

A close-up photograph of an Orange-throated Tanager perched on a branch. The bird has a black head and neck, a bright orange throat and breast, and a black body with blue wings. The background is a soft-focus green forest.

**Remote Birding Tour
Southern Ecuador**

**Amazon Foothills & Podocarpus
8 Days / 7 Nights**

Exploraves Birding Tours Ecuador

Remote Birding in Southern Ecuador

Southern Ecuador is one of the most biodiverse regions in the world, offering an exceptional variety of habitats within a relatively small area.

This 8-day birding tour explores the remote forests of the Amazon foothills, including Podocarpus National Park and the unique Nangaritza Valley.

The tour is designed to target a wide range of Andean and Amazonian species, including several endemics and highly sought-after birds. With access to pristine and less-visited habitats, this itinerary offers excellent opportunities for birdwatching and photography in one of Ecuador's richest regions.

Tour Highlights

- • Remote birding in El Zarza Reserve, Paquisha.
- • Remote birding in Nangaritza Valley
- • Maycu Reserve & tropical rainforest habitats
- • Podocarpus National Park (Bombuscaro)
- • Excellent for Antbirds, Antshrikes, Trogons, and Tanagers
- • Low visitor pressure / less crowded



Lanceolated Monklet

Itinerary

Day 1 – Arrival in Catamayo & Transfer to Copalinga Reserve

Arrival at Catamayo Airport (Loja) after a short 50-minute flight from Quito. The Catamayo Valley is characterized by Tumbesian dry forest, dominated by species such as *Ceiba trichistandra*. This unique ecosystem supports a distinctive assemblage of bird species typical of southwestern Ecuador and northwestern Peru. If time allows, we will explore nearby dry forest and scrub habitats, where possible species include Peruvian Pygmy Owl, Long-tailed Mockingbird, Loja Hummingbird, Pacific Parrotlet, Golden-olive Woodpecker, Fasciated Wren, Chestnut-throated Seedeater.

Following this initial birding session, we continue to Copalinga Reserve, located near the entrance of Podocarpus National Park. Depending on arrival time, additional birding opportunities may be possible along the route or around the lodge grounds.

Day 2 – Copalinga & Podocarpus National Park (Bombuscaro)

We begin the day with birding around the lodge grounds at Copalinga Reserve, where a variety of foothill species can be observed.

Later, we head to Podocarpus National Park, exploring trails along the Bombuscaro River. This area offers excellent opportunities for a wide range of species including Andean Cock-of-the-rock, Amazonian Umbrellabird, Lanceolated Monklet, tanagers, flycatchers, manakins, and mixed flocks moving through the forest.

Possible highlights include Andean Cock-of-the-rock, Andean Motmot, Amazonian Umbrellabird, Lanceolated Monklet Spangled Coquette, Golden-eared Tanager.

The combination of well-preserved habitat and active birdlife makes this one of the most productive birding areas in southern Ecuador.

Day 3 – Copalinga & Transfer to Los Encuentros

We start the morning with birding around Copalinga Reserve, focusing on additional forest species before departure. Later, we head towards the Los Encuentros area, with possible stops along the way depending on bird activity and timing.

Overnight: Los Encuentros (1 night)

Day 4 – El Zarza Reserve & Transfer to Nangaritza Valley

After an early start, we visit El Zarza Reserve in search of subtropical forest species, including the Subtropical Pygmy-Owl and other difficult targets. We then continue towards Paquisha and descend into the remote Nangaritza Valley, reaching Yankuam. If time allows, a short visit to Maycu Reserve may be possible.

Overnight: Yankuam Cabins (3 nights)



Day 5 – Maycu Reserve & Nangaritza Valley

Today we dedicate the day to birding in Maycu Reserve and the surrounding forests of the Nangaritza Valley. This remote lowland and foothill habitat offers excellent opportunities to search for a variety of understory and mid-level species, including antshrikes, antbirds, antwrens, and trogons.

Particular attention will be given to locating more elusive species, with the Orange-throated Tanager being one of the main targets of the day.

Birding activity in this region can be highly rewarding, with chances to encounter mixed flocks and a diversity of tropical forest specialists.

Day 6 – Nangaritza River & Maycu Reserve

Today we explore the Nangaritza River by boat, offering a different perspective of this remote and pristine region. River-based birding can provide opportunities to observe species along the forest edge, riverbanks, and adjacent habitats.

After the river excursion, we continue birding in Maycu Reserve, focusing again on tropical forest species and any targets that may have been missed the previous day.

This combination of river and forest birding adds diversity to the experience and increases the chances of encountering a wider range of species.



Day 7 – Morning in Nangaritza & Return to Copalinga

We begin the day with a final morning of birding in the Nangaritza Valley, taking advantage of any remaining opportunities to observe species in this remote region. Early activity can still produce interesting records before departure.

After the morning session, we head back towards Copalinga Reserve, with optional birding stops along the way depending on time and activity. Upon arrival, there may be time for light birding around the lodge or to relax after the journey.

Overnight: Copalinga Reserve (1 night)

Day 8 – Final Birding & Departure

We spend the morning birding around Copalinga Reserve, taking advantage of the rich foothill habitat and any remaining opportunities to observe species in the area.

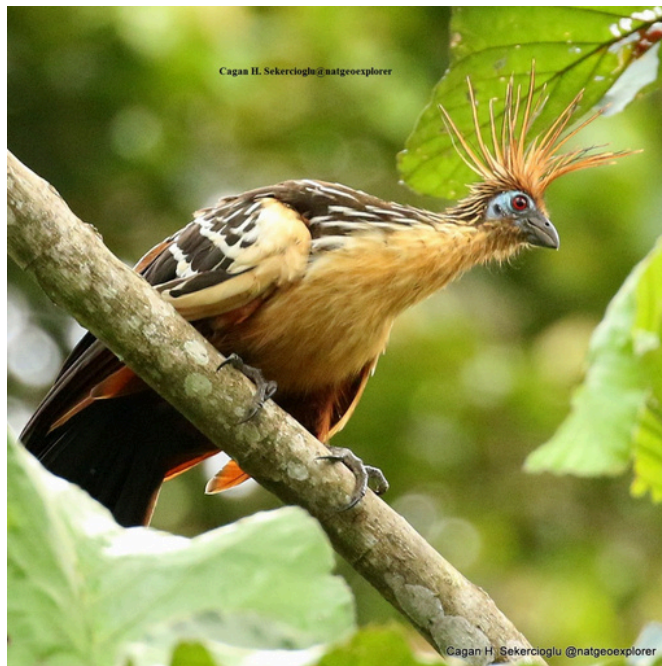
Around midday, we return to Loja and continue to Catamayo Airport for the afternoon flight back to Quito.



Spangled Coquette

Target Species

- Orange-throated Tanager
- Amazonian Umbrellabird
- Andean Cock-of-the-rock
- Spangled Coquette
- Coppery-chested Jacamar
- Lanceolated Monklet
- Black-streaked Puffbird
- Golden-eared Tanager
- Paradise Tanager
- White-necked Parakeet
- Subtropical Pygmy-Owl



Hoatzin

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Guided by Pablo Andrade



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