

North of Lima Bird specialties: 2 Days
Lomas ecosystem - Andean Foothills

This birdwatching tour was designed to be able to visit two very unique ecosystems found north of the city of Lima, with the possibility of registering specialized birds in restricted habitats in a short period of time.

These two birding spots are located relatively close to each other, which provide the facility to look for a set of birds that includes endemic and unique species of these ecosystems. On this excursion we plan to observe bird species that are associated with the so-called Desert Oasis and species confined to the *Polylepis* patches found at the base of the first Andean foothills of Lima.

The first day the trip begins at sea level reaching 600 to 700m once we enter the Lomas vegetation. On the second day we will drive west and explore the valley until we reach 4,100m where we find patches of *Polylepis*. This route is a complement of geographical spaces with unique characteristics that will hardly be found anywhere else.

Some of the bird species that we will observe during these two days of incredible landscapes and natural settings are: the endemic Coastal Miner (*Geositta peruviana*), the Thick-billed Miner (*Geositta crassirostris*), and the Cactus Canastero (*Pseudasthenes cactorum*) in the ecosystems de Lomas, in addition to other species that are common to find in these habitats. Already on the way to the height and in the *Polylepis* vegetation, the endemic Black Metaltail (*Metallura phoebe*), the Rusty-bellied Brush-Finch (*Atlapetes nationi*) and the White-cheeked Cotinga (*Zaratornis stresemanni*) are some of the targets, in addition to other specialties that will add our observations.



Coastal Miner @Guillermo Knell

Day 1: Early departure from the Hotel in Lima to the ecosystems of Lomas - including the Lachay National Reserve.

The Lachay National Reserve is the first example of a Peruvian coastal hill ecosystem that is protected by the government. Currently there is an interest in protecting more similar ecosystems that are found in the same coastal strip and along our coastline. These natural formations have a unique and interesting vegetation that depends solely on the water that comes from and originates from the humid mists that form in the ocean, 8km away.



Burrowing Owl © Andrew Fix

When these mists reach the coast, they collide with the hills at a height of between 150-700 meters above sea level, creating an oasis of very unique beauty in the middle of one of the driest deserts in the world.

The best time (high season) to visit "Las Lomas" is between the months of August and October (Winter), because it is the time when these ecosystems are completely covered by dense vegetation creating the feeling of being in the middle of a humid tropical forest. The rest of the year is dry with the presence of some trees and bushes.

The first section of observation will be done from the vehicle and the second would be walking using the trail system that accesses these incredible and unique habitats. Other species that we can find in addition to those already mentioned are: The Least Seedsnipe (*Thinocorus rumicivorus*), the endemic Raimondi's Yellow-Finch (*Sicalis raymondi*), some birds of prey such as the Black-chested Buzzard-eagle (*Geranoetus melanoleucus*) and the Variable Hawk. (*Buteo polyosoma*). When it is flower season, Las Lomas is a good destination to observe some hummingbirds, such as the Oasis Hummingbird (*Rhodopis vesper*), the Peruvian Sheartail (*Thaumastura cora*), and the Purple-collared Woodstar (*Myrtis fanny*).



Thick-billed Miner @ Dennis Osorio

After lunch and covering all the species present during that season of the year in the Lomas, we will go to the last stop of the day where we will spend the night. The gardens that surround the lodge offer the opportunity to observe some other birds before the end of the day, such as the endemic Peruvian Woodpecker or Black-necked Woodpecker (*Colaptes atricollis*).

Day 2: After breakfast, early departure to the Polylepis forest and Oyón low pass.

We leave very early towards the Polylepis forest known locally as Queñuales forest. These forests, which are made up of trees and shrubs, constitute one of the most vulnerable ecosystems in the High Andes. Those that we will visit in this locality will be found around 3,800 to 4,100 meters above sea level. At this point we will observe two species of Cotinga, the endemic White-cheeked Cotinga (*Zaratornis stresemanni*) and the Red-crested Cotinga (*Ampelion rubrocristatus*). Other species that can be observed here are the Striped-headed Antpitta (*Grallaria andicolus*), the Giant Conebill (*Conirostrum binghami*), Tit-like Dacnis (*Xenodacnis parina*), and the endemic Rusty-crowned Tit-spinetail (*Leptasthenura pileata*). Some hummingbirds are common, such as the Giant Hummingbird (*Patagona gigas*) and the Shining Sunbeam (*Aglaeactis cupripennis*). From the Low pass you can already see the Andean Condor (*Vultur gryphus*) and other local specialties.



Line-cheeked Spinetail @ Dennis Osorio

Before starting to descend and begin our return to the city of Lima, we will visit a high Andean lagoon to increase our list of species. Lunch on the way.

End of services

Pax	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Price per person	\$1,300	\$700	\$490	\$400	\$330	\$330	\$330	\$330	\$330

Includes: Private transportation, naturalist interpreter – expert bird guide, reservation tickets, meals, snacks, overnight at a local hotel, bottle of water.

Not included: Tips