



IN CONJUNCTION WITH



PANAMA

**CANOPY TOWER & CANOPY
LODGE**

26 JUNE – 5 JULY 2018

\$3295 PER PERSON SHARING

**(SEE 'IMPORTANT NOTES' BELOW FOR
SINGLE SUPPLEMENT DETAILS)**

CANOPY CAMP EXTENSION

5-11 JULY 2018

\$2120 PER PERSON SHARING

\$300 SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

LEADERS: ADAM SELL, JOSH ENGEL, AND LOCAL GUIDES

INTRODUCTION

Panama is not only the gateway for commerce between oceans, it is also the bridge between two continents. This has created a melting pot of biodiversity with avifauna of both of North and South America, with many species limited to this region. With its incredible birding, wonderful accommodations, excellent infrastructure, and easy access from the United States, it offers perhaps the best combination of a great destination for an introduction to the tropics and a place where the seasoned world birder can go to see a blast of new birds in an incredible setting. Check out the detailed itinerary to get a taste of the mouth-watering array of birds that we hope to see.

This tour is designed to take in the best of Panamanian birding, staying at the world-famous Canopy Family of lodges, renowned for their exceptional birding, delicious food, and comfortable accommodations. The main tour takes in their two best known and most easily accessed lodges—Canopy Tower in the Central lowlands of Soberanía National Park and Canopy Lodge at a higher elevation in El Valle de Antón. Day trips to higher elevation and Pacific dry forests will allow us to maximize the diversity of neotropical birds seen, which include a few endemics!

The optional trip extension then takes us to the remote Darién region of Eastern Panama, while based at the Canopy Camp. This region is host to numerous endemics to the Choco region of eastern Panama and Northwest Columbia. Also, the Darién gives us our best chances of seeing a Harpy Eagle, and we will include a day spent looking for this majestic raptor while enjoying the wonders of Eastern Panama's primary forests.

Panama is home to over 971 species of birds, and by spending time in the Central lowlands, foothills, and highlands, as well as the remote Eastern lowlands, we will experience a broad sampling of habitats that encompass a wide-range of the species Panama has to offer!

DETAILED DAILY ITINERARY

Day 1- June 26

Arrival at the Canopy Tower (Night at Canopy Tower)

Arrival at the Canopy Tower. Guests are welcome to spend the afternoon on the observation deck, overlooking the extensive forest canopy of Soberanía National Park and the Panama Canal. Black-breasted Puffbird, Keel-billed Toucan, Green Honeycreeper, Fulvous-vented Euphonia, Blue-gray, Palm, Plain-colored and Golden-hooded tanagers, Tropical Kingbird, Great Kiskadee, Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift, and several species of raptors are commonly seen. Dinner at Canopy Tower. After dinner, we can scan the treetops with a spotlight for nocturnal wildlife, including Kinkajou, Allen's Olingo, Panamanian Night Monkey and Black-and-white Owl.



The Canopy Tower is set right in the middle of Soberanía National Park's lowland rainforest. Photo by Alex Alba / The Canopy Family

Day 2- June 27

AM: Semaphore Hill Road -- PM: Ammo Ponds or optional trip to Panama Canal (Night at Canopy Tower)

This morning will start at dawn on the observation deck. Mealy, Red-lored and Blue-headed parrots, Scaled Pigeon, Collared Aracari, Blue Cotinga, Short-tailed and Band-rumped swifts and Gray-breasted Martin as well as several species of tanagers will greet our guests as they enjoy a hot drink before breakfast. Collared Forest-Falcon, Green Shrike-Vireo and Great Tinamou, as well as the roar of Mantled Howler monkeys, make up a typical dawn chorus in Soberanía National Park. After breakfast, we will walk down Semaphore Hill Road, where it is possible to see Blue-crowned and Red-capped manakins, Cocoa and Plain-brown woodcreepers, Rufous Motmot, Slaty-tailed Trogon, White-whiskered Puffbird, Black-crowned Antshrike, Yellow-olive Flycatcher, Plain Xenops, Blue-black Grosbeak and White Hawk among many others.

In the afternoon, we will visit the Ammo Ponds, near the town of Gamboa. This wetland is home to a wide variety of aquatic species, such as Rufescent Tiger-Heron, Striated Heron, White-throated Crake, Amazon Kingfisher, Snail Kite, Wattled Jacana and Purple Gallinule. We will scan the roadsides and grasses for Variable, Yellow-bellied and Ruddy-breasted seedeaters, Blue-black Grassquit, Scrub Greenlet, Smooth-billed Ani, Black-striped Sparrow and Ruddy Ground-Dove.

Alternatively, those who would prefer to see the wonders of the Miraflores Locks and Panama Canal can visit that area in the afternoon in place of visiting the Ammo Ponds. Dinner at Canopy Tower.

Day 3- June 28

AM: Pipeline Road -- PM: Summit Ponds and Old Gamboa Road (Night at Canopy Tower)

After an early breakfast, we will depart for the world famous Pipeline Road! Over 500 species have been recorded here, and we will be watching and listening for White-bellied Antbird, Golden-collared Manakin, Rufous Motmot, Yellow-throated Toucan, Purple-crowned Fairy, Black-striped Woodcreeper, Brown-capped Tyrannulet, Forest Elaenia, Rufous Mourner, Spot-crowned Antvireo, Fasciated Antshrike, Chestnut-backed Antbird, White-breasted Wood-Wren, Streak-chested Antpitta, Red-throated Ant-Tanager and up to 5 species of trogons! If we're lucky, an army ant swarm may provide up-close looks at Spotted, Bicolored and Ocellated antbirds, Northern Barred and Plain-brown woodcreepers, Song Wren and Gray-headed Tanager. Return to Canopy Tower for lunch.

After lunch and a siesta, we will visit Summit Ponds and Old Gamboa Road. At the ponds, Boat-billed Heron, Lesser Kiskadee, Gray-necked Wood-Rail, and Amazon, Ringed, and Green kingfishers are often seen. Carrying on down Old Gamboa Road, we hope to find Lance-tailed Manakin, Jet Antbird, White-winged Becard, Black Hawk-Eagle, Spectacled Owl, Rosy Thrush-Tanager, Yellow-billed Cacique, Rufous-breasted, Rufous-and-white and Black-bellied wrens, and several species of flycatchers. We will return back in time to freshen up for cocktails and dinner.



Toucans like these Chestnut-mandibled are often seen from the tower. Photo by Rafael Lau / The Canopy Family.

Day 4- June 29

Cerro Azul -- Full Day (Night at Canopy Tower)

We will depart early for Cerro Azul, in the foothills east of Panama City. The cloud forest of Cerro Azul, at an elevation of 2500 ft., is a haven for hummingbirds, and up to 16 species are possible—Rufous-crested Coquette, White-tipped Sicklebill, Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer, Green Thorntail, Violet-headed, Violet-capped and Snowy-bellied hummingbirds are common. We will spend the morning searching for Yellow-eared Toucanet, Black-and-white Hawk-Eagle, Spot-crowned Barbet, Russet Antshrike, Spotted Woodcreeper, Black-eared Wood-Quail, and several species of tanagers, including Silver-throated, Emerald, Rufous-winged, Bay-headed, Speckled, Golden-hooded, Black-and-yellow and Hepatic. The endemic Stripe-cheeked Woodpecker is regularly seen in this area. We will have lunch at a picturesque residence overlooking the vast rainforest of Chagres National Park. The afternoon is reserved for even more birding at Cerro Azul. Dinner at Canopy Tower.

Day 5- June 30

AM: Transfer to Canopy Lodge -- PM: Canopy Adventure Trails (Night at Canopy Lodge)

We will start our day leisurely, as today we will be traveling to our next destination—the Canopy Lodge, in the foothills of western Panama. Before breakfast, we will meet on the observation deck once again to watch the morning bird activity, followed by a hot breakfast. Shortly after, we will pack our bags and travel 2 hours west along the Panamerican highway, then up the hillside to the picturesque town of El Valle de Anton. The cool air and friendly staff will welcome us and show us to our rooms. The fruit feeders in the garden will be freshly stocked with bananas to attract a variety of

birds including Dusky-faced, Flame-rumped, Crimson-backed, Blue-gray and Palm tanagers, Thick-billed and Fulvous-vented euphonias, Bananaquit, Clay-colored Thrush, Collared Aracari and even Chestnut-headed Oropendolas occasionally come in to feed on the ripe fruit offerings. Without further adieu, lunch will be served in the open-air veranda.

After a delicious lunch, you will meet your guide and explore the trails around the Canopy Lodge and the Canopy Adventure. These winding trails pass through the dark understory of foothills forest, passing by streams, where we hope to find Buff-rumped and Rufous-capped warblers, Sunbittern, Tawny-crested Tanager, Tawny-capped Euphonia, Bay Wren and many others. The rare and spectacular Rufous-vented Ground-Cuckoo follows swarms of army ants through these forest trails, and if we're really lucky, we may come across one. Mottled Owls roost in dense tangles through the day, before commencing their evening activity. At the Canopy Adventure, we will pass by "Chorro El Macho", the largest waterfall in the area. We will return back to the Lodge for dinner.



Tody Motmot is an uncommon bird that we will look for while based at Canopy Lodge. Photo by Rafael Lau / The Canopy Lodge.

Day 6- July 1

AM: La Mesa -- PM: Cara Iguana Trail (Night at Canopy Lodge)

After breakfast, we will depart for our morning birding destination, La Mesa, a visually-pleasing blend of scrubby pastures, secondary forest and grassy fields. This area is located at a higher elevation than the lodge, and we can expect to find some different species. Tawny-capped Euphonia, Tawny-crowned tanagers, Orange-bellied Trogon, Black-faced Grosbeak, Silver-throated Tanager, Southern Lapwing, Cinnamon Becard, Spot-crowned Antvireo, Black-throated Mango, Scarlet-thighed Tanager, Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant and Blue-throated Toucanet are resident here. Lunch at Canopy Lodge.

After a delicious lunch, we have some time to rest up, take a 'siesta', enjoy the garden birds or relax in a hammock. We will head out again at mid-afternoon, to Cara Iguana Trail, not far from the lodge

in the town of El Valle, where a blend of dry forest and open area gives us the opportunity to find some different species, including Lance-tailed Manakin, Tody Motmot, Rufous-breasted Wren, Lesser Elaenia, Yellow-olive and Panama flycatchers, Barred Antshrike, White-bellied Antbird, Garden Emerald, Long-billed Gnatwren, Pale-eyed Pygmy-Tyrant and migrants including Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Green and Worm-eating warblers. After walking the open road at Cara Iguana and adding many new species to our list, we will return to the Lodge to freshen up before cocktails and dinner. Dinner at Canopy Lodge.

Day 7- July 2

AM: Cerro Gaital -- PM: Watercress Trail (Night at Canopy Lodge)

Today after breakfast, we proceed to Cerro Gaital, a steep, forested, mist-shrouded mountain that you see from the lodge! Cerro Gaital (3,500') is the namesake of Cerro Gaital Natural Monument, which protects more than 335 hectares of mature cloud forest. This area offers sightings of Black Guan, Blue-throated Toucanet, Orange-bellied Trogon, Spotted Barbtail, Common Bush-Tanager, Silver-throated Tanager, Black-headed Antthrush, Slaty Antwren, Spot-crowned & Plain antvireos, Black-faced Grosbeak, Blue Seedeater, Rufous-capped Warbler, Gray-headed Kite, White Hawk, Tawny-capped Euphonia, Pale-vented Thrush, Northern Schiffornis, White-tailed Emerald, Green-crowned Brilliant, Violet-headed Hummingbird and Crowned Woodnymph. Scaled Antpitta and Rufous-vented Ground-Cuckoo have been recorded here! Back for lunch at the CANOPY LODGE.

After lunch we are off to the Watercress trail, named after the herb which is commercially grown in the terraced creek near the entrance. This easy trail traverses through good secondary forest, which is framed by picturesque forested mountains of Cerro Gaital Natural Monument. Good birds here are Rosy Thrush-Tanager, Black-headed Saltator, Great Antshrike, White-ruffed Manakin, White-thighed Swallow, White-bellied Antbird and Tody Motmot; hummers, such as Long-billed Starthroat, Rufous-crested Coquette and, when the Inga is in bloom, we scan for Snowcap! We will also listen for Purplish-backed Quail-Dove. Dinner at Canopy Lodge.

Day 8 - July 3

El Chiru & Juan Hombron -- Full Day (Night at Canopy Lodge)

This exciting day will start with an early breakfast at the lodge and a prompt departure, as we venture down to the coastline to explore the Pacific dry forest and lowlands of El Chiru and Juan Hombron. Here, a completely different set of birds awaits our arrival. Yellow-headed and Crested caracaras, Savanna, Gray and Short-tailed hawks, Aplomado Falcon, Pearl Kite, White-tailed Kite, Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl, Crested Bobwhite, Blue and Plain-breasted ground-doves, Grassland Yellow-Finch, Rufous-browed Peppershrike, Brown-throated Parakeet, Red-breasted Blackbird, Crested Oropendola, Veraguan Mango, Mouse-colored Tyrannulet, Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, Northern Scrub-Flycatcher, Straight-billed Woodcreeper and Pale-breasted Spinetail are possibilities. We will break for a picnic lunch at Santa Clara beach, where the birding continues as we scan for Magnificent

Frigatebird, Blue-footed and Brown boobies, Sandwich, Royal and Elegant terns, Laughing Gull and an abundance of waders. After a full day in the Pacific lowlands, we will head back up the hill to El Valle. Dinner at the Canopy Lodge.

Day 9 - July 4

AM: Candelario Trail -- PM: Valle Chiquito (Night at Riande Airport Hotel)

This morning after breakfast we will head upward again, this time to Candelario Trail, an old finca road which passes through scrubby pastures and fields in the foothills of Cerro Gaital. We will scan the open areas for Southern Lapwing, Tawny-capped Euphonia, Shiny Cowbird, Yellow-billed Cacique, Silver-throated Tanager, Blue-headed Parrot, Blue-black and Yellow-faced grassquits and Thick-billed Seed-Finch. We will walk a short trail through dense forest in search of Dull-mantled and Chestnut-backed antbirds, Song Wren, Slaty Antwren, Spotted Woodcreeper, Black-chested Jay, Tawny-faced and Long-billed gnatwrens and Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch.

After lunch and a rest back at the lodge, we will depart for Valle Chiquito. This valley is accessible by a new paved road and passes through forested woodlands and rivers. Here we will search for Sepia-capped Flycatcher, Tody Motmot, Yellow-backed Oriole, Gray-chested Dove, Zone-tailed Hawk, Panama Flycatcher, Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher, Little Tinamou, and Black-bellied, Rufous-and-white, Bay and Rufous-breasted wrens in the thickets. Early dinner at Canopy Lodge, then transfer to Riande Airport Hotel.

Day 10- July 5

Departure or begin extension

This morning those leaving home will meet for a farewell breakfast and then take the shuttle from Riande Airport Hotel to the Tocumen Airport. Those continuing on for the extension will have an early breakfast, then hit the road for the remote Darién Region!

CANOPY CAMP EXTENSION

Day 10- July 5

AM: Bayano Lake -- PM: Arrival at Canopy Camp Darién (Night at Canopy Camp)

Our guide will arrive around 6:00am to help you with any questions you may have, and soon after breakfast, we'll be heading for eastern Panama! Today is a long travel day, the journey to our final destination is approximately 7 hours, but we will make stops along the way in exciting birding areas. As we drive east along the Pan-American Highway, we will scan for roadside birds and open-field raptors including Savanna Hawk and Crested Caracara. Our first scheduled stop will be at the bridge at Bayano Lake, a great opportunity to stretch our legs and see what we can see along the lakeside. This reservoir supports great amounts of water birds, including a large colony of Neotropic Cormorants, as well as Anhinga, Coci Heron and the rare Bare-throated Tiger-Heron. We will scan the water's edge for Purple Gallinule, Pied Water-Tyrant, Smooth-billed Ani and Ruddy-breasted Seedeater. A short trail leading from the water's edge is a great place to search for Black Antshrike, Bare-crowned Antbird, Rufous-winged Antwren and Golden-collared Manakin. At another great stop

along the way, Río Mono Bridge, the surrounding forest is home to One-colored Becard, Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher, Blue Cotinga, Pied Puffbird, Orange-crowned Oriole, Blue Ground-Dove and more. We will also scan the river below for Green-and-rufous Kingfisher and the elusive Fasciated Tiger-Heron. While enjoying a lovely Panamanian lunch, the hummingbirds at the feeders will no doubt capture our attention, as Long-billed Starthroat, Sapphire-throated Hummingbird, Scaly-breasted Hummingbird, Black-throated Mango and more take their lunch as well; great hummingbird photo opportunities here! *Lunch in TORTI.*

After a delicious lunch, we will head back to the Pan-American Highway and continue east. We will carry on from here to Canopy Camp Darien, and arrive before daylight fades so we can settle into our tents and get acquainted with the setting. After a delicious dinner of fresh American and Panamanian fare, we will gather to have a meeting about the days to come, and settle into our tents for the night. Dinner at Canopy camp.

Day 11 - July 6

AM: Canopy Camp Trails -- PM: Panamerican Highway to Yaviza (Night at Canopy Camp)

We will meet before sunrise for a hot drink and to enjoy the sounds of the birds. Yellow-throated and Keel-billed toucans call from the towering Cuipo trees; Red-lore and Mealy parrots fly overhead; White-bellied Antbird, Bright-rumped Attila, White-headed Wren and Golden-headed Manakin sing from the surrounding forests; while Pale-bellied Hermit and Sapphire-throated Hummingbird visit the flowers around camp. Rufous-tailed Jacamar and Barred Puffbird are also seen frequently around the lodge. We will be served a hearty breakfast at 7:30 am. After breakfast we will work our way into the forest on "Nando's Trail," in hopes of finding Tiny Hawk, Black Antshrike, Great Antshrike, Olive-backed Quail-Dove, Cinnamon Becard, Black-tailed Trogon, Double-banded Graytail, Gray-cheeked Nunlet, Yellow-breasted Flycatcher, Royal Flycatcher and Russet-winged Schiffornis. We will also be looking for groups of Red-throated Caracara, King Vulture and Short-tailed Hawk overhead in the clearings. Ornate Hawk-Eagle, Plumbeous and Zone-tailed hawks are also possible. Lunch at Canopy Camp.

After lunch we can enjoy the hummingbirds and other species around the camp, dip our feet in the rocky stream or have a siesta. Then we will head an hour southeast and will bird the forests and swampy meadows along the road toward Yaviza, to the end of the Pan-American Highway! Black-billed Flycatcher, Sooty-headed Tyrannulet, Jet Antbird, Black Oropendola, Pied Water-Tyrant, Bicolored Hawk, Black-collared Hawk, Pearl Kite, White-tailed Kite, Limpkin, Spot-breasted Woodpecker, Ruddy-breasted Seedeater, Yellow-hooded Blackbird, Black-capped Donacobius and Red-breasted Blackbird can all be found as we head farther into Darién today.

We will return to camp in time to freshen up for dinner. After dinner we will gather to look for owls, including Striped, Crested, Barn, Black-and-white and Mottled owls, as well as Common and Great potoos and likely some nocturnal mammals. We will end the day with our checklist, tallying our sightings for our first full day at the Canopy Camp! Dinner at Canopy Camp.

Day 12 - July 7

AM: El Salto Road & Tierra Nueva Foundation -- PM: Las Lagunas Road & Aruza Lagoons (Night at Canopy Camp)

We will meet for an early breakfast, then head to El Salto Road for the morning. El Salto Road extends 6 km north from the Pan-American Highway and ends at the mighty Río Chucunaque. This open road and surrounding dry forest is a great place to search for regional specialties including Golden-green Woodpecker, Double-banded Graytail, Blue-and-gold and Chestnut-fronted macaws, Black and Crested oropendolas, Blue Cotinga, White-eared Conebill, Black-breasted Puffbird, Orange-crowned Oriole and the majestic King Vulture. A trail at the end of the road will take us into low-canopy forest, where we hope to find Bare-crowned Antbird, Pale-bellied Hermit, Olivaceous Piculet, Streak-headed Woodcreeper and Forest Elaenia.

As the sun heats up the day by mid-morning, we head over to visit the adjacent property of the Tierra Nueva Foundation. Fundación Tierra Nueva is a non-profit organization whose main mission is “working towards the sustainable development of people of the Darién Rainforest.” The property is the home of a technical school focusing on applications in agriculture. We will explore the trails of this large property, in hopes of finding Streak-headed Woodcreeper, Yellow-breasted and Black-billed flycatchers, Red-rumped Woodpecker, Slaty-backed Forest-Falcon, Cinnamon, Cinereous and One-colored becards, White-eared Conebill, White-headed Wren and the magnificent Great Curassow. Lunch at Canopy Camp.

This afternoon we will bird along the road to Las Lagunas. This road extends 12 km south off the Pan-American Highway through open farmland, dry scrub and roadside habitat. The road eventually crosses a small stream and ends at small ponds. Along the roadsides, we hope to find Red-breasted Blackbird, Spot-breasted Woodpecker, Yellow-breasted Flycatcher, White-headed Wren, Smooth-billed and Greater Ani, Muscovy Duck, Rufescent Tiger-Heron, Southern Lapwing, Blue-headed Parrot, Striped Cuckoo, Scaly-breasted Hummingbird, Ringed and Amazon kingfishers, Fork-tailed Flycatcher, Buff-breasted Wren, Bananaquit, Giant and Shiny cowbirds, Crested Oropendola, Laughing Falcon and Aplomado Falcon. If we're lucky, we may get a glimpse of a Chestnut-fronted Macaw or a shy Little Cuckoo, both having been seen along this road. At the lagoons, we hope to find Pied Water-Tyrant, Capped Heron, the beautiful Yellow-hooded Blackbird and Black-capped Donacobius, a great habitat for all these wonderful species. We drive back to Canopy Camp as dusk draws near and will watch for Common Pauraque and Tropical Screech-Owl along the way! Dinner at Canopy Camp.

Day 13 - July 8

AM: Quebrada Felix -- PM: Lajas Blancas (Night at Canopy Camp)

We will meet for an early breakfast at the Canopy Camp. This morning we bird Quebrada Felix—this newly discovered site awaits us to be explored! Quebrada Felix is nestled in the base of the Filo del Tallo Hydrological Reserve, and is just a short drive from the Canopy Camp. Surrounded by tall trees and mature lowland forest, we will walk the rocky stream in search of some of Panama's most

wanted species. Here, we will try for Black-crowned Antpitta, Scaly-throated Leaf-tosser, Speckled Mourner, Ocellated Antbird, Rufous-winged and Moustached Antwrens, White-fronted Nunbird, Wedge-billed Woodcreeper, Royal Flycatcher and our endemic, the Stripe-cheeked Woodpecker. It is also a great spot to find Fasciated Tiger-Heron, Green-and-rufous Kingfisher, Bicolored Antbird, Golden-crowned Spadebill, Double-banded Graytail and much more. Crested and Solitary eagles have even been spotted here, a great testament to the mature forest of the area. Quebrada Felix is becoming a favorite spot among our guides and recent visitors! Lunch at Canopy Camp.

This afternoon we explore the open areas and mixed forests of Lajas Blancas. Lajas Blancas is the closest Embera Indigenous community to the Canopy Camp, a large community with a population of over 1000 residents. Just 15 minutes away, the area around the community boasts great birding and the opportunity to find many Darien specialties! After turning off the Pan-American Highway, we drive through pasture and open farmland—a great place to see One-colored Becard, Great Potoo, Spot-breasted Woodpecker, Yellow-crowned Tyrannulet, Yellow-breasted Flycatcher, Black Antshrike and Black Oropendola. During the dry season, a bridge across the Chucunaque River provides us easy access to some mature secondary forest where Double-banded Graytail, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, White-winged and Cinnamon Becards, Cinnamon and Golden-green woodpeckers, manakins and others can be found. Beyond the community, the road continues and there is much more forest, including primary forest at its far reaches, waiting to be explored. Dinner at Canopy Camp.



The search for the Harpy Eagle is one of the highlights of the Canopy Camp extension. Photo by Uwe Speck/ The Canopy Family.

Day 14 - July 9

Harpy Eagle Tour -- Full Day (Night at Canopy Camp)

One of the most spectacular birds of fabled Darien is the Harpy Eagle—Panama's elusive National

Bird. Powerful and majestic, Harpy Eagles live in intact dense lowland rainforest. The Harpy Eagle is our target for the day! Today we will start very early, long before sunrise, and drive to Yaviza, at the end of the Pan-American Highway. Arriving at dawn in Yaviza, we will board a “piragua”—a dugout canoe, and traverse the still waters of the Chucunaque and Taira rivers. The river edges offer shrub and grass habitat, as well as mudflats and beaches depending on the water level. There are plenty of birds to see along the riverside.

After lunch and a break, we will retrace our steps and start our way back to the Canopy Camp. We will plan to arrive back at the Canopy Camp by dinnertime, and reminisce about the fantastic day we had! Dinner at CANOPY CAMP.

Day 15 - July 10

AM: San Francisco Nature Reserve -- PM: Return to Panama City (Night at Riande Airport Hotel)

We will wake before dawn to pack and have an early breakfast, say our goodbyes to the Canopy Camp, and start our journey back to Panama City. We will stop at San Francisco Nature Reserve, a private forest reserve owned and managed by the St. Francis Foundation, covering 1,300 acres in eastern Panama Province, and we will spend the morning birding at this fantastic site. The San Francisco Reserve was established in 2001 by Father Pablo Kasuboski, an American priest from Wisconsin who came to Panama in 1988. The reserve serves as a wildlife refuge and protects the headwaters of the main rivers of the area. This location has a variety of habitats including primary, secondary and riparian forests, forest edge, fields, farmland, ponds and wetlands. During our morning here, we will explore some of the different habitats along the short road that enters the reserve. We will hope to find Great Jacamar, Broad-billed Motmot, Collared Aracari, Russet-winged Schiffornis, Royal Flycatcher, White-fronted Nunbird, Brownish Twistwing, Yellow-green Tyrannulet, Central American Pygmy-Owl, Blue and Plain-breasted ground-doves, and if we're very lucky, a Black-and-white Hawk-Eagle soaring overhead or a Wing-banded Antbird along the trails! Lunch in TORTI.

After lunch, we head back to Panama City. We will end our tour at the Riande Aeropuerto Hotel for overnight. Dinner tonight and breakfast next day are included.

Day 16 - July 11

Departure

Our final morning! We will meet for a farewell breakfast and then take the shuttle from Riande Airport Hotel to the Tocumen Airport. You can schedule your departure for any time this day.

IMPORTANT NOTES

Contact information

The Red Hill Birding **tour manager** for this trip is Amanda Zeigler. To sign up, or if you have any questions, please contact us at info@redhillbirding.com. Your spot on the trip will be confirmed upon our receipt of the deposit and booking form (we will give you the requisite mailing information and forms upon request).

Timing and arrival/departure logistics

The trip will **begin on June 26, 2018, in Panama City, Panama**. The main tour will **end on July 5 in Panama City**; the extension **will end on July 11 in Panama City**. The main airport in Panama City is Tocumen International Airport (PTY). You are responsible for booking your own plane tickets. Contact us if you would like assistance.

Upon arrival on June 26, there are free transfers from the airport to Canopy Tower at 9:30am and 3:30pm. Please plan your arrival time accordingly. If you would like to arrive the night before, we can book you into an airport hotel for \$110/room, including breakfast. If you would like a transfer at a time other than 9:30am or 3:30pm, there will be an additional charge.

If you are departing on July 5 after the main tour, you can book your flight for any time that day. We will be staying near the airport the previous night, and the hotel provides a free shuttle to the airport.

If you are departing on July 11 after the extension, you can book your flight for any time that day. We will be staying near the airport the previous night, and the hotel provides a free shuttle to the airport.

We can help arrange a tour of Panama City or the Miraflores Locks and Panama Canal if you would like to add an additional day to the start or end of the tour.

Price

The price of the trip **includes** all meals, from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 10 (breakfast on day 16 for the extension), all transportation and accommodation during that period; two Red Hill Birding guides and a local guide for the duration of the trip (one Red Hill Birding guide and a local guide for the extension); tips for the local guides and drivers; \$100 for the IOS Grant Fund; and all entrance fees. The price **does not include** visa fees (no visa is required as of this writing for American citizens visiting Panama), airfare, alcoholic beverages, snacks, laundry, tips for the Red Hill Birding guides, tips for lodge staff, or other items of a personal nature. The deposit for the main tour is \$900; the deposit for the extension is \$500. The deposit is due upon booking in order to secure your place. Final payment is due by February 25, 2018.

This trip requires eight participants to run, with a maximum of 10. If eight participants have not signed up by December 25, 2017, the trip will be canceled and the deposit will be refunded in full.

This trip is open to members of the Illinois Ornithological Society and is being run at a special price

for members. If you are not a member, a \$25 membership fee will be added to the cost of the trip, for which you will receive *The Meadowlark Journal* and all other member benefits for one year of membership.

Notes about single supplement

There is no charge for a single supplement for the main tour. However, this requires staying in a simple room with a shared bathroom at Canopy Tower (but staying in a normal room with en suite bathroom at Canopy Lodge). There are two such singles available for participants.

If you would like a single room with en suite bathroom at both Canopy Tower and Canopy Lodge, the single supplement is \$350.

Single rooms are available on the extension—a single tent at Canopy Camp and single room on the night before departure in Panama City. The cost is \$300.

If you are traveling alone and would like a roommate, we will try to place you with one. However, if no roommate is available, you will have to pay the single supplement costs where required.

Physical difficulty

This trip is **physically moderate**. The terrain is varied, with a few relatively steep trails. We will be birding along roads, wide trails, and narrow trails. Some trails may be slippery after rain. Because of the nature of rainforest birding, we will have three guides to make sure that everybody sees as many of the birds as possible. We will be walking quite a bit, but we will be walking at a “birding pace.” There is excellent birding right at the lodges, so there is always the option to stay back if you do not feel up for a particular outing.

At the Canopy Tower, it is necessary to walk up several staircases to get to the rooms, restaurant, and the rooftop deck. You will be making this climb several times daily. There is no elevator.

Pace

The pace of the trip is **easy-moderate**. We will be staying in just two comfortable lodges for the duration of the trip. The pace of the extension is **moderate**. There is a long travel day (five-hour drive, plus stops for birding and lunch) to get to Canopy Camp for the extension. We will be staying in one lodge for the extension, with a departure night near the airport in Panama City.

We will maximize the amount of time we spend in the field with early mornings (some of them will be optional) and fairly long days. Many days will include an afternoon siesta; on some days we will stay out all day. We will have optional nighttime excursions on a couple of evenings to look for owls, nightjars, potoos, nocturnal mammals, and other creatures of the night. There are optional tourist activities as well, including visiting the Panama Canal.

Weather

Panama is a wet country, and we will be visiting during the “green season”, when daily afternoon rain storms are expected. We will make every effort to avoid being outside during the rain, but it is important to have good rain gear and waterproof hiking shoes. The weather will be hot and humid in the lowlands at Canopy Tower and Canopy Camp. It will be cooler in the highlands at Canopy

Lodge. We will be taking advantage of the cooler mornings and evenings for birding.

Photography

The photographic opportunities in Panama are **good**. Bird photography inside the forest is always difficult, but some of our birding is along roads and wide trails, where there is more light. Photography from the Canopy Tower is excellent, and generally photography around the loges is very good. That said, this is primarily a birdwatching tour, so while there will be ample opportunities for photography along the way, we will not be making special considerations for photographers.

Accommodations & Food

The accommodations and food on this tour are excellent. Canopy Tower and Canopy Lodge are famous for their excellent cuisine. Wireless internet is provided for free at both lodges.

Canopy Camp is more remote. Accommodations are in “tents,” but these are large, luxurious tents with comfortable beds, windows, electricity, and attached bathrooms. There is no wireless internet.

Bottled water will be provided throughout. In the hot climate, it is important to stay hydrated. Soda, wine, and coffee/tea are included with meals; alcoholic beverages are extra.

Packing considerations

You will generally want to wear comfortable clothing that you don't mind getting a little dirty. The dress for the tour is entirely casual. Comfortable, waterproof walking shoes are a must. A good raincoat or poncho is important, as rain is expected on this tour. Light-weight, quick-dry clothing that will allow you to stay cool in the tropical heat and dry quickly after rains is best. A headlamp or flashlight will be useful for nighttime excursions and in case of power outages.

Electricity is available at all lodges. It is useful to bring extra batteries and memory cards for cameras.

As always, the essentials, such as binoculars and medications, should be packed in carry-on bags in case of lost luggage.

Resources

The best field guide for Panama is *The Birds of Panama: A Field Guide*, by George Angehr and Robert Dean. The older *A Guide to the Birds of Panama with Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Honduras* by Robert S. Ridgely and John A. Gwynne is also excellent. *The New Neotropical Companion* by John Kricher provides a highly readable and extremely informative introduction to tropical ecology, with a lot of great information about birds.

Money

The currency in Panama is the Balboa, the value of which is tied 1:1 to the U.S. Dollar. Dollars are accepted and circulated as legal currency, so there is no need to change money.

Tiping

We aim to provide exceptional service, using guides that are knowledgeable, interesting, personable,

PANAMA WITH THE ILLINOIS ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY CONTACT: INFO@REDHILLBIRDING.COM

and experienced. While tipping is never expected, if you feel that your guides went above and beyond, you are welcome to leave them a gratuity. **Note that the tips for our local guides and drivers are included in the tour price.**

Travel insurance

We do not require travel insurance for Panama trips. However, we recommend buying it as it is inexpensive and can protect you from unforeseen costs associated with missed flights, sudden illness, or other unexpected circumstances.

We recommend Generali Global Assistance (<https://www.generalitravelinsurance.com/>).

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please contact the Red Hill Birding tour manager, Amanda Zeigler, at any time with questions: info@redhillbirding.com, or call Josh Engel at (224) 213-2280.