit Chichén Itzá. One of the greatest Mayan sites in the Yucatán, it is also considered one of the most important political centers from 600-1200 AD and the early Post-classic period. Receive an on-site lecture. The forests in and around the impressive archaeological complex are home to a variety of wildlife. Target species include the Yucatan Jay, Rose-throated Becard, Masked Tityra, Black-crowned Tityra, Golden-fronted Woodpecker, Boat-billed Flycatcher, Cave Swallow, Scrub Euphonia, Yellow-throated Euphonia, and Social Flycatcher. Endemic bird species include the Yucatan Woodpecker and Yucatan Parrot. This is also a good area to spot migrant songbirds that winter in the region. Later, visit Cenote Yokdzonot for swimming. *Overnight at Hotel Mayaland Chichen. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 23 - PUERTO MORELOS

This morning depart for Ria Lagartos Biosphere Reserve. During a boat ride in the reserve's wetlands, look for American Flamingo, Muscovy Duck, Wood Stork, and Peregrine Falcon. The reserve has a great diversity of plant and animal life including 523 registered plant species, 335 bird species (179 are resident, 142 are migratory, and 14 are resident migrants), 95 reptile and amphibian species, 71 registered fish species, and 58 mammal species listed as endangered. The reserve's most famous resident is the colorful Caribbean Flamingo which can be seen nesting in El Cuyo basin. Other bird families commonly spotted include herons, storks, kingfishers, cormorants, coots, rails, and gallinules. Have lunch at a local restaurant. Afterwards transfer to Puerto Morelos and enjoy dinner at your beachside hotel. *Overnight at Hacienda Morelos. (BLD)*

NOVEMBER 24 - DEPART

Have breakfast at the hotel, then transfer to the Dr. Alfredo Barrera Marin Botanical Garden, established in 1982 to protect the regional flora and fauna of the north of Quintana Roo. It is currently the only reserve of original forest in the area. In addition to a resident troupe of spider monkeys, some of the species here include the Great Kiskadee, Boat-billed Heron, Cinnamon Hummingbird, White-fronted Parrot, Groove-billed Ani, and Lesser Greenlet. After the visit, transfer to the Cancún Airport for flights home. *(BLD)*

EXTENSION LAND PRICING

\$1,095 (based on a minimum of 4 participants)

Cost includes meals, accommodations, and activities as indicated in the itinerary, in-country transportation, internal flights, full time guide for duration of program, tips/gratuities except main guide and driver, bottled water on the bus, Travel Protection, and carbon offset.

Does not include tips/gratuities except for main guide and driver, or items of a personal nature.

EXTENSION FINE PRINT

Cost is based on double occupancy; for a single room throughout the trip add \$200 per person. A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form are required to reserve your space on the trip. This deposit is refundable until August 18, 2021 at which time non-refundable final payment is due.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENROLL

Visit holbrook.travel/georgiaaudubon-mx21 or contact Debbie Jordan at debbie@holbrooktravel.com or 866-748-6146.