



Blue-naped Chlorophonia © Joao Quental



Colombia: Santa Marta & the Caribbean Coast

With 1,900+ bird species Colombia is a birder's paradise. Experience the Caribbean region and the Santa Marta Mountains, famed for their high level of endemic species. Explore high elevation mountains, dry forest, and coastal habitats in search of an array of neotropical avifauna, including antbirds, tanagers, hummingbirds, parakeets, and more. Throughout your journey, meet members of the local Wayúu indigenous community and learn about their bird-based ecotourism conservation efforts.

Dates: 9 – 17 March 2023 (9 days)

Itinerary: [Map](#)

Cost: \$3,725 (max 10 participants)

In-country Guide: TBD

Potential Species: 250-300

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- ✿ Bird the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta mountain range, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.
- ✿ Learn how the Wayúu have preserved their land for the benefit of birds and ecotourism.
- ✿ Visit Los Flamencos Sanctuary that hosts one of the largest populations of its namesake in the region, along with Scarlet Ibis and other waterfowl.
- ✿ Seek out the 20+ endemic bird species (27% of the country's 95) found in this unique area.



This program will involve early mornings, moderate-to-high intensity birding, with some rough terrain.

Day 1: Thursday 3/9/2023 Arrival in Barranquilla

Welcome to Colombia! Upon arrival in Barranquilla, after clearing customs and collecting your luggage, you'll be met and transported to your hotel. This evening the group will meet for a trip briefing and then enjoy a welcome dinner at the hotel's restaurant. *Elevation: sea level ~ Temperature: 75-90°F*

Overnight: Hotel Estelar en Alto Prado (check-in 3pm)

Day 2: Friday 3/10/2023 Riohacha

After an early breakfast, head to the Universidad del Norte on the outskirts of the city for a good chance at seeing the endemic **Chestnut-winged Chachalaca***. From there, continue to the area known as Km 4 to begin the day's birding in the mangrove habitat of Salamanca National Park. The wetlands of this area provide habitat for numerous species of shorebirds. Target species will include **Bicolored Conebill**, **Pied** and **Russet-throated Puffbirds**, **Stripe-backed Wren**, **Pale-legged (Caribbean) Hornero**, **Turquoise-winged Parrotlet***, **Glossy**, **White**, and **Green Ibises**, **Yellow-chinned Spinetail**, **Large-billed Tern**, **Sapphire-bellied*** and **Sapphire-throated Hummingbirds**, and more. Have lunch at a local restaurant before the long drive to Riohacha with birding along the way. Check in at the Taroa Hotel, the first "Wayúu Lifestyle Hotel" in Colombia. The hotel is staffed by Indigenous Wayúu people, and every space in the hotel is inspired by Wayúu culture, which is represented in their weaving, ceramics, vegetation, and gastronomy.

Elevation: sea level ~ Accessibility: Easy, some rural unpaved roads ~ Temperature: 75-90°F

Overnight: Taroa Hotel

Day 3: Saturday 3/11/2023 Riohacha

Today, visit Los Flamencos Sanctuary and focus on the wetlands and shorebirds. Los Flamencos Sanctuary is an important coastal wetland and dry forest reserve created to protect a large population of **American Flamingo**. This 17,000 acre reserve of marshes, lagoons, and dry forest also provides habitat for 185 other bird species, 80% of which are migrants. Spend some time birding the dry scrubland for specialties such as the **Tocuyo Sparrow^**, **Vermilion Cardinal^**, **Chestnut Piculet^**, **Slender-billed Tyrannulet^**, **White-whiskered Spinetail^**, **Red-billed Emerald^** and **Buffy Hummingbird^**, all of which are near endemics – species only found in Colombia and a neighboring country. We'll also search out **Pearl Kite**, **Aplomado Falcon**, **Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl**, **Burrowing Owl**, **White-fringed Antwren**, **Green-rumped Parrotlet**, **Brown-throated** and **Blue-crowned Parakeets**, and **Northern Scrub-Flycatcher** among others. Afterward, visit the village of Camarones, where we will learn about the Wayúu Indigenous people. We will have a chance to meet with our local Wayúu guide's family, visit their home and learn about their arts and crafts, especially the handmade, colorful bags known as mochilas.



Vermilion Cardinal © Felix Uribe

Have lunch at a local restaurant in Camarones Beach, then search for key species we dipped-on this morning, as well as some new species notably, **Orinocan Saltator^**, **Bare-eyed Pigeon^**, **Glaucous Tanager^**, **Crested Bobwhite**, **Pileated Finch**, and **Rufous-crowned Pygmy-Tyrant**.

Elevation: sea level ~ Accessibility: Easy, some rural unpaved roads ~ Temperature: 75-90°F

Overnight: Taroa Hotel

Day 4: Sunday 3/12/2023 Santa Marta

After breakfast at the hotel, check out and travel to Santa Marta with birding en route at Gaviotas Forest and Tayrona National Park. La Guajira Peninsula is among the country's most arid regions, and as a result, low-growth shrubs and thorny trees dominate the landscape; these sub-xerophytic conditions help maintain a unique diversity of species. The dry forests in La Guajira are distributed in territories belonging to the Wayúu, who grant access to their lands thanks to the good relationship the Audubon Society has fostered with the community. Here we will look for some interesting species including **Gray-capped Cuckoo** and **Lance-tailed Manakin**. Enjoy lunch in a local restaurant on the way to Santa Marta.



A Wayúu family © Gustavo La Rotta Amaya

Tayrona NP is known for its lush rainforest and rich biodiversity, with over 400 bird species documented inside the park. We will be hoping to find **Rufous-vented Chachalaca**^, **Ruby-Topaz Hummingbird**, **White-chinned Sapphire**, **Whooping Motmot**, **White-necked Puffbird**, **Chestnut Piculet**, **Green-rumped Parrotlet**, **Military Macaw**, **Black-crested Antshrike**, **Sepia-capped Flycatcher**, **Brown-capped Tyrannulet**, **Golden-fronted Greenlet**, **Bicolored Wren**, and **Trinidad Euphonia**. Check in at our beachfront hotel and bird in the surrounding area. With the beach close by, this is a great place for those who'd like to take a little respite from birding.

Elevation: sea level ~ Accessibility: Easy, some rural unpaved roads ~ Temperature: 82-97°F

Overnight: GHL Costa Azul

Day 5: Monday 3/13/2023 El Dorado Reserve – Santa Marta Mountains

Depart early for El Dorado, with birding along the way in the humid tropical forest around the town of Minca. Minca sits in the low-elevation foothills of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, where a dry forest ecosystem predominates across the ridges. Above the village, the premontane forest mixes with coffee crops to create habitat for many local and migratory bird species, including the **Golden-winged Sparrow**^ and **Black-backed Antshrike**^, which tend to be difficult to find in other regions of the country. We'll have lunch in Minca while watching hundreds of hummingbirds at the nearby feeders.



Orange-chinned Parakeet © Charlie Jackson

After lunch, board several 4x4s and journey higher into the mountains to the beautiful El Dorado Lodge, the ProAves Foundation's flagship lodge. Situated in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, this area is home to a vast array of species, including the endemic **Santa Marta Blossomcrown***, **Santa Marta Sabrewing***, and **Streak-capped Spinetail***, along with other more widely distributed species, **Scarlet-fronted** and **Orange-chinned Parakeets**, **Blue-fronted Lancebill**, **Steely-vented Hummingbird**, **Lineated** and **Crimson-crested Woodpeckers**, **Ochre-bellied Flycatcher**, **Cinnamon** and **White-winged Becards**, **Black-chested Jay**,

continued on next page...

Rusty Flowerpiercer, Streaked and Olivaceous Saltators, Crested Oropendola, Thick-billed Euphonia, and many others.

Elevation: sea level to 5,900ft ~ *Accessibility:* Moderate, rural unpaved roads ~ *Temperature:* 59-86°F

Overnight: El Dorado Lodge

Day 6: Tuesday 3/14/2023 El Dorado Reserve – Santa Marta Mountains

Spend today exploring the San Lorenzo Ridge. The Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, the highest coastal mountain range in the world, is home to an incredible 20 endemic species, which account for 27% of

the endemics in the entire country. Search for as many of these unique species as you can find along the altitudinal gradient of the San Lorenzo Ridge. Some of the species that you may hope to find in the Santa Marta Mountains include the **Santa Marta Parakeet***, **Santa Marta Screech-Owl***, **White-tailed Starfrontlet***, **Santa Marta Woodstar***, **Rusty-headed Spinetail***, **Santa Marta*** and **Sierra Nevada Antpittas***, **Brown-rumped Tapaculo***, **Santa Marta Bush-Tyrant***, **Yellow-crowned Redstart***, **White-lored Warbler***, **Santa Marta Warbler***, **Santa Marta (Black-cheeked) Mountain-Tanager***, **Black-backed Thornbill***, **Sierra Nevada Brushfinch***, and **Hermit Wood-Wren***, all of which are endemic to the Santa Marta mountains.

We'll also have good chances to see **Gray-breasted Wood-Wren**, **Black-fronted Wood-Quail^**, **White-tipped Quetzal**, **White-rumped Hawk**, **Band-tailed and Sickle-winged Guans**, **Red-billed Parrot**, **Masked Trogon**, **Golden-olive Woodpecker**, **Groove-billed Toucanet** and **Southern Emerald-Toucanet**, **Montane Foliage-gleaner**, **Spotted Barbtail**, **Streaked Xenops**, **Gray-throated Leaf-tosser**, **Strong-billed**

Woodcreeper, **Rusty-breasted Antpitta**, **Mountain Elaenia**, **Black-capped and White-throated Tyrannulets**, **Olive-striped and Cinnamon Flycatchers**, **Black-throated Tody-Tyrant**, **Yellow-bellied Chat-Tyrant**, **Golden-breasted Fruiteater**, **Orange-billed and Slaty-backed Nightingale-Thrushes**, **Great and Black-hooded Thrushes**, **Slate-throated Redstart**, **Three-striped Warbler**, **White-sided Flowerpiercer**, **Blue-naped Chlorophonia**, and many others.

Elevation: 5,900ft ~ *Accessibility:* Easy to moderate, rural unpaved roads, hiking trails along the reserve ~ *Temperature:* 60-75°F

Overnight: El Dorado Lodge

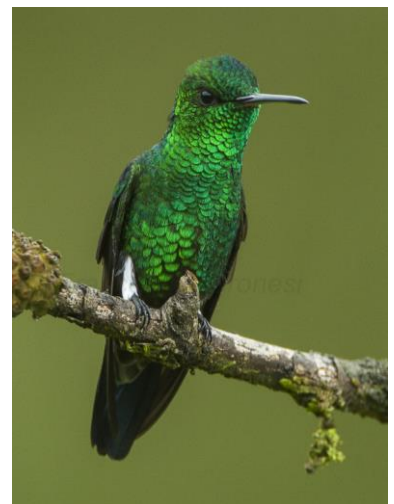
Day 7: Wednesday 3/15/2023 El Dorado Reserve

Spend today birding in the El Dorado Nature Reserve, located in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, inside a matrix of cloud forests. The reserve sits in a transitional zone between lower montane forest and higher cloud forest, creating a confluence of species from both areas. It is the perfect place for hiking and searching for endemic species, or to simply sit and enjoy the birds that visit the feeders overlooking the Caribbean Sea. The reserve is known for its incredible feeders for hummingbirds (some endemic), tanagers, guans, and wood-quails. Targets today include the **Santa Marta Foliage-gleaner***, **Santa Marta Antbird***, **Santa Marta Wren***, **Coppery Emerald^**, **Black Hawk-Eagle**, **Lined Quail-Dove**, **Brown Violetear**,

continued on next page...



Santa Marta Mountain-Tanager © Nick Athanas



Steely-vented Hummingbird © Fransesco Veronesi

Keel-billed Toucan, Greenish and Forest Elaenias, Social and Piratic Flycatchers, Rufous-breasted and Rufous-and-white Wrens, Brown-capped Vireo, and Grayish Saltator, Yellow-bellied Seed-eater, and more. During the northern winter months, these foothills harbor a good number of North American breeding migrants, including **Swainson's Thrush, Yellow-throated Vireo, Tennessee, Golden-winged, Cerulean, Blackburnian, and Black-throated Green Warblers, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Summer Tanager.**

Elevation: 5,900ft ~ *Accessibility:* Easy to moderate, rural unpaved roads, hiking trails along the reserve ~ *Temperature:* 60-75°F



Crested Oropendola © Luiz Carlos Rocha

Overnight: El Dorado Lodge

Day 8: Thursday 3/16/2023 Baranquilla

Spend a final morning birding around El Dorado Reserve before starting the descent toward Santa Marta, with birding en route. We'll use the 4x4 Jeeps until we reach Minca, where we'll have lunch and then continue in our bus to Baranquilla with more birding en route. Arrive at our hotel late in the afternoon and check-in. Later we'll get together for our final check-list at the hotel before our farewell dinner.

Elevation: 5,900ft to sea level ~ *Accessibility:* Easy to moderate, rural unpaved roads, hiking trails along the reserve ~ *Temperature:* 60-75°F to 76-90°F

Overnight: Estelar an Alto Prado

Day 9: Friday 3/17/2023 Depart

This morning, check out and head to the airport in Barranquilla for early afternoon flights back to the U.S. Check out is at 1 pm.

LAND PRICE

\$3,725 per person, 10 people travelling
 \$4,120 per person, 8-9 people travelling
 \$4,365 per person, 6-7 people travelling

REGISTER

Reserve your place on this trip here:
www.holbrook.travel/alight-co23
 A \$500 deposit is needed to secure your place.
 or contact Toby Ross
tobeross@gmail.com (206) 552-3834

*endemic to Colombia

^regional endemic – only found in Colombia and neighboring country



Santa Marta Mountains © Ian Sagebarth









Birders © Debbie Jordan



San Lorenzo Ridge © Debbie Jordan

CONSERVATION CONNECTIONS

Your trip to Colombia will support conservation and sustainable development in a number of ways:

-  Employ in-country expert guides during our visit, one of which will be from a local indigenous Wayúu community.
-  Discover how local Wayúu communities are harnessing bird-based tourism as a tool for sustainable development, and in turn how this contributes to conservation.
-  Learn how one of Colombia's leading conservation NGOs, ProAves, is working to save critical habitat in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta region for birds and other wildlife.
-  Donate to the National Audubon Society's Americas Program which develops itineraries, like this one, as part of their Flyway Expeditions project to advance sustainable development in bird hotspots.
-  Support local economies by creating a demand for expert guides, high quality lodging, restaurants, and staff, demonstrating that birds literally mean business.
-  Alight Tours will donate 3% of all profits from this trip to an in-country NGO that works to conserve birds, wildlife and the habitats they depend on.

THE FINE PRINT

Price includes full-time guide, accommodation in standard rooms, meals and non-alcoholic drinks, entrance fees and activities as outlined in this itinerary, private transportation (with A/C), arrival and departure transfers, fees, carbon offset, and donations to the Audubon Society and local conservation NGO's. The price does not include international flight, travel insurance, alcoholic drinks and gratuities.

Cost is based on double occupancy. Single rooms may be available for an additional cost of \$490pp. We will make every effort to match people who request to share with others seeking a roommate. The deadline for **final payment is due December 4, 2022**. Deposits are refundable less \$100 cancellation fee up until the deadline. Cancellation after the deadline results in the forfeit of 100% of the trip fee.

FLIGHTS

Our travel partner has a flight specialist on staff who will be happy to arrange your flights at no additional cost. They are able to negotiate a lower fare using a group rate and when en route can be contacted 24/7 in case flights are cancelled or need to be rescheduled. Occasionally, you may be able to find airfares online that are listed at a lower price. Keep in mind that those rates are based on individual passengers and not your entire group. In general, individual fares lack the flexibility of group airfare and often require immediate purchase.

Please note reservations are not being held at this time. A suggested flight schedule is provided below (all times listed are local).

Date	Departure City	Arrival City	Departure	Arrival
03/09/2023	Seattle	Miami	12:15am	8:53 am
03/09/2023	Miami	Baranquilla, Colombia	10:30am	1:23pm
03/17/2023	Baranquilla, Colombia	Miami	10:04am	1:55pm
03/17/2023	Miami	Seattle	7:30pm	11:15pm

Estimated airfare: \$759.00

Airport Transfers

Transfers between the airport and hotel are included in the program cost for the arrival and departure day only. Private airport transfers and extra hotel nights are available upon request.

THE FINE PRINT continued...

CARBON OFFSETTING

Carbon offsetting is included in the trip price. Our travel partner works with ClimateSafe to offset the carbon emissions created from land and air travel. If you choose to opt out of carbon offsetting, your per person land cost will be reduced by \$45.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

A passport is required for international travel, and many countries require that passports must be valid for at least six months after the date of entry. Certain destinations may require a visa for entry, U.S. citizens can check requirements at travel.state.gov; citizens of other nationalities should check with the appropriate embassy.

This program is presented in partnership with Holbrook Travel an eco-tourism travel company based in Florida.

