



BIRDWATCHING & PHOTOGRAPHY TOURS IN SOUTH AMERICA

Pucusana & Mini-Pelagic

Coastal and offshore birding in a single morning — a shorter, gentler alternative to the full pelagic.

Photo © Alfredo Fernández

DURATION

One full morning (boat 3–4 hours)

DEPARTURE

5:00 AM from Lima

GROUP SIZE

1–4+

FROM

\$385 per person

1 pax \$1,100 · 2 pax \$660 · 3 pax \$530 · 4+ pax \$385

Our Pucusana & Mini-Pelagic tour is the easiest way to add true seabirds to a Lima trip — a gentle, sheltered half-day on the Humboldt Current without the cost, distance or seasickness of a full offshore pelagic. We leave the city before dawn and drive an hour south to Pucusana, a working fishing village on a sheltered bay, then head out by boat into the cold, plankton-rich upwelling that makes the Peruvian coast one of the most productive seabird waters on Earth. In a single morning you can pair the tubenoses and marine mammals of the open water with the rocky-islet specialists of Isla Pucusana, then finish with relaxed birding in the nearby Azpitia Valley — the most bird-diverse Lima day trip available before lunch.

The boat trip is the heart of the tour. Out over the upwelling within about 15 km of shore we search for the Peruvian Diving-Petrel — the tiny, whirring speciality of the Humboldt Current — alongside Sooty and Pink-footed Shearwaters and a run of storm-petrels: Wilson's, Elliot's, Wedge-rumped, Markham's and Ringed. In the cooler months the same water can produce Waved Albatross, Pintado (Cape) Petrel, Southern and Northern Giant-Petrels and Slender-billed Prion, while Swallow-tailed Gull, Chilean Skua and jaegers hunt overhead and pods of Dusky, Common and Bottlenose Dolphins — with Humpback Whales in season — move through below.

TARGET SPECIES

Humboldt Penguin
Peruvian Booby
Guanay Cormorant
Blackish Oystercatcher
Peruvian Diving-Petrel
Pink-footed Shearwater
Swallow-tailed Gull
Chilean Skua
Amazilia Hummingbird
Purple-collared Woodstar
Long-tailed Mockingbird

Red-legged Cormorant
Peruvian Pelican
Inca Tern
• **Surf Cinclodes**
Sooty Shearwater
Wilson's Storm-Petrel
Sabine's Gull
Parasitic Jaeger
Peruvian Sheartail
Harris's Hawk

· endemic to Peru

DAY BY DAY**5:00 AM — Hotel pickup in Lima**

We collect you from your Lima hotel before dawn and drive south down the Panamericana, reaching the fishing village of Pucusana in about an hour. Leaving early puts us on the water in the calm, well-lit morning conditions that make for the best seabirding and photography.

~6:00 AM — Board at Pucusana harbour

At the caleta we meet our boatman, load the gear and set out across the sheltered bay of this working fishing port. Right from the dock there are Inca Terns, Peruvian Pelicans, cormorants and South American Sea-lions to warm up on.

Isla Pucusana & the guano islets

We first work the rocky islands and cliffs around the bay for the Humboldt Current's coastal seabirds — Humboldt Penguin, Peruvian and Blue-footed Boobies, Guanay and Red-legged Cormorants, Blackish Oystercatcher and the endemic Surf Cinclodes on the wave-washed rocks. This is close, sheltered-water photography, with sea-lions hauled out on the ledges just metres away.

The mini-pelagic — offshore into the upwelling

We then push out up to about 15 km from shore, over the cold, plankton-rich upwelling, for the true pelagics: Peruvian Diving-Petrel, Sooty and Pink-footed Shearwaters, storm-petrels and, in the cooler months, Waved Albatross, Pintado Petrel, giant-petrels and prions. Chilean Skua, jaegers and Swallow-tailed Gull hunt overhead while pods of dolphins — and seasonal Humpback Whales — move through the swell.

Mid-afternoon — return & lunch in town

We motor back in past the sea-lion colonies and disembark for a relaxed lunch at a seafood restaurant in Pucusana town. There is time to sort photos and go over the morning's list over a plate of fresh ceviche.

Afternoon — the Azpitia Valley, then Lima

A short drive brings us to the Azpitia Valley on the Río Mala, where desert scrub and riverside thickets hold a completely different set of birds — Amazilia and Oasis Hummingbirds, Peruvian Sheartail, Purple-collared Woodstar, Long-tailed Mockingbird, dry-country seedeaters and Harris's Hawk. After the valley we drive back up the coast, aiming to have you at your Lima hotel by mid-to-late afternoon.

Ready to book, or want it tailored?

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