

Guatemala Birding 2

Jan 2-13, 2020



JB Journeys
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See the Golden-cheeked Warbler in its winter territory!

Join us for this unique birding tour to beautiful Guatemala. Based on the overwhelming success of our 2019 tours, we are again offering this opportunity to bird areas not offered by other bird tour companies, guided by Guatemala's top birder, **John Cahill**.

Your participation in our tour benefits both Travis Audubon Society and Community Cloudforest Conservation (CCFC), an environmental education program located near Cobán in central Guatemala. In addition to fabulous birds – including the near mythical **Resplendent Quetzal** – Guatemala offers you an amazing history of birding and conservation.



First we begin our birding at the very same farm where **Dr. Alexander Skutch** lived for more than



two years in the 1930s while studying birds and collecting plants. Here we'll see a number of range-restricted birds that occur in this area such as Blue-throated Motmot, Black-capped Siskin, and what is possibly the most beautiful of all warblers, the Pink-headed Warbler.

Then we work our way to the cloudforest, visiting several private reserves set up specifically for migrating birds. This area also gives Central Texas birders the possibility to see the **Golden-cheeked Warbler** on its wintering grounds in the very cloudforest where the species was first described by ornithologists in 1860! We will spend three nights and days at CCFC's amazing environmental center, a totally off-the-grid building and a marvel in engineering.

We end our adventure in Tikal, perhaps the greatest of the Mayan cities. We'll pick up a local cultural guide who will add to the experience. There are more amazing birds to see here as we walk among pyramids, like Keel-billed Toucan, Slaty-tailed Trogon, Ocellated Turkey, Tody Motmot, several species of parrots, and raptors including the rare Orange-breasted Falcon. We'll also see some cool mammals like Coatis, Agoutis, and Spider and Black Howler Monkeys.

Our local guides will be **John Cahill**, the top birder in Guatemala (see his story [in Birders Guide, October 2014](#)) and in his early 20s, he is part of the new generation of birders. Comments from prior tours refer to John as "the best bird guide ever". He is a birding rockstar and seems to know everyone in the country! He will be assisted by his father **Rob Cahill**. The Cahill Family runs [Community Cloud Forest Conservation](#), which focuses on environmental education for the local Mayan school population, using Cornell Lab of Ornithology's BirdSleuth program. They also run a leadership training program for girls and young women in sustainable agro-ecology, nutrition, cooking, health and family planning, career and educational options, eco-tourism, and other life-skills, with the goal of helping them stay in school and continue their education.



In addition to donations to both organizations, a half-acre cloud forest restoration will be dedicated in the name of Travis Audubon, thus offsetting our in-country carbon output while enhancing bird habitat.

With a minimum of 8, a representative of Travis Audubon Society will escort this departure.

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Photo credit: John Cahill

Jan 2, Thurs: Arrive Guatemala City mid-day. Transfer from Guatemala City to Tecpán, approximately 1.5 hours.

Afternoon birding at Senderos Alux. 2 nights at Albergue Caleras Chichavac.

Jan 3, Fri: Tecpán – Morning birding at Reserva Natural Atitlan. Lunch at Lake Atitlan. Afternoon birding at Caleras Chichavac Private Reserve and Rincon Suizo's Private Reserve. Overnight at Albergue Caleras.

Bar-winged Oriole, Chestnut-sided Shrike-Vireo, Rufous Sabrewing, Slender Sheartail, Sparkling-tailed Hummingbird, Belted Flycatcher, Black-throated Jay, Red-faced Warbler, Garnet-throated Hummingbird, Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer, Black-capped Siskin, Pink-headed Warbler, Mountain Trogan, Rufous-browed Wren, Blue-throated Motmot, Mountain Thrush, Hooded Grosbeak

Jan 4, Sat: Tecpán to Guatemala City - This morning we have another chance to look for target birds. Late morning or early afternoon we'll head to Guatemala City to overnight there. Overnight at San Carlos Hotel.

Jan 5, Sun: Granados – We have an early departure with breakfast on the road as we head to Granados in Motagua Valley. Lunch in the cloudforest and we'll arrive at Posada del Quetzal late afternoon. Total driving time is approximately 4-4.5 hours, with stops for birding along the way. 2 nights Posada del Quetzal.

White-lored Gnatcatcher, Russet-crowned and Turquoise-browed Motmots, Streak-backed Oriole, Stripe-headed Sparrow, Orange-fronted Parakeet, White-throated Magpie-Jay, Buff-collared Nightjar, Crested Bobwhite, Cinnamon Hummingbird, Varied Bunting

Jan 6, Mon: Cloud Forest Birding – Morning birding at Los Ranchitos Private Reserve about ½ hour away. Afternoon birding in pine-oak forest at Rio Escondido Private Reserve, which was created to protect migrating birds, such as the Golden-cheeked Warbler. Overnight Posada del Quetzal

Resplendent Quetzal, Unicolored Jay, Blue-crowned Chlorophonia, Azure-hooded Jay, Black-headed and Spotted Nightingale-Thrush, Violet Sabrewing, Highland Guan, Buff-breasted Flycatcher, Painted Redstart, Golden-cheeked Warbler

Jan 7, Tues: Rubel Chaim/CCFC Center – Morning birding at Los Ranchitos again. Afternoon drive to the agro-ecology center, approximately 1-1.5 hours. Birding around the center, where we stay 3 nights.

Belted Flycatcher, Golden-cheeked Warbler, Guatemalan Pygmy-Owl, Emerald-chinned Hummingbird, Bushy-crested Jay, Brown-capped Vireo, Golden-winged Warbler, Ocellated Quail

Jan 8, Wed: Laguna Chichoj – Morning birding the agro-ecology center. Afternoon birding Laguna Chichoj. *Golden-cheeked Warbler, Bushy-crested Jay, Ocellated Quail, Blue-crowned Chlorophonia, Tawny-throated Leafcutter, Ruddy Crake, Spotted Rail, Limpkin, Spot-breasted Oriole, White-throated Flycatcher, Gray-crowned Yellowthroat, North American migrants*

Jan 9, Thurs: Rubel Chaim – Morning birding the cloud forests above the agro-ecology center. Afternoon birding and touring the agro-ecology center campus. Overnight CCFC Center.

Golden-cheeked Warbler, Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush, Chestnut-capped Brushfinch, Ocellated Quail, Resplendent Quetzal, Rose-throated Becard, Crimson-collared Tanager, Rufous-browed Peppershrike, Green-throated Mountain-Gem, Flame-colored Tanager

Jan 10, Fri: Cloud Forest to Rain Forest – This is the longest day of driving, with a total of 7-8 hours, broken up with stops for birding. Morning birding Chajbaoc Private Reserve and in pine forest at Las Victorias National Park. Afternoon birding in rain forest in the Rosario National Park. Late afternoon or early evening

we'll arrive to Tikal, the fabulous Mayan city, where we stay 2 nights at Tikal Inn at the ruins.

Scaled Antpitta, Mottled Owl, Yellow-backed Oriole, Emerald Toucanet, Slate-colored Solitaire, Slate-throated Redstart, Rusty Sparrow, Lesson's Motmot, Grace's Warbler, Black-capped Swallow, Collared Trogon, Black-collared Hawk, Black-crowned Tityra, Olive-backed Euphonia, Golden-hooded Tanager, White-whiskered Puffbird

Jan 11, Sat: Tikal – Full day birding the archeological site in Tikal National Park, including the famous abandoned airstrip. In addition to birding, we will be joined by a local archeological guide. One night we'll look for owls. Overnight Tikal Inn.

Ocellated Turkey, Black-throated Shrike-Tanager, Slaty-tailed Tropicbird, Yellow-bellied Tyrannulet, Gray-headed Tanager, Tawny-winged Woodcreeper, Red-capped Manakin, Orange-breasted Falcon, Gray-necked Wood-Rail, Giant Cowbird, Montezuma Oropendola, Black-cowled Oriole, Bare-throated Tiger-Heron, Purple-crowned Fairy, Brown-hooded Parrot, Boat-billed Heron, White-bellied Emerald, Blue Bunting

Jan 12, Sun: Tikal to El Remate - A last morning of birding before we drive to El Remate on the shore of late Peten Itza, the drive about 1-1.5 hours. We'll have time for some afternoon and evening birding around the grounds of our hotel, which offers a great place for a sunset! Overnight Casa de don David.

Jan 13, Mon: Santa Ana – Very early this morning, we'll leave for Flores airport, with international connections through Guatemala City or Belize.

*Note: The order and sites visited may vary due to weather, road conditions and other factors beyond our control.
Hotels listed are valid as of printing, but may change.*

NOTE REGARDING FLIGHTS: The itinerary is based on flights arriving Guatemala City airport by early afternoon and leaving immediately for Tecpán. United, American, and Delta (among others) have flights arriving between 11 AM and 1 PM. Later arrivals may incur an additional transfer fee. Or you can arrive a day early and we can arrange a room for you and then pick you up to meet the others on arrival the next day. The tour ends in Flores, the airport serving Tikal, where you can connect to your international flight.

COST:

- \$3495 per person in double occupancy with 10 participants. (With 8: \$3595, with 6: \$3695).
- Single \$395. Singles are very limited. Rooms are either a smaller room or a double at single rate.
- Minimum 7 to operate, maximum 10 participants.
- To confirm your spot, please [complete the reservation form on-line](#).
- Deposit \$500 to hold space; final payment will due October 15, 2019.
- If by check, make it to JB Journeys & mail to Jean Warneke, 1202 Newning Ave #114, Austin 78704.
- Cancellation policy – up to 120 days prior to departure, \$250/person. 119-60 days, 25%. Inside 60 days – non-refundable.

INCLUDED:

- Transportation as listed by van
- 11 nights lodging* with taxes included
- Services of local bilingual bird guides
- Entry fees to parks, etc
- Meals as listed
- Basic gratuities for hotels, meals, & driver

NOT INCLUDED:

- Airfare (into Guatemala City, return from Flores in Tikal. Sample flights on registration)
- Drinks
- Gratuities to local guides*(See suggestions)
- Travel Insurance
- Personal expenses

*Suggested tipping for guides:

- John, your lead guide: \$10-15 per person/per day
- Local guide in Tikal: \$10-15 per person