

## Northern Peru Itinerary

[Link: Northern Peru](#)

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### Tour Overview

Northern Peru has a suite of birds not found anywhere else in the world, and holds some of the most remarkable species in a land renowned for its amazing avifauna. The Marvelous Spatuletail is surely among the most astonishing birds on earth, the endangered Peruvian Plantcutter is just one highly sought-after target species, and the Long-whiskered Owllet is simply astounding. And the list goes on - inca-finches, Marañon Thrush, Marañon Crescentchest, spinetails, softtails, lots of tanagers, foliage-gleaners, woodcreepers, ovenbirds, lots of Tumbesian specialties, and many endemics.

At dusk we look for White-throated Screech-Owl, Cinnamon Screech-Owl and Lyre-tailed Nightjar. Near Tarapoto, Wattled Guan, Orange-breasted Falcon, Bluish-fronted Jacamar, Gilded Barbet, Red-stained Woodpecker, White-fronted Tyrannulet, Dotted Tanager, Plumbeous Euphonia, White-tipped Swift, Koepke's Hermit and gaudy birds such as Curl-crested Aracari and Andean Cock-of-the-rock occur.

Join Hector for a northern Peru birding tour to these amazingly diverse areas ranging from arid scrub and desert, through tropical thorn-forest and deciduous forest, to montane cloud forest and inter-mountain scrub, one of the richest and most threatened wildlife areas on earth.

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### Itinerary

#### Day 1 - Arrival in Lima

Our Northern Peru birding tour starts in the evening at our hotel near the Jorge Chavez International Airport near Lima with a Welcome dinner. Those arriving earlier will have a chance to catch up with common and widespread lowland birds - Southern House Wren, Pacific and Eared Doves, Blue-gray Tanager, Bananaquit, Blue-and-white Swallow, American Kestrel, Tropical Kingbird, Rufous-collared Sparrow, and perhaps most intriguing - the two morphs of Vermilion Flycatcher, the usual and superb red morph and the odd and highly local black morph. People arriving late can catch up with the group in the morning. Night near Lima airport.

## **Day 2 - Lima to Chiclayo and Bosque de Pomac**

We take an early flight to Chiclayo and drive to the reserve of Bosque de Pomac, perhaps encountering Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle, Savanna Hawk, Pacific Parrotlet, Short-tailed Field-Tyrant, Parrot-billed Seedeater and Peruvian Meadowlark on the way. At Pomac, we come to grips with several common Tumbesian endemics along with threatened species - Peruvian Plantcutter and Rufous Flycatcher. Bosque de Pomac is a reserve of 6000 ha that protects archeological sites such as Batán Grande, and in so doing has also saved a considerable amount of Prosopis (Mesquite) woodland. Species that occur here include Necklaced Spinetail, Superciliated Wren, Cinereous Finch, Scarlet-backed Woodpecker, Gray-and-white Tyrannulet, Peruvian Pygmy-Owl, Tumbes Tyrannulet (split from Mouse-colored Tyrannulet), Pacific Hornero, Fasciated Wren, Long-tailed Mockingbird and Saffron Finch. Other interesting birds include White-edge Oriole and Collared Antshrike, while cliffs nearby hold Black-faced Ibis and riverside vegetation is home to Tumbes Swallow. Night in Salas

## **Day 3 - Quebrado Frejolillo**

We spend all day at Quebrada Frejolillo, about 1 hr 40 min from Salas. Quebrada Frejolillo is probably the best place to see White-winged Guan in the wild and we make a special effort to find this extremely rare species. The ravine (quebrada) and the road leading to it hold a number of other elusive species such as Pale-browed Tinamou, Red-masked Parakeet, Peruvian Screech-Owl, Elegant Crescentchest, Gray-breasted Flycatcher and Tumbes Tyrant. Other possible species here are Short-tailed Woodstar, Guayaquil Woodpecker, Baird's Flycatcher, Plumbeous-backed Thrush, Gray-and-gold Warbler and Tumbes Sparrow, among others. Night in Salas.

## **Day 4 - Abra Porculla**

An early start today, as we drive towards Jaen, birding en route in the deciduous forests of the western Andes near the Abra Porculla pass. The drive takes us to 2100 m elevation (make sure you have a sweater or jacket handy), and then we descend to the warm Marañón Valley. The Porculla Pass is home to the endemic Piura Chat-Tyrant, as well as Porculla Hermit, Pallid Dove, Chestnut-crowned Antpitta, Rufous-necked Foliage-gleaner, Line-cheeked Spinetail, Chapman's Antshrike, Three-banded Warbler, Black-cowled Saltator, and White-winged and Bay-crowned Brush-Finches. Open country birds include Harris's Hawk and Northern Crested Caracara. With luck, we'll find Marañón Crescentchest and other Marañón specialties. We also stop at "km 70" about an hour before Jaen to look for Yellow-faced Parrotlet, and later we will search for Little Inca-Finch near Jaen. Night in Jaen.

## **Day 5 - Tamborapa and Huembo hummer feeders**

Depending on what we have found up to today, we may bird around Jaen at "Fundo Gotas de Agua", looking for Marañón goodies which we may have missed, such as Little Inca-Finch, Marañón Gnatcatcher, as well as perhaps Purple-throated Sunangel, Purple-collared Woodstar, Three-striped and Russet-crowned Warblers, Green-tailed Trainbearer, Tawny-rumped Tyrannulet, Sierran Elaenia, Streak-necked Flycatcher, Smoke-colored Pewee, flowerpiercers, and Green-throated, Silver-backed and Blue-capped Tanagers. Near the village of Pomacochas at the Huembo Reserve we spend time in search of the Marvelous Spatuletail. The male is perhaps the world's most spectacular hummingbird, with long tail feathers curved back around the body and ending in "spatulas". This amazing hummingbird is confined to the humid montane forests on the west slope of the eastern Andes; we hope to find a male of this legendary species, although a female or young male would be quite welcome! This area will also produce many other hummingbirds. Night in Pomacochas.

## **Days 6 - 8 - Abra Patricia**

Today we head to the famous Abra Patricia area, located in one of the loveliest areas of Peru's northern Andes, for a three night stay. We spend our days exploring the Abra Patricia area. This is a very bird-rich region; over 400 species have been recorded in this area. Stunted forests here, amidst awe-inspiring scenery, support the mysterious and enigmatic Long-whiskered Owllet, known along the appropriately named "Owlet Trail", the little-known Ochre-fronted Antpitta, the stunning Royal Sunangel, Johnson's and Black-throated Tody-Tyrants, Undulated Antpitta, the highly localized Cinnamon-breasted Tody-Tyrant, Andean Solitaire, Bar-winged Wood-Wren and the splendid White-capped Tanager. Multi-species flocks hold a multitude of tanagers including the endemic Yellow-scarfed Tanager, several bush-tanagers, mountain-tanagers, hemispinguses and flowerpiercers, along with antbirds, woodcreepers, fruiteaters, becards, flycatchers, vireos and warblers. Hummingbirds are well represented, with Bronzy Inca, Emerald-bellied Puffleg, Chestnut-breasted Coronet and Long-tailed Sylph. At dusk we look for White-throated Screech-Owl, Rufescent Screech-Owl and Lyre-tailed Nightjar. Nights at Abra Patricia Biological Station.

## **Day 9 - Afluente and onward to Tarapoto**

Today we continue birding the Abra Patricia area, driving down the road to the tiny settlement of Afluente. The road passes through beautiful upper tropical forests, which the late Ted Parker first explored, locating yet another set of new and exciting birds. Among the most noteworthy specialties are the tiny Speckle-chested Piculet and the canopy-dwelling Ash-throated Antwren, until recently only known from outlying mountain ridges above Jesus del Monte (further east), but in 1999 this highly localized species was also found here. We have excellent chances of seeing Andean Cock-of-the-Rock and Ecuadorian Piedtail, a lek-forming hummingbird reaching the southernmost limit of its range. The endemic Huallaga (or Black-bellied) Tanager is fairly common and Yellow-throated and Ashy-throated Bush-Tanagers make their rounds in noisy family parties. At day's end, our tanager list may include Orange-eared, Paradise, Green-and-gold, Spotted, Golden, Blue-necked, Bay-headed, White-winged and Magpie Tanagers, whilst with a bit of luck we will encounter the stunning Vermilion Tanager. Chestnut-breasted Wrens are also here, along with Black-billed Treehunter, Versicolored Barbet, Yellow-breasted Antwren, Gray-mantled Wren and the easily overlooked Equatorial Graytail, a warbler-like member of the Furnariidae here also at the southern extremity of its range. Other birds include various pigeons, parakeets and parrots, toucans, woodpeckers, woodcreepers, foliage-gleaners, antbirds, tyrannulets, euphonias, oropendolas and thrushes. Carrying on, we head for Tarapoto, making a few stops in cleared areas for open country and second growth species such as Striated Heron, Roadside Hawk, Wattled Jacana, Cobalt-winged Parakeet, Fork-tailed Palm-Swift, Ringed Kingfisher, Brown-mandibled Aracari, Little Woodpecker, Rufous-fronted Thornbird, Barred Antshrike, Yellow-cheeked Becard, Black-capped Donacobius, Pale-breasted and Black-billed Thrushes, Crested Oropendola, Yellow-rumped Cacique, Chestnut-vented Conebill, Burnished-buff and Black-faced Tanagers, and Black-billed and Lesser Seed-Finches. Night in Tarapoto.

## **Day 10 - Túnel, Juan Guerra; transfer to Moyobamba**

We take the recently paved "tunnel road" northeast of Tarapoto and head to the high forested ridge at Cerro Escalera. We stop at the highest point, at the 100 metre 'Tunnel' which cuts through the top part of the 900 metre mountain, and the ACONABICHK Center. This is cloud forest habitat where humid tropical forest and foothill species mingle, with a very different avifauna from the dry forest down below; Wattleed Guan, White Hawk, Yellow-crested, Yellow-bellied and Dotted Tanagers, Smoky-brown and Red-stained Woodpeckers, Ruddy Foliage-Gleaner, Slaty-capped Shrike-Vireo, Blackish Pewee, Dusky-chested and Cliff Flycatchers, Blue-crowned Manakin, Orange-breasted Falcon, Gilded Barbet, Lanceolated Monklet, White-fronted Tyrannulet, Carmiol's Tanager, Plumbeous Euphonia and Short-billed Honeycreeper. A cliff face is home to a nesting colony of White-tipped Swifts, Koepke's Hermit visits Heliconia flowers nearby, and gaudy birds such as Curl-crested Aracaris and Andean Cocks-of-the-rock may be feeding in fruiting trees along the road. We then drive back to Tarapoto and head south of the city to Juan Guerra district, past roadside wetlands to dry forest, where we have a chance at many new species: White-browed Antbird, Northern Slaty Antshrike, Blue-crowned Trogon, Mishana Tyrannulet, Ashy-headed Greenlet, Comb Duck, Pied Lapwing, Sand-coloured Nighthawk, Stripe-necked Tody-Tyrant, White-bellied Pygmy-Tyrant, Hook-billed Kite, Rufous Casiornis, Chestnut-throated Spinetail, Great Antshrike, Green and Violaceous Jays, Yellow-tufted Woodpecker, Brown-crested Flycatcher, Lettered Aracari, Chestnut-crowned Puffbird, Grey-capped Flycatcher and Laughing Falcon. Leaving Tarapoto, we head west towards Moyobamba, stopping at a spot for Oilbirds. Night in Moyobamba.

## **Day 11 - Morro de Calzada, Arenas Blancas, and Abra Patricia**

Our first destination today is Morro de Calzada, a small reserve centered on an isolated hill above flat plains around Rioja and Moyobamba. The general area is a mosaic of evergreen forest, open grasslands interspersed with trees and second growth scrub, and is a good location for range-restricted or patchily distributed species such as Cinereous-breasted and Dark-breasted Spinetails, Great-billed Seedfinch, Pearly-vented and Buff-throated Tody-Tyrants, Sooty-headed and Mishana Tyrannulets, Fiery-capped Manakin, the still undescribed subspecies of Striped Manakin, and Red-shouldered Tanager. Mammals include Saddle-backed Tamarins. Leaving Morro de Calzada, we head for a new private conservation site, Arena Blanca Reserve, an area of humid tropical montane forest and close to Rio Serranoyacu. Here are a plethora of hummingbirds - Blue-fronted and Green-fronted Lancebills, Green, Reddish and Black-throated Hermits, Napo and Gray-breasted Sabrewings, the stunning Rufous-crested Coquette, White-bellied Woodstar, Wire-crested Thorntail, Long-billed Starthroat, Many-spotted Hummingbird, Sapphire-spangled Emerald, Golden-tailed Sapphire, Fork-tailed Woodnymph - in total there have been 22 species of hummingbirds recorded here. Other goodies include Little and Cinereous Tinamous, Grey-necked Wood-Rail, Orange-billed Sparrow, Rufous-breasted Wood-Quail, Bluish-fronted Jacamar, Montane Woodcreeper, Fiery-throated Fruiteater, Varzea Thrush and Peruvian Warbling-Antbird. Grasslands hold Wedge-tailed Grass-Finch and Chestnut-bellied Seedeater. We then head to Abra Patricia for the night.

## **Day 12 - Abra Patricia to Leymebamba**

We spend the morning birding around Abra Patricia, and then head off to Leymebamba, visiting a known day roost for Koepke's Screech-Owl. En route we could encounter Fasciated Tiger-Heron, Torrent Duck, Spot-throated Hummingbird, Torrent Tyrannulet, White-capped Dipper, Sword-billed Hummingbird, Spectacled Whitestart, Amazon Kingfisher, Mitred Parakeet, Hepatic Tanager, Black-necked Woodpecker, Rainbow Starfrontlet and with luck Band-winged Nightjar. Night in Leymebamba

### **Day 13 - Leymebamba, Abra Barro Negro, and transfer to Celendin**

We leave Leymebamba and drive up to Abra Barro Negro, a high pass at 3600 m, stopping for high altitude species, before dropping down into the Marañon Canyon looking for Buff-bridled Inca-Finch and Yellow-faced Parrotlet, with a chance for Peruvian Pigeon and Marañon Thrush. Other species today include Gray-winged Inca-Finch, Moustached Flowerpiercer, White-chinned Thistletail, Tufted Tit-Tyrant, Rufous Antpitta, Brown-backed Chat-Tyrant, Shining Sunbeam, Tyrian and Coppery Metaltails, Great Sapphirewing, Plumbeous Sierra-Finch, Plain-coloured Seedeater, Scarlet-fronted Parakeet, Peruvian Pygmy Owl, Bare-faced Ground-Dove and Aplomado Falcon. We then continue on to Celendin for the night.

### **Day 14 - Transfer to Cajamarca**

We leave Celendin and bird along the road, stopping at Cruz Conga. Goodies today include White-tailed Shrike-Tyrant, "Cajamarca" race of Rufous Antpitta, Rufous-webbed Bush-Tyrant, Rufous-eared Brush-Finch, Black-crested Warbler, Jelski's and White-browed Chat-Tyrants, Baron's Spinetail, Golden-billed Saltator and Black-crested Tit-Tyrant. Night at Cajamarca.

### **Day 15 - San Marcos, Rio Chonta: transfer to Lima**

We drive to San Marcos to look for Great Spinetail and White-winged Black Tyrant, then continue to Rio Chonta for Grey-bellied Comet, Rusty-crowned Tit-Spinetail, Andean Swift and White-winged Cinclodes, Late afternoon flight to Lima. Your international flight home will likely leave just after midnight. You also have the option to stay at the airport hotel and depart the next day at an additional charge.

### **Day 16 - Departure**

Our Northern Peru birding tour ends today in the very early morning with flights out of Lima typically leaving just after midnight.

## **What to Expect**

Our accommodations range from good to basic but perfectly adequate on our Northern Peru birding tour. In the Tumbes region, weather will be variable. At low and middle elevations days are usually warm to hot, sunny and likely humid, although it can be cool and overcast. At higher altitudes conditions range from cool to cold, especially in the early morning. Rain can be expected at times. Layers and a windbreaker would be the solution in the mountains. At all altitudes, we should remember to have adequate protection from the sun. Walking effort is mostly moderate, with some optional harder walks including the walk to see the Marvelous Spatuletail. On some occasions we go spotlighting at night. Trails may be muddy; waterproof footwear is recommended. In the evening, we enjoy good meals provided by the various lodges' dining facility or at the hotel restaurant. At this time we discuss the day's activities and review the list of birds and wildlife we have encountered. We outline the events for the next day, in preparation for another round of excitement and discovery.

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# What's Included

## **Tour Price Includes**

- All accommodations and meals
- Includes 2 flights: Lima - Chiclayo, Cajamarca - Lima
- Ground Transportation
- Guides - EET guide plus local guide with 4 - 12 participants
- Park entry/tour fees
- Gratuities

## **Tour Price Does Not Include**

- Flights to and from Lima
  - Travel Insurance
  - Items of a personal nature
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