



2027

EcoTravel

Overnight Natural History Tours and Day Trips

Guatemala: Birds and Mayan Ruins

March 14 - 22, 2027



Overview

The tiny country of Guatemala, with its ancient Mayan culture and history, volcanic vistas, and incredible birdlife, is a dream come true for adventure travelers. Guatemala is home to more than 700 species of birds, many of which are restricted to northern Central America. Travel from cloud forest to shade-grown coffee plantations, from tropical dry forest to tropical rain forests, from its Pacific slopes to the central highlands, to search out Guatemala's many regionally endemic species. The Tikal portion of the trip opens views into the Mayan past as you witness pyramids nestled within tropical splendor.

Guatemala has embraced ecotourism and invited the world. Its unique history and geography, combined with a modern tourist infrastructure, good roads, comfortable lodges, and inviting food, have made Guatemala a premier destination: a colorful weaving of indigenous culture, historic cities, mysterious ruins, and awe-inspiring wildlife. Guatemala also features volcanoes, incredible scenery, fabulous textiles, colorful markets, and what many have called the best pre-Mayan ruins in the world, Tikal, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Don't miss out on a trip to remember!

Join us as we return to Guatemala in search of iconic birds such as Horned Guan and Azure-rumped Tanager, while also taking time to visit the legendary Mayan ruins of Tikal.

Climate

Temperature and Season

February and March are the heart of the dry season in Guatemala. This doesn't mean that there's no rain, just that it's unlikely. Temperatures can be expected to be hot and humid, especially in the lowlands where Tikal is located. Temperatures range from upper 60s to mid 90s in the lowlands, with cooler weather expected in mountain areas.

Elevation

5,000 – 9,500 feet above sea level

Accommodation

Lodging is in local accommodations, with private rooms and en suite bathrooms. At Tikal, the hotel is located within National Park boundaries.

Pace and Physical Difficulty

This trip is at a casual pace, with moderate walking. An optional morning hike for Horned Guan is strenuous and requires decent mobility. Travelers opting to not take part in the hike will have the morning to relax on the hotel grounds..

Birding is at a casual pace, with the focus being on the regional specialties, especially those restricted to northern Central America, while also enjoying the local history.



Itinerary

Day 1

Departing home airports, we'll meet in Guatemala and embark on the approximately 90-minute transfer to our hotel in Antigua. We'll get to know each other over a Welcome Dinner before getting well-deserved rest before the exciting adventure ahead.

Night: Antigua

Meals: D

Day 2

In the early morning, we'll head towards San Cristobal El Alto, where we'll enjoy breakfast at a local restaurant with breathtaking views of the surrounding volcanoes. After enjoying our meal, we'll head to Finca El Pilar, one of the top birding destinations in Guatemala.

With three trails to explore, surrounded by organic coffee plantations, visitors can explore nearly 8,000 feet of elevational change. However, the main draw to the property are its impressive hummingbird feeders. Some of the species we hope to have buzzing around our heads include **Rivoli's Hummingbird**, **Green-throated Mountain-gem**, **White-eared Hummingbird**, **Rufous Sabrewing**, and **Azure-crowned Hummingbird**. When not enjoying the feeders, we hope to spot northern Central American specialties, including **Singing Quail**, **Blue-throated Motmot**, **Guatemalan Flicker**, and **Bushy-crested Jay**.

In the afternoon, we'll enjoy a cultural tour of Antigua, where we'll visit Central Park, the main cathedral, Calle del Arco, and La Merced Church.

Night: Antigua

Meals: BLD

Day 3

We'll depart the hotel bright and early, arriving in Tecpán, where we'll eat a delicious breakfast.

After filling our stomachs, we'll explore the local nature reserve in search of more regional endemics. If we missed Blue-throated Motmot the previous day, we have another great chance at connecting with the species here. Other targets include the breathtaking **Pink-headed Warbler**, **Guatemalan Tyrannulet**, **Amethyst-throated Mountain-gem**, and **Rufous-browed Wren**. Migrant species, preparing to embark on their journey back north to their breeding grounds, include **Townsend's**, **Wilson's**, **Black-and-white**, and **Red-faced warblers**.

In the afternoon, we'll travel towards Lake Atitlan, where we'll spend the afternoon birding.

Night: Santiago Atitlan

Meals: BLD



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Rufous Sabrewing © Charles J. Sharp CC BY-SA 4.0



Pink-headed Warbler © Blair Dudeck CC BY 4.0

Day 4

In the morning, we'll take a boat trip towards San Pedro La Laguna, where waiting pick-up trucks will take us up the rugged roads to the entrance of the Paquisis volcano.

Here, we'll start a hike for one of Guatemala's iconic birds: the **Horned Guan**. This endangered species, with its iconic red horn, is difficult to see, but the slopes of Paquisis offer one of the best chances at connecting with it. Other species we'll keep our eyes peeled for include **Chestnut-sided Shrike-Vireo**, **Mountain Trogon**, **White-faced Ground-Sparrow**, and **Bar-winged Oriole**.

In the early afternoon, we'll head back to the hotel and reconnect with those who chose to relax instead of taking part in the morning adventure. We'll head towards our next hotel, just over an hour away from Lake Atitlan. With a varying topography, the reserve is critically essential for protecting habitats important for endangered and endemic species.

Night: Los Tarrales
Meals: BLD

Day 5

We'll spend the morning exploring the highlands of the reserve, where we'll search for **Azure-rumped Tanager**, a highly sought-after species, along with **Emerald-chinned Hummingbird**, **Tody Motmot**, **Pacific Parakeet**, **Long-tailed Manakin**, and **Gray-crowned Ground-Sparrow**.

After lunch, we'll explore the area around the lagoon, where we'll target **White-bellied Chachalaca**, **Yellow-naped Amazon**, **Ivory-billed Woodcreeper**, **Yellow-winged Tanager**, and **Rufous-breasted Spinetail**.

Night: Los Tarrales
Meals: BLD

Day 6

In the morning, we'll explore yet another section of the reserve, where **Highland Guan**, **Cinnamon Hummingbird**, and **Rufous-backed Wren** are all possible.

After breakfast, we'll pack our bags and check out of the hotel, heading to the airport to take our short, domestic flight to Peten. Upon arrival, we'll transfer to our hotel, located inside the boundaries of Tikal National Park.

Night: Tikal National Park
Meals: BLD

Day 7

Within the grounds of Tikal National Park, among the ancient monuments that stand as remnants of a once-powerful kingdom, a new variety of species awaits us. As we search along the trails, we'll target interesting species including **Ocellated Turkey**, **Orange-breasted Falcon**, **Yucatan Jay**, **Black Catbird**, **Rose-throated Tanager**, **Great Curassow**, **White-fronted Amazon**, **Crested Eagle**, **Slaty-tailed Trogon**, **Keel-billed Toucan**, **Chestnut-**



Collared Aracari © Matthew Bell/CT Audubon



Cinnamon Hummingbird © Charles J. Sharp CC BY-SA 4.0



Keel-billed Toucan © Matthew Bell/CT Audubon

colored Woodpecker, Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher, White-bellied Wren, Montezuma Oropendola, and many hummingbirds among others.

After returning to the lodge for lunch and a short afternoon break, we'll take an archaeological tour through the ruins to learn more about the Mayan culture.

Night: Tikal National Park
Meals: BLD

Day 8

We'll have a second morning to explore the national park, searching for any species we may have missed. After enjoying a final lunch in the park, we'll begin our transfer back towards the airport with a stop at the local lake for any new species to add to our trip list.

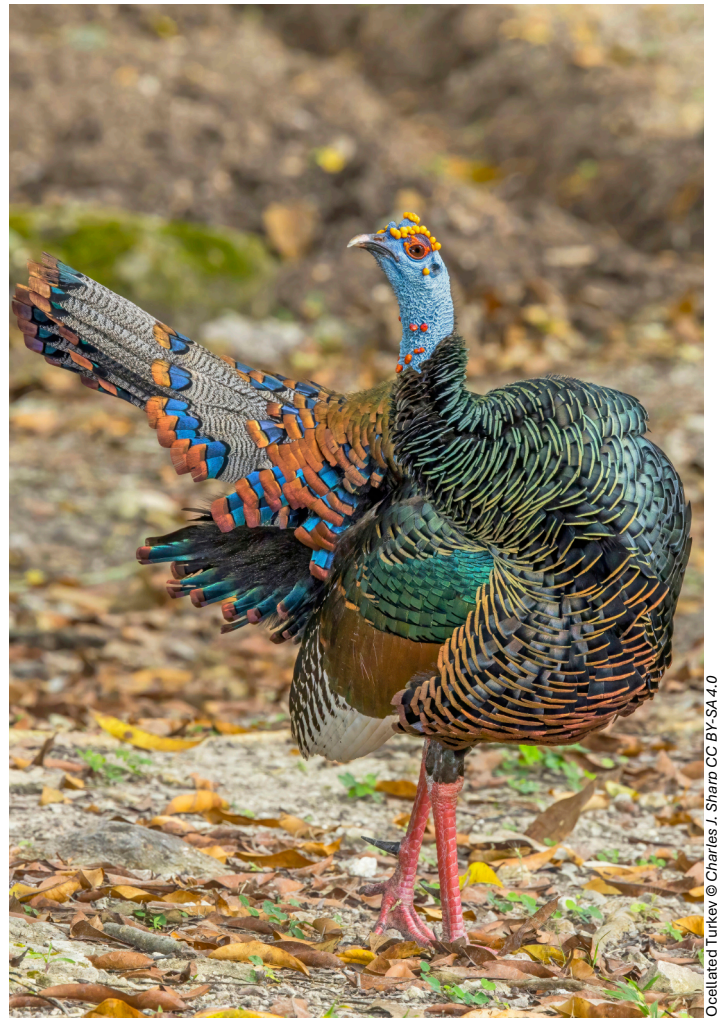
After our evening flight back to Guatemala City, we'll enjoy a final dinner together as a group, reminiscing over the incredible sites and sights we've experienced throughout our adventure.

Night: Guatemala City
Meals: BLD

Day 9

After breakfast, we'll head back to the airport and begin our journeys home, with countless images to search through.

Meals: B



Ocellated Turkey © Charles J. Sharp CC BY-SA 4.0



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General Information

Tour Cost: \$4,998.

Members: \$4,498.

The above cost is based upon a minimum number of six paying participants traveling together. If there are fewer participants, there will be a small group supplement. Per person Tour Cost is based on two people sharing a room.

Single Room Supplement: \$415.

All rates are calculated at the time of publication and are subject to change due to conditions out of our control (i.e. hotel rates). All passengers will be notified if changes in pricing occur.

Tour Includes:

Accommodations are based on double occupancy, one or two beds. Meals are included as outlined in the itinerary section (B=Breakfast/L=Lunch/D=Dinner). Additional charges for meals may apply if needs are out of the standard offerings. Entrance fees to national parks and sightseeing as specified in the itinerary.

Not Included:

Taxes; costs of obtaining passports and visas; airfare; baggage fees; personal expenses such as room service, beverages, laundry, gratuities for the local guide and housekeeping; personal communications; airport taxes; tax increases or new taxes charged for services that were not taxed at the time the booking was made; excess mileage carried out at the request of the passenger; sightseeing or meals not specified in the itinerary; personal insurance coverage (strongly recommended); and transfers to and from your home airport.

Leader

Matt Bell is a graduate of The Ohio State University with BS degrees in both earth sciences and evolution/ecology. He started birding in May 2013 and became more seriously involved after a trip to Costa Rica. Since then he helped revive The Ornithology Club at Ohio State and assisted as a volunteer guide for The Biggest Week in American Birding and the Yellow Rails and Rice Festival. He absolutely loves participating in citizen science, tour guiding, chasing rare birds in his free time, and meeting fellow birders from around the globe. Most of all, Matt enjoys sharing his passion for birds and conservation with others and never shies away at taking the time to help beginners start their explorations of the avian world. Matt is the Assistant Director of Ecotravel and leads day trips and overnight tours.



Rufous-collared Sparrow © Matthew Bell/CT Audubon



Rufous-tailed Hummingbird © Matthew Bell/CT Audubon



Red-legged Honeycreeper © Matthew Bell/CT Audubon

General Terms & Conditions

Reservations

Early reservations with deposit are essential to guarantee your booking. A **\$1,500 deposit, per person**, applicable to final payment, is required to reserve space on this trip. Reservations made within 120 days of departure require full payment along with the formal Registration Forms. Final payment for programs is due 120 days prior to departure. Payments can be made by personal check, money order, certified check, or a cashier's check.

Rates and Fares

Prices are accurate as available at the time of publication. Prices do not include airfare unless otherwise stated. The Connecticut Audubon Society (CAS) reserves the right to alter quoted prices to reflect changes in airline fares, land service, or currency exchange rates. In the event that the number of participants is below the minimum required for the quoted price, a small group surcharge may be added.

Cancellation and Insurance

At the time the EcoTravel Office receives written notice that you must cancel your trip, the following cancellation fees will apply: Prior to 120 days from departure, your payments will be refunded minus **\$300 per person**. At 120 days and less, no refund is granted. NOTE: In addition to cancellation fees, airline tickets and deposits required to guarantee hotel rooms may be nonrefundable. The purchase of a general travel insurance plan covering baggage, accident/life, and trip cancellation is highly recommended. Give us a call and we can put you in touch with those providers. CAS reserve the right, if registration is insufficient or other reasons out of our control, to cancel, postpone, or offer the trip with a small group supplement. In the event that CAS cancels or postpones, those with reservations will be notified as soon as possible and a credit of payments will be held on file. The Connecticut Audubon Society is not responsible for the refund or credit of additional expenses incurred in preparation for a trip. Any "delay" or "postponing" of departure by tour participants is considered a cancellation and cancellation parameters will be apply relative to the 120-day window. There are no exceptions.

Responsibility

Payment of deposit represents and acceptance of the following terms and conditions by the purchaser: The Connecticut Audubon Society, its affiliates, and all cooperating airlines and agencies act only in the capacity of agents in all matters of transportation and tour operations, and their liability is limited to the terms of the airline tickets and land accommodation contracts. They are not responsible for any delays, inconveniences, accidents, expense, or mishap of any kind whatsoever resulting entirely or in part from the negligence of others or from causes beyond their control. They can accept no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, riot, war, pandemic, quarantine, or other causes. All such losses or expenses must be borne by the passengers, as the tour rate provides for arrangements only as describe in the tour brochure. The right is reserved to change tour leaders, substitute hotels, of similar category, and to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary or caused by unforeseen circumstances. Baggage is at the owner's risk entirely. No refund can be made for unused hotel rooms, meals, and sightseeing tours unless arrangements are made at time of booking. The right is reserved to decline any person as a tour member for any reason which affects the operation of the tour or the rights, welfare, or enjoyment of the other tour members. Any refund of the recoverable land tour services in the limit of The Connecticut Audubon Society and its affiliates' liability.

To make a Reservation:

Send the above stated deposit to hold your reservation. Nonmembers, please add \$28 (65+), \$45 (single), or \$58 (family) for your annual membership and to take advantage of the member discount.

Send your name(s), address, phone number, email address, name of the trip, your deposit, and membership fee (if applicable) to:

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