



**COLOMBIA: ANDEAN ENDEMIC AND SPECTACLED BEAR
TOUR-SPECIFIC INFORMATION**



Yellow-eared Parrot is restricted to Colombia and Ecuador (photo Alejandro Grajales).

**PLEASE CLICK HERE FOR GENERAL INFORMATION PERTAINING TO OUR
COLOMBIA TOURS IN GENERAL**

This itinerary has been designed to provide you with a thirteen-day tour across the central and eastern Andes of Colombia on an exciting route looking for a whole bunch of endemic species, mostly restricted to the Magdalena Valley and the Bogotá area. You will have the chance to explore some of the highlights surrounding Medellín including the picturesque town of Jardín where we can visit what is perhaps the most impressive **Andean Cock-of-the-Rock** lek in the whole of the Andes. Other regionally restricted endemics that we hope to encounter include the Endangered **Yellow-eared Parrot**, **Red-bellied Grackle** and other endemics of the Magdalena Valley such as **Beautiful Woodpecker**, **White-mantled Barbet**, **Antioquia Bristle Tyrant** and **Sooty Ant Tanager**. Later we will focus on the eastern Andes exploring the paramos of Bogotá looking for the endemic **Green-bearded Helmetcrest**, **Apolinar's Wren**, **Silvery-throated Spinetail**, **Noble Snipe** and **Bogota Rail**. We will visit an incredible set of hummingbird feeders which should provide stunning views of species such as **Blue-throated Starfrontlet**, **Indigo-capped Hummingbird** and **Ruby-Topaz Hummingbird**.

ARRIVAL INFORMATION

Our tour will start in Medellín's Jose María Cordova International Airport (MDE) which can be reached by flights from all over Colombia and directly from some US international airports as well as from Panama City (Panama). If traveling from Europe, you will need to fly via the Colombian city of Bogotá. Please consult your travel agent to book your most convenient flight.

Your Birding Ecotours leader will be waiting for you at Medellín airport and will then transfer you to your hotel. Please remember to keep your luggage tags, as they are required to exit the terminal at the airport. Please be aware that most international flights arrive in Medellín in the afternoon, so we don't have any birding activities planned for Day 1. In case you arrive on an early flight, you will be transferred to the hotel but will have to wait until check-in is available. If you would like an early check-in, this may incur an extra cost from the hotel; this cost is not included in the Birding Ecotours tour price.

When filling out the customs declaration form, please use the below address for the hotel:

Hotel Extremadura, Cra. 32 N. 71sur 220, Sabaneta, Antioquia, Colombia
Phone: +57 4378 0218

DEPARTURE INFORMATION

Our tour will end in Bogotá after a wonderful thirteen days in Colombia. After a final morning of birding, our tour representatives will transfer you to the Bogotá El Dorado International Airport (BOG), from where you can take international connections and flights back home.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS AND PACE

We grade this trip as easy to moderate. Most of the birding involves walking along roads, although some of them may lead slightly up and down hills. We will do very few trails (only if necessary). Keep in mind that as is usual on birding tours, we need to be awake very early in the morning, and predawn starts are in order each day. We normally spend the entire morning birding in the field, return to the lodge for lunch, and then rest a little, before continuing our birding in the afternoon. Your guide will sometimes invite you to search for owls at night, but this is an optional activity that you can skip if you feel tired. Some people may prefer to rest and rather skip birding in the afternoon; this can be done at those lodges when we are staying more than one night. When we do birding stops while traveling from location to location, people who feel tired do not have to follow the group and can certainly remain in the vehicle.

This tour has been customized to ensure we spend two or three nights at a few places, which allows us more time to enjoy these destinations and reduces the stress of having to pack and re-pack every day. However, Colombia is a big country and the tour includes some unavoidable, lengthy drives which will allow you to enjoy the interesting countryside and maximize chances for unexpected birds along the way.

We will stay at the best accommodations available, but not all lodges provide facilities such as air conditioning or heating systems (although the latter is almost non-existent in Colombia). Other accommodations provide fans instead.

We think this trip might be difficult for people with back, walking, and balance problems or for those who are not used to a birding trip with regular early starts involved.

ATM MACHINES

ATM machines will only be available in the cities of Medellín and Bogotá.

ALTITUDE

We will reach some high elevations on this trip with a maximum of 13,100 feet (4,000 meters) at the Sumapaz Lake. Bogotá city is located at 8,500 feet (2,600 meters) above sea level.

WEATHER

We ask you to be ready for all kinds of weather during this trip.

The Magdalena Valley including Rio Claro, Laguna Guarinoncito and Bolombolo are hot, with temperatures reaching between 86 – 90°F (30 – 32°C). Please wear clothes in which you feel most comfortable for this kind of weather. We highly recommend using sunscreen and bringing a light-colored hat or cap.

Even when it is sunny in the mornings, the temperatures can be cool at night in Medellín and Jardín de Antioquia.

In the eastern Andes while birding in the paramos near Bogotá the coldest temperatures can drop to 44°F (7°C) at both Chinganza and Sumapaz.

LAUNDRY

Laundry services are only available at Hacienda Balandú, Los Colores Eco-Parque and Hotel Habel in Bogotá. Laundry fees are not included in the tour price.

ACCOMMODATION

Note on showers: Hotel Eco-Parque Los Colores (Magdalena Valley; x 2 nights) does not provide hot showers, however the weather is generally humid and hot here.

TRANSPORT

We will have a private van for the whole tour with plenty of room for everybody. However, we might have to divide the group in two for the transfer from Jardín de Antioquia to the Yellow-eared Parrot Reserve and for the short drive downhill to the bottom of the Chicaque. We will use 4x4 jeeps for both of these trips.

