

# Big Country

Jesse Fagan

**P**eru is Big Country (yes, I am hearing that popular 80's song in my head right now), and like any big country (think Brazil, Mexico, or Australia) with lots of birds, it deserves complete coverage. I mean, Peru has more than 1850 species of birds, 139 or so endemics, and is twice the size of Texas. That equates to nearly 20% of all bird species in the world (and second in total number), and it ranks fifth in number of endemics! Why so much diversity? Isolation, topography (remember the Andes?), lots of different habitats and microclimates. Indeed, this is the very reason to visit Peru: variety. And we are not just talking about birds and landscapes, but also a rich indigenous culture (Incan and pre-Incan) and some of the best food in the world (where to get started?! *aji de gallina*, *lomo saltado*, *ceviche*, *pisco sours*,...).

Our *Holiday Southern Peru* tour is a comprehensive central Andes tour that visits most of the southern third of Peru. This includes many areas not reached on other tours, offering new birds

and new sites. Several days around Lima will give us a chance at coastal specialties normally bypassed (Lima is usually a jumping off point, not a destination). The cold offshore currents are home to millions of seabirds including the lovely Inca Tern and playful, Humboldt Penguin. We will not ignore the coastal desert, however, and though low in diversity, it's high in species endemism (most of them a sandy brown color!).

We'll fly from Lima to Cusco and snake our way westerly up the Andes to Abancay. Here we will be after the "Apurimac" endemics including Apurimac Spinetail and a brush-finch, Vilcabamba Thistletail, and an undescribed tapaculo, "Apurimac" Tapaculo. It's then on to Puno (but not before visiting impressive Sacsayhuaman), where the lake endemic Titicaca Grebe awaits.

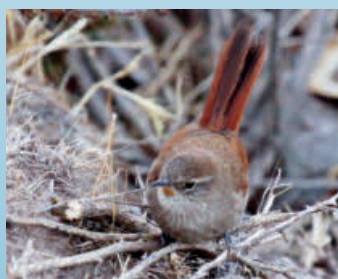
South of Puno is the expansive Altiplano, the largest "high plain" or desert outside of Nepal. We will be attentive, scanning for Lesser

*Continued on page 10*



Diademed Sandpiper-Plover

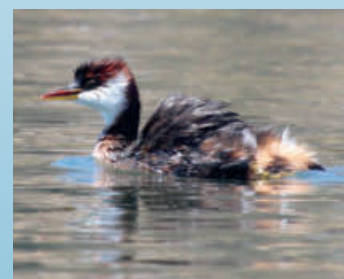
Black-faced Ibis (top)



Canyon Canastero



Peruvian Sierra-Finch



Titicaca Grebe



# 2016 TOURS

It's time once again to preview our new schedule. 2016 looks to be a very full one, with more than 130 advertised and private departures (we can organize that special trip for your group!) to destinations around the globe. On the schedule are dozens of long-running and popular itineraries, plus a few new and revised ones—we're always looking to improve our tours. For full details, visit our web site. We look forward to seeing you in the field.

—*From all of us at Field Guides, good birding!*

Eland in Kenya's Masai Mara by guide Terry Stevenson.

## January 2016

Oman & the UAE: Birding Arabia  
Amazonian Ecuador: Sacha Lodge I  
Nowhere But Northeast Brazil!  
Costa Rica: Birding the Edges Part I  
Colombia: Bogota, the Magdalena Valley & Santa Marta  
South Texas Rarities I  
Jewels of Ecuador: Hummers, Tanagers & Antpittas  
East Africa Highlights: Kenya & Tanzania  
Thailand  
Costa Rica: Birding the Edges Part II  
South Texas Rarities II  
Guyana: Wilderness Paradise

Jan 7-23 Phil Gregory & local guide  
Jan 8-17 Willy Perez  
Jan 8-25 Bret Whitney & Pepe Rojas  
Jan 9-18 Jay VanderGaast & Tom Johnson  
Jan 9-25 Jesse Fagan  
Jan 16-22 Chris Benesh  
Jan 16-Feb 2 Willy Perez  
Jan 16-Feb 5 Terry Stevenson  
Jan 16-Feb 6 Dave Stejskal & local guide  
Jan 17-26 Jay VanderGaast & Tom Johnson  
Jan 23-29 Chris Benesh  
Jan 30-Feb 10 Megan Edwards Crewe & local guide

## February 2016

Winter Japan: Dancing Cranes & Spectacular Sea-Eagles  
Colombia: The Cauca Valley, Western & Central Andes  
Panama's Canopy Tower I  
Guatemala: Shade-grown Birding  
Trinidad & Tobago I  
Amazonian Ecuador: Sacha Lodge II  
Best of the Pacific Northwest: Skagit Valley & Puget Sound  
Mexico: Oaxaca  
Cambodia  
Panama's Canopy Tower II  
Namibia & Botswana  
Ecuador: Rainforest & Andes I

Feb 5-20 Phil Gregory  
Feb 6-21 Richard Webster  
Feb 7-13 John Coons  
Feb 11-20 Jesse Fagan  
Feb 12-21 Eric Hynes & local guide  
Feb 12-21 Dan Lane  
Feb 13-18 Terry McEneaney  
Feb 13-20 Pepe Rojas & Tom Johnson  
Feb 20-Mar 4 Phil Gregory & local guide  
Feb 22-28 Chris Benesh & local guide  
Feb 23-Mar 13 Terry Stevenson  
Feb 28-Mar 13 Willy Perez

## March 2016

Colombia: Santa Marta Escape  
Brazil Nutshell: Intervalles, Iguazu Falls & the Pantanal  
Southwestern Ecuador Specialties: Jocotoco Foundation Reserves  
Costa Rica  
Jamaica  
Dominican Republic  
Spring in South Texas  
Ecuador's Wildsumaco Lodge I  
Borneo I  
Puerto Rico  
Rarely Visited Belize: Punta Gorda  
NEW/Western Panama: Chiriqui & Bocas del Toro  
Hawaii

Mar 5-14 Richard Webster  
Mar 5-19 Marcelo Padua & Megan Edwards Crewe  
Mar 5-19 Mitch Lysinger  
Mar 5-20 Jay VanderGaast & local guide  
Mar 7-13 Eric Hynes  
Mar 12-19 Tom Johnson & local guide  
Mar 12-20 Chris Benesh  
Mar 13-23 Willy Perez  
Mar 15-Apr 1 Dave Stejskal & local guide  
Mar 19-25 Tom Johnson & Pepe Rojas  
Mar 19-27 Peter Burke  
Mar 20-29 Jesse Fagan  
Mar 31-Apr 9 Dan Lane & Megan Edwards Crewe

## April 2016

Ghana  
Bahamas: Abaco, Eleuthera & Kirtland's Warbler  
Colorado Grouse I  
Bhutan  
Colorado Grouse II  
Lesser Antilles  
Texas Coast Migration Spectacle I  
Texas Coast Migration Spectacle II  
Texas's Big Bend & Hill Country  
Hungary & Romania: The Best of Eastern Europe  
China: Manchuria & the Tibetan Plateau  
Arizona Nightbirds & More I

Apr 1-19 Phil Gregory  
Apr 2-9 Jesse Fagan  
Apr 2-12 Chris Benesh & Tom Johnson  
Apr 2-20 Richard Webster & local guide  
Apr 10-20 Eric Hynes & Pepe Rojas  
Apr 10-25 Jesse Fagan  
Apr 16-22 John Coons  
Apr 23-29 John Coons  
Apr 23-May 2 Chris Benesh  
Apr 23-May 9 Terry Stevenson & local guide  
Apr 26-May 17 Jay VanderGaast & local guide  
Apr 28-May 2 Dave Stejskal

## May 2016

Classical Greece  
Arizona Nightbirds & More II  
Arizona: Birding the Border I  
Spain: La Mancha, Coto Donana & Extremadura  
Arizona: Birding the Border II  
Spring in Cape May  
Ethiopia: Endemic Birds & Ethiopian Wolf  
Maine: Birding Downeast  
Morocco  
Uganda: Shoebill, Rift Endemics & Gorillas  
Alaska I—Part One (Pribilofs & Denali)

May 1-15 Megan Edwards Crewe & local guide  
May 5-9 Tom Johnson  
May 6-15 John Coons  
May 7-19 Willy Perez & Marcelo Padua  
May 13-22 Dave Stejskal  
May 15-21 Tom Johnson  
May 20-Jun 9 Terry Stevenson & local guide  
May 21-29 Eric Hynes  
May 21-Jun 7 Jesse Fagan  
May 21-Jun 10 Phil Gregory  
May 27-Jun 4 Chris Benesh & Pepe Rojas



## June 2016

Borneo  
Alaska II—Part One (Pribilofs & Denali)  
Alaska I—Part Two (Nome, Seward & Barrow)  
Northern Arizona's Canyons & Condor  
Montana: Yellowstone to Glacier  
Alaska II—Part Two (Nome, Seward & Barrow)  
Galapagos: An Intimate Look at Darwin's Islands I  
Brazil's Rio Roosevelt: Birding the River of Doubt  
Rainforest & Savanna: Alta Floresta & the Northern Pantanal, Brazil  
Newfoundland & Nova Scotia  
Spitsbergen & Svalbard Archipelago: A Cruise to the Norwegian Arctic

## July 2016

Amazonian Ecuador: Sacha Lodge III  
East Africa Highlights: Kenya & Tanzania  
Papua New Guinea  
Jaguar Spotting: Pantanal & Garden of the Amazon  
Galapagos: An Intimate Look at Darwin's Islands II  
*NEW!* Iceland  
Peru's Magnetic North: Spatuletails, Owllet Lodge & More  
Arizona's Second Spring I  
Peruvian Rainforests of the Tambopata: Macaw Lick Extraordinaire  
Arizona's Second Spring II

## August 2016

Machu Picchu & Abra Malaga, Peru  
Kenya Safari Spectacular  
Slice of California: Seabirds to Sierra  
France: Camargue & Pyrenees

## September 2016

Rio Negro Paradise: Manaus, Brazil  
Bolivia's Avian Riches  
Rio Negro Paradise: Manaus, Brazil  
Ecuador's Shiripuno Lodge: Heartland of the Waorani  
Cape May Megan's Way  
Safari Brazil: The Pantanal & More  
Australia (Part One)  
Barrow, Alaska: Search for Ross's Gull

## October 2016

Mountains of Manu, Peru  
South Africa  
Northwestern Argentina: The Chaco, Cordoba & Northern Andes  
Australia (Part Two)  
Serra dos Tucanos, Brazil  
Southern Argentina: The Pampas, Patagonia & Tierra del Fuego  
Louisiana: Yellow Rails & Crawfish Tails  
New Guinea & Australia  
Spectacular Southeast Brazil (Part One)  
Sri Lanka  
Northern Peru: Endemics Galore

Jun 2-19  
Jun 3-11  
Jun 3-13  
Jun 4-9  
Jun 9-19  
Jun 10-20  
Jun 11-21  
Jun 11-Jun 24  
Jun 11-27  
Jun 24-Jul 4  
Jun 28-Jul 10

Megan Edwards Crewe & local guide  
Dave Stejskal & Tom Johnson  
Chris Benesh & Pepe Rojas  
John Coons  
Terry McEneaney  
Dave Stejskal & Tom Johnson  
Willy Perez & local guide  
Bret Whitney  
Marcelo Padua  
Chris Benesh  
John Coons

Jul 1-10  
Jul 2-22  
Jul 3-21  
Jul 4-15  
Jul 9-19  
Jul 18-27  
Jul 20-31  
Jul 23-Aug 1  
Jul 24-Aug 4  
Jul 30-Aug 8

Mitch Lysinger  
Terry Stevenson  
Jay VanderGaast  
Marcelo Padua  
Pepe Rojas & local guide  
Eric Hynes & local guide  
Dan Lane & Jesse Fagan  
Chris Benesh  
Pepe Rojas  
John Coons

Aug 4-13  
Aug 26-Sep 22  
Aug 27-Sep 5  
Aug 27-Sep 6

Jesse Fagan  
Terry Stevenson  
Chris Benesh  
Megan Edwards Crewe & Tom Johnson

Sep 3-17  
Sep 3-18  
Sep 11-25  
Sep 23-Oct 2  
Sep 25-Oct 1  
Sep 25-Oct 10  
Sep 29-Oct 20  
Sep 30-Oct 4

Marcelo Padua & Dave Stejskal  
Dan Lane & Jay VanderGaast  
Bret Whitney & Pepe Rojas  
Mitch Lysinger  
Megan Edwards Crewe  
Marcelo Padua & Eric Hynes  
John Coons & Tom Johnson  
Chris Benesh & second guide

Oct 1-16  
Oct 6-29  
Oct 8-26  
Oct 18-Nov 2  
Oct 24-Nov 3  
Oct 25-Nov 11  
Oct 27-31  
Oct 27-Nov 14  
Oct 28-Nov 13  
Oct 28-Nov 14  
Oct 30-Nov 19

Pepe Rojas  
Terry Stevenson & local guide  
Willy Perez & Jesse Fagan  
Chris Benesh & second guide  
Marcelo Padua  
Dave Stejskal & Pepe Rojas  
Dan Lane & second guide  
Jay VanderGaast  
Bret Whitney & Tom Johnson  
Megan Edwards Crewe & local guide  
Richard Webster

## November 2016

*Birding Plus* Ireland in Fall: Birds, Traditional Music & Pubs  
Colombia: The Llanos & More  
Madagascar, Mauritius & Reunion  
New Zealand  
Chile  
Spectacular Southeast Brazil (Part Two)  
Southern India: Western Ghats Endemics  
Holiday at San Isidro, Ecuador  
Mexico: Yucatan & Cozumel  
Holiday Southern Peru  
Vietnam

Nov 3-13  
Nov 5-15  
Nov 5-Dec 1  
Nov 6-24  
Nov 6-26  
Nov 11-27  
Nov 13-Dec 3  
Nov 19-28  
Nov 19-28  
Nov 19-Dec 1  
Nov 25-Dec 16

Terry McEneaney & Karen McEneaney  
Jesse Fagan  
Phil Gregory  
Dan Lane & local guide  
Willy Perez & local guide  
Bret Whitney & Marcelo Padua  
Terry Stevenson & local guide  
Mitch Lysinger  
Chris Benesh & local guide  
Jesse Fagan & Pepe Rojas  
Dave Stejskal & local guide

## December 2016

Holiday Costa Rica: Rancho Naturalista I  
Arizona Winter Specialties  
Ecuador's Wildsumaco Lodge II  
Iquitos, Peru: Canopy Walkways & Ancient Forests  
Panama's Canopy Lodge: El Valle de Anton  
Holiday Costa Rica: Rancho Naturalista II  
Trinidad & Tobago II

Dec 18-26  
Dec 29-Jan 4  
Dec 29-Jan 8  
Dec 29-Jan 9  
Dec 30-Jan 6  
Dec 30-Jan 7  
Dec 30-Jan 8

Megan Edwards Crewe & local guide  
Chris Benesh  
Willy Perez  
Dan Lane  
John Coons & local guide  
Jesse Fagan & local guide  
Tom Johnson & local guide

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# FRESH FROM THE FIELD



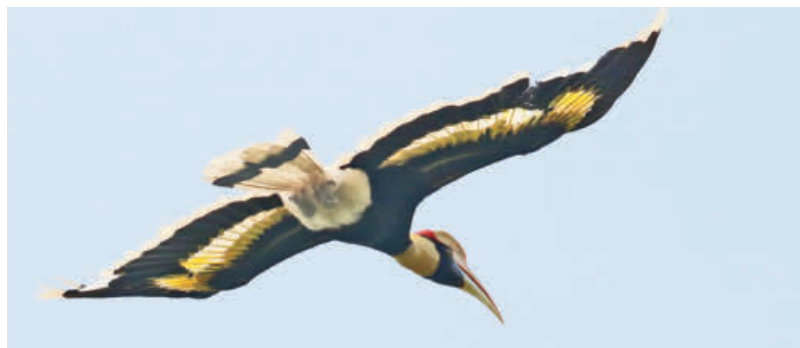
It's great to have something you can count on when you're guiding a tour, and Old Faithful was, well, faithful on the **Yellowstone in Winter** trip this January. At left, an American Dipper, another pretty reliable encounter. The tour will return in 2017. (Photos by guide Terry McEneaney and participant Ann Camp)



You simply cannot avoid gorgeous hummingbirds like this Empress Brilliant, top right, on Willy Perez's **Ecuador: Rainforest & Andes** tour. Below the brilliant, a Rufous-breasted Anthrush; both birds are from the Andean West Slope. We visit the East as well—and that Black-mantle Tamarin, top left, is a rainforest inhabitant we see on the Sacha section of the tour. (Photos by participant Larry Peavler)



Tom Johnson reports from our **Trinidad & Tobago** tour that he and guide Eric Hynes and their group had satisfying views of the endangered Trinidad Piping-Guan, at right, watching as it sat in the open and then sang. Other delights shown here were the colorful Trinidad Motmot, above left, and the White-fringed Antwren, above right. Manakins, even when fairly common like the White-bearded below, are always fun to encounter. (Photos by guide Eric Hynes and participant Linda Rudolph)

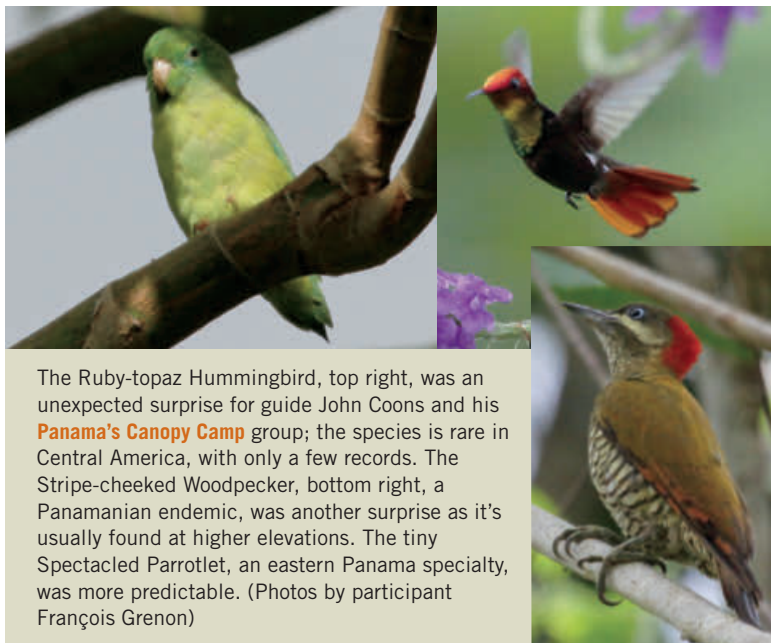


Guide Dave Stejskal writes that his **Thailand** group enjoyed great views of this stunning Crimson-winged Woodpecker, above left, described as a Malay/Sunda species but one that is truly out of this world. The more elegantly patterned Spectacled Barwing (above) and the Silver-eared Laughingthrush—one of six laughingthrushes seen on the tour and the easiest to see—are both montane species found in evergreen forests in the country's northwest. And at top, a massive, and we should say magnificent, Great Hornbill. (Photos by guide Dave Stejskal and participant Bill Fraser)





That's one of our recent **Amazonian Ecuador: Sacha Lodge** groups, plus guide Willy Perez, at far right, and two local guides perched on a sandbar, just one of the full range of lowland rainforest habitats the lodge offers us. And a variety of habitats means lots of birds, including the bizarre Bare-necked Fruitcrow at right and the elegant Crested Owls, a day-roosting pair from guide Dan Lane's tour. (Photos by guide Willy Perez and participant Paula Crawley)



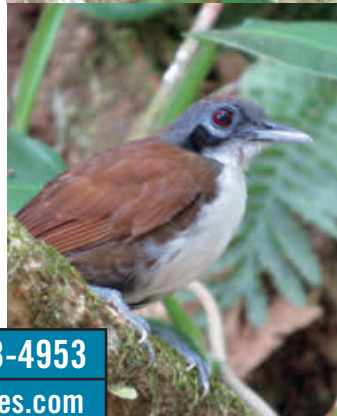
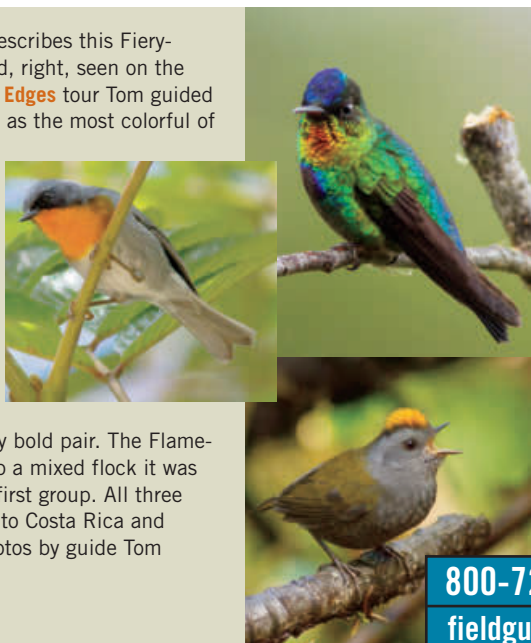
The Ruby-topaz Hummingbird, top right, was an unexpected surprise for guide John Coons and his **Panama's Canopy Camp** group; the species is rare in Central America, with only a few records. The Stripe-cheeked Woodpecker, bottom right, a Panamanian endemic, was another surprise as it's usually found at higher elevations. The tiny Spectacled Parrotlet, an eastern Panama specialty, was more predictable. (Photos by participant François Grenon)



It's hard to top our two **Panama's Canopy Tower** tours for lowland Middle American birding. Pheasant Cuckoo, above, is a bird that's often difficult to see, but our first tour had an electrifying encounter with this one on Pipeline Road—check out guide John Rowlett's trip report on our web site for video. The Black-breasted Puffbird (left) is one of four

puffbird species possible on the tour, and the observation towers allow for views like this. And at bottom, a good comparison of two obligate ant followers often found feeding at antswarms, Bicolored Antbird, left, and Ocellated Antbird. (Photos by guides John Rowlett & Chris Benesh and participant Danny Shelton)

Guide Tom Johnson describes this Fiery-throated Hummingbird, right, seen on the **Costa Rica: Birding the Edges** tour Tom guided with Jay VanderGaast, as the most colorful of the hummers they encountered, as you can see for yourself from Tom's photo. Wrenthrush, bottom right, is normally a skulker, but participants on the second part of the tour had jaw-dropping views of an uncharacteristically bold pair. The Flame-throated Warbler lit up a mixed flock it was traveling with for the first group. All three species are restricted to Costa Rica and western Panama. (Photos by guide Tom Johnson)



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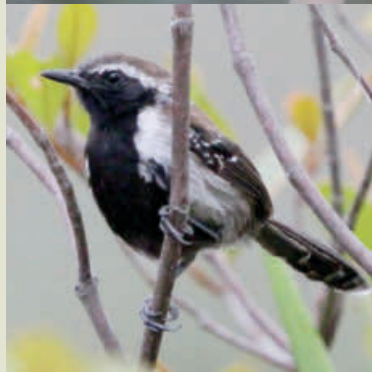


# FRESH FROM THE FIELD

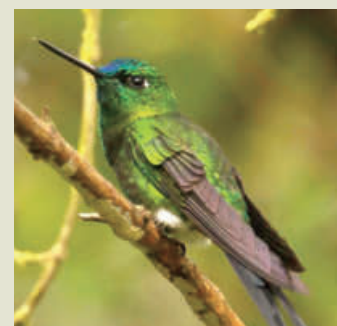


This little Boucard's Wren, above, is one of two-dozen or so Mexican endemics our winter **Oaxaca** tours enjoyed seeing this year; the Golden-browed Warbler, while not an endemic, is a species that certainly adds some beautiful color. But the sight that really catches the eye here is this dramatic aerial view of the ruins of Monte Alban, a pre-Columbian archeological site we visited and birded. (Photos by guides Eric Hynes & Dan Lane and participant Jan Shaw)

This year's **Nowhere But Northeast Brazil** tour went like a dream according to guide Bret Whitney. Seeing so many bird species well that you can see nowhere else—including the Araripe Manakin above and the Sincora Antwren at right—is a little dreamlike, indeed. And though it gets around more than the other two pictured here, the lovely Collared Crescentchest, below, gave our group a wonderful performance. (Photos by participants Kathy Brown & George Sims) Be sure to check Bret's tour report for video.



The **Jewels of Ecuador: Hummers, Tanagers & Antpittas** tour covers a variety of habitats, both north and south and east and west slopes, and it's likely to see 60-plus hummers, tanagers by the dozens, and who knows how many antpittas these days. Among the hummers, there're some beauties like this Sapphire-vented Puffleg, bottom right. But we see a great many other notable birds, like the Giant Conebill, above, a specialist of high-elevation Polylepis forests, difficult to get to and difficult to see, and the Black-billed Mountain-Toucan, a showy bird showing here its black bill and white throat. (Photos by guide Willy Perez and participant Bernie Grossman)

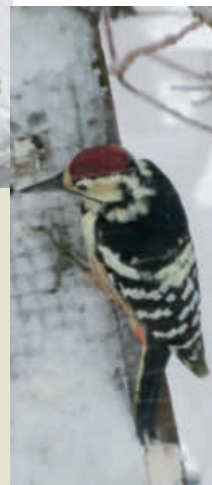


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Guide Phil Gregory, doing his eleventh Japan trip, notes that one of the highlights on this year's **Winter Japan: Dancing Cranes & Spectacular Sea-Eagles** tour was the Blakiston Fish-Owls (one pictured here above right) fishing through the ice just outside the windows of the lodge. Five species of cranes, including Red-crowned in the snow and these Hooded, flying at left, provided quite a spectacle as well. The White-backed Woodpecker showing up on a feeder on a snowy day wasn't bad either. Fine looks at both Steller's Sea-Eagle and White-tailed Eagle, Eurasian Woodcock, Solitary Snipe, and Snow Monkeys were all hits. (Photos by guide Phil Gregory)

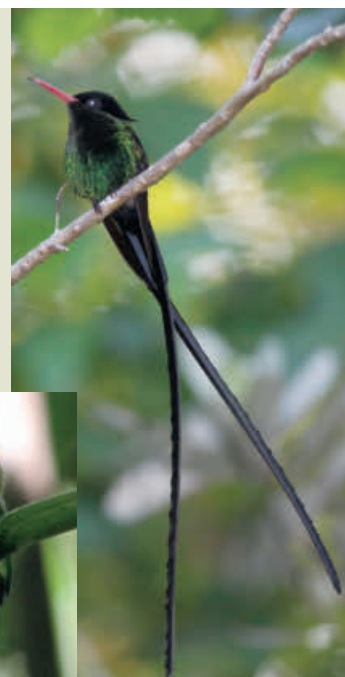


It's not just about rarities on our **South Texas Rarities** trips, though this year a Gray-crowned Yellowthroat (just a handful of US records in the past hundred years) did show up for one tour, as well as a Long-tailed Weasel that was a thrill for guide Chris Benesh. Most of the birds seen are those special birds that make up the Rio Grande Valley birding experience, like the ones pictured here, which include from left a very pretty Tropical Parula warbler, a trim Green Kingfisher, Crested Caracara, and White-collared Seedeater. (Photos by guide Chris Benesh)

More than 600 species of birds have been recorded between the city of Iquitos, where our **Iquitos, Peru: Canopy Walkway & Ancient Forests** tour begins, and the forest lodges downstream on the Amazon and Napo rivers, one of which features the amazing canopy walkway, a part of which is seen here. Our recent tour enjoyed good looks at many species from the walkway, including this Ivory-billed Aracari right, one of four aracari seen, and Spangled Cotinga, which guide Pepe Rojas described as gorging on Schefflera-like berries while the group watched. (Photos by guide Pepe Rojas)



Our **Jamaica** tour group, pictured below with guide Eric Hynes (in the green cap), enjoyed the first run of our newly revised tour. All 27 island endemics were spotted, including the three shown here: a striking Jamaican Spindalis (below left) in the Blue Mountains; the (Red-billed) Streamertail at right—the elaborate tail plumes make a humming sound in flight; and a very cute Jamaican Tody, described by Eric as the emerald sprite of the island. (Photos by guide Eric Hynes)

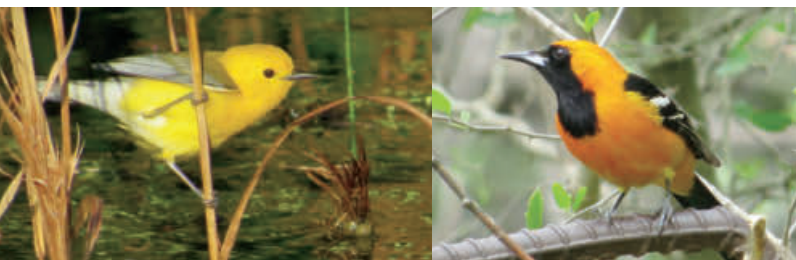




## FRESH FROM THE FIELD



Among the many sights and sounds on our **Guyana: Wilderness Paradise** tour is a visit to Kaieteur Falls; with an almost 750-foot drop, it's one of the largest single-drop falls in the world! Here, a few brave souls from guide Megan Edwards Crewe's group get up close and personal with the roaring waters of the Potaro River. Other sights, though perhaps not as dramatic, include the two birds pictured below the falls, a Hoatzin stretching its wings and a nicely perched Guianan Cock-of-the-rock—a lek of which we pass right by on our way to the falls. (Photos by guide Megan Edwards Crewe and participant Don Grade)



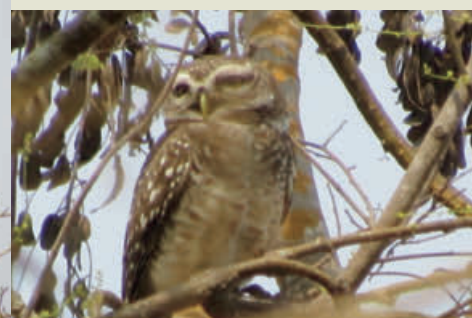
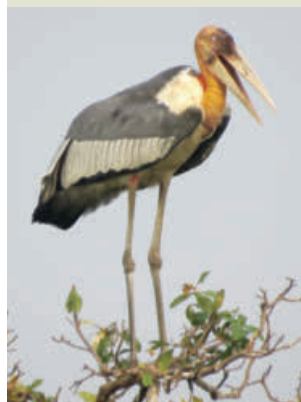
All three of the birds pictured here were among the favorites on Chris Benesh's recent **Spring in South Texas** tour. South Texas is the place to go for the little Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl at left, and the group had good studies of two birds. The stunning Hooded Oriole, top right, was just one of three oriole species seen. And here's a pretty, male Prothonotary Warbler, an early migrant or an over-wintering bird. (Photos by guide Chris Benesh and participant Judy McBay)



A clear morning made for great looks at the Endangered Yellow-eared Parrot (top right) on our **Colombia: The Cauca Valley & Western & Central Andes** tour; according to guide Richard Webster, the group had views of the parrots perched, in flight, and foraging. Red-bellied Grackle, one of Colombia's finest endemics, above left, was also a welcome sight, as were Black-thighed Puffleg, below left, a lovely specialty among the more than forty hummers seen, and Slate-crowned Antpitta, one of six species seen on the tour. (Photos by participant Greg Griffith)



Phil Gregory reports from his recent **Cambodia** tour—that's Phil second from left with his group during a visit to the Angkor Wat temple complex—that this year's trip had excellent looks at the rare Greater Adjutant, below left, a large stork now restricted to two small breeding populations, one in Cambodia. The day-roosting Spotted Owllet was a nice addition to the tour. (Photos by guide Phil Gregory)







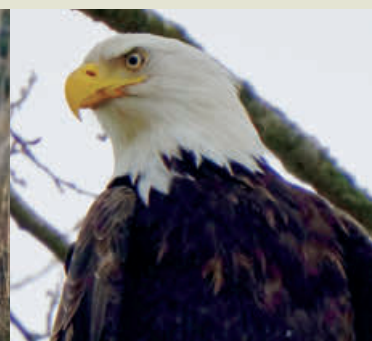
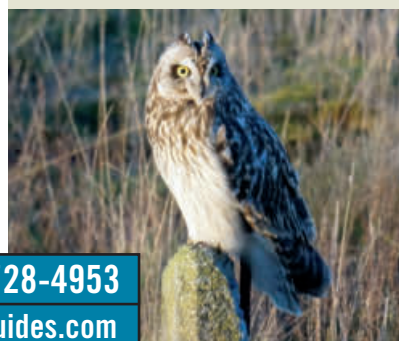
The expression “quintessential Africa,” brings to mind something like this scene of Tanzania’s Ngorongoro Crater; you have to wonder what is down there? Could be the Kori Bustard at far left that our **East Africa Highlights: Kenya & Tanzania** group witnessed in the midst of his display, his tail swept up over his back? Or, the pretty Lilac-breasted Roller at right. Or, as we find from guide Terry Stevenson’s report, 16 different raptors or Rufous-tailed Weavers or Lions, African Elephants, Black Rhino, and several thousand zebra, buffalo, antelopes, and gazelles. The Superb Starling, like the European Starling, is common and widespread, but most of us would be delighted to make a swap. (Photos by participants Terry McEneaney [on a busman’s holiday] and Terry Parrinello)



With nearly six hundred bird species recorded, it’s no exaggeration to say that guide Jesse Fagan’s **Colombia: Bogota, the Magdalena Valley & Santa Marta** tour sees lots of birds. A few of the favorites this year included the female Blue-billed Curassow at right that the group caught up with wandering down a road; White-whiskered Spinetail, above left, is one of the specialties of the extreme northeast of Colombia; the endemic Black-backed Thornbill, above right, one of 47 hummers seen; and a handsome Lesser Nighthawk, posing nicely. (Photos by guide Trevor Ellery)



Guide Terry McEneaney (in red—that’s Karen McEneaney next to him) and his group enjoyed six days recently in scenic Washington State on our **Best of the Pacific Northwest: Skagit Valley & Puget Sound, Washington** tour. Below the group, a pair of Trumpeter Swans, trumpeting in unison; a very stately Bald Eagle, just one of several hundred individuals seen on the tour; and a Short-eared Owl with his ears showing nicely. The owls were seen repeatedly during the tour. (Photos by guide Terry McEneaney & participant Paul Demkovich)



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# Big Country

Yes, Peru *IS* a Big Country, and we offer tours to almost every part of it. With two guides living in Peru and a third, one of the principal authors of the *Birds of Peru*, we feel we're really in touch with that country.

## 2015 tours include:

**Machu Picchu & Abra Malaga, Peru**—July 2-11 with Jesse Fagan. Southern Peru's east-slope, temperate birding at its best, featuring several endemics and scenic Andean puna; also Machu Picchu and great subtropical birding on and near lovely hotel grounds.

**Peru's Magnetic North: Spatuletails, Owlet Lodge & More**—July 22-August 2 with Dan Lane & Pepe Rojas. A 12-day taste of northern Peru's east-slope Andes! Five nights at Long-whiskered Owlet Lodge; much time in the field, yet no camping.

**Iquitos, Peru: Canopy Walkways & Ancient Forests**—August 1-12 with Pepe Rojas and December 19-30 with Pepe Rojas & Dan Lane. An immersion in one of the richest regions in Amazonia, including the white-sand forests near Iquitos. River travel on the Amazon and Napo rivers, canopy access via the famed walkway.

**Mountains of Manu, Peru**—September 19-October 4 with Pepe Rojas. Our in-depth transect along the "birdiest road in the world" of the higher elevation half of the Manu Biosphere Reserve.

**Peruvian Rainforests of the Tambopata: Macaw Lick Extraordinaire**—October 3-16 with Pepe Rojas. Three-site tour to the one of the most species-rich rainforests on Earth. Largest known macaw lick, canopy walkway and towers, eagles and monkeys.

**Northern Peru: Endemics Galore**—November 1-21 with Richard Webster. Dry-season tour to one of the least-known and most endemic-rich areas of South America. Targets geographic specialties as it surveys the rich and diverse habitats of northern Peru, including some remote and beautiful wild areas.

*Continued from page 1*

Rhea or a sneedsnipe, while carefully searching bog edges for White-throated Sierra-Finch or a Puna Yellow-Finch. Around Arequipa we will have a night in the Colca Canyon, famous for close encounters with Andean Condor, but also a place to look for Diademed Sandpiper-Plover (and look we will). The La Mejia marsh site south of Arequipa is the only place in Peru to find Red-fronted Coot, which seems more like a gallinule.

Finally, we'll drive north to Nazca, taking in the lunar-like landscape that is the spectacular Atacama Desert (now we are in the driest non-polar place in the world). Above Nazca we will find time to photograph the elegant Vicuña, the wild ancestor of the domestic llama, which will be around in good numbers. Other targets here will include Thick-billed Miner, "Dark-winged" Canastero, and Black-hooded Sierra-Finch (around the Polylepis). Then, of course, we will want to actually see the Nazca Lines. Strap in for the ride of your life!

**Jesse's new tour is scheduled for November 21 to December 5. He'll be joined by Field Guide Chris Benesh.**



Vicuñas are around in good numbers; Creamy-breasted Canastero. Photos by guide Jesse Fagan.

## UPCOMING TOURS

For details, please call our office or check our web site.

### August 2015

**Arizona's Second Spring**—August 1-10, 2015 with John Coons & Tom Johnson. An ideal time for visiting one of the best birding regions in North America: great for local specialties and Mexican vagrants.

**Jaguar Spotting: Pantanal & Garden of the Amazon I & II**—August 1-12, 2015 with Marcelo Padua and August 25-September 5, 2015 with Marcelo Padua & Pepe Rojas. This short but action-packed Brazil birding tour features the Pantanal at its best, a nice taste of southern Amazonian birds, and excellent chances of seeing a Jaguar.

**Iquitos, Peru: Canopy Walkways & Ancient Forests**—August 1-12, 2015 with Pepe Rojas. Ten-day immersion in the most species-rich region of Amazonia, including the white-sand forests near Iquitos. River travel on the Amazon and Napo rivers, canopy access via the famed walkway at ACTS (Amazon Conservatory of Tropical Studies).

**Kenya Safari Spectacular**—August 28-September 24, 2015 with Terry Stevenson. Unsurpassed in its combined wealth of bird life and mammal spectacle; includes Mt. Kenya, the arid north, Rift Valley lakes, Kakamega Forest and the far west, Masai Mara, Tsavo and the Taita Hills, and the coast. Timesaving internal flights.

**Slice of California: Seabirds to Sierra I & II**—August 29-September 7, 2015 with Chris Benesh and September 3-12, 2015 with Tom Johnson. A diverse mix of West Coast specialties, montane species, and pelagics in rugged and scenic sites.

**France: Camargue & Pyrenees I & II**—August 29-September 8, 2015 with Megan Edwards Crewe & Willy Perez and September 2-12, 2015 with Jay VanderGaast. Two of Europe's finest birding destinations

combined in this wonderful eleven-day tour, with varied highlights and some great French food.

**New Caledonia, Fiji & Vanuatu: Islands of the South Pacific**—August 31-September 18, 2015 with Phil Gregory. Island endemics and tropical Pacific specialties abound on this tour to three highlight destinations.

### September 2015

**Rio Negro Paradise: Manaus, Brazil I & II**—September 5-19, 2015 with Bret Whitney & Dan Lane and September 13-27, 2015 with Marcelo Padua & Rose Ann Rowlett. Bird the rainforests and rivers of the mighty Amazon and Negro in an unforgettable mix of forest hikes and live-aboard luxury.

**Morocco**—September 7-24, 2015 with Jesse Fagan. Endemic, rare, and specialty birds from coastal wetlands and towering cliffs to the Atlas Mountains and the northwest corner of the Sahara.

**Mountains of Manu, Peru**—September 19-October 4, 2015 with Pepe Rojas. Our in-depth transect tour of the higher-elevation half of the Manu Biosphere Reserve.

**Ecuador's Shiripuno Lodge: Heartland of the Waorani**—September 25-October 4, 2015 with Willy Perez. Tour to Shiripuno Lodge, gateway to the Yasuni Biosphere Reserve in Ecuador's Amazon region.

**Serra dos Tucanos, Brazil**—September 26-October 6, 2015 with John Rowlett. A short but rich immersion in the avifauna of the Atlantic Forest, based at one lovely site near Rio.

**Cape May Megan's Way I & II**—September 27-October 3, 2015 and October 4-10, 2015 with Megan Edwards Crewe. See bird migration in action at one of the country's top migration hotspots.

### October 2015

**Barrow, Alaska: Search for Ross's Gull**—October 2-6, 2015 with Dave Stejskal & Dan Lane. A short birding sojourn to 71 degrees North latitude, the US's northernmost point, for the legendary Ross's Gull, loons, eiders, and possibly even Polar Bear and Ivory Gull.

**Australia**—October 2-22, 2015 (Part I) with Chris Benesh & Jesse Fagan and October 20-November 4, 2015 (Part II; Tasmania Extension) with John Coons & Tom Johnson. In two parts for those with limited time. Part I covers the





# Seeing Pink

ERIC HYNES

*Every fall, in one of birding's little-known spectacles, the majority of the world's Ross's Gulls migrate past the remote outpost of Barrow on their way from the Chukchi Sea in Arctic Russia to the Beaufort Sea in Arctic Alaska. It's a migration phenomenon first witnessed in the late 1800's but not documented until the 1970's and 1980's. Our short*

**Barrow, Alaska: Search for Ross's Gull** tour to Alaska's far north offers the opportunity to witness this extraordinary migration; the following is guide Eric Hynes's report from last year's tour.

**"**I see pink, hot pink!" Little did we know when we all scrambled to get bins on that first Ross's Gull that we would spot many others at almost all of our stops along the coast.

Adult birds, first winter birds, close birds, birds on the beach and in flight...we had it all. The low angle afternoon sunlight illuminating those pink beauties was magical. How could you ever forget those pink bellies?

Our Barrow tour is more about quality than it is about quantity. The trip list is brief, but the species we tallied and the looks we enjoyed of each were marvelous. Words simply will not do justice to the experiences we enjoyed—Ross's Gull is SO worth the effort to see under these circumstances. A significant surf with waves breaking right on the beach really churned up the zooplankton and generated a phalarope and gull feeding frenzy literally at the water's edge. I

Photos by guide Eric Hynes.

think we can thank the substantial surf for the gulls working the shoreline—no scope needed.

In addition to the Ross's, Red Phalaropes, Glaucous Gulls, and Black-legged Kittiwakes were numerous, and present in lower numbers but no less cooperative were first winter Thayer's Gulls. The number of Snowy Owl encounters exceeded my wildest expectations. Clearly the lemming population around Barrow is high right now. It was a wonderful study in the variability of dark markings on Snowy Owls. We observed nearly white birds and some individuals that only showed clean white on the facial disk.

Witnessing the Inupiat people sustainably harvest Bowhead Whales was a profound cultural event, enhancing our overall experience immensely. Other highlights included the first winter Sabine's Gull, Hoary Redpoll study at Mike's feeders, good looks at Yellow-billed Loons, seeing Glaucous Gull and all its variability so well, the white Arctic Fox dashing across the ice, and the bonus Polar Bear on our last morning!

*If you'd like to see for yourself, consider joining Dave Stejskal and Dan Lane in Alaska from October 2-6.*



environs of Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, southwest Australia, and Alice Springs. Part II begins in Darwin and continues to Queensland (Cairns, Atherton Tableland, Outback Queensland, and O'Reilly's Guest House). Both parts combine for a complete birding tour of Australia.

**Peruvian Rainforests of the Tambopata: Macaw Lick Extraordinaire**—October 3-16, 2015 with Pepe Rojas. Three-site tour to the most species-rich rainforest on Earth. Largest known macaw lick, canopy walkway and towers, eagles, and monkeys.

**South Africa**—October 8-31, 2015 with Terry Stevenson & local guide. Endemic-rich birding, spectacular landscapes, and a unique flora are the highlights of our energetic survey tour of this beautiful country.

**Safari Brazil: The Pantanal & More**—October 10-25, 2015 (Brazilian Merganser Extension) with Marcelo Padua. The spectacular wetlands of the Pantanal, with Hyacinth Macaws and Jabirus, combine with the many specialties of Brazil's Planalto Central to make for the perfect first birding trip to Brazil.

**Great Rivers of the Amazon II: Birding the Madeira-Tapajos Interfluvium**—October 23-November 7, 2015 with Bret Whitney & Pepe Rojas. Live-aboard luxury on an adventurous tour through the lower Madeira-Tapajos interfluvium of central Amazonian Brazil; be ready for the unexpected!

**Chile**—October 25-November 14, 2015 with Peter Burke & Willy Perez. Comprehensive survey tour of this visually spectacular and tourist-friendly country.

**Louisiana: Yellow Rails & Crawfish Tails**—October 29-November 2, 2015 with Dan Lane. Late-autumn birding on the Gulf Coast targeting Yellow Rails and other migrants and wintering species of the region.

**New Guinea & Australia**—October 29-November 16, 2015 with Jay VanderGaast. A rich and diverse sampler of the best birding of New Guinea and Australia.

**NEW/Colombia: The Llanos & More**—October 31-November 10, 2015 with Jesse Fagan & local guide. A new tour to the rich birding sites around Bogota including Chingaza and Chicacua national parks plus a trip to the llanos of eastern Colombia for Crestless Curassow, Pale-headed Jacamar, and White-bearded Flycatcher, among others.

## November 2015

**Northern Peru: Endemics Galore**—November 1-21, 2015 with Richard Webster. Dry-season tour to one of the least-known and most endemic-rich areas of South America. Targets geographic specialties as it surveys the rich and diverse habitats of northern Peru, including some remote and beautiful wild areas.

**NEW/China: Yunnan Province**—November 6-28, 2015 (Beijing Birds & Culture Extension) with Dave Stejskal & Jesper Hornskov. Survey tour of China's richest province with many eastern Himalayan specialties.

**Madagascar, Mauritius & Reunion**—November 7-December 3, 2015 (Masoala Peninsula Extension) with Phil Gregory & local guide. In-depth coverage of the accessible parts of Madagascar: many endemic birds, striking lemurs, bizarre flora and chameleons, fascinating culture. Mauritius and Reunion provide an additional bevy of rare and interesting endemics.

**New Zealand**—November 8-26, 2015 (Hauraki Gulf Pelagic Extension) with Dan Lane & local guide. Beautiful landscapes as a backdrop for nearly 50 endemic birds plus a great selection of seabirds.

**Namibia & Botswana**—November 10-29, 2015 with Terry Stevenson. Southwestern Africa's bird specialties, striking scenery, wilderness, and the famed game of Etosha and the Okavango Delta.

**Spectacular Southeast Brazil**—November 14-29, 2015 (Iguazu Falls Extension) with Bret Whitney & Marcelo Padua. Prepare to be blown away in the center of avian endemism in eastern Brazil; particularly well endowed with hummingbirds, cotingas, antbirds, and beautiful scenery. The Iguazu Falls Extension features an amazing landscape with additional great birding.

**Holiday at San Isidro, Ecuador**—November 21-30, 2015 with Mitch Lysinger. A bird-rich holiday escape based primarily at the very comfortable San Isidro Lodge.

**Mexico: Yucatan & Cozumel**—November 21-30, 2015 with Megan Edwards Crewe & local guide. The most interesting birds of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula amidst its attractive Mayan sites and only a short flight from the US.

**NEW/Holiday Southern Peru**—November 21-December 5, 2015 with Jesse Fagan & Chris Benesh. Coastal and Andean birding at its best. Lots of endemics and Peruvian near-endemics.



# fieldguides®

## BIRDING TOURS WORLDWIDE

### FIELD GUIDES INCORPORATED

9433 Bee Cave Road / Building 1, Suite 150 / Austin, TX 78733  
800-728-4953 / 512-263-7295 / fax: 512-263-0117  
fieldguides@fieldguides.com / www.fieldguides.com

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## Africa Birding and Wildlife Adventures

**Kenya Highlights**, Jul 1-19 with Terry Stevenson

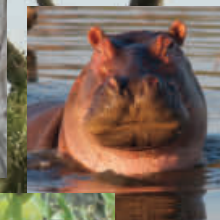
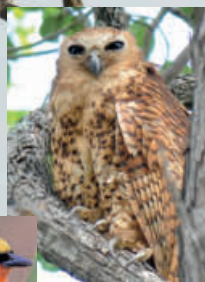
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