



VICTOR EMANUEL NATURE TOURS

ITINERARY

AMAZON RIVER CRUISE

A BIRDING AND NATURAL HISTORY ODYSSEY

ABOARD *Zafiro*

JANUARY 22 – FEBRUARY 1, 2026

PRE-CRUISE TRIP:
THE BIRDS OF THE NORTHERN KINGDOMS OF PERU
JANUARY 16 – 23, 2026

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The Amazon region conjures many images, but it is, above all, a realm of superlatives. The centerpiece of this vast region is the Amazon River itself, the largest river in the world. In fact, many of its tributaries rival or exceed the size of other great rivers of the world. The



Hoatzin © David Ascanio

Amazonian region also boasts the highest diversity of both birds and plants anywhere in the world. The very word “Amazon” brings to mind images of broad, sinuous rivers, tree-lined banks, strange animals, bright butterflies, torrential rains, and glorious sunsets. Along the rivers one may see macaws and parrots and oropendolas flying overhead, ponderous Horned Screamers rising from stream banks and exotic wildlife that includes hoatzins, umbrellabirds, sloths, fresh-water (river) dolphins, and primates coexisting in this untamed area.

We offer this relatively short excursion to the Amazon for those who want a full Amazonian rainforest and river experience without sacrificing comfort. We believe, in fact, that the classically styled, triple-deck riverboat

we're using offers visitors the utmost in comfort, security and safety while still permitting us to visit remote and relatively unspoiled regions in Amazonia. The ship's spacious cabins are individually climate-controlled, air-conditioned, and include private bathrooms, hot-water showers, laundry service, and bottled water available at all times.



In addition to the wildlife experience, we will offer a morning visit to a local community, where participants will learn about the challenges and lifestyle of the people living in this riverine habitat. Visitors can also be assured of having waterproof ponchos, walking sticks, and extra thick boat cushions as needed for off-boat excursions. The ship features excellent food and an open-air upper deck for great wildlife viewing by day and stargazing by night. The list of amenities offered by the ship and its attendant crew is impressive. Additionally, stable, flat-bottomed boats powered by exceptionally quiet engines permit intimate exploration of small streams and lakes with

ease and comfort, and a minimum of noise intrusion.

The mobility of our ship and its excursion boats will allow us to explore different habitats and streams each morning and afternoon and provide exceptional opportunities to see birds and wildlife. Some birds will be common, widespread Amazonian species such as Black-collared Hawk, Black-fronted Nunbird, Oriole Blackbird, Yellow-rumped Cacique, and Russet-backed Oropendola. Others will be more local species such as Hoatzin, Black-tailed Antbird and Festive Parrot. We will surely explore some of the unique sedimentary river islands allowing views of river specialists such as Red-and-white, white-bellied and Parker's Spinetails as well as Black-and-white Antbird and Lesser Wagtail-Tyrant. During the course of the trip, we'll explore small wooded streams, oxbow lakes, seasonally flooded forest (várzea or igapó), and flooded river islands. Depending on the water level, during the latter part of the trip, we'll spend some time walking in high ground forest. Here or nearby, we may find a fruiting tree frequented by colorful araçaris, tanagers, and honeycreepers, or be surprised with the presence of an army ant swarm with its attendant antbirds and woodcreepers.

Some of the spectacular species and memorable moments may include a brilliant blue Plum-throated Cotinga perched in a treetop, a pair of Blue-and-yellow Macaws winging overhead, a swirling of hundreds of White-winged Parakeets landing on tall cane to roost, or a White-eared Jacamar in the morning sun—it is hard to predict which of these or many other experiences will delight you the most. We'll also fill some spare shipboard time with discussions and explanations of Amazonian natural history, as well as recaps of daily excursions in the evenings. We are confident that at the end of this extraordinary cruise you will have a greater appreciation and understanding of the Amazon region and the myriad creatures that make it the most complex ecosystem anywhere on earth.

Finally, many people harbor misgivings about visiting the Amazon, fearing excessive heat and humidity, torrential rain, hordes of mosquitoes or other insects. While it is indeed possible to experience such things, most visitors are pleasantly surprised at how comfortable travel can be even in the heart of Amazonia.



Masked Crimson Tanager © David Ascanio

The airy, breezy ship and air-conditioned cabins mitigate the effects of even the hottest days, and visitors soon discover that insects and mosquitoes, far from being the torment they are imagined, are restricted or no problem at all. This trip, which is based aboard a relatively small river boat offers perhaps the most comfortable and luxurious way

possible to explore the Amazon while still retaining the ability to visit remote regions. Visitors can be assured of a shipboard staff and crew that will respond to your every need; exciting exploratory trips on mornings, afternoons, and evenings; and some of the best birding and wildlife viewing in the Amazon.

Those interested in maximizing their time in Peru are encouraged to join our optional Northern Kingdoms of Peru pre-trip, traveling the territory of the former Moche and Chimu kingdoms which will truly be an epic adventure.

January 22, Day 1: Arrive Lima. You should plan your flights to arrive Lima, Peru (Jorge Chávez Lima-Callao International Airport, airport code LIM) any time today. After clearing immigration and customs you will be transferred to your hotel. Most flights from the United States arrive sometime late evening. When making your airline reservations, bear in mind that you may want to arrive as early as possible in the evening as we are offering a trip on Day 2 to a wetland near Lima that is sure to have many birds, departing from the hotel fairly early.

If your time permits, we recommend arriving a day early in order to rest and to allow for flight delays that are sometimes associated with winter weather in your home areas. Please be aware that those participants who are delayed may risk missing the flight on Day 3 from Lima to Iquitos and would then be in jeopardy of arriving at the pier after ship has departed.

NIGHT: Swissotel, Lima

January 23, Day 2: Lima including Pantanos de Villa Marshes and Pucusana Fishing Village. We will meet as a group for the first time this morning at 6:50 a.m. for our trip southward toward the picturesque coast of Pucusana. We will have an opportunity to see some fine coastal marshes, a good cross-section of the stark Atacama Desert of western Peru and many of the seabirds typical of the cold, rich waters of the Humboldt Current just offshore. Today we should see about 35 to 50 species of birds, most of which will not be seen elsewhere on this trip. These may include Humboldt Penguin (views depend upon ocean conditions); White-tufted and Great grebes; Peruvian Pelican; Peruvian Booby; Neotropic and Guanay cormorants; several egrets and herons; Least Bittern (hard to find); Puna Ibis (unpredictable); White-cheeked Pintail; Cinnamon Teal; Harris's Hawk; Plumbeous Rail; Slate-colored Coot (with several different frontal shield colors); Common Moorhen; Peruvian Thick-knee (now scarce); Belcher's (Band-tailed), Gray-hooded, Kelp, and Gray gulls as well as migrant Franklin's Gull (Oct-March only); Inca Tern; West Peruvian Dove; Croaking Ground-Dove; Amazilia Hummingbird; Wren-like Rushbird; Surf Cinclodes; Many-colored Rush-Tyrant; Vermilion Flycatcher (black morph in Lima, normal red ones along the coast); Long-tailed Mockingbird; Peruvian Red-breasted Meadowlark; and Grassland Yellow-Finch. We should be back by late afternoon and will dine in the hotel this evening.

NIGHT: Swissotel, Lima

January 24, Day 3: Lima to Iquitos, Peru. Embarkation. Our flight to Iquitos is currently scheduled for a morning departure from Lima and our activities once we reach Iquitos will depend, in large part, upon the amount of time we have available. If our flight is early there may be some time available for birding along the promenade and/or a short drive through the food market area of Iquitos before lunch. Our afternoon activities will be determined by when the ship is outfitted and when we will be permitted to board, but we are sure to have some time to get settled in and have a little time for a short outing.



Large-billed Tern © David Ascanio

At the waterfront at Iquitos, we should see many common and more widespread birds along the river. These species should include Cocoi and Striated herons, Great and Snowy egrets, Turkey and Lesser Yellow-headed vultures, Plumbeous Kite, Roadside Hawk, Yellow-headed Caracara, Large-billed Tern and Oriole Blackbird. If time permits, our late afternoon exploration of the Amazon will begin with a short visit to a river island or young river edge vegetation. All of the river islands should be flooded, or mostly so, at this time of year, which makes access to island habitats by boat relatively easy. There are more than twenty species of river island bird specialists here, almost all of which occur in one of four or five island vegetation types: tall grass (*Gynerium* spp.); willow (*Salix*) and *Tessaria*; *Cecropia* and *Heliconia* spp; and mixed *Ficus* trees.

River islands are also used by forest or migrant species to roost, such as Short-tailed Parrot; Tui and White-winged Oarakeets; Yellow-rumped Cacique, Eastern Kingbird and Barn Swallows. But the importance to preserve this habitat is due to the fact that other species make their entire life there, including Olive-spotted Hummingbird; Lesser Hornero (sand bars); White-bellied, Parker's and Castelnau's Antshrike (mainly older islands); Red-and-white spinetails; Leaden Antwren; Black-and-white Antbird; Brownish Elaenia; River Tyrannulet; Lesser Wagtail-Tyrant; Riverside Tyrant; and Pearly-breasted Conebill. Other species we could see on or in the vicinity of river islands include Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture; Wattled Jacana; Greater and



Spectacled Owl © David Ascanio

Smooth-billed anis; Ringed and Amazon kingfishers; Spotted Tody-Flycatcher; Great Kiskadee; Brown-chested and Gray-breasted martins; White-winged and Southern Rough-winged swallows; Orange-headed, Blue-gray, and Silver-beaked tanagers; Grayish Saltator; Red-capped Cardinal; Russet-backed Oropendola; Yellow-hooded blackbird; Shiny Cowbird; Lesson's, Chestnut-bellied, and Caquetá seedeaters.

NIGHT: *Zafiro*, Amazon River

January 25, Day 4: Early morning birding Amazon tributaries near the junction of the Ríos Marañon and Ucayali. We will be off the ship early for exploration of river island and *várzea* (floodplain) habitat, most likely in the vicinity of the Quebrada Tahuayo, located in the Amazon River. A sampling of birds this morning could include most of the species mentioned yesterday as well as Gray-headed and Slender-billed kites; Black-collared and Slate-colored hawks; Pale-vented Pigeon; Dusky-headed, White-eyed, and Cobalt-winged parakeets; Greater Ani; Black-tailed Trogon; Green Kingfisher; Black-fronted Nunbird; White-eared Jacamar; Chestnut-eared Araçari; Crimson-crested Woodpecker; Pale-legged Hornero; Striped and Straight-billed woodcreepers; Barred Antshrike; White-headed Marsh-Tyrant; Short-crested Flycatcher; Masked Tityra; Bare-necked Fruitcrow; Black-capped Donacobius; Buff-breasted Wren; Black-billed Thrush; Chivi Vireo (split-off the Red-eyed Vireo); Hooded and Turquoise tanagers; Thick-billed and Purple-throated euphonias; Silver-beaked and Masked Crimson tanagers; Yellow-rumped Cacique; and Russet-backed Oropendola. There is also a good possibility of seeing Pink River Dolphins and perhaps even Gray River Dolphins. We should be back aboard the ship in the mid-morning for a break and will resume our field trip until the late morning.

After lunch, we will continue upriver towards the Rio Ucayali, and we will be traveling along the border of the vast Pacaya-Samiria Reserve. We will keep our eyes opened checking the riverbanks for raptors, egrets, herons and the unique Drab Water Tyrant. In the afternoon, we will explore a channel with secondary growth that eventually ends in an oxbow lake, typical of the floodplains, and will be exposed to suitable habitat for Castelnau's Antshrike, Yellow-chinned Spinetail (patchily distributed in the Amazon), Wattled Jacana and the shy Bay (Pale-billed) Hornero.

NIGHT: *Zafiro*, Ucayali River

January **26-28, Days 5-7: Yarapa and Yanallpa / Río Ucayali.**

During these two days, we will explore small streams, rivers, riverbanks and maybe even a river island or two as we gradually make our way up the Río Ucayali. Along relatively narrow and heavily forested streams, we should continue to see species typical of *várzea* and *igapó* forest, although the taller forest and narrower channels of some creeks here should give us opportunities to add many new species each day. A sampling could include almost any of the species mentioned previously, as well as Horned Screamer; Black Caracara; Hoatzin; Muscovy Duck; Ruddy Pigeon; Gray-fronted Dove; Mealy and Festive parrots; Sand-colored Nighthawk; Short-tailed Swift; Glittering-throated Emerald; Scarlet-crowned and Lemon-throated barbets; Spotted Puffbird; Cream-colored Woodpecker; Dark-breasted Spinetail; Long-billed Woodcreeper; Great and Black-crested antshrikes; Amazonian Streaked-Antwren; Plumbeous, Band-tailed, and Silvered antbirds; Black-spotted Bare-eye; Plum-throated Cotinga; Varzea Schiffornis; Yellow-crowned Tyrannulet; Forest Elaenia; Social Flycatcher; and Velvet-fronted Grackle.



Lemon-throated Barbet © David Ascanio



Night Monkeys © David Ascanio

On our second day, as we continue exploring up the Río Ucayali, we will encounter an increasing number of black water rivers and lakes such as Yanallpa creek. On past trips we have recorded Wattled Curassow, Crested Eagle, Tiny Hawk, Collared Forest-Falcon and other large birds, and their presence suggests that the wildlife here is not persecuted. Even if we do not find any of these species (all rare), we are sure to find many other interesting birds. During mid-day and early afternoon, we will reposition the ship again, moving further upriver, perhaps as far as the mouth of Zapote Creek. A small native community is located a short distance up the Zapote and the area beyond their village is designated as a reserve where they do not hunt. Consequently, this area also is particularly good for primates, raptors and other large birds. If we reach Zapote Creek, we'll depart in our skiffs for a late afternoon excursion up this beautiful stream, with the possibility of remaining out until after dark, before returning for dinner. On these evening excursions, we often see Common or Great potoos, and sometimes a Tropical Screech-Owl, or Common Pauraque or Ladder-tailed Nightjar, but there also is the possibility of finding frogs, a small caiman, various kinds of insects, and

occasionally even a snake with our spotlights. And, just being out enjoying the many exotic night sounds, and the star-filled sky is sure to be memorable.

NIGHTS: *Zafiro*, Ucayali River

January 29, Day 8: Dorado and/or Zapote Creek. If we were able to anchor near Zapote Creek overnight, we'll likely be out along this stream early this morning, or on another similar tributary of the Ucayali where we will continue to explore the area from small boats. Because the upper part of this river is a particularly wild area, we'll get an early start. This is a good region for raptors as well as parrots and parakeets, and we may see pairs or families of Blue-and-yellow Macaws, and even Scarlet Macaws along the river. In the upper portions of Zapote Creek, we have had good success with raptors, and have, on past tours, recorded both Harpy Eagle and Crested Eagle here, as well Gray-headed Kite, Hook-billed Kite, Slender-billed Kite, Buckley's Forest-Falcon (very rare) and more common species such as Black-collared Hawk and Slate-colored Hawk. A sample of other birds here might include almost any of the species mentioned on days 3 and 4, as well as Capped Heron, Rufescent Tiger-Heron, Green Ibis, Great Black-Hawk, Speckled Chachalaca, Sungrebe, Sunbittern (scarce), Chestnut-fronted Macaw, Black-throated Mango, up to five species of kingfishers, Forest and Yellow-crowned elaenias, Cinnamon and White-eyed (Dull-capped) attilas, Lesser Kiskadee, and Gray-capped Flycatcher. This is also an excellent area for primates and among the possibilities are Red Howler Monkey, Night Monkey, Squirrel Monkey, Saddle-backed Tamarin, Dusky Titi-Monkey, Brown capuchin, and perhaps even the unusual Monk Saki (scarce and retiring).



Sungrebe (singing) © David Ascanio

Late morning will find us back aboard our ship as we prepare to retrace our route back down the Río Ucayali. We will reposition ourselves downriver near the junction of the Marañon and weigh anchor for the evening. Time permitted we will make a short excursion by boat to a nearby river island or stream.

NIGHT: *Zafiro*, Marañon River

January 30, Day 9: Yarapa and San José de Paranapura / Iquitos creek. We will be spending the morning



Ladder-tailed Nightjar © David Ascanio

exploring slowly up one of the hundreds of small creeks and tributaries that feed the main Ucayali rivers here. Continuing some of the activities that we began our first afternoon in the channel of the Amazon, we will be looking for a number of river island bird specialist species that live almost exclusively in the various early successional stage vegetation on islands. River islands vary enormously in size, in age, and in vegetation structure but all of them harbor interesting arrays of birds that are generally fairly easy to see. Many of the species possible this morning have already been mentioned previously under the list for day two.

Because of the ever-changing nature of the islands from one flood season to another, one never knows what combinations of birds to expect, or even if a particular island has survived the previous high-water seasons. Typically, on these islands, we may expect from youngest vegetation to oldest: 1) sand bars, often with low colonizing grass; 2) marshes and tall grass; 3) small shrubby trees known as *Tessaria* (Asteraceae family) which attract birds that forage for insects on its leaves; 4) willows (*Salix*); 5) *Cecropia* of various ages; 6) large *Ficus* (figs); and 7) on the oldest islands a more advanced and diverse array of trees that resemble second growth habitats on the mainland. Each of the various habitats harbor an array of interesting bird species, and a good many of these birds are found nowhere else. We will try to reach several of these habitats by small boat and, of course, there will always be many other more widespread species ranging from herons, egrets, vultures, hawks and caracaras to kingbirds, saltators, orioles and seedeaters on the islands.

In the afternoon, we should be anchored an hour or two above Nauta, in preparation for our field trip which will be our first Marañón river birding excursion. Because of the hilly terrain of this river, we are likely to see more terra firme forest birds than in previous locations. We will almost certainly encounter a rather different, community of birds here that is sure to include more antbirds and furnariids and possibly manakins. However, forest birding activities are typically more difficult and greater patience will be required to see some of these forest dwelling birds. Later tonight we will tie up close to Iquitos in preparation for our disembarkation tomorrow morning.

NIGHT: *Zafiro*, Marañón River

January 31, Day 10: Morning departure from *Zafiro*; flight from Iquitos to Lima. We will disembark *Zafiro* this morning and transfer to the airport in Iquitos in preparation for our flight to Lima. Because flights are sometimes delayed out of Iquitos, we have not scheduled any afternoon activities in Lima. Depending upon arrival time, part of the afternoon should be available for resting and repacking for international flights. There will be a farewell dinner this evening after which those departing for home should use the hotel's second floor overhead walkway, which leads directly into the airport prior to your international flight home.

DAY ROOM: Costa del Sol Airport Hotel, Lima

January 31-February 1, Days 10-11: Lima to home. Generally speaking, flights depart for the USA after 10:30 p.m. on Day 10, arriving in the USA early the following morning. Those wishing to avoid the long overnight flight should consider spending a final night in Lima and taking an international flight the following morning (if available). Arrangements can be made through the VENT office for overnight accommodations in Lima at an additional charge.

Due to the nature of the expedition, weather conditions or government regulations may require changes to be made to the itinerary and/or the cancellation of certain shore excursions. Every attempt will be made to adhere to the itinerary described, within the limits of safety and time. In the event of changes, passengers have no right to any refund or other compensation. Expedition fees are based on group participation. Should you choose not to take part in any activity or make use of services provided, no refund will be made.

BIRDS OF THE NORTHERN KINGDOMS OF PERU
A new and exciting birding and cultural experience
January 16-23, 2026



Peruvian Plantcutter © A Whittaker

The archaeological wonders of northern Perú offer a unique opportunity to look into Peru's earliest complex societies. Traveling the territory of the former Moche and Chimu kingdoms will truly be an epic adventure. Stretching from modern day Chiclayo to Trujillo, the Pacific-hugging landscape where the cold nutrient rich waters of the northern end of the Humboldt Current mixes with the warmer waters flowing south creating a wealth of marine life, the perfect setting for the flourishing of these cultures.

*The territory on this part of Peru is laced with ancient pre-Inca sites like the massive and largest adobe complex of Chan Chan, the exquisitely decorated Temple of the Moon, the most modern and highly acclaimed Royal Tombs of the Lord of Sipan Museum and the enormous Tucume Pyramids surrounded by lush and unique Algarrobo forests (*Prosopis pallida*).*

This new tour focuses on the famous Tumbesian Bio-region, an endemic bird area with many range-restricted species such as the Peruvian Plantcutter, Tumbes Tyrant, Rufous Flycatcher, Tumbes Swallow and the almost enigmatic White-winged Guan. Key locations include the Pomac Forest Historical Sanctuary with its protected Mesquite Forest, the Chaparri Ecological Reserve as well as the forested valleys around Casupe and the Dam of Tinajones.

In addition to the amazing mix of culture and birds, this trip will expose us to the wonders of the famous Peruvian cuisine. The menus offered by the lodges and restaurants will reflect the country`s unique fusion. During these days of travel, we will certainly indulge our palates with an unparalleled gastronomic experience in a country that has become one the top culinary destinations in the world.

January 16, Day 1: Arrive Lima. You should plan your flights to arrive Lima, Peru (Jorge Chávez Lima-Callao International Airport, airport code LIM) any time today. After clearing immigration and customs you will be transferred to your hotel which is just across the airport access road. Most flights from the United States arrive sometime late evening. When making your airline reservations, bear that in mind as the flight to Chiclayo (Day 2) is schedule to depart around 8:00 a.m. If your time permits, we recommend arriving a day early in order to rest and to allow for flight delays that are sometimes associated with winter weather in your home areas. Should you wish to arrive a day early and plan to have a special day tour in Lima, we will be pleased to assist.

NIGHT: Costa del Sol Airport Hotel, Lima

January 17, Day 2: Lima to Chiclayo. Morning flight to the northern coastal city of Chiclayo. Upon arrival, a short 30-minute drive takes us to the Eten Port for our first taste of Peruvian water birds, this fine coastal marsh offers great opportunities for various species of teals, egrets and herons, the handsome Many-colored Rush-tyrant, Least Seedsnipe and sometimes Tawny-throated Dotterel. Many seabirds typical of the cold, rich waters of the Humboldt Current occur just offshore. These include Peruvian Pelicans and Boobies, Neotropical Cormorants, Band-tailed, Gray-hooded and Kelp Gulls and Peruvian Terns. We should be at the hotel for lunch and respective check-in.



Royal Tombs of the Lord of Sipan © Reservas Habitats Peru

Mid-afternoon we'll visit the site of Huaca Rajada where a trove of ceramics, jewelry, textiles and ceremonial utensils were found. Today all of it is housed in the gorgeous Royal Tombs of the Lord of Sipan, one of the top museums in all of Perú. We will dine in the hotel this evening.

NIGHT: Casa Andina Select Hotel, Chiclayo

January 18, Day 3: Chiclayo to Chaparri. Today we will continue our adventure in Moche and Chimu lands. A good part of the morning will be dedicated to bird the extensive Tucume Pyramids and the Pomac Forest Historical Sanctuary, both birding paradises intended to preserve the unique flora and fauna of the Equatorial Dry Forests in Peru. A set of new and exciting birds awaits us as we explore the numerous trails. Walking slowly and paying attention to the sounds of the forest in search of Peruvian Plantcutter, considered endangered due to increasing habitat lost, Tumbes Tyrant, Black-necked Woodpecker and, of course, more widespread species like Long-tailed Mockingbird, Fasciated Wrens and the delicate Amazilia Hummingbird.

The Salinas section, a more open habitat, gives us the chance to look for other Peruvian specialties such as the unmistakable bird with long legs and bright yellow eyes - the Peruvian Thick-knee, and Rufous Flycatcher and Tumbes Swallows.

TUCUME, the Valley of the Pyramids was established by Calac, a descendant of Naylamp, the mythical creator god of the Moche people around the year 700 AD. Tucume is an ancient settlement with a combination of simpler buildings, cemeteries and residential areas, contrasted by monumental architectural structures including the imposing complex of 26 mud brick truncated pyramids constructed in stages through-out the centuries.

A half day in the Forest of Pomac is pleasant and rewarding not only because of the bird and cultural diversity but also for the relaxing experience of being surrounded by nature. As we continue our drive, we'll pick a spot to enjoy our lunch in the field.

We will arrive mid-afternoon to the Chaparri Ecological Reserve. This ecolodge provides great birding and wildlife watching opportunities with many endemic and threatened species, a great trail network and hides. The local community of Santa Catalina de Chongoyape established this reserve back in 2000 to protect their natural resources and to seek sustainable alternatives to reduce poverty and improve standards of living in the area. This is an integrated conservation approach developed under their own initiative with the support of the local NGO *Asociacion Naylamp*. The very creation of this reserve required a new piece of legislation in Peru recognizing privately owned conservation areas. This law is being applied in the country extensively and quite successfully helping to preserve key conservation areas through-out the country.

NIGHT: Chaparri Ecological Reserve, Santa Catalina Chongoyape, Chiclayo

January 19, Day 4: Chaparri Ecolodge. This morning after a well-deserved sleep, enjoy a cup of coffee while we indulge our eyes at a small hummingbird pool-party by a running creek just below the outdoor dining room, a great way to start the day! The number of species vary seasonally and based on weather conditions, with less species on overcast mornings. This oasis is visited frequently by Amazilia and Tumbes



White-winged Guan © A Whittaker

hummingbirds. Purple-collared Woodstars, Long-billed Starthroat, Peruvian Sheartail, Oasis Hummingbird and Short-tailed Woodstar are also seen regularly but in smaller numbers. The rest of day will be spent exploring lodge trails in search of the most wanted and iconic bird of pacific dry forest, the endemic White-winged Guan, previously brought to the brink of extinction from hunting and habitat loss. This impressive bird has made a comeback thanks to the establishment of new protected areas such as Chaparri. Other spectacular birds include White-tailed Jay, White-headed Brush-finch, Collared Antshrike, Tumbes Sparrow and White-eyed Oriole. Of course, birds aren't the only wildlife present in Chaparri. There are Coastal Foxes, White-tailed Deer and Collared

Peccaries commonly seen close to main building and along trails. The reserve has an ongoing Spectacled Bear Project. There are individuals on the grounds, some rescued from seedy circuses kept in very poor conditions, hoping to be re-introduced in the vastness of the reserve.

NIGHT: Chaparri Ecological Reserve, Santa Catalina Chongoyape, Chiclayo

January 20, Day 5: From Chaparri to Trujillo. As we continue to explore the unique habitat around us, we leave Chaparri for our next destination, the charming colonial city of Trujillo, the City of the Eternal Spring. This very happening city possesses a mixture of ancient cultures, colonial architecture and a welcoming population. The central part of the city features the largest Plaza de Armas (main square) in Perú and is surrounded by both colonial and republican era mansions painted in bright colors.

Our first stop of the day will be the Tinajones Reservoir where we hope to come across several Comb Ducks, Great Grebes, Black-faced Ibis and Wood Storks. The surrounding vegetation offers chances for Necklaced Spinetail, Collared Antshrike, Scarlet-backed Woodpecker and various others. A short detour during our drive to Trujillo (25 minutes) will take us to the Casupe Road in search of the Henna-hooded Foliage-gleaner, Guayaquil Woodpecker, the handsome Piura Chat-tyrant, Black-cowled Saltator and Rufous-necked Foliage-gleaner.

At lunch break, we will continue indulging our palates with delicious typical dishes of northern Perú. Arrival in Trujillo at mid-afternoon allows for time to check in at the hotel with the remainder of the afternoon at leisure. Tonight, we will dine at the hotel.

NIGHT: Costa del Sol Hotel, Trujillo.

January 21, Day 6: Trujillo, Chan-Chan mud city, Temple of the Sun and the Moon.

We'll enjoy a full day exploration of the charming city of Trujillo and it's nearby archaeological wonders beginning with a short walking tour of its historical center visiting the Main Plaza, its Cathedral, and the neoclassical and baroque style mansion homes such as the Urquiaga and Bracamonte. Chan-Chan, the biggest pre-Hispanic urban center built entirely with mud bricks is located only three miles northeast of the city and was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO back in 1986.



Chan Chan, largest mud city in the world © Reservas Habitats Peru

This amazing complex features plazas, workshops, streets, walls and pyramidal temples. Its enormous walls are profusely decorated with reliefs of geometric figures, zoomorphic stylizations and mythological creatures.

This afternoon we'll have a special lunch featuring a show of Peruvian Paso Horses and the Peruvian Marinera dance. The Peruvian Paso Horse, known for its smooth lateral gait and even temperament, was first developed in Trujillo from the horses brought over by the Spanish conquistadors. This much respected breed has earned worldwide recognition and has even been declared part of the cultural heritage of the nation. The Peruvian Marinera is a popular courtship dance. Quite graceful, romantic, and elegant, the dance is a mix of Spanish contradanza and Andean zamacueca.



Temple of the Sun and Moon © Reservas Habitats Peru

In the afternoon we'll explore the Temples of the Sun and the Moon. These pyramid-like structures were constructed by the sophisticated Moche people who ruled the northern coast between A.D 100 and 800. Their walls are plastered with distinctive murals depicting the Moche creator God Ai Apaec, the temple is thought to have been used for religious and ritual ceremonies. At the end of this exciting day, we will enjoy a delicious dinner at the hotel restaurant.

NIGHT: Costa del Sol Hote, Trujillo

January 22, Day 7: Trujillo and Lomas de Campana to Lima. On our last morning, we will visit a nearby and newly created private reserve known as Lomas Cerro de Campana (45 mins drive from Trujillo). The main objective of this reserve is to protect the delicate coastal hills and lomas ecosystems with its unique flora and fauna. The vegetation develops on the slopes facing the sea, favoring the condensations of mists brought by winds from the south and southwest. These slopes can start at sea level and reach up to 3,200 ft. Above this height the influence of the fog ceases due the phenomenon of thermal inversion. These ecosystems are periodic phytogeographic units that generally contain large numbers of endemism, this probably being the result of geographical isolation since these plant formations function as islands separated by hyper-arid habitat devoid of plant life. These are very special plant formations with unique ecosystems in the world and are mainly found on the coast of Perú and in parts of Chile but to a lesser extent.



Cactus Canastero © A Whittaker

This is where we will have a short outing in search of some lomas specialists and various endemics. We hope to come across the very secretive Cactus Canastero, Coastal Miner, Great Inca-Finch, Collared Warbling-Finch, Short-field Tyrant and others. At mid-morning, we start our drive back to Trujillo in time to take our mid-day flight back to Lima.

NIGHT: Swissotel, Lima

January 22-23, Days 7-8: Lima to home. For those not continuing to the Amazon River Cruise, flights depart for the USA after 10:30 p.m. on Day 7, arriving in the USA early the following morning. Those wishing to avoid the long overnight flight should consider spending a final night in Lima and taking an international flight the following morning (if available). Arrangements can be made through the VENT office for overnight accommodations in Lima at an additional charge.

EXTRA ARRANGEMENTS: Should you wish to make arrangements to arrive early or extend your stay, please contact the VENT office at least four months prior to your departure date. We can very easily make hotel arrangements and arrange transfers often at our group rate, if we receive your request with enough advance time.

MEDICAL EVACUATION INSURANCE/PROTECTION REQUIREMENT: This tour visits remote locations where immediate access to primary medical care may not be available. **For this reason, travel insurance/travel protection which covers you for emergency evacuation is required for participation on this tour.** This coverage is included in the **Ripcord Rescue Travel Insurance™** program. Alternatively, comparable service can be obtained through **Medjet** and its **MedjetAssist** plan. If you choose not to purchase insurance/travel protection through Ripcord or Medjet, you are required to obtain it through another provider. Please refer to the TRAVEL INSURANCE/TRAVEL PROTECTION section for additional information.

TOUR SIZE: The Amazon River Cruise will be limited to 31 participants; and the Birds of the Northern Kingdom Pre-trip will be limited to 12 participants.

TOUR LEADERS: David Ascanio, Alex Nagy, and Doris Valencia will lead the Amazon River Cruise; **Doris Valencia** will lead the Birds of the Northern Kingdoms of Peru Pre-trip with a second local leader added with a group size of 10 or more.

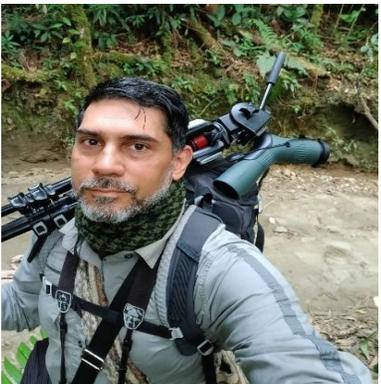


David Ascanio, a Venezuelan birder and naturalist, has spent over 39 years guiding birding tours throughout his native country, Colombia, Brazil, Peru, Costa Rica, the Orinoco and Amazon River basins, Trinidad & Tobago, Suriname, the Guianas, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, the Lesser Antilles, Cuba, Chile, and Panama. He is especially interested in bird vocalizations and has a private library containing voices of more than 70% of all the birds of Venezuela. David combines superb birding skills with an astonishing command of bird vocalizations. He has published a book for children about bird songs and coauthored the descriptions of two new species, the Rio Orinoco Spinetail and the Delta Amacuro Softtail. David has also published numerous papers about the birds of the *llanos* (plains), Orinoco River Island species, and the pan-tepui endemic species on which he has become an authority. He is the senior author of the *Field Guide to the Birds of Venezuela* (2017). David is an excellent communicator, has a great sense of humor, and is tireless in helping others find birds and wildlife. These traits have made him one of the most popular naturalists/guides in the Neotropics.



Doris Valencia, a naturalist born in Cuzco, Peru, began her study of the Manu wilderness at a young age. She has served as a volunteer park ranger in Manu National Park and has been working as a naturalist and birdwatching tour guide for more than fifteen years. She is an avid student of the flora and fauna of the Amazon as well as the Andes and has a special interest in birds. Doris is an excellent birder and leads birding groups throughout Peru including Paracas National Marine Reserve, Bajua-ha-Sonene National Park, Tambopata-Candamo National Reserve, Pampas del Heath, Machu Picchu Historical Sanctuary, and Manu Biosphere Reserve. Doris is also an avid student of Peruvian history. Her

lectures on the Pre Columbian Peru culture are superb.



Alejandro "Alex" Nagy was born and raised in Caracas, Venezuela. Despite growing up in the city, he had permanent contact with the outdoors and wildlife throughout his childhood and teen years. At the age of 20, he joined the staff at the William H. Phelps ornithology collection in Caracas, taking an active part in everything related to the operation of a bird museum. As a longtime bird-bander at the Portachuelo banding station in PN Henri Pittier, VZ, he has first confirmed country records for Caribbean Martin, Chimney Swift, and Worm-eating Warbler among others. Alex has also been part of important expeditions to rediscover enigmatic species such as the Orinoco Softtail and the Tachira Antpitta. He has also been a field assistant in bird sound studies, which has given him tremendous skills in bird identification by vocalization. Alex began

leading birding tours in Venezuela in the year 2000, at the world-famous Hato El Cedral cattle ranch and nature reserve, and later throughout the country. This passion was the catalyst for his move to Colombia with his wife, Esmeralda, in 2018, co-leading tours with David Ascanio and also Steve Hilty. He became an

avid eBirder, soon-to-be regional reviewer, and always on the lookout for new birds—county, state, regional, or even better, lifers. With a charming, humble personality, Alex is always cool and calm under pressure, with great patience. His outstanding passion for birds and nature will ensure an enjoyable tour experience in all aspects.



Technical Information

- Length: 164 feet; Width: 31 feet
- Built: 2015
- Registry: Peru
- Passenger Capacity: 40; Staff and Crew: 21

CRUISE INFORMATION

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS: All staterooms are outside cabins with two lower beds or one queen bed and have private facilities. Cabins will be reserved on a first-come, first-served basis. Single accommodations are limited to four cabins, after those four cabins are reserved, single accommodations are available at 2X the double rate. Quoted prices are per person.

Lower Suites, Cabins #1-8:	\$11,495
Master Suites, Cabins #9 & #10:	\$13,095
Upper Suites, Cabins #11-18:	\$12,095
Zafiro Suite, Cabin #19:	\$15,165
Single Lower Suites, Cabins #1-8:	\$17,795
Single Upper Suites, Cabins #11-18:	\$18,045

The fee for the **Amazon River Cruise** includes breakfast on day 2 through dinner on day 10; hotel and ship accommodations as stated in the itinerary; internal Peru flights (Lima-Iquitos-Lima)*; domestic departure tax; ground transportation during the tour; group transfers and baggage handling between airport, ship, and hotel; shore excursions and river cruises as described; gratuities to the crew and staff including the Naturalists and Expedition Leader of *Zafiro*; and the services of on-board leaders and lecturers.

Not included in your cruise fee is roundtrip airfare from your home to Lima and return; alcoholic beverages; phone calls; laundry; excess baggage charges; international departure taxes; passport or visa fees (if applicable); accommodations, meals, and transfers prior to joining/after tour; personal and baggage insurance; and all items of a personal nature. Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration, a small-party supplement may have to be charged.

***Please Note: Domestic airfare Lima-Iquitos-Lima is included in the tour fee. At the time of printing the cost of these air segments is \$400 but is subject to change without notice until the time of ticketing. Victor Emanuel Nature Tours reserves the right to assess a surcharge for this air ticket should costs increase before ticketing.**

BIRDS OF THE NORTHERN KINGDOMS OF PERU

The fee for the **Birds of the Northern Kingdoms of Peru** is **\$4,095** in double occupancy from Lima. The tour fee includes all meals beginning with breakfast on day 2 through lunch on day 7; internal Peru flights (Lima-Chiclayo / Trujillo-Lima)*; domestic departure tax; lodging as stated in the itinerary; ground transportation during the tour; and guide services provided by the tour leader.

The single supplement for the Birds of the Northern Kingdoms of Peru is **\$525**. You will be charged a single supplement if you desire single accommodations, or if you prefer to share but have no roommate and we cannot provide one for you.

Not included in your tour fee is roundtrip airfare from your home to Lima and return; international departure taxes; alcoholic beverages; special gratuities; phone calls; laundry; passport or visa fees (if applicable); accommodations, meals, and transfers prior to joining/after tour; personal and baggage insurance; or items of a personal nature. Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration, a small-party supplement may have to be charged.

*Domestic airfare Lima-Chiclayo / Trujillo-Lima is included in the tour fee. At the time of printing the cost of these air segments is \$250 but is subject to change without notice until the time of ticketing. Victor Emanuel Nature Tours reserves the right to assess a surcharge for this air ticket should costs increase before ticketing.

CRUISE REGISTRATION: A deposit of **\$2,000** is required to reserve a space on this cruise. A second deposit of **\$3,000** is due July 3, 2025. The balance of the fee is due 150 days prior to departure (August 25, 2025).

This cruise is designed for persons in reasonably good health. By forwarding the expedition deposit, you certify that you do not have a physical condition or disability which would create a hazard to you or other passengers. VENT reserves the right to decline to accept or retain you or other passengers should your health, actions, or general deportment impede the operations of the expedition or the rights, welfare, or enjoyment of other passengers.

NORTHERN KINGDOM OF PERU PRE-TRIP REGISTRATION: The deposit for this tour is **\$1000** per person with balance due 150 days prior to departure (September 17, 2025). If you prefer to pay your deposits using a credit card, the deposit must be made with MasterCard or Visa at the time of registration. If you would like to pay your deposit by check, money order, or bank transfer, your tour space will be held for 10 days to allow time for the VENT office to receive your deposit and completed registration form. The VENT registration form (available from the VENT office or by download at www.ventbird.com) should be completed, signed, and returned to the VENT office.

FUEL AND FUEL SURCHARGES: In the uncertain, often volatile oil market of late, it is difficult – if not impossible – to predict fuel costs over the long term, and more specifically, at the time of operation of this voyage. Our prices are based upon the prevailing fuel rates at the time of brochure printing. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, if the fuel rates increase significantly, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

EXCHANGE RATE SURCHARGES: In the erratic global financial markets of today, it is difficult to predict foreign currency exchange rates over the long term or at the time of operation of a tour or cruise departure. Tour prices are based upon the rate of exchange at the time of itinerary publication. If exchange rates change drastically, it may be necessary to implement a surcharge. If a surcharge is necessary, every effort will be made to minimize the amount. In many cases, these additional foreign exchange rate surcharges are passed to VENT by its vendors and suppliers.

PAYMENTS: All tour payments may be made by credit card (MasterCard or Visa), check, money order, or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). These include initial deposits, second deposits, interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc. Full payment of the tour fee is due 150 days prior to the tour departure date.

CANCELLATION POLICY: **\$1,000** of your initial deposit is non-refundable if cancellation occurs up to 210 days prior to the departure date. For cancellations that occur between 209 and 151 days, both deposits are non-refundable; cancellations within 150 days of the departure date are 100% non-refundable whether previously paid or not. Any refunds will be reduced by applicable airline cancellation penalties. No refunds will be made in the event of “no shows” or cancellations made on the day of sailing.

<u>If you cancel:</u>	<u>Your refund will be:</u>
210 days or more before departure date	Your deposit minus \$1,000
Between 209 and 151 days before departure	No refund of the deposit, but any payments on the balance will be refunded
Fewer than 150 days before departure date	No refund available

Upon cancellation of the transportation or travel services, where you, the customer, are not at fault and have not cancelled in violation of the terms and conditions of any of the contract for transportation or travel services, all sums paid to VENT for services not received by you will be promptly refunded by VENT to you unless you otherwise advise VENT in writing. This policy does not apply to air tickets purchased through VENT or to any special arrangements, such as additional hotel nights, that fall outside the services described in the tour itinerary.

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or

NORTHERN KINGDOMS OF PERU CANCELLATION POLICY: Refunds are made according to the following schedule: If cancellation is made 180 days or more before the tour departure date, a cancellation fee of **\$500** per person will be charged unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months, in which case the cancellation fee will be **\$100** per person. If cancellation is made between 179 and 151 days before departure date, the deposit is not refundable, but any payments covering the balance of the fee will be refunded. If cancellation is made fewer than 150 days before departure date, no refund is available. This policy and fee schedule also apply to pre- and post-tour extensions. **For your protection, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance that covers trip cancellation/interruption.**

<u>If you cancel:</u>	<u>Your refund will be:</u>
180 days or more before departure date	Your deposit minus \$500*
179 to 151 days before departure date	No refund of the deposit, but any payments on the balance will be refunded
150 days or less before departure date	No refund available

*Unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months, in which case the cancellation fee will be \$100 per person. To qualify, cancellation must occur 180 days or more before departure date; deposit transfers must be made at the time of cancellation; and one transfer per deposit.

Upon cancellation of the transportation or travel services, where you, the customer, are not at fault and have not cancelled in violation of the terms and conditions of any of the contract for transportation or travel services, all sums paid to VENT for services not received by you will be promptly refunded by VENT to you unless you otherwise advise VENT in writing. This policy does not apply to air tickets purchased through VENT or to any special arrangements, such as additional hotel nights, that fall outside the services described in the tour itinerary.

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a bond issued by Travelers in the amount of \$50,000. CST #2014998-50.

TRAVEL INSURANCE/TRAVEL PROTECTION: To safeguard against losses due to illness, accident, or other unforeseen circumstances, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance as soon as possible after making a deposit. VENT has partnered with **Redpoint Travel Protection** as our

preferred travel insurance provider. Through Redpoint, we recommend its comprehensive Ripcord plan, which includes a medical evacuation benefit. With this in mind, it is important to note that medical evacuation is not offered by Redpoint as a stand-alone policy or benefit. For travelers not interested in comprehensive travel insurance, VENT recommends **Medjet** and its **MedjetAssist®** plan. Medjet is not an insurance company, and Medjet Assist is not an insurance product; rather, Medjet is a membership-based air-medical transport company specializing in moving hospitalized travelers from an admitting hospital to a medical facility of choice. Medjet does not provide medical evacuation service from the point of injury or illness; yet, the MedjetAssist plan offers robust enough travel protection to satisfy the medical evacuation insurance requirement in place for many VENT tours.

About Ripcord

Ripcord is a completely integrated travel insurance program with single contact for emergency services, travel assistance, and insurance claims. Critical benefits include comprehensive travel insurance for trip cancellation/interruption, **medical evacuation from your point of injury or illness to your hospital of choice**; medical expense coverage, death of pet, and much more. Optional expanded insurance coverage is available and includes items such as evacuation coverage in case of a natural disaster or political or security reasons, waiver for pre-existing medical conditions exclusion, and a “Cancel for Any Reason” benefit. Ripcord is available to U.S. and non-U.S. residents.* For a price quote or to purchase travel insurance, please visit:

<https://ripcordtravelprotection.com/ventbird>; or click the “Visit the VENT page at **Ripcord**” on our website (click Help and “Preparation & Insurance”; then click “ + Trip Insurance”); or call +1-415-481-0600. Pricing is based on age, trip cost, trip length, and level of coverage.

*To be eligible for the pre-existing medical condition exclusion waiver and the optional Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR) upgrade, you must purchase your policy within 15 days of making your first trip payment. The CFAR benefit provides reimbursement for 75% of covered costs, and increases the policy premium by approximately 50%. Policies may be purchased either for the full value of the tour fee at the time of deposit or in segments as individual tour payments are made (deposit, second deposit, final balance, additional arrangements, etc.). The “pay as you go” approach reduces up-front expense and ensures that the amount paid toward your full policy premium is in proportion to the amount paid toward the full tour fee. If you choose to “pay as you go,” you must cover each deposit or payment within 15 days, and insure all non-refundable trip costs in order to maintain the CFAR benefit. Please refer to the policy for a full description of coverage.

Coronavirus (COVID-19):

Redpoint considers COVID-19 illness as any other seasonal respiratory illness. Providing only a positive Covid-19 test result will likely not be considered a covered event per the terms and conditions of the company's policy. Redpoint maintains a [Coronavirus FAQ page](#) on its website that addresses questions and concerns travelers may have regarding COVID-19 and Redpoint's policy. We strongly recommend that you visit the page for an overview of relevant topics.

About MedjetAssist

MedjetAssist is a membership program that functions like AAA for motorists. The company's primary service is air medical transport. Critical benefits of MedjetAssist include a staff on call and ready to provide assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; all-expenses-paid air medical transport in the United States and internationally to medical facility of choice, regardless of medical necessity; repatriation of remains; and no exclusions for pre-existing conditions.

For travelers under 75, MedjetAssist may be purchased as Short-Term Memberships of 8, 15, 21, and 30 days, or Regular Annual Memberships from 1 to 5 years. For travelers 75–84, Medjet offers a Diamond Membership that is the same program but with a few additional conditions.

For a price quote or to purchase MedjetAssist, please visit: Medjet.com/VentBird or call 1-800-527-7478. Pricing is based on type and term of membership.

AIR INFORMATION: Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT). Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to make any domestic or international air travel arrangements from your home and return. Per person fees apply for each set of travel arrangements: \$50 domestic; \$75 international.* Many of our travelers choose to make their own air travel arrangements, but we emphasize the benefits to using our services. If you book your air arrangements yourself, Victor Emanuel Travel is unable to provide support in managing any flight delays and/or cancellations that could occur before and during a tour. When you purchase air tickets through Victor Emanuel Travel, our staff has ready access to your air ticket record and can provide assistance as problems arise. Please feel free to call the VENT office to confirm your air arrangements. **Please be sure to check with the VENT office prior to purchasing your air ticket to confirm that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. VENT cannot be held responsible for any air ticket penalties.**

*An air ticket will be purchased by Victor Emanuel Travel on behalf of the traveler with the traveler's consent. A purchase is considered final upon receipt of payment. If a ticket is subsequently reissued at the behest of the traveler (i.e. voluntary change of plans), the same fee rates apply for the reissue process, in addition to any fees that may be charged by the airline.

BAGGAGE: The airlines now strictly enforce baggage regulations. Excess baggage charges, which can be substantial, are the personal responsibility of each participant. **Please consult your pre-departure materials and airline to find out specific weight restrictions.** As a precaution against lost luggage, we suggest that you pack a change of clothes, toiletries, medications, important travel documents, optics, and any other essential items in your carry-on bag.

Due to ever-changing circumstances in the government's attempts to improve airport security we recommend that you check the website of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for the most updated information: <http://www.tsa.gov/>

Baggage limits for the domestic flights within Peru are one checked bag of no more than 50 lb. and one carry on of 17 lbs. Guests may also carry on one personal item such as a purse, duty free bag etc., and all luggage is weighed at check-in. Excess baggage fees will be calculated based on the weight of the bag and the route. Guests should consult the LATAM website (https://www.latam.com/en_us/) for more information if they have extra or overweight baggage. Persons with luggage in excess of this amount will be required to pay their own overweight charges. Therefore, we request participants limit their baggage to one medium-sized suitcase of no more than 50 pounds and one carry-on, as space in vehicles and on the riverboat may be limited. Please note, quoted restrictions are valid as of April 2019 and are subject to change without notice.

CLIMATE & WEATHER: In Amazonian Peru, temperatures will be warm, but they will rarely exceed 90° F and often are 85° or less at this time of year. However, because of high rainfall and humidity, it may feel somewhat uncomfortable at times. The climate, of course, is warm and humid. Along the main course of the Amazon River, which is close to the equator, there is no pronounced dry season. In almost any month, rains may vary from brief afternoon showers to more extended periods of heavy rain.

On the Birds of the Northern Kingdom of Peru tour, it will be warm to hot with temperatures reaching between 83° F to 86° F with clear skies and sunny days are expected. Chiclayo and Trujillo are right on the coast so they have a desert and oceanic climate.

CLOTHING: We ask that participants bring hats and clothing of mostly subdued colors (i.e. khakis, tans or shades of dull blue, green or brown) which serve to reduce the conspicuousness of our movements. White T-shirts or white shirts are suitable in boats but please do not wear them in the forest. We do not recommend wearing military-style clothing.

- **Pants and Shorts:** A couple pairs of pants and shorts each are recommended. Many people prefer loose-fitting pants made of cotton or other material. Shorts or other comfortable lightweight clothing will be desirable for warmer times of day while onboard the riverboat.
- **Field Clothing:** Outdoor stores such as Cabela's and REI carry field clothing that many birders find appealing. Pants and shirts made of lightweight, yet durable materials with multiple pockets and ventilated seams are popular and more reasonably priced than in the past.
- **Shirts:** Several shirts, (long and short-sleeved), in addition to other comfortable styles suitable for warm weather.
- **Lightweight Poncho:** Quite useful on boat outings in the event of rain.
- **Hat:** A good hat for protection from the sun and rain is essential.

CONDITIONS:

The Program – This **Amazon River Cruise** is an all-around natural history expedition as well as a birding trip. While seeing as many birds and other wildlife is of high importance, an overarching goal is to experience the many habitats that comprise the region we call “Amazonia,” one of the world’s most dynamic ecosystems. Travel on the river will be aboard a new and very comfortable riverboat. Off the boat, we will explore back channels and tributary rivers aboard stable motorized skiffs. In some years, the program includes a morning in “terre firme” habitat where we’ll have the opportunity to walk a forest trail on higher ground. Nevertheless, we might try other options based in the trail conditions. Physical demands for this trip are light.

Our routine for most days will involve an early morning breakfast (usually about 5:30 a.m.) followed by a skiff expedition lasting from approximately 6:10 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Thereafter, we will return to the boat for a 15 to 20-minute break followed by a second late morning excursion (optional) lasting from about 10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. After a noon lunch we’ll enjoy some personal time, or down time, until about 3-4:00 p.m., at which point there will be a late-afternoon skiff trip exploring a new location. Dinner will usually be at 7:00 p.m. most nights and this will usually be followed immediately by a checklist and recap session in the lecture room. Depending on weather, also we will offer two or three 20-to-30-minute lectures or a conservation discussion prior to our afternoon outings. An optional nighttime outing to search for night birds, frogs, and insects may be offered, at least on one night. The schedule is always subject to amending at the discretion of your tour leaders or the boat’s expedition leader and the ship captains. Occasionally we may enjoy breakfast in the field.

Dining – The riverboat’s spacious window-lined dining room accommodates all passengers in a single seating with tables unassigned. All meals are served buffet-style using fresh local ingredients when possible. The chefs prepare a range of culinary options to accommodate everyone’s tastes, including vegetarians. Participants with special dietary needs should inform our office at the time of registration.

While on the boat – While cruising the river, you’ll have options to join your leaders on the viewing decks for birding and wildlife viewing, or relax in your room, on deck, or in the Lecture Room. The January-March period is generally a time of high water on the Amazon River, but cruising conditions should be smooth throughout the voyage.

While on land – The nature of this program precludes walking on land; however, we will make at least one effort to go ashore in “terre firme” habitat for birding in the drier, more heavily forested uplands. This type of excursion will involve a short-to-moderate length walk on a forest trail. Please be forewarned that the trail could be muddy if it has recently rained. Please see the notes on FOOTWEAR.

Motorized skiffs – *Zafiro* is equipped with three motorized skiffs for exploring back channels and tributary rivers—places where the larger vessel cannot travel. Each skiff is of metal construction and features a flat bottom for better access to shallow water. This design also ensures a stable and comfortable excursion. Twin outboard motors of four-stroke design provide plenty of power while yielding a remarkably quiet ride.

The Program – The Birds of the Northern Kingdoms of Perú is a multi-themed program that blends history, culture and birds. Physical demands for this trip are light. Birding activities intermingled with walking tours and visit to archaeological wonders. There will be one long drive with various stops in a comfortable air-conditioned van. The tour pace is moderate with mid-day breaks and easy walking on well-kept trails. Most days will involve early morning breakfast between 05.30 to 06.00 am, followed by a drive to a birding hotspot or other sites. Most lunches will be at hotel or lodge. Occasionally we may enjoy breakfast or lunch in the field. There will be mid-day breaks for some personal time until mid-afternoon where we will be in the field again. Dinners are served around 7.00 pm most nights as well as check-list and recap sessions. An optional night outing will be available to search for night creatures (birds, mammals, insects, etc). This program is subject to changes based on weather or other circumstances beyond our control.

Conditions – The Birds of the Northern Kingdoms of Peru:

Our tours are conducted in spacious vans equipped with AC, ensuring your comfort throughout the week. As we embark on our expedition most of our route traverse smoothly paved roads offering a seamless journey through the picturesque countryside. However, our commute to the Chaparri Reserve introduces a different terrain. While the majority of the route is on well-maintained pavement, the final stretch of approximately 14 kms (8.70 miles) presents an unpaved road, challenging in its ruggedness. Navigating carefully through this segment, our skilled drivers guide us over dry river beds, ensuring a safe passage. Despite the slower pace, this leg of the journey rewards us with an unparalleled opportunity to immerse ourselves in the pristine wilderness, where sightings of exotic bird species with various endemics make it all worth it. After a couple of nights at Chaparri, we continue our journey heading towards the enchanting Casupe Forest, a round trip drive of around 25 miles. Along this route we traverse a dirt road, relatively well-kept, allowing for a smooth ride amidst the captivating natural scenery. Here birdwatching enthusiasts will delight in the abundance of avian life with various range restricted species and specialties. As our expedition progresses, we embark on the longest stretch of our journey, traversing between the states of Chiclayo and Trujillo. We resume our journey along the Pan-American Highway, spanning a distance of 132 miles, traveling through landscape that transitions from verdant valleys to rugged coastal plains, arriving to Trujillo in the late afternoon.

Hotels, lodge and dining: Our carefully selected hotels provide with the finest accommodations during your stay. While in Chiclayo, we offer you one of the city’s premier hotels, nestled in a prime location. Each room offers modern amenities to cater to your every need. Rest assured your safety is our top priority with round-the-clock security. In Trujillo our hotel is located near the main plaza of the city, offering easy access to the most iconic attractions and ensuring a seamless blend of convenience and comfort throughout your stay. Each morning a full buffet breakfast is served at both facilities featuring an array of healthy options to energize you for the day ahead. As the evening approaches, immerse yourself in the vibrant flavors of Perú with our diverse menu, showcasing the finest culinary delights the region has to offer, including the renowned Ceviche prepared to perfection by our skilled chefs.

While our accommodations in Chiclayo and Trujillo offer wonderful comforts, our lodge in the Chaparri Reserve offers a more rustic yet charming experience. Here amidst serene wilderness and simplicity, we immerse ourselves in the authentic charm of rural Perú. The lodge is constructed in the local style with mud-bricks, offering humble yet comfortable rooms that provide respite from the heat of the day. Each room is equipped with modern conveniences including hot water and electricity powered by solar energy. At night the sky is ablaze with millions of stars overhead. Indulge in the simple, delicious meals prepared by the talented women of the local community, showcasing the authentic flavors of the region.

Physical grading: During this pre-trip, it's important to note that no strenuous hiking is involved, making it accessible to participants with an average level of fitness. Our birding excursions predominantly take place along well maintained trails and main roads where the tranquility of nature reigns, and vehicular traffic is rare to nonexistent. Rest assured that your comfort and convenience are our priorities with our vehicle always within reach.

FOOTWEAR: Heavy duty hiking boots are not necessary for either of these trips. While on the **Amazon River Cruise** you may prefer sandals and/or tennis shoes for the duration of the time spent on the boat.

Rubber Boots (optional): Rubber boots are not really needed. However, be prepared to get mud in your shoes when visiting communities or if a visit to a trail opportunity arises. Please be aware that the majority of our outings will be in the skiffs, and we will not be doing extensive hiking. In the event of getting your walking shoes muddy, the ship cruise is very effective at getting your field shoes cleaned!

LAUNDRY SERVICE: Limited laundry service is available Monday through Thursday on the riverboat, with the first ten items at no extra cost. Any overage will be billed to your ship account.

EQUIPMENT: One of the most important aspects of having an enjoyable travel experience is being prepared with proper equipment. The following items will come in handy during your trip to Peru:

- **Strong Sunscreen**
- **Insect Repellent (and some Permethrin-treated clothes)**
- **Reliable Flashlight:** A flashlight or at least a small L.E.D. –type headlamp or SMA light is essential. These can be used in rooms and for doing checklists and writing in the evenings (even though the boat will have electricity on a 24-hr. basis)
- **Umbrella and Light-weight, Waterproof Poncho:** We recommend you bring both, which are especially useful on the small excursion boats.
- **Plastic Bags or “Dry Bags”:** Rain showers are unpredictable and often appear suddenly in the Amazon. Those with larger camera and optical equipment should consider bringing plenty of plastic bags or a “dry bag” to protect equipment against moisture intrusion.
- **Other Plastic Bags:** Bring plastic bags of various sizes, including a couple of larger, heavier bags for protecting duffels and luggage from rain during transport to and from lodges; bring enough medium-sized plastic bags to fully pack all your clothes for waterproofing during boat and lodge transfers
- **Water Sandals for Showers** (and for walking to and from them)
- **All personal medications and toiletries:** There will be no opportunity to restock once we leave Iquitos
- **Binoculars** – We strongly recommend good binoculars of at least 7x35, 8x42, 10x40, or 10x42 magnification. Please do NOT bring mini-binoculars of any kind. Some people like them because they are small and lightweight; but they have an extremely small field of view and very poor light gathering power. Trying to find a bird in your mini-binoculars is like trying to read a book through a keyhole. You will be very frustrated, and even if you do manage to get the bird in your binoculars

before it flies, you will have a poor view. You will find that 7x35 or 8x42 binoculars are compact and light enough.

- **Spotting Scopes** – Since most wildlife viewing will take place on a moving ship or skiff, or at very close range, you do not need to bring a spotting scope. Your tour leaders will have one available for group use on the occasions where it is necessary. We also recommend against bringing your scope for the pre-trip as it adds to the size and weight of your luggage.
- **Small Backpack or Over-the-shoulder Bag:** For carrying items in the field; a pack that is completely or partially waterproof, or sheds water and dries quickly, is most useful

OPTIONAL ITEMS:

- A very lightweight, thin mesh head net in case insects are a problem.
- A small canteen and some packaged snacks. Bottled water is provided in abundance by the ship.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS:

PASSPORTS - A valid passport is required for entry into Peru for United States citizens. Please check the expiration date on your passport. **If it is not valid for at least six months after your trip return date, you will need to get it renewed.** You will also want to make sure that you have at least two blank pages in your passport for stamps. If you need a passport, you should get it well in advance of your trip departure date. For additional fees, a passport can be issued on an expedited basis. In the United States this can be done at the nearest passport office, most post offices, or the county clerk's office. You may also visit www.state.gov/travel/ for information on how to get or renew a passport.

As a safety measure, photocopy the first two pages of your passport. Keep the photocopies in a safe place, so if your passport is lost you will have proof of identification. Your passport should be signed and easily available at all times. You will need it for check-in at the airport on your first day of departure, so **do not pack it in your checked luggage.** On board ship, it is often customary for the purser to hold all passports for clearance with port authorities. Your passport may be collected upon embarkation and returned upon disembarkation.

VISAS – American citizens do not need a visa if they are traveling as a tourist with a valid U.S. passport to enter Peru. You will be issued a tourist card upon entry, which is valid for up to 90 days. Rules and regulations pertaining to non-U.S. citizens may vary; please check with the immigration office, consulate, or embassy of Peru for information on entry requirements. Visa requirements can change without notice, and you should check the latest entry requirements as far in advance as possible in order to allow time to obtain a visa in your home country should that be necessary.

CURRENCY & MONEY MATTERS: Your trip to Peru includes all necessary expenses, including all meals and accommodations aboard *Zafiro*. While U.S. dollars might be accepted in large cities and shops, it is always convenient to have a supply of local currency for such items as taxi rides, gifts, non-mealtime and off-ship refreshments, laundry tips, meals on your own, extra gratuities, and personal items. It is best to acquire local currency before leaving the U.S., although U.S. dollars can be exchanged in Lima at banks and major hotels. Small denominations of cash are always best as it is easier for individuals and businesses to provide change. It is not recommended to exchange money from street vendors.

Upon embarkation, a shipboard account will be opened for your convenience. The U.S. dollar is the official currency aboard the ship. Credit cards, Visa and MasterCard (not American Express or Discover) are accepted for expenses on board that may be paid and settled at the end of the cruise. Note that it may not always be possible to make change for travelers' checks and cash in large denominations; the ship staff

would appreciate the use of U.S dollars, if paying by cash in smaller denominations for settlement of your shipboard account.

There is no facility on board for exchanging U.S. dollars into local currency. Should you extend your vacation in Peru beyond what is offered in the cruise program, you should strongly consider obtaining local currency. ATM machines can be found in large cities and in some towns; you shouldn't have any problems using major cards in hotels, restaurants, and some shops. Please check with your bank and credit card issuer for more information regarding banking and the use of ATM and credit cards overseas.

The official currency of Peru is the Peruvian Nuevo Sol (PEN). You can check the latest currency conversion rate by visiting "[XE-The World's Favorite Currency Site](#)".

ELECTRICITY: Power in Peru is 220V, with use of outlet types "A" and "C" most prevalent. The "A" type outlet accommodates a flat two-bladed plug while the "C" type outlet, also known as the European-style outlet, accommodates a plug with two round pins. To ensure that use of American standard 110V equipment with the flat-pronged plugs will work, you should bring an all-purpose transformer to convert the current for 110V use, in addition to proper plug adapters.

LANGUAGE: Spanish is the primary language spoken in Peru; English is spoken by our local guides and agents in addition to the boat's expedition staff.

TIME: The time zone of Peru is Peru Time (PET) and is standard all year. For Amazon River cruises departing in January and February, PET is the same as Eastern Standard Time (EST). Trips departing after day light savings time goes into effect will be one hour ahead of Eastern Daylight Time (EDT).

HEALTH:

VENT follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for standard travel precautions, which includes vaccination against a variety of preventable diseases. Among these so-called Routine Vaccinations are measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine (boosters for adult travelers), and Varicella (Chickenpox). You should also be up-to-date with Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccinations.

If you are taking personal medication, prescription or over-the-counter, be sure to bring an ample supply that will allow you to get through the tour safely. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

COVID-19: We continually emphasize that our number one priority is the health and safety of our customers and employees. Although VENT no longer maintains any of its COVID-era prevention protocols, we strongly recommend best practices for protecting yourself and your fellow travelers against COVID-19 illness. These measures include receiving the primary series vaccinations for those eligible, staying "Up to Date" with COVID-19 booster shots, wearing high filtration N-95 or KN-95 masks when in airports and on airplanes, and avoiding risky social settings in the lead-up to your tour. These recommendations are firmly rooted in CDC guidance regarding recommendations for avoiding COVID-19.

In addition to your physician, a good source of general health information for travelers is the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, which operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers' Information Line (800) CDC-INFO (800-232-4636). You can check the CDC website at

<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>. Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html> (click on Travel Health).

Yellow fever vaccination in Peru is recommended for all travelers visiting lowland/jungle areas east of the Andes, or travelers arriving from any country where Yellow Fever is endemic. It is not recommended for those whose travels will be limited to Lima on the coast or highland areas such as Cuzco and Machu Picchu. Some individuals may have medical conditions for which vaccination is contraindicated.

Malaria has been confirmed in Peru, including the chloroquine-resistant strain, but is highly unlikely on this tour.

For yellow fever and malaria, we suggest that participants consult their physician as well as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for current recommendations.

If you are taking personal medication, prescription or over-the-counter, be sure to bring an ample supply that will allow you to get through the tour safely. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

Those passengers who are not fit for a cruise, including those with physical disabilities that affect mobility and balance, heart or immune deficiencies, or other conditions associated with poor health, are advised not to join the cruise. A serious health emergency may result in an air evacuation, which will come at considerable expense to you. **Comprehensive optional insurance, including coverage for medical evacuation (REQUIRED), can be purchased with your trip cancellation policy. Please consult your insurance agent or existing policy, if in effect, for the terms and limitations of your existing coverage. Please refer to the section on Trip Cancellation Insurance.**

COVID-19: We continually emphasize that our number one priority is the health and safety of our customers and employees. Although VENT no longer maintains any of its COVID-era prevention protocols, we strongly recommend best practices for protecting yourself and your fellow travelers against COVID-19 illness. These measures include receiving the primary series vaccinations for those eligible, staying “Up to Date” with COVID-19 booster shots, wearing high filtration N-95 or KN-95 masks when in airports and on airplanes, and avoiding risky social settings in the lead-up to your tour. These recommendations are firmly rooted in CDC guidance regarding recommendations for avoiding COVID-19. Please visit the **Coronavirus Travel Update** page of our website <https://ventbird.com/covid-19> for our official statement regarding COVID-19 and the operation of our tours. Please visit the CDC website for the most up to date information about COVID-19 and associated guidance for proper health and hygiene: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>.

In addition to your physician, a good source of general health information for travelers is the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, which operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers’ Information Line (800) CDC-INFO (800-232-4636). You can check the CDC website at <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>. Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html> (click on Travel Health).

Sun Exposure – The sun’s ultraviolet rays are dangerous under prolonged exposure (sometimes only a matter of minutes). Anytime you are outdoors you will want to protect your skin, including your lips, eyes, nose, and ears. Severe sunburn is potentially very painful and will affect your level of enjoyment. Always

protect yourself when outdoors and be sure to bring an ample supply of high SPF sunscreen and lip balm. We strongly recommend the use of ultra-violet blocking, polarized sunglasses.

Biting Insects – Mosquitoes occur along the Amazon River and can be numerous, particularly around the forest. To protect you from being bitten, we recommend wearing long-sleeved shirts, pants, and a hat when in the field, particularly between the late afternoon and cooler morning hours. If your cabin has an open balcony, please keep windows closed while you sleep, and make sure that your insect repellent contains DEET (we strongly recommend that you bring the stick one and avoid using spray types). Repellent can be applied to exposed skin and/or clothing. Clothing (two sets) sprayed with Permethrin is another option (pre-treated or you can treat yourself).

A Note About Chiggers: This tour visits a couple of areas where chiggers are known to occur, mainly around villages and settlements along the Amazon. Nonetheless, the chances for Getting chigger bites in our cruise are minimal since we remain in trails when unloading the skiffs. Chiggers are tiny parasitic mites found in most warm weather areas of the southern United States and the world's tropics. They are especially numerous in grassy areas, where, in the immature stage, they attach themselves to other animals or humans who make contact with the grass as they pass by. Chiggers do not suck blood and the majority of the world's species do not carry disease. They do feed on bodily fluids, however, through a process in which a digestive enzyme is produced by the chigger which essentially liquefies the skin around the area where the chigger is attached. The chigger is not usually attached to the skin for more than a few hours before it either falls off or is knocked off. Our bodies respond by producing a hardened area as a defense against the chigger's digestive enzyme. Though the chigger may be long gone, it is the presence of the hardened area, and the body's natural process of reabsorbing it that typically causes intense itching, often lasting for a week or more. Chiggers like to attach themselves to areas of thin skin, like around the ankles, beltline, undergarment lines, knees, and elbows.

Insect repellents for the skin are commonly available in three forms:

- DEET (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide): A chemical compound that is marketed under various brand names (OFF!®, Cutter™, Ultrathon™, etc.) and offered in a variety of formulations including sprays, lotions, time-release preparations, and disposable wipes. The formulations will state a percentage of the active ingredient DEET on the packaging. DEET may be applied to exposed skin directly and/or sprayed on clothing. Please be careful when applying DEET as it can damage plastics and lens coatings.
- Picaridin: A synthetic formulation that is derived from piperine, a substance found in plants that produce black pepper.
- Herbal insect repellents: Various mixtures of organic ingredients such as oils from eucalyptus, citronella, cedar, and other herbs. The herbal repellents are more difficult to categorize because of the difference in ingredients from one brand to another. There is considerable variation in their effectiveness.

An insect repellent for clothing is marketed in one approved formulation:

- Permanone® (Permethrin) is an odorless spray-on repellent that may be used for **pre-treatment** of clothing, gear, and tents. It should not be used directly on the skin or sprayed on clothing while it is being worn. The pre-treatment process requires a number of hours to complete and must be done outdoors, so is best completed in advance of travel. Do-it-yourself pre-treatment has to be repeated more often than commercial treatment using Insect Shield® technology. It is available at various outdoor stores and can easily be found online.

- Insect Shield® apparel: Clothing pre-treated with Permethrin is made by a variety of manufacturers. It is available for purchase from some sporting goods suppliers. The clothing is advertised as retaining its repellency for up to 70 washings.

The US EPA offers a search tool to help choose a repellent that is best for a particular situation. For example, some repellents work for mosquitoes, but not for ticks.

<https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/which-insect-repellent-right-you>

DEPARTURE TAX: At present, the international departure tax is about \$35. For travelers who purchased their air tickets from major U.S. carriers, the tax should be included in the cost of the ticket. We recommend that you keep some extra cash handy when checking in for your flight.

SUGGESTED READING: A number of traditional booksellers and online stores list excellent inventories of field guides and other natural history resources that will help prepare you for this tour. We recommend www.amazon.com which has a wide selection; www.buteobooks.com and www.nhbs.com which specialize in ornithology and natural history books; and www.abebooks.com for out-of-print and hard-to-find titles.

BIRDS – ESSENTIAL:

Schulenberg, T. S., D. F. Stotz, D. F. Lane, J. P. O’Neill, & T. A. Parker III. *Birds of Peru*. 2010. Revised and updated edition. Princeton University Press. Long in preparation this up-to-date guide is now the essential field guide for all birders visiting Peru. Relatively compact (but remember, there are almost 1800 species in this book) although not as small or lightweight as field guides to North America and Europe.

Hilty, Steven. *Birds of Tropical America: A Watcher’s Introduction to Behavior, Breeding and Diversity*. University of Texas Press, 2005. Highly recommended for background information on how things work in bird communities in tropical latitudes; topics include diversity of birds, hummingbird communities; mixed species flocks; antbirds and army ants; colorfulness, song structure in relation to environments, and much more.

BIRDS – APPs:

Schulenberg, T. S., D. F. Stotz, D. F. Lane, J. P. O’Neill, & T. A. Parker III. *Birds of Peru*. Birdeyes app. As of March 2018, available for iPhone only.

eBird, Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Among the largest and most successful citizen science projects in existence, eBird is an essential tool for promoting bird study and conservation. Among a range of benefits, eBird allows users to keep a variety of lists in a single application. When taxonomic splits are incorporated, lists are automatically updated. Additionally, trip leaders can share daily lists, so one need only accept a shared list and it will upload to your files. Highly recommended. Once downloaded, a username must be created with a password. Highly recommended

Merlin Bird ID, Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Merlin is an app designed as a birding coach for beginning and intermediate bird watchers. Excellent for use in the field, Merlin asks the observer a series of questions regarding his or her bird sighting, including date and location, and color, size, and behavior of a bird. Merlin then processes the viewer’s responses to present a shortlist of possible identifications, from which the user can choose the likely bird. Species profiles include a brief physical description, photographs, and sound samples. The Photo ID feature allows anyone with a camera to snap a photo and obtain a list of suggestions. Merlin’s Sound ID feature allows identification of birds through audible recognition. To use Merlin, download the app, followed by the appropriate regional “pack.” For this trip, please download the pack for **Peru: Amazon**. For the pre-trip, please download the pack for **Peru: North** Highly recommended.

Bird Call Xeno. This app gives you access to one of the largest online bird libraries in the world. Provided that your phone has an active data service, you´ll be able to listen to the bird recordings uploaded in the site.

BIRD VOICES:

- English, Peter and Theodore A. Parker III. *Birds of Eastern Ecuador*. Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, 1992. <http://birds.cornell.edu/LNS/CommercialProductns/csamerica/eastecuador.htm>.
- Parker III, Theodore A. *Voices of the Peruvian Rainforest*. Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. <http://birds.cornell.edu/LNS/CommercialProductns/csamerica/perurain.htm>.
- Schulenberg, T., C. Marantz, and P. English. *Voices of Amazonian Birds. Vols. 1 - 3*. CD. Library of Natural Sounds, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, 2000. <http://birds.cornell.edu/LNS/CommercialProductns/international/amazonvol1.html>.
- Schulenberg, T., *Voices of Andean Birds. Vols. 1 - 2*. CD. Library of Natural Sounds, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY. <http://birds.cornell.edu/LNS/CommercialProductns/international/andeanvol1.html>.
- Xeno-canto. <https://www.xeno-canto.org/> This website offers an impressive collection of recordings made by thousands of contributors.

GENERAL TOPICS:

- Forsyth, Adrian, & Ken Miyata. 1984. *Tropical Nature*. Life & Death in the Rain Forests of Central and South America. Scribners Sons, New York. Does not deal much with birds but is a fantastic introduction to all kinds of topics relating to tropical wildlife including bugs, frogs, plant strategies, bot flies, and much more. Extraordinarily well written, a classic, and a book that ought to be read by anyone contemplating a visit to the American tropics.
- Goulding, Michael, et al. *Floods of Fortune. Ecology and Economy Along the Amazon*. Columbia University Press, 1996. The book, on the present status of the river, enables the reader to grasp the issues and understand the immense devastation the Amazon Region has undergone—and the global implications of that destruction. Beautiful photographs. Highly recommended.
- Grann, David. 2010. *The Lost City of Z: A tale of deadly obsession in the Amazon*. Doubleday.
- Hemming, John. 2008. *Tree of Rivers: The story of the Amazon*. Thames & Hudson. Available as pdf in the App Store.
- Kricher, John C. *The New Neotropical Companion*. 2017. Princeton University Press. An introduction to the animals, plants and ecosystems of the New World Tropics. Recommended as a general, broad-based introduction to plants and animals of Amazonia.
- Insight Guide. *Amazon Wildlife*. (Geoffrey, E. ed.). APA Publications, 2002. An illustrated guide to the region and its wildlife. Covers biogeography, habitats, animal groups, and conservation.
- Pearson, David L., L. Beletsky, and P. Barrett. *Peru: The Traveler's Wildlife Guide*. (Paperback; 1st American ed.) Interlink Books, 2004. Covers a wide range of topics from ecotourism in Amazonia to geography, habitats, parks, reserves, ecology, and natural history. Nice introductory sections (well-illustrated) on amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals, insects, and other arthropods. Excellent introductory book on Amazonian with especially good illustrations of more common wildlife.

OTHER MEDIA:

Mark Flowers, Lydia Baines, Simon Blakeney. *Rivers of Life: Nile, Amazon, Mississippi*. DVD. BBC Studios Ltd.

for PBS television, 2019.

This three-part series profiles several of the planet's great rivers. Bringing to bear a method of technology

and storytelling, the viewer is immersed in the ecology of each of these iconic rivers and the people who live alongside them. Each part is 55 minutes in length. All are worth watching, but the piece on the Amazon River is especially salient to this trip. The series debuted on PBS television in 2019. It may still be available for streaming, but can also be purchased as a single DVD from the [Shop PBS website](#) for \$24.99 plus shipping and handling.

FURTHER READING ON BIRDS, MAMMALS, REPTILES, & AMPHIBIANS:

- Bartlett, R. D., and P. Bartlett. *Reptiles and Amphibians of the Amazon*. 2003. Guide to 250 more commonly found snakes, lizards, turtles, frogs, and salamanders of the Amazon basin.
- Castner, J. L., S. L. Timme, and J. A. Duke. *A Field Guide to Medicinal and Useful Plants of the Upper Amazon*. 1998. A photographic guide to identification of commoner plants with practical uses in the upper Amazonian basin forest.
- Emmons, Louise and François Feer. *Neotropical Rainforest Mammals: A Field Guide*. University of Chicago Press, 1997. A color-illustrated field guide to the mammals of the Neotropics.
- Gentry, Al. *A Field Guide to the Families and Genera of Woody Plants of Northwest South America*. University of Chicago Press, 1996. A keyed reference to the plant genera of Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. Illustrated with black-and-white sketches. The only book of its kind on plant identification of the region, but not always easy to use.
- Henderson, Andrew et al. *Field Guide to the Palms of the Americas*. Princeton University Press, 1995.
- Valqui, T. 2004. Where to Watch Birds in Peru. www.granperu.com/birdwatchingbook. A very helpful book for birders interesting in exploring Peru. Published in Peru.

GENERAL: (this is but a sample of the many books available about the Inca History and Peru)

- Beech, C. *Lonely Planet Peru*. Fifth Edition. 2004.
- Bingham, Hiram. *The Lost City of the Incas*. Sterling Publications, 2002.
- Thomson, H. *The White Rock. An Exploration of the Inca Heartland*. Woodstock, 2001.

TIPPING: Tipping (restaurant staff, porters, drivers, local guides) is included on VENT tours. However, if you feel one or both of your VENT leaders or any local guides have given you exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that tips are not expected and are entirely optional. Tips should be given directly to your tour leader; they should not be sent to the VENT office.

RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT: Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc., a Texas corporation, and/or its agents (together, “**VENT**”) act only as agents for the participant in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the participant or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. VENT accepts no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in airfare or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, terrorism, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will be borne by the participant, as tour rates only provide for arrangements for the time stated.

VENT reserves the right (i) to substitute hotels of similar category, or the best reasonable substitution available under the circumstances, for those indicated and (ii) to make any changes in the itinerary that are deemed necessary by VENT or which are caused by third party transportation schedules (i.e. railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, etc.).

VENT reserves the right to substitute leaders or guides on any tour. Where VENT, in its sole discretion, determines such substitution is necessary, it will notify tour participants.

VENT reserves the right to cancel any tour prior to departure with or without cause or good reason. See the VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy set forth above.

Tour prices are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on June 5, 2025, and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change thereto.

VENT reserves the right to decline any participant's Registration Form and/or refuse to allow any participant to participate in a tour as VENT deems reasonably necessary, in its sole discretion. VENT also reserves the right to remove any tour participant from any portion of a tour as VENT deems necessary, in its sole discretion, reasons for such removal include but are not limited to, medical needs, injury, illness, inability to meet physical demands of a tour, personality conflict or situations in which such removal is otherwise in the best interest of the tour, the tour group and/or such participant. A participant may also voluntarily depart from a tour. If a participant is removed from a tour or voluntarily departs from a tour, such participant will be responsible for any expenses associated with such removal or departure, including but not limited to, transportation, lodging, airfare and meals, and VENT will have no obligation to refund or reimburse any such removed or departed participant for any tour payments or deposits previously paid by such participant.

Baggage is carried at the participant's risk entirely. No airline company, its employees, agents and/or affiliates (the "**Airline**") is to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time participants are not on board the Airline's aircraft. The participant ticket in use by any Airline, when issued, will constitute the sole contract between the Airline and the purchaser of the tickets and/or the participant. The services of any I.A.T.A.N. carrier may be used for VENT tours, and transportation within the United States may be provided by any member carrier of the Airlines Reporting Corporation.

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