



Mass Audubon Tours
supporting conservation here and abroad

Panama Birding at Canopy Tower and Lodge



March 8-16, 2013 with Sue MacCallum
Optional extension to Darien Region March 16 - 19



Mass Audubon
Protecting the Nature of Massachusetts

DAY-TO-DAY ITINERARY

Friday, March 8 – Tuesday, 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 Achioté 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.

One evening during our stay we will have a night outing with the opportunity to see common potoo, olingo, and other nocturnal creatures. And we will also take some time to visit the Miraflores Locks along the Canal.

Wednesday, March 13 – Friday, 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 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.



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.

Saturday, 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 (no earlier than 1 pm).

PACE: The pace for this trip will be comfortable with many opportunities to bird, walk, and just relax and enjoy the forest and scenery.

Optional extension to Darien Region March 16 - 19

Details will be final in January, but this exploratory trip will include birding in:

- The Bayano Reservoir area to look for Darien Lowlands specialties, such as: White-eared Conebills, One-colored Becard, Orange-crowned Oriole, Black Antshrike, a bird limited to eastern Panama and western Colombia.
- The riparian forests of Rio Torti looking for beautiful Spot-breasted Woodpecker, the Fasciated Tiger Herron, Pied Puffbird, Blue-crowned Motmot, Green and Rufous Kingfisher and others.
- The San Francisco Forest Reserve to bird watch the roads that give access to this protected watershed! Orange-crowned Oriole, Spot-crowned Barbet and Syristes are among the target species today.
- The indigenous reservation of Arimae, a protected area of the Embera people. We will carry our picnic lunch and will spend the whole day in this beautiful, tall, primary lowland forests. Double-banded Graytail, Red-throated Caracara, Stripe-breasted Wren, Bare-crowned Antbird and many others would be our desire sightings..
- The Tierra Nueva Foundation reserve near the middle Chucunaque river. This area offers some surprises such as Spectacled Parrotlet, the Darien morph of the Bay Wren, Red-rumped Woodpecker, White-headed Wren, King Vulture, Crested Guan.

****Overnights will be in the best hotel in Eastern Panama, in the village of Torti**

ABOUT YOUR GUIDE



Sue MacCallum is Director of Mass Audubon's South Shore Sanctuaries in Marshfield. During her twenty years with Mass Audubon, she has coordinated and led many natural history and birding trips. Her international trips include many visits to Panama, 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

MAIN TOUR 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 flights 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.

DARIEN EXTENSION TOUR PRICE: \$TBD per person/double occupancy;

GROUP SIZE: A minimum of 4 participants is required. The group size will be limited to approximately 9 people.



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. 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.



Reservation Form

Mr./Mrs./Ms.

Passenger Name (1) – as shown in passport

Date of Birth

Mr./Mrs./Ms.

Passenger Name (2) – as shown in passport

Date of Birth

Address

City

State

Zip

Phone: Day

Evening

Email address

ACCOMMODATIONS:

I/We are non-smoker(s) ____ smoker(s) ____ (*smoking is limited to outdoors in non-group spaces*)

____ 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.

EXTENSION TO DARIEN REGION

____ YES, Please hold ____ places for the Darien extension trip, March 16 – 19, 2013

DEPOSIT:

____ Please find my enclosed **check** deposit of \$500 per person:

Checks should be made payable to “*Massachusetts Audubon Society*”

OR

____ Please **charge** my credit card:

VISA MC Card #

Exp.

Signature