

WILDLIFE TRAVEL

4th to 21st January 2018 (18 days)

ECUADOR

Wildlife from the Andes to Amazonia



NEW
ITINERARY
FOR 2018

Ecuador has long been one of our favourite destinations. This year we return to the mainland, in search of some of the country's exciting mammal life, while also enjoying the abundant birds, butterflies and botany.

We start by visiting the paramo of the high Andes, where we will spend time searching for **Spectacled Bear** and Mountain Tapir, while Andean Condor circle overhead.

Moving down onto the **eastern slope** of the Andes, a whole new suite of hummingbirds and other birds appears, before we arrive in the humid lowlands of the Amazon basin and travel down the **Napo River** to our wonderful lodge in the rainforest, where eleven species of monkey travel through the trees and Giant Otters patrol the waterways.

From here, we travel back across the Andes to the **Choco cloud forest** of the western slopes, in the Mindo-Tandayapa area, where we hope to find the newly-discovered **Olinguito**, a relative of the raccoons. The Choco is also famous for its rich bird life, and we aim to catch up with some of the stars of the area, notably Andean Cock-of-the-Rock, Long-wattled Umbrellabird and Oilbird, as well as an amazing variety of **hummingbirds** and tanagers.

We will be spending time in some of the most **species-rich habitats** in the world, staying in comfortable lodges throughout.



Price
£4795

Single Room Supplement
£495

Full board

- Day 1** UK to Quito
Day 2 travel to Guango
Day 3-5 Coyambe Coca NP
Day 6-7 eastern Andes cloud forest, San Isidro area transfer to Napo
Day 8 Rio Napo, Amazonia
Day 9-11 travel to Quito
Day 12 western Andes cloud forest, Mindo area
Day 13-16 flight departs (arrive UK **Day 18**)

Day 17

Leaders

Philip Precey
and Xavier Muñoz

mammals and birds,
cloud forest, Amazonian
rainforest

Wildlife and culture holidays



Our profits are donated to the **Wildlife Trusts**



ITINERARY

Please note that the itinerary may be changed to suit the weather or other practicalities or at the discretion of the leaders.

Day 1 4th Jan We fly via Amsterdam to Quito. o/n Puenbo Birding Garden (PBG)

Day 2 5th Jan Today we head on up to the ridge of the eastern cordillera of the Andes, where we will spend the next four days at **Guango Lodge**, nestled between the two reserves of **Cayambe-Coca and Antisana**. The hummingbird feeders here attract a bewildering variety of species, including the amazing Sword-billed Hummingbird.

Day 3-5 6th-8th Jan We have three days to explore the highlands, comprising alpine 'paramo' grassland and bog interspersed with small patches of native forest clinging to the mountain slopes. **Spectacled Bears and Mountain Tapir** use these forest patches for shelter, venturing out at dawn and dusk to forage and feed. With the help of local expertise, we will focus on these two species: plenty of patience and a degree of good luck should give us our best chance of tracking them down.

While searching for mammals, birds will never be far away, and during our time up on the paramo we will look for Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe, Ecuadorian Hillstar and Andean Condor. A short distance down the valley, we encounter humid temperate forest, another distinctly different habitat to explore in between our stints of searching for bears.

Days 6/7 9th/10th Jan We leave Guango and head down to **Cabañas San Isidro**, a comfortable lodge surrounded by 1300 hectares of sub-tropical forest. Black Agouti and Red-tailed Squirrel are common around the cabins, while the forest is home to three species of monkey and Dwarf Brocket Deer: Spectacled Bear, Mountain Tapir and Giant Anteater are all present in the area, although we would have to be very lucky to bump into them.

Here on the **eastern slope** of the Andes, a whole different array of birds can be found, with yet more hummingbirds busying themselves at the feeders and mixed flocks of tanagers roving through the forest. After dinner, we will hope for a visit from the mysterious 'San Isidro Owl', an as-yet unnamed species that makes a regular appearance around the lodge.

Day 8 11th Jan Today we continue down to the base of the Andes and on eastwards across the Amazonian floodplain to the port town of Coca, where we board a covered motorised canoe for the 50 mile journey down the **Rio Napo** to the wonderful **Napo Wildlife Centre (NWC)** on the shores of Lake Añangu, our home for the next four nights.

Days 9-11 12th-14th Jan NWC is a conservation project which supports a unique 82 square mile private nature reserve within the wider **Yasuni National Park**, an ancestral territory of the Añangu community, who co-own the centre. We will explore the area both by foot, along the trails, and by **dug out canoe**. Wildlife abounds: there are **clay-licks** close to the lodge, where up to 800 parrots of several different species gather; two canopy towers transport us up into the rainforest canopy, a wonderful place to spend sunrise, with birds and howler monkeys welcoming the dawn; a family of **Giant Otters** are resident in the lake, and will entertain us on our boat trips; **eleven species of monkey** are at home in the reserve, with different species to look for either side of the river, including the beautiful Golden-mantled Tamarin; and with more than 600 bird species recorded from the National Park, we are unlikely to get bored.

Day 12 15th Jan Our final walk along the boardwalk through the flooded palm forest will take us back to the Rio Napo, and our journey **upstream to Coca**, from where we take a 45 minute flight back to Quito. o/n PBG

Day 13 16th Jan After breakfast, we drive up out of Quito, passing over the western ridge of the Andes and dropping down onto the Pacific slope along the Tandayapa road.

After several stops in the cloud forest along the way, we should arrive at Bellavista Cloudforest Lodge in the late afternoon, in time to enjoy the **hummingbirds and tanagers** coming to the feeders before the sun sets. After dinner, our attention again turns to the feeders, where the night shift takes over: visitors may include Kinkajou, Andean White-eared Opposum and the star of the show, the **recently-discovered Olinguito**. o/n Bellavista.

Days 14-16 17th-19th Jan We spend the next three days in the **Choco cloud forest**, in search of Toucan Barbet, Plate-billed Mountain-toucan, a variety of parrots, tanagers and hummingbirds, with a different suite of species present at different altitudes along the valley. Early one morning we will visit the famous Refugio Paz de las Aves, where the glowing orange **Andean Cock-of-the-Rock** gathers to display while we will also look for several species of antpitta. Next day we head a little further down the Mindo valley in search of the spectacular **Long-wattled Umbrellabird**, while another special excursion will take us to a hidden cave where a colony of the bizarre **Oilbird** can be found. We spend two nights at Sachatamia Lodge, heading back to PBG on 16th.

Day 17 20th Jan We will have a relaxing start to the day and a morning tour of **Quito**, before our flights home (arriving **Day 18 21st Jan**)

Fitness and health

The walking is generally moderate, but there are likely to be some hilly areas with steep slopes and wet or uneven ground for us to cover: you will need to have a reasonable level of general fitness and agility in order to make the most of all of the opportunities to see the wildlife.

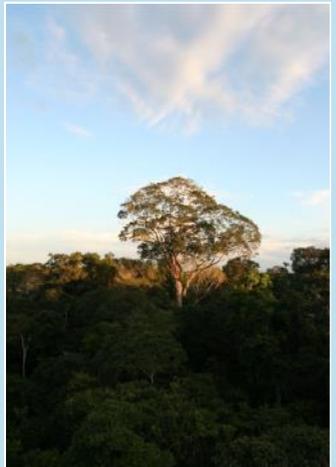
Biting insects such as mosquitoes are likely to be present in the lowlands. In the rainforest, there is a chance of leeches, and you may like to consider taking leech socks.

We will be visiting **high altitudes** in the Andes, up to around **4,000m** in Coca Cayumbe National Park, although our accommodation is all lower than 3000m. If you have any reason to believe that you will be adversely affected at these altitudes you should consult your doctor prior to booking.

You should consult your GP about travel inoculations, including typhoid and hepatitis. The areas we visit on days 12-15, in the Amazonian lowlands, are classified as high risk for **malaria** and anti-malarials are recommended. **Yellow fever** is endemic to the same lowland areas. A yellow fever vaccination certificate is required if arriving from a country with risk of yellow fever transmission.

Passports and Visas

You must have a valid passport for this trip (valid for at least 6 months after the end of the holiday). Visas are not required for holders of UK/EU passports, although you may be asked to show evidence of your return or onward flights. For holders of other passports please check with the relevant embassy.



Above (from top): Spectacled Bear, Spectacled Whitestart, Giant Otter, dawn over the rainforest canopy

Front cover: Mountain Tapir, Shining Sunbeam, Olinguito and a Dracula sp orchid.

Leaders and Guides

Philip Precey is a Director of Wildlife Travel and has led many of our trips in recent years, from Australia and Galapagos to Norfolk and the Isles of Scilly. This will be Philip's eighth visit to Ecuador. Never far from his binoculars, Philip will help you to enjoy all aspects of the wildlife we encounter. We will be accompanied by **Xavier Munoz** from our partners at Neblina Forest along with local guides.

Weather

In the mountains, typical weather will be sunny, clear mornings/early afternoons and cloudy, often wet afternoon/evenings: we should expect some periods of rain, sometimes heavy or thundery, with temperatures dependent on altitude: from 5°C up on the paramo to 20-25°C in the Mindo/Tandayapa area.

Once we head into the lowlands of the east, we can expect hot and humid rainforest weather, with temperatures around 25-32°C, and the chance of rain at any time. Again, typically the heavy rain comes in the afternoon/evening.

Accommodation and local travel

Our accommodation during this holiday will be at good lodges all with en-suite accommodation. All the meals provided during the stay will be a mixture of **local and International dishes**. Requests for special diets can be accommodated.

We will ensure that our travelling is as comfortable as possible, using a small coach. However, some of the roads are in poor condition, and can be bumpy at times. We will take one internal flight to fly back from Coca to Quito.

Flights

The group flights are with KLM from Manchester. It is also possible to fly from Heathrow, Bristol, Newcastle, Norwich, Birmingham and Leeds Bradford: talk to us to discuss options. *Flight times are yet to be released for 2018 but are likely to be similar to the following:*

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 4th January | Depart Manchester 05.55, arrive Amsterdam 08.20 |
| | Depart Amsterdam 10.15, arrive Quito 16.15 |
| 20th January | Depart Quito 17.35, arrive Amsterdam 13.40 (27th) |
| 21st January | Depart Amsterdam 16.25, arrive Manchester 16.40 |

TO BOOK

Contact us to check availability and reserve a place. Complete the Booking Form and send to Sunvil Holidays (CAA-ATOL Licence 808, ABTA V6218), our tour operator, with your deposit. All details about booking are given in the Booking Pack.

**DEPOSIT PER PERSON £1200,
SECOND INSTALLMENT ON CONFIRMATION OF HOLIDAY £1300
BALANCE DUE BY 5th October 2017**

INCLUDED: Return flight from Manchester to Quito. Local transport as specified in itinerary, including internal flight from Coca to Quito. 16 night's accommodation, full board basis (breakfast, lunch and dinner). Entrance fees except during any optional sightseeing. Services of leader and guides.

NOT INCLUDED: Refreshments. Gratuities. Travel insurance.

WILDLIFE TRAVEL

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