



Guatemala: Spectacular Central American Birding

Day 1: Arrivals into Guatemala City

No matter your arrival plans, you will be met by the trip leader and driver. The group will leave from the airport straight to their nearby hotel to spend the night. If you arrive before 1:00 PM, your guide will take you birding in the afternoon in locations near the city.

Day 2: Dry Thorn Forest Birding and PM Birding in Ranchitos del Quetzal

You will start the day early, at about 5:30 AM, so you can escape the urban hub of Guatemala City right away. You will have a box breakfast before reaching your first birding site for the day.

You should reach the dry forest, a new habitat for the trip, before 8:00 AM. We hope to be in Pajasagua at 7:30 AM. Pajasagua is the best destination for bird watching in the dry thorn scrub biome. In this particular place we will hope to find: Lesser Roadrunner, Lesser Ground-Cuckoo, Cinnamon Hummingbird, Russet-crowned Motmot, Turquoise-browed Motmot, White-lored Gnatcatcher, and Altamira Oriole, among many other good birds.

- You will also hope to find *Heloderma horridum* (a lizard), known locally as scorpion or niño dormido (which means the “sleeping child”). This species has been categorized as endangered.

After finishing birding in the dry forest at about 11:30 AM, you will head to Los Ranchitos del Quetzal to take a look at the superb Resplendent Quetzal. On your way to Los Ranchitos del Quetzal you will stop at the Posada Montaña del Quetzal to have lunch. After lunch, you will bird the hotel grounds for 30 minutes and then drive 5

minutes more to reach Los Ranchitos. Other species that might be encountered here are: Yellowish Flycatcher, Black-throated Jay, Unicolored Jay, Nightingale Wren, Rufous-browed Wren, Brown-backed Solitaire, Slate-colored Solitaire, Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush, Black Thrush, Golden-cheeked Warbler, Common Chlorospingus, and Chestnut-headed Oropendola.

After a full day of birding at these two sites, we will hope to reach the hotel by 6:00 PM. You will enjoy a late supper in your hotel. You will also complete the bird checklist and review plans for the next day (including morning wake-up and breakfast plans).



Day 3: AM Birding in Los Ranchitos del Quetzal and PM transfer to Antigua Guatemala

This morning, your target bird will be the Resplendent Quetzal, in case you missed it yesterday at Ranchitos del Quetzal. You will start birding at 6:00 AM or earlier in order to have a good chance to see the bird. You will also try for Mottled Owl, Mountain Trogon, Blue-crowned Motmot, Golden-olive Woodpecker, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Crimson-collared Tanager and Black-headed Nightingale-Thrush. You will likely spend your morning trying to find the Resplendent Quetzal. At 10:00 AM you will head towards Antigua Guatemala, stopping for lunch at Sarita Restaurant at about 12:00 PM. After lunch you will drive to Antigua Guatemala. You should arrive there around 4:00 PM, though this hour will vary depending on city traffic. After checking into your hotel you will have time to enjoy Antigua and its culture in the afternoon until supper time.

After a full day of birding at these sites, you will enjoy supper in your hotel at 6:30 PM. You will also complete the bird checklist and review plans for the next day (including morning wake-up and breakfast plans).



Day 4: AM Birding in Finca el Pilar and PM Birding in Los Tarrales

Finca El Pilar is just 10 minutes away from Antigua Guatemala. This beautiful Reserve is filled with forests of White Pine, oak and cypress. It ranges from 5,500 to 8,700 feet. You will first head to the upper part of the mountain. Here we hope to find: Bushy-crested Jay, Rose-throated Becard, Dusky-capped Flycatcher, Emerald Toucanet, Chestnut-sided Shrike-Vireo and Bar-winged Oriole. Several woodpeckers can be seen, including Golden-fronted, Golden-olive, and Hairy Woodpeckers. Also White-eared Ground-Sparrow, Prevost's Ground-Sparrow, White-naped Brushfinch, Ruddy Foliage-gleaner, Rufous-capped Warbler, and White-tipped Dove.

After clearing the high-elevation trails you will walk down to the hummingbird feeders which are located at the lower entrance to the mountain trails. This is a good spot to see Rufous Sabrewing, Green-throated Mountain-gem, Magnificent Hummingbird, White-eared Hummingbird, Azure-crowned Hummingbird, Berylline Hummingbird, Blue-tailed Hummingbird, Violet Sabrewing and Green Violetear.

At about 12:00 PM you will head back to Antigua Guatemala to have lunch in one of the many nice restaurants in the city. You will then prepare for your 2 hour drive to the amazing Los Tarrales Reserve. You will have a drastic change of habitats this day, and this promises a great diversity of birds.

Tarrales' main crop is coffee, but they also grow numerous other plants for export. Los Tarrales Reserve ranges from 2,300 feet elevation to higher forest areas at 8,200 feet, with tropical humid savannah and sub-tropical humid forest habitats. More than 340 bird species have been recorded in Los Tarrales. The reserve is part of the Atitlán Important Bird Area, designated by BirdLife International. The Christmas Bird Count yielded 240 species in a single day; so, this birding site cannot be missed.

The birding at Tarrales can be excellent, and you will have the expertise of one of the

De León brothers, very well-trained local guides here. With two excellent guides, you will find a lot of birds to start the trip. You will start by quickly checking a Mottled Owl roost before heading up into the nearby forested areas with some mixed bamboo where you should find White-bellied Chachalaca, King Vulture, Cinnamon Hummingbird, Violet Sabrewing, Orange-fronted Parakeet, Orange-chinned Parakeet, Yellow-naped Parrot, Rufous-breasted Spinetail, White-throated Magpie-Jay, Rufous-naped Wren, and Prevost's Ground-Sparrow.

You will spend most of the afternoon on the trails near the hotel grounds until supper time at 6:30 PM. At supper, you will complete the bird checklist as a group and review plans for the next day.



Day 5: Full Day Birding at Los Tarrales Reserve

You will want to have an early start for birding at Los Tarrales. At 5:30 AM you will all meet at the Main House to drive to Las Pavas Trail, which is 30 minutes away. Please note that you can meet early for a great cup of coffee at the Main House. At Las Pavas, you will work to find Green-breasted Mango, White-bellied Emerald, Berylline Hummingbird, Blue-tailed Hummingbird, and Blue-throated Goldentail. Other birds we will hope to find include: Black Hawk-Eagle, Ornate Hawk-Eagle, Barred Forest-Falcon, Bat Falcon, and Blue-crowned Motmot. You should get good looks at Ivory-billed Woodcreeper, and everyone will fall for the stunning Long-tailed Manakin and the beautiful Azure-rumped Tanager. This day we will have a delicious box breakfast prepared.

When the day gets hot, you will start your descent to the hotel grounds again to have lunch at 12:30 PM and take a brief rest before heading for birding in the afternoon at about 2:30/3:00 PM. This afternoon, you will look for Highland Guan, Golden-olive Woodpecker, Blue-gray Tanager, Yellow-winged Tanager, Black-headed Saltator, Northern Potoo, Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush, Ochre-bellied Flycatcher, Northern Bentbill, Common Tody-Flycatcher, Spot-breasted Oriole, among other birds.

At supper at 6:30 PM, you will complete the bird checklist as a group and review plans for the next day (including morning wake-up and breakfast plans). Right after supper, everyone will have the option for some nocturnal birding for one or two hours. Depending upon recent reports of owls in the area, you may try for Spectacled Owl and/or Black-and-white Owl. This is an option for each participant, so you can go owling and/or get to bed. You will overnight at the nice rooms at Los Tarrales Reserve.



Day 6: AM Birding in Los Tarrales Reserve and PM Birding in Las Nubes

You will start your day at 5:30 AM, gathering in the Main House for a good cup of coffee and early breakfast. At 6:30 AM you will go to La Rinconada, one of the many trails Los Tarrales has to offer. This trail is perfect for finding the beautiful Tody Motmot, a real small jewel. You will work to find Crested Guan, Long-billed Gnatwren, White-winged Tanager, Cooper's Hawk, Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl, Long-billed Starthroat, and Green Shrike-Vireo, among many others.

You will end your morning birding with a great lunch back in the Main House at 12:00 PM. After lunch you will get ready to leave Los Tarrales and move to your next destination, Las Nubes.

Las Nubes is a coffee farm located on the southern foothill of Santo Tomás volcano in the western Guatemalan highlands. Its main habitat is primary cloud forest and pine-oak forest, the elevation ranges from 1,900 m to 3,300 m (6,200 - 10,800 ft). Las Nubes is filled with lush forest and river canyons providing a great variety of habitats for endangered bird species such as the Azure-rumped Tanager. We will plan to arrive at Las Nubes at 3:00 PM or earlier. After arriving and checking in you will bird the afternoon on the trails near the lodge at 1,200 m (3900 ft). Here you will hope to find: Cinnamon Hummingbird, Golden-fronted Woodpecker, Clay-colored Thrush, Yellow-winged Tanager, Yellow-throated Euphonia, Black Phoebe, Mottled Owl, Blue-gray Tanager, Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer, White-bellied Chachalaca among many others.

After some great birding you will head to the Main House to have supper at 6:00 PM, You will also complete the bird checklist and review plans for the next day (including morning wake-up and breakfast plans).

After supper you will drive to a special place, about 20 minutes away from the Main House, to see the Fulvous Owl. The Fulvous Owl experience is one that is hard to match. Surrounded by mist rolling through the forest, with fireflies adding a delightfully glowing warmth to the cool evening, the stage will be set to see the magnificent explosion of Fulvous Owls, seemingly descending from nowhere, swooping by and perching up for excellent views and photos. After viewing this magnificent bird, you will head back to the hotel to rest. You will overnight at the nice rooms at Las Nubes.



Day 7: AM and early PM Birding in Las Nubes; Transfer to Fuentes Georginas Area.

You will have breakfast at 6:30 AM and will start birding at 7:00 AM. You will head to the upper trails, starting at the "Quetzal platform." Here you will be able to see the Resplendent Quetzal, with its 26 inch tail, flying right in front of you - a great opportunity to take photos of this stunning bird. Other target birds we will aim to see here include: Spotted Wood-Quail, White-faced Quail-Dove, Collared Trogon, Blue-throated Motmot, Emerald Toucanet, Barred Parakeet, Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaner, Ruddy Foliage-gleaner, Yellowish Flycatcher, Gray-breasted Wood-Wren, Brown-backed Solitaire, Slate-throated Redstart, Azure-rumped Tanager, Elegant Euphonia and Blue-crowned Chlorophonia.

After clearing the 'Quetzal platform' you will take one of the nearby trails to get the chance to see Common Bush-Tanager, Green-throated Mountain-gem, Ornate Hawk-Eagle, Black Hawk-Eagle, Spotted Wood-Quail, Brown-backed Solitaire, Paltry Tyrannulet, Slate-throated Redstart, Spotted Woodcreeper, Eye-ringed Flatbill, White-eyed Vireo and, if you are lucky, Spotted Nightingale-Thrush.

After having lunch at 12:30 PM, you will continue birding the trails in the lower part of the farm. Here you will hope to find Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl, Lesser Nighthawk, Pacific Parakeet, White-throated Magpie-Jay, Bushy-crested Jay, White-throated Thrush,

Melodious Blackbird, Dusky-capped Flycatcher, Common Tody-Flycatcher, Red-legged Honeycreeper, White-collared Seedeater, Gray Hawk, Plain Wren and Bat Falcon.

After productive birding at Las Nubes you will head to your nice hotel in the Fuentes Georginas area. You will hope to reach the hotel by 6:00 PM and have supper. You will also complete the bird checklist and review plans for the next day (including morning wake-up and breakfast plans).



Day 8: AM Birding in Fuentes Georginas; PM Transfer to Lake Atitlán Area

The trip up to Fuentes Georginas includes great views of volcanoes and travel through the highland farms of Guatemala. Its habitat is cloud forest at nearly 8,000 feet. You will start early with a 20 minute drive to Fuentes Georginas to start birding at 6:30 AM. You will spend most of the morning birding at Fuentes Georginas. You will take a break for a good breakfast at 7:30 AM. The road up to and through this hot springs area is key to finding Green Violetear, Amethyst-throated Hummingbird, Garnet-throated Hummingbird, Wine-throated Hummingbird, Mountain Trogon, Unicolored Jay, Black Thrush, Mountain Thrush, Pink-headed Warbler, and Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer. With some luck, you may find Buffy-crowned Wood-Partridge and Maroon-chested Ground-Dove. Other birds found here include Black-throated Jay, Bar-winged Oriole, Black-capped Swallow, Rufous-browed Wren, Brown-backed Solitaire, Slate-colored Solitaire, Rufous-collared Robin, and Blue-and-white Mockingbird.

We will plan to have a box lunch today, which will give you an opportunity to try some of the fresh fruit grown in the area and which will give you flexibility on birding at this site.

After lunch and perhaps as late as 3:00 PM, you will drive to the Atitlán area.

With a little birding along the way, you will hope to arrive by about 5:30 PM in Panajachel, a town located on the shores of Lake Atitlán.

You will have supper at 6:30 PM and also complete the bird checklist and review plans for the next day (including morning wake-up and breakfast plans).



Day 9: AM Lake Atitlán Area Birding Looking for the Stunning Belted Flycatcher; Mid-Day Return to Guatemala City with Birding at Rincon Suizo and/or Other Birding Sites

You will start your day at 6:00 AM with a nice breakfast at the hotel. By about 6:30 AM, you will leave the hotel to walk to the boat docks (just minutes away). There you will head to the nearby boat station to catch your boat ride to Laguna Lodge. Expect a 10 to 15 minute ride.

At this site, you will spend all morning searching for the enigmatic Belted Flycatcher. Laguna Lodge is the gateway to 100 acres of safe walking into high altitude tropical dry forest. You will visit this location for the pleasure of watching the stunning Belted Flycatcher. This species has a very localized distribution, only found in Chiapas (Mexico) and Guatemala. Additional species that might be encountered at this location are Rufous Sabrewing, Rusty Sparrow, Prevost's Ground-Sparrow, Violet-green Swallow, Bushy-crested Jay, Spotted Towhee, White-tipped Dove, Slender Sheartail, Sparkling-tailed Hummingbird, Azure-crowned Hummingbird, White-eared Hummingbird, Northern (Guatemalan) Flicker, Tropical Mockingbird, Flame-colored Tanager, and Rufous-collared Sparrow.

After good birding at this site, you will take your boat back to Panajachel where you will have lunch at 12:30 PM.

After lunch you will be transferred to Guatemala City, making a stop at Rincon Suizo, one of the many Important Bird Areas of Guatemala. The habitat here includes pine-oak forests at 7,870 feet and we will hope to find Magnificent Hummingbird, Green-throated Mountain-gem, Amethyst Hummingbird, Mountain Trogon, Blue-throated Motmot, Hairy Woodpecker, Spotted Woodcreeper, Spot-crowned Woodcreeper, Bushy-crested Jay, Black-capped Swallow, Rufous-browed Wren, Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush, Rufous-collared Robin, Blue-and-white Mockingbird, Gray Silky-flycatcher, Olive Warbler, Crescent-chested Warbler, Golden-browed Warbler, Red-faced Warbler, Pink-

headed Warbler, Painted Redstart, Slate-throated Redstart, Yellow-eyed Junco, Elegant Euphonia, Black-headed Siskin, and Hooded Grosbeak.

You will begin the drive back to Guatemala City in the late afternoon and hope to arrive by about 5:00 PM/6:00 PM. This will greatly depend on the city's traffic. This will be the final night with all the trip participants together, so everyone can bid each other a fond farewell.

Your guide will review plans for all trip participants, whether you are leaving on a trip extension and/or simply leaving in the morning.

Day 10: Flights back home

For those not on the Tikal extension, we will arrange a transfer to the airport with the reliable hotel staff.



Day 10/ Day 1 Tikal Extension: AM Flight to Tikal National Park and Birding Rest of the Day

On Day 1, the group will start her day with an early flight to Flores, Petén. You should reach the airport at 5:00 AM in order to have one hour to check in for your flight. Normally, flights from Guatemala City to Petén leave at 6:00 AM. The group will arrive at 7:01 AM in Flores, Petén. After clearing customs you will be met by your local guide. He will have a sign with your name on it.

After meeting up with your local guide, you will drive to a nearby restaurant to have a great breakfast. After breakfast Your local guide will decide on any birding stops to make before reaching the Park. At these birding spots you may encounter Bare-throated Tiger-Heron, Green Kingfisher, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, Black-cheeked Woodpecker, Lineated Woodpecker, Olivaceous Woodcreeper, Great Crested Flycatcher, Gray-collared Becard, White-eyed Vireo, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Gray-

headed Tanager, Black-collared Hawk, Olive-throated Parakeet, Tawny-winged Woodcreeper, Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Swallow-tailed Kite, Plumbeous Kite.

In the heart of the jungle, surrounded by lush vegetation, lies one of the major sites of Mayan civilization, inhabited from the 6th century B.C. to the 10th century A.D. The ceremonial centre contains superb temples and palaces, and public squares accessed by means of ramps. Remains of dwellings are scattered throughout the surrounding countryside.

Habitat here is tropical humid forest between 500 and 1000 feet above sea level. Birds to be seen here are: Gartered Trogon, Slaty-tailed Trogon, White-whiskered Puffbird, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, Pale-billed Woodpecker, Barred Forest-Falcon, Collared Forest-Falcon, Olive-throated Parakeet, Brown-hooded Parrot, White-crowned Parrot, Red-lobed Parrot, Mealy Parrot, Bat Falcon, Royal Flycatcher, Bright-rumped Attila, Yucatan Flycatcher, Green-backed Sparrow, Blue Bunting, Giant Cowbird, Montezuma Oropendola and Keel-billed Toucan.

After a successful morning of birding, you will head back to the lodge to enjoy a good lunch. After lunch, you can head straight to birding along several trails in the National Park, looking for new species to add to the trip list. You will spend most of the rest of the day finding species best found in the National Park. You will also continue to explore the temples and other ruins in this vast World Heritage Site.



Day 11/ Day 2 Tikal Extension: Birding in Tikal National Park

You will start your day with a nice breakfast at the hotel at 6:00 AM. At 6:30 AM you will start birding down a very birdy trail with habitat ranging from scattered forest to tall brush. The trail ends at a nice pond which has some really interesting birds. With some fantastic luck, some visitors find Jaguar drinking from this pond. We shall hope to find Thicket Tinamou, Plain Chachalaca, Agami Heron, Boat-billed Heron, Pheasant Cuckoo, Olive-throated Parakeet, Mangrove Vireo, White-breasted Wood-Wren, Green-backed Sparrow, and Gray-throated Chat. Two kingfisher species that frequent the ponds here are Green Kingfisher and American Pygmy Kingfisher. The area is also

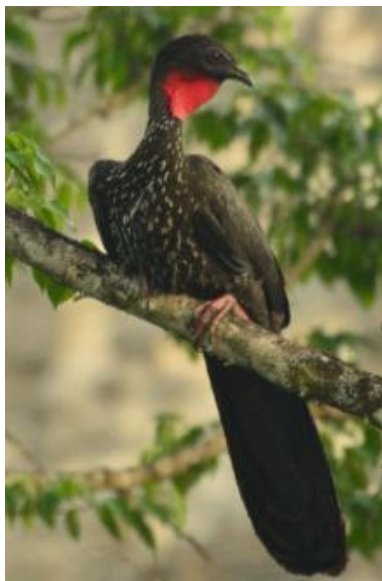
good for seeing both Scaled Pigeon, Purple-crowned Fairy, Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, Collared Aracari, Strong-billed Woodcreeper, Northern Bentbill, Common Tody-Flycatcher, Stub-tailed Spadebill, Couch's Kingbird, Louisiana Waterthrush and Northern Waterthrush. A few tough-to-get North American breeding warblers can also be found here, so we will be on the look out for Worm-eating Warbler, Kentucky Warbler and Hooded Warbler as well.

At mid-morning we will enter the forested and archaeological area, and at some point we will reach the main plaza where we will have amazingly close looks at Ocellated Turkey, and Ridgeway's Rough-winged Swallows (a race of Northern Rough-winged Swallow). The structures of the main plaza also provide nesting grounds for Orange-breasted Falcon, an endangered species which is not reliably found at any other place in Guatemala. With some work, we may see King Vulture, Plumbeous Kite, Black Hawk-Eagle, Ornate Hawk-Eagle, and Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift fly by.

At mid-day, we will have lunch either at the hotel or a box lunch. After lunch, we will head out for more birding in the afternoon. We will hope to see Great Tinamou, Little Tinamou, Crested Guan, Great Curassow, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, White-crowned Parrot, Black-faced Antthrush, Sepia-capped Flycatcher, Eye-ringed Flatbill, Royal Flycatcher, Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher, Red-capped Manakin, White-collared Manakin, Lesser Greenlet, Tawny-crowned Greenlet, Gray-headed Tanager, Black-throated Shrike-Tanager, Red-crowned Ant-Tanager, Red-throated Ant-Tanager, Blue Bunting, and Yellow-throated Euphonia.

Besides birding, you will enjoy the temples. We also rely on the expertise of our local park guide for both cultural information and birding.

By about 6 PM, you will head back to the lodge to clean up for supper. At supper, you will complete the bird checklist and review plans for the next day (including morning wake-up and breakfast plans).



Day 12/ Day 3 Tikal Extension: Full Day Birding in Cerro Cahuí Protected Biotope: AM Birding for Species Missed, and Late PM Return to Flores

After breakfast at the lodge in Tikal National Park, at about 6:30 AM you will be transferred to Cerro Cahuí, 20 minutes from your hotel. Cerro Cahuí Protected Biotope has been a protected area since 1989, when it was created for the purpose of conserving the natural and cultural resources, as well as promoting recreational and educational activities in the area. The Biotope covers an area of 1606 acres. It is a large forest over the northern edge of Lake Petén Itzá, being a connection between Tikal National Park, Biotope San Miguel La Palotada, and the lake. Here you will hope to see: Bicolored Hawk, Black Hawk-Eagle, Plain Chachalaca, Black-and-white Owl, Emerald Toucanet, Black-faced Antthrush, Yellow-breasted Chat, Black-throated Bobwhite, Snail Kite, Pale-vented Pigeon, Wedge-tailed Sabrewing, Black-crowned Tityra, Black Catbird, Gray-throated Chat, Rose-throated Tanager, and a few more birds that you might have missed in Tikal.

At mid-day, you will have lunch in el Remate and rest for a little bit before continuing with your birding expedition.

After lunch, you will give Petén Itzá Lake a scout, looking for birds we might have missed before. After scouting the lake's shore, you will head to a local hotel to bird for one hour and a half for several very local hummingbird species and some other nice birds. You will also hope to see Ruddy Crake, Scaled Pigeon, Squirrel Cuckoo, Long-billed Hermit, Stripe-throated Hermit, Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, Northern Bentbill, and Mangrove Vireo.

By about 5:30 PM you will need to be back in Flores, 15 minutes from where you will be birding. At 6:30 you will have your last supper in Petén in your beautiful hotel on the shores of the Petén Itza Lake.



Day 13/ Day 4 Tikal Extension: AM Flight to Guatemala City and Mid-day Flight Back Home

After enjoying the 3-day Tikal extension, the group will be picked up by Your local guide at 5:45 AM in the hotel lobby (in Santa Elena). The group will have to be ready at this time for the transfer to the Flores airport. The group (and Your local guide) will reach the airport by about 6:00 AM, and will have to check into their flight right away upon arrival. If the group would like breakfast, the little café next door serves good meals. The group should be back at the airport by about 6:45 to get back through customs to catch their flight that normally leaves Flores at 7:31 AM and arrives into Guatemala City at 8:35 AM.

After arriving in Guatemala City, the group will have to check in for their international flight back home.

