



## PERU GENERAL INFORMATION



*The highly desired Andean Cock-of-the-rock can be seen on our Peru birding tours.*

Peru is the second-most bird diverse country on the planet, with 1,879 recorded to date! This remarkable country list is due to the amazing and varied geography of Peru. Peru plays host to over 1,200 miles (~2,000 kilometers) of Pacific Ocean coastline which rises to heights of over 18,000 feet (6,000 meters) elevation in the snow-capped Andes Mountains, the longest mountain chain in the world. Dropping down from the roof of the Andes, habitats change into lush montane cloud forest and finally into the vast Amazon rainforest which borders Brazil.

Birds are simply everywhere in this country and the most adventurous travelers and birders will enjoy looking for an amazing set of birds such as **Andean Cock-of-the Rock**, **Andean Condor**, **Inca Tern**, **Giant Hummingbird**, **Marvelous Spatuletail**, **Scarlet-banded Barbet**, **Cordillera Azul Antbird**, and **Long-whiskered Owlet**, to name a few.

## PASSPORT AND VISA

To enter Peru a passport valid for at least six months beyond your planned departure from Peru is required. We recommend having a few blank pages as some countries require a full page for the stamp in your passport. Please also bring a few photocopies of your passport and details of your consular representation in Peru. Please check with your consular representation whether you require a visa to visit Peru.

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

We strongly encourage you to purchase trip cancellation or interruption insurance in case you have to cancel, due to illness or for any other reason, as tour payments are non-refundable as per [our terms and conditions](#). **We advise you to get a plan that will cover all your medical care and evacuation back to your country of residence.**

## CRIME

All areas of the Peruvian countryside that we visit on our tours are considered safe, and you will find that Peruvians everywhere are friendly and helpful. Big cities such as Lima, Trujillo and Chiclayo, however, suffer the same problems as large cities around the world, and you should take extra precautions to safeguard personal belongings such as money, passports, and optical equipment. It is best to avoid walking at night in large cities without informing your tour leader, and please do not walk around big cities displaying binoculars and expensive cameras.

Recent press reports have highlighted local crime, which has increased in the country due to the presence of foreign criminal gangs, however, their focus is more on the blackmailing of prosperous small and medium business enterprises. We take all due precautions, in terms of where we go and what times we are out birding on the roads. We have not experienced any incidents on any kind on our Peru bird tours over the last 20 years.

## HEALTH, VACCINATIONS, AND MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Please refer to the [Center for Disease Control \(CDC\) website](#) for health advice (including malaria and vaccination advice). Please also consult with your physician or your local travel clinic for recommendations. While a yellow fever vaccination is not a requirement for entry into Peru, unless you are arriving from an infected area in another country, it is a good idea for most people traveling to third world or tropical countries, and the vaccination is now valid for life. There is no risk of Malaria in most of the areas we visit during our Peru birding tours, but we ask you to stick to the latest CDC advice.

Peru has experienced a recent outbreak of Dengue fever, which seems to be focused in some rural areas of the tropical lowlands. To help reduce the likelihood of insect bites, we recommend using insect repellents, long-sleeved shirts and trousers. To date, we have not experienced any Dengue fever problems during or after our tours.

Diarrhea is always a tricky hazard when traveling in South America. Even though many travelers escape untouched, we ask you to consult your doctor and bring some medication to treat diarrhea (e.g. Imodium or Ciprofloxacin). We recommend only drinking bottled water and not eating from street shops, if you are at all unsure of hygiene. As always, please follow your tour leader's advice.

We take responsibility for selecting where we go for meals and the food we prepare in the field. We ask you to clean your hands using hand sanitizer. Please note that the likely dramatic change from your normal diet may result in some mild stomach or digestive abnormalities that should disappear in a short time. Only when this problem is followed by nausea and/or even fever, may there be a real diarrhea problem. Again, please ask your doctor what they recommend is best for you.

Please let us know about any medical condition you have, such as diabetes, asthma, allergies, heart conditions, or knee problems. We ask you to please mention any phobias or anything else you think we should know prior to the start of the tour. This information will help us to take care of you and make suggestions, so you can enjoy your trip to the utmost.

## INSECTS

Insects should not be a big problem along most of our route, but we recommend that you wear loose-fitting long pants and long-sleeved shirts and keep insect repellent handy. Spraying your feet, socks, shoes, and the lower portion of your pants with insect repellent will help reduce any problems with chiggers. Chiggers are burrowing mites that occur in hot areas throughout the Americas. They occur on grass, and even though they do not spread any kind of disease, their bites produce long-term itching as an allergic reaction.

Please carry your own antihistamine drugs if you are allergic to insect stings/bites, such as from bees or wasps.

## POLITICAL DEMOSTRATIONS

In recent years, Peru has suffered diverse social demonstrations and riots, mainly organized by political parties and targeting the current administration, to damage the popularity of the government. Demonstrations may start out peacefully, but could turn violent, resulting in rioters creating barricades to block main roads and highways. Nevertheless, in 20 years of running tours in Peru, we have never experienced any situation that has put the safety of our tour participants or local staff at risk. These demonstrations are hard to predict but are generally more likely to occur during election periods. We will always have a “Plan B” in case a particular area is affected by social unrest. Fortunately, the political and socio-economic situation is currently (March 2025) stable across the country.

## FOOD AND WATER

Our Peru tours include meals, and we are well-known for taking good care of our clients while visiting Peru. Our meals are either a la carte or set menu while staying in full-board lodges. We can easily adjust to vegetarian options, however, we request that if you have other special dietary restrictions, that you please communicate with us about this prior to the tour. Please note that it is not common in Peru to consume beans daily, as in other countries in the region, including Brazil and Costa Rica.

Some of our lunches will be small picnic meals, after birding and before traveling to another location, especially on most days of our northern Peru itinerary. You will be well attended to by our staff while you continue birding in the field. To facilitate this, we work out a daily menu and buy supplies in advance. We therefore request that you let us know in advance about any dietary preferences or restrictions.

Bottled water is included during the trip, and you can fill your own bottles each time you need, including while out birding in the field, or to take water back to your room overnight. The lodges don't necessarily provide water to fill bottles. **Drinks, including soft drinks, fruit juices, alcoholic beverages, and bottled water (at restaurants) are not included in the tour price.**

## CURRENCY

We recommend carrying US dollars, although please do not bring US dollar bills that are damaged in any way (broken tips and edges, ink marks, pieces of tape, etc.). Most institutions and people do not accept US dollars that show this kind of damage. We cannot spend birding time looking for exchange institutions or commercial shops, unless close to our hotels. We recommend exchanging some US dollars or Euros at the airport on arrival.

Your holiday is an almost all-inclusive tour, so you only need money to cover personal expenses such as drinks, laundry services, phone calls from the hotels, bar expenses, souvenirs and gifts you want to take home, or any non-mandatory gratuities/tips for exceptional service. Tipping is OK in US\$ and Euros. We will let you know places where you can use your credit card for personal payments.

ATM machines are available in the larger cities and towns. Credit cards are accepted in most of the areas we visit during our tour, but not everywhere, especially in remote locations.

## **ELECTRICITY AND COMMUNICATION**

In Peru, power plugs and sockets (outlets) of type A, B and C are used. The standard voltage is 220 V. A surge protector is strongly recommended. We also recommend bringing more than one universal adaptor to fit your electric devices into all kinds of sockets. Devices working exclusively with 110V will need a power converter, not provided by hotels.

Some remote places, like Manu in southeastern Peru, still lack electricity. Please be aware of this before booking a tour with us, if you depend on medical devices requiring continuous electricity rather than rechargeable batteries (e.g., CPAP sleep apnea masks).

## **ACCOMMODATION**

We always do our best to choose the best accommodation available on our tours, to provide our clients with a great holiday. We use accommodation we consider comfortable but not luxurious. Our goal is not necessarily to provide fancy boutique accommodation, but more basic accommodation in areas near great birding and wildlife areas. When we have various options to choose from, we will choose better accommodation.

The lodges and hotel rooms can vary from basic to very pleasant, but always with private bathrooms and hot showers. In remote places, such as in the southern Amazon, air conditioning is not available and sometimes these areas lack electricity. Please check with us.

## **TOUR VEHICLE AND SEAT ROTATION**

For our Peru birding tours we mostly use vans (Mercedes Sprinters), however, we do occasionally switch to 4×4 vehicles when negotiating rougher sections of road.

At Birding Ecotours we employ a seat rotation policy on all our small-group set departure tours. This ensures that everybody has equal opportunities during the tour. Unfortunately, motion sickness will not excuse you from our seat rotation policy and thus, if you are prone to motion sickness, you should ensure you bring the necessary medication. We also require that you are fit and flexible enough to maneuver yourself to the back of the vehicle. Tour participants should also be mindful of what extra equipment they bring into the general seating area of the vehicle (rather than the luggage section) and should ensure they do not clog up general thoroughfare or extra seats with camera equipment, tripods, etc., from a comfort and health and safety point of view.

## **BIRDING ECOTOURS EMERGENCY CONTACT DETAILS**

Office: Cane +27-72-211-9863, Chris +44-7808-571-444

E-mail: [info@birdingecotours.com](mailto:info@birdingecotours.com) (which is checked almost daily)

## **FIELD GUIDES**

**Birds of Peru, revised and updated edition** (Schulenberg et al., 2010) - This is the most complete and up-to-date guide to the birds of Peru. Even though it covers over 1,800 species, this book is still easily portable.

## **USEFUL APPS AND WEBSITE RESOURCES**

Aves Vox – a good app that enables the downloading of bird songs and calls from the xeno-canto website onto your cell phone.

eBird – there is a wealth of information contained on this website and the mobile app is now excellent and useful too. Photo, video, and sound galleries are available for practically every species in the world through The Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Macaulay Library.

Merlin – an app that can help you identify birds by sight (from photos) and sound (from recordings) and is a useful tool to aid bird identification. The app gets expanded all the time with new data and regional information, so is worth keeping an eye on. We recommend downloading the West Indies pack for this tour.

IOC World Bird List – this website contains all the latest details on the world of global bird taxonomy. You can read about newly described species, splits (creation of a new species) and lumps (deletion of a species) of existing species, and plenty of other important information.