



WHITE SAND & ORINOCO JUNGLE

INIRIDA – GUAINIA / COLOMBIA

**Luis Urueña, Hernan Arias & Jovani Flores
Manakin Nature Tours**

A really good exploration trip in this remote but amazing place in the Orinoco Jungle and the unique White sand ecosystem of the Guyana Shield. Part of the team of MANAKIN NATURE TOURS decide to visit the places with the end to open a new route of high quality in Colombia that include Puerto Inirida in Guainia department close to the border of Venezuela and Orinoco River.

The result was a great logistic found: very good hotels, good transportation, good restaurants, great security, nice people and the best, so really cool birds and paths to see this!

In our travel, Tomas Torres a local indigenous Curripaco, was our guide and with him we can enter to al communities and to find some birds in amazing and wonderful places. Now after of our trip, Tomas have a new binoculars, bird book guide and other equipment to be our local birding guide in Inirida.

We explore different ecosystems that include floating forest, Varzea, Terra Firme, Savanna, White Sand, and Secondary Forest, we visit six different paths in where we found some great birds, however for the weather (rain season) was no possible to find some important birds reported in the places that we visit, for this reason we recommend to make to visit this places in dry season (November – April)



Laguna Negra

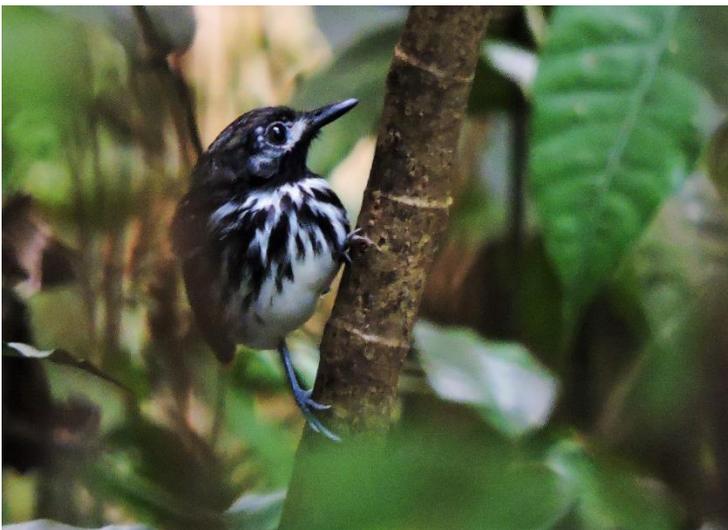
A easy place close to the village in where is necessary to take a boat, we saw some interesting birds but nothing rare... is not highly recommended, is prefer to visit ecosystems with more special birds, however some birds seen there include Black-collared Hawk (*Busarellus nigricollis*), Large-billed Tern (*Phaetusa simplex*), Ringed Kingfisher (*Megaceryle torquata*), Amazon Kingfisher (*Chloroceryle amazon*), Cobalt-winged Parakeet (*Brotogeris cyanoptera*), Rusty-backed Spinetail (*Cranioleuca vulpina*), Yellow-crowned Tyrannulet (*Tyrannulus elatus*).



Matraca Trail

One of the best paths during the trip approximately to 45 minutes in slow boat from Inirida Port, but unfortunately all the path was floating and we need to move in both all the time; the path definitely could be one of the best around Inirida and although not found some very important birds reported for the path as Capuchinbird, Rose-breasted Chat, Yapacana Antbird and other, we can find some very interesting species as Muscovy Duck (*Cairina moschata*), Green Ibis (*Mesembrinibis cayennensis*), Hook-billed Kite (*Chondrohierax uncinatus*), Little Cuckoo (*Coccyua minuta*), Reddish Hermit (*Phaethornis ruber*), Black-eared Fairy (*Heliostyris auritus*), Blue-

crowned Trogon (*Trogon curucui*), Black-fronted Nunbird (*Monasa nigrifrons*), Green-tailed Jacamar (*Galbula galbula*), Lafresnaye's Piculet (*Picumnus lafresnayi*), Little Woodpecker (*Veniliornis passerinus*), Crimson-crested Woodpecker (*Campephilus melanoleucos*), Red-and-green Macaw (*Ara chloropterus*) 2 Chestnut-fronted Macaw (*Ara severus*), Fasciated Antshrike (*Cymbilaimus lineatus*), Great Antshrike (*Taraba major*), Black-crested Antshrike (*Sakesphorus canadensis*), Blackish-gray Antshrike (*Thamnophilus nigrocinereus*), Dot-winged Antwren (*Microrhopias quixensis*), Dusky Antbird (*Cercomacroides tyrannina*), Gray Antbird (*Cercomacra cinerascens*), Black-chinned Antbird (*Hypocnemoides melanopogon*), Dot-backed Antbird (*Hylophylax punctulatus*), Long-billed Woodcreeper (*Nasica longirostris*), Slender-billed Xenops (*Xenops tenuirostris*), Drab Water Tyrant (*Ochthornis littoralis*), Bare-necked Fruitcrow (*Gymnoderus foetidus*), Varzea Schiffornis (*Schiffornis major*), Turquoise Tanager (*Tangara mexicana*), Slate-colored Grosbeak (*Saltator grossus*), Velvet-fronted Grackle (*Lamprosar tanagrinus*), Olive Oropendola (*Psarocolius bifasciatus*) and more.





Caño Culebra

This is a place of white sand close to Indira (just 15 minutes in a car), in where a solitary road that going to indigenous community have a lot of medium size forest and some tall trees in portions of the path. Is very long and good alternative for a complete day for birding, but is very important to protect of sun and mosquitos that are very common inside the forest! Some interesting birds this day include Little Tinamou (*Crypturellus soui*), Spix's Guan (*Penelope jacquacu*), Least Nighthawk (*Chordeiles pusillus*), Orinoco Piculet (*Picumnus pumilus*), Lafresnaye's Piculet (*Picumnus lafresnayi*), Chestnut Woodpecker (*Celeus elegans*), Black Caracara (*Daptrius ater*), Red-throated Caracara (*Ibycter americanus*), Mealy Parrot (*Amazona farinosa*), Orange-winged Parrot (*Amazona amazonica*), Red-and-green Macaw (*Ara chloropterus*), Cherrie's Antwren (*Myrmotherula cherriei*), Yellow-crowned Tyrannulet (*Tyrannulus elatus*), Rufous-crowned Elaenia (*Elaenia ruficeps*), Black Manakin (*Xenopipo*

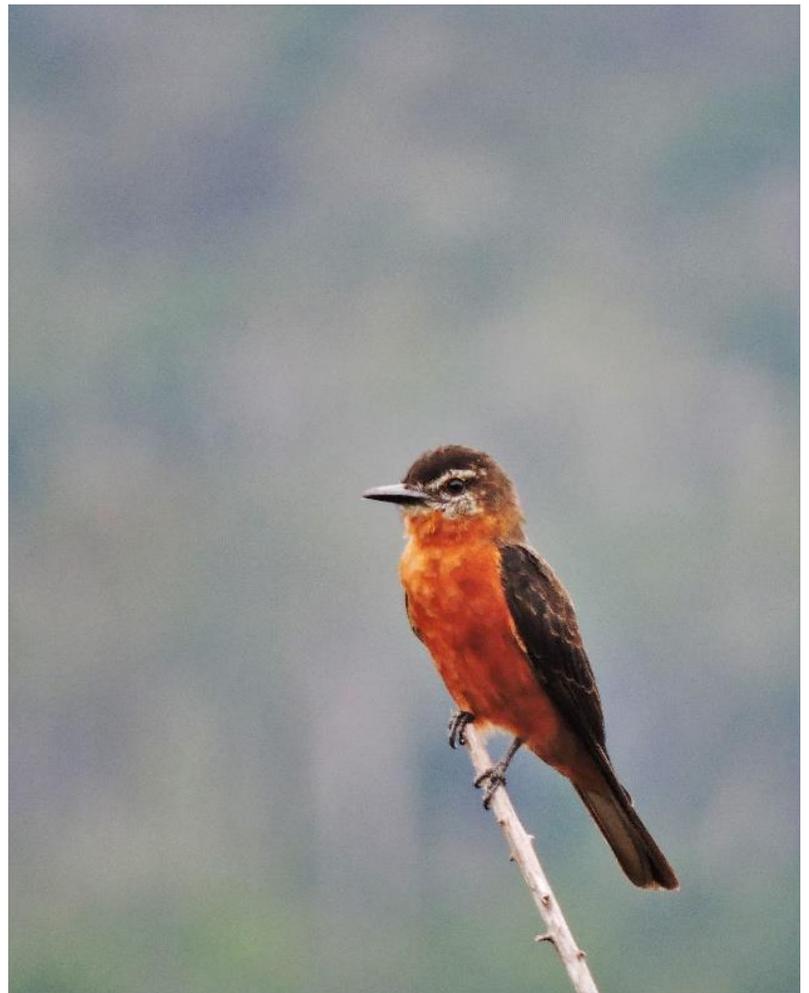


atronitens), Coraya Wren (*Pheugopedius coraya*), Red-shouldered Tanager (*Tachyphonus phoenicius*), and many more; also they have records of Collard Gnatwren that we cannot see this day.



Cerros de Mavecure

We visit this mystic place that is 2 hours in boat from Inirida to the southwest; is a so nice and relax trip but however is not the best to see birds; the Cerros de Mevecure is a holy place of the different indigenous communities in the area and is amazing and when we climb the Mevecure Hill the view is insuperable. However is great to see some birds as Capped Heron (*Pilherodius pileatus*), Greater Yellow-headed Vulture (*Cathartes melambrotus*), Pied Lapwing (*Vanellus cayanus*), Sand-colored Nighthawk (*Chordeiles rupestris*) (flying late at night in the river), Reddish Hermit (*Phaethornis ruber*), Glittering-throated Emerald (*Amazilia fimbriata*), Cliff Flycatcher (*Hirundinea ferruginea*), Amazonian Umbrellabird (*Cephalopterus ornatus*), Black-collared Swallow (*Pygochelidon melanoleuca*), Burnished-buff Tanager (*Tangara cayana*), Ruddy-breasted Seedeater (*Sporophila minuta*), Chestnut-bellied Seed-Finch (*Sporophila angolensis*). This is a travel of all day with a hard physical effort if is a decision to climb the hill.

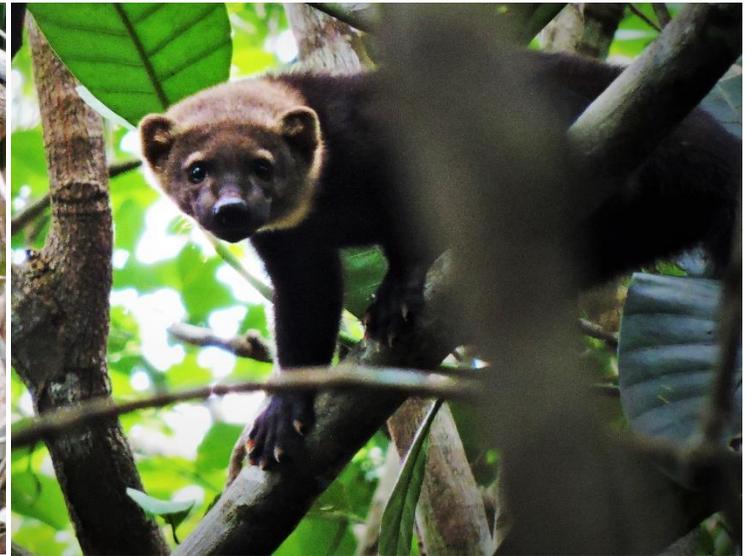


Guamal - Caño Pava – Sabanitas Path

Probably one of the best places to see birds and biodiversity in general around Inirida; is close to the village and start with a wood path inside a flooded very tall forest. Other part of the path is an open area of secondary forest and the biggest part is a very big terra firme forest that end in Sabanitas community, very good place also to see parrots, and mammals in special Collared Titi. Is a path to walk in 3-4 hours birding and with very good understory to see antbirds and other small birds.

Some interesting birds that we saw include Gray-headed Kite (*Leptodon cayanensis*), Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*), Plumbeous Kite (*Ictinia plumbea*), Crane Hawk (*Geranospiza caerulescens*), Gray-fronted Dove (*Leptotila rufaxilla*), Gray-rumped Swift (*Chaetura cinereiventris*), Fork-tailed Palm-Swift (*Tachornis squamata*), Reddish Hermit (*Phaethornis ruber*), Fork-tailed Woodnymph (*Thalurania furcata*), Amazonian Motmot (*Momotus momota*), Amazon Kingfisher (*Chloroceryle amazona*), Green-and-rufous Kingfisher (*Chloroceryle inda*), Swallow-winged Puffbird (*Chelidoptera tenebrosa*), Paradise Jacamar (*Galbula dea*), Gilded Barbet (*Capito auratus*), Golden-spangled Piculet (*Picumnus exilis*), Scale-breasted Woodpecker (*Celeus grammicus*), Black Caracara (*Daptrius ater*), Scarlet-shouldered Parrotlet (*Touit huetii*), Cobalt-winged Parakeet (*Brotogeris cyanoptera*), Blue-headed Parrot (*Pionus menstruus*), Black-headed Parrot (*Pionites melanocephalus*), Chestnut-fronted Macaw (*Ara severus*), Amazonian Antshrike (*Thamnophilus amazonicus*), Pearly Antshrike (*Megastictus margaritatus*), Cherrie's Antwren (*Myrmotherula cherriei*), White-flanked Antwren (*Myrmotherula axillaris*), Spot-backed Antwren (*Herpsilochmus dorsimaculatus*), White-fringed Antwren (*Formicivora grisea*), Imeri Warbling-Antbird (*Hypocnemis flavescens*), White-cheeked Antbird (*Gymnopithys leucaspis*), Olivaceous Woodcreeper (*Sittasomus griseicapillus*), Wedge-billed Woodcreeper (*Glyphorhynchus spirurus*), Striped Woodcreeper (*Xiphorhynchus obsoletus*), Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner (*Automolus ochrolaemus*), Yellow Tyrannulet (*Capsiempis flaveola*), Ochre-bellied Flycatcher (*Mionectes oleagineus*), Slender-footed Tyrannulet (*Zimmerius gracilipes*), Yellow-breasted Flycatcher (*Tolmomyias flaviventris*), Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher (*Terenotriccus erythrus*), Citron-bellied Attila (*Attila citriniventris*), Short-crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus ferox*), White-crowned Manakin (*Dixiphia pipra*), Golden-headed Manakin (*Ceratopipra erythrocephala*), White-winged Becard (*Pachyramphus polychopterus*), Paradise Tanager (*Tangara chilensis*), Blue Dacnis (*Dacnis cayana*), Red-legged Honeycreeper (*Cyanerpes cyaneus*), Pectoral Sparrow (*Arremon taciturnus*), Epaulet Oriole (*Moriche*) (*Icterus cayanensis chrysocephalus*), Yellow-rumped Cacique (*Cacicus cela*), Plumbeous Euphonia (*Euphonia plumbea*), Golden-bellied Euphonia (*Euphonia chrysopasta*); also amazing view of a couple Tyaras making a nest.





La Curva de los Pepes Trail

This is amazing path but is very important to know that a visit in rain season means literally to walk inside the water during 2 hours; in summer is great and easy to walk. This path is basically a savanna of white sands in where is fantastic to see the endemic plant of Guyana shield: Flor de Inirida (*Guacamaya superba* and *Schoenocephalum teretifolium*), definitely a great specie to see. Inside the savanna is possible to see some interesting birds as Savanna Hawk (*Buteogallus meridionalis*), White-tailed Hawk (*Geranoaetus albicaudatus*), Collared Plover (*Charadrius collaris*), Green-tailed Goldenthrout (*Polytmus theresiae*), Aplomado Falcon (*Falco femoralis*), Wedge-tailed Grass-Finch (*Emberizoides herbicola*), Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*); however when the savanna finish and the forest appear (small trees) other species was of our interest in special the White-naped Seedeater (*Sporophila fringilloides*) that is a very rare species and limited to white sand ecosystems.

When the big forest appear some great birds also, very good species inside the forest and in the border that include species as Scaled Pigeon (*Patagioenas speciosa*), White-chinned Sapphire (*Hylocharis cyanus*), Brown Jacamar (*Brachygalba lugubris*), Bronzy Jacamar (*Galbula leucogastra*), Brown-throated Parakeet (*Eupsittula pertinax*), Barred Antshrike (*Thamnophilus doliatus*), White-eyed Tody-Tyrant (*Hemitriccus zosterops*), Rufous-tailed Flatbill (*Ramphotrigon ruficauda*), Spangled Cotinga (*Cotinga cayana*), Pompadour Cotinga (*Xipholena punicea*), Tropical Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila plumbea*), Black-faced Tanager (*Schistochlamys melanopis*) and many more. This was a great day, but our main



target was not seen, Capuchinbird (*Perissocephalus tricolor*); we was in the correct place but probably for the season this amazing bird was not calling and without this condition is so difficult to see. This path is highly recommended in the dry season that is between November to April.



Caño Vitina

In our last day in Inirida, we visit other great place of terra firme forest in the community of Caño Vitina; we had a guide names Alvaro Cordoba (Curripaco Indigenous) how talk us about the Capuchinbird and the indigenous hstory about hi, however we cannot seen.

In caño Vitina we saw some amazing birds and different to other locations, the forest is really good and definitely is a place that we need to include in our final itinerary; some birds interesting included: Black-bellied Cuckoo (*Piaya melanogaster*) (Wautdzue in curripaco language), Green-backed Trogon (*Trogon viridis*), Spotted Puffbird (*Bucco tamatia*), White-cheeked Antbird (*Gymnopithys leucaspis*), Plain-brown Woodcreeper (*Dendrocincla fuliginosa*), Citron-bellied Attila (*Attila citriniventris*), Spangled Cotinga (*Cotinga cayana*), Pompadour Cotinga (*Xipholena punicea*) (Catawako in Curripaco language), White-crowned Manakin (*Dixiphia pipra*), Paradise Jacamar (*Galbula dea*), White-throated Toucan (*Ramphastos tucanus*), Golden-spangled Piculet (*Picumnus exilis*), Yellow-tufted Woodpecker (*Melanerpes cruentatus*), Chestnut Woodpecker (*Celeus elegans*), Lineated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus lineatus*), Chestnut-fronted Macaw (*Ara severus*), Amazonian Antshrike (*Thamnophilus*

amazonicus), Wedge-billed Woodcreeper (*Glyphorynchus spirurus*), Pale-breasted Spinetail (*Synallaxis albescens*), Screaming Piha (*Lipaugus vociferans*), Yellow-crowned Manakin (*Heterocercus flavivertex*), Striped Manakin (*Machaeropterus regulus*), Golden-headed Manakin (*Ceratopipra erythrocephala*), Opal-rumped Tanager (*Tangara velia*, Lined Seedeater (*Sporophila lineola*) 2 Ruddy-breasted Seedeater (*Sporophila minuta*), Blue-black Grosbeak (*Cyanocompsa cyanoides*), Epaulet Oriole (*Icterus cayanensis*) and many more.



Logistic

During all the trip we use a local hotel named Toninas, was very good, clean, safe and very central to all places. In the hotel they have all services available for us, boats, terrestrial transportation and local guides. Other choice of hotels exists, we consider other hotel name La Cabaña de Juaco, is very nice bit a little far way of the central area of Inirida, however this hotel have own restaurant and all services; but choice are very good.



Our local guide: Tomas is a Curripaco indigenous without too much experience with birdwatching tours, however Manakin Nature Tours proved of binoculars, bird books and laser pointer to him that develop a better work, now he is working and learning about birds... obviously he know all locations that we visit and is a very important person to have the permission to enter to all communities; in solo locations he was our boat driver.

Inirida is a village with not more than 10.000 people, is basically a town that live with the binational commerce with Venezuela and the rivers (Orinoco, Inirida y Guaviare), is a very safe and development, considering that is so remote, almost the people is indigenous but regularly a lot of colonos have big business and the main public positions.

Inirida have 4 flight frequencies per week (Monday, Thursday, Friday, Sunday), the company that travel is Satena and is very important to make reservation with good time of anticipation. Local restaurant are available close to the hotel, with choice as chicken, beef, pork, fish and local soaps; a typical soap named "ajicero" is very popular and is very popular if somebody want to teste.



Itinerary Recommended

Sunday – Day 1. Arrival to Colombia / Night in Bogota

Monday - Day 2. Arrival to Inirida, birding in Caño Culebra / Night in Toninas Hotel

Tuesday – Day 3. Birding in Matraca Trail all day / Night in Toninas Hotel

Wednesday – Day 4. Birding in La Curva de los Pepes and Caño Vitina Road / Night in Toninas Hotels

Thursday – Day 5. Birding in Guamal – Pavas & Sabanitas all day / Night in Toninas Hotel

Friday – Day 6. Caño Vitina Path al day / Night in Toninas Hotel

Saturday – Day 7. Cerros de Mavecure and Orinoco Islands / Night in Toninas Hotel

Sunday – Day 8. Laguna Negra, flight to Bogota / Night in Bogota

All Pictures by Manakin Nature Tours / Luis E. Urueña

