



Crimson-rumped Toucanet by Reinier Munguia

## COLOMBIA

Birding The Central Andes & Rio Claro Reserve

*Friends of the Bosque del Apache*

March 7-15, 2020



.....

*With over 1,900 avian species—more than any other country in the world—Colombia is a birder’s paradise waiting to be discovered. This 9-day program focuses on the highlights of the Central Andes region, famed for its high level of species diversity, including the Rio Claro Natural Reserve, Nevado del Ruiz, Rio Blanco Reserve, and Otún Quimbaya Flora and Fauna Sanctuary. Explore high elevation mountains, humid tropical forest, páramo, wetlands, and highland savanna habitats in search of an array of tropical avifauna, including flycatchers, hummingbirds, tanagers, toucans, and more. Throughout your journey, meet members of the local community and learn about conservation efforts to use birding as a sustainable development resource.*

### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Seek out a variety of Colombia’s rare and endemic species, such as the Red-bellied Grackle, White-mantled Barbet, Magdalena Antbird, and Buffy Helmetcrest.
- Go birding in the humid tropical forest of Rio Claro Reserve, where approximately 350 avian species have been recorded.
- Enjoy impressive views of the Nevado del Ruiz Volcano while exploring high-elevation páramo habitat, with the possibility of seeing the Andean Condor.
- Watch the antpitta feeders in Rio Blanco Natural Reserve, which draw mixed flocks in high numbers.
- Hike the forest paths of Otún Quimbaya Flora and Fauna Sanctuary by night for the chance to see a variety of owls, including the endemic Colombian Screech-Owl.

## ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER



Blue-crowned Motmot by Sonja Pauen

### MARCH 7 - MEDELLÍN

Arrive at the José María Córdova International Airport (MDE) in Medellín, Colombia, and transfer to the hotel. This is an arrival day and no meals are included. Check-in time is at 3 pm. *Overnight at Hotel La Extremadura.*

### MARCH 8 - RIO CLARO RESERVE

After an early breakfast transfer to La Romera Reserve in Sabaneta village—a nice secondary forest in the Medellín Mountains—in search of endemics such as Red-bellied Grackle and Yellow-headed Manakin. Other target species include Blackish Tapaculo, Rusty Flowerpiercer, Three-striped Warbler, Scrub Tanager, Blue-crowned Motmot and more. After lunch at a local restaurant, continue with the transfer to Rio Claro Reserve, arriving at about 5 pm. After checking into to your room, get together for the first checklist meeting, followed by dinner at the hotel. (Elevation up to 5,570 feet, temperature ranges from 59 - 73.4 °F.) *Overnight at Cabañas La Mulata. (BLD)*

### MARCH 9 - RIO CLARO RESERVE

Spend today birding in the Rio Claro Natural Reserve, where you can enjoy the incredible humid tropical forest and amazing biodiversity. Some birds of interest here include: Citron-throated Toucan, Black-bellied Wren, Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher, Marble Wood-Quail, Chestnut-backed Antbird, Stripe-throated Hermit, Ruby Topaz, Purple-crowned Fairy, Western White-tailed Trogon, Pied Puffbird, Barred Puffbird, White-whiskered Puffbird, Cinnamon Woodpecker, Jet Antbird, Pacific Antwren, Brown-capped Tyrannulet, Southern Bentbill, Long-tailed Tyrant, Rufous Piha, Blue Cotinga, Black-chested Jay, Rufous Wren, Scarlet-browed Tanager, Plain-colored Tanager, Golden-hooded Tanager and more. Endemic birds of the region are the White-mantled Barbet, Sooty Ant-Tanager, Colombian Chachalaca, Beautiful Woodpecker, Magdalena Antbird, Antioquia

Bristle-Tyrant; near-endemic birds are the Saffron-headed Parrot and Moustached Brushfinch. (Elevation 2,300 - 3280 feet, temperature 77-95 °F.) *Overnight at Cabañas La Mulata. (BLD)*

### MARCH 10 - NEVADO DEL RUIZ

Spend the morning birding around the trails surrounding the lodge. After lunch, begin the four-hour transfer to the next location. *Overnight at Termales del Ruiz. (BLD)*

### MARCH 11 - NEVADO DEL RUIZ

This morning go birding in the high elevations (~13,000 feet) of Los Nevados National Park (Nevado del Ruiz), an incredible páramo in the central Andes with many special birds and amazing landscapes. Return back to the lodge for lunch. In the afternoon go birding around the lodge trails and the feeders. Target species for this day include the Andean Condor, Andean Duck, Páramo Tapaculo, Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle, Noble Snipe, Andean Pygmy-Owl, Sword-billed Hummingbird, Shining Sunbeam, Golden-breasted Puffleg, Rainbow-bearded Thornbill, Viridian Metaltail, Many-striped Canastero, White-chinned Thistletail, Andean Tit-Spintail, White-capped Tanager, Páramo Seedeater, Slate-colored Seedeater, and Golden-crowned Tanager. Endemic birds of the region are the Buffy Helmetcrest and Rufous-fronted Parakeet; near-endemic birds are the Black-thighed Puffleg, Golden-breasted Puffleg, Crescent-faced Antpitta, and Black-backed Bush-Tanager. (Elevation 10,830-13,450 feet, temperature 14-50 °F ) *Overnight at Termales del Ruiz. (BLD)*

### MARCH 12 - OTÚN QUIMBAYA SANCTUARY

Depart early for the Rio Blanco Reserve. Upon arrival, have breakfast and start your morning birding excursion. Rio Blanco Natural Reserve is one of the most famous places in Colombia to see birds by the antpitta feeders; in this location the mixed flocks and the amazing number of birds are fantastic and very easy to see. After lunch, transfer to Otún Quimbaya Sanctuary. (Elevation 5,250 - 5,900 feet, temperature 59 - 64 °F.) *Overnight at Lodge at Otún Quimbaya. (BLD)*

### MARCH 13 - OTÚN QUIMBAYA SANCTUARY

Spend the day birding in the Otún Quimbaya Flora and Fauna Sanctuary. This is a lovely place in the central Andes with some very important and rare birds. Search for birds on a little-used road or on the paths inside the forest. Some interesting birds in Otún for this day are the Cauca Guan, Chestnut Wood-Quail, Multicolored Tanager, Stiles's Tapaculo, Hooded Antpitta, Moustached Antpitta, Colombian Screech-Owl, Rufous-breasted Flycatcher, Flame-rumped Tanager, Scrub Tanager, Golden-plumed Parakeet, Red-ruffed Fruitcrow, Chestnut-breasted Wren, Wattled Guan, Marble-



faced Bristle-Tyrant, Andean Solitaire, Oleaginous Hemispingus, Golden-headed Quetzal, White-winged Becard, Western Emerald, Crimson-rumped Toucanet, Emerald Toucanet, Spotted Barbtail, and Speckle-faced Parrot. Otún is also very good for owling, so you'll have the opportunity to explore the reserve by night. *Overnight at Lodge at Otún Quimbaya. (BLD)*

### MARCH 14 - BOGOTÁ

Before breakfast, you'll have time for birding around the lodge trails one last time. After breakfast, journey toward Pereira for your mid-day flight to Bogotá, with some birding en route to look for ducks and dippers. Lunch will be at the Bogotá airport upon arrival.

Then transfer to La Florida Park, a wetland ecosystem in Bogotá, where you'll have the chance to see some important highland savanna species, such as the Bogotá Rail, Apolinar's Wren, Silvery-throated Spinetail, Noble Snipe, Subtropical Doradito, and more. Transfer to the hotel late in the afternoon and check in. Gather with your fellow travelers for a final checklist review at the hotel before sharing a farewell dinner. *Overnight at Hilton Garden Inn. (BLD)*

### MARCH 15 - DEPARTURE

Transfer to the airport for return flights to the U.S. Check-out time at 12:00pm (B)

## ACTIVITY LEVEL

**What to Expect:** This trip is rated moderately strenuous (Level 4) due to the high altitude of the Los Nevados National Natural Park trail, which is over 11,500 feet in elevation. However, the birding activities and walks are on well-maintained paths and are not long. Without the elevation consideration, we would rate this trip Level 3 Moderate. During most days there is easy-to-moderate walking. It does require extended periods of time walking and very early morning birding activities. Due to varying temperatures during the hikes, layering of clothing is suggested. There are some bumpy rides on dirt roads and the pace of each day can be quite long. Travelers should be in good physical health and able to walk for extended periods on uneven terrain.



## LAND PRICING

**\$2,975** (10 participants)

Cost includes meals, accommodations, and activities as indicated in the itinerary, in-country transportation, internal flight, full-time guide for duration of the program, carbon offset, departure tax, and donation to National Audubon and Friends of the Bosque del Apache.

Does not include international airfare, tips/gratuities, or items of a personal nature.

## 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.

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.



Andean Condor by Kevin Law

## THE FINE PRINT

*Cost is based on double occupancy; Single occupancy arrangements offered at an additional \$250 per person. A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form are required to reserve your space on the trip. This deposit is refundable excluding a \$100 cancellation fee until December 03, 2019 at which time non-refundable final payment is due.*



*This program includes optional carbon offsetting with ClimateSafe. Learn more at [holbrooktravel.com/climatesafe](http://holbrooktravel.com/climatesafe)*





**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENROLL**

Visit [holbrook.travelfob-co20](http://holbrook.travelfob-co20) or contact Sandy Schmidt at [schmidt@holbrooktravel.com](mailto:schmidt@holbrooktravel.com) or 877-907-5360

**PHOTOS BY**

*Debbie Jordan, Ian Segebarth and Ben Tavener*