

COLÁN – ALTO MAYO
BIRDING ROUTE
IN NORTHERN PERU, AMAZONAS AND SAN MARTÍN



Marvelous Spatuletail / © Carlos Altamirano

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The Colán – Alto Mayo Birding Route, located in northern Peru between Amazonas and San Martín, is one of the most important and widely recognized birding corridors in the country. Its significance lies in its extraordinary bird diversity, with nearly 1,000 species and around 50 Peruvian endemic or restricted-range species found between southern Ecuador and northern Peru.

The route also stands out for its highly scenic landscapes, such as Yumbilla Waterfall, extensive well-preserved forests, natural protected areas including Bosque de Protección Alto Mayo, Santuario Nacional Cordillera de Colán, and Área de Conservación Privada Abra Patricia–Alto Nieva. It also offers opportunities to learn about living cultures, such as the awajún people.

To ensure a high-quality experience for specialized birdwatchers, 13 main sites have been prioritized, several of them with suitable infrastructure and services: lodging, hot water, internet, restaurants, trails, viewpoints, observation towers, hides, feeders, and bird feeders.

In addition, 12 secondary sites have been included, offering ecotourism services and cultural experiences. These places are located across different habitats.

Promoted by ECOAN, this route positions birdwatching tourism as a tool for conservation, sustainable development, strengthening local economies, and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage of northern Peru.



Orange-breasted Cormorant / © Zhan Aguilera

10 REASONS TO EXPERIENCE THE ROUTE

- 1 Nearly 1,000 bird species, including 50 Peruvian endemics and restricted-range species.

2 Sites with infrastructure suitable for birdwatching tourism.

3 Responsible use of feeders, bird feeders, and hides.

4 Good road connectivity and accessibility.

5 Exceptional geography and diverse ecosystems.

6 Adventure and nature.

7 Diversity of living cultures.

8 Safety and hospitality.

9 A wide range of accommodation options.

10 Affordable prices.



Long-billed Siphon / © Zhan Aguilera

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P 01 Yumbilla Waterfall Trail

With four drops reaching a total height of 895 m, Catarata Yumbilla is one of the most remarkable natural landscapes in northern Peru. From Cuispes, visitors can access the Suchurco trail toward the third drop, or take the route through Shasuta trail to reach the first drop. Both trails pass through montane forests and scenic viewpoints that are ideal for observing around 120 bird species, including Marvelous Spatuletail, Speckle-chested Piculet, Marañon Thrush, Buff-bellied Tanager, Jet Manakin, and Leymebamba Antpitta.

Buff-bellied Tanager / © Zhan Aguilera



P 04 Puerto Canoas Ecological Reserve

This birding initiative, led by Alejandro Valle and located on the shores of Laguna Pomacochas, combines birdwatching with beautiful lakeside landscapes. From Pomacochas, visitors can access the site through the El Porvenir sector via an 800 m trail, or by boat from the pier in approximately 30 minutes. The reserve features well-maintained trails, flower gardens, and strategically placed bird feeders. Around 100 species have been recorded here, with highlights including Marvelous Spatuletail, Speckle-chested Piculet, Yellow-breasted Brushfinch, and Plumbeous Rail.



Speckle-chested Piculet / © Zhan Aguilera

P 05 ACP Abra Patricia Owllet Lodge

An icon of birdwatching tourism in northern Peru and an international reference site for the conservation of the Long-whiskered Owllet, this private Natural Protected Area, managed by ECOAN, offers birdwatching and photography in well-preserved montane forests, with direct access at km 364.3 of the Fernando Belaunde Terry Highway. Its trails, gardens, feeders, bird feeders, hides, and observation tower have recorded around 500 species, including White-throated Quail-Dove, Rusty-ringed Antpitta, White-faced Nunbird, Chestnut Antpitta, Chestnut-crested Cotinga, Masked Saltator, Emerald-bellied Puffleg, Chestnut-breasted Chlorophonia, Rufous-vented Tapaculo, Peruvian Tyrannulet, Barred Antthrush, and Lulu's Tody-Flycatcher.



Long-whiskered Owllet / © Zhan Aguilera

P 07 Royal Sunangel Trail

Located within Bosque de Protección Alto Mayo, this site is ideal for birdwatching in northern Peru, especially for observing the Royal Sunangel. Privately managed by Juan Pérez, it offers birdwatching and photography in well-preserved montane forests. Access begins at km 379 of the Fernando Belaunde Terry Highway, along a stone-paved trail. Its flower gardens and bird feeders have recorded around 250 species, including Vermilion Tanager, Golden-winged Manakin, Royal Sunangel, Wire-crested Thornbill, and Inca Flycatcher.



Royal Sunangel / © Zhan Aguilera

P 08 La Llantería Birds

Located within Bosque de Protección Alto Mayo, this site is globally recognized as a key birding destination in northern Peru, especially for observing the Ecuadorian Piedtail. Managed and operated by Elmer Chuque, it offers birdwatching and photography in well-preserved montane forests. Access begins at km 390 of the Fernando Belaunde Terry Highway, along a stone-paved trail. Its gardens and bird feeders have recorded more than 500 species, including Lanceolated Monklet, Andean Cock-of-the-Rock, Ecuadorian Piedtail, Amazonian Umbrellabird, Scaled Fruiteater, and Equatorial Graytail.



Andean Cock-of-the-rock / © Zhan Aguilera



P 03 Cresta San Lorenzo Trail

This site invites visitors to embrace the physical challenge of a trail with a 400 m elevation gain, passing through cattle sheds, cultivated fields, shrublands, and montane forests with Andean bamboo. Access begins at km 321 of the Fernando Belaunde Terry Highway toward San Lorenzo, passing by the Antpitta Refuge, an initiative led by the Zurita family. Around 260 species have been recorded here, including Pale-billed Antpitta, Lulu's Tody-Flycatcher, Russet-mantled Softtail, Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan, Yellow-scarfed Tanager, Golden-plumed Parakeet, Unstreaked Tit-Tyrant, Barred Fruiteater, Powerful Woodpecker, and Rufous-browed Hemispingus.

Pale-billed Antpitta / © Carlos Altamirano



Marvelous Spatuletail / © Zhan Aguilera

P 09 Arena Blanca Reserve

Located in the buffer zone of Bosque de Protección Alto Mayo, this reserve is an emblematic birding site in northern Peru. Managed by Norbil Becerra García, it offers birdwatching and photography in a restored and well-managed forest. From Aguas Verdes, the site is accessed by an unpaved road toward the communal cemetery. Its trails, gardens, feeders, bird feeders, and hides have recorded around 500 species, including Little Tinamou, Cinnamon-breasted Tody-Tyrant, Uniform Crane, Zimmer's Antbird, and Fiery-capped Manakin.



Wire-crested Thornbill / © Zhan Aguilera

P 12 Ikam Expeditions Reserve

A benchmark for birdwatching tourism and an emblematic site in northern Peru, this reserve, managed by Julio César Tello, offers birdwatching and photography in a well-managed setting, ideal for experienced birdwatchers. Access follows the route to Morro Calzada up to the control checkpoint and then continues along an unpaved vehicle road. The experience includes gardens, bird feeders, feeders, and a hide. More than 350 species have been recorded here, including Painted Manakin, Rufous-sided Crane, Rufous-crested Coquette, Burnished-buff Tanager, Zimmer's Antbird, and Stygian Owl.



Rufous-sided Crane / © Zhan Aguilera



P 10 IKAM Etsagami Interpretation Trail Native Community Alto Naranjillo

Managed by the Alto Naranjillo native community, part of the awajún culture, this recent birding initiative combines cultural experiences with birdwatching. Access begins in the town of Naranjillo, along an unpaved road suitable for vehicles, with prior coordination with community members. The route can be explored along the track toward the Naranjillo River or through internal trails, complemented by gardens and an observation tower. Around 120 species have been recorded here, including Swallow Tanager, White-browed Antbird, Broad-billed Motmot, and Scaly-breasted Wren.



Black-bellied Tanager / © Carlos Altamirano



P 11 Morro Calzada

Visited by both amateur and expert birdwatchers, this emblematic nature tourism site stands out for its location and well-preserved forest, managed by the Municipalidad Distrital de Calzada. Access begins in the town of Calzada, following signs along the main avenue to an unpaved road that leads to the parking area. The route combines dirt road sections, trails, gardens, and an observation tower. More than 450 species have been recorded here, including Mishana Tyrannulet, Stygian Owl, and White-lored Tyrannulet.



Painted Manakin / © Eugenio Valdivia

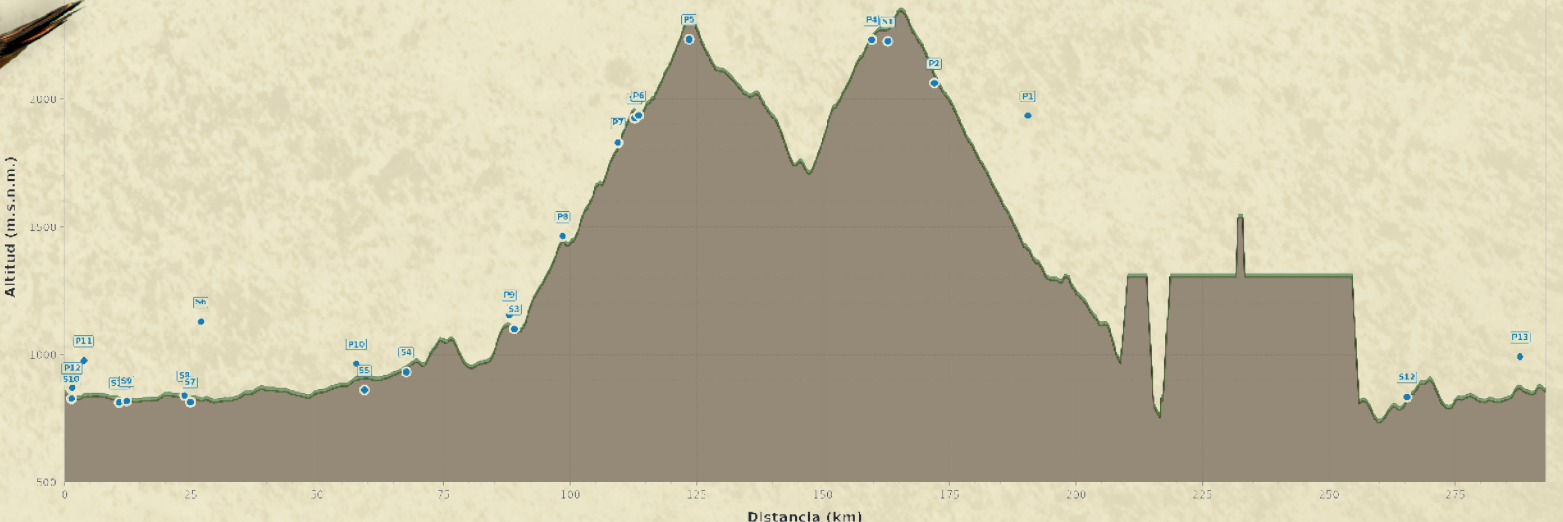


P 13 Waqanki Reserve Moyobamba

A world-renowned birding site in northern Peru, Waqanki is managed by the Altamirano Guerrero family and offers birdwatching and photography in a restored and well-managed setting. From Moyobamba, access follows the road to Japalecio, toward the hot springs, up to the entrance of the reserve. The site features trails, viewpoints, gardens, feeders, and bird feeders, as well as the Fundo San Camilo extension (FSC). More than 500 species have been recorded here, including Rufous-crested Coquette, Fiery-throated Fruiteater, Mishana Tyrannulet, Painted Manakin, Russet-crowned Crane, Spot-winged Parrotlet, Zimmer's Antbird, Black-bellied Tanager, Varzea Thrush, Black-and-white Tody-Flycatcher, Ash-throated Antwren, Yellow-crested Tanager (FSC), Band-bellied Owl (FSC), Black-throated Hermit, Buff-tailed Sicklebill, Chestnut-throated Spinetail, and Scarlet-breasted Fruiteater.



Rufous-crested Coquette / © Zhan Aguilera



LEGEND

- Primary Sites of Interest **P 01**
- Secondary Sites of Interest **S 01**
- Provincial Boundaries
- Departmental Capital
- National Highway
- Protected Natural Area
- Private Conservation Area
- Upper Montane Pluvial Yunga Forest
- Floodplain Alluvial Forest
- Lower Montane Yunga Forest
- High Hill Forest
- Non-Floodable Terrace Forest
- Montane Yunga Forest
- Bodies of Water
- Jalca
- Palm Swamp
- Grasslands / Herbaceous Vegetation
- Disturbed Area
- Departmental Boundaries

Secondary Sites of Interest

S 01 Pomacochas Lagoon Walking Trail

Access begins in the town of Pomacocha, following Jr. Independencia, using the Policía Nacional del Perú station as a reference point. Species of interest include

Subtropical Doradito, Plumbeous Rail, and Pantanal Snipe.

S 02 BPAM Viewpoint

Located at km 375 of the Fernando Belaunde Terry Highway. Species of interest include

Flame-faced Tanager, Blue-browed Tanager, Rufous-tailed Tyrant and Deep-blue Flowerpiercer.

S 03 La Posada de los Gallitos

Located in the populated centre of Aguas Verdes, at km 399 of the Fernando Belaunde Terry Highway. Species of interest include

Andean Cock-of-the-Rock, Black-and-white Tody-Flycatcher, Black-billed Treehunter, White-browed Antbird, Lyre-tailed Nightjar and Golden-eared Tanager.

S 04 Pumpushak Ecological Reserve Alto Mayo Native Community

Access is from Naranjos-Barrios Altos toward the Alto Mayo Native Community. Species of interest include

Uniform Crane, Rusty-backed Antwren, Spot-tailed Nightjar, Red-legged Honeycreeper, Russet-crowned Crane, Spot-winged Parrotlet, Zimmer's Antbird, Stripe-necked Tody-Tyrant, Yellow Tyrannulet and Black-bellied Tanager.

S 05 Bosque de las Nuwas Shampuyacu Native Community

Access is from Naranjillo, located at km 431 on the Fernando Belaunde Terry Highway, via the unpaved road leading to the Shampuyacu Native Community and the Bosque de las Nuwas reserve. Species of interest include

Rufous-headed Woodpecker, Cream-colored Woodpecker, Spot-winged Antbird and White-lored Tyrannulet.

S 06 Urkuchaqui

Access is from the town of Nuevo Parvenin, located at km 459 of the Fernando Belaunde Terry highway, following the unpaved vehicle road that leads toward Naciente del Río Negro – Nueva Zelandia. Species of interest include

Buff-tailed Sicklebill, Green-backed Becard, Dusky-cheeked Foliage-gleaner, Speckle-chested Piculet, Scaled Antpitta, Chestnut-crowned Becard, Stripe-chested Antwren and Olive-chested Flycatcher.

S 07 Santa Elena Rioja

Access is from the turnout to Posic, continuing toward Santa Elena Reserve. Species of interest include

Common Potoo, American Pygmy Kingfisher and Band-tailed

S 08 Cerro Tamburco, Rioja

Access is from km 08, continuing toward the town of La Libertad- Tamburco Reserve. Species of interest include

Varzea Thrush, Stripe-necked Tody-Tyrant, Pearly-vented Tody-Tyrant, Spot-tailed Nightjar, Fiery-capped Manakin, Chestnut-crowned Becard, Russet-crowned Crane and Black-bellied Tanager.



SCAN ME TO DISCOVER MORE ABOUT THE ROUTE

S 09 Tangumi, Rioja

Located at km 475 of the Fernando Belaunde Terry Highway. Species of interest include

Pale-eyed Blackbird, Comb Duck, Brazilian Teal and Black-capped Donacobius.

S 10 La Julianita Tourist Recreation Area - Moyobamba

Access is at the Tonchima River, located at km 485 of the Fernando Belaunde Terry Highway. Continue along an unpaved vehicle road to La Julianita. Species of interest include

Bluish-fronted Jacamar, Painted Manakin, Rufous Motmot, Fiery-capped Manakin and White-chinned Sapphire.

S 11 Tingana Ecological Reserve

Access is from Moyobamba, with prior coordination required for the transfer to Tingana. Species of interest include

Rufous-headed Woodpecker, Band-tailed Antbird, Agami Heron, Common Potoo and American Pygmy Kingfisher.

S 12 Quiscarrumi Canyon

Located at km 515 of the Fernando Belaunde Terry Highway. Species of interest include

Oilbird, Mishana Tyrannulet and White-eyed Parakeet.

Route Services

Lodging

Restaurant

Interpretation centre

Restrooms

Internet

Electricity

Solar panel

Parking

Official guide

Local Guide

Local Birding Specialist Guide

Signage



Lathraea's Piculet / © Jhon Aguilar



ECOAN is a Peruvian organization dedicated to the conservation of biodiversity and threatened ecosystems in the Andes and the Amazon. For more than twenty years, it has worked to protect endangered species, restore habitats, promote the sustainable use of natural resources, and advance environmental education, in partnership with local communities, authorities, and strategic institutions.

ECOAN is the Peruvian partner of American Bird Conservancy and the national partner of BirdLife International in Peru, and together with Global Forest Generation, it leads the international Acción Andina programme. Through these partnerships, ECOAN promotes conservation and sustainable development initiatives that strengthen the role of communities in caring for their territories.

ECOAN also promotes biodiversity-based trade through the Colán-Alto Mayo Birding Route, located in northern Peru, between the departments of Amazonas and San Martín. One of the route's main activities is the training of specialized local birding guides.



Over Forest Anguila / © Carlos Altamirano

Rusty-winged Antbird / © Jhon Aguilar

DIRECTORY

PRIMARY SITES	CONTACT	PHONE NUMBER
P 01 Yumbilla Waterfall Trail	Noelia Torrejón	+51 991 484 987
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P 03 Cresta San Lorenzo Trail	Orlando Zurita	+51 993 155 421
P 04 Puerto Canoas Ecological Reserve	Juan Valles	+51 949 757 545
P 05 ACP Abra Patricia Owlet Lodge	Gleny Vera	+51 952 324 193
P 06 Fundo Alto Nieva	Carlos Calle	+51 995 090 370
P 07 Royal Sunangel Trail	Juan Pérez	+51 900 587 051
P 08 La Llantería Birds	Elmer Chuque	+51 935 134 151
P 09 Arena Blanca Reserve	Norbil Becerra	+51 925 702 580
P 10 IKAM Etsagami Interpretation Trail Alto Naranjillo Native Community	Ronald Wajajai	+51 961 327 355
P 11 Morro Calzada	Municipal Distrital de Calzada	(042) 632 365
P 12 Ikam Expeditions Reserve	Julio César Tello	+51 969 995 041
P 13 Waqanki Reserve Moyobamba	Caridad Altamirano	+51 964 785 853

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S 02 BPAM Viewpoint		
S 03 La Posada de los Gallitos	Warlen Pisco	+51 905 721 495
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S 05 Bosque de las Nuwas Shampuyacu Native Community	Nivia	+51 916 715 354
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S 07 Santa Elena Rioja	Alex Castillo	+51 975 653 602
S 08 Cerro Tamburco Rioja		
S 09 Tangumi Rioja		
S 10 La Julianita Tourist Recreation Area	Sergio Rodríguez	+51 951 413 547
S 11 Tingana Ecological Reserve	Mireya Fabián	+51 941 949 609
S 12 Quiscarrumi Canyon		

DISTANCES BETWEEN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SITES OF THE COLÁN – ALTO MAYO BIRDING ROUTE, IN NORTHERN PERU, AMAZONAS AND SAN MARTÍN

	km
P 01 • - - - - - • P 02	32
P 02 • - - - - - • P 03	10
P 03 • - - - - - • S 01	8.7
S 02 • - - - - - • P 04	4.4
P 04 • - - - - - • P 05	32.6
P 05 • - - - - - • P 06	10
P 06 • - - - - - • S 02	1.2
S 03 • - - - - - • P 07	3.4
P 07 • - - - - - • P 08	11
P 08 • - - - - - • S 03	9.5
S 03 • - - - - - • P 09	2.5
P 09 • - - - - - • S 04	27.5
S 04 • - - - - - • S 05	32
S 05 • - - - - - • P 10	13.7
P 10 • - - - - - • S 06	43
S 06 • - - - - - • S 07	25.4
S 07 • - - - - - • S 08	11.3
S 08 • - - - - - • S 09	15
S 09 • - - - - - • P 11	11
P 11 • - - - - - • P 02	1
P 12 • - - - - - • S 10	8
S 10 • - - - - - • P 13	21
P 13 • - - - - - • S 11	33.5
P 13 • - - - - - • S 12	25