

## 10-day: birding the Mayan ruins of the Copan Valley, Lake Yojoa basin & the Caribbean coast of Honduras

### TRIP OVERVIEW

This 10-day birding trip, features the rich cultural & natural diversity of Honduras. We spend the first three nights in the town of Copan Ruinas, near the ancient Mayan sites, a place filled with culture and many birding hotspots nearby. We will have the opportunity to do birding in a UNESCO World Heritage Site. On Day 4, we will move to the Lake Yojoa basin, which is surrounded by national parks, and spend three days birding in rainforests, cloud forests and the lake area. For the remaining three nights, we move to the Caribbean coast, on-route birding the historic Lancetilla Botanical Garden, and staying in Pico Bonito National Park.

### DAY-BY-DAY TRIP DESCRIPTION

**Day 1: Arrive in San Pedro Sula and travel to Copán Ruinas:** After arriving in San Pedro Sula (the airport code is: SAP), we will drive west to Copan Ruinas, approx. 4 hours. Birding opportunities on-route depending on flight arrival times. Check-in at our hotel in the charming town of Copan Ruinas.



**Day 2: Birdwatching and tour of Copan archaeological site, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and eBird hotspot (256 species):** We will visit the political & religious center of Mayan society in the Copan Valley, well-known for its intricately-carved stelae, ball-court & hieroglyphic staircase. Abundant **Scarlet Macaws** will welcome us, these birds were sacred in Mayan mythology, and were reintroduced in the Copán Valley 40 years ago. We will search for **Turquoise-browed Motmot, Ferruginous Pigmy-Owl, Lesson's Motmot, Collared Aracari, Scrub Euphonia** and **Long-billed Hermit**.

Lunch in town & afternoon birding around Copan. In the evening time, to update lists.

**Day 3: Birdwatching road to San Francisco Lagoon and Hacienda San Lucas:** We will be birdwatching near the Copán River and the road to the San Francisco Lagoon (eBird hotspot 220 species), an area populated with many species of birds due to the variety of forest; conifer trees and broad-leaf. This location is considered the largest gathering place of the beautiful **Elegant Euphonia** in Central America. We hope to observe a minimum of 60 species including **Bushy-crested Jay, Green-throated Mountain Gem, Cinnamon Hummingbird, Tropical Kingbird, and Gartered Trogon**, in the afternoon enjoy great sunset views of the Copan Valley from Hacienda San Lucas.

**Day 4: Birding El Puente archaeological site then travel to Lake Yojoa basin:** After breakfast, check-out from our hotel, and opportunity for birding on-route in El Puente archaeological site (eBird hotspot 150 species) including: **Ivory-billed Woodcreeper, Olive-throated Parakeet, Masked Tityra**.



Afterward, continue drive to Lake Yojoa basin with lunch in a restaurant on-route. In the late afternoon, arrive and check-in at hotel. Time to stretch your legs and a bit of birding around the hotel.

## Day 5: Birding El Rancho and around

**Lake Yojoa:** After breakfast, we drive to El Rancho near El Cajon Dam. This area is one of the places where you can see the endemic **Honduran Emerald**, and other species such as **White-necked Puffbird** and **Yellow-tailed Oriole**, after lunch, we do some birding around Lake Yojoa, in search of **Ruddy Crake**, **Pinnated Bittern**, **Fulvous Whistling-Duck**, and the elusive **Yellow-breasted Crake**.

**Day 6: Birding cloud forest and coffee farms near Santa Barbara National Park:** After an early breakfast we head west for approx. 1.5 hours to El Cedral in the buffer zone of Santa Barbara National Park, an area with over 215 recorded species. There we will meet Leonel, local guide & conservation champion, and head into the cloud forest in search of **Resplendent Quetzal**, the “*feathered serpent of the Mayans*”. Other notable species possible: **Wine-throated Hummingbird**, **Elegant Euphonia**, **Northern Emerald-Toucanet**, **Green-throated Mountain Gem** and **Chestnut-Capped Brushfinch**. There are stretches of somewhat strenuous uphill hiking needed to reach the area (we can arrange for horses). For lunch we will enjoy a traditional meal in Leonel’s home and coffee from his farm. After lunch, enjoy more birding opportunities on the way down from the forest to lake. Dinner and time to update checklists.

**Day 7: Travel to north coast, Lancetilla Botanical Garden and Pico Bonito:** After breakfast, check-out

from the hotel and travel to Pico Bonito on the Caribbean coast. On the way, birding at Lancetilla Botanical Garden, an eBird hotspot with 326 recorded species, including: **Rufous-Tailed Jacamar**, **American Pygmy Kingfisher**, **Rufous-Breasted Spinetail**, **Yellow Billed Cacique**, and **Rufous-and-White Wren**.

**Day 8: Birding Pico Bonito National Park:** Today we will walk the trails of Pico Bonito, with great viewpoints from the observation towers in search of the beautiful **Lovely Cotinga**. This area is a hotspot with more than 350 recorded species including: **Keel-billed Motmot**, **Tody Motmot**, **Collared Aracari**, **Keel-billed Toucan**, **Great Potoo**, **Montezuma Oropendola** and many **hummingbirds** and **Trogon**s.

**Day 9: Birding Cuero y Salado Wildlife Refuge:** After an early breakfast, this is a day filled with adventure as we arrive in the community of La Union and take an old United Fruit Company railcar into the wildlife refuge. Once there, we will navigate the calm waters of the Salado River in search of **Agami Heron**, **Rufous-breasted Spinetail**, **Northern Jacana**, **American Pygmy Kingfisher**, **Roseate Spoonbill**, and **Black-crowned Antshrike**. As an added bonus, this location is a naturalist’s dream with the possibility of sighting **West Indian Manatee**, **American Crocodile**, **White-headed Capuchin** & **Mantled Howler Monkeys**. Back at the hotel we do our final checklist update.

**Day 10: Transfer to San Pedro Sula Airport:** After breakfast, check-out from hotel, and head to San Pedro Sula airport for departure flights. Any possible activities on this day are dependent on flight departure times.

# BIRDING TRIP ITINERARY

## Pricing:

US\$ 2,999/person (based on 4 travelers)

US\$ 2,699/person (based on 6 travelers)

Prices subject to change without notice

### The trip price includes:

- 9-nights of accommodations in double occupancy rooms
- All meals (starting from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 10) Please inform us of special dietary requirements at time of booking trip
- Honduran bilingual birding guide
- All ground transportation as specified
- Entrance fees to cultural sites, museums, birding sites and natural protected areas

### The trip price does NOT include:

- Airfare and airport departure tax
- Tours and activities not specified
- Equipment rentals
- Gratuities for guides
- Alcoholic beverages
- Travel/medical insurance
- Any other incidentals

Choose Honduras is member of:

