



**BOLIVIA: LAND OF ENDEMIC MACAWS,
WITH OPTIONAL PRE-TOUR FOR BLUE-
THROATED MACAW**

(24) 27 OCTOBER – 14 NOVEMBER 2022



Blue-throated Macaw (photo Jose Luis Avendaño)

Bolivia may be one of the less-frequently visited birding destinations in South America, but it has truly great potential and magnificent birds. The country holds 1452 bird species, the sixth country with the largest number of birds after Colombia, Peru, Brazil, Indonesia, and Ecuador. There are 18 endemic species, but Bolivia also holds several range-restricted and 50 globally threatened birds that are very difficult to find anywhere else. The reason for this avian biodiversity is probably the large number of different ecosystems found in this country. From Amazon rainforest through cloudforest (Yungas) mountains, tropical savanna, cerrado, flooded savanna, Chiquitania forest, and Chaco to high Andean mountains and Lake Titicaca, the highest navigable lake in the world, Bolivia is likely the most diverse landlocked country on earth.

Our 19-day Bolivia trip will give you the opportunity to explore some unique habitats in southern South America, such as the Chiquitania region. This transitional area between the Gran Chaco and the Beni wetlands is comprised of native xerophytic vegetation, acacia-like trees, and lowland grasslands and holds birds such as **Toco Toucan**, **Chopi Blackbird**, **Sayaca Tanager**, **White-bellied Nothura**, **Red-winged Tinamou**, **Campo Flicker**, **Green-cheeked Parakeet**, **Flavescent Warbler**, **Bolivian Slaty Antshrike**, **Yellow-chevroned Parakeet**, and with luck the beautiful **Red-legged Seriema**.

We will start the main tour south of Santa Cruz de la Sierra to explore the Bolivian part of the Gran Chaco, a vast and impenetrable deciduous, thorn-bush-like ecosystem that covers large parts of Paraguay, northern Argentina, and western Brazil and reaches into southern Bolivia. The Chaco holds several very special birds, like the most-wanted **Black-legged Seriema** in addition to **Chaco Earthcreeper**, **Little Thornbird**, **Many-colored Chaco Finch**, **Short-billed Canastero**, **Crested Hornero**, **Lark-like Brushrunner**, **White Monjita**, **White Woodpecker**, and **Chaco Chachalaca**.

The lush tropical forest of the fantastically beautiful red-walled canyon near Bermejo at the edge of the Amboró National Park will be our next port of call. We will stay at the Refugio Los Volcanes ecolodge, where we could find **Bolivian White-crowned Tapaculo**, **Grey-throated Leaf-tosser**, **Military Macaw**, **Rufescent Screech Owl**, **Two-banded Warbler**, **Dusky-green Oropendola**, **Black-streaked Puffbird**, **Blue-browed Tanager**, **White-backed Fire-eye**, **Yungas Manakin**, **Yungas Dove**, **Ochre-cheeked Spinetail**, **Slaty Gnateater**, and with some luck **Bolivian Recurvebill**.

Then we will explore the dry valleys between Samaipata and Saipina in search of several range-restricted species such as **Dot-fronted Woodpecker**, **Tucuman Amazon**, and **Bolivian Earthcreeper** and the endemics **Bolivian Blackbird**, **Cliff Parakeet**, and **Red-fronted Macaw**.

Leaving the dry valleys behind we will visit the cloudforest of the Siberia area, where we will look for the endemic **Black-throated Thistletail**, **Trilling Tapaculo**, **Light-crowned Spinetail**, **Pearled Treerunner**, **Fulvous-headed Brushfinch**, and the endemic **Rufous-faced Antpitta**.

The city of Cochabamba in the center of the country at 2550 meters (8366 feet) above sea level will be our base for the next four nights to explore the slopes of the snow-capped Cerro Tunari, where several interesting species occur, such as the endemic **Cochabamba Mountain Finch** and **Bolivian Warbling Finch**. We will have a chance to see the gorgeous **Red-tailed Comet**, **Andean Condor**, and several *Polylepis* specialists including **Tawny Tit-Spinetail**, **Brown-capped Tit-Spinetail**, and **Giant Conebill**. The beautiful mountain scenery is a picture in itself with the addition of images of **Andean Gull**, **Andean Goose**, and **Andean Lapwing**. The cloudforest and upper tropical foothills hold several range-restricted species that are otherwise

found only in the extreme southeast of Peru and are hard to get there, such as **Hooded Mountain Toucan**, **Orange-browed Hemispingus**, **Yellow-rumped Antwren**, **White-eared Solitaire**, **Blue-banded Toucanet**, and **Straw-backed Tanager**.



Giant Conebill

Then we will fly to the city of La Paz to explore Lake Titicaca, the highest navigable lake in the world, looking for **Titicaca Grebe**, **Chilean Flamingo**, **Andean Avocet**, **Yellow-winged Blackbird**, and **Many-colored Rush Tyrant**. We will also explore other habitats in search of the endemic **Berlepsch's Canastero**, and finally our journey will take us along the legendary "Death Road" that used to join the high Andes with the lush and humid Yungas. Along the different altitudinal levels of this road we will look for high-elevation species such as **Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe**, **Scribble-tailed Canastero**, and **Diademed Tapaculo** to low-elevation species such as **Versicolored Barbet**, **Yungas Tody-Tyrant**, and **Upland Antshrike**.

In addition to this 19-day main tour we offer a 4-day pre-tour (which can be run only if the main tour is guaranteed as a fixed departure; it can be taken either in combination with the main tour or as a standalone tour) to the town of Trinidad in the Beni wetlands to look for the Critically Endangered (IUCN) **Blue-throated Macaw** as well as other interesting species such as the Beni-endemic subspecies of **Velvet-fronted Grackle** and **Grey-crested Cacholote** and **Plain Softail**. We will also look for **Sunbittern**, **Band-tailed Antbird**, **Great Rufous Woodcreeper**, **Band-tailed Manakin**, **Unicolored Thrush**, **Blue-and-yellow Macaw**, **Red-and-green Macaw**, **Chestnut-fronted Macaw**, **Hoatzin**, **Greater Thornbird**, **Plumbeous Ibis**, **Snail Kite**, **Jabiru**, **South American Snipe**, and **Black-collared Hawk**, and with some luck **Bare-faced Curassow** and the scarce **Orinoco Goose**.

Pre-tour itinerary: 4 days/3 nights**Day 1. Arrival at Santa Cruz de la Sierra and transfer to the hotel**

You arrive at the Viru Viru International Airport in Santa Cruz de la Sierra in the afternoon. If time permits we will spend a couple of hours birding around the airport, looking for species like **Chopi Blackbird**, **Orange-backed Troupial**, **Rufous Casiornis**, **Toco Toucan**, **Yellow-chevroned Parakeet**, **White-bellied Nothura**, **Red-winged Tinamou**, **Campo Flicker**, and **Greater Rhea**.

Overnight: Hotel Cortez, Santa Cruz de la Sierra

Day 2. Lomas de Arena Regional Park, flight to and birding at Trinidad

We will have an early start to make a brief visit to the Lomas de Arena Regional Park before our flight to Trinidad. This visit to Lomas de Arenas depends on the schedule of the flight. We will focus on **Red-legged Seriema** and **White-eared Puffbird**. Then we will transfer to the domestic airport to connect with our flight to Trinidad in the Beni Department. The wetlands of Trinidad provide good numbers of species like **Jabiru**, **Wood Stork**, **Roseate Spoonbill**, **Limpkin**, and **Wattled Jacana**. We will also look for **Snail Kite**, **Black-collared Hawk**, **Long-winged Harrier**, the local subspecies of **Plain Softtail**, and **Velvet-fronted Grackle**, **Greater Thornbird**, **Grey-crested Cacholote**, **Black-collared Hawk**, **Snail Kite**, and **White-bellied and Rusty-collared Seed eaters**.

Overnight: Tapacare Resort, Trinidad



Jabiru

Day 3. Loreto Road and Blue-throated Macaw

We will depart early in the morning to look for our main target here, the Critically Endangered (IUCN) **Blue-throated Macaw**. Until 1992 the natural habitat of this species was completely unknown, and with possibly no more than 50-249 mature individuals it is one of the most endangered avian species in the world. Around Trinidad there is an accessible site where three pairs live. We will also look for other species like **Blue-and-yellow Macaw**, **Red-and-green Macaw**, **Chestnut-fronted Macaw**, **Mato Grosso Antbird**, **White-lored Spinetail**, **Narrow-billed Woodcreeper**, **Great Rufous Woodcreeper**, **White Monjita**, **Black-and-white Monjita**, **South American Snipe**, **Large-billed Tern**, **Yellow-billed Tern**, **Undulated Tinamou**, **Scarlet-headed Blackbird**, **Solitary Cacique**, and **White-tailed Goldenthrout**.

Overnight: Tapacare Resort, Trinidad

Day 4. Flight to Santa Cruz de la Sierra

If time permit we will spend the morning birding in Trinidad visiting the Chuchuni Ecological Reserve, where we might find species such as **Hoatzin**, **Sunbittern**, **Black-tailed Trogon**, **Blue-crowned Trogon**, **Chestnut-backed Antshrike**, **Great Antshrike**, **Barred Antshrike**, **Band-tailed Antbird**, **Buff-throated Woodcreeper**, **Band-tailed Manakin**, **Purplish Jay**, **Plain-crowned Spinetail**, **Fawn-breasted Wren** and **White-backed Fire-eye**. With luck we might find the secretive **Bare-faced Curassow**, **Undulated Tinamou** or **Pheasant Cuckoo**. Then we will fly back to Santa Cruz.

If you are not joining us for the main Bolivia tour, your tour will end here at the Viru Viru International Airport for your flight home.

If you are joining us for the main Bolivia tour we will transfer to the hotel, where we will have our meal together.

Overnight: Hotel Cortez, Santa Cruz de la Sierra



Hoatzin

Main tour itinerary: 19 days/18 nights**Day 1 (4). Arrival at Santa Cruz de la Sierra and transfer to the hotel**

You arrive at Viru-Viru International Airport in Santa Cruz de la Sierra in the afternoon. We will spend a couple of hours birding around the airport, looking for species like **Chopi Blackbird**, **Orange-backed Troupial**, **Toco Toucan**, **Sayaca Tanager**, **Yellow-chevroned Parakeet**, **White-bellied Nothura**, **Campo Flicker**, and **Greater Rhea**.

Overnight: Hotel Cortez, Santa Cruz de la Sierra

Day 2 (5). Lomas de Arena and Santa Cruz Botanical Garden

We will have an early start to briefly explore the Lomas de Arena Regional Park, where we will focus on **Red-legged Seriema** and **White-eared Puffbird**.



Red-legged Seriema

Later we will visit the Municipal de Santa Cruz de la Sierra Botanical Garden, where we will look for the endemic **Bolivian Slaty Antshrike**, **Green-cheeked Parakeet**, **Fawn-breasted Wren**, **Blue-crowned Trogon**, **Amazonian Motmot**, **Chestnut-eared Aracari**, **Yellow-tufted Woodpecker**, **Golden-green Woodpecker**, **Crowned Slaty Flycatcher**, **Purplish Jay**, **Creamy-bellied Thrush**, **Great Antshrike**, **Olivaceous Woodcreeper**, **Buff-throated Woodcreeper**, **Black-capped Antwren**, **Suiriri Flycatcher**, **Flavescent Warbler**, **Golden-crowned Warbler**, **Guira Tanager**, and **Guira Cuckoo**. With luck we might find the elusive **Stripe-backed Antbird**.

In the afternoon we will visit some water reservoirs and lagoons near Santa Cruz, where we will look for **Ringed Teal**.

Overnight: Hotel Cortez, Santa Cruz de la Sierra

Day 3 (6). Transfer to and birding in the Chaco

We will leave Santa Cruz de la Sierra and drive south toward the Chaco, one of the largest and least-explored ecosystems in South America. The Chaco holds an interesting bird community with birds that can be found elsewhere only in the Chaco in Argentina and the Chaco in Paraguay. On the way to the Chaco we will look for **Military Macaw, Stripe-backed Antbird, Black-capped Antwren, Ringed Teal, Least Grebe, Scaly-headed Parrot, and Turquoise-fronted Parrot**. In the afternoon, we will start exploring the Chaco itself, where our main target is the most-wanted **Black-legged Seriema**. Other species we might encounter are **Lark-like Brushrunner, Crested Hornero, Suiriri Flycatcher, Cinereous Tyrant, Little Thornbird, and Chaco Earthcreeper**.

Overnight: J R Hotel, Camiri

Day 4 (7). Birding the Chaco

We will have another day in the Chaco to look for Chaco specials including **Short-billed Canastero, Many-colored Chaco Finch, Bolivian Slaty Antshrike, Great Antshrike, Crowned Slaty Flycatcher, Stripe-crowned Spinetail, and Checkered Woodpecker**.

Overnight: JR Hotel Camiri

Day 5 (8). Transfer to Santa Cruz de la Sierra, birding en route

Today we will drive back to Santa Cruz de la Sierra, on the way exploring some habitat north of the Chaco, where we could find **Grey-crowned Warbler, Ochre-cheeked Spinetail, Black-bellied Antwren, Black-capped Antwren, Blue-tufted Starthroat, Gilded Hummingbird, Sooty-fronted Spinetail, Pale-breasted Spinetail, and Golden-collared Macaw**, and with a lot of luck we might encounter **Chaco Eagle and Quebracho Crested Tinamou**.

Overnight: Hotel Cortez, Santa Cruz de la Sierra

Days 6-7 (9-10). Refugio Los Volcanes Lodge

We will have another early start, leaving Santa Cruz de la Sierra for Refugio Los Volcanes. This basic lodge is located in an outstanding location surrounded by rocky cliffs at the edge of the Amboró National Park. Here we will spend two nights. We will be looking for **Two-banded Warbler, Black-goggled Tanager, Dusky-green Oropendola, Plush-crested Jay, Purplish Jay, Green-cheeked Parakeet, Blue-throated Piping Guan, Blue-browed Tanager, Striated Antthrush, Slaty Gnateater, Ochre-cheeked Spinetail, Bolivian White-crowned Tapaculo, Red-necked Woodpecker, Yungas Dove, Sunbittern, Black-streaked Puffbird, Yungas Manakin**, and if we are lucky the secretive **Bolivian Recurvebill** and the elusive **Grey Tinamou**. At night, we will try for **Rufescent Screech Owl**.

Overnight: Refugio Los Volcanes, Florida



Black-streaked Puffbird

Day 8 (11). Transfer to Samaipata

After a last morning's birding around Refugio Los Volcanes we will transfer to Samaipata.

Overnight: El Pueblito Hotel Boutique, Samaipata

Day 9 (12). Quirusillas forest and transfer to Comarapa

We will have a very early start to drive the unpaved road to the Quirusillas forest. This remote location holds a remnant of temperate Tucuman forest (a unique habitat found in this part of Bolivia and in northwestern Argentina). Our goal is to be there by dawn to look for **Red-faced Guan**, **Tucuman Amazon**, and **Dot-fronted Woodpecker**. Later we will descend into the dry valleys, dominated by scrub and cacti. During our drive to Comarapa we might see **Blue-crowned Parakeet**, **Grey-crested Finch**, **White-fronted Woodpecker**, **White-tipped Plantcutter**, and **Black-and-rufous Warbling Finch**.

Overnight: Monteblanco B&B, Comarapa

Day 10 (13). Perereta (Red-fronted Macaw)

Today we have an early start to drive to Perereta, a special place where the endemic **Red-fronted Macaw** roosts, so the sighting and the chance to photograph this unique species is almost guaranteed. Other birds here include the endemic **Cliff Parakeet**, the endemic **Bolivian Earthcreeper**, the endemic **Bolivian Blackbird**, **Chaco Puffbird**, **Black-capped Warbling**

Finch, Rufous-sided Warbling Finch, Striped Woodpecker, and Spot-breasted Thornbird, and on the way back to Comarapa we might have a chance to see the elusive **Giant Antshrike** and **Dusky-legged Guan**. With luck, we might see the majestic **Andean Condor** en route.

Overnight: Monteblando B&B, Comarapa



Andean Condor (photo Alejandro Ronchetti)

Day 11 (14). Siberia forest and transfer to Cochabamba

Today we will explore the humid patch of montane forest above Comarapa, looking for **Azara's (Buff-browed) Spinetail, Light-crowned Spinetail, Trilling Tapaculo**, the endemic **Rufous-faced Antpitta, Common Bush Tanager, Bolivian Brushfinch, Olive-crowned Crescentchest, Fulvous-headed Brushfinch, White-browed Brushfinch**, and with luck the scarce **Black-winged Parrot**. We will drive to a slightly higher elevation and try for the endemic **Black-throated Thistletail**. Later we will arrive at Cochabamba for a three-night stay.

Overnight: [Hotel Diplomat, Cochabamba](#)

Day 12 (15). Birding the Cerro Tunari

Today we explore the Cerro Tunari, looking for the endemic **Cochabamba Mountain Finch, Bolivian Warbling Finch, Brown-capped Tit-Spinetail, Tawny Tit-Spinetail, Puna Tapaculo, Maquis Canastero, Cordilleran Canastero, Rusty-vented Canastero, Streak-fronted Thornbird, Black-hooded Sierra Finch, Greenish Yellow Finch, White-capped Dipper, Andean Condor, Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle, Tufted Tit-Tyrant**, and the striking **Red-tailed Comet**.

Overnight: Hotel Diplomat, Cochabamba



Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle

Day 13 (16). Birding the upper Chapare

The Chapare area is the habitat of the localized **Hooded Mountain Toucan** and also **White-eared Solitaire**, the uncommon **Orange-browed Hemispingus**, and the rare **Straw-backed Tanager**. Other species include **Yungas Pygmy Owl**, **Band-tailed Pigeon**, **Barred Antthrush**, **Blue-banded Toucanet**, **Grey-bellied Flowerpiercer**, **Scarlet-bellied Mountain Tanager**, **Grass-green Tanager**, **White-eared Conebill**, **Hooded Mountain Tanager**, **Chestnut-crested Cotinga**, **Barred Fruiteater**, and **Southern Mountain Cacique**.

Overnight: Hotel Diplomat, Cochabamba

Day 14 (17). Birding the lower Chapare

Another day to bird the upper Chapare in case we missed some of our targets in the area. We will then descend in elevation, looking for the localized **Yellow-rumped Antwren**

Overnight: Hotel Diplomat, Cochabamba

Day 15 (18). Flight to La Paz, transfer to and birding at Lake Titicaca

We will have an early flight to La Paz, and as soon as we have landed at El Alto International Airport we will transfer to Huarina at the shores of Lake Titicaca. The main target for today is the localized and most wanted **Titicaca Grebe**, which is easy from the grounds of our comfortable hotel. Other birds include **Yellow-winged Blackbird**, **Many-colored Rush Tyrant**, **Wren-like Rushbird**, **Spot-winged Pigeon**, **Yellow-billed Teal**, **Yellow-billed Pintail**, **Andean**

Duck, Puna Teal, Andean Gull, Chilean Flamingo, Plumbeous Rail, Andean Goose, Andean Lapwing, and Cinereous Harrier.

Overnight: Inca Utama Hotel, Lake Titicaca



Chilean Flamingo

Day 16 (19). Search for Berlepsch's Canastero

Today's excursion will take us to Sorata to look for the endemic and localized **Berlepsch's Canastero** and other high-Andes species. Then we will drive back to La Paz for an overnight.

Overnight: Hotel La Paz, La Paz

Day 17 (20). Day Birding La Cumbre and Coroico Road

Today we will explore the high-elevation mountain pass of La Cumbre at the base of the snow-capped mountains and at an altitude of over 4000 meters (14,440 feet). Surrounded by stunning scenery we will look for **Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe** and **Grey-breasted Seedsnipe** and at slightly lower elevation for **Scribble-tailed Canastero** and **Diademed Tapaculo**. We will reach the famous Coroico Road (once the infamous Death Road), which is used these days only by cars and mountain cycles. Here we will look for the scarce **Scimitar-winged Piha**, **Band-tailed Fruiteater**, **Rufous-capped Antshrike**, **Bolivian Tyrannulet**, **Mountain Wren**, **Fulvous Wren**, **Blue-winged Mountain Tanager**, **Andean Solitaire**, **Drab Hemispingus**, and **Orange-browed Hemispingus**. Then we will descend to Coroico in the tropical Yungas.

Overnight: Rio Selva Resort, Coroico

Day 18 (21). The Coroico Road and transfer to La Paz

We will spend the morning looking for the localized **Brown Tinamou**, **Upland Antshrike**, **Andean Cock-of-the-rock**, **Stripe-chested Antwren**, and with luck **Yellow-rumped Antwren**. In the afternoon we will return to La Paz.

Overnight: Hotel La Paz, La Paz



Andean Cock-of-the-rock

Day 19 (22). Day Transfer to El Alto International Airport and departure

You will be transferred from La Paz to El Alto International Airport to connect with your international flight.

Please note that the itinerary cannot be guaranteed as it is only a rough guide and can be changed (usually only slightly) due to factors such as availability of accommodation, updated information on the state of accommodation, roads, or birding sites, the discretion of the guides and other factors.

Pre-tour

Duration: 4 days

Group Size: 4 - 8
Dates: 24-27 October 2022
Start: Santa Cruz de la Sierra
End: Santa Cruz de la Sierra
Prices: US\$2,175 per person sharing (2022)

Single Supplements: US\$280 (2022)

Difficulty: This pre-tour is rated moderate to difficult. The temperature is hot and humid. There are long drives on bad roads and picnic lunches. The accommodation is good but not luxurious, but is clean with private bathroom and AC. Most of the birding is along roads but includes walking along flat rainforest trails.

Prices include:

Domestic flights Santa Cruz – Trinidad – Santa Cruz
All accommodation
All meals
Land transportation
Admission fees
Private tour leader

Prices exclude:

International flights
Personal expenses such as internet access, phone calls, room service, minibar expenses, alcoholic drinks, soft drinks, hotel water for sale
Any activity not described in the itinerary
Gratuities

Main Tour

Duration: 19 days
Group Size: 4 – 8
Dates: 27 October - 14 November 2022
Start: Santa Cruz de la Sierra
End: La Paz
Prices: US\$7,529 per person sharing (2022)

Single Supplements: US\$970 (2022)

Difficulty: This trip is rated moderate to difficult. Extreme temperatures, high elevations, long drives including poor roads include several picnic lunches, facilities vary from very good to fairly basic, but even though some hiking is included it is not strenuous.

Prices include:

Domestic flight from Cochabamba to La Paz
All accommodation
Land transportation
Admission fees
All meals (except where indicated)
Private tour leader
All water in the field

Prices exclude:

International Flights
Travel cancellation and medical insurance
Personal expenses such as room service, minibar expenses, alcoholic drinks, soft drinks, hotel water for sale, phone calls, internet expenses, any activity not described in the itinerary
Breakfast and lunch on day 1
Excess weight of checked luggage, regulated and charged directly by the airline
Gratuities