

ECUADOR – Mindo in July: Tour Information...5

Camping supply stores sell a product containing permethrin 0.5%, which must be applied directly to clothing in advance of wearing and allowed to dry. This non-staining, odourless chemical is non-toxic to humans and protective on clothing through several launderings. Please make sure you never to spray insect repellent inside the vehicle or when you are standing close to other participants – it may drift on to their optical equipment.

LEADER'S EQUIPMENT: The leader will provide the following:

Telescope and tripod
Reference books
Laser pointer

Small first-aid kit
Maps
Playback equipment

LUGGAGE: Our Final Information document, which will be sent to you approximately three weeks before departure, will give details about baggage weight and size restrictions imposed by the airline used for this tour.

If possible, please bring your luggage in soft-sided bags or cases (rather than large hard 'Samsonite'-type suitcases) as these pack more easily into our vehicles during the tour. Please note that on many tours there are no porters to carry your luggage so please ensure that **no bag is so heavy that you are unable to lift and carry it yourself**. As a general rule, in addition to using your luggage labels, it is a good idea to fix identification to the *inside* of each piece of luggage.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Scenery and memory shots will be plentiful and simple to obtain. Memory cards may be difficult to obtain and will certainly be more expensive than at home so you should bring with you all that you expect to need. Camera equipment should be packed in moisture and dust-proof bags as a precaution. If you wish to 'digiscope' please ensure that you bring your own telescope.

There will be plenty of opportunities to take photos of birds, mammals and scenery and the leaders will do all they can to accommodate anyone wishing to take photographs. However if you are a serious photographer please bear in mind that this is first and foremost a birdwatching tour. Please do not allow your photographic desires to conflict with other participants' birdwatching activities.

TRANSPORT: Transportation between birding destinations and throughout the tour will be by minibus or small bus depending on the group size. We will travel on a variety of roads ranging from bumpy dirt roads off the beaten track to multi-lane highways around Quito. All driving will be by a local Ecuadorian driver. The leader will arrange a seating rotation and participants should be able to ride in any seat in tour vehicles.

SMOKING: Smoking and vaping is not allowed in the vehicles or when the group is gathered for meals, checklists etc. If you are sharing a room with a non-smoker, please do not smoke in the room. If you smoke in the field, we ask that you do so well away and downwind from the group if possible. Note: At Séptimo Paraíso, our lodge, smoking is prohibited inside any of the buildings.

TRAVEL INSURANCE: Travel insurance is essential and we insist that you take out suitable cover as soon as your tour is booked. If you are bringing expensive optical equipment or other valuable items, please make sure they are also adequately insured on your home contents policy, as most travel insurance policies do not cover very expensive individual items. You may wish to consult your insurance broker regarding coverage. Please also ensure that your policy covers you in the event of a medical emergency, cancellation of a trip or severe delays. Medical costs abroad can often be extremely expensive.

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Please note that Sunbird is not liable for any medical or repatriation costs resulting from injury or illness during a tour or for covering any costs resulting from a flight delay such as extra hotel accommodation.

If you wish, insurance can be arranged by Helen Fisher, Bullerwell Independent Insurance Brokers, 13 Goldington Road, Bedford, MK40 3JY. Tel: 01234-866964. Please contact Helen for a quote and she will send the schedule directly to you.

TIPPING: All tour-based tips are included in the tour price. These include tips to local guides, drivers, hotel porters, and waiters and waitresses. You only need to pay tips for personal services such as room service or drinks from the bar.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Dunning, John S. 1989. *South American Birds: A Photographic Aid to Identification*. Harrowood Books, Newtown Square, Pennsylvania, USA. This book contains color photographs of over 1,000 South American landbirds including a number of Ecuadorian species not illustrated in Hilty & Brown.

Fjeldså, Jon and N. Krabbe. 1990. *Birds of the High Andes: A Manual to the Birds of the Temperate Zone of the Andes and Patagonia, South America*. Apollo, Denmark. A guide to South America's higher altitude species, covering most of those not included in Hilty et al. Although heavy, expensive, and very poorly bound, it is worth studying prior to the tour.

Forsyth, Adrian and Ken Miyata. 1984. *Tropical Nature*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. A superb and very readable introduction to the ecology of tropical rain forests. **Recommended.**

Green, Clive. 1996. *Birding Ecuador*. Second edition. Available from the author directly (1208 N Swan Rd, Tucson, AZ 85712), or from Tucson Audubon Society and ABA Sales.

Hilty, S.L. 1994. *Birds of Tropical America*. Chapters Publishing, Ltd., Shelburne, CT. Excellent treatment of natural history of neotropical birds.

McMullen, Miles and Lelis Navarrete. 2013. *Fieldbook of the Birds of Ecuador*. Quito, Ecuador. This new small field guide has updated range maps and identification information. The plates are mediocre, but its small size makes it a useful book for the field. Note that it might not be available outside Ecuador.

Pearson, David et al. 1997. *New Key to Ecuador and the Galapagos (New Key Guides)*. Soho Press. ISBN 1569750750.

Ridgely, Robert S. and Paul J. Greenfield. 2001. *The Birds of Ecuador*. Comstock Publishing Associates, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY. **This is the recommended field guide for the tour.**

Ridgely, Robert S. and Paul J. Greenfield. 2001. *The Birds of Ecuador: Status, Distribution and Taxonomy*. Cornell University Press. This is the companion book to the field guide listed above.

Ridgely, R. S., P. Greenfield, and M. Guerrero G. 1998. *An annotated list of the birds of mainland Ecuador*. Fundacion ornitologia del Ecuador, CECIA. Quito, Ecuador. ISBN 9978-40-487-2. A very useful distributional checklist that divides Ecuador into various altitudinal zones and give the status of all the species to be found in each. Follows the taxonomy and nomenclature of the guide to the birds of Ecuador by Ridgely and Greenfield. **Recommended.**