



ABOARD M/Y YOLITA II : EXPEDITION TO THE

GALAPAGOS



HOLBROOK
TRAVEL

2012

Manatee County and Sarasota Audubon Societies July 3-16, 2012

Charles Darwin set off on a voyage in 1831 that would change not only his own life, but change the world as well. What he saw, on an isolated group of islands out in the Pacific, prompted an intellectual voyage that would span 20 years, and would culminate in the revolutionary theory that living things are shaped by the world around them. Darwin found a place where some birds no longer fly, tortoises weigh 500 pounds, Antarctic penguins live on the equator, and Blue-footed Boobies perform elaborate dances for their mates. This 14-day program invites you to explore and cruise through the serene volcanic landscape of the Galápagos Archipelago and bird in the highlands of Ecuador. Your journey to these remote islands will be no less exciting than Charles Darwin's more than one hundred and fifty years ago!

HIGHLIGHTS

- Discover the magical biodiversity and biogeography of this world-famous archipelago as well as 3 days of intense birding in the cloud forest of mainland Ecuador
- Walk in Darwin's footsteps and explore the sites that inspired his legendary theory of evolution
- Learn about conservation initiatives and research programs at the Charles Darwin Research Station
- Get up close and personal with Blue-footed Boobies, Galápagos tortoises, and marine iguanas
- Watch the Blue-footed Boobies in their mating dance
- Observe and discuss the effects of development on the islands
- Enjoy hiking on the islands and stargazing aboard M/Y Yolita II
- Snorkel with sea lions and other marine wildlife
- Enjoy this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to explore one of the world's most inspiring ecosystems!

TRIP DETAILS

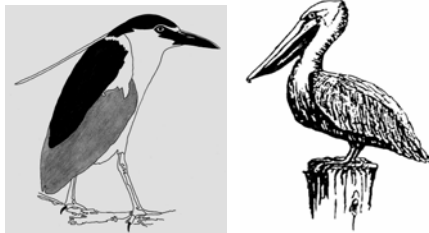
DATES

July 3-16, 2012

TRIP COST

\$4625

Cost includes transportation from Manatee area to Miami, \$645 international airfare Miami-Quito-Guayaquil-Miami, all meals (except first and last days), all gratuities, airport departure tax, donation to Audubon Society, Galápagos flights and Galápagos National Park Fees



Certified



This program is Carbon Neutral via a carbon offset through Holbrook's partnership with ClimateSafe.

Payments to be made to Manatee County Audubon Society. Cost is based on double occupancy, limited to 16 total participants. Program may incur unforeseen fuel surcharges. Payment Schedule: \$350 deposit due by 3/1/2011 \$700 by 6/1/2011, \$1000 by 10/1/2011. The deposits are refundable prior to 10/1/2011 with the exclusion of a \$200 cancellation fee. Final payment of \$2575 is due 1/15/2012, after which time the monies are non-refundable. Travel/trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended. For more information call 800-243-3174 or visit www.travelinsured.com. Holbrook's agency number is 15849.



July 3 - Quito

Group transfer to Miami for late afternoon flight. Upon arrival in Quito you will be met and escorted to your hotel. No meals are included. Overnight at Hotel Sheraton Quito.

July 4-6 - Tandayapa

Pick up from the hotel early in the morning. Drive to Yanacocha Reserve, located on the slopes of Volcan Pichincha, just an hour outside of Quito. The reserve protects a large area (960 ha) of elfin Polylepis forest on the slopes of Volcan Pichincha and is home to the Black-breasted Puffleg (*Eriocnemis nigrivestis*), a very rare hummingbird. We may also have good opportunities to see the Sword-billed Hummingbird and the Hooded Mountain Tanager here. We continue the trip along the Nono-Mindo Eco Road, arriving at our lodge in the afternoon. Over the next two days we will be birding in and around the Bellavista Cloud Forest Reserve with our two expert birding guides. The primary and secondary forests include over 330 bird species with specialties like Tanager-Finch, Giant Antpitta, Plate-billed Mountain-Toucan, Toucan Barbet. Overnight at Bellavista Cloud Forest Reserve (BLD)

July 7 - Quito

Early morning birding before breakfast and departure for Quito, with birding along our way. Stop at the Middle of the World equator monument and we'll have lunch in a local restaurant and a city tour. Overnight at Hotel Sheraton Quito (BLD)

July 8 - Galápagos

This morning you will be escorted to the airport for your flight to the Galápagos Islands. Upon arrival you will be met by your naturalist guide and transferred to the vessel, where you will board and set sail. In the afternoon visit Bachas Beach. Please note that there is a 44-pound weight limit on the internal flights. Please pack accordingly. Overnight on M/Y Yolita II. (BLD)

July 9 - Galápagos

This morning enjoy an excursion to South Plazas Island, which has one of the largest populations of land iguanas in the Galápagos and also a large colony of sea lions. In the afternoon visit Santa Fe Island, which has one of the best locations for swimming with sea lions and is also a great place to catch a glimpse of the Galápagos White-tipped shark and sea turtles. Overnight on M/Y Yolita II. (BLD)

July 10 - Galápagos

This morning begin your exploration of Española island with an excursion to Gardner Bay, located on the eastern shore of the island. Here you will have the opportunity to hike along the white sand beach littered with sea lions. You'll notice the curious Galápagos Mockingbirds here as well as Brown Pelicans. The bay is an excellent choice for swimming or snorkeling in the clear turquoise waters. This afternoon visit Punta Suarez, famous for its varied sea birds including large colonies of Blue-footed Boobies, Masked Boobies, Waved

Albatrosses, and Swallow-tailed Gulls. Marine iguanas are also present. Catch a glimpse of the famous blowhole found here along the jagged cliffs. Overnight on M/Y Yolita II. (BLD)

July 11 - Galápagos

Today enjoy an exploration of Floreana Island, famous for the pirates post office, where you can leave mail and pick up any destined for your home town, no postage necessary! Next visit Cormorant Bay where a dense mangrove-belt behind the beach distinguishes the quiet lagoon. Here expect to see flamingos, Bahama Pintail Ducks, Black-necked Stilts and Whimbrels. Overnight on M/Y Yolita II. (BLD)

July 12 - Galápagos

This morning disembark at Puerto Ayora on the island of Santa Cruz and visit the important Charles Darwin Research Station to learn about the conservation of the islands. After lunch on the boat visit the highlands of Santa Cruz in search of the giant tortoises who roam the wild here. Also visit Los Gemelos, the twin lava "craters" during your visit. Overnight on M/Y Yolita II. (BLD)

July 13 - Galápagos

This morning enjoy an excursion to Rabida Island. Rabida is one of the most volcanically varied islands in the chain. Marine iguanas and sea lions are often observed resting in the shade of the caves nearby. The island also offers perhaps the only opportunity to see pelicans nesting up close. It is additionally home to one of the best lagoons for viewing flamingos. In the afternoon visit Chinese Hat, a small island off the southeast tip of Santiago. The landscape is dominated by volcanic rubble, including sharp outcroppings, cracked lava formations and very fragile lava tubes which break when you step on them (staying on trails is especially important on this island). The island is home to sea lions and Sally Lightfoot Crabs. Overnight on M/Y Yolita II. (BLD)

July 14 - Galápagos

This morning visit Bartolome, which is one of the youngest islands in the archipelago. It displays a fantastic landscape of lava formations. You will also visit the Pinnacle Rock, which is one of the best-known landmarks in the archipelago. Near the base of this tall, eroded pinnacle you can see multi-colored fish and penguins. In the afternoon enjoy a visit to Caleta Tortuga Negra, or Black Turtle Cove, in English, where you will likely observe the Galápagos green sea turtles. Overnight on M/Y Yolita II. (BLD)

July 15 - Guayaquil

This morning visit North Seymour, where the largest colony of magnificent frigate birds is found. Afterwards disembark on Baltra Island and transfer to the airport for your flight to Guayaquil. Enjoy lunch during your flight. This afternoon enjoy guided tour of the Malecon and Santa Ana Hill and farewell dinner at the hotel. Overnight at Grand Hotel Guayaquil (BLD)

July 16 - Farewell

Transfer to airport for your flight back to Miami. (B)