



SILVER-THROATED TANAGER BY DOMINIC SHERONY

PANAMA

Birding and Culture at the Crossroads of the Americas

9 DAYS | December 1 - 9, 2022

Panama's prime location between North and South America offers birders an extraordinary advantage for spotting its 1,000-plus bird species. After exploring Panama City highlights, spend time birding in trails, parks, and towers in the surrounding natural areas, including Finca Bayano, Soberania National Park, and the world-famous Pipeline Road – a well-renowned trail for the immense number of species found here. Despite the proximity to Panama City, the natural area boasts rich avifauna and an abundance of other wildlife. Also, learn a blend of history and culture that make this a spectacular country to check off your list for a birding adventure.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore the historical wonders of Panama City and see ships transit through the Miraflores Locks in the Panama Canal.
- Search for lowland bird species in Finca Bayano, a private rice farm, including the Cocoli Heron, Pearl Kite, and Pied Water-Tyrant.
- Meet members of the indigenous Emberá tribe and learn about their history, traditions, and culture.
- Spot hummingbirds, manakins, and trogons along Pipeline Road, and search for the Red-lored Parrot, Yellow-throated Toucan, and Masked Tityra from a 130-foot observation tower.
- Ride on Gamboa's Aerial Tram for advantageous viewing of nesting birds, sloths, and several species of monkeys.
- Journey along four-mile Plantation Road searching for interior forest birds including the Ocellated Antbird, Ruddy Woodcreeper, and Golden-crowned Spadebill.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- Bilingual local guide
- Driver
- Accommodations
- Activities
- Private transportation
- Meals
- Beverages with meals
- Carbon offsetting



MIRAFLORES LOCKS

ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

DAY 1 - PANAMA CITY

Upon arrival at Tocumen International Airport in Panama City, meet your driver and transfer approximately 45 minutes to the hotel, which is situated along the Amador Causeway. Check-in begins at 3 pm. This is an international arrival day, with most flights arriving in the evening; therefore, no activities are planned today. *Overnight at Radisson Panama Canal*

DAY 2 - PANAMA CITY

This morning meet for a welcome breakfast and orientation to the program and Panama City before heading out to explore the historical wonders of the city. The first stop is Panama Viejo. Founded in 1519, Panama Viejo (Old Panama) was the first Spanish city established on the Pacific coast of the Americas and was one of the most important trade routes in the history of the American continent. Together with the historical district of Panama, it forms a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site. Highlights include the Catedral Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, Bishop House, Convent of the Nuns, and the Panama La Vieja Museum. Next, head to the Miraflores Locks Visitor Center to view the locks at work and enjoy the museum's interactive displays. Have lunch while watching ships passing through the canal. Visit the Centro Municipal de Artesanías Panameñas for shopping. Return to the hotel in the late afternoon. This evening meet a member of the Panama Audubon Society to learn about their important conservation work. *Overnight at Radisson Panama Canal (BLD)*

DAY 3 - PANAMA CITY

Visit Finca Bayano just east of Panama City. Bird this private rice farm that is an ideal birding spot for marsh and lowland bird species such as the Cocoli Heron, Savanna Hawk, Laughing Falcon, Pale-breasted Spinetail, Pearl Kite, Straight-billed Woodcreeper, and the Pied Water-Tyrant among more. Later, visit Cerro Azul (house of Jerry and Linda Harrison) for hummingbird observation. Return to the hotel with some time at leisure before heading out to dinner at a local restaurant on the causeway. *Overnight at Radisson Panama Canal (BLD)*

DAY 4 - GAMBOA

Depart for Gamboa this morning with another stop at Centro Municipal de Artesanías Panameñas and the Agua Clara Visitor Center overlooking the new Panamax locks. Late afternoon bird walk after arrival at Gamboa Rainforest Resort. *Overnight at Gamboa Rainforest Resort (BLD)*

DAY 5 - GAMBOA

After breakfast, transfer toward Lake Alajuela, with discussions en route about indigenous cultures and their history in Panama. Upon arrival at the Chagres River, board dugout canoes for the journey through the dense jungle. Upriver, step out of the dugout canoes and experience a short hike (which could be a bit muddy) to a beautiful waterfall in the midst of the rainforest. Those who want to cool off can take a swim in the refreshing pool just beneath the waterfall. Continue to the village of the Emberá, one of seven indigenous tribes in Panama. The people of the Emberá community will provide a warm welcome and share about their life. The village chief will explain the history of the tribe, its traditions, cultures, beliefs, and handicrafts. After a typical lunch of fish and plantains prepared by the Emberá women, experience a traditional dance and have the opportunity to shop for handicrafts. The sale of local products directly benefits the village and helps fund schooling for the children. There is also the opportunity to get "inked" with a temporary Emberá tattoo painting. Later this afternoon return by boat to the dock and transfer by bus to Gamboa Rainforest Resort. Settle in and have dinner at the hotel. *Overnight at Gamboa Rainforest Resort (BLD)*

DAY 6 - GAMBOA

This morning, visit Soberanía National Park. Created in 1980, it stands as one of Panama's natural jewels and is one of the country's most

accessible tropical rainforests. Next, visit Summit Ponds for birding and Summit Botanical Gardens, which hosts a research center for development of tropical biology and horticulture. The botanical garden showcases a representation of plant species from tropical and subtropical countries around the world and from the native species of Panama. Afterwards, return to the resort for lunch. This afternoon enjoy a presentation with the founder of the Pan American Conservation Association. Learn about wildlife rescue and rehabilitation, their work to transition injured animals back into the wild, animal relocation during canal expansion and meet their animal ambassadors. *Overnight at Gamboa Rainforest Resort (BLD)*

DAY 7 - GAMBOA

Today, visit the Rainforest Discovery Center, located at the world-famous Pipeline Road. Begin at the visitor center, observing up to 14 species of hummingbirds that have been recorded at the feeders. Continue along the trails observing birds of the undergrowth, such as manakins and trogons. Ascend the 130-foot tower to observe birds in the canopy layer such as the Mealy and Red-lore Parrots, Keel-billed and Yellow-throated Toucans, Blue Cotinga, Masked Tityra, and Green and Red-legged Honeycreepers. This afternoon, take a ride on Gamboa's Aerial Tram, a journey of almost 2,000 feet aboard a gondola that rises above the rainforest, to appreciate viewpoints otherwise unachievable on the ground. At a height almost touching the treetops, you may see a wide variety of nesting birds, sloths, and several species of monkeys. At the end of the tram ride, you will find an impressive 100-foot-high observation tower with a 360-degree view of the Soberanía National Park. *Overnight at Gamboa Rainforest Resort (BLD)*

DAY 8 - PANAMA CITY

After breakfast, journey to Plantation Road. This old, graded dirt road passes along a mature forest and is approximately four miles long. Go birding along the road in search of interior forest birds, such as Spotted, Bicolored and Ocellated Antbirds, Gray-headed Tanager, and Plain-brown. Enjoy a picnic lunch, and then head out for birding at Metropolitan Nature Park, perhaps the only forest reserve within a major capital city in Latin America. Farewell dinner this evening *Overnight at Radisson Panama Canal (BLD)*

DAY 9 - DEPARTURE

This morning transfer to the international airport for the flight to the United States. Participants with later flights can keep their hotel rooms until check out at 12 pm. Except for breakfast, all other meals are on your own today. (B)

PROGRAM PRICING

\$3,395 (based on 9 participants)

Single Supplement \$620

International airfare, gratuities, and personal items are not included.

THE FINE PRINT

A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form is due upon booking and no later than four months prior to departure. 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. Cancellations received less than 95 days prior to departure are not refundable.



GAMBOA RAINFOREST BY KATJA SCHULZ

Certified



ClimateSafe

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