



Indiana Audubon 2024 Belize Birding Tour
January 19-27, 2024
Tropical Birding: The Best of Belize!



Join Indiana Audubon, in partnership with IndiGo Birding Nature Tours, for some great birding adventure as we discover the bird and cultural diversity in the Yucatan Peninsula as we explore Belize. Belize is an emerging destination for North American birders because of its proximity to the U.S., diverse cultures, food, and nearly 600 species of birds in an area the size of New Jersey. It also helps that Belize is an English-speaking country with the friendliest and most genuine people you will ever meet.

While there will be some bumpy gravel roads to travel in this developing country, you will have the chance to relax each evening in beautiful settings with very comfortable accommodations. The tour is designed to maximize the bird list by visiting a wide range of habitats, with special attention put on finding tropical favorites like toucans, trogons, manakins, and more.



As part of Indiana Audubon's commitment to conservation in areas we visit, a portion of the trip fees will be donated towards the Belize Audubon Society, as the longest standing conservation organization in Belize.

Trip Leaders: Sam Warren is the education and outreach manager for Indiana Audubon. Sam is a familiar staple if you've ever joined and IAS virtual workshop. David Rupp is the owner and guide for IndiGo Birding Nature Tours based in Bloomington and has organized the tour for IAS. David fell in love with Belize on his first visit in 2018 and has led numerous tours since then to Belize. He is an Indiana Audubon member and past president of Sassafra Audubon Society.

- Day 1.** January 19th. Afternoon arrival in Belize City.
- Day 2.** January 20th. Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary.
- Day 3.** January 21st. Shrimp farm and Black Rock Road.
- Day 4.** January 22nd. Black Rock and Macal River.
- Day 5.** January 23rd. Mountain Pine Ridge and Caracol Mayan Site.
- Day 6.** January 24th. Spanish Lookout and Bocawina.
- Day 7.** January 25th. Cockscomb Basin Jaguar Preserve
- Day 8.** January 26th. Red Bank for Scarlet Macaws; Hopkins coastal wetlands.
- Day 9.** January 27th. Return flight to U.S.

Detailed Itinerary

DAY 1

Crooked Tree – Welcome to Belize (night at Bird’s Eye View Lodge)

All flights should be arranged to arrive in early afternoon at Philip S.W. Goldson International Airport (BZE) just outside Belize City. A guide from Bird’s Eye View Lodge will be there to welcome us and provide transportation to the lodge which is less than an hour’s drive from the airport. After checking in, we’ll admire birds around the lodge, which include Vermilion Flycatcher, Hooded Oriole, Common Tody-flycatcher, and Common Pauraque.

DAY 2

Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary (night at Bird’s Eye View Lodge)

The village of Crooked Tree is on an island in the middle a huge lagoon. We will rise at dawn for a “must-do” boat trip for any birder that visits Belize. Target species include the elusive Agami Heron, the stately Jabiru, the Black-collared Hawk, and many more waterbirds. Nine herons are possible and five species of kingfishers. The rest of the day will be spent birding other parts of the island, visiting both pine forest and savanna habitat as we search for Yucatan Jay, Yellow-backed Oriole, and Black-throated Bobwhite.



DAY 3

Coast to Mountains (night at Black Rock Lodge)

Before we head further inland, we’ll visit Captain Hook’s Shrimp Farm and Restaurant for a wide variety of shorebirds and a tasty lunch! This is a great spot to find Wilson’s Plover, Western Sandpiper, Willet,

and Northern Jacana. We'll also keep an eye open for the Cinnamon Hummingbird. A guide from Black Rock Lodge will meet us there and take us to the remote eco-lodge along the Macal River.

DAY 4

Birding Black Rock (night at Black Rock Lodge)

Black Rock Lodge is one of the top eBird hotspots in Belize. We will spend this day on and near the grounds of the lodge, hoping to get a hawk-eagle sweep: Black, Ornate, and Black-and-white! An open-air dining area looks out on the river below, and some of the birds that come to the feeder include Collared Aracari, Red-legged Honeycreeper, and Yellow-throated Euphonia. After a four-course dinner, we'll head back out on the grounds in search of an owl or two. A Spectacled Owl is a real possibility!

DAY 5

Mountain Pine Ridge (night at Black Rock Lodge)

We will rise early for a long road trip to one of the most beautiful and remote areas in Belize: the Mountain Pine Ridge. Rusty Sparrow, Rufous-capped Warbler, and Hepatic Tanager will be among our target species as we view waterfalls, caves, and spectacular scenery. If road conditions allow, we will continue on to the Caracol Archaeological Site to see Mayan Ruins and lots of birds. All four trogons native to Belize can be found here, and Caracol is also a great spot for Keel-billed Toucan, Black-throated Shrike Tanager, and White-whiskered Puffbird.



DAY 6

Spanish Lookout to Bocawina (night at Bocawina)

We say goodbye to Black Rock Lodge after another amazing Belizean Breakfast. The agricultural lands of Spanish Lookout, a Mennonite community, will be our morning destination. Here we might find Scissor-tailed and Fork-tailed Flycatchers, Gray-crowned Yellowthroats, and a wide variety of raptors. After lunch at a local restaurant, we travel to the south along Hummingbird Highway to Bocawina Rainforest Resort, located in the middle of Mayflower Bocawina National Park. A late afternoon birding stroll here might turn up a Lesson's Motmot, Golden-hooded Tanager, or any of an assortment of hummingbirds.

DAY 7

Cockscomb Basin Jaguar Preserve (night at Bocawina)

Just to the south of Bocawina is the Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary. The road to Cockscomb is a birding destination in itself. We will look for both Montezuma and Chestnut-headed Oropendola on the drive. In the preserve we will hope to find the Rufous-tailed Jacamar, both species of manakins, and some of the birds that love ants: Barred Antshrike, Dot-winged Antwren, Mayan Antthrush, and Dusky Antbird! We will return to Bocawina for more birding before dinner if time allows.

DAY 8

Red Bank and Hopkins (night at Bocawina)

We save the Scarlet Macaws for the last full day! The Mayan village of Red Bank hosts dozens of these beautiful birds in the nearby hills. After a morning of birding in Red Bank, we'll stop at a Mayan restaurant for lunch. The tour finishes with a visit to the Garifuna village of Hopkins, right on the Caribbean Sea. We'll fill in any gaps still left on our bird list by adding species like Magnificent Frigatebird, Royal Tern, and Brown Pelican. The Hopkins Wetlands is also good for Clapper Rail, Roseate Spoonbill, Wood Stork, dowitchers and other wintering shorebirds.



DAY 9

Farewell to Belize

It will be difficult to leave, but on our ride back to the airport for departure we can discuss other Belizean birding hotspots that you can visit when you come back!

Included with the Tour:

- IAS member and IndiGo Birding Nature Tours guide David Rupp coordinating trip logistics before and during the tour.
- Local birding guides throughout Belize.
- Transportation with fuel included throughout the trip.
- All lodging for 9 days, 8 nights.
- All meals starting with dinner on day 1 and finishing with breakfast on day 9.
- All entrance fees to reserves and national parks, including Crooked Tree boat tour.
- Standard lunch and dinner tips for restaurant wait staff.

Not included with the Tour:

- International flights to and from Belize.
- Tips for hotel staff, bird guides and driver, are not included.
- Medical expenses, prescription drugs and other items of personal use.
- Additional services offered in hotels (Spa, massage, etc.)
- Alcoholic beverages and anything else not listed on the menus of restaurants.
- Health and/or trip insurance
- Laundry service
- Souvenirs
- Any other expense or extra tour not listed as included above

Trip limit is 10 participants max. Prices are based on double occupancy. For more information or to register, contact Brad Bumgardner at bbumgardner@indianaaudubon.org. A \$500 deposit/person is required for reservation.

\$3,190 per person IAS Member. \$3,290 per person non-IAS Member.

Single Supplement: \$400

\$75 surcharge for credit card payments



INDIANA AUDUBON TERMS AND CONDITIONS

We believe it is best to begin with a clear written understanding of our respective responsibilities and obligations. Please read the entire document and select “I/we have read and understood these terms and conditions” to continue with the booking process. If you prefer, you can request a paper booking form, fill it out, sign it, and return it by fax or mail. We will not consider your booking confirmed until we receive both your completed booking form and your deposit (or full payment for late bookings). If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us by e-mail at bbumgardner@indianaaudubon.org or by phone at [\(219\)-928-6905](tel:219-928-6905) (US & Canada) INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY undertakes to create a trip itinerary, to provide a trip leader to guide expeditions, and to arrange for all travel services and accommodation. INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY reserves the right to substitute other suppliers of arranged services, and to alter the itinerary when deemed necessary or advisable. The passage contract used by the airline shall constitute the trip participant's sole contract regarding international air travel and is not a contract with INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY.

TRIP PRICE

The price of the trip includes all accommodation, ground transport as required by the itinerary, tour materials and the service(s) of a leader, entrance fees to parks and reserves mentioned on the itinerary, as well as meals as indicated on the final itinerary. Exclusions to prices are noted on your itinerary or are designated as optional activities. The price represents a complete package; itemization of individual costs is not available. Not included are flights between your home and the tour's starting and ending destinations. Travel expenses such as departure taxes, passports, visas, immunizations, insurance, medical costs, evacuation, optional excursions, room service, minibar, laundry, excess baggage, telephone calls and expenses of a purely personal nature are not included. Any expenses arising from the delay, disruption or extension of a trip due to causes beyond INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY'S control are not included. Tips to the Indiana Audubon Society tour leader are not included. If you have questions about what is or is not included in your tour, please do not hesitate to contact us. A special note on trip reports: Our guides write trip reports for many of the tours, but due to time constraints, busy schedules, and other reasons, a trip report cannot be produced for every tour. Indiana Audubon Society cannot guarantee that a trip report will be written for any tour.

TRIP PRICE INCREASE

Due to a variety of possible circumstances beyond our control, the total trip cost is subject to change, although this is only as a last resort. Participants will be notified if any changes to the trip cost will be incurred. INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY tries its best to anticipate the rising costs of service in every country it operates, but when unexpected increases occur we will reserve the right to increase our price by 10% of the tour price. If greater increases are necessary, participants will be allowed to withdraw from the tour without cancellation penalty. If you wish to avoid the cost of a single room (single supplement), we will attempt to find a roommate for you, but please be aware that this is not always possible, and if we are unable to find a suitable roommate for you, you will be required to pay the single supplement. Please note rooming preferences will be honored to the best of our ability, but not guaranteed. In some locations, such as remote field stations or very small lodges, single rooms may not be available, and sharing arrangements need

to be accommodated. Whenever INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY is aware of these situations, participants will always be informed prior to booking. When unexpected sharing must occur (particularly in remote locations where communication is difficult) the lack of availability at a particular hotel or lodge is usually not notified to us in advance and is only discovered on arrival. Under these circumstances, your leader(s) will do their best to accommodate the group's preferences.

RESERVATIONS and PAYMENTS

To secure your reservation, we require a deposit as well as the signing of the booking form including the assumption of risk and liability release, either electronically or handwritten on a paper form. DEPOSITS ARE NON-REFUNDABLE IF YOU DECIDE TO CANCEL YOUR TOUR. If INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY cancels a tour, deposits are almost always refundable; please refer to the section on CANCELLATIONS below. INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY reserves the right to refuse or decline bookings for any reason whatsoever, at its sole discretion. A booking is accepted only from the date that INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY has confirmed acceptance in writing and received your booking form and payment. Only at this point does the contract between the participant and INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY come into existence. If payments are not received according to the payment schedule outlined in the invoice, INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY reserves the right to treat these bookings as canceled and charge cancellation fees as outlined in this booking form. For tours to all international destinations, the full balance is due 90 days prior to the starting date of the tour. Payments for bookings made less than 90 days prior to departure are due in full at the time of booking. We accept payments by check, bank draft, or bank-to-bank (wire) transfer. Credit cards payments may require additional credit card processing fees and must be paid by participant if this is the preferred method of payment. All checks must be in US dollars and drawn on a US bank. For payments by wire transfer, you must instruct your bank to cover all bank charges involved in sending the wire. In many instances, an intermediary bank will deduct additional charges, which are deducted from the total that is transmitted to our account. If this is a small amount (US\$25 or less), we will absorb it, but if the charges are more than US\$25, INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY will invoice you for the charges.

INSURANCE

All trip participants are responsible for their own personal travel insurance to cover accident, medical expense, evacuation, repatriation, and loss of effects. We suggest you check your health policy to determine if it provides any overseas coverage (most do not). In addition, we strongly recommend trip cancellation/interruption coverage. We cannot stress how important this is to protect your investment. Please note that most traveler insurance companies require policies to be purchased within a short period following booking, depending on the insurer, so bear this in mind when booking and applying for travel insurance.

CHANGE OF ITINERARY or LEADER

INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY reserves the right to make tour changes if the need should arise due to unforeseen circumstances or for safety reasons. If the trip leader/guide determines it is best to deviate from the activities described in the trip program, he/she will make reasonable efforts to substitute an activity of comparable interest and satisfaction to the trip participants. If significant changes are necessary prior to the start of any tour, participants will be informed. If a change of itinerary or operation mode is imposed upon us for any reason, such as airline strikes, weather or political unrest, the additional costs, whatever these may be, shall be the participants' responsibility. Finally, INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY reserves the right to reassign or substitute any of its leaders to any tour.

GROUP SIZE

A suitable maximum group size to enjoy a tour will depend very much upon the location and type

of habitats visited. The tour pages on the Indiana Audubon Society website state the maximum group size for each tour, or you may contact us and ask. All but a very few of our tours are limited to 8-12 participants and one leader. When there are more than 12 participants a second leader will be provided at no additional charge.

MEDICAL CARE

All applicants with medical problems that could interfere or limit participation in the tour, or with communicable diseases, are required to make them known to us. The trip leader/guide has the right to disqualify anyone at any time from certain activities, if he/she has reason to believe that the person is not capable of safely participating in the activity. INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY makes no representation that there will be a doctor on any trip, and we assume no liability whatsoever regarding provision of medical care. If a participant is injured or becomes ill, INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY or the trip leader/guide may, at the participant's cost, arrange medical evacuation or other emergency services.

RESTRICTIONS AND PARTICIPATION

Our tours do not normally entail very strenuous activity but, if this cannot be avoided, it will be made clear in the tour details. Nevertheless, participants must be able to complete moderate walks of several miles a day, sometimes on uneven or slippery surfaces, to participate fully in the activities of the tour. To cater for the needs of all clients, our tours sometimes involve long days in the field and traveling long distances.

AUTHORITY OF TRIP LEADER/GUIDE

Please let the trip leader/guide know of any problems or dissatisfaction; he/she will usually be able to remedy the situation. If a schedule change is necessary, he/she will ordinarily consult with trip participants. However, on matters relating to the safety and proper conduct of the trip, the leader's decision is final. INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY accepts no responsibility for a participant who breaks the laws or regulations of any country visited, who is judged detrimental to the safety or welfare of others on the trip, or whose behavior impedes the operation of the trip or the rights, welfare or enjoyment of other trip participants. Such a person may be asked to leave the trip and INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY shall not be liable for any additional expenses incurred by a person excluded from further participation on a trip, including, but not limited to, ground costs and airfares.

TRAVELER'S RESPONSIBILITY

Trip participants' responsibilities include: selecting a trip appropriate to their interests and abilities; determining that destinations and activities are appropriate for them; determining that they are in sufficient health and fitness to undertake the trip and activities along the way; acquiring necessary passports, visas and immunizations; securing adequate insurance coverage; bringing appropriate clothing and equipment; passing through customs. Participants are responsible for the fate of all personal belongings they choose to bring on the trip.

DOCUMENTATION

For tours outside of your country of citizenship, a passport valid for six months after the date of completion of your international travel is required for all trips. Many countries require foreign visitors to obtain a visa before they can enter the country. It is the responsibility of the traveler to determine their visa requirements for all destinations and countries visited within a tour, though INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY can help you with this upon request.

CANCELLATION BY TRAVELER

We require written notice of cancellation (email or fax), which is effective upon receipt by us. If you need to cancel your booking, you must inform us immediately via email or fax and we will

confirm your cancellation. Based on the date that we acknowledge your cancellation notice, cancellation fees will apply per person. This policy and fee schedule also applies to pre-trip and post-trip extensions as well as any transfers from one tour extension to another. For cancellations of all other tours received 90 days or more prior to the first day of the tour, your cancellation fee will be your deposit. For cancellations of all other tours received 89 days or less prior to the first day of the tour, your cancellation fee will be the full cost of the tour. Please note that bank charges may be deducted from the refund you receive. INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY cannot waive or reduce cancellation fees, so it is highly recommended that you purchase trip cancellation/interruption insurance.

CANCELLATION BY INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY

We always try to run a tour, and sometimes at a loss, even if few people have signed up. Certain tours are designated as “guaranteed departures” which means they will never be cancelled due to insufficient bookings. Trip cancellations by Indiana Audubon Society are a matter of last resort. However, we simply cannot run some tours without a minimum number of bookings, and if we fail to reach that number we will be forced to cancel the tour. If this should happen, you will receive a full refund of any payment made. Participants should note that the cancellation of a pre- or post-tour extension due to insufficient participation, or any other reason, does not alter your rights and obligations with respect to the main tour. INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY’S responsibilities are limited to ground services only. Airfares may not be refundable from airlines, so we strongly advise tour participants to obtain travel insurance.

TOUR ANNULMENT DUE TO CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY’S CONTROL

If a tour cannot commence due to circumstances beyond our control, including but not limited to technical or maintenance problems with transport, changes imposed by rescheduling or cancellation by air or sea carriers, government action, industrial dispute, war or threat of war, civil strife, terrorist activity, riot, natural or man-made disaster, severe weather conditions, or any situation considered threatening to the safety of our participants and/or staff, the tour will be annulled. In the event of an annulment, then INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY will refund all payments minus all expenses incurred by us. Where non-refundable prepayment has been made by INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY, most of the tour costs will not be refundable. In these instances, documentation will be provided by Indiana Audubon Society to allow participants to make a claim on their travel cancellation/interruption insurance. Keep in mind that many travel insurance policies will not cover civil unrest however. Also note that we cannot be responsible for any airline cancellation fees or other travel expenses you may face if the tour you signed up for is disrupted. For this reason, we strongly advise tour participants to obtain travel insurance.

IAS International Trip Terms and Conditions Acknowledgement

Name

Date

Name

Date