



ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

Honduras

Escape to Central America

1st December to 6th December 2023 (6 days)



Lovely Cotinga by Adam Riley

Honduras, one of Central America's best-kept birding and wildlife secrets. A biodiversity hotspot, it supports more than 700 bird species and various habitats including over 30 separate cloud forests. We will first take some time to explore one of the most remarkable eco-lodges on the planet: Pico Bonito! The bird list will be as impressive as the grounds and cuisine, where we can expect to find such gems as Keel-billed and Tody Motmots, Keel-billed Toucan, Lovely Cotinga, Chestnut-colored Woodpecker, Red-capped Manakin, White Hawk, King Vulture, Black-and-white Owl, and too many other fantastic species to list here! We shall also visit the Honduran Emerald Reserve in the Aguan Valley for one of the only true endemics to the region, the glittering little hummer after which the reserve is named.

The awesome birdlife is further augmented by the ease of travel, standard of lodge, super-friendly people and fine cuisine, making this a thoroughly enjoyable birding adventure for both hardcore and casual birders alike!

THE TOUR AT A GLANCE...**MAIN TOUR**

Day 1	Arrive in San Pedro Sula, transfer to Pico Bonito Lodge
Days 2 & 3	Pico Bonito Lodge
Day 4	Day trip to Honduran Emerald Reserve
Day 5	Day trip to Lancetilla Botanical Gardens
Day 6	Pico Bonito Lodge to San Pedro Sula and final departures

TOUR MAP...

THE TOUR IN DETAIL...



Turquoise-browed Motmot by Adam Riley

Lizards.

Day 1: San Pedro Sula to Pico Bonito Lodge. After arriving in the large city of San Pedro Sula, we shall embark on a group transfer to the luxury eco-resort in the Parque Nacional Pico Bonito - our base for the next 5 nights. Considered by *National Geographic* to rank among the world's top 50 eco-lodges, and rated as a "birder's paradise" by *Audubon Magazine*, Pico Bonito's well-manicured gardens and facilities offer us a chance to bird in absolute style!

Even while lounging in the hammocks on our wooden cabin decks or bathing in the alluring swimming pool, birds and other wildlife are always at hand. Around the lodge itself, we should enjoy close views of many interesting species including inquisitive pairs of Collared Aracari, numerous hummingbirds such as Band-tailed Barbthroat, Violet Sabrewing, Scaly-breasted Hummingbird, White-necked Jacobin, Brown Violetear, and Crowned Woodnymph visiting the abundant flowers, Central American Agoutis scurrying across the lawns and even some impressive Basilisk

Days 2 & 3: Pico Bonito Lodge. Following an early breakfast, we will spend the morning birding the lower reaches of the property. A canopy tower here offers panoramic views of the mountainous forest and with careful scanning, we hope to find the major target of the morning, the gorgeous Lovely Cotinga feeding amongst the treetops, as well as Keel-billed Toucan, Chestnut-colored Woodpecker, an impressive 5 species of euphonia, various tanagers and numerous other canopy-associated species. We will also scan the skies above for soaring raptors that could include White Hawk, Black Hawk-Eagle and the majestic King Vulture, and flocks of White-collared Swift.

Other species likely in the more open habit of the lower property and also in the lush forested areas include Lesson's and Turquoise-browed Motmots, Pale-billed and Black-cheeked Woodpeckers, Wedge-billed and Cocoa Woodcreepers, Black-headed, Slaty-tailed, Gartered and Collared Trogons, Violet-headed Hummingbird, Purple-crowned Fairy, Mistletoe Tyrannulet, White-breasted Wood Wren, White-throated Thrush, Giant Cowbird, Red-throated Ant Tanager, Olive-backed, Scrub, White-vented and Yellow-throated Euphonias, Variable and Morelet's Seedeaters and an array of overwintering North American migrants including various vireos, warblers, buntings and orioles.



Keel-billed Toucan by Adam Riley





Pale-billed Woodpecker
by Owen Deutsch

Breaking for lunch, we will then head off to tackle a few trails leading through primary rainforest in the upper reaches of the reserve. High on our priority list are two difficult species of Motmot, namely Keel-billed and Tody, though we may have secured good looks of the former by this stage. Other interesting species we hope to find include the reticent Tawny-faced Quail, Great and Slaty-breasted Tinamous, Slaty-tailed Trogon and, if we are very fortunate, Grey-headed Piprites. We should also add to our growing mammal list, with noisy troops of Central American Spider Monkeys, in particular, occurring here in good numbers.

Night birding in the area can also be rewarding, with possibilities including Middle American Screech Owl, Mottled and Black-and-white Owls, Great Potoo and further mammal prospects including chances for the intriguing Grey Four-eyed Opossum.

Day 4: Day trip to Honduran Emerald Reserve. Today sees us making a very early start for a full day's birding in the Rio Aguan Valley. Situated in the rain shadow of the

coastal mountain range, the habitat here is uniquely dry with cactus and euphorbia dominating. The reserve was established to protect our major target of the day, Honduras' only endemic, the lovely little Honduran Emerald – one of Central America's rarest and most range-restricted birds. While incredibly local, this tiny glittering green hummingbird is fairly common here, and we anticipate excellent views of this special species as it goes about looking for its daily supply of nectar in any open flowers. Our ride into 'Emerald country' as it is known can be equally rewarding, as a surprising number of bird species inhabit this desert-like habitat. Along the way, we will also visit localised wet areas within this arid region. Short stops may well produce Double-striped Thick-knee, Lesser Roadrunner and Lesser Ground Cuckoo (though both these tricky species will require a lot of luck!), Northern Beardless Tyrannulet, White-lored Gnatcatcher, Cinnamon Hummingbird, Canivet's Emerald, Spot-bellied Bobwhite, Banded Wren, White-bellied Wren, Stripe-headed Sparrow and Altamira Oriole amongst others.

Day 5: Day trip to Lancetilla Botanical Gardens. Today we will depart early and drive to the lovely Lancetilla Botanic Gardens near the coastal town of Tela. Initially created as an agricultural research centre and experimental station by the United Fruit Company, the property rapidly expanded in size and importance and is now the world's second-largest tropical botanical garden, boasting an exceptional collection of tropical plants from Central America and elsewhere. This includes a substantial selection of orchids and ornamental plants and even a protected area of tropical broad-leaved rainforest. Of course, with all the



Honduran Emerald by Adam Riley





White-fronted Amazon by Owen Deutsch

incredible plants and diversity of ecosystems to be found here, the gardens are a magnet for both resident and migratory birds, and a walk around the manicured grounds here will certainly keep us very busy.

Amongst the numerous Grey Catbirds, a number of colourful warblers may include Magnolia, Golden-winged and Black-and-white. We will also spend some time attempting to obtain decent views of the agoraphobic Ruddy Crake, for which this spot is rather renowned. Other expected species to look out for are Grey and Short-tailed Hawks, Plain Chachalaca, White-fronted and Red-colored Amazons, Black-headed, Gartered, Slaty-tailed and Collared Trogons, Turquoise-browed Motmot, Short-billed Pigeon, Blue Ground Dove, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, Great and Barred Antshrikes, Squirrel Cuckoo, Smoky-brown Woodpecker, Stripe-throated and Long-billed Hermits, Dusky Antbird, Long-billed Gnatwren, Yellow-bellied Tyrannulet and many other flycatchers and related species, Crimson-collared and Scarlet-rumped

(Passerini's) Tanagers, Buff-throated Saltator, Orchard Oriole and Black-striped Sparrow. Lunch will be had at a local restaurant, following which we will then continue with our explorations of the area until the late afternoon, when we will return to our lodge to freshen up before our final celebratory dinner together.

Day 6: Pico Bonito Lodge to San Pedro Sula and final departures. This morning our Honduran adventure comes to an end and we will transfer to the San Pedro Sula airport for our onward flights homeward bound.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:

Tour dates, prices, single supplement rates, approximate flight costs and spaces available for this tour are displayed on our website. Please see under IMPORTANT NOTES below.

This includes:

- All meals from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 6;
- All lodgings as per itinerary;
- All ground transportation;
- All national park and other reserve entrance fees; and
- Local guiding services.

This excludes:

- **Any** airfares;
- Any beverages;
- Tips for local guides and services;
- Special gratuities;
- Trip Report; and
- Telephone calls, laundry and other items of a personal nature.

Single Supplement: The single supplement cost for this tour will be charged if you wish to have single accommodation. If RBL cannot provide you with a rooming partner for these nights although you



choose to share, the single supplement will become applicable. We will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that a rooming partner is found if you do wish to share.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- a) **Due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, we quote our tours in 4 currencies. The tour price is however fixed only in the currency printed in bold, and the actual cost in the other currencies listed will be adjusted according to prevailing exchange rates at the time of final invoicing (usually 4 months before the tour.) The same applies to approximate flight and single supplement rates, which are also quoted in the respective fixed currency.**
- b) **Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration a small party supplement will have to be charged.**
- c) **Furthermore, these costs are subject to unforeseen increases in tour related costs and may have to be adjusted as a result.**
- d) **Lastly, we may be forced to change or alter the itinerary and / or the designated Rockjumper leader at short or no notice due to unforeseen circumstances; please be aware that we will attempt to adhere as close to the original program as possible.**

Tippling: As noted above, gratuities are NOT included on this tour.

Please note:

- **San Pedro Sula has a high crime rate (predominantly gang related). The airport is situated on the very eastern edge of the city, from where we depart and head further east, ie: we do not travel through, visit or stay in the city itself.**
- It is important for the comfort of your fellow travellers that you do not over-pack. Kindly stick to 20kg (44lb) for check in luggage and 8kg (+-18lb) for hand luggage.
- It can be hot and humid with harsh sun in the lowlands, so please come prepared with hats and sun cream for protection. Humidity levels are high for much of the tour.
- Mosquitoes and tiny bloodsucking flies can be numerous at times and it is advisable to pack a good supply of DEET or another effective insect repellent.
- Accommodation is very comfortable.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE DETAILS:

This tour **does not** include **ANY** airfares. The tour will begin in San Pedro Sula on day 1 with a group transfer to our lodge. The tour will conclude after breakfast on day 6 with a transfer from Pico Bonito Lodge to Ramón Villeda Morales International Airport, San Pedro Sula, Honduras.

The above information in respect of arrivals and departures is a guide only. Precise arrival and departure information will be sent to you in your **Tour Confirmation** package once the tour has been officially confirmed. If you wish to arrive early and/or depart late and would like assistance in this regard, kindly contact the Rockjumper office.

FLIGHTS:

Ramón Villeda Morales International Airport, San Pedro Sula, Honduras (IATA: SAP) is the main port of entry and exit for international flights on this tour. **Please DO NOT book any flights until you have consulted the Rockjumper office for confirmation on the status of the tour.**

