



LAKE ATITLÁN



GUATEMALA

BIRDING GUATEMALA'S HIGHLANDS AND LAKE ATITLÁN

11 days | Choose your dates

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Bird the lower and upper trails at Los Tarrales, with the goal of seeing the Long-tailed Manakin's impressive courtship display.
- Visit Corazon del Bosque Reserve for the chance to see Mountain Trogon, White-naped Brush-Finch, and with luck, the uncommon Pink-headed Warbler.
- Ascend to the higher-elevation forests of Los Andes Private Nature Reserve, where you may spot the Resplendent Quetzal.
- Explore Santiago de Atitlán, a village known for its many women's cooperatives and traditional textile weaving.
- Meet representatives of Asociación Vivamos Mejor, a private nonprofit organization committed to improving the quality of life in communities surrounding Lake Atitlán.

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Supporting Audubon and its partners in advancing sustainable development in bird hot-spots

Holbrook Travel is a supporting partner in Audubon and its partners' conservation work in Latin America and in the Caribbean. One key aspect of that work is the strengthening of **bird-based tourism** as a conservation and sustainable development tool. The tours developed from this initiative are designed to help protect key target areas along the flyways for migratory and local species. Initial sites are located in **Belize, Colombia, Guatemala, Paraguay and the Bahamas.**

These areas were selected by intersecting bird hot-spots with key **Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs)** where Audubon and their partners (Belize Audubon, Patrimonio Natural, Calidris, WCS, Vivamos Mejor, Guyra Paraguay and the Bahamas National Trust) are carrying out vital conservation work. By overlaying conservation work with the economic support that bird-based tourism brings, this program **strengthens local communities and the long-term conservation** of these areas.

Participants on these tours have a direct economic impact on local people and communities, help preserve IBAs, and nurture an emerging ecotourism industry. By visiting these sites with our trained guides, you **help protect threatened habitats** by supporting local conservation and local communities that benefit from tourism.

WHAT MAKES FLYWAY EXPEDITIONS DIFFERENT?



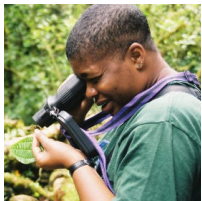
UNIQUE ITINERARIES

These birding itineraries are unique in that they are designed to help strengthen and support tourism in bird hot-spots and support conservation and local economic development. The initial program is focusing on nine sites in Belize, Guatemala, Paraguay and the Bahamas. The project is helping communities, local tour operators, and tourism boards attract bird watching tourists to the selected destinations and associated businesses. Participants will see the conservation activities first-hand and engage with the local community during their tours.



EXTENSIVE GUIDE TRAINING

Birding guides selected for the tours have taken part in comprehensive guide training in alliance with expert guides, local tourism authorities, and Audubon's local conservation partners. Guides are provided advanced levels of training which include bird identification, biology, ecology, and conservation alongside guiding ethics, group management, marketing, and business, plus basic English language where needed. Tours connect advanced regional guides with local guides to increase knowledge and capacity.



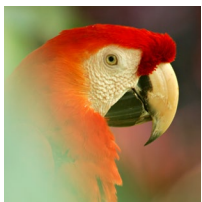
SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESSES

The National Audubon Society project provides local guiding businesses with access to equipment, including binoculars, scopes, and guidebooks; improves trails and associated infrastructure; and offers basic business support such as marketing and customer service training. Participants on the tours will benefit from these improvements and help support the important economic incentive to promote conservation.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Travelers will learn about targeted environmental education and outreach programs carried out by Audubon and its partners. These include programs at local schools, using local birdlife as a hook to engage youth, and courses for adult, community, and women's groups, and alternative livelihood programs. Tours may include a talk with community members or a school visit where participants can exchange their passion for birding.



BIRD CONSERVATION

With greater local awareness and appreciation for ecosystems, the program supports priority endemic bird species including the critically endangered Scarlet Macaw, Resplendent Quetzal and Bahama Oriole, plus migrant species that rely on key migratory flyways like the Piping Plover, Wood Thrush and Buff-breasted Sandpiper, and other wildlife including the Jaguar, Maned Wolf and Rock Iguana.

Photos by Greg Basco, Christa Dillabaugh, Pelin Karaca, and Martin Van Lokven

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Supporting Audubon and its partners in advancing sustainable development in bird hot-spots

This bird-based tourism initiative is a key conservation tool being implemented by the National Audubon Society that links poverty reduction and economic development directly with nature conservation. By building capacity within communities, especially on the edge of protected areas or Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas, and working with tour operators and local organizations to drive an interested market to support the initiative, we all can make a vast difference for conservation and reduce the loss of habitat and birds. Holbrook Travel is a proud supporter of this work, having pioneered conservation, local guide training, and community outreach in Costa Rica. Together, we aim to create a network of community-based birding destinations across the hemisphere that offer skilled local birding guides, improved site interpretation and lodging, and related goods and services tailored to the birding community.

Birding Guatemala's Highlands and Lake Atitlán

Guatemala is a richly diverse cultural center and a lush and vibrant paradise for birders. Set in the heart of Central America, it is one of the New World's prime migratory corridors. See firsthand many of the species Audubon hopes to protect through its ongoing conservation efforts. Experience National Audubon's *Asociación Vivamos Mejor* program based in Panajachel on Lake Atitlán, including a training program for Guatemalans to become birding and nature guides. Under their guidance, you'll explore a variety of habitats, seek out rare and endemic species, and meet with locals who are part of the Audubon bird-tourism initiative in Santiago Atitlán, a hub of Maya culture. Birders who choose to take this tour will enjoy the vast, natural riches while supporting local communities and protecting a diverse ecosystem.

ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER



RESPLENDENT QUETZAL BY ANN AND ROB SIMPSON

DAY 1 - ANTIGUA

Arrive at La Aurora International Airport in **Guatemala City**, Guatemala. (Note: All flights should arrive no later than 2:00 pm.) Meet the local representative outside the airport after clearing immigration and customs, then transfer to **Antigua** (about a 1-hour drive, depending on traffic). This evening enjoy a welcome talk about your upcoming journey. *Overnight at Hotel Posada Don Rodrigo. (D)*

DAY 2 - LOS ANDES PRIVATE NATURE RESERVE

After breakfast, travel to **Finca El Pilar**, a private reserve with pine-oak forest and excellent trails for birding. Walk the trails looking for various species and visit the hummingbird feeders. In the afternoon, continue to **Finca Los Andes** at the southern slopes of **Atitlán Volcano**. Los Andes is home to the elusive Resplendent Quetzal as well as the rare and exquisite Cabanis's Tanager, also known as the Azure-rumped Tanager. This small bird's highly localized habitat is shared by hundreds of local and migrating species, including a host of hummingbirds, orioles, flycatchers, trogons and motmots. In 2001, Los Andes was declared a private nature reserve, and it is a founding member of Guatemala's Association of Private Nature Reserves. The reserve works closely with local residents to promote self-sufficiency, health and education. Some residents are also enrolled in a guide training program to provide them with an alternate source of income. Hunting is prohibited in the reserve, and present programs for conservation include building artificial nests for the Quetzals. The reserve also has a reforestation program approved by INAB (The National Forestry Institute), as well as eucalyptus forests planted for firewood. Financial and technical assistance are provided to buy and install efficient wood burning stoves in the workers' houses. Los Andes has its own hydroelectric plant, which generates all power used on the estate. *Overnight at Finca Los Andes. (B)*

DAY 3 - FINCA LOS ANDES

Today, continue birding at the reserve. Hummingbird feeders at the lodge may attract the Blue-tailed Hummingbird as well as Violet and Rufous Sabrewings. The rarer Wine-throated Hummingbird may also appear. Head up to the higher forest above the tea plantations via pick-up truck, then embark on a set of trails that may lead to a Resplendent Quetzal. Also present are Tody Motmots, Emerald Toucanets, and other deep-forest species such as Singing Quail, Spotted Nightingale-Thrush and Scaled Antpitta. Tonight after dinner, there will be an optional walk for owling. *Overnight at Finca Los Andes. (BLD)*

DAY 4 - LOS TARRALES RESERVE

Enjoy early morning birding around the lodge. After breakfast, transfer to **Finca Los Tarrales**, located on the flanks of the same mountain as Finca Los Andes. However, the elevation and humidity profile differ, and so does the bird life. Los Tarrales ranges in altitude from 2,300 to 11,500 feet, with good access to various types of forest, and 340+ species of birds from lowland to highland habitats. The reserve is part of the Atitlán Important Bird Area, and harbors 21 regional endemic bird species, including Horned Guan, Highland Guan, Azure-rumped Tanager, and Blue-tailed Hummingbird. There is also an impressive abundance of migratory birds here, including Swainson's Thrush, Tennessee, Magnolia, and Black-and-white Warblers, Western Tanager, and Orchard Oriole. It is a good place for raptors as well, including the Black Hawk-Eagle, and sometimes the gorgeous Black-and-white Owl. Morning and evening are great for commuting parrots, with four species of parakeets and parrots typically seen. During lunch, take some time to enjoy the feeders, where Orchard, Altamira, Spot-breasted and Baltimore Orioles come to feed along with Rufous-naped Wrens and Yellow-throated Euphonias. *Overnight at Finca Los Tarrales. (BLD)*

DAY 5 - LOS TARRALES RESERVE

Continue birding the reserve's lower and upper trails in search of a diversity of birds, including displaying Long-tailed Manakins. Los Tarrales is private and self-sustaining; costs are covered from income selling coffee, ornamental plants, and honey, and through tourism services. Sixty Maya Kaqchikel families live within the protected area, working in agricultural production, as forest rangers, and in tourism. Los Tarrales also has a private primary school for children living on the reserve, offering classes in nature, science, and conservation in addition to the standard disciplines. (Note: School visits must be arranged for a weekday, when school is in session.) *Overnight at Finca Los Tarrales. (BLD)*

DAY 6 - SANTIAGO DE ATITLÁN

After birding in the morning, transfer to **Santiago de Atitlán** in time for lunch. In the afternoon, there are a few chances to



TODY MOTMOT BY DOMINIC SHERONY

see some new species. If lucky, you may find the uncommon Slender Sheartail hummingbird or Prevost's Ground-Sparrow. Santiago de Atitlán is a hub of Maya culture and there may be an opportunity to meet some locals who are part of the Audubon bird tourism initiative. National Audubon has partnered with Asociación Vivamos Mejor (AVM), a private nonprofit development organization committed to improving the quality of life of rural communities surrounding Lake Atitlán. AVM focuses on sustainable watersheds and resiliency to climate change as a strategy for promoting sustainable development. Along with your primary group leader, each location will have a local guide involved in the project. *Overnight at Hotel Bambú. (BLD)*

DAY 7 - SANTIAGO DE ATITLÁN

This morning, enjoy birding at **Parque Mirador del Rey Tepepul**, a 3,500-hectare forest park with a wide altitudinal range. Although new to the bird tourism scene, this park has great birds, including the Yellow-naped Parrot, Blue-crowned Chlorophonia, and the Azure-rumped Tanager. In the afternoon, head back to Santiago de Atitlán to explore the town. Santiago de Atitlán is home to an incredible number of women's cooperatives and women's groups. The groups do fine weaving of textiles on the traditional back strap loom and, to a lesser degree, the Spanish floor loom. The village is also a hub for natural dyed fabrics. *Overnight at Hotel Bambú. (BLD)*

DAY 8 - SANTIAGO DE ATITLÁN

Spend the day in **San Juan La Laguna** area on the western shore of Lake Atitlán, another new site to bird tourism. Seek out the rare and gorgeous Belted Flycatcher along the lower slopes of **Volcán San Pedro**. You may also come across the Lesser Roadrunner and other dry forest species such as Prevost's Ground-Sparrow. Participants in excellent shape can try the hike to the volcano to find the Horned Guan. This hike is very difficult, strenuous, and not for everyone – nor is it a guarantee to see the rare guan. *Overnight at Hotel Bambú. (BLD)*

DAY 9 - PANAJACHEL

In the morning, take a boat ride across Lake Atitlán to Panajachel on the northeast shore. From here, visit the **Atitlán Reserve** for a chance to find the Inca Dove, House Wren, Great-tailed Grackle, Bronzed Cowbird, Yellow-winged Tanager, Melodious Blackbird, and Vaux's Swift. Spend the morning birding at the reserve, then have lunch in town. This afternoon is free to enjoy some shopping or relax and take in views of Lake Atitlán from the hotel. Before dinner, meet with a representative of Asociación Vivamos Mejor and learn more about their work with communities surrounding Lake Atitlán. *Overnight at Hotel Posada Don Rodrigo. (BLD)*

DAY 10 - GUATEMALA CITY

This morning, visit **Corazon del Bosque**, a reserve located higher up in the oak-pine forest zone. The star bird here is the gorgeous

and uncommon Pink-headed Warbler. While looking for the warbler, you may catch a glimpse of Mountain Trogon, Spotted Woodcreeper, Yellowish Flycatcher, Rufous-browed Wren, Olive Warbler, Crescent-chested Warbler, White-naped Brush-Finch and the local form of the Yellow-eyed Junco, the "Guatemalan Junco," which many consider a separate species. After the visit, head back to Guatemala City and enjoy lunch at a local restaurant en route. Arrive in Guatemala City in the late afternoon with time to freshen up before the farewell dinner at the hotel. *Overnight at Hotel Radisson. (BLD)*

DAY 11 - DEPART

Transfer to Guatemala City Airport to take your flight home. Breakfast will be available depending on your flight time. (B)



PROGRAM PRICING

\$2,545 (based on 12 participants and 1 leader)

\$2,695 (based on 10 participants and 1 leader)

Cost includes accommodations, activities, and meals as indicated in the itinerary, in-country transportation, full-time guide, part-time apprentice guides, and a donation to National Audubon to support the program.

International airfare, gratuities, or items of a personal nature are not included.

Valid for travel in 2020.

THE FINE PRINT

A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form is due to secure your reservation. This deposit is refundable until 95 days prior to departure excluding a \$100 cancellation fee. Final payments are due no later than 95 days prior to departure. Non-refundable final payment is due at 95 days prior to departure.

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. 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.