



New Zealand: The Land of Birds, Hope, and Albatrosses!

Dan Lane

If you imagine the Earth as it must have been thousands of years ago, before the arrival of humans, what might come to mind is a landscape dominated by mammals in vast numbers and great variety scattered across the grasslands as far as the eye could see. But try to picture a different landscape, a place where instead of mammals there were huge shaggy birds standing six feet tall (or taller!) that grazed grasslands or browsed the forests—the moas—and smaller flightless birds with long bills (somewhat like woodcocks) that fed on worm and leaf litter insects and loped about in an endearing manner—the kiwis. There were even eagles, now called Haast's Eagle (probably called something like “Yikes!” in the original Maori), large enough to prey upon the six-foot-tall bipedal browsers. Did they soar and stoop from great heights, or were they sit-and-wait predators like today's Harpy and Philippine eagles?



North Island Kokako, above, one of New Zealand's wattlebirds, an endemic family of five species, and at top, thousands of Bar-tailed Godwits at Miranda Shorebird Reserve. (Photos by participants Linda Nuttall & David & Judy Smith)

As you've probably figured out by now, the place I'm describing is Aotearoa, the land of the long white cloud, or, as we know it today, New Zealand. So much has changed in Aotearoa. After the first wave of humans landed, a second wave of European explorers and settlers arrived. With them came dogs, cats, pigs, cattle, rats, and later weasels, polecats, and even Australian Bushy-tailed Possums. These mammals wreaked havoc on an avifauna that had no defenses against terrestrial mammalian predators, particularly when nesting. Many species went extinct.

But New Zealand's plight has sparked some of the most amazing and successful mammalian eradication and captive-breeding programs worldwide to try to prevent any additional extinctions in modern times. Smaller offshore islands, and now even peninsulas and areas protected by exclusion fences on the main islands, are

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Birding Vietnam

Dave Stejskal

“Where should I go next?” It's a question I'm frequently asked by participants interested in our southern Asia tours. They've had a fantastic trip to India with Terry Stevenson or Bhutan with Richard Webster or Thailand with yours truly and found the birdlife to be magical. They want to build on their Asian experience while all those strange birds and new families are still fresh in their minds. And where is a good place to do that?

Continued on page 2



A pair of Bar-bellied Pittas. (Photo by guide Uthai Treesucon)

New Zealand: The Land of Birds, Hope, and Albatrosses! *Continued from page 1*



South Island Saddleback. (Photo by guide Dan Lane)

becoming predator-free zones that permit native birds to breed and survive successfully. With any luck, such efforts will reclaim larger areas of mainland forests and allow such charismatic New Zealand birds as Stitchbird, Takahe, Saddleback, and Kokako to recolonize their ancestral homes and add their haunting or musical songs to the dawn chorus in the incredible

forests that still exist over much of the country! In some ways, New Zealand is a microcosm of what is happening worldwide, and it's an amazing country to visit.

In addition to its distinctive landbirds, New Zealand acts as the breeding ground for a huge percentage of the world's seabirds—colonies of Australasian Gannets, at least three species of penguins, and large numbers of albatrosses, shearwaters, and petrels. Seeing these birds just offshore on short boat rides is one of the highlights of visiting the country. In a three-hour pelagic when you're never more than about two miles from land, you can be surrounded by four-plus species of albatrosses, masses of "cute" Cape Petrels, the grotesque giant petrels, and wheeling White-chinned and Westland petrels, Hutton's Shearwaters, and more! It can be difficult to know what to look at next!

Our tour this fall will visit some of the wildest and loveliest parts of South, Stewart, and North islands as well as a few of the predator-free refuges, where we can see most of the native landbirds that are still extant. We also ply the waters around the islands on seven boat trips (including ferries between islands) in search of the rich seabird (and other!) fauna.

Finally, for those who can't get enough of the seabirds, we offer an extension into the Hauraki Gulf north of Auckland with the main target of the recently-rediscovered New Zealand Storm-Petrel. As we travel from the colder South, with its subantarctic weather systems, to the sub-tropical North, where palm trees and tree ferns are common, we learn about the history, geology, culture, and natural history of the islands. For those who are tentative about international travel, you don't need to learn any other languages to get around (but a dictionary of "Kiwi" terms may be necessary at times), and the people are friendly as they can be! So why not come on down and visit the bottom of the world with me this coming November?

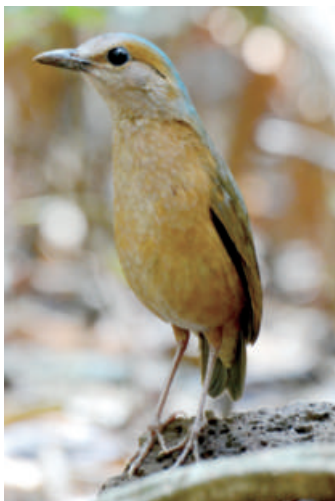
Dates are November 6-24 for the main tour and November 24-26 for the Hauraki Gulf Pelagic Extension.



Takahe. (Photo by participant Paul Goldschmidt)

Vietnam *Continued from page 1*

Field Guides has a lot to choose from, but one place I would suggest—one that might not be the first to come to mind—is Vietnam. Of all the mainland Southeast Asian countries (Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Malaysia), none has more endemics and regional specialties than Vietnam. That may be a little hard to believe, but it makes sense when you consider that the central and southern highlands of Vietnam, effectively isolated from the other highland regions across Southeast Asia, are together a rich center for endemism in this region. Quite a few Vietnamese endemics have been "on the books" for years now but, with more field ornithologists looking more closely at distinctive and isolated subspecies here and in the nearby border regions of Laos and Cambodia, there's been a flood of newly elevated species restricted mainly to the mountains of Vietnam, principally in the highlands of southern Annam Province, where we'll be based for several days during our upcoming November tour. Besides the Black-hooded and Collared laughingthrushes, Gray-crowned Crocias, and Vietnamese Greenfinch, we now have Indochinese Barbet (split from Black-browed Barbet), Dalat Shrike-Babbler (split from White-browed Shrike-Babbler), Black-crowned Fulvetta (split from Rufous-winged Fulvetta), Orange-breasted Laughingthrush (split from Spot-breasted Laughingthrush), Vietnamese Cutia (split from Himalayan Cutia), and Black-headed Parrotbill (split from Gray-headed Parrotbill) to look for! And there are even more potential splits out there.



Blue-rumped Pitta. (Photo by guide Uthai Treesucon)

In the north, within an easy drive from the capitol of Hanoi, are two lovely forested national parks: Phuong and Tam Dao. (Yes, there is still plenty of great, protected forest remaining in Vietnam.) Both have comfortable accommodations, good food—and great birds! I remember well a single spot that we visited in Cuc Phuong on our last tour that hosted a wealth of frugivores like Japanese and Gray-backed thrushes, Chinese Blackbird, and a lovely male Green Cochoa, along with a rarely encountered Fujian Niltava—a very local winterer in Vietnam, but regular here. Tam Dao boasts an impressive list for the park, and it's a super place to look for a couple of scarce and local parrotbills: Rufous-headed and Short-tailed. Hanoi itself, where we begin the tour, is an excellent place to play tourist, with many sights to see in this thriving and historic city.

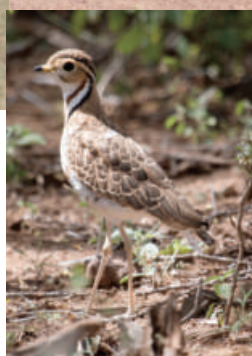
We'll end the tour in the south in Cat Tien National Park—the single best place for birds in the country. Based at a delightful lodge right in the park, we'll have a few days to scour the forest roads and trails here for the likes of Germain's Peacock-Pheasant, Green Peafowl, both Blue-rumped and Bar-bellied pittas, the fantastic Douc Langur, and much more in this expansive lowland forest.

If you can't wait to get back to Southeast Asia, or if you'd just like to get your first taste of Asian birds, there are a couple of spaces left this November on our Vietnam tour, November 25-December 15. We'd love to have you join us!

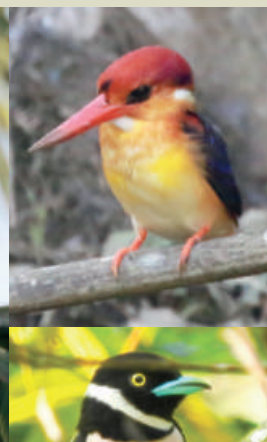
FRESH FROM THE FIELD



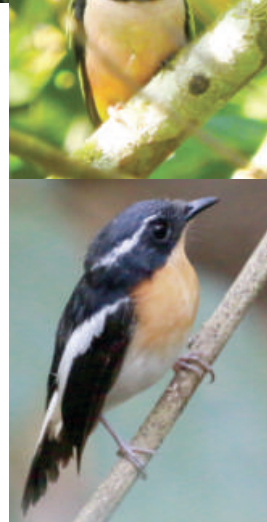
One look at these Common Giraffes should tell you what part of the world we're in, but just in case, we've included a photo of Terry Stevenson (second from left) and his recent **East Africa Highlights** group with a map. The tour visits some of the very best areas of both Kenya and Tanzania, where some of the birding thrills include encountering such large birds as this flashy Gray Crowned-Crane wandering the plains, or a delicately patterned Three-banded Courser, a mainly nocturnal species our tour managed to see well during the day. (Photos by participant Jody Gillespie)



A morning of stellar birding followed by lunch in the field is the routine on many a Field Guides tour, and Dave Stejskal's **Thailand** tour is no exception, with its sumptuous birds and delicious lunches that bring raves. We're not sure what was on the menu for this year's tour, but a few of the birds the group savored are pictured here: at top, a Rusty-naped Pitta, one of a pair of this often difficult-to-see bird; a regal Chinese Egret, not a common sight, bottom right; and a softly hued Orange-breasted Trogon. (Photos by guide Dave Stejskal)



Pictured here—a study in bill variation from our recent **Borneo** tour. Hornbills, numerous in Borneo, are named for their fantastical bills, and the Wrinkled, above, sports one of the more outrageous of the group—though you might not think so upon seeing a Rhinoceros Hornbill (and have a look at the Great Hornbill on page 7). The petite Rufous-backed Dwarf-Kingfisher is indeed almost dwarfed by his bill. The Black-and-yellow Broadbill's beak stands out for its blue, which looks almost painted on. The lovely Rufous-chested Flycatcher, at right, clearly has the most conventional bill of the group, not fancy but serviceable for catching the insects it feeds on. (Photos by guide Dave Stejskal and participant Chuck Holliday)

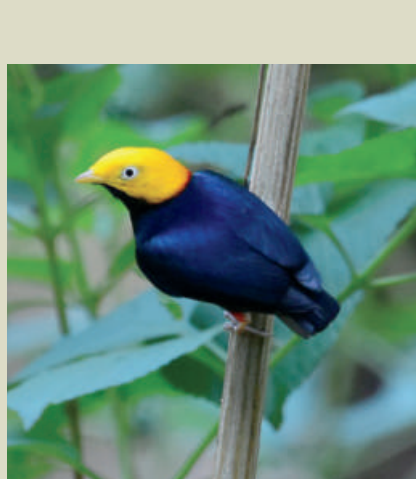


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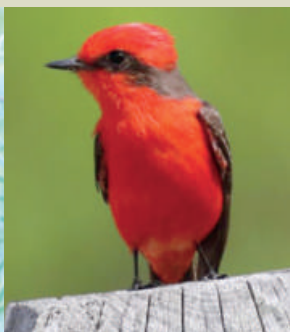
FRESH FROM THE FIELD



What better place to enjoy your morning coffee—as some of our **Guatemala: Shade-Grown Birding** group are doing here—than at Finca Las Nubes, a working coffee finca where the tour spends two nights. Guide Jesse Fagan writes that among the tour favorites this year were Resplendent Quetzal (Guatemala's national bird), Azure-rumped Tanagers, the Fulvous Owl (above right) that put on a great show, and a Pheasant Cuckoo, an often difficult-to-see bird, in display mode at Tikal. But the clear group favorite was this frosty-topped Pink-headed Warbler. (Photos by participants Mary Lou Barritt and David & Judy Smith)



Visiting **Guyana** is a little like stepping back in time—it's a place without busy highways or huge airports or bustling cities and with much of its interior forest intact. It's a place where big birds like Harpy Eagles and Rufous-winged Ground-Cuckoos, while not common, can be seen. The colorful group on display here are also among the regulars on our tour; they include an eye-popping Golden-headed Manakin at top left, the formerly Violaceous, now Guianan Trogon, found all over the country, and the glamorous Guianan Cock-of-the-rock. Visit our Facebook page for Bret Whitney's video from his recent tour of a pair of Rufous-winged Ground-Cuckoos. (Photos by guide Megan Edwards Crewe and participant Brian Stech)



Chris Benesh's **Spring in South Texas** tour is scheduled to include the wintering Whooping Cranes before they depart to their northern breeding grounds, a few early spring migrants, and—a sampling pictured here from our recent tour—species restricted to this region of the country, like this rather puffed up Audubon's Oriole, top left, or birds of wider though still limited range, like the Ladder-backed Woodpecker at left and the Vermilion Flycatcher above. (Photos by guide Chris Benesh and participant Don Faulkner)

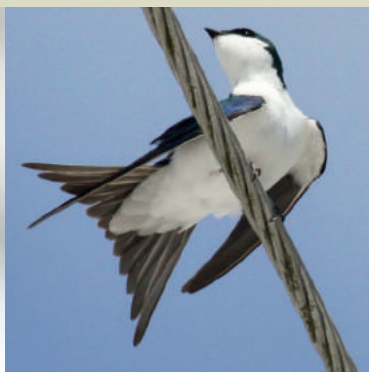
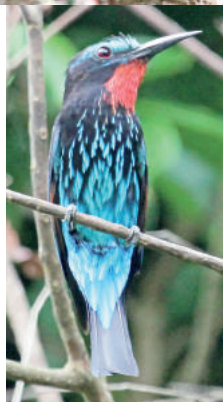


A visit to Ecuador's **Sacha Lodge**—located in one of the most biodiverse regions of the Amazon basin where the number of bird species is mind-boggling—is full of highlights: watching parrots come into a lick, getting close views of hard-to-see canopy species from one of the towers, making boat trips through quiet backwaters. Here, guide Dan Lane helps participants on a recent tour spot something from the forest floor, possibly the lovely Masked Tanager at top left, one of well over a dozen tanager species seen, or maybe the Wire-tailed Manakin that gave the group a great show. (Photos by guide Dan Lane and participant Kathy Keef)

In March, guide John Coons and his group spent a wonderful week birding lowlands and foothills on our **Panama's Canopy Tower & Lodge** tour. A few of the sights from the tour are pictured here: the White-tipped Sicklebill, top right, is an uncommon and strange-looking hummingbird that believe you me is rarely seen this well; likewise the Pheasant Cuckoo below it, which can be very noisy while at the same time stay out of sight; Orange-bellied Trogon, bottom left, is a lovely local specialty at the Lodge; and who doesn't love the little Tody Motmot, another specialty of the foothills and the smallest of the five motmots seen on the tour? (Photos by participants Lain Adkins and Ed LeGrand)



The smart-looking bird at top, the White-necked Rockfowl (*Picathartes gymnocephalus*) is always a highlight of our **Ghana: Window into West African Birding** tour, and so it was again this year with guide Phil Gregory reporting the group had "an absolute stunner hop in and pose on a rock for several minutes." Observing such a little-seen bird so well is certainly enough to take your breath away, especially when combined with other great sightings like four Egyptian Plovers on a sandbar, the lovely Black Bee-eater (left), widespread and a pleasure to see, and a handsome Blue-headed Coucal. (Photos by participant Greg Griffith)



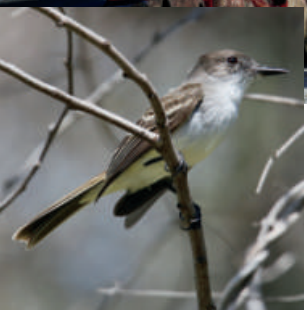
Kirtland's Warblers keep popping up on guide Jesse Fagan's **Bahamas: Endemics & Kirtland's Warblers** tours, and though not pictured here, this North American migrant gives an added dimension to the many restricted-range birds sought on the tour, birds like this endemic Bahama Oriole, above left, with a population estimated to be around 250 individuals and found only on one island. Top right, a very clean-cut Bahama Swallow, another endemic, and below, a hungry Cuban Parrot. There are four recognized subspecies of this bird and this one is *bahamensis*. (Photos by guide Jesse Fagan)



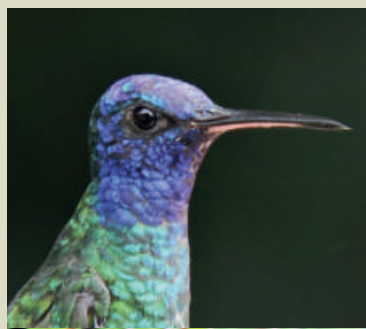
Guide Megan Crewe seems to be enjoying herself in **Hawaii**, even though she's not on a beach. Well, there are other ways to enjoy the islands, like seeing some really great birds. The Hawaiian Islands are the most isolated archipelago on Earth, which accounts for the more than two-dozen endemics found there, two of which are shown here to the left of Megan: the Hawaii Amakihi (top) and the liwi, a small honeycreeper that is able to hover like a hummingbird. (Photos by guide Dan Lane)

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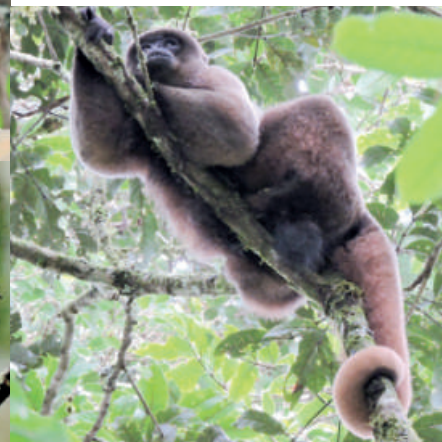
FRESH FROM THE FIELD



Guide Tom Johnson reports that this year's **Puerto Rico** tour once again saw all of the island's 17 endemics, including the three shown here: Puerto Rican Flycatcher, a *Myiarchus* flycatcher at left; below the flycatcher, Puerto Rican Tanager, not as colorful as some other tanagers but one that occupies a monotypic genus; and the winner of the bird of the trip award, the Puerto Rican Parrot, a Critically Endangered *Amazona* that is being reintroduced on the island. Several participants arrived ahead of the tour and explored historic Old San Juan. (Photos by guide Tom Johnson and participant Larry Wright)



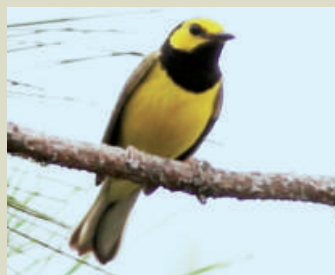
"It rained some almost every day," Willy Perez writes of his recent **Ecuador's Wildsumaco Lodge** tour, "but we saw the most fantastic birds and wildlife imaginable!" These included Andean Condors, Sword-billed Hummingbirds, and a Spectacled Bear—and that was just the first morning. Pictured here, a few other sightings, from top left: a sparkling Golden-tailed Sapphire at Wildsumaco Lodge, one of the more than three-dozen hummingbird species seen; a Blackish Nightjar that fortunately contrasts with his rock; a wonderfully named Paradise Tanager; and a poorly named Common Woolly Monkey—Uncommon Woolly Monkey would be better. (Photos by guide Willy Perez)



It may look here as though the Greater Prairie-Chicken and Greater Sage-Grouse below got into a rumble on one of our recent **Colorado Grouse** trips, but indeed the two have never met, though a Greater Prairie-Chicken did tap-dance across the roof of Tom



Johnson's van on one of our tours, which, as Tom described it, seemed both comical and awesome (see his video on our Facebook page). Other less flamboyant sights included Gray-crowned (left) and Brown-capped rosy-finches sharing a feeder perch and a White-tailed Ptarmigan, right, still wearing his winter plumage. (Photos by participants Steve Wakeham & Bob Reed)



We always hope for a good migrant fallout on our **Texas Coast Migration Spectacle** tour, and this year both tours benefited from heavy rains resulting in large fallouts along the coast—Blue-winged, Blackburnian, Chestnut-sided, Hooded (above left), and many more. Guide John Coons—here shown birding the coastal groves for migrants with his group—remarked that Scarlet and Summer tanagers and Baltimore Orioles were all over the place and he knew it was going to be good when one of the first warblers seen was a Bay-breasted. Migration isn't the only thing happening on the coast in spring; there's the Big Thicket with its southern pine specialties, shorebirds on the tidal flats, and rails, like this Clapper above, in the Anahuac NWR. (Photos by participants Neil McDonal & Pamela Gunn)

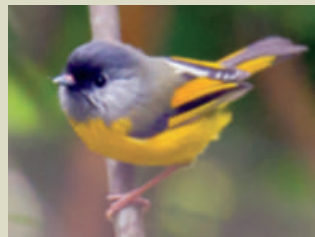




This year marked the seventh for our **Cambodia: Angkor Temples & Vanishing Birds** tour with guide Phil Gregory. The tour spends several days at Siem Reap, the jumping off point for visiting the magnificent temples of Angkor Wat (pictured above) and for birding the rich area surrounding the complex. A few of Cambodia's *Vanishing Birds* include vultures—White-rumped, Red-headed, and Slender-billed (right), all of which were seen well by Phil and his group. Other sights along the way included the Crested Serpent-Eagle, above left, and—adding some color—a pretty Blue-tailed Bee-eater. (Photos by guide Phil Gregory and participant George Sims)

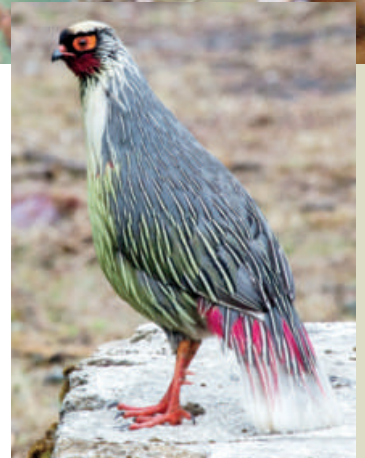


Guide Megan Edwards Crewe joined Marcelo Padua in March for our **Brazil Nutshell** tour that visits three prime areas of Brazil—Intervales State Park for Atlantic Forest specialties like the Black-fronted Piping-Guan at top (though the piping-guan may also be seen later in the tour at Iguazu Falls) and the Gray-hooded Flycatcher, bottom left. The flycatcher is one of five members of the genus *Mionectes*, a group with a lek mating system—behavior we don't usually associate with flycatchers. Brazil's Pantanal is often regarded as one of the best places to bird in the Neotropics, and the perfectly named Hyacinth Macaws may be the region's signature species. (Photos by participants David & Sue Wright and Charm Peterman)



Guide Richard Webster described his recent **Bhutan** tour as one of sunny days, grand vistas, good habitat for birding, and of course, many cool birds. Among them, the scarce Ward's Trogon; repeat encounters with three fabulous pheasants—Satyr Tragopan, Himalayan Monal, and Blood Pheasant (pictured here at right); a Rufous-necked Hornbill as well as a flock—meaning a couple of dozen!—of the previously mentioned Great Hornbills (top right); Golden-breasted Fulvetta, one of Bhutan's specialties, and you can see why from the photo above. All this while spending nearly every day in the midst of some of the most beautiful scenery imaginable.

(Photos by guide Richard Webster and participant Johnny Powell)

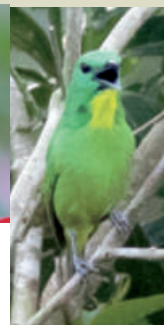
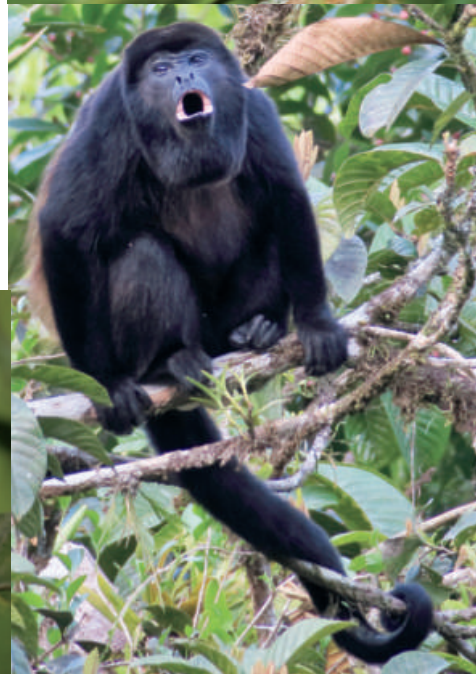


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FRESH FROM THE FIELD



The theme of this page is not just Middle American tours—**Costa Rica** here—but tail feathers, with both the Resplendent Quetzal at left and the streamertail below exhibiting two of the showier versions in the avian world. According to guide Jay VanderGaast, this shimmering quetzal was the indisputable highlight of his recent tour. An Emerald Toucanet at right, with the sun lighting up his colorful bill, a Green Violetear (below the quetzal), showing well his violet ear, an obliging Mottled Owl, and a Mantled Howler Monkey giving it his all, make traveling in Costa Rica hard to beat, even for Jay after twenty years of birding there. (Photos by participants Reg David, Paul Bisson, and Greg Vassilopoulos)



When you're showing just a handful of **Jamaica's** birds like these from our two recent tours, it takes more will power than we have not to include streamertails, two likely-to-be-split spectacular hummingbirds endemic to Jamaica. The one at left is the Red-billed. The two parrots are the Yellow-billed, the more common of Jamaica's endemic parrots, and that's a glowing blue Orangequit above them, another endemic that is the only member of its genus. The Jamaican Oriole at left is also an endemic, one that is relatively common and widespread on the island. (Photos by guide Eric Hynes and participants David Disher & Kevin Heffernan)

Guide John Coons (at front left below) and his **Panama's Canopy Tower** group—one of two tours, with Chris Benesh guiding the other—shown here birding along Pipeline Road, seem intent on something, perhaps the Red-capped Manakin at top right, one of four male manakins seen on the tour. A close view of the canopy-dwelling Green Shrike-Vireo (at middle) is rare from the ground, which is one of the advantages of a tower like that of the Discovery Center along Pipeline. The Long-billed Hermit is not the most colorful of hummers, but its size, its long decurved bill, and its facial striping do cause it to be noticed. (Photos by guide Doug Gochfeld and participants Len & Mae Sander)



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UPCOMING TOURS

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

September 2016

France: Camargue & Pyrenees II—September 3-13, 2016 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.

Rio Negro Paradise: Manaus, Brazil I & II—September 3-17, 2016 with Marcelo Padua & Dave Stejskal and September 11-25, 2016 with Bret Whitney & Pepe Rojas. Bird the rainforests and rivers of the mighty Amazon and Negro in an unforgettable mix of forest hikes and live-aboard luxury.

Bolivia's Avian Riches—September 3-19, 2016 ("Bountiful Beni: Bazillions of Birds" Extension) with Dan Lane. The special bird life of the Bolivian Andes; wonderful mountain scenery.

Slice of California: Seabirds to Sierra I & II—September 8-17, 2016 with Chris Benesh and September 13-22, 2016 with Tom Johnson. A diverse mix of West Coast specialties, montane species, and pelagics in rugged and scenic sites.

Ecuador's Shiripuno Lodge: Heartland of the Waorani—September 22-October 1, 2016 with Mitch Lysinger. A tour to Shiripuno Lodge, gateway to the Yasuni Biosphere Reserve in Ecuador's Amazon region.

Cape May Megan's Way I & II—September 24-30, 2016 and October 2-8, 2016 with Megan Edwards Crewe. See bird migration in action at one of the country's top migration hotspots.

Serra dos Tucanos, Brazil—September 24-October 4, 2016 with Marcelo Padua. A short but rich immersion in the avifauna of the Atlantic Forest, based at one lovely site near Rio.

Australia—September 30-October 20, 2016 (Part I) with John Coons & Tom Johnson and October 18-November 2, 2016 (Part II; Tasmania Extension) with Chris Benesh. In two parts for those with limited time. Part I covers the 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 tour of Australia.

October 2016

Mountains of Manu, Peru—October 1-16, 2016 with Pepe Rojas. Our in-depth transect of the higher-elevation half of the Manu Biosphere Reserve.

South Africa—October 6-29, 2016 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.

Barrow, Alaska: Search for Ross's Gull—October 7-11, 2016 with Chris Benesh. A short 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.

Northwestern Argentina: The Chaco, Cordoba & Northern Andes—October 8-26, 2016 (Rincon del Socorro Extension) with Willy Perez & Jesse Fagan. Comprehensive tour of the many habitats of the diverse northwest; many specialty birds.

Safari Brazil: The Pantanal & More—October 13-28, 2016 (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.

Southern Argentina: The Pampas, Patagonia & Tierra del Fuego—October 25-November 11, 2016 with Dave Stejskal. Superb springtime birding tour through southern South America amid stark and spectacular landscapes.

Louisiana: Yellow Rails & Crawfish Tails—October 27-31, 2016 with Dan Lane. Late-autumn tour on the Gulf Coast targeting Yellow Rails and other migrants and wintering species of the region.

New Guinea & Australia—October 27-November 14, 2016 with Jay VanderGaast. A rich and diverse sampler of the best birding of New Guinea and Australia.

Spectacular Southeast Brazil—October 28-November 13, 2016 (North of the Tropic) with Bret Whitney & Tom Johnson and November 11-27, 2016 (South of the Capricorn; Iguazu Falls Extension) with Bret Whitney & Marcelo Padua. The fantastic center of avian endemism in eastern Brazil, particularly well endowed with hummingbirds, cotingas, antbirds, and beautiful scenery. Part I: North of the Tropic; Part II: South of the Capricorn, plus an optional Iguazu Falls Extension.

Sri Lanka—October 28-November 14, 2016 with Megan Edwards Crewe & local guide. A two-week introduction to Asia's birds, including more than two-dozen species endemic to the island, with one of the country's foremost birders as a co-leader.

Northern Peru: Endemics Galore—October 30-November 19, 2016 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; camping no longer necessary.

November 2016

Birding Plus/Ireland in Fall: Birds, Traditional Music & Pubs—November 3-13, 2016 with Terry McEneaney & Karen McEneaney. The birds, culture, music, and pubs of this beautiful country in fall.

Colombia: The Llanos & More—November 5-15, 2016 with Jesse Fagan & local guide. A tour to the rich birding sites around Bogota including Chingaza and Chicacue national parks, plus a trip to the llanos of eastern Colombia for Crestless Curassow, Pale-headed Jacamar, and White-bearded Flycatcher, among others.

Madagascar, Mauritius & Reunion—November 5-December 1, 2016 (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 6-24, 2016 (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.

Chile—November 6-26, 2016 with Willy Perez & local guide. Comprehensive survey tour of this visually spectacular and tourist-friendly country.

Southern India: Western Ghats Endemics—November 13-December 3, 2016 with Terry Stevenson & local guide. Journey from the mammal-rich lowlands of Nagarhole to the endemic-rich mountains of the Western Ghats.

Vietnam—November 25-December 15, 2016 with Dave Stejskal & local guide. Intriguing survey tour to bird-rich but poorly known Vietnam.

Holiday Tours

Holiday at San Isidro, Ecuador—November 19-28, 2016 with Mitch Lysinger. A bird-rich holiday escape based primarily at the very comfortable San Isidro Lodge.

Mexico: Yucatan & Cozumel—November 19-28, 2016 with Chris Benesh & local guide. A tour for the most interesting birds of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula amidst its attractive Mayan sites and only a short flight from the US.

Peru's Rarely Explored South: High Arid Deserts & Nazca Lines—November 19-December 1, 2016 with Jesse Fagan. A tour over the Thanksgiving break through grand Peruvian landscapes to many birding sites south of Lima, from Cusco and Arequipa to Lake Titicaca and Nazca. Coastal and Andean birding at its best. Lots of endemics and Peruvian near-endemics.

Iquitos, Peru: Canopy Walkways & Ancient Forests—December 17-28, 2016 with Dan Lane. Two-week immersion in one of the most species-rich regions of Amazonia, including the white-sand forests near Iquitos.

Holiday Costa Rica: Rancho Naturalista I & II—December 18-26, 2016 with Megan Edwards Crewe & local guide and December 30, 2016-January 7, 2017 with Jesse Fagan & local guide. One-site holiday tour based at the comfortable Rancho Naturalista Lodge, with excursions to other habitats on Costa Rica's bird-rich Caribbean slope.

Arizona Winter Specialties—December 29, 2016-January 4, 2017 with Chris Benesh. Exceptional winter birding on a short tour with numerous specialties and potential rarities.

Ecuador's Wildsumaco Lodge—December 29, 2016-January 8, 2017 with Willy Perez. Exploring the riches of the eastern Andean foothills of northern Ecuador for numerous specialties at Wildsumaco Lodge.

Panama's Canopy Lodge: El Valle de Anton—December 30, 2016-January 6, 2017 with John Coons & local guide. A superb introduction to Neotropical birds or a complement to your broader Middle American birding, all based at a charming lodge.

Trinidad & Tobago—December 30, 2016-January 8, 2017 with Tom Johnson & local guide. Wonderful introductory tour to South America's bird riches, including bellbirds, toucans, manakins, and motmots.



Guide Willy Perez (right) and local guides with a recent *Amazonian Ecuador: Sacha Lodge* tour

2017 JANUARY- FEBRUARY

January

Yellowstone in Winter—January 1-9, 2017 with Terry McEneaney & Karen McEneaney. A winter birding, wildlife, and landscape adventure to one of the world's legendary destinations.

Nowhere but Northeast Brazil!—January 9-27, 2017 (Southern Bahia Extension) with Bret Whitney & Dan Lane. From beautiful beaches to barren badlands, our tour is a quest for specialties of the endangered caatinga, chapada, and Atlantic Forest habitats. The Southern Bahia Extension offers an opportunity to see many additional endemic birds, some of which are not seen on our *Spectacular Southeast Brazil* tours.

Guyana: Wilderness Paradise I & II—January 12-23, 2017 and January 28-February 8, 2017 with Megan Edwards Crewe & local guide. A survey of the country's vast untrammelled rainforest, with an emphasis on Guianan shield specialties and side trips to coastal and savanna regions and spectacular Kaieteur Falls.

Amazonian Ecuador: Sacha Lodge I & II—January 13-22, 2017 with Willy Perez & local guide and February 3-12, 2017 with Mitch Lysinger & local guide.

One-site tour to one of the most comfortable lodges in western Amazonia with some of the birdiest canopy platforms anywhere.

South Texas Rarities—January 14-20, 2017 with Chris Benesh. Escape the winter birding doldrums on our week-long tour to the bird-rich Rio Grande Valley, with specialties from kiskadees and Green Jays to Hook-billed Kites and Altamira Orioles. And the winter potential for Mexican vagrants is terrific!

Costa Rica: Birding the Edges—January 14-23, 2017 (Part 1) and January 22-31, 2017 (Part 2) with Tom Johnson & local guide. A two-part tour to this bird-rich country exploring sites and birds not covered on our March or holiday tours. (*Our March tour is scheduled for March 19-April 3, 2017 with Jay VanderGaast*)

Colombia: Bogota, the Magdalena Valley & Santa Marta—January 14-29, 2017 with Jesse Fagan & local guide. Energetic, endemic-oriented (30+) tour connecting reserves up the Magdalena Valley from Bogota to the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta.

Thailand—January 14-February 4, 2017 with Dave Stejskal & Jay VanderGaast. A wide variety of forest birds in the friendly heart of Southeast Asia (and fabulous Thai food).

Winter Japan: Dancing Cranes & Spectacular Sea-Eagles—January 20-February 5, 2017 with Phil Gregory. Japan's winter spectacles, including the fabulous cranes and Steller's Sea-Eagle.



Araripe Manakin—nowhere but Northeast Brazil

Jewels of Ecuador: Hummers, Tanagers & Antpittas I & II—January 21-February 7, 2017 and March 21-April 7, 2017 with Willy Perez. Survey of Andean Ecuador; diverse avifauna dominated by colorful hummers and tanagers and more subtle and haunting antpittas.

Northern India: Birds, Tiger & the Taj Mahal—January 28-February 17, 2017 with Terry Stevenson. Fantastic adventure from the Ganges plains to the Himalayan foothills, with the Bharatpur wetlands, a good chance of Tiger, and the wondrous Taj Mahal.



Bicolored Antbird is a happy sight in Panama and Costa Rica as well as further south.

February

NEW/Colombia: Medellin Escape: Andes & Valleys—February 4-13, 2017 with Richard Webster & local guide. Rich forests from the foothills to treeline accessed from good country hotels and comfortable lodges at some of Colombia's best private reserves. Many Colombian endemics, but primarily an opportunity to gorge on the birds of the Andes after a short flight across the Caribbean. (*Also with Richard, Colombia: Santa Marta Escape—March 4-12, 2017*)

Birding Plus: Birds & Wines of Chile and Argentina—February 4-18, 2017 with Marcelo Padua & John Coons. A tour combining an exploration of the great birds and vineyards of these two wonderful countries!

Cambodia: Angkor Temples & Vanishing Birds—February 4-18, 2017 with Phil Gregory. A "last chance" destination for some of the large, rare Asian waterbirds now extinct in neighboring countries, plus additional regional specialties and world-famous Angkor Wat.

Panama's Canopy Tower—February 5-11, 2017 (Canopy Lodge Extension) with Chris Benesh & local guide. A towering introduction to Neotropical birds based entirely at a unique lodge; quick access to famous Pipeline Road. (*And coming in March, Panama's Canopy Tower & Lodge—March 12-19, 2017 with John Coons & local guide and Western Panama: Chiriqui & Bocas del Toro—March 18-27, 2017 with Jesse Fagan*)

Guatemala: Shade-grown Birding—February 10-18, 2017 (Temples of Tikal Extension) with Jesse Fagan. Resplendent Quetzal, a host of hummingbirds, and



Hard to believe, but Sparkling Violetear is a fairly common hummer on many of our Ecuador and Colombia tours.



Whitehead's Trogon—only in Borneo.

Azure-rumped Tanager set against a dramatic volcanic landscape and colorful Mayan culture.

Mexico: Oaxaca—February 11-18, 2017 with Dan Lane & second guide. Superb birding with two dozen Mexican endemics and fascinating ruins while based in lovely Oaxaca City.

Trinidad & Tobago—February 11-20, 2017 with Tom Johnson & local guide. Wonderful introductory tour to South America's riches, including bellbirds, toucans, manakins, and motmots.

NEW/Owlberta: Alberta's Owls & More—February 18-24, 2017 with Jay VanderGaast & second guide. A short tour targeting owls and other winter specialties in the boreal forests, prairies, and foothills of the Canadian province of Alberta.

Jamaica I & II—February 26-March 4, 2017 with Jesse Fagan & local guide and March 5-11, 2017 with Eric Hynes & local guide. A quick adventure in search of Jamaica's 27 endemics and numerous regional specialties at Green Castle Estate.

Borneo—February 28-March 17, 2017 with Megan Edwards Crewe & local guide. Three prime areas in some of Earth's richest forests while based in comfort right in the wild.

Holiday at San Isidro, Ecuador

Mitch Lysinger

Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe

We'll look for this football-sized, high elevation dweller right up at the continental divide on our first day where they inhabit a most intriguing, almost mystical, alpine habitat full of brain coral-like vegetation. Although related to shorebirds, seedsnipes look more like ptarmigans in summer plumage.



"San Isidro type" Black-banded Owl

This stunning owl graces the gardens around Cabañas San Isidro, usually allowing very close approach as if in a staring contest. It is often referred to as the "Mystery Owl" since many experts suspect that this middle elevation form might be different enough from the more lowland occurring Black-banded to warrant at least subspecific status.



Black-billed Mountain-Toucan

A trip to the humid Neotropics just wouldn't be complete without a toucan of some kind or other! This trip often nets quite a few species of them, of which the flashy mountain-toucans, restricted to Andean slopes, are the highlights. We have a great chance of seeing this Black-billed Mountain-Toucan around San Isidro and the Gray-breasted at Guango Lodge. Both are real eye candy!



Sword-billed Hummingbird

Sword-billed Hummingbird is a fine example of evolutionary forces driving a species to extremes! You have to see this hummer in action to believe its surgical ability with that ridiculously long bill, and the feeders at Guango Lodge attract them throughout the day, and they can be quite tame.



(Photos by guides Mitch Lysinger and Willy Perez, and Carolina Bustamante Holguin)

There's still some space available on Mitch's November San Isidro tour, and we hope you'll consider joining him for a birding adventure in his backyard. Dates are November 19-28.

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BIRDING TOURS WORLDWIDE

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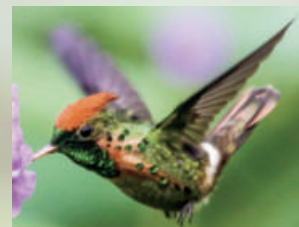
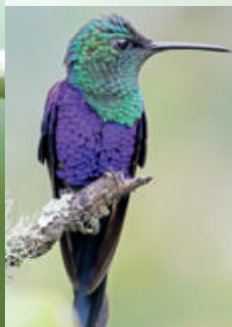
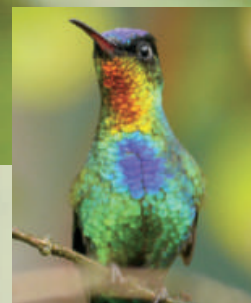
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Then be sure to see our new slideshow of 55 species! Samples here include a Chestnut-breasted Coronet and Long-tailed Sylph challenging each

other in Ecuador, Fiery-throated Hummingbird (top) in Costa Rica, Crowned Woodnymph from Colombia, and Tufted Coquette from Trinidad. Participants Larry Peavler, Sandy Paci, Greg Griffith, and Rick Woodruff contributed these fine images.

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