

Reef and Rainforest Tours



Galapagos and Amazon - Ecuador's Unique Wildlife Heritage

Escorted Group Tour

Led by Quentin Bloxam

October 2010



Galapagos and Amazon - Ecuador's Unique Wildlife Heritage

Directly benefiting the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, this tour gives a fantastic opportunity to meet and travel with Gerald Durrell's right-hand man: Quentin Bloxam an expert zoologist and Durrell's current Director of Conservation Management.

Quentin has been accompanying Reef and Rainforest groups for the last twelve years, during which time we have raised thousands of pounds for the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust. You will learn about Durrell's important conservation work around the islands and meet researchers at the Charles Darwin Research Station. Previous wildlife highlights have included humpback whales (including a mother and calf), pods of 200 dolphins, snorkeling with a dozen green turtles, shoals of golden rays, hammerhead sharks, waved albatross, sealions, marine iguanas, giant tortoises, land iguanas, Darwin finches, penguins and a huge number of sea birds.

We also include the Ecuadorian Amazon as part of the tour: It is a particular favourite area of Quentin's, as his experiences here with previous Reef and Rainforest groups include an astonishing amount of wildlife: large numbers of primates (red howler monkeys, spider monkeys, squirrel monkeys, brown capuchins and golden mantled tamarins), river otters, black caimans, macaws and parrots.

With a large amount of wildlife to be seen over two very different habitats and Quentin's congenial company, this tour will allow you to meet one of the world's most eminent conservationists whilst seeing two of the world's most enthralling wildlife destinations: the Amazon rainforest and Galapagos Islands.





GALAPAGOS AND AMAZON - ECUADOR'S UNIQUE WILDLIFE HERITAGE

15 DAYS – LED BY QUENTIN BLOXAM, 2010

ITINERARY IN BRIEF

- 21 OCT Morning departure from LONDON HEATHROW on IBERIA AIRLINES flight to MADRID. Connect with flight to QUITO, ECUADOR. Met on arrival and trf to hotel. O/n HOTEL PATIO ANDALUZ, BB.
- 22-25 OCT Fly to COCA on the NAPO RIVER. Scenic canoe ride to the lodge. Stay of FOUR nights at NAPO WILDLIFE CENTRE, FB. Our stay here includes all meals and a full programme of inclusive guided activities.
- 26 OCT Return to COCA by canoe and fly to QUITO. O/n HOTEL PATIO ANDALUZ, BB.
- 27 OCT Catch flight to BALTRA ISLAND, GALAPAGOS ISLANDS. Board yacht M/S CACHALOTE for a SEVEN nights' cruise around the islands, visiting all the major highlights. Today, visit PLAZAS.
- 28 OCT Full day on SANTA CRUZ - Morning at the CHARLES DARWIN RESEARCH STATION. Afternoon to observe giant tortoise in the wild.
- 29 OCT Full day on ESPANOLA visiting Punta Suarez and Gardner Bay.
- 30 OCT Full day on FLOREANA visiting Post Office Bay and Punta Cormorant.
- 31 OCT Full day on ISABELA visiting Punta Moreno and Elizabeth Bay.
- 1 NOV Morning on ISABELA - Urbina Bay. Afternoon on FERNANDINA - Punta Espinosa.
- 2 NOV Morning on SANTIAGO - Puerto Egas. Afternoon on BARTOLOME.
- 3 NOV Morning on SANTA CRUZ – Turtle Cove before returning to BALTRA for flight out to GUAYAQUIL. Met & transfer into city for a short visit before returning to the airport for the international flight. Depart GUAYAQUIL on IBERIA AIRLINES flight to MADRID.
- 4 NOV Early afternoon arrival in MADRID and connect with flight to LONDON HEATHROW.



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GROUP LEADER:

QUENTIN BLOXAM



Quentin is an ever-popular and entertaining leader. He has an outstanding conservation pedigree being the Programme Director of Conservation Management for the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust at Jersey Zoo. He also accompanied Gerald Durrell on a number of his expeditions. Quentin is a very competent wildlife photographer who is always keen to share his knowledge with others; in fact, all of the wildlife photos in this itinerary were taken by Quentin during past Reef and Rainforest Tours to Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands.

PLEASE NOTE: A sizable donation will be made to the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust for each person joining this group tour in 2010.



GALAPAGOS AND AMAZON - ECUADOR'S UNIQUE WILDLIFE HERITAGE 2010

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 01 Depart LONDON HEATHROW at 0725 on IBERIA AIRLINES flight IB3161 to MADRID, arriving 1045. Connect with IBERIA AIRLINES flight IB6463 at 1215 to QUITO, ECUADOR, arriving 1620. O/n PATIO ANDALUZ, BB. A beautiful old colonial building which has been converted in to a 32 room boutique hotel.

Day 02-05 Transfer to airport and fly to COCA on the NAPO RIVER (approx 30 mins). Board motorised canoe for scenic 2-hour boat ride to the NAPO WILDLIFE CENTRE RESERVE.

Change to paddle canoe (no motorised transport is allowed in the reserve or around the lodge) and transfer through gallery rainforest to the lodge. This trip can take between one and three hours as you will stop for a picnic lunch and take time to spot wildlife en route. Possible sightings include giant river otters, kingfishers, hoatzins and monkeys.



Stay of FOUR nights at the NAPO WILDLIFE CENTRE, FB. Owned and operated by the local Anangu Quichua Indian Community, this upmarket lodge is located within a pristine 52,000 acre private terra firma rainforest reserve. The reserve forms part of the YASUNI NATIONAL PARK, the largest national park in Ecuador comprising a huge tract of unspoilt Amazonian rainforest.



The lodge overlooks the beautiful ANANGUCOCHA LAKE which is home to a resident population of giant river otters, capybara, large numbers of waterbirds and the black caiman - an endangered relative of the alligator

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which grows up to 4 metres in length. The surrounding primary rainforest is home to 11 species of monkeys (including red howler, spider, woolly, squirrel, monk saki and golden mantle tamarins), sloths and a multitude of insects, reptiles and amphibians. Spectacular but more elusive residents include anaconda, jaguar, puma, tapir, giant anteater, pink river dolphin and giant armadillo.

Over 560 species of birds have so far been recorded at the lodge with highlights including macaws (scarlet, blue and yellow, red and green, chestnut-fronted, red bellied), mixed feeding flocks of ant birds, toucans, manakins (six species), humming birds, agami herons, five species of kingfisher and occasionally harpy and crested eagles.



A particular highlight are two clay licks which attract large numbers of parrots, parakeets and occasionally macaws to digest kaolin to counteract toxins in their diet. The lodge manages two of the best parrot clay licks in Ecuador which are visited by canoeing through miles of virgin rainforest. There is also a large

canopy platform offering spectacular views over the rainforest where you have a good chance of seeing monkeys, sloths, canopy birds and rainforest raptors.

Each of the lodge’s 10 bright and airy detached cabanas has a spacious bedroom, private bathroom, hot water shower and private porch with seating and fantastic views over the lake and surrounding forest. There is also a good restaurant, bar and well-stocked library.



Your stay here includes a full programme of rainforest walks, canoe trips, visits to clay licks and the canopy platform all in the company of the lodge’s naturalist guides and local spotters. Visits to the local community are also possible.

Day 06 Return to COCA by motorised canoe and fly back to QUITO. O/n HOTEL PATIO ANDAULZ, BB.

Day 07 Early pick-up at hotel and transfer to QUITO AIRPORT. Catch flight to BALTRA ISLAND, GALAPAGOS ISLANDS. Met and transfer to dock. Board yacht M/S CACHALOTE for a SEVEN nights’ cruise around the islands. Built in 2002 and recently refitted, the 96ft schooner-



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rigged motor-sailer has eight double cabins, each with private head and shower, and is fully air-conditioned.



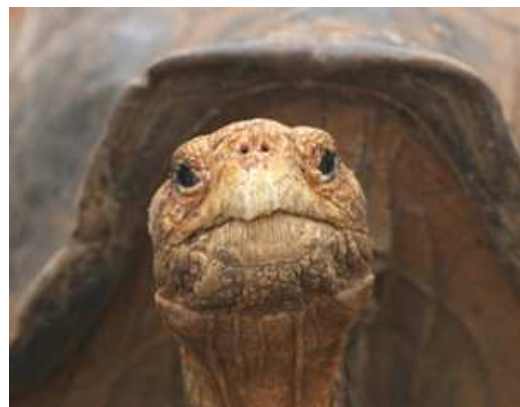
The crew comprises the Captain, a multi-lingual naturalist guide, cook, and three sailors.

Our seven night/eight day itinerary will visit all the major highlights including the endemic wildlife and volcanic landscapes of the islands, spectacular snorkelling with penguins and sea lions, and possible sightings of whales and dolphins as we sail between each island.

Of the 29 species of land birds on the islands, 22 are endemic including 13 species of the famous Darwin’s finches. Nineteen species of seabirds are found on the islands including the waved albatross, flightless cormorant, Galapagos penguin, two species of frigatebirds and three species of booby.

Mammals include the Galapagos sea lion, the fur seal and a large number of cetaceans including sperm whales, humpback whales and orcas. There is also a high diversity of other marine life including a number of ray and shark species such as the Galapagos shark, scalloped hammerhead and whale shark.

Reptiles include marine turtles (in particular a large nesting population of the Pacific green turtle), two species of land iguana, the ubiquitous marine iguana, seven species of lava lizard, nine species of gecko (five endemic species) and three endemic snake species. However, a particular focus of the cruise will be the giant tortoise (*Geochelone elephantopus*). In addition to the captive population at the Darwin Research Station, attempts will be made to encounter individuals in the wild. Please note that the park authorities strictly control the areas visited on each island.



In the afternoon visit PLAZAS for land iguanas and one of the most concentrated sea lion colonies on the Galapagos Islands.

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Day 08 Full day on SANTA CRUZ - Morning in highlands to visit El Chato tortoise reserve to observe giant tortoise in the wild. Afternoon at the CHARLES DARWIN RESEARCH STATION for captive tortoises (including all surviving subspecies).

Day 09 Full day on ESPANOLA - Morning in Gardner Bay. White sand beach (turtle nesting), sea lions, marine iguanas, waved albatross and snorkelling. Afternoon on Punta Suarez. Large sea lion colony, marine iguanas ('Christmas iguanas'), boobies, snakes, lava lizards (large subspecies), Galapagos hawks and mockingbirds.



Day 10 Full day on FLOREANA – Morning in Punta Cormorant. Turtle nesting, sea lions, flamingos, stingrays. Afternoon in Post Office Bay. Sea lions, boobies, lava tubes.

Day 11 Full day on ISABELA - Morning in Punta Moreno. Lagoons for water birds (including flamingos) and insects, large expanse of lava – good for lava lizards and other reptiles. Afternoon in Elizabeth Bay (by boat only) for mangroves, marine turtles, schools of rays and sharks. Followed by Caleta Derek for marine turtles.



Day 12 Morning on ISABELA - Urbina Bay. Alcedo giant tortoises, marine iguanas, land iguanas, Darwin finches, warblers, mockingbirds. Afternoon on FERNANDINA - Punta Espinosa. Large colony of nesting marine iguanas, sea lions, flightless cormorants.

Day 13 Morning on SANTIAGO - Puerto Egas. Marine iguanas, flamingos, fur seals, sea lions. Afternoon on BARTOLOMÉ - Marine turtle nesting, black tip reef sharks, snorkelling with sea lions and penguins

Day 14 Morning at Turtle Cove (boat only) for mangroves, mating turtles, rays and sharks before returning to BALTRA for flight out to GUAYAQUIL. Check in for IBERIA AIRLINES flight IB6464 at 2100 to MADRID.

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Day 15 Arrive MADRID at 1345 and connect with IBERIA AIRLINES flight IB3172 at 1525 to LONDON HEATHROW, arriving 1645.

Minimum group size is 6, maximum 15 plus the tour leader.

GALAPAGOS AND AMAZON - ECUADOR’S UNIQUE WILDLIFE HERITAGE 2010

<i>Departure Date from London</i>	<i>Adult Price</i>	<i>Single Supplement</i>
21 October 2010	£5,150	£1,135*

*Solo travelers willing to share a room/cabin with another group member of the same sex will not be required to pay the single supplement.

The price includes international and internal flights as shown, all ground transportation, twin/double accommodation, meals as indicated, excursions and a donation to the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust.

It does not include the Galapagos National Park fee, snorkel equipment hire, extra local excursions and guided tours, international and domestic departure taxes, tips, drinks, items of a personal nature and travel insurance.

Please call 01803 866965 if you have any queries, would like to secure your place on the tour, and/or if you would like to extend the tour to include other locations.





IMPORTANT NOTES TO ACCOMPANY THE ABOVE ITINERARY

NB: If there are sufficient numbers, our group will have exclusive use of the boat. However, spare cabins/rooms may be offered to other paying guests in order to keep the tour price as low as possible.

NB: All itineraries, including the Galapagos yacht itinerary, are subject to change without notice to take into account possible airline flight schedule changes which can take place before the departure date or during the tour, and other operational factors and park regulations.

NB: The quoted price for the above itinerary is based on current airline fares (both international and domestic), fuel surcharges and flight taxes. These (and other tour costs) may be subject to unanticipated increases beyond our control at short notice, either before or after you have booked the tour, in which case the price would need to be revised accordingly.

NB: This tour involves some travel in remote areas. This adds to the adventure and increases the opportunity to enjoy a true wildlife experience. However, due to terrain, weather, road conditions, and other factors beyond our control, some elements of the tour may have to be altered. Times of some activities may need to be changed or even cancelled due to the conditions. If an activity is cancelled it will usually be replaced with an alternative activity that is more appropriate for the conditions. Advance notice will be given for any changes where possible, although at times changes may need to be made whilst the tour is in progress.

NB: With any trip involving wildlife it is impossible to guarantee a sighting, but each trip is designed around known habitats. Every effort will be made to ensure a sighting, but cannot be held responsible if no sighting is made due to the wildlife itself, weather, or any other elements beyond our control.

NB: Prices are based on a specific airlines and specific economy seating classes. Flights are booked on an ad hoc basis and so early booking is recommended to take advantage of the cheapest fare availability. Prices may rise if a more expensive seat class or airline needs to be booked. Please call for information on price variations for using alternative airlines or for seat upgrades.

NB: All visitors to the Amazonian rainforest now require a Yellow Fever vaccination. This takes 10 days to become effective so you must ensure that you leave plenty of time for this. It is also crucial that you TAKE YOUR YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE WITH YOU.

NB: Adequate insurance cover is mandatory. Please supply us with details of your cover.

NB: Should for any reason the specified tour leader be unable to accompany the group, a suitable substitute will be provided.

NB: In Ecuador, English is not widely spoken. Hotels may not have bi-lingual staff, and sometimes local guides may not speak English fluently.

NB: Visas are not required for EU residents. For all other nationalities, please check with the Ecuador Embassy in London. Please ensure your passport has six months validity from the date of return.

NB: Meals are provided as follows B/B = bed and breakfast, H/B = half board, F/B = full board.

Reef and Rainforest Tours Ltd.

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