



Long-wattled Umbrelabird - Buenaventura

## Southern Ecuador Birding Trip

From Dec 27<sup>th</sup> , 2026 to January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2027

Guayaqui, Churute, Buenaventura, Jorupe, Sozoronga, Uchucay , Ayampe

Tour leader: Daniel Martinez

**Ground operations partner: Nature Experience** — a licensed tour operator based in Quito, Ecuador. By booking this trip you also agree to Nature Experience's General Terms and Conditions of Sale, attached to this document.

### **Day 1. Sunday, Dec 27<sup>th</sup>, 2026.**

Arrival to Guayaquil. Depending on arrival time, we will have the possibility to Visit Cerro Blanco Protected Forest just about 20 minutes from our first Hotel (Luxva). At Cerro Blanco we'll have the opportunity to find species such like Lilacine Amazon, Pacific Elaenia, Henna-hooded Foliage-gleaner and the Ecuadorian Trogon.

### **Day 2-3. Monday, Dec 28<sup>th</sup> – Tuesday, Dec 29<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

Early this day, from Guayaquil immediately begin our transfer to the Umbrellabird Lodge located in the Buenaventura Reserve. On the way, we'll stop at the La Lagartera / Manglares Churute Wetlands, an important habitat for migratory species such as the Horned Screamer, Comb Duck and Ecuadorian Ground Dove. After a lunch stop, continue our journey to the Umbrellabird Lodge, arriving in the late afternoon.

On the next day, we'll spend the full day exploring the Buenaventura Reserve, looking for species endemic to southwestern Ecuador. The reserve is a prime location for birding, with trails that lead through diverse habitats where you can encounter Gray-backed Hawk and other rare species such as the Rufous-headed Chachalaca and Club-winged Manakin. The reserve's bird feeders attract various hummingbirds and forest species, and the surrounding area provides more opportunities for additional birding along the trails.

### **Day 4-5. Wednesday, Dec 30<sup>th</sup> – Thursday, Dec 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026**

Macará / Overnight at Urraca Lodge After breakfast we'll travel to Macará, a town near the border with Peru, passing through the diverse habitats of the Catatocha and El Empalme roads. These areas are known for species like the White-tailed Jay and Grey-cheeked Parakeet. Upon arrival at Urraca Lodge in the late afternoon, take time to explore the lodge grounds, which are rich in birdlife, including species such as the Watkin's Antpitta, Peruvian Pygmy-Owl and Pale-browed Tinamou. The lodge is located right in the Jorupe Reserve, which is a critical area for the conservation of the region's dry forests. The next is spent birding around the lodge, the reserve and surroundings. The reserve's dry forests host a number of endemic species, including the Ecuadorian Piculet, Speckle-breasted Wren and Collared Antshrike. Additionally, the area's network of trails and feeding stations offer excellent birding opportunities.

### **Day 6-7. Friday, January 1<sup>st</sup> – Saturday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2027**

Early this day, from Urraca Lodge immediately begin our first Birding at Sozoranga Road where we'll explore the area to find some targets such like Black-cowled Saltator, Jelski's Chat-Tyrant and Black-crested Tit-Tyrant. After a couple hours here, we'll continue our trip to Cuenca vicinity (Hotel Los Balcones), for about 7 hour drive with a few stops for lunch, etc.

**Day 8. Sunday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2027**

Early this day after having breakfast at Los Balcones Hotel, we'll head toward Camino al Cielo (Cuenca Vicinity), where our main target species will be the Red-faced Parrot, an endangered and very rare species found only in high Andean forest in southern Ecuador and adjacent parts of northern Peru. Some other located species here are Agile Tit-Tyrant, Sapphire-vented Puffleg and Purple-throated Sunangel.

**Day 9. Monday, January 4<sup>th</sup>**

Early this day after having breakfast at Los Balcones Hotel we'll begin our transfer from Cuenca toward El Alto where we'll make a brief stop and have good chance to see some special birds suchlike Bar-bellied Woodpecker, Andean Pygmy-Owl, Plushcap or Black-chested Mountain Tanager. Then we'll continue our trip to Guayaquil on route to the Santa Elena Peninsula and Ayampe vicinity. (Overnight at Cabañas Refugio del Colibrí). This is a 7 hour trip approximately with stop on the way.

**Day 10. Wednesday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2027**

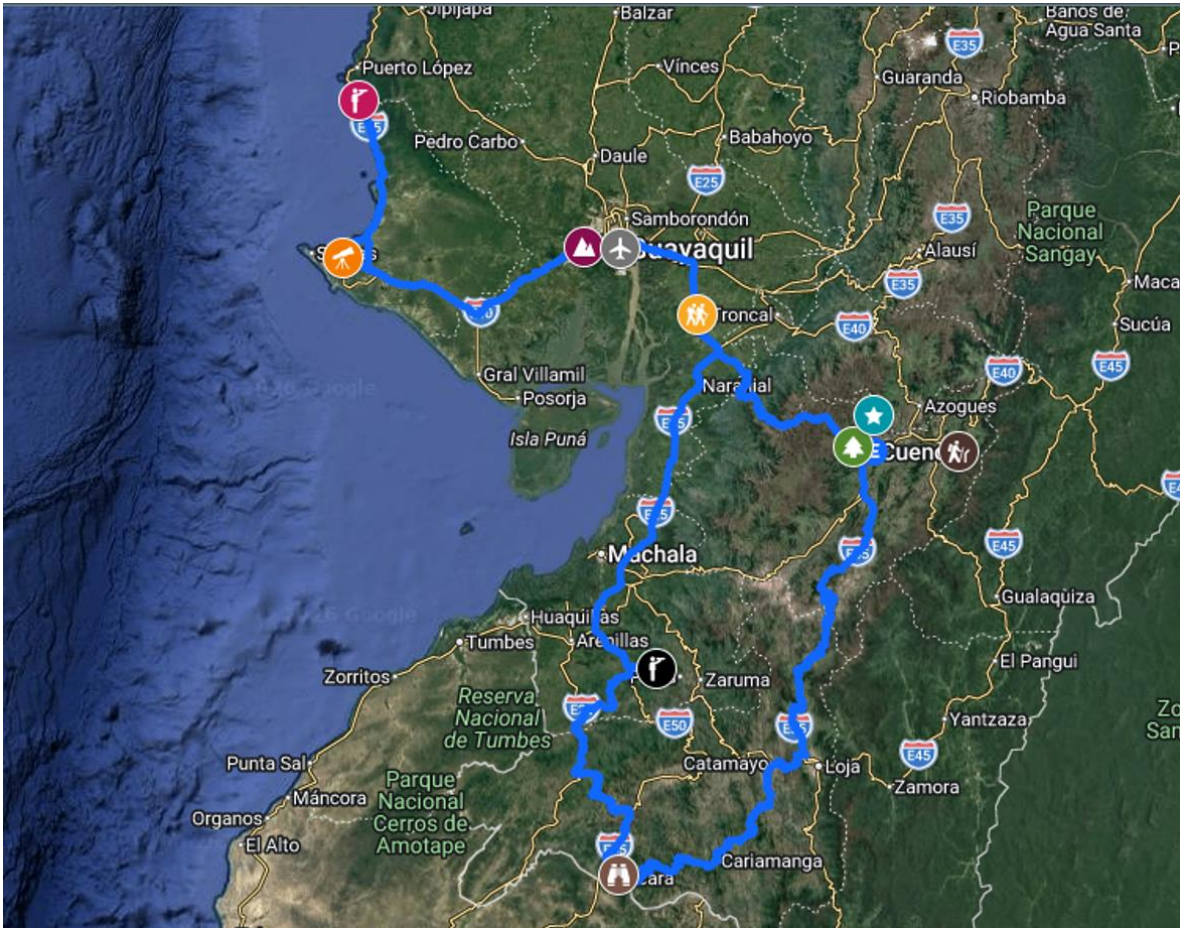
We'll spend the full day in Ayampe and surroundings. This area is within the Dry Forest, the Chongón-Colonche Mountain Range transitional ecosystem (dry, deciduous and humid) and the coast. This special and unique type of ecosystem at this location offers the big opportunity to find bird species like: Mouse-gray Flycatcher, Watkins's Antpitta, Tumbes Pewee, and the **Rare and Vulnerable Esmeraldas Woodstar**.

**Day 11. Thursday, January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2027**

This last day we'll be ready to get the transfer back to Guayaquil and of course with stops along the route. This will be a 4-5 hour drive until we get back to Hotel Luxva (overnight).

**Day 12. Friday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2027**

Transfer to the GYE airport



[Click here to see the map](#)

## What's Included

- Private Tour
- 12 days
- Accommodations and meals
- Bilingual Tour Guide
- Private Transportation
- Special birds and Unique Opportunity

## Not included

- International flights
- Tips
- Alcoholic beverages
- Tours not mentioned in the itinerary

## Tour leader

### **Daniel Martínez**

*Biologist specialized in Ornithology.*

Ornithology consultant

freelance naturalist and birding guide.

28 years of experience



Daniel has a Post Degree in Tropical Biology with a focus on Natural Resources and a Bachelor´s Degree in Biology focused on Ecology and Sustainable Development. Since 2003, Daniel has complementing his passion for guiding with his studies and observation of birds all across Costa Rica. He is fanatical about birds and has participated in many counts and researches throughout the continent. He dedicates his free time to another of his passions, photography, and of course, birds and nature are his highlights. Exploring new places and spending time with his family are also in the top of his life.

He has experience in observation and guidance as well as in counting and relevant ornithological records in some countries of the region such as Ecuador, Nicaragua and Chile. He focuses on being able to collaborate in the conservation and protection of the birds in their habitat as well as in knowing about changes in their distribution and natural history. He has a great interest and passion for woodpeckers, raptors, shorebirds and antbirds.