

Birding Ecotours



COLOMBIA BIRDING TOUR: ANDEAN ENDEMIC AND SPECTACLED BEAR

22 JANUARY-05 FEBRUARY 2027
22 JANUARY-05 FEBRUARY 2028



*The endemic **White-mantled Barbet** should be seen at feeding stations on this Colombian birding tour.*

During the first part of this exciting Andean endemics birding tour, we will arrive in the city of Medellín to explore the recently created Margaritas Private Reserve to look for a feast of colorful and endemic species such as **White-mantled Barbet**, **Red-bellied Grackle**, **White-bearded Manakin**, **Blue-naped Chlorophonia**, and the recently split **Striolated Manakin**.

Using Medellín as a base, we will travel to the Yarumal area to look for the newly described and poorly known **Antioquia Brushfinch**. This rare Colombian endemic was only described in 2007, based on museum specimens, with its natural habitat only discovered in 2018. We will devote the whole day to finding the Antioquia Brushfinch ('Gorrión Paisa' in Spanish).

From Medellín, we head towards the picturesque town of Jardín in the southwest region of Antioquia, which will be our base from which to explore the ProAves Yellow-eared Parrot Reserve to look for our main target, the Endangered (BirdLife International) **Yellow-eared Parrot**. Other target species in the area include **Tanager Finch**, **Chami Antpitta** (recently split from the Rufous Antpitta complex), **Purplish-mantled Tanager**, **Chestnut-breasted Chlorophonia**, and with luck **Ocellated Tapaculo** and **Chestnut-crested Cotinga**.



Tanager Finch will be searched for in the ProAves Yellow-eared Parrot Reserve.

The dry area of Bolombolo in the Cauca Valley is where we hope to find the newly described endemic **Antioquia Wren** along with two other Colombian endemics **Apical Flycatcher** and **Greyish Piculet**.

We will also explore the Rio Claro Nature Reserve, where we will look for endemic species such as **White-mantled Barbet**, **Sooty Ant Tanager**, **Antioquia Bristle Tyrant**, and with luck, **Beautiful Woodpecker**. Other birds in the area include the highly sought-after as well as **Northern Screamer**, **Magdalena Antbird**, **Bare-crowned Antbird**, **Moustached Puffbird**, **Saffron-headed Parrot**, **Russet-winged Schiffornis**, and **Citron-throated Toucan**.

The second part of the tour will allow participants to explore the eastern Andes, near Bogotá, to visit unique bird reserves and exciting feeding stations in search of an incredible array of country endemics and regional specials such as **Bogota Rail**, **Green-bearded Helmetcrest**, **Blue-throated Starfrontlet**, **Silvery-throated Spinetail**, **Apolinar's Wren**, **Black Inca**, **Noble Snipe**, **Golden-bellied Starfrontlet**, **Indigo-capped Hummingbird**, **Grey-throated Warbler**, **Moustached Brushfinch**, **Rufous-browed Conebill**, **Cundinamarca Antpitta**, and **Spot-flanked Gallinule**.

During our time around Bogotá, we will make a special trip to Chingaza National Natural Park to look for **Spectacled Bear**. This area has become one of the most reliable places to see South America's only bear species and we look forward to the chance of finding this highly sought-after mammal. If you would like to create your own custom (and shorter) trip focusing only on **Spectacled Bear**, please get in touch as we can happily arrange this for you.



*The stunning **Blue-throated Starfrontlet** is one of our targets at Observatorio de Colibries.*

Itinerary (15 days/14 nights)

Day 1. Arrival in Medellín and transfer to our hotel

You will arrive at the José María Córdova International Airport, located in Rionegro, on the outskirts of Medellín. Here we stay in a comfortable hotel five minutes from the airport.

Overnight: Hotel Movich, Rionegro, or similar

Day 2. El Toche Natural Reserve

The tour will have an exciting start as we make an early visit to El Toche Natural Reserve looking for the endemic **White-mantled Barbet** at the fruit feeders in this reserve. Other attractions of the reserve include **Colombian Chachalaca**, **Rufous Motmot**, **Red-headed Barbet**, **Red-crowned Woodpecker**, **Spectacled Parrotlet**, **Great Antshrike**, **Bar-crested Antshrike**, **Slaty Spinetail**, **Cinnamon Becard**, **Chestnut-capped Warbler**, **Scrub Tanager**, **Plain-colored Tanager**, **Crimson-backed Tanager** and **Green Honeycreeper** among many others. We will spend the full morning birding in the reserve and then head back to Medellín.

Overnight: [Hotel Dann Carlton](#), Medellín, or similar



White-bearded Manakin can be seen near Medellín.

Day 3. Transfer to Jardín de Antioquia

Today we travel to the picturesque town of Jardín, located at 5,700 feet (~1,750 meters). In the afternoon we visit what is perhaps the greatest **Andean Cock-of-the-rock** lek in the whole of South America. Other birds to find in this reserve include **Flame-rumped Tanager**, **White-naped Brushfinch**, **Colombian Chachalaca**, **Red-crowned Woodpecker**, **Bronze-winged Parrot**, **Palm**, **Bay-headed**, and **Scrub Tanagers**, **Red-headed Barbet**, **Inca Jay**, **Chestnut-headed Oropendola**, and **Andean Motmot**. Here we will have a second chance for **Red-bellied Grackle**, however, the **Andean Cock-of-the-rock** is the star of the reserve with individuals active throughout the day and highly photogenic!

Overnight: [Casa Passiflora Boutique Hotel](#), Jardín, or similar

Day 4. ProAves Yellow-eared Parrot Reserve

We will have a predawn start to explore the ProAves Yellow-eared Parrot Reserve in search of the highly localized and rare **Yellow-eared Parrot**. We will arrive at dawn, and with a spotting scope, we will scan all nearby wax palms and known nest cavities to hopefully obtain views of this special parrot. Other birds in these cloud forest mountains include **Chami Antpitta**, **Tanager Finch**, **Purplish-mantled Tanager**, **Chestnut-breasted Chlorophonia**, **Plushcap**, **Ocellated Tapaculo**, **Barred Fruiteater**, **Black-capped Tyrannulet**, **Chestnut-naped Antpitta**, **Tourmaline Sunangel**, **Tyrian Metaltail**, **Black-collared Jay**, **Golden-headed Quetzal**, **Northern Chestnut-breasted Wren**, and **Flammulated Treehunter**. If we are very lucky, we could find the elusive and seldom-seen **Tawny-breasted Tinamou** or even **Highland Tinamou**; both occur in the area, but the chances for sightings are slim. In the lower-lying areas we will check for **Chestnut-crested Cotinga**.

Overnight: Casa Passiflora Boutique Hotel, Jardín, or similar



*We will visit ProAves **Yellow-eared Parrot** Reserve for its namesake species.*

Day 5. Bolombolo birding and transfer to Medellín

Today we will have another early start as we leave Jardín and head to Medellín. En route we will look for the recently described endemic **Antioquia Wren** in the dry area of Bolombolo in the Cauca Valley. Other birds here include the two Colombian endemics, **Apical Flycatcher** and **Greyish Piculet**.

Overnight: Hotel Dann Carlton, Medellín, or similar

Day 6. Finding Antioquia Brushfinch

We will dedicate the day to looking for the endemic and rare **Antioquia Brushfinch** in the Yarumal area which is one of the main targets of the trip. We will of course look for other special birds in the area. Later we will return to Medellín for another night.

Overnight: Hotel Dann Carlton, Medellín, or similar

Day 7. Transfer to Rio Claro Reserve and Secreto del Bosque Feeders

We will then drive east of Medellín to spend the morning looking for **Chestnut-headed Oropendola**, **Pacific Antwren**, **Plain-colored Tanager**, **Scrub Tanager**, **Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher**, **Black-headed Brushfinch**, **Bar-crested Antshrike**, **Spectacled Parrotlet**, **Band-backed Wren**, and with luck, the endemic **Beautiful Woodpecker**. Other birds possible here include the endemic **White-mantled Barbet** as well as **Moustached Puffbird**, the endemic **Magdalena Antbird**, **Bay Wren**, **Buff-rumped Warbler**, the endemic **Antioquia Bristle Tyrant**, **Black-bellied Wren**, **Dusky-faced Tanager**, **Blue-chested Hummingbird**, **Black-capped Pygmy Tyrant**, **Plain Xenops**, **Russet-winged Schiffornis**, **Striolated Manakin**, and **White-bearded Manakin**. We will visit the new Secreto del Bosque Natural Reserve where we may see the sought-after **Bare-crowned Antbird** plus other species such as **Cinnamon Woodpecker**, **Cocoa Woodcreeper**, **Band-backed Wren**, **Cinnamon Becard**, **Bicolored Wren**, **Yellow-tufted Dacnis**, and localized **White-eared Conebill**

Overnight: Los Colores Ecoparque Hotel, Rio Claro, or similar



Beautiful Woodpecker, one of the many endemics we will be searching for on this Colombian tour (photo Daniel Orozco).

Day 8. Birding the Magdalena Valley and Laguna de Guarinocito

Today we will focus our efforts on any targets we might have missed on the previous day. We will also look for the endemic **Sooty Ant Tanager**. Later, we will drive to Laguna de Guarinocito, en route to Honda, where we are based for the next two nights. At Laguna de Guarinocito, we will take a relaxing boat ride to explore the lagoon and look for aquatic species such as **White-faced Ibis**, **Boat-billed Heron**, **Ringed Kingfisher** and **Green Kingfisher**, however, our main target will be the highly sought-after **Northern Screamer**. Other species that can be seen in the area include **Rufous-tailed Jacamar**, **Pied Water Tyrant**, **Black-capped Donacobius**, **Yellow-chinned Spinetail**, **Greater Ani**, **Dwarf Cuckoo**, and **Black-collared Hawk**.

Overnight: Hotel Boutique Posada las Trampas, Honda, or similar

Day 9. Full day birding Bellavista Reserve

Today we will visit the Bellavista Reserve located one and a half hours from Honda. Here we will have great chances to see several endemic and range-restricted species such as **Velvet-fronted Euphonia**, **White-mantled Barbet**, **Colombian Chachalaca**, **Golden-hooded Tanager**, **Black-faced Dacnis**, **Collared Aracari**, **Ruddy Quail-Dove**, **Red-rumped Woodpecker**, **Orange-billed Sparrow**, **Scrub Greenlet**, **Black-chested Jay**, **Black-bellied Wren**, **Rufous-capped Warbler** and **Spectacled Parrotlet**. We will also have more chances to connect with species such as **Beautiful Woodpecker**, **Black-crowned Antshrike**, **Black-faced Antthrush**, and **Antioquia Bristle Tyrant**. After a great day of birding, we will return to our comfortable hotel.

Overnight: Hotel Boutique Posada las Trampas, Honda, or similar



The most-wanted Northern Screamer should be seen in the Magdalena Valley.

Day 10. Birding Laguna El Tabacal and El Jardín Encantado

Today will be another early start as we leave Honda to visit the Laguna El Tabacal en route to Bogotá. Here we will look for the endemic **Grey-throated Warbler**, as well as other species such as **Rosy Thrush-tanager**, **Rusty-breasted Antpitta**, the endemic **Velvet-fronted Euphonia**, **White-bellied Antbird**, **Rufous-naped Greenlet**, **Slaty Spinetail**, **Sooty-headed Wren**, **Striolated Manakin**, and the elusive **Ruddy Quail-Dove** among many others. Later we will move to El Jardín Encantado, a private house, where we will likely be overwhelmed by the number of hummingbird species including the endemic **Indigo-capped Hummingbird** and **Ruby-topaz Hummingbird**. After another exciting birding day, we will arrive in Bogotá.

Overnight: Courtyard by Marriott, Bogotá, or similar

Day 11. Chingaza National Natural Park for Spectacled Bear and high-elevation bird species

Today we will explore the Chingaza National Natural Park and adjacent areas to enjoy high-elevation species and search for the elusive **Spectacled Bear**. The mountains of this national park have become a reliable place to look for this most-wanted animal, which is the only bear species native to South America. We hope to encounter several Andean bird species restricted to the páramo and treeline including the endemic **Green-bearded Helmetcrest**.

Overnight: Courtyard by Marriott, Bogotá, or similar



*We hope to find the sought-after **Spectacled Bear** in the mountainous areas above Bogotá.*

Day 12. Chingaza and Bogotá surroundings

We will have another morning to explore the surroundings of the Chingaza National Park in search of **Spectacled Bear**. Interesting bird species we may see today include the endemic **Golden-bellied Starfrontlet**, as well as **Apolinar's Wren**, **Noble Snipe** and **Silvery-throated Spinetail**.

Overnight: Courtyard by Marriott, Bogotá, or similar

Day 13. Birding Reserva Bosque Guajira and Guasca Wetlands

We will have a full day to explore the Andes above Bogotá looking for targets such as **Bronze-tailed Thornbill**, **Pale-bellied Tapaculo**, **Golden-crowned Tanager**, **Rufous-browed Conebill**, **Tawny Antpitta**, **Agile Tit-Tyrant**, **Buff-breasted Mountain Tanager**, **Black-chested Mountain Tanager**, **Black-headed Hemispingus**, **Black-billed Mountain Toucan**, **Ochre-breasted Brushfinch**, and **Yellow-bellied Chat-Tyrant**. There is also a small chance of **Tawny-breasted Tinamou**. We will also check the area adjacent to Nuevo Mundo for the endemic **Flame-winged Parakeet** and we will have a chance for the **Muisca Antpitta**, and with luck, **Andean Potoo** at a daytime roost. The hummingbird feeders should provide birds such as **Blue-throated Starfrontlet**, **Glowing Puffleg**, **Sword-billed Hummingbird**, **Tyrian Metaltail**, **Longuemare's Sunangel**, **Great Sapphirewing**, **Buff-tailed Coronet**, and **White-bellied Woodstar**.

Later we will visit the Guasca wetland where we will look for the endemic **Bogota Rail**, as well as **Silvery-throated Spinetail**, **Noble Snipe**, **Eastern Meadowlark**, **Grey-browed Brushfinch**, and **Yellow-hooded Blackbird**.

Overnight: Courtyard by Marriott, Bogotá, or similar



Sword-billed Hummingbird — a neotropical dream bird!

Day 14. Finding Cundinamarca Antpitta

Today is dedicated to finding the secretive and endemic **Cundinamarca Antpitta** which has been attending worm-feeder stations nearby to the classic Monterredondo sector of the huge Chingaza National Natural Park in recent years. We will spend patient hours at the feeders, listening for its soft whistles and watching it emerge from the undergrowth. Although we will focus our efforts on this elusive and most-wanted species, the area also offers many other highly prized bird species including **Flavescent Flycatcher**, **Black-crested Warbler**, **Slaty Brushfinch**, **Sulphur-bellied Tyrannulet**, **Grey-hooded Bush Tanager**, **Rusty-winged Barbtail**, **Andean Siskin**, **Moustached Brushfinch**, and **Andean Pygmy Owl**, to name just a few.

In the evening, we return to Bogotá for our final dinner and checklist session, celebrating the extraordinary diversity of Colombia's Andes and hopefully the unforgettable sighting of one of its most elusive endemics.

Overnight: Courtyard by Marriott, Bogotá, or similar



*We hope to find the beautiful **Green-bearded Helmetcrest** near to Bogotá (photo Daniel Orozco).*



We will search for the endemic **Cundinamarca Antpitta** near Chingaza National Natural Park.

Day 15. Departure

Today your international flights will depart from Bogotá International Airport where our fantastic fifteen days of Colombian birding will conclude.

Please note that the itinerary cannot be guaranteed as it is only a rough guide and can be changed (usually 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. In addition, we sometimes have to use a different guide from the one advertised due to tour scheduling or other factors.

Duration:	15 days
Group Size:	4 - 8
Dates:	22 January-05 February 2027 22 January-05 February 2028
Start:	Medellín
End:	Bogotá
Price:	US\$7,490 per person sharing, based on 4-8 participants (2027) US\$7,920 per person sharing, based on 4-8 participants (2028)

Single Supplement: US\$940 (2027)
 US\$980 (2028)

Price includes:

All accommodation as described above, or similar
All meals (à la carte meals, fixed menus, and field meals)
Private transportation
Admission fees to parks, reserves, and feeding stations
Private birding guide
Local guides
Bottled water in the vehicle

Price excludes:

All flights
Private expenses such as laundry, telephone, internet, room service and minibar expenses, drinks, alcoholic drinks, water for sale in hotels
Any activity not described in the itinerary
Gratuities (please see our [tipping guidelines blog](#))