



ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

Ecuador Gold Country Endemics



Long-wattled Umbrellabird by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Due to incredibly complex geology and topography, southern Ecuador supports one of the most diverse habitat ranges in the world. Within 200 miles of the Pacific Coast, one can travel from the arid xerophytic habitat, through chocó and semi-deciduous tropical forest, over the continental divide's treeless paramos and down to lush, wet, foothill forests of the eastern Andes. Within these varied,



pristine habitats, the evolution of many fine endemic species has occurred; we will sample distinct habitats in search of these endemics and other specialties. Targets include El Oro and White-breasted Parakeets, El Oro Tapaculo, Watkins's and the fantastic Jocotoco Antpitta, White-headed Brushfinch, Henna-hooded Foliage-gleaner, Elegant Crescentchest, White-tailed Jay, the fabulous Long-wattled Umbrellabird, and much more besides!

Hosting Conservation Partner – Jocotoco Foundation

It's amazing to think about it now. One day in 1998, a group of American and Ecuadorian biologists were birding together amid the cloud forest in Tapichalaca in the province of Zamora Chinchipe, when they heard a strange sound. Almost right away, they knew it was something different; *something new*.



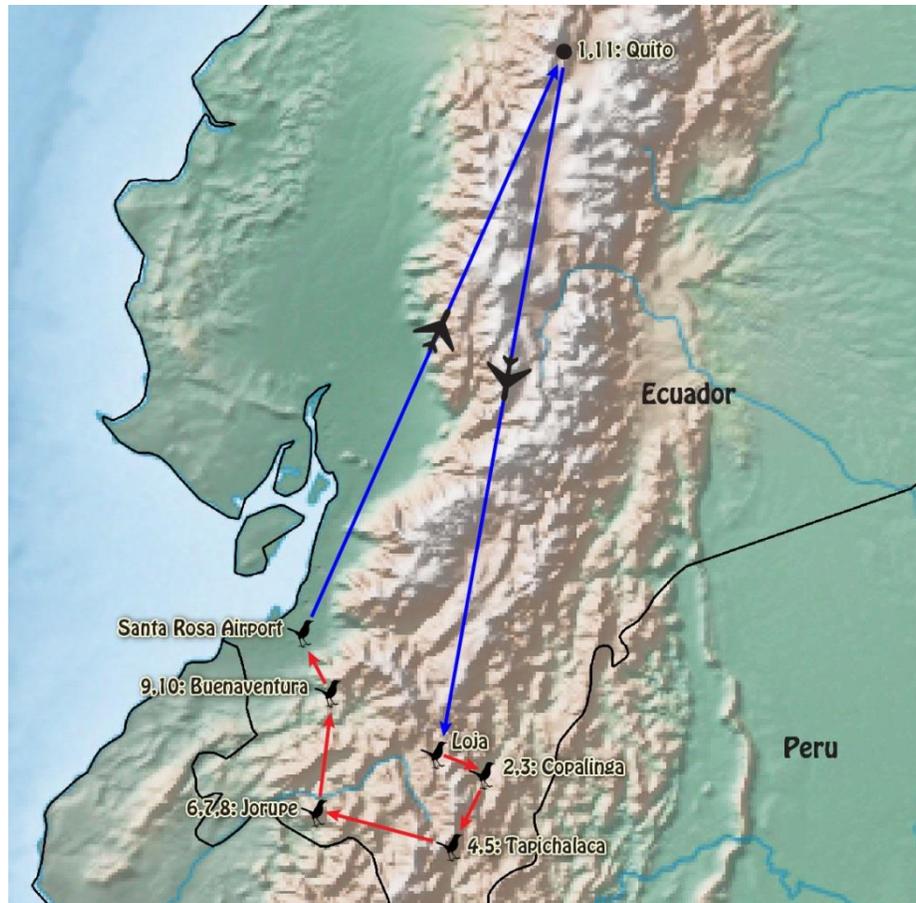
A new bird! Eventually, their eyes confirmed what their ears were telling them, and what is now known as one of Ecuador's star birds was finally seen by ornithologists for the very first time. Local farmers recognized the sound, but had hardly seen the bird, and referred to this phantom of the forest as the 'Jocotoco'. Now known widely as the Jocotoco Antpitta, this charismatic species served as the inspiration to protect Ecuador's most prized biodiversity hotspots. Today, the Jocotoco Foundation owns and manages 40,000 acres of wildlife habitat, protecting no less than 36 globally endangered bird

species and 24 more threatened species. They oversee 11 reserves, and a network of lodges, all built using local materials to harmonize with their environment. This tour features and supports the amazing work of one of the most productive and inspiring conservation organizations in the world. Team Rockjumper is proud to partner with the Jocotoco Foundation for this unique offering, to Ecuador's old gold country in the south.

THE ITINERARY

Day 1	Arrival in Quito, night in UIO
Day 2	Flight from Quito to Loja. Spend the night at Copalinga
Day 3	Copalinga
Day 4	Tapichalaca
Day 5	Tapichalaca
Day 6	Jorupe
Day 7	Jorupe (include visit to Utuana)
Day 8	Jorupe
Day 9	Buenaventura
Day 10	Buenaventura
Day 11	Flight from Santa Rosa to Quito. Departure on late international flight



TOUR MAP**DAILY SUMMARY**

Day 1: Arrivals in Quito. After arriving in Quito, you will be taken to our fine accommodations.

Day 2: Quito - Loja - to Copalinga via Catamayo. Our first morning will see us on a plane flying over the high Andes into the Catamayo Valley near Loja. This will be our first exposure to the driest



Grey Tinamou by Dušan Brinkhuizen

habitat of the entire tour: Tumbes Valley arid scrub. We will have a couple of hours to explore the edge habitats and remaining natural scrub in the valley near the airport before making our way up and over the Continental Divide. Some of the star species we hope to encounter include the cute Croaking Ground Dove, Pacific Pygmy Owl, the localized Tumbes Sparrow, the rare Drab Seedeater, and we will hopefully get to see the spectacular Elegant Crescentchest as well.



The remainder of the day will be spent birding en route to Copalinga. We will probably spend some time along the old Loja-Zamora road, otherwise known as the Via San Francisco. Some fine lower-subtropical species remain here, despite farming along the road. Anything from Coppery-chested Jacamar to Ecuadorian Tyrannulet is possible on this stretch of road, and it's our best shot for both Fasciated Tiger Heron and Cliff Flycatcher, amongst the vast host of flock-following species that we'll hope to encounter. We plan to arrive at Copalinga in time to enjoy some late-afternoon hummingbird viewing, and if we are lucky, the very rare Grey Tinamou that occasionally visits a corn feeder. At dusk, we will try for Blackish Nightjar.



Golden-eared Tanager by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Day 3: Rio Bombuscaro and Copalinga.

Coppery-chested Jacamar, Black-streaked Puffbird, Amazonian Umbrellabird, Andean Cock-of-the-rock... these are just a few of the wonderful birds that we hope to encounter during our full day at Rio Bombuscaro and Copalinga. Our accommodation is perfectly situated 2.5kms from the Rio Bombuscaro entrance to the famed Podocarpus National Park, which provides us with several trails and birding options for the day.

Situated at around 1,100 meters in elevation, the Rio Bombuscaro sector of Podocarpus National Park is one of the few places where the visiting birder can access pristine, untouched, foothill forest. A good



Wire-crested Thorntail by
Dušan Brinkhuizen

host of wildlife (from birds to monkeys) representative of the upper Amazon basin is present, co-mingling with flora and fauna typical of lower subtropical elevations. Most of the prime target birds of this area, however, are restricted to the foothills of the Eastern Andes. The list of hopefuls includes Band-bellied Owl, Chestnut-tipped Toucanet, several species of hummingbirds, White-breasted Parakeet, Lanceolated Monklet, Grey-mantled Wren, Foothill Antwren, Foothill Elaenia, Blue-rumped Manakin, Andean Motmot, and many more.

Copalinga itself hosts many wonderful species of birds, herps and orchids as well. The hummingbird feeders at the bar attract a few species, including the rare Black-throated Brilliant. On the *Verbena* flowers, we might get Violet-headed Hummingbird and the spectacular Wire-crested Thorntail. Spangled Coquette is another star attraction that visits the flowers seasonally.



Day 4: Copalinga to Tapichalaca. Our birding this morning very much depends on the species we got the day before. We shall tailor our early morning plans to search for any species that we may still require. We may continue to bird the lower foothills for a couple of hours; alternatively, we may head into the subtropics to look for other specialties. After our early morning exploits, it will take the better part of the day to arrive at our next destination, which will suit us just fine as birding and sightseeing along the way will be captivating and wonderful.

Day 5: Tapichalaca. The flagship property of the Jocotoco Foundation, and type locality for the namesake Jocotoco Antpitta, is truly an outstanding place. Ranging in elevation from 2,900m (treeline) down to 1,500m (new Parker tract), the Tapichalaca reserve is home to over 400 bird species, including the near-endemic Bearded Guan, White-breasted (White-necked) Parakeet and Orange-banded Flycatcher. Jocotoco and Chestnut-naped Antpittas are regularly fed worms; the near-endemic Chusquea Tapaculo thrives; Golden-plumed Parakeets nest; Andean Potoos and Chestnut-crested Cotingas are occasionally seen; and the reserve, as well as its prize list of birds, continues to grow!



**Lanceolated Monklet by Dušan
Brinkhuizen**

We will devote a full day to accessing as much of a range in elevation as time and weather will allow. The morning focus will be the Jocotoco Antpitta, which can be seen along a trail system ranging above Casa Simpson (main lodge). Some of the other birds we hope to encounter on the trails include Bearded Guan, Grey-breasted Mountain Toucan, Barred and Green-and-black Fruiteaters, various furnariids, Slate-crowned, Rufous and Undulated Antpittas, Chusquea Tapaculo, Orange-banded Flycatcher and an incredible list of flocking tanagers.



**Jocotoco Antpitta by Dušan
Brinkhuizen**

With luck, we might even come across two enigmatic, spectacular birds of the high Andes – the noisy but scarce White-capped Tanager and the rare and elusive Masked Saltator!

The hummingbird feeders and compost heap near the lodge boast some 20+ possible species: Black-throated Tody-Tyrant, Golden-plumed Parakeet and many more can sometimes be seen right from the porch. If time allows, we will visit middle-to-lower elevation where we might come across White-breasted Parakeet or Chestnut-crested Cotinga if we are vigilant. A variety of lower subtropical tanagers and flocking species can be seen, on occasion, right from the main road. If time permits, we will venture even lower, towards Palanda, in hopes of picking up a few Marañon endemics, though a



trip to Northern Peru is necessary to see the whole array.

Day 6: Tapichalaca to Jorupe. Our early morning birding depends on what species we need, and we may decide to hazard a trip up Cerro Toledo for Neblina Metaltail and some high-elevation species. Given the condition of the road and frequent landslides, Cerro Toledo might, however, not be accessible – yet we remain optimistic! We will probably pass by the arid valley of Catamayo again, so if time permits, we can have a second try for specialties like Drab Seedeater, Tumbes Sparrow and Elegant Crescentchest. Upon entering the truly deciduous, dry scrub typical of the Tumbes mountain region, we will search for the handsome Baird’s Flycatcher and the very local White-headed Brushfinch.



White-capped Tanager by Dušan Brinkhuizen

In case we arrive timely at Jocotoco Foundation’s Jorupe Reserve, Amazilia Hummingbird will no doubt entertain us at the feeders while we listen for Pacific Pygmy Owl, Pale-browed Tinamou and Watkin’s Antpitta at dusk. If we’re lucky, the local pair of Spectacled Owls will allow us some close views. On our 2016 tour, we encountered the enigmatic Buff-fronted Owl this very evening, and we will certainly try for it again!



Watkin’s Antpitta by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Day 7: Jorupe. This is the third of four preserves owned and managed by the Jocotoco Foundation that we will visit during the tour. This particular land was purchased to protect a large tract of Tumbes semi-deciduous forest. The Tumbes region is one of the largest areas of particular endemism on the continent, hosting more than 40 species only found in the various arid and montane habitats of far south-west Ecuador and north-west Peru. During our two full days in this area, we will search out many of these localized species.

As we wander through the fine set of forest trails through the open understory, beneath viny tangles and among bloated ceibas over 100 feet tall, we will look and listen for skulkers such as Pale-browed Tinamou, Watkin’s Antpitta and Ochre-bellied Dove. Henna-hooded and Rufous-necked Foliage-gleaners will be teased out of dense brush for close views. The stunning Ecuadorian Trogon is often encountered and viewed at length. Woodpeckers are in evidence, with Guayaquil, Scarlet-backed and Golden-olive representing their family well here. Other enticing species that we will hopefully see include Blackish-headed Spinetail, Speckle-breasted Wren, White-tailed Jay, Black-capped Sparrow,



Grey-breasted Flycatcher, Tumbes Pewee, Black-and-white Tanager (seasonal), and, of course, the vocal and lovely Grey-and-gold Warbler!

Nightbirds are a must at Jorupe and we will take advantage, weather dependent, to search for more owls, including West Peruvian Screech Owl.

Day 8: Utuana. As the warm air off the Pacific rises (despite the Humboldt Current effects that force such arid climates near the coast), clouds form and rain falls over the higher altitudes of the Andes in the Tumbes. However, the scarce amount of rainfall (most precipitation here is in the form of mist and fog) over Utuana is consistent with endemic patterns lower down.



Ecuadorian Trogon by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Here, we will look for some real gems, including the showy Rainbow Starfrontlet, Purple-throated Sunangel, Line-cheeked Spinetail, Loja Tyrannulet and fun and vocal Chapman's Antshrike. In this bamboo-laden habitat, rare birds like Jelski's Chat-Tyrant, Black-crested Tit-Tyrant, Grey-headed



Rainbow Starfrontlet by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Antbird and the recently split Piura Hemispingus persist, all of which are high on the list of our target birds representative of the region. Black-cowled Saltator is yet another fancy Tumbes bird to be found here before we visit a local church in the small town of Sozoranga (no particular religious affiliation necessary!) to delight us at this often reliable colony of Chestnut-collared Swallows. During the remainder of the day, we may spend more time at lower elevations in case we missed any important target species yesterday.

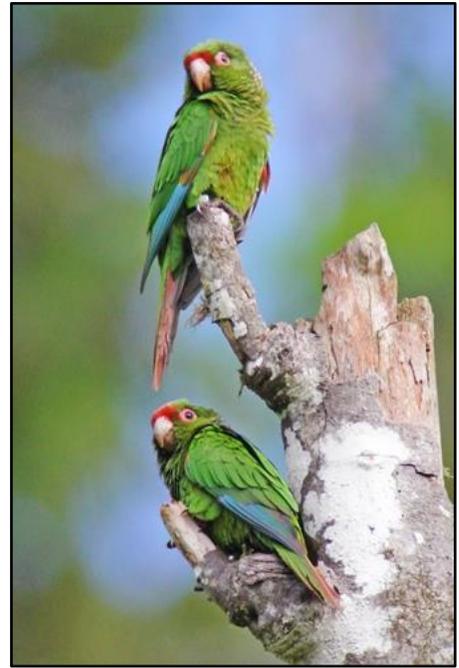
(Please note: In 2016, Utuana was NOT accessible due to a major landslide. However, we did have alternative sites nearby and managed to get most of the above-mentioned targets).

Day 9: Jorupe to Buenaventura via Zapotillo. In the morning, we venture down to the lowest elevation of the Tumbes region in Ecuador. Many specialties are far easier to find here, including West Peruvian Dove, Black-and-white Tanager, Superciliated Wren, Elegant Crescentchest and Baird's Flycatcher. It is also our best chance of finding the impressive and rare Comb Duck. Zapotillo specials include Tumbes Hummingbird and Tumbes Tyrant, but both species can be quite hard to find, depending on the time of year, and their movements are not fully understood. There will be a bit of birding upon nearing Buenaventura, though most of the afternoon will be devoted to travel.

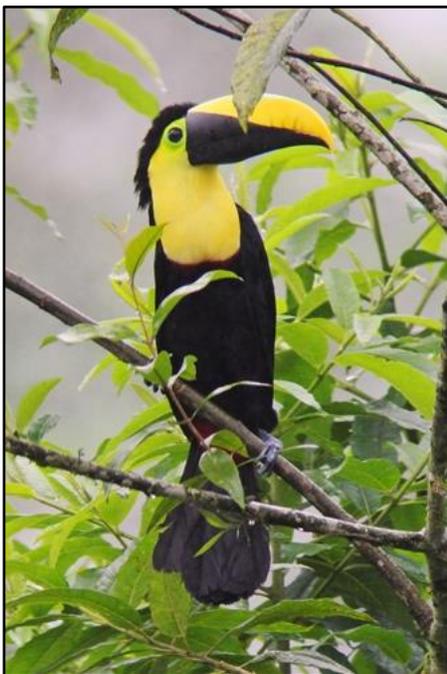


Days 10: Buenaventura. The host of birds this Jocotoco Foundation preserve protects is simply staggering! It was originally set up to protect the few El Oro Parakeets left in existence, and to rehabilitate their numbers in the wild by pioneering nest-box efforts. During the study of the avifauna of this property in its early stages, an entirely new species was discovered, the El Oro (Ecuadorian) Tapaculo! The reason this preserve boasts well over 300 species within its borders is due to the range of elevation it encompasses. An unmaintained private road cuts through the preserve from nearly 1,200m elevation to under 800m. This transects through pristine habitat, allowing the visiting birder easy walking along one of the best forest tracks in the country.

This full day at Buenaventura will be dedicated to birding all elevations of the preserve in search of the wonderful myriad of species available. On top of the easy access to the preserve's forests, the lodge itself has one of the finest and most impressive feeding stations in the world. Not only do they feed hummingbirds of 10 species (by the hundreds!) regularly, but honeycreepers, bananaquits, tanagers, chachalacas, aracarís and even mammals such as Coati's and Agouti's make forays to the banana and sugar water feeders. Best of all, this can all be enjoyed from the comfort of roomy sofas and comfy recliners. Birding in style, at its finest!



El Oro Parakeet by Dušan Brinkhuizen



Choco Toucan by Dušan Brinkhuizen

A quick list of some of the more extraordinary and wonderful birds of Buenaventura includes Fasciated Tiger Heron, Grey-backed, Barred and Grey-lined Hawks, Red-masked Parakeet, Rose-faced Parrot (rare), White-tipped Sicklebill, Crowned Woodnymph (the subspecies here is sometimes split as Emerald-bellied Woodnymph), plus 21 other species of hummers(!), 3 species of motmot, Barred Puffbird, Crimson-rumped Toucanet, Brown-billed Scythebill, Line-cheeked Spinetail, 4 species of antshrike – including Great, 3 species of antbirds – including Esmeraldas Antbird, Ochraceous Attila, Pacific Royal Flycatcher, Scaled Fruiteater, the spectacular Long-wattled Umbrellabird, Club-winged Manakin, Song Wren, Brownish Twistwing, White-throated Spadebill and many, many more!!!

Day 11: Buenaventura. Flight from Santa Rosa to Quito. Today we travel to Santa Rosa Airport for our flight back to Quito. The airport is about an hour away but we might do some early morning birding at Buenaventura if time allows. The



marshes and rice paddies near the airport can be productive as well, so a more detailed plan for today's birding will be tailor-made the evening before, depending on the birds we prefer to look for.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:

Tour prices can be adjusted to accommodate different group sizes in some cases. For more info on pricing, please contact Rockjumper's Conservation Tours Department at: conservationtours@rockjumperbirding.com.

· **Tour Price:**

Based on 4 participants \$4850.00

Based on 8 participants \$3400.00

Based on 10 participants \$3200.00

· **Single Supplement:** \$330

The tour fee includes:

- All meals from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 11;
- Bottled drinking water;
- All lodgings;
- Ground transportation;
- Extra activities mentioned in the itinerary;
- Reserve entrance fees; and
- All guiding services (including tips for local guides and services).

The tour fee does not include:

- Visa fees;
- ANY flights;
- Any drinks;
- Special gratuities; and
- Telephone calls, laundry and other items of a personal nature.

Single Supplement:

The single supplement cost for this tour will be charged if you wish to have single accommodation. If RBL cannot provide you with a rooming partner for these nights although you choose to share, the single supplement will become applicable. We will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that a rooming partner is found if you do wish to share.

IMPORTANT NOTES:



- Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration a small party supplement will have to be charged.
- Furthermore, these costs are subject to unforeseen increases in tour related costs and may have to be adjusted as a result.
- Lastly, we may be forced to change or alter the itinerary at short or no notice due to unforeseen circumstances; please be aware that we will attempt to adhere as close to the original program as possible.

Tipping:

As noted above, gratuities (drivers, hotel staff, restaurants etc.) are included on this tour. However, this does not include your Rockjumper leader/s. If, therefore, you feel that he/they have given you excellent service, it is entirely appropriate to tip them.

Special Notes:

- This tour involves very little arduous walking. If you have any physical limitations or medical conditions of any sort please do let the Rockjumper office know in advance of the tour.
- We will be birding in some remote areas well away from modern medical facilities.
- The hotels fluctuate from a very good standard to quite basic in more remote locations.
- Transport is by small coach or minibus. Road conditions fluctuate from good to rather poor. Some areas are prone to flooding, and may interfere with our trip, though we have minimized this risk by undertaking the tour during the driest part of the season.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE DETAILS:

This tour **does not** include **ANY** airfares. The tour will depart from Quito on Day 1. The tour will conclude in the afternoon UIO Quito-Airport on Day 11.

The above information in respect of arrivals and departures is a guide only. Precise arrival and departure information will be sent to you in your Tour Confirmation package once the tour has been officially confirmed. If you wish to arrive early and/or depart late and would like assistance in this regard, kindly contact the Rockjumper office.

FLIGHTS:

Rockjumper has an in-house travel agent who can assist with booking flights. Ask us for help at conservationtours@rockjumperbirding.com.

IMPORTANT: If you opt to book your own flights, please **DO NOT** book any international flights until you have consulted the Rockjumper office for confirmation on the status of the tour.



Rockjumper Birding Ltd

Labourdonnais Village

Mapou

Mauritius

Tel: (USA & Canada) toll-free: 1-888-990-5552

Email: info@rockjumperbirding.com

Alternative email: rockjumperbirding@yahoo.com

Website: www.rockjumperbirding.com

