



Photo by Michael Goldman



COLOMBIA

BIRDING THE CENTRAL ANDES

with Seminole Audubon Society

January 4-12, 2020



HIGH INTENSITY!

This program is for serious birders. Expect at least 6-8 hours of birding each day.

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, 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.
- Spend time interacting with community members who are part of Audubon’s International Alliance guide training program.
- 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

JANUARY 4 - PEREIRA

Upon arrival at the Pereira International Airport, after clearing customs and securing your luggage, you will be met and transferred to Sonesta Hotel for overnight. Check-in starts at 3 pm. Elevation at Pereira is 4,629 ft. *Overnight at Sonesta Hotel.*

JANUARY 5 - OTÚN

Depart for Otún very early this morning and receive an orientation on the program. Spend all day birding at Otún-Quimbaya Sanctuary, created in 1996 as an ecological buffer zone between the city of Pereira and Los Nevados National Park. The park is situated in the Andean tropical forest of the Central Andes and is home to some very rare birds. We'll search for birds on a little-used road or on the paths inside the forest. Some target birds include Cauca Guan, Chestnut Wood-Quail, Multicolored Tanager, Stile's Tapaculo, Hooded Antpitta, Moustached Antpitta, Colombian Screech-Owl, Rufous-breasted Flycatcher, Flame-rumped Tanager, and many more. Otún is also very good for owling, so this evening we'll explore the reserve at night. Gather this evening for a recap of the day's discoveries, as we will do each day of the trip. Elevation 5,250 - 5,900 ft. *Overnight at the Lodge at Otún Quimbaya. (BLD)*

JANUARY 6 - OTÚN

This morning continue birding at Otún-Quimbaya National Park and before lunch have a talk with Yarumo Blanco, the community-based ecotourism organization that manages park activities and accommodations. You will have the afternoon free to resume birding in the park. Elevation 5,250 - 5,900 ft. *Overnight at the Lodge at Otún Quimbaya. (BLD)*

JANUARY 7 - SANTA ROSA DE CABAL

This morning depart for Santa Rosa de Cabal. Upon arrival, have free time to engage in optional activities,

like taking a walk down by the river, or visiting the on-site feeders. Elevation 5,581 ft. *Overnight at Hacienda Santa Clara. (BLD)*

JANUARY 8 - SANTA ROSA DE CABAL

This morning go birding in the cloud forest of La Finca El Cortaderal near Santa Rosa de Cabal municipality, where a population of critically endangered Fuertes's Parrot was discovered. This afternoon travel to Lake Camedegua to look for aquatic species or enjoy the area options that are available. *Overnight at Hacienda Santa Clara. (BLD)*



JANUARY 9 - NEVADO DEL RUIZ

Depart early for the Rio Blanco Reserve. Upon arrival, have breakfast and enjoy the very active hummingbird feeders. Then visit the antpitta feeding stations, which provide excellent opportunities to see Chestnut-crowned and Brown-banded Antpittas, and possibly Bicolored Antpitta. Rio Blanco is one of the most famous places in Colombia to see these shy birds. Spend the morning birding before heading off via winding mountain roads to Termales del Ruiz. This evening have time to enjoy the thermal waters. Elevation 10,830 - 13,450 ft. *Overnight at Termales del Ruiz. (BLD)*

JANUARY 10 - NEVADO DEL RUIZ

This morning go birding in the high elevations (~10,000-13,000 ft.) of Los Nevados National Park (Nevado del Ruiz), an incredible páramo in the central Andes with many special birds and amazing landscapes. After lunch at the lodge receive a talk from a local Audubon member to learn more about projects implemented by the National Audubon Society in that area. 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. *Overnight at Termales del Ruiz. (BLD)*



JANUARY 11 - PEREIRA

Enjoy a leisurely morning of birding with your guide or explore your surroundings on your own before lunch and departure for Pereira. Tonight celebrate your time in Colombia with an early evening farewell dinner at the hotel. *Overnight at Sonesta Hotel. (BLD)*

JANUARY 12 - DEPARTURE

Very early this morning transfer to the Pereira International Airport for your return flights home. Checkout starts at 12pm. (B)



LAND PRICING

\$2,695 (based on 10 participants)

Cost includes meals and non-alcoholic beverages, accommodations, and activities as indicated in the itinerary, private transportation, bottled water on the bus, full-time guide, and donation to Seminole Audubon.

Does not include international airfare, 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.

THE FINE PRINT

Cost is based on double occupancy; single occupancy available at an additional \$465 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 September 6, 2019 at which time non-refundable final payment is due.



FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENROLL

Visit holbrook.travel/seminoleaud-co20 or contact Sandy Schmidt at 877-907-5360 or email schmidt@holbrooktravel.com

PHOTOS BY

Photos by Scott Cutler, Michael Goldman, and Debbie Jordan