

Itinerary

Birds of Canopy Camp Darien and Canopy Tower

10-day, 9-night, all-inclusive birding package

Day 1, January 28th Arrival in Panama City

Today will be arriving in Central America's southernmost country! Upon your arrival in Panama, you will be transferred to Canopy Tower. A member of our staff will greet you as you arrive at the Tower, and you will be provided with an orientation on the use of the facilities. At this time we will answer any questions you may have. As your luggage is being ferried to your room, you may visit the dining/bar area and enjoy a refreshing drink. We highly recommend that you spend some time on the Observation Deck. The view from the platform is incredible! Here, you get a unique eye-level perspective of the rainforest canopy. Many birds, including toucans, parrots, tanagers of various types, hawks, and dozens of others, as well as 2 species of sloths, monkeys and other mammals are commonly seen. From this vantage point you can also see ships transiting the Panama Canal, the majestic Centennial Bridge and miles of rainforest! You may also want to watch the hummingbird feeders at the base of the Tower for Long-billed Hermit, White-necked Jacobin, Violet-bellied & Blue-chested hummingbirds and White-vented Plumeleteer. Occasionally, a Snowy-bellied Hummingbird is spotted! Dinner at CANOPY TOWER.

Day 2, January 29th AM: Pipeline Road (25 minutes from Canopy Tower)

This morning after an early breakfast, we will board the Canopy Tower's Birdmobile and spend the morning at the world famous Pipeline Road. Hundreds of species of birds, mammals and countless insects and plants have been recorded here. This 17-km gravel road with eleven creeks has much to be explored, and is a great place for mammals, including White-faced Capuchin, Mantled Howler, Central American Agouti, White-nosed Coati, Tayra and Collared Peccary. We will keep an eye on the openings of tree cavities for Rufous Tree Rat. There have also been sightings of three species of cats, namely Jaguarundi, Ocelot and even, rarely, the Jaguar. Over 500 species of birds have been recorded here, so there are good chances we will enjoy quality sightings of Crimson-crested Woodpecker, White-tailed Trogon, Spotted Antbird and if lucky, Tiny Hawk! We head back to the CANOPY TOWER for lunch.

PM: Summit Gardens & Old Gamboa Road (10 minutes from Canopy Tower)

After lunch, we head up to the Summit Botanical Garden, just 10 minutes from the tower. Our main target here will be to find a roosting colony of Common Tent-making Bats under the large palm leaves at the entrance to the park. Other mammals are always a possibility. Great Black Hawk, Crane Hawk, Giant Cowbird, Yellow-backed Oriole and Masked Tityra also may be seen! After a short visit to the gardens, we will cross the road to explore the area of Old Gamboa Road and the adjacent Summit Ponds. This site boasts the nearest access to Pacific Dry Forest from the Canopy Tower. The ponds are a great place to look for some secretive herons, namely Boat-billed and Capped herons, and the diminutive American Pygmy Kingfisher, along with Spectacled Caiman and Common Basilisk or "Jesus Christ Lizard". Carrying on down Old Gamboa Road south, we hope to encounter Tayra, Red-tailed Squirrel, more Two-toed and Three-toed sloths, Jaguarundi, White-nosed Coati and other mammals we have yet to encounter. Back at the Canopy Tower, we will review our checklist and enjoy happy hour prior to dinner. During dinner, Little Mastiff Bats may be seen flying around the dining room as they head out for their evening hunt, and we will watch for the largest bat in the

Americas, the False Vampire Bat, hunting around the Cecropia trees out the windows. Dinner at CANOPY TOWER.

This evening after dinner, we will head out on another night drive, targeting nocturnal mammals. Common Opossum, Northern Tamandua, Hoffmann's Two-toed Sloth and Collared Peccary are some hopefuls on our night drives!

Day 3, January 30th

AM: Pipeline Road Entrance (20 min. from Canopy Tower)

After breakfast you board the Birdmobile or the Rainfomobile, both open-air vehicles, that take you to Pipeline Road, the best place in Central Panama to find forest birds, and one of the premier birding spots in the world! This morning we concentrate our efforts at the beginning of Pipeline, where we will look for Greater Ani, Gray-necked Wood-Rail, Yellow-tailed Oriole, Masked Tityra, Rosy Thrush-Tanager, Plain Wren, Streaked Flycatcher, Red-throated Ant-Tanager, Squirrel Cuckoo, Gray-headed Chachalaca, Southern Bentbill, Forest Elaenia, Panama Flycatcher, Blue Ground-Dove and Little Tinamou. Other birds recorded here are Black-bellied & Buff-breasted wrens, Golden-collared Manakin, White-necked Puffbird, Gartered, Slaty-tailed, Black-throated, White-tailed & Black-tailed trogons, Purple-crowned Fairy, Yellow Tyrannulet, White-bellied & Dusky antbirds, Fasciated & Black-crowned antshrikes. During migration this entrance road is excellent for migrant warblers, flycatchers, grosbeaks and tanagers. Lunch at CANOPY TOWER.

PM: Summit Gardens/Harpy Exhibit (10 min. from Canopy Tower)

Summit Gardens is a center for recreation, education and conservation, dedicated to reflect and enhance Panama's tropical and cultural diversity. The botanical gardens are great for migratory warblers and other forest-edge species, including a colony of Chestnut-headed Oropendolas, Yellow-margined Flycatcher, Laughing Falcon, Gray-lined, Crane & Great Black hawks, Collared Forest-Falcon, Tropical Pewee, Masked Tityra, Golden-fronted & Scrub greenlets, Yellow-crowned Tyrannulet, Yellow-rumped Cacique, Giant, Shiny & Bronzed cowbirds and Blue Cotinga. This park is the best place to find Streak-headed Woodcreeper, a difficult species to get elsewhere. The Harpy Eagle is Panama's national bird, and this park has an exhibit, including a life-size nest and interpretive panels, tracing the importance of the Harpy in Panamanian history and culture dating back to Pre-Columbian times. Dinner at CANOPY TOWER.

Day 4, January 31st

AM: Plantation Trail (5 min. from Canopy Tower)

After breakfast, we take a short ride to the bottom of Semaphore Hill to Plantation Trail, one of our premier birding areas. This easy trail passes through mature rainforest and follows a small creek (Rio Chico Masambi) and is a reliable place to find Golden-crowned Spadebills. Oftentimes at the parking area near the entrance, we find Black-chested Jays. Other birds to look for along the trail include Ocellated, Bicolored, Chestnut-backed, White-bellied & Spotted antbirds; Broad-billed & Whooping motmots, trogons, White-whiskered Puffbird, hummers (Blue-chested, White-necked Jacobin and others); Plain Brown, Northern Barred & Cocoa woodcreepers; Cinnamon, Crimson-crested & Black-cheeked woodpeckers; White-breasted Wood-Wren, Song Wren, Dot-winged, Checker-throated & White-flanked antwrens; Purple-throated Fruitcrow, Bright-rumped Attila, Gray-headed Tanager, Long-billed Gnatwren, Black-crowned & Fasciated antshrikes, Red-capped & Blue-crowned manakins, Great Tinamou, Ruddy-tailed, Royal & Yellow-margined flycatchers, Yellow-rumped Cacique, Scaly-throated Leaf-tosser and occasionally, a Great Jacamar or the endemic Yellow-green Tyrannulet! Lunch at CANOPY TOWER.

PM: Chagres River/Gamboa Feeders (15 min. from Canopy Tower)

After lunch, we take a short drive to Chagres River and the accompanying fields & forest. First, we must stop at the Canopy Bed & Breakfast in the picturesque village of Gamboa, to look at

the bird feeders! With a beautiful backdrop of Cerro Pelado, the backyard at the Canopy B&B is teeming with bird life. At the fruit feeders, we are likely to see Red-legged, Shining & Green Honeycreepers, Lemon-rumped, Crimson-backed & Blue-gray Tanagers, Thick-billed Euphonia, Yellow-bellied & Variable Seedeaters, Whooping Motmot and Gray-headed Chachalaca, with Central American Agoutis lurking about under the feeders. Next, we're off to Chagres River, the main tributary for the Panama Canal. The birding along the river banks and the forest edges of Gamboa Resort can be spectacular! Here, we search for Amazon, Green & American Pygmy Kingfishers, as well as, Whooping Motmot and Cinnamon Woodpecker. We could also see Gray-Necked Wood-Rail, Cooi, Green & Striated Herons, Wattled Jacana, Pied-billed Grebe, Anhinga, Royal & Sandwich Terns, Brown Pelican, Neotropic Cormorant, Tricolored & Little Blue Herons, Rufescent Tiger-Heron, Mangrove Swallow, Black-chested Jay, Lesser Kiskadee, Rusty-margined Flycatcher, Yellow-billed Cacique, Black-bellied & Buff-breasted Wrens, Fasciated & Barred Antshrikes, Cinnamon Becard, Slaty-tailed Trogon, White-bellied Antbird, and even Slaty-backed Forest-Falcon and Blue Cotinga at times! Dinner at CANOPY TOWER.

Day 5, February 1st

World Famous Pipeline Road (20 min. from Canopy Tower) FULL DAY

Today we will search for the area's super-rare specialties, the Rufous-vented Ground-Cuckoo and [the Harpy Eagle](#), both recorded here. Eight species of wrens, 5 trogons, 4 puffbirds, 3 motmots, many tanagers and flycatchers, including the unusual Brownish Twistwing, Great Jacamar and Common Potoo, among others, are often found. Also, the calls of Streak-chested Antpitta and Black-faced Antthrush will lure us in! Army ant swarms are found occasionally, attended by a host of birds including, Bicolored, Ocellated & Spotted antbirds. Plus, we will hunt for Golden-collared, Red-capped & Blue-crowned manakins, always high on a birder's list of favorites! Raptors include 3 forest-falcons, Tiny & Semiplumbeous hawks, Ornate & Black hawk-eagles (soaring overhead), as well as Carmiol's & Sulphur-rumped tanagers, Purple-throated Fruitcrow, Black-crowned & Masked tityras, Cinnamon & Crimson-crested woodpeckers, Scarlet-rumped Cacique, Red-lored & Brown-hooded parrots, Collard Araçari, Pheasant Cuckoo, Speckled Mourner, Buff-throated Foliage-Gleaner, Black-mandibled & Keel-billed toucans, Black-striped, Northern Barred and Plain Brown woodcreepers! As we cross several rivers, we search for Sunbittern and Green-and-rufous Kingfisher. To maximize our time in the field, we enjoy a nice picnic lunch along Pipeline Road—but with scope and binoculars at the ready! After lunch, we search for more species, including the elusive Wing-banded Antbird and Spot-crowned Antwreio, Moustached Antwren, Ruddy Quail-Dove and Marbled Wood-Quail! Dinner at CANOPY TOWER.

Day 6, February 2nd

AM: Observation Deck & Semaphore Hill Road

We will start our day at sunrise on the observation deck on the Canopy Tower. The Canopy Tower's observation deck offers a great opportunity to scan the treetops, where we can often see Geoffroy's Tamarin, Mantled Howlers, Two- and Three-toed sloths, Red-tailed Squirrel and a variety of colorful birds that come to feed on the Cecropia trees. Keel-billed Toucans, a colorful variety of tanagers, majestic raptors and even Blue Cotingas can be seen from the observation deck. Breakfast will follow. After breakfast, we will start walking down Semaphore Hill Road through the lush lowland rainforest of Soberania National Park to continue our search for mammals and other creatures. On this road there is a chance to find Brown-throated three-toed Sloth and Hoffmann's two-toed Sloth, as well as a Northern Tamandua and White-nosed Coati. This paved road is a little more than a mile long, and passes through some of the most beautiful forest around! Here we will get a chance to see mammals as well as birds and interesting plants, wildflowers and butterflies. The rare Silky Anteater, as well as the secretive Tayra, have been spotted occasionally along this road. We also have a great chance for understory birds including Slaty-tailed and Gartered trogons, Rufous and Broad-billed motmots,

and several species of antbirds. At the end of this walk, we will get picked up by one of our open-air vehicles and driven up to the CANOPY TOWER for lunch.

PM: Ammo Ponds & Gamboa Marina (20 minutes from Canopy Tower)

After lunch and a “siesta,” we will drive north to Ammo Dump Pond, located in the small town of Gamboa. This is a great place to look for the world’s second largest rodent, the Lesser Capybara, which can be found in or near the Chagres river. Also, in Gamboa's forested neighborhoods, we hunt for Red Squirrels and Central American Agouti, a large diurnal rainforest rodent. Depending on time, we will make a quick stop at the marina on the Chagres River, the main source of water for the Panama Canal. With a bit of luck, we can find a Neotropical River Otter and Variegated Squirrels. Water birds including Wattled Jacana, Striated Heron and the beautiful Snail Kite can be seen hunting here. Dinner at CANOPY TOWER.

After dinner we board the Canopy Tower’s open back Rainfomobile for a night drive down Semaphore Hill Road. Many Neotropical mammals are nocturnal, and night drives are the best way to find them! We hope this evening to find Panamanian Night Monkey, Paca, Central American Woolly Opossum and if lucky, a Rothschild’s Porcupine!

Day 7, February 3rd

Bayano Lake & Transfer to Canopy Camp Darien (6 hours from Canopy Tower)

We will wake before dawn to pack and have an early breakfast, say our goodbyes to the Canopy Tower, and start our journey to Darién. After a very early breakfast at Canopy Tower, we will depart for Canopy Camp Darien! The journey to our destination is approximately 6 hours, but we will make stops along the way in exciting birding areas. As we drive east along the Pan-American Highway, we will scan for roadside birds and open-field raptors including Savanna Hawk and Crested Caracara. Our first scheduled stop will be at the bridge at Bayano Lake, a great opportunity to stretch our legs and see what we can see along the lakeside. This reservoir supports great amounts of water birds, including a large colony of Neotropic Cormorants, as well as Anhinga, Cocoli Heron and the rare Bare-throated Tiger-Heron. We will scan the water’s edge for Purple Gallinule, Pied Water-Tyrant, Smooth-billed Ani and Ruddy-breasted Seedeater. A short trail leading from the water’s edge is a great place to search for Black Antshrike, Bare-crowned Antbird, Rufous-winged Antwren and Golden-collared Manakin. At another great stop along the way, Río Mono Bridge, the surrounding forest is home to One-colored Becard, Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher, Blue Cotinga, Pied Puffbird, Orange-crowned Oriole, Blue Ground-Dove and more. We will also scan the river below for Green-and-rufous Kingfisher and the elusive Fasciated Tiger-Heron. While enjoying a lovely Panamanian lunch, the hummingbirds at the feeders will no doubt capture our attention, as Long-billed Starthroat, Sapphire-throated Hummingbird, Scaly-breasted Hummingbird, Black-throated Mango and more take their lunch as well; great hummingbird photo opportunities here! Lunch in TORTI.

After a delicious lunch, we will head back to the Pan-American Highway and continue east. We will carry on from here to Canopy Camp Darien, and arrive before daylight fades so we can settle into our tents and get acquainted with the setting. After a delicious dinner of fresh American and Panamanian fare, we will gather to have a meeting about the days to come, and settle into our tents for the night. Dinner at CANOPY CAMP.

Day 8, February 4th

Harpy Eagle (45 minutes from Canopy Camp) FULL DAY

Harpy Eagles live in remote mature forest, and a full day trip is required to visit the site available. The following description gives you an idea of what a Harpy Eagle excursion entails:

The Harpy Eagle is our target for the day! Today we will start very early, long before sunrise, and drive to Yaviza, at the end of the Pan-American Highway. Arriving at dawn in Yaviza, we

will board a “piragua”—a dugout canoe, and traverse the still waters of the Chucunaque and Tuirá rivers. The river edges offer shrub and grass habitat, as well as mudflats and beaches depending on the water level. There are plenty of birds to see along the riverside: Neotropic Cormorant, Anhinga, Great Blue, Cocoi, Little Blue, Tricolored, Striated and Capped herons, Snowy Egret, White Ibis, Green Ibis, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Pied Water-Tyrant, Bronzed Cowbird, Yellow-hooded Blackbird and both Crested and Black oropendolas. White-tailed Kite, Black-collared Hawk and Common Black-Hawk may be found cruising overhead.

Upon arrival in El Real, we can scan the open areas for Spot-breasted Woodpecker and Great Potoo. We will meet a local truck and head south out of town past the airstrip, to the trailhead toward the border of Darien National Park! This trail is wide, traversing through lowland rainforest and alongside a river. If very lucky, we may see Harpy Eagle or Crested Eagle, both of these magnificent raptors roam the dense forests here. Hopefully with some success this morning, we can rest and have a picnic lunch in the field, and continue to bird along the trail. Other large forest eagles, including Ornate Hawk-Eagle and Crested Eagle, can also be found in the area, as well as Gray-cheeked Nunlet, White-fronted Nunbird, Green-and-rufous Kingfisher, Agami Heron, Red-throated Caracara, Chestnut-backed Antbird (the eastern Panama race shows white dots on the wings), Chestnut-fronted and Great Green macaws, Scarlet-browed Tanager and more. After lunch and a break, we will retrace our steps and start our way back to El Real, then head back to Yaviza by river. Along the Pan-American Highway, we can scan for bird activity as the sun sets in the horizon. Picnic lunch in on the way, dinner at CANOPY CAMP.

Day 9, February 5th

AM: Quebrada Felix (30 minutes from Canopy Camp)

We will meet for an early breakfast at the Canopy Camp. This morning we bird Quebrada Felix—this newly discovered site awaits us to be explored! Quebrada Felix is nestled in the base of the Filo del Tallo Hydrological Reserve, and is just a short drive from the Canopy Camp. Surrounded by tall trees and mature lowland forest, we will walk the rocky stream in search of some of Panama’s most wanted species. Here, we will try for Black-crowned Antpitta, Scaly-throated Leafhopper, Speckled Mourner, Ocellated Antbird, Rufous-winged and Moustached antwrens, White-fronted Nunbird, Wedge-billed Woodcreeper, Royal Flycatcher and our endemic, the Stripe-cheeked Woodpecker. It is also a great spot to find Fasciated Tiger-Heron, Green-and-rufous Kingfisher, Bicolored Antbird, Golden-crowned Spadebill, Double-banded Graytail and much more. Crested and Solitary eagles have even been spotted here, a great testament to the mature forest of the area. Quebrada Felix is becoming a favorite spot among our guides and recent visitors! Lunch at CANOPY CAMP

PM: Canopy Camp Grounds

Among all the fantastic birding sites we have visited this week, the Canopy Camp grounds and trails merit some more exploration as well! This afternoon is ours to enjoy the nearby trails accessible from the lodge, the verbenas full of hummingbird and butterfly activity, where we hope to see Violet-bellied Hummingbird, Pale-bellied Hermit, Long-billed Starthroat, Blue-throated Goldentail and if lucky, a stunning Ruby-Topaz Hummingbird feeding here. Barred Puffbird, Spot-crowned Barbet, Olivaceous Piculet, White-headed Wren, King Vulture, Red-rumped Woodpecker and Streak-headed Woodcreeper are birds we may encounter this afternoon.

Yellow-throated, Keel-billed toucans, Red-lore and Mealy parrots are also seen here, as well as White-bellied Antbird, Bright-rumped Attila, White-headed Wren and Golden-headed Manakin. If we have time, we will work our way into the forest on “Nando’s Trail,” in hopes of finding Tiny Hawk, Black Antshrike, Great Antshrike, Olive-backed Quail-Dove, Cinnamon Becard, Black-tailed Trogon, Double-banded Graytail, Gray-cheeked Nunlet, Yellow-breasted Flycatcher, Royal Flycatcher and Russet-winged Schiffornis.

We will enjoy a final dinner together to wrap up the tour, and once again listen for the calls of owls and night birds around the camp after dark. Dinner at CANOPY CAMP.

Day 10, February 6th

AM: San Francisco Nature Reserve (2.5 hours from Canopy Camp)

We will wake before dawn to pack and have an early breakfast and start our journey to San Francisco Nature Reserve, a private forest reserve owned and managed by the St. Francis Foundation, covering 1,300 acres in eastern Panama Province, and we will spend the morning birding at this fantastic site. The San Francisco Reserve was established in 2001 by Father Pablo Kasuboski, an American priest from Wisconsin who came to Panama in 1988. The reserve serves as a wildlife refuge and protects the headwaters of the main rivers of the area. The foundation created by Padre Pablo, as Father Kasuboski is called, also works on infrastructure development in the area by building and maintaining aqueducts, roads, schools and churches. In fact, the St. Francis Foundation built and maintains the largest private rural aqueduct in all of Panama and Central America. The reserve has a variety of habitats including primary, secondary and riparian forests, forest edge, fields, farmland, ponds and wetlands. During our morning here, we will explore some of the different habitats along the short road that enters the reserve. We will hope to find Great Jacamar, Broad-billed Motmot, Collared Aracari, Russet-winged Schiffornis, Royal Flycatcher, White-fronted Nunbird, Brownish Twistwing, Yellow-green Tyrannulet, Central American Pygmy-Owl, Blue and Plain-breasted ground-doves, and if we're very lucky, a Black-and-white Hawk-Eagle soaring overhead or a Wing-banded Antbird along the trails! Lunch in TORTI.

PM: Return to Panama City

After lunch, we head back to Panama City towards Tocumén International Airport for your return flight home, with awesome memories of birds, mammals, wildflowers, butterflies and everything else you experienced while birding in Panama! Estimated arrival time at the airport is 3:30 to 4:00 pm.

Those who chose to stay that night in the city, they can be dropped off at Hotel Riande Airport for the night (not included).

Tour Price: US\$3,950

Include: all meals, transportation in Panama, taxes, all tours, park entry fees, pop sodas and fruit juices, wine with dinner, and snacks. Internet wifi is available. Also a bilingual local birding guide and Neotropical birding guide Rodney Fuentes (tour leader).

Does not include: international flights, accommodation and airport shuttle in Panama City (if needed) on Day 10/11.

Please note that this itinerary may change without prior notice due to weather, alterations in habitat or other conditions.

This itinerary has been modified from the original version written by The Canopy Family.