



PANAMA BIRDING HIGHLIGHTS & HARPY EAGLE QUEST

Lahontan Audubon Society

December 3 - 13, 2024 & May 18-28, 2025

Panama has a wealth of biodiversity in its lush rainforests, verdant wetlands, cloud forests, coastal plains, and Panama Canal area. Birders from all over the world "flock" to Panama to explore and enjoy its natural history and abundant opportunities for birding over 1,000 species including the opportunity to see the rare and majestic Harpy Eagle. The Panama Birding Highlights and Harpy Eagle Quest birding trip offered to LAS through Crescentia Expeditions is an opportunity for enthusiastic birders of intermediate or advanced levels to experience a diversity of neotropical bird species, ecological zones, the Panama Canal, and search for the iconic Harpy Eagle.



ITINERARY:

Day 1: Arrive at Tocumen International airport. After clearing customs you will be met by a local guide and then transferred to the hotel. The hotel grounds offer birding opportunities for some of the more common species like Red-crowned Woodpecker, Crimson-backed Tanager, Whooping Motmot, Blue-gray Tanager, Thick-billed Euphonia and others. This evening we'll gather for an orientation meeting followed by a welcome dinner.

[Overnight Hotel Riande Airport](#) - D -

Day 2: During these first 3 full days, we'll be exploring various habitats, mainly rain forest, hotel grounds and gardens as well as some ponds and rivers while enjoying birding and accommodations in the famous Canopy Tower, a former US Air Force radar tower in the midst of Soberania National Park. We have an early morning departure today for birding in the Gamboa area and at the Metropolitan Natural Park. After lunch we'll visit Miraflores Locks in the Panama Canal area to learn about this important landmark and hopefully see some ships passing through. Later in the afternoon we'll check into the Canopy Tower. Specialties for this day include Forest Elaenia, White-tailed Trogon, White-vented Plumeleteer, Fulvous-vented Euphonia, Rosy Thrush-Tanager, Lance-tailed Manakin, Violet-bellied Hummingbird among many others.

[Overnight Canopy Tower](#) - BLD -

Day 3: We enjoy early coffee and birding from the Canopy Tower. Our field trip today includes Pipeline Road, Panama Rainforest Discovery Center, Ammo Ponds and Chagres River. We lunch at a local restaurant then return to the Canopy Tower near the end of the day. Today we'll be looking for highly sought-after species such as Pheasant Cuckoo, Black-breasted Puffbird Blue Cotinga, Rufous-crested Coquette, Rufescent Tiger-Heron, Crimson-crested Woodpecker Lesser Kiskadee, Black-tailed Trogon, Great Jacamar and more.

[Overnight Canopy Tower](#) - BLD -

Day 4: Today we explore Plantation Road, Semaphore Hill Road and other nearby hotspots for new species. We'll continue searching for specialties such as Brownish Twistwing, Olivaceous Flatbill, Yellow-rumped Cacique, Slaty-backed Forest-Falcon, Golden-fronted Greenlet and much more as well as becoming more proficient at identifying the birds from the previous days. We complete our final checklist for this amazing birding area.

[Overnight Canopy Tower](#) - BLD -

Day 5-6-7-8-9: We depart after breakfast at the Canopy Tower to the famous Canopy Camp Darién, where we will spend the following 5 nights. At Canopy Camp Darién we will enjoy comfortable, large, safari-style tent accommodations, each with full-size beds, screens, private bathroom facilities with refreshing showers, flush toilets, electricity from solar panels, and fans. This is an all-inclusive stay with both morning and afternoon guided birding trips. The drive to Canopy Camp Darién is in the range of 4 to 5 hours along the Pan-American Highway. Our drive includes many stops for birding in places such as Bayano Lake Area and Torti and of course for lunch!

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At the Canopy Camp Darién, our local guides will work closely with our guide Mario to find the regional specialties and navigate whatever the weather presents us. The itinerary, therefore, is very flexible and adjustments will be made according to the bird activity and current conditions. Some of the locations that could be included are the Canopy Camp Grounds, Nando's Trail, El Salto Road, Tierra Nueva Foundation, Quebrada Felix, Aligandi, San Francisco Reserve and others.

During our stay in the Darién Area, we will focus on the impressive number of specialties, many of them with close affinity to Northern South American species. Some samples are: Cocoi Heron, Pied Water-Tyrant, Black Antshrike, One-colored Becard, Golden-collared Manakin, Little Cuckoo, Barred Puffbird, Gray-cheeked Nunlet, White-headed Wren, Golden-green Woodpecker and large raptors such as Crested and Solitary Eagles.



GRAY-CHEEKED NUNLET



HARPY EAGLE

The Canopy Camp team communicates the following: *"Darién is a stronghold for Harpy Eagles and other large forest raptors, and holds Central America's largest population of this rare and majestic bird. If there is a site available to visit, whether it be a nest site or a fledged juvenile in a reliable location, it will be included in the itinerary."* So one of our days there will be spent on a Harpy Eagle quest. Harpy Eagles live in remote mature forest, and a full day trip is required to visit sites available. We will keep you posted as we get closer to the designated date for this outing.

At the end of each day, we will return to Canopy Camp Darién to enjoy our dinner, review our checklist, and treasure our unique stay amongst one of the most remote, diverse, and least explored places in the world.

[Overnight Canopy Camp Darién](#) - BLD -



DUSKY-BACKED JACAMAR

Day 10: This day we begin our return to Panama City, arriving mid-afternoon. Time permitting, we will check some more birding locations along the way. We are staying at a conveniently located hotel near the airport. Our farewell checklist and dinner will be at a local restaurant.

[Overnight Hotel Riande Airport](#) - D -1

Day 11: After breakfast we transfer to Tocumen International Airport for returning flights, having seen some amazing birds, made new friends, and looking forward to our next birding adventure.

During our stay at the Canopy Tower and the Canopy Camp we'll be visiting numerous amazing birding sites which will involve early departures and the means of transportation will vary from vans to pick-up trucks to canoes in the case of Darien. Also as part of our activities we will need to walk on uneven terrain and generally under hot and humid conditions. For all the outings we will be assisted with water, cold beverages and snacks.



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Acommodations description:



Riande Airport Hotel is conveniently located 5 minutes from the Tocumen airport. The hotel offers amenities like swimming pool, air conditioned rooms and open areas for birding.

RIANDE AIRPORT HOTEL



The Canopy Tower is a one-of-a-kind ecolodge – as a former US Air Force radar tower, its rooms are like no other. Twelve rooms are precisely arranged on two floors with spectacular views of the rainforest out every window, and the observation deck rises to 50 feet to offer the best views of the forest canopy.

CANOPY TOWER



The Canopy Camp has eight African Safari-style tents. Each tent is raised on its own sturdy platform above the ground, and has a private bathroom just a few steps away from the tent entrance. The tents are well-spaced and the lush tropical plants ensure privacy.

CANOPY CAMP

The tour includes:

- Professional Naturalist & Birding Guides services throughout the program.
- Coach transportation throughout the program (Airport pick-up and drop-off included).
- Purified Water, non-alcoholic beverages, snacks
- All meals starting with dinner on day 1, ending with breakfast on day 11 (B-L-D)
- All lodging in standard double occupancy starting with day 1, ending with day 11
- All entrance fees and excursions.
- Updated Panama's Bird Check-list.
- Gratuities
- Donation to Lahontan Audubon Society

Not included:

- Airline ticket
- Travel insurance
- Alcoholic beverages & personal expenses

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For information please contact Kath Giel:

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Price:

\$4900 / Single Supplement \$750



CRIMSON-CRESTED WOODPECKER

WHITE-EARED CONEBILL



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CUSTOMIZED NATURAL HISTORY, EDUCATIONAL & BIRDING TOURS

