

Birds

in Protected Natural Areas

© Daniel Silva

A single trip is not enough to discover all the wonders that Peru has to offer. **With more than 1800 bird species, 106* of which are endemic,** Peru is a true paradise of birdwatching.

*According to the South American Classification Committee of the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU).

**Important Bird Areas (important areas for bird conservation)



Inca tern

(*Larosterna inca*)

This is a very sociable bird that lives in large colonies; it feeds mainly on anchovies.



NPA: Paracas National Reserve (IBA)**
Endemic: Yes, from the Humboldt Current

Characteristics

Deep red beak and legs, and a bluish black head and forehead. The whole body is dark gray. Under its beak it has a yellow fleshy growth and from the base of the beak there are white moustaches that curve downwards and forwards.



Length: approx. 40 cm
Threat: Vulnerable (VU)



Best time for observation:
All year round



Habitat:
In rocky areas near the coast.



Endemic species of the Humboldt current found on the coast of Peru.



Jabiru

(*Jabiru mycteria*)

This bird feeds mainly on fish, mollusks and amphibians and builds its nest in the tops of the tallest trees.



NPA: Pacaya Samiria National Reserve (IBA)**

Endemic: No

Characteristics

It has a large bill and black and red neck.



Length: 127 to 150 cm

Wingspan: 3 m (wings spread out)

Threat: Near Threatened (NT)



Best time for observation:

August - November



Habitat:

Can be seen in the different rivers within the Reserve



Jabiru is one of the largest storks in Peru.



Peruvian plantcutter

(*Phytotoma raimondii*)

Medium-sized bird, which can usually be seen in an upright position.



NPA: Bosque de Pomac historical Sanctuary**

Endemic: Yes

Characteristics

Males are characterized by a rust-coloured belly and forehead, while females have a black body



Length: 18 to 19 cm
Threat: Endangered



Best time for observation:
April - November
(in the breeding season)



Habitat:

Areas with dense and semi-dense forest.



The best place to see it is in front of the millenary tree, where the Cortarrama route begins, as well as in the Palería sector.



Andean cock-of-the-rock


(*Rupicola peruvianus*)


In the mornings and afternoons, males get together in exhibition places called leks, where they compete with each other in order to find a mate.


 **NPA:** Manu National Park (IBA)**
Endemic: No


Characteristics

This bird has a yellow beak and yellow legs, while its head, characterized by a rounded crest, is projected up to its beak. Its plumage is mostly intense red, while its wings and tail are shiny black.

 **Length:** 31 to 33 cm
threat: Least Concern (LC)

 **Best time for observation:**
All year round

 **Habitat:**
Mountain forests near San Pedro.
(at 2300 m altitude)

 This species is most easily observed between 5 and 6 am in the area of San Pedro on the Manu road, between Acjanaco and Tono.



Harpy eagle

(*Harpia harpyja*)

This bird feeds mainly on sloths and monkeys, and sometimes on large birds. It builds its nests in large trees where it raises only one chick every 2 or 3 years; harpy eagles are known to mate for life.



NPA: Tambopata National Reserve (IBA)**

Endemic: No

Characteristics

Females are larger than males and weigh up to 11 kg., while the males weigh only about 6 kg. Both have the same plumage features.



Length: 89 to 105 cm

Wingspan: 180 to 200 cm

Threat: Vulnerable (VU)



Best time for observation:

All year round



Habitat:

In the entire reserve between the ceibos, shihuahuaco, and chestnut trees.



This is the biggest eagle in the Americas.



Iquitos gnatcatcher

(Polioptila clementsi)

This bird normally inhabits the forest canopy in the company of other bird species and forms what is known as a mixed canopy flock. It feeds on small insects.



NPA: Allpahuayo Mishana National Reserve (IBA)**

Endemic: Yes

Characteristics

Thin black bill and legs. Grey plumage, its chest and the bottom of its tail are white and it has long wings.



Length: 16 cm

Threat: Critically Endangered (CR)



Best time for observation:

All year round



Habitat:

Varillal forests.



The greatest chances to observe this rare species are found in the varillal forests located on the premises of INIA (National Institute of Agrarian Innovation); as well as in the surroundings of the communities of Nueva Esperanza and Mishana (Nanay River).



Bare-throated tiger heron

(*Tigrisoma mexicanum*)

This bird normally remains immobile for long periods at the water's edge, with its neck extended diagonally. It is a solitary bird, although it is sometimes seen in groups in open areas or on the edge of wetlands.



NPA: Los Manglares de Tumbes National Sanctuary

Endemic: No

Characteristics

Yellow-green skin on the face and orange iris; it differs from other species by its white bare throat.



Length: 80 cm

Threat: Least Concern (LC)



Best time for observation:

All year round



Habitat:

In the mangroves, from the marshes and canals, with greater chances from the trail towards the viewpoint that exists inside the mangrove and in the Envidia estuary.



It was given its name because of its beautifully striped neck.

Apurímac spinetail

(*Synallaxis courseni*)

It forages near the ground, solitary or in pairs, between bushes and in the undergrowth.



NPA: Ampay National Sanctuary (IBA)**

Endemic: Yes

Characteristics

Generally dark grey, with a rufous or reddish crown and wings, and a long, dark tail. The tails of some individual birds show blunt edges.



Length: 19 to 20 cm

Threat: Vulnerable (VU)



Best time for observation:

All year round



Habitat:

Forests and shrub vegetation between 3000 and 3600 metres above sea level.



This bird is most likely to be seen in the Intimpas forest before 8 a.m.



Ash-throated antwren

(*Herpsilochmus parkeri*)

This bird forages in the canopy and understory of the mountainous rainforest, often in flocks of mixed species.



NPA: Alto Mayo Protected Forest (IBA)**

Endemic: Yes

Characteristics

The males have more grey on their throat, chest and flanks. The females have superciliums, throats and chests of a distinctive suede color.

As this bird is difficult to spot, it is often attracted using playback.



Length: 12 cm

Threat: Endangered (EN)



Best time for observation:

All year round



Habitat:

Canopy and montane rainforests.



This bird is most likely to be seen in La Llantería, in the northern part of the NPA.

Natural area

for bird watching



📍 Paracas National Reserve

Inca tern *Larosterna inca*

Along the Peruvian coast, in the waters of the Humboldt Current, live several sea birds, i.e. birds that can only be seen at a certain distance from the coast. These birds include one species many wildlife enthusiasts consider a "must see" bird: the Inca tern. Due to its elegant plumage it is one of the most distinguished varieties of its family. You will be able to see it between the rocks or even while resting on one of the sides of your boat.



📍 Pacaya Samiria National Reserve

Jabiru *Jabiru mycteria*

As the water level starts to decrease in the Amazon lowlands, you will be able to see a great variety of mollusks, amphibians, and birds. The Pacaya Samiria National Reserve, with a surface area of 2,080,000 hectares, is located at the confluence of two large rivers, namely the Marañón and the Ucayali. There, between meandering rivers, mirrored waters and torrential rains, you will have the pleasure to meet one of the largest storks in Peru: the Jabiru.



📍 Bosque de Pomac Historical Sanctuary

Peruvian plantcutter *Phytotoma raimondii*

The adventure begins with a visit to the carob trees in the Bosque de Pomac Historical Sanctuary. In this 5887-hectare equatorial dry forest you will find a huge carob tree of more than 500 years old, to which the locals attribute miracles and legends. It is known as the millennial tree and close to it you will be able to find one of the most endangered bird species in the northern part of Peru, as well as one of the most sought after by birdwatchers: the Peruvian plantcutter. At this point you will start the **Cortarrama route**, a natural birding route that takes about 20 minutes.





📍 Los Manglares de Tumbes National Sanctuary

Bare-throated tiger heron *Tigrisoma mexicanum*

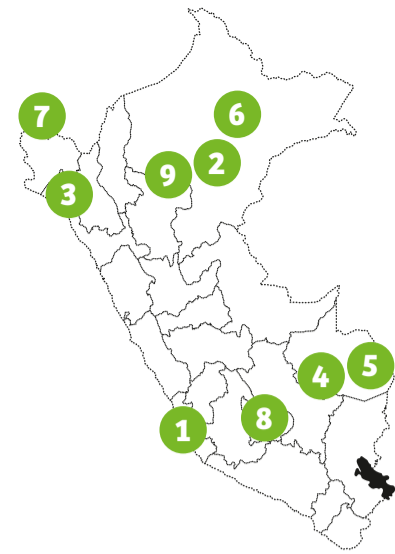
Very close to the city of Tumbes, on the northern border of Peru, you will find an environment surrounded by mangroves; tall and leafy trees that have given the place its name: Los Manglares de Tumbes National Sanctuary. You will visit the Almejas, Roncal, Correa and Matapalo islands, where several birds cross the sky offering a beautiful spectacle. On the edges of the vegetation, in the wooded streams, you will be able to see a solitary bird with a striped neck: the bare-throated tiger heron.



-  NPA - Protected Natural Areas
-  Habitat
-  Best time for birdwatching
-  Additional information



South America



Manu National Park

Andean cock-of-the-rock *Rupicola peruviana*

On the Manu road, between Acjanaco and Tono, and near the famous Tres Cruces Viewpoint, you will find one of the most famous members of the **cotingo** family: the Andean cock-of-the-rock, which is one of the most spectacular and well-known birds in the world. The males of this species –intensely orange colored, with black backs and grey wings--gather in traditional sites known as leks, where they sing and dance, while lowering their heads and raising their wings, in order to attract the females. A unique experience that you will never forget.



Tambopata National Reserve

Harpy eagle *Harpia harpyja*

After a boat trip from Puerto Maldonado and a walk through the jungle, you will reach a captivating territory with a wealth of flora and fauna species. Hundreds of colorful and noisy birds will accompany you on your way and many of them will be closer than you think, as the Tambopata National Reserve gathers about 632 different species including one of the world's largest and most majestic birds of prey: the Harpy Eagle. This bird is so strong that its main food sources are the sloths and monkeys that live among the branches of the trees.



Allpahuayo Mishana National Reserve

Iquitos gnatcatcher *Poliophtila clementsi*

A short distance from the city of Iquitos, in the lower Nanay, there is a forest that grows on white sand. Its soil has few nutrients, but the vegetation is well adapted to these poor soil conditions and forms high forests of up to 25 to 30 meters, known as white sand forests or varillales, which are home to a low richness of species restricted to this type of habitat. Among them is the Iquitos gnatcatcher, a small and rare bird with grey plumage and a white chest, which is a favorite among bird watchers.



Ampay National Sanctuary

Apurímac spinetail *Synallaxis courseni*

On the slopes of the snow-capped Ampay mountain, between 3000 and 3600 meters above sea level, one of the most impressive rainforest formations is located. The Intimpas forest is one of the most valuable areas of this Sanctuary. If you arrive early, you will find a great variety of endemic birds. Among them, you can observe the Apurímac spinetail, which is considered endemic and classified as vulnerable.



Alto Mayo Protected Forest

Ash-throated antwren *Herpsilochmus parkeri*

Located north of the Alto Mayo rainforest, in an area known as Chuquillantas or La Llantera, a mountain ridge can be found. This area is recognized by birdwatchers as a place of frequent passage of mixed flocks. If you watch carefully in the treetops or in the forest with a relatively closed canopy, with a bit of luck you are able to see a unique grey bird: the Ash-throated antwren.



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