



## Colombia Cali Birding

# Relaxed, Diverse, Magical

**Dates:** March 08th - 15th, 2025 (8 days)

**Price:** \$3,500 per person (Double) Single Supplement: \$700

**Maximum Group Size:** 10 participants

**Leader:** Stephan Lorenz (email at: [birdingtravel@gmail.com](mailto:birdingtravel@gmail.com) for more information)

**Starts and Ends:** Aeropuerto Internacional Alfonso Bonilla Aragón - Cali (CLO)

**Lodging:** We will stay at the wonderful ARAUCANA LODGE for the entire duration of the tour.



Toucan Barbets are one of the star attractions near Cali. Photo Stephan Lorenz

Colombia is the birdiest country on earth, with 1,970 species—almost 20% of the world's total in 1% of its landmass, with new species still being discovered and new records being announced regularly. It is easy to see why. Colombia is tropical yet it also has ample elevation changes due to the Andes; furthermore, it has both the Pacific and Caribbean coasts. Lots of different habitats ensure an abundance of bird species.

This tour celebrates the opening of Colombia's newest birding lodge, allowing one to bird in very comfortable accommodations in some of the best birding sites in Colombia, without having to spend much time in a vehicle. The Araucana Lodge is a brand new lodge (opening date is January 2019) designed specifically for birders and nature lovers, with spacious rooms and all the comforts that ensure a good night's rest. For those who enjoy bird photography, Araucana Lodge and many of the reserves along the route have excellent feeder set ups that provide some of the best photographic opportunities in Colombia.



Andean Cock-of-the-rock Photo Stephan Lorenz

The tour starts in the KM 18 and San Antonio Cloud Forest, which provide an excellent introduction to birding in the Colombian Andes. More than 100 years ago, Frank Chapman, of the American Museum of Natural History, spent some time researching the bird diversity of this forest, which concluded in the first detailed bird survey for Colombia. The birding in the area is amazing, with mixed-species flocks of Multicolored, Purplish-mantled, Scrub and Golden-naped

Tanagers foraging alongside Scaled Fruiteater, Chestnut-breasted Chlorophonias and Golden-headed and Crested Quetzal. Apart from a visit to an active Andean Cock-of-the-rock lek, this tour dips into the humid forests of the Pacific lowlands in the San Cipriano Reserve, where the habitat and the species differ dramatically from those in the Andean Cloud forests. Another destination is the Upper Anchicaya Valley, in one of the most biodiverse national parks on the planet: Farallones NP. Found along The Old Buenaventura Road, which descends from the western Andes to the Pacific Ocean, the area is one of Colombia's newest destinations to open up to birding and is AMAZING. The road provides a mind-boggling diversity of birds and is such that it inspired Steve Hilty to start work on his Field Guide to the Birds of Colombia. This was the first ornithological field guide for South America and inspired a myriad of ornithologists on the continent.



Blue-headed Sapphire Photo Stephan Lorenz

## DAY 1: ARRIVE IN CALI AND TRANSFER TO ARAUCANA LODGE

Depending on the time, we may do some initial birding around the lodge today. Then we will have a welcome dinner at the lodge and discuss the plans and birding opportunities for the coming days. There will be plenty of time to settle into our comfortable accommodations.

## DAY 2: KM 18

Today we spend the morning around the famous KM 18, located on an 1800-meter (5,900-foot) pass 18 kilometers (11 miles) northwest of Cali along the road that connects Cali with the port city of Buenaventura. Birding can be very productive here, and we will look for four endemics – Chestnut Wood-Quail, Colombian Chachalaca, Grayish Piculet and the spectacular Multicolored Tanager. This area is a tanager paradise, where we have a good chance to see Purplish-mantled, Beryl-spangled, Flame-rumped, Golden, Metallic-green, Saffron-crowned, and Golden-naped tanagers as well as Ashy-throated Bush-Tanager and Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager. We hope to be dazzled by an impressive show of hummingbirds at a private house along the same road, including the beautifully ornate Long-tailed Sylph, Booted Rackettail, Blue-headed Sapphire, Green Violetear, Fawn-breasted Brilliant, Speckled Hummingbird, White-necked Jacobin, Brown Violetear and Tawny-bellied Hermit. Birding the forest can also produce many near-endemics such as Scrub Tanager, Purple-throated Woodstar, and Nariño Tapaculo. Lodging: Araucana Lodge



Esmeraldas Antbird Photo Stephan Lorenz

### DAY 3: SONSO LAGOON

We will start early to take a 2-hour drive to this wetland gem. It is one of the only remaining wetlands in the Cauca Valley and is teeming with birds, making it one of Colombia's best wetland birding locations. Here we will search the marshes and lagoons that line the Cauca River for Fulvous and Black-bellied Whistling-ducks, Roseate Spoonbill, Glossy Ibis, Anhinga, Little Blue, Cocoi, and Striated herons, Snowy Egret, Black-necked Stilt and Snail Kite. We are likely to find Wattled Jacana, which have a polyandry mating system, where females mate with many males within a breeding season. Polyandry is a fascinating adaptation that occurs in less than 1% of birds, and is most common in shorebirds. Other interesting species we might spot include the endemics Apical Flycatcher and Grayish Piculet, Jet Antbird, Blackish Rail,

Ruby-topaz Hummingbird, and Horned Screamer. Along riparian areas, we may find Greater Ani, Ringed Kingfisher, Crested and Yellow-headed Caracara, Red-crowned and Spot-breasted Woodpeckers, and Cocoa Woodcreeper. Greater Anis are fascinating because two to four unrelated pairs form a nesting group that build a single nest in which all the females lay their eggs and raise the young communally. Lodging: Araucana Lodge

#### **DAY 4: ARAUCANA LODGE**

The day will be spent at the Araucana Lodge in search of some of the targets at the lodge that include species such as Parker's Antbird, Grayish Piculet, Apical Flycatcher, Smoky-brown Woodpecker, Bar-crested Antshrike, Spectacled Parrotlet, Scaled Antpitta, Crimson-rumped Toucanet, Colombian Chachalaca and Scale-crested Pygmy-tyrant. We will also have a chance to explore the trails that wind through the pre-montane forest that is protected by the owners of the lodge and a stroll around the organic vegetable gardens is also a treat! Lodging: Araucana Lodge



Bar-crested Antshrike Photo Stephan Lorenz

#### **DAY 5: SAN CIPRIANO**

The day starts with a 1.5-hour drive to Zaragosa, our entry point into the humid forests of the San Cipriano Reserve. There are no roads into the reserve, so access is via a pleasant ride on "brujitas," which are motorcycle-powered wooden carts on rails that the locals have ingeniously engineered. In the heart of the Choco Bioregion, the area is known for being one of the most biodiverse on the planet and the wettest. Some of the birds that are possible include Choco

Toucan, Stripe-billed Aracari, Black-tipped Cotinga (NE), Rose-faced (NE) and Blue-headed Parrots, Spot-crowned and Five-colored Barbet (NE), Broad-billed Motmot and Purple-throated Fruitcrow and Tawny-crested Tanager. The area is teeming with Antbirds, with chances to see Ocellated, Jet, Stub-tailed and Bicolored Antbirds. With the high humidity and heat, it is best to have bagged species such as Pacific and Checker-throated Antwrens, Pacific Flatbill, Cinnamon Becard, Thicket Antpitta, Black-chested Puffbird, White-ringed Flycatcher, Blue-black Grosbeak, and Blue-crowned and Golden-collared Manakin before lunch. Lodging: Araucana Lodge



White-headed Wren Photo Stephan Lorenz

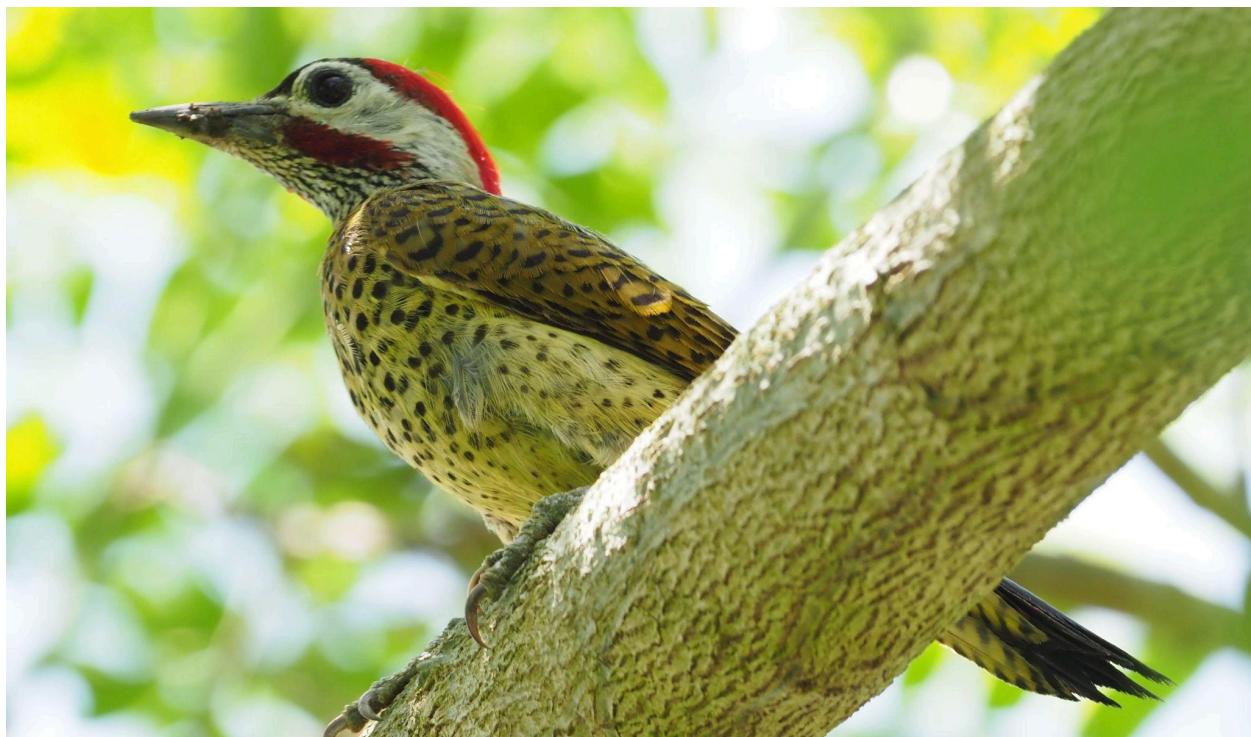
## DAY 6: UPPER ANCHICAYA AND ANDEAN COCK-OF-THE-ROCK LEK

Perhaps Colombia's most famous birding location, the Anchicaya watershed is located in the Farallones National Park, one of the most diverse parks on the planet. The birding begins just 30 minutes from the hotel via a paved road that can offer many of the Choco endemics that this mega-diverse locality has to offer. The day will be spent birding along the upper portion of the road. We will devote some time to the El Descanso area, where Rufous-throated, Glistening-green and Silver-throated Tanagers are known to occur. A day of birding at Doña Dora's place and along the upper portion of the road will surely yield many highly prized species including the endemic Crested Ant-tanager, Golden-collared Honeycreeper, White-whiskered Puffbird, Uniform Treehunter, Sooty-headed Wren, Green Thorntail and Empress Brilliant. One of the main targets is Toucan Barbet, sporting 5 different colors elegantly while still having a tough demeanor. We will search the skies for Barred Hawk, Ornate Hawk-eagle, and Swallow-tailed

Kites, whilst keeping an eye out for the attractive Ornate Flycatcher feeding on low branches. Another mega target is the recently described Tatama Tapaculo. After lunch, the group takes a 2-hour drive to an Andean Cock-of-the-rock Lek. Lodging: Araucana Lodge

## DAY 7: ATUNCELA DRY FOREST

This morning we'll visit the village of Atuncela, about 40 minutes from the lodge, where a fascinating habitat exists due to a very localized rain shadow. A dry forest with several endemic species of cactus harbors entertaining species such as Bar-crested Antshrike and Striped Cuckoo. Other targets of this area include Pale-breasted Spinetail, Golden-rumped Euphonia, the endemic Apical Flycatcher, and Cocoa Woodcreeper. Lodging: Araucana Lodge



Spot-breasted Woodpecker Photo Stephan Lorenz

## DAY 8: FLIGHTS HOME FROM CALI

**About your Leader:** Stephan Lorenz has led a dozen tours to Colombia and traveled independently to nearly every corner of this diverse country. Stephan Lorenz began birding in Texas, one of North America's richest areas for birds and biodiversity. After completing a Bachelor of Science in Biology at the University of Houston, he continued at the University of Texas earning a Master of Science in ornithology. His main area of research focused on the landscape ecology of grassland birds. Stephan has worked on a wide range of field studies for the Max Planck and Smithsonian Institutes, Indiana State University, Memorial University, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. In addition, he has worked as a field biologist in environmental consulting. He began his guiding work in 2008 in southwest Costa Rica and has since then

worked as a resident guide in Alaska and Brazil. Since 2010 he has led more than 100 birding tours on five continents. Having a strong interest in photography, his bird images have appeared in several magazines and books. He has published several peer-reviewed articles on natural history, ecology, and bird distribution and has authored more than 50 articles on birds, birding, and travel. His writing and photography appear regularly in Bird Watcher's Digest Magazine, ABA Birder's Guide, and BirdWatching. He enjoys birding in every environment, but skulky antbirds in dense jungles are always near the top of the list.



Araucana Lodge



## TOUR INCLUDES

7 nights of Lodging (Double Accommodation)

Purified Water Throughout the Trip  
All Meals From Dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 8  
Entrance Fees to Nature Reserves  
All ground Transportation and Airport Transfers in a 15 PAX Van.  
Limited Medical and Accident Insurance

**DOES NOT INCLUDE**

Gratuities  
Alcoholic Beverages  
Airfare to Colombia  
Laundry  
Items of Personal Nature

Possible Species

Berlepsch's Tinamou, Horned Screamer, Colombia Chachalaca (E), Chestnut Wood-quail, Dwarf Cuckoo, around 45 species of hummingbirds are possible, Golden-headed Quetzal, Rufous and Broad-billed Motmots, Black-breasted Puffbird, Lanceolated Monklet, Spot-crowned, Five-colored, Red-headed, and Toucan Barbets, Crimson-rumped Toucanet, Yellow-throated and Choco Toucans, Grayish Piculet (E) plus a dozen other woodpecker species, Rose-faced Parrot, Sapayoas, 20 species of antshrikes and antbirds, 20 species of ovenbirds, Golden-winged and Golden-collared Manakin