



BIRDWATCHING & PHOTOGRAPHY TOURS IN SOUTH AMERICA

Paracas National Reserve

A 3-day coastal desert classic — shorebirds, endemics, and a boat trip to the Ballestas 'Peru's Galapagos'.

Photo © Jean Paul Perret

DURATION

3 days

DEPARTURE

Early morning Day 1

GROUP SIZE

2–6

FROM

\$843

per person

2 pax \$990 · 3+ pax \$843

Our 3-day Paracas birding tour is the classic introduction to Peru's south coast — a desert peninsula where the cold Humboldt Current drives one of the richest concentrations of seabirds and shorebirds in South America. Four hours south of Lima, the Reserva Nacional de Paracas, the Ballestas Islands, the Pisco wetlands and the huarango (mesquite) forests around Ica pack an extraordinary variety of coastal, marine and desert birds into a single unhurried circuit. For anyone searching for a Paracas birding tour, a Ballestas Islands boat trip, or simply the best birdwatching on Peru's south coast, this is the trip that shows you the whole cross-section — and every site comes with its own free downloadable checklist.

The heart of the tour is the Reserva Nacional de Paracas, Peru's oldest marine protected area, where red-sand cliffs fall to a turquoise bay and the desert runs empty to the horizon. Its mudflats and salt lagoons hold Chilean and Andean Flamingos, Peruvian Thick-knee, American and Blackish Oystercatchers, Surfbird, Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot and thousands of migratory shorebirds, while the beaches at Lagunillas, La Mina and Playa Roja bring the endemic Surf Cinclodes onto the rocks and Inca Tern overhead. At Sequión we look for the endangered Peruvian Tern on its desert breeding grounds, and the open pampa adds the endemic Coastal and Thick-billed Miners and Raimondi's Yellow-Finch — 224 species are on our free Paracas National Reserve checklist.

TARGET SPECIES

- Peruvian Tern
- Coastal Miner
- Black-necked Woodpecker
- Red-legged Cormorant
- Humboldt Penguin
- American Oystercatcher
- Surfbird
- Great Grebe
- Slender-billed Finch
- Peruvian Thick-knee
- Peruvian Diving-Petrel
- Inca Tern
- Surf Cinclodes
- Guanay Cormorant
- Peruvian Booby
- Chilean Flamingo
- Blackish Oystercatcher
- Sanderling
- Many-colored Rush-Tyrant
- Vermilion Flycatcher
- Burrowing Owl

· endemic to Peru

DAY BY DAY

Day 1 — Paracas Bay & the National Reserve

An early departure from Lima brings us to Paracas by late morning, where we begin on the bay's mudflats scanning flocks of migratory shorebirds, flamingos and terns as the tide drops. In the afternoon we enter the Reserva Nacional de Paracas, working Lagunillas and La Mina Beach for the endemic Surf Cinclodes and Inca Tern, and Sequión Bay for the endangered Peruvian Tern, before sunset over the desert cliffs.

Day 2 — Ballestas Islands & the Pisco wetlands

After breakfast we take the morning boat from El Chaco out to the Islas Ballestas, passing the Candelabro geoglyph for close views of Humboldt Penguin, boobies, cormorants and Peruvian Diving-Petrel around the sea-lion colonies. Back on the mainland we spend the afternoon at the Pisco and Caucato wetlands, birding the river mouth, reedbeds and lagoons for grebes, rails, waterfowl and a fresh set of shorebirds.

Day 3 — Ica desert oases & mesquite forest

On the final morning we head south to the desert oases and huarango forest around Ica, searching the mesquite and river valleys for the endemic Black-necked Woodpecker and Slender-billed Finch alongside Vermilion Flycatcher, Oasis Hummingbird and Peruvian Sheartail. After a last look at the dunes and vineyards we begin the return journey, reaching Lima in the evening.



Chilean Flamingo Paracas National Reserve

Photo © Alfredo Fernández

Ready to book, or want it tailored?

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