



# Ecuador

*A Tour with Holliday Park Foundation*



Tour Leaders: Rob Ripma, Adam Barnes, Edison Buenaño

October 1-13, 2024

*Ecuador has long been considered one of the best birding and wildlife destinations in the world, and once you're there, you'll understand why! On this exciting tour, we'll visit a wide variety of habitats as we travel from elevations of 14,000 feet at Papallacta Pass down to Napo Wildlife Center in the Amazon River Basin.*

*We will begin this tour in the high elevations of Antisana and Papallacta Pass on the eastern slope of the Andes outside of Quito. As we move down in elevation, we will visit three lodges and will spend two nights at each lodge. These lodges are located at a variety of elevations which means each time we change lodges we will see a host of new species. Highlights on this part of the trip could include Sword-billed Hummingbird, Torrent Duck, White-capped Dipper, White-capped, Saffron-crowned, Golden-naped, Beryl-spangled, Blue-and-black, Magpie, White-lined, Silver-beaked, Blue-browed, Orange-eared, Spotted, Yellow-bellied and Golden-eared Tanagers, San Isidro Owl, Golden-collared Toucanet, Golden-collared Honeycreeper, and much more.*

*Once we have worked our way all the way down to the Amazon Basin, we will get in motorized canoes to take us down the Napo River to the Napo Wildlife Center Ecolodge. This lodge is deep in the Amazon on a tranquil jungle lake. This area is loaded with incredible wildlife, and you will be fully immersed in the Amazon here. We'll have the chance to visit clay licks for macaws and parrots, learn about the local indigenous communities that protect this forest and run the lodge, visit canopy towers, and hike in this remarkable forest.*

*All of these wonderful lodges provide great accommodation and amazing food. Travel between the lodges isn't far so we will have lots of time to explore these beautiful areas without too much travel time.*



## **Itinerary Overview:**

October 1: Arrival in Quito, Ecuador

October 2: Antisana National Park - Transfer to Papallacta

October 3: Cayambe-Coca Reserve, Papallacta Pass, and Papallacta Hot Springs

October 4: Guango Lodge and La Brisa - Transfer to San Isidro Lodge

October 5: San Isidro Lodge

October 6: Wayra Reserve - Transfer to WildSumaco Lodge

October 7: WildSumaco Lodge and Entrance Road

October 8: Transfer to Coca City by Car and Transfer to Napo Wildlife Center Ecolodge by Boat

October 9-11: Napo Wildlife Center

October 12: Transfer to Coca and Flights to Quito

October 13: Departure from Quito, Ecuador

## **Detailed Itinerary:**

### **October 1: Arrival in Quito, Ecuador**

Upon arrival, you will be picked up at Mariscal Sucre International Airport (UIO) and transferred to the hotel for the night.

*-Overnight: San Jose de Puembo Garden Hotel*

### **October 2: Antisana National Park - Transfer to Papallacta**

After breakfast, we'll head for Antisana National Park where we will be birding at elevations above 12,000 feet. As we get close to the park, we'll stop at a small restaurant and hotel where Giant Hummingbird can be found. This area also has a good view of cliffs where Andean Condors are regular. Then, we will continue to Antisana where we will search for Andean Condor, Black-faced Ibis, Paramo Pipit, Black-winged Ground-Dove, Ecuadorian Hillstar, and other paramo specialties. We will also take a hike to Suco Lake in search of Silvery Grebe and other waterbirds. After a picnic lunch, we will make the drive to our next lodge in Papallacta.

*-Overnight: Termas Papallacta Hotel Spa*



*Andean Ibis*



### **October 3: Cayambe-Coca Reserve, Papallacta Pass, and Papallacta Hot Springs**

Before breakfast, we will bird a nearby patch of forest close to the Cayambe-Coca Reserve looking for mixed flocks. Some of the highlights in this area could include Agile Tit-Tyrant, Black-chested, Scarlet-bellied, and Hooded Mountain Tanagers, Golden-crowned Tanagers, Black-backed Bush Tanager, and many more!

After breakfast, we will drive to about 14,000 feet at Papallacta Pass. The paramo habitat, above the treeline, is extensive in this location and we will be looking for two main targets, the Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe and the Ecuadorian Hillstar. Afterwards, we'll head lower in elevation to the Polylepis Forests. Polylepis trees are the only trees that grow at elevations above 9,500 feet. Here we will be looking for several specialties including the Giant Conebill.

We will return to our lodge for lunch and have a free afternoon for everyone to enjoy the hot springs at our hotel.

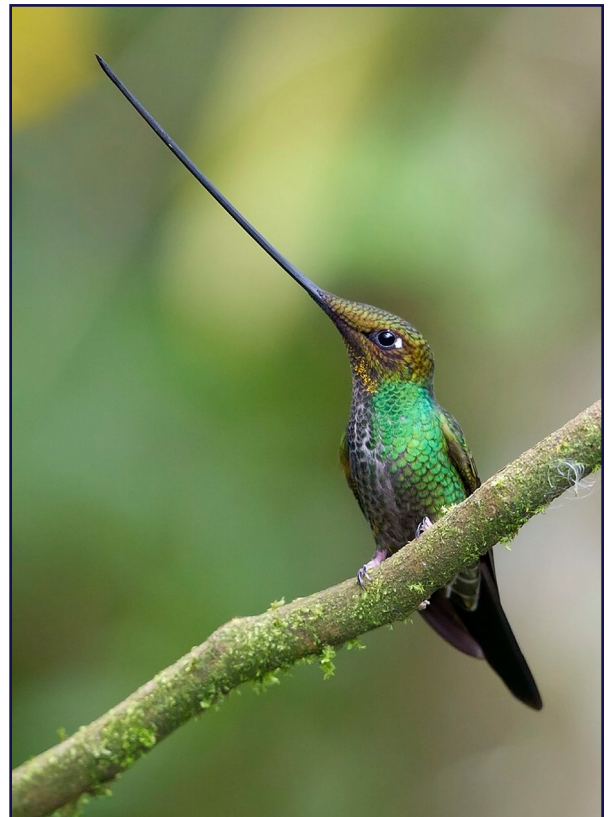
*-Overnight: Termas Papallacta Hotel Spa*

### **October 4: Guango Lodge and La Brisa - Transfer to San Isidro Lodge**

We will have an early start this morning to drive to Guango Lodge. We will spend time watching the hummingbird feeders at Guango that allow close views of many highly sought-after hummingbirds, including the Sword-billed Hummingbird! Other hummingbirds include Chestnut-breasted Coronet, Mountain Velvetbreast, Tourlamine Sunangel, and Mountain Avocetbill. We will also walk the nearby trails looking for many species and we hope to come across a mixed flock. We will also check the Papallacta River for Torrent Duck and White-capped Dipper.

After lunch at Guango, we will continue driving down slope to San Isidro. On the way we will make a stop at Las Brisas which has a great setup for hummingbirds. The feeders are usually visited by Peruvian Racket-tail, Violet-fronted Brilliant, Gorgeted and White-bellied Woodstar, Long-tailed Sylph, Bronzy Inca, and others. Afterwards, we will continue on to San Isidro Lodge where we will be staying for two nights.

*-Overnight: San Isidro Lodge*



*Sword-billed Hummingbird*

## October 5: San Isidro Lodge

This wonderful property has plenty of birding to keep us busy all day! We'll start out by visiting a few lights that attract moths overnight. In the morning, birds come in to see what they might be able to find around the lights for breakfast! Then we'll join one of the workers from the lodge as they call in and feed a White-bellied Antpitta. We'll spend the rest of the morning and likely some of the afternoon birding in this amazing area. Some of the highlight species we might find include Crested Quetzal, Masked Trogon, Andean Cock-of-the-rock, Green (Inca) Jay, White-capped, Saffron-crowned, Golden-naped, Beryl-spangled, and Blue-and-black Tanagers, and Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager.

At some point during the day, we will likely drive a short distance to the town of Cosanga where we can check the river for Torrent Ducks as well as some other birds that won't be found at the lodge's property.

After dinner, we'll take a short night hike to search for the "San Isidro Owl", the lodge's famous "mystery owl" which may eventually be designated a new species!

*-Overnight: San Isidro Lodge*



*Wire-crested Thorn-tail*

## October 6: Wayra Reserve - Transfer to WildSumaco Lodge

After an early breakfast, we will drive to the Wayra Reserve. The owners of this reserve have feeders that attract Rufous-breasted Wood-Quails and Gray-fronted Doves, both of which are difficult to see when birding in the forest. Many species of hummingbirds can also be seen including the spectacular Wire-crested Thorn-tail and Spangled Coquette. Some other flashy species that we may see here include Red-headed Barbet, Golden-winged Tody-Flycatcher, Paradise, Spotted, and Swallow Tanagers, and Black-faced Dacnis. After our visit, we will continue on to WildSumaco Lodge where we will be staying for the next two nights.

*-Overnight: WildSumaco Lodge*

## October 7: WildSumaco Lodge and Entrance Road

Before breakfast, we'll visit the moth hide where White-chested Puffbird, Western Fire-eye, Black-faced Antbird, and more occur. After breakfast, we'll spend the day exploring the trails and main road looking for mixed flocks, Coppery-chested Jacamar, Gray-tailed Piha, and Blue-rumped Manakin. We should see at least 15 species of hummingbirds at the feeders, including Napo Sabrewing, Ecuadorian Piedtail, Many-spotted Hummingbird, Peruvian Racket-tail, and much more. Other species

we hope to see include Chestnut-crowned Gnatcatcher, Golden-collared Toucanet, White-tipped Siskin, Blackish Rail, Red-billed Tyrannulet, Yellow-breasted Antwren, Rufous-naped Greenlet, Coraya Wren, Foothill Antwren, Rufous-breasted Piculet, Golden-collared Honeycreeper, and more species of tanagers such as Magpie, White-lined, Silver-beaked, Blue-browed, Orange-eared, Spotted, Yellow-bellied and Golden-eared. At dusk, we'll try for Band-bellied Owl and Foothill Screech-Owl.

-Overnight: WildSumaco Lodge

### **October 8: Transfer to Coca City by Car and Transfer to Napo Wildlife Center Ecolodge by Boat**

We'll have time for some final birding and photography around the lodge this morning as well as time to pack up to begin the final leg of our journey.

After leaving Wildsumaco, we'll make the drive to the Coca port where we'll will take a comfortable covered motorboat ride along the Napo River. Approximately 2 hours later, and after spotting some birds along the way, we'll arrive at Napo Wildlife Center's first welcoming area which is complete with restroom facilities.

We'll switch watercraft and take a magical and peaceful 2-hour dugout-canoe ride along a narrow creek where motorized vehicles are prohibited. The Añangu stream connects to the lake where the lodge is located. Along the way, we'll see our first Hoatzins and get a taste for the diversity of the region, with birds perhaps including Rufescent Tiger-Heron, Sungrebe, Red-bellied Macaw, and Green-and-rufous Kingfisher. We'll reach our final destination by arriving at the lodge in the late afternoon.

-Overnight: Napo Wildlife Center Ecolodge



*Hoatzin*



## October 9-11: Napo Wildlife Center

Napo Wildlife Center is an incredible location for both birders and photographers. Over the next 3 days, we will all have the opportunity to enjoy everything this amazing place has to offer. Some of our activities will be done as a full group while other times we will split up between our birding and photo groups. Some of our activities will include the following.

**Sunrise in the Canopy Tower** – On one or two mornings, we will visit the very sturdy canopy tower which offers privileged access to a world apart from the rest of the rainforest. Flocks of oropendolas, aracarís, tanagers, and euphonias roam the canopy in search of fruit. Spangled and Plum-throated Cotingas sing from the treetops while raptors perch on vantage points to dry off in the morning sun. White-browed Purpletufts and Crowned Slaty Flycatchers compete for insects, numerous parrots and macaws fly by or drop in if there is a fruiting tree nearby, and many other species wander past (and through!) the towering tree.

**Parrot Clay Licks** - Several clay licks (or "saladeros") exist on the NWC lands. Here we should see (and hear!) the spectacle of hundreds of parrots and parakeets coming in to eat clay. It's a unique sight to see, and it never gets old! The river-edge forest, where we'll visit the local community that built and expertly runs the lodge, is home to numerous other species such as Turquoise and Magpie Tanagers, Rufous-headed Woodpeckers, and Swallow-winged Puffbirds.

**Blackwater Creek and Lake by Canoe** for otters, caimans, monkeys, and birds - We'll enjoy numerous canoe rides around the lake by the lodge and along adjacent creeks, where the songs of Silvered and Plumbeous Antbirds reverberate through the flooded forest. Birds we will be seeking here include the poorly known Zigzag Heron, a habitat specialist called the Point-tailed Palmcreeper, Orange-crested Manakin, and the striking Long-billed Woodcreeper. Plenty of different species of monkeys and the impressive giant river otter are also highlights.

**Night Walks** – We can spend time exploring the forest at night for a wonderful variety of creatures including amphibians, reptiles, and insects. This should lead to some wonderful photo opportunities.

**Exploring the Islands of Río Napo** – The islands in the Río Napo support a varied avifauna distinct from that found on the "mainland" only a few hundred yards away! Island specialties we hope to see



*Blue-headed, Orange-cheeked, and Mealy Parrots at a Clay Lick*

include the Black-and-white Antbird, Olive-spotted Hummingbird, and at least three species of spinetails. Plus, more "expected" river birds such as the Capped Heron, Collared Plover, and Yellow-billed Tern will surely make an appearance.

Terra Firma Hiking Trails – Good trails offer access to another component of the avifauna with woodcreepers, antbirds, and tinamous particularly well represented. We should be able to encounter the vocally striking Screaming Piha and the visually striking Black-necked Red-Cotinga. Keep your eyes peeled, cameras charged, and binoculars at the ready.

-Overnight: *Napo Wildlife Center Ecolodge*

## **October 12: Transfer to Coca and Flights to Quito**

This day is a travel day. We will return to Coca by boat, before heading to the Coca airport where we will make our return flight to Quito. We will enjoy a delicious farewell dinner in Quito before flights out the following day.

-Overnight: *San Jose de Puembo Garden Hotel*

## **October 13: Departure from Quito, Ecuador**





## **Trip Details:**

### **Cost:**

Price per person (double occupancy), from Quito, Ecuador: \$7,999

Single Supplement: \$1,500

Minimum Participants: 8

Maximum Participants: 10

### **Price Includes:**

2 Expert Guides

Ground Transportation in Ecuador

All Lodging

All Meals

Park Entrance Fees

Portion of Proceeds Donated to Holliday Park  
Foundation

### **Price Does Not Include:**

Airfare to and from Quito, Ecuador

Airport Taxes

Passport and Visa Fees

Alcoholic Beverages

Personal Items

Travel Insurance

Tips

### **Deposit:**

A deposit of \$500 per person is required to hold your spot on this tour. The remaining balance is due no later than 3 months prior to the scheduled start date of the tour (July 3, 2024).

If you have any questions about this tour or would like to sign up for it, please contact us at [info@sabrewingnaturetours.com](mailto:info@sabrewingnaturetours.com), by phone at 317-324-8505, or register through our website at [sabrewingnaturetours.com](http://sabrewingnaturetours.com).

### **Responsibility/Disclaimer Statement:**

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