



Mass Audubon Tours
supporting conservation here and abroad

Panama Birding at Canopy Tower and Lodge



*March 8-16, 2012
with Sue MacCallum*



Mass Audubon
Protecting the Nature of Massachusetts

DAY-TO-DAY ITINERARY

Thursday, March 8 – Monday, March 12

Canopy Tower

Canopy Tower is a birding lodge located on top of Semaphore Hill, 900 feet above sea level. It overlooks Soberania National Park, a magnificent 54,000-acre, tropical lowland rainforest with an impressive diversity of wildlife. From the roof of the tower, we will have extraordinary looks down into the tree tops and across the broad expanse of forest. Birds and mammals will be all around us.

The roof of the tower provides 360-degree visibility, and the large windows in the dining room provide additional views into the forest. We will see many species of exciting birds and some mammals from our dining tables. The floors just below the dining area house comfortable bedrooms with full baths and hot water in each. The tower does not have air conditioning; however, each room is equipped with a fan and a large window to enhance natural ventilation.

While enjoying the comforts of Canopy Tower, we will explore the surrounding area with walks down



Semaphore Hill Road and visits along Plantation Road and Pipeline Road. Expect to see an incredible variety of birds including such spectacular species as Orange-chinned Parakeet, Blue-crowned Motmot, Slaty-tailed Trogon, Ringed Kingfisher, Collared Aracari, Chestnut-mandibled Toucan, Red-capped Manakin, and many species of hummingbirds.

From the tower, we will take a full day trip to the Atlantic Coast and the famous Achiote Road. The habitat here is more open, and we will see many species of birds that we will not see around Canopy Tower. We will then cross the Panama Canal, one of the most important waterways in the world, and have a clear view of the massive locks. Our return trip to Panama City and Canopy Tower will be by train, the Panama Canal Railroad. This railroad, the first transcontinental railroad ever built, opened in 1855. Our comfortable train ride follows an historic route bordering the Panama Canal and lasts about one hour. We will be on the lookout for many species of waders, and we should see Snail Kites hunting over the wetlands.

Tuesday, March 13 – Thursday, March 15 **El Valle de Antón (Western Foothills)**

On Tuesday morning, we will board a comfortable, air-conditioned bus for the 2½-hour ride to El Valle de Antón, also known as Crater Valley. We will spend three nights in this lovely village, nestled in the crater of an extinct volcano. The scenery is unique—a steep valley surrounded by jagged peaks and filled with flowers, streams, and verdant forests. Our home for this El Valle adventure will be the Canopy Lodge, a charming *new* hotel with views of the foothills. Birding around the lodge and along mountain trails, we will search for one of the most sought-after species in Neotropical birding, the Rufous-vented Ground-Cuckoo. The higher elevations at El Valle also offer opportunities to see exciting species such as the Emerald Toucanet, Orange-bellied Trogon, Spotted Barbtail, Common Bush-Tanager, Black-faced Grosbeak, Rufous-capped Warbler, Gray-headed Kite, Tawny-capped Euphonia, White-tailed Emerald, and Violet-headed Hummingbird. If we are very lucky, we could find a Scaled Antpitta or Black-headed Antthrush.



During our stay, participants will have the option to experience “The Canopy Adventure.” This popular attraction features a series of zip lines that are strung high through the forest canopy where one can see the rainforest close up. The program requires a short, invigorating climb to a ridge-top platform where participants are strapped into harnesses. Participants then soar through the treetops where they will see a wealth of unexpected natural beauty and wildlife activity. Those who prefer not to do the zip lines can hike a forest trail around a beautiful waterfall where it is possible to see Dull-mantled Antbird, Tawny-crested and Dusky-faced tanagers, Bananaquit, Green Hermit, and many other forest species.

One day we will conduct an all-day trip from Canopy Lodge to Santa Clara Beach and the Pacific coast lowlands. There is good lowland birding (e.g., Crested Bobwhite, Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, Rufous-browed Peppershrike), shorebirds along the Pacific Ocean coast/mudflats, and the opportunity to go swimming in the warm Pacific.

Friday, March 16 Panama City

After a leisurely breakfast and some last minute birding in the gardens surrounding the lodge, we will drive back to Panama City and catch our return flights home.

PACE: The pace for this trip will be comfortable with many opportunities to bird, walk, and just relax and enjoy the forest and scenery. The Canopy Adventure zip line is not for everyone, but it has been a trip highlight for those who chose to go. It is optional.

ABOUT YOUR GUIDE



Sue MacCullum is Director of Mass Audubon's South Shore Sanctuaries in Marshfield. During her twenty years with Mass Audubon, she has coordinated and led natural history and birding trips to many North American hot spots. Her international trips include many visits to Costa Rica, Ecuador, and the Galapagos Islands, as well as the Amazon Basin in Peru. These trips to the neotropics have sparked her fascination with tropical ecology, which she enjoys sharing. She graduated from Western Illinois University with a bachelor's degree in zoology and a minor in botany.

PRICE, TERMS AND CONDITIONS

PRICE: \$3500 per person/double occupancy; Single rooms are very limited. Travelers who choose a single room should be aware that the single rooms at Canopy Tower are considerably smaller than the regular rooms and share a bathroom. Single Supplement is \$200. *There are also limited Suites available for \$200 additional.* A \$500 per person deposit is required.

GROUP SIZE: A minimum of 8 participants is required. The group size will be limited to approximately 14 people.

WHAT'S INCLUDED:

- Services of a qualified Massachusetts Audubon Society naturalist as well as local guides.
- All scheduled land transport and transfer within Panama
- All meals and accommodations as described in the program.
- All scheduled transfers, portages, and service charges and taxes.
- Tips to local guide/driver and staff.

NOT INCLUDED:

- Round-trip travel to Panama City
- Items of a personal nature (alcoholic beverages, laundry, phone calls, etc.)
- Airport departure taxes, passport fees, or other fees not listed in program.

RESERVATION /APPLICATION FORM (2 SIDES)



Passenger 1 Name as shown as passport: _____

Nickname for Name tag: _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

Passport number (1) (for international trips): _____ Expiration date: _____

Passenger 2 Name as shown as passport: _____

Nickname for Name tag: _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

Passport number (2) (for international trips): _____ Expiration date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip: _____

Phone: Home: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____

Email address: _____

Room Preferences

____ I request single accommodations where available and will pay the single supplement.

____ I would like to be assigned a roommate. If one is not available, I will pay the single supplement.

Personal Information:

____ I/We are non-smokers. (If you are a smoker(s), please check here ____ and note that smoking is limited to outdoors in non-group spaces)

____ I/We have a food allergy (Yes / No). If Yes, List: _____

____ I/We prefer a special diet (Yes / No). If Yes, List: _____

____ I am allergic to medications, insects other: List _____
(you are required to carry your own Epi-pen and necessary medications)

____ Is there anything else we should know about your health that might impact your ability to participate comfortably on this trips? Please describe: _____

Deposit: Please find my enclosed **check** _____ or please **charge** _____ my credit card for the deposit:

VISA MC Card # _____ Exp. _____

Checks should be made payable to "Massachusetts Audubon Society"

Signature: _____

IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY, PLEASE NOTIFY:

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Phone: Work/Daytime: _____ Home or Cell: _____

Release and Assumption of Risk

I would like to participate in the birding and nature tour named above (the "Tour") organized by Massachusetts Audubon Society, Inc. ("Mass Audubon"). I am aware that participation in a Mass Audubon tour involves risk, including, but not limited to, the hazards of living in and traveling over unpredictable terrain often in remote areas without adequate medical facilities, exposure to disease and infection, being subject to the forces of nature, and travel by airplane and motor vehicle.

In addition, I understand and acknowledge that, if I participate in the Tour, one or more of the risks described above or set forth here could result in or cause bodily injury or death to me or damage to personal property of mine: Physical exertion, Travel by foot, plane, train, auto, vans, bus, boat or other conveyance, Consumption of food and beverages, Civil unrest, terrorism, banditry, or criminal activity, High altitude, Inadequate medical facilities or service.

I acknowledge that I have received and read carefully information describing the Tour, including, but not limited to, the Terms and Conditions and the paragraph in the Terms and Conditions entitled "Your Responsibility". I acknowledge that the enjoyment and excitement of touring is derived, at least in part, from the inherent risks incurred by travel and activity beyond the accepted safety and routine of life at home or work, and that part of the reason I have decided to participate in the Tour is to experience this enjoyment and excitement. I further acknowledge that I have had the opportunity to discuss with my medical provider the medical risks involved in the Tour. I have also had the opportunity to research the Tour and to understand fully the risks involved.

Therefore, notwithstanding the risks of participating in the Tour set forth and as described above, and in consideration of Mass Audubon permitting me to participate in the Tour:

- (1) I agree to assume and accept all risks associated with this tour; and
- (2) I hereby release and forever discharge and covenant and agree not to sue, and agree to indemnify and hold harmless, Mass Audubon and its Directors, Officers, Employees and agents (collectively the "Releasees"), and each of the releasees from and against and in regard to any and all Claims, demands, actions suits, losses, costs, damages, and expenses and any and all liabilities and obligations, which I shall or may have against the Releasees or any one or more of them arising out of, or in connection with, my participation on the tour.

I agree that this release and Assumption of Risk shall be (a) binding upon me and my heirs, executors, legal representatives, successors, and assigns, and (b) deemed a contract made under seal under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and shall be governed by, and construed and enforced in accordance with, the internal laws of said Commonwealth without regard to its principles of conflict of laws.

I have carefully read, understand, and voluntarily sign this release and assumption of Risk.

Signature(s) _____ Date: _____

Signature(s) _____ Date: _____

TERMS & CONDITIONS

APPLICATIONS, RESERVATIONS, DEPOSITS: Early applications are strongly encouraged. Trip rosters usually must be finalized 4 months before departure! All applications must be accompanied by a completed reservation form and a \$500 deposit. Deposits can be by check or credit card (Visa or MasterCard). We reserve the right to decline your application. In the case of questionable health, we reserve the right to require a physician's certification to affirm you are capable of the activities. Final payment is due 90 days before the departure date. Final payment must be by check or money order.

RATES: All tour prices are based on double occupancy. If you would like us to find you a roommate, we will do our best, but cannot guarantee a share. If we cannot find a share, you will need to pay the single supplement. All forms and fares are accurate at the time of publication April 13, 2011 but are subject to change at any time prior to departure. It is our policy to only pass on the actual amount of any increases in airfares or land costs such as those increases due to the devaluation of the dollar. Rarely, a price increase may be called for if the group falls below the minimum, as listed in the itinerary.

FLIGHTS: You, the traveler, are responsible for booking and paying for your own international flights. Once you reserve your space, we will provide you with suggested flights and tell you which flights our leaders will take. You may book flights directly with the airline, online, or with a travel agent. Please be aware that most tickets are non-refundable, therefore you should not book your flight arrangements until you have checked with us to be sure the tour has the minimum number of participants for the trip to go. We ask that you provide us with your flight details so we can be sure to meet you at the airport upon your arrival.

PHOTOS: Mass Audubon reserves the right to make use of any photograph taken on the tour. We guarantee that no photos of a comprising nature will be used. If you have questions or concerns, please contact us.

TRIP INSURANCE: A brochure and application for optional trip cancellation, illness and baggage insurance will be sent to you upon registrations. We strongly recommend that you purchase trip cancellation insurance to protect yourself. Mass Audubon does provide Medical Evacuation Coverage as part of the tour price.

CANCELLATION Policy: If you need to change your booking, you must inform us immediately in writing. All cancellations must be done in writing and are effective upon receipt in the Massachusetts Audubon Travel Office. Cancellations received up to 121 days prior to departure will be refunded deposits less a \$300 per person fee. For cancellations between 120 and 90 days prior to departure, all deposits will not be refunded. There are no refunds for cancellations 90 days or less from departure. We strongly urge all travelers to purchase trip cancellation insurance. You will be sent information from the Massachusetts Audubon Society upon receipt of your deposit.

Your Responsibility: Although every precaution is taken to safeguard you and your belongings, group travel trips by their nature involve a certain amount of risk. Trip participants should understand that the domestic and international trips sponsored/operated by Massachusetts Audubon Society (Mass Audubon Tours) - hereafter collectively "M.A.S." - involve known and unknown risks. M.A.S. assumes no responsibility for injuries, death, financial losses or damage to clients' property caused by or occurring during participation in any of the travel trips sponsored/operated by M.A.S. Trip participants must assume responsibility for having sufficient skill and fitness to participate in the trips and activities offered or sponsored by M.A.S. Trip participants must also certify that they have no medical, mental or physical conditions which could interfere with their abilities to participate in the activities and/or trips they are participating in and they must assume and bear the cost of all risks that may be created, directly or indirectly, by any such condition. It is the responsibility of trip participants to have in place adequate insurance to cover any injury, damage or emergency transportation costs related to their travel and/or participation in trip activities and/or to bear the costs of such injury, damage or emergency transportation costs. Because of the risks associated with the travel trips sponsored by M.A.S. we urge all trip participants to supplement their own insurance with travel or vacation or emergency response types of insurance. M.A.S. requires that all trip participants acknowledge and assume these risks by reading and signing an M.A.S. Release and Waiver and Assumption of Risk contract prior to departure.

CONDITIONS OF TRAVEL: Travelers will be provided with an itinerary and trip preparation information. It is expected that travelers will read this information prior to trip departure. Travelers will be responsible for completing an application reservation form, including the personal information and a release of liability. (see attached) Travelers will be expected to abide by the terms set for in the invoice. During the tour, travelers are asked to respect and follow the directions of their guide and leader.