

Peru

Machu Picchu & the Cloud Forests & Lowlands of Manu

Saturday 30 October – Monday 15 November 2010

Leader: Colin Bushell

2010 Cost: **£4,399** single room supplement **£450**



This is a tour with the best that Peru has to offer! Leaving the misty coast behind we travel straight into the Andes and start with Andean waterfowl and the endemic hummingbird Bearded Mountaineer near Cusco. Then we travel into the cloud forests of Manu with superb mountain scenery and displaying Cock-of-the-Rock before sampling the immense biodiversity of the east slope of the Andean foothills as they meet the Amazonian lowlands. We will maximise our chances of seeing a wide range of species in the rainforests of Peru by visiting a macaw-lick, a canopy platform and an ox-bow lake. Birds are our focus but Giant Otters, Tapirs and even Jaguar (seen on a previous tour) live in these pristine forests. The Inca ruins of Machu Picchu would be a fitting finale to this exciting journey but there are still some amazing seabirds to be found near Lima on our route home. Throughout the tour Colin Bushell, a specialist in the birds and wildlife of Peru will be the leader. This will be Ornitholidays' 14th tour to this fascinating region.



Red-and-green Macaws at clay lick

ITINERARY

Days 1 & 2

We catch a scheduled flight from London to Lima. We arrive in Lima in the evening and transfer to our hotel in the Miraflores district for dinner. The next morning we make an early transfer to the airport to catch a flight to Cusco. On arrival in the Inca City we check into our hotel near the Plaza de Armas – the main square. We take a 45-minute journey to Huacarpay Lakes where we have a picnic lunch and then search the gullies for the Bearded Mountaineer – a hummingbird endemic to southern Peru. Other 'land birds' of interest here include Rusty-fronted Canastero and Streak-fronted Thornbird. The reed-fringed margins of the lake are the places to look for Plumbeous Rail, Wren-like Rushbird and the Many-coloured Rush-Tyrant. Wildfowl present may include Andean Duck, Speckled and Cinnamon Teal and Yellow-billed Pintail. With luck we may catch a glimpse of a Cinereous Harrier as it coasts over the reed bed flushing flocks of Puna Ibis. As the afternoon draws in we make our way back to Cusco for dinner.

Days 3 to 5

This morning we make our way along the Manu Road. Our first stops will be to look for Chestnut-breasted Mountain-Finch and Creamy-crested Spinetail and as we progress into Manu the habitat changes from arid, scrubby hillsides to humid cloud forest. Birds we may see here include Moustached Flowerpiercer, Grey-breasted Mountain-Toucan, Hooded and Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanagers, Black-and-chestnut Eagle, Amethyst-throated Sunangel, Mountain Cacique and Golden-headed Quetzal. One of our lodges simply has to be the best place in the world to see lekking Andean Cock-of-the-Rock! As well as being able to watch this stunning cotinga on its display grounds we could see Crested Quetzal, Highland Motmot, Yungas Manakin, the rare Yellow-rumped Antwren and the recently described Cinnamon-faced Tyrannulet. Relaxing by the lodge garden at lunchtime can prove very productive with Versicolored Barbet often coming to the fruit on the bird table. Hummingbirds on the feeders may include Violet-fronted Brilliant and Many-spotted Hummingbird and the flowering bushes can attract Green Hermit, Booted Racket-tail, Speckled Hummingbird and Long-tailed Sylph. As night falls Lyre-tailed Nightjar or Rufescent Screech-Owl may be heard. We will be very busy here for sure!

Days 6 to 8

As we drive down to Atalaya on the banks of the Alto Madre de Dios the habitat changes



Machu Picchu



Black-fronted Nunbird

somewhat as does the avifauna. Lowland birds such as Speckled Chachalaca and Greater Yellow-headed Vulture begin to show but less common birds like Black-backed Tody-Flycatcher and Peruvian Piedtail may be found. Nearing Atalaya we look for Fasciated Tiger-Herons feeding by the river before crossing to Amazonia Lodge, our home for three nights. This friendly, family-run lodge is a favourite of most visitors to Manu and the mix of habitats here has produced one of the largest bird lists for any lodge in the world with over 600 species recorded! We could see Manu Antbird, Bamboo Antshrike, Red-billed Scythebill and Rufous-capped Nunlet. River-edge habitats here may produce Scarlet-hooded Barbet or Spangled Cotinga. The forest trails are good for Razor-billed Curassow and in the past we have even seen Rufous-vented Ground-Cuckoo here. As well as being a good night birding spot, the clearing near the lodge is a great place to observe 'hummers' like Rufous-crested Coquette and Amethyst Woodstar as well as Masked Crimson Tanager on the bird table. The floodplain forest has a few leks of Band-tailed Manakins and even Fiery-capped is possible.

Days 9 to 12

A boat journey takes us from Amazonia Lodge into the lowlands and to Manu Wildlife Centre. Regular species on the river include Large-billed and Amazon Terns, Great Black-Hawk, Sand-coloured Nighthawks, Capped Heron and Horned Screammers. Scarlet and Blue-and-yellow Macaws coast over the forest canopy with noisy groups of Mealy and Blue-headed Parrots. From time to time we see Orinoco Goose, Muscovy Duck, Jabiru, Roseate Spoonbill and there are usually a few Black Skimmers to liven proceedings. From our base at Manu Wildlife Centre we have access to many different habitats using our boats. We spend time at a canopy tower accessed by a spiral metal stairway on at least one morning. Canopy flocks may include Sclater's Antwren, Chestnut-winged Foliage-gleaner and Lineated Woodcreeper, Yellow-shouldered Grosbeak and a multitude of tanagers and honeycreepers. Some of the more interesting and unusual species we will be searching for in the bamboo include - Rufous-headed Woodpecker, Manu Antbird, Flammulated Bamboo-Tyrant, Brown-rumped Foliage-gleaner, Large-headed and Dusky-tailed Flatbills, Peruvian Recurvebill, Ihering's and Ornate Antwrens, White-lined and Striated Antbirds. Some of the scarcer forest species we will be on the lookout for

that we have seen here previously include Rufous-fronted Antthrush, Pale-winged Trumpeter, Sunbittern, Pavonine Quetzal, Striolated Puffbird, Cream-coloured Woodpecker, Striped Woodhaunter, White-throated Antbird and Black-spotted Bare-eye. We will also visit ox-bow lakes where we may see Hoatzin, Sungrebe, Silvered and Band-tailed Antbirds, Amazonian Streaked Antwren and Chestnut Jacamar. We may be lucky enough to see Giant Otter here too. Night birding may produce Great and Common Potoos, Amazonian Pygmy Owl, Spectacled Owl and Ocellated Poorwill.

Day 13

We make an early start and take a boat journey down the Madre de Dios River to Laberinto. On the way we look out for riverside birds. On leaving the boat we take a 40-minute bus ride into the bustling frontier town of Puerto Maldonado where we spend the night.

Days 14 & 15

We have time for some early morning birding and we should see Red-breasted Blackbird and some open country birds like Grassland Sparrow, Grey-breasted Crane, Black-faced Tanager, Barred Antshrike and Crested Caracara. Our flight takes us to Cusco where we have the remainder of the day to look around the historical city where we stay for two nights. The next day we visit the celebrated Inca ruins of Machu Picchu. We leave Cusco early in the morning for the three and a half hour journey to Machu Picchu. From the train we will almost certainly see Torrent Duck and White-capped Dipper on the Urubamba River and get closer looks as we leave the train. Arriving at the ruins, birding takes a back seat for once as we are taken on a guided tour of this famous place but we will take time to look for Inca Wren and Green-and-white Hummingbird – both Peruvian endemics. In the late afternoon we take the train back to Cusco.

Days 16 & 17

We transfer to the airport for our flight to Lima, where we visit the nearby Villa Marshes just outside the city to look for Great Grebe and Peruvian Thick-knee. We can see many seabirds here as well including Peruvian Booby and Guanay Cormorant passing along the coast with huge Peruvian Pelicans. We have day rooms available for changing before we return to the airport later in the afternoon for our flight to London, where we arrive the next day.

Outline Itinerary

Day 1	Fly to Lima
Day 2	Cusco
Days 3-5	Manu Road
Days 6-8	Amazonia Lodge
Days 9-12	Manu Wildlife Centre
Day 13	Puerto Maldonado
Days 14-15	Cusco
Day 16	Depart Lima
Day 17	Arrive London

Party Size

Maximum of 10 clients.

Accommodation

Comfortable accommodation has been arranged throughout the tour at lodges and hotels, with private facilities. However single rooms are not available at Manu Wildlife Centre and facilities are shared at Amazonia Lodge. There is a lack of electricity at some lodges.

Transport

By private coach, train and motorised canoes.

Includes

All flights, meals, accommodation, transport, entrance fees, services of the leaders, airport taxes and tips.


Gradings

 Good

 400


 Cool to Hot


 High

 Special

 Moderate

 Good

 Moderate

 Scheduled



Tamandua