



# Yucatan, Mexico Birding Trip

## Flamingos and Much More!

November 15-23, 2024



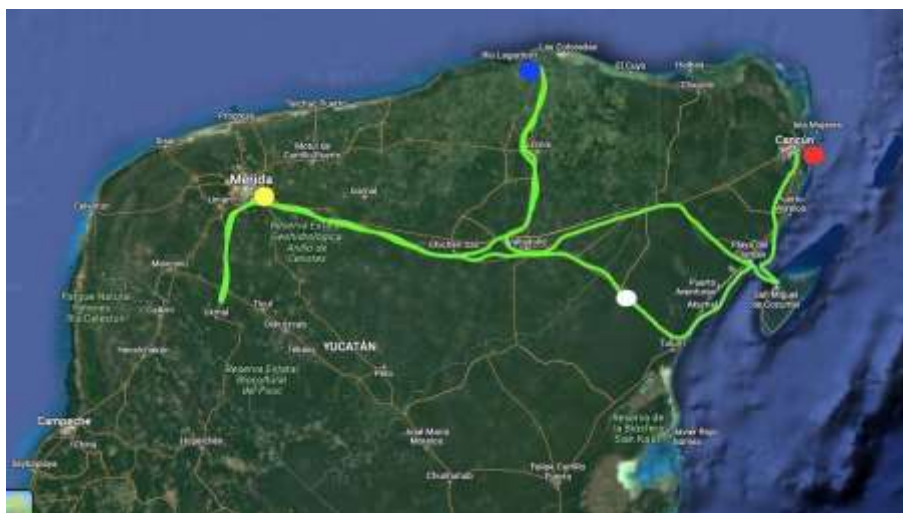
The Yucatan Peninsula, iconic for the majestic Mayan temples, the unique colonial architecture, the beautiful beaches, and of course its extraordinary birds. This large peninsula is located along the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea is famous for the large numbers of Mayan archaeological sites, the unique food, and its extraordinary birds, and constitutes one of the most popular Mexican areas for birding due to the high number of species in this ecosystem.

The peninsula is an exposed mass of the larger Yucatan platform, a flat landscape, a karst composed of carbonate and soluble rocks, with the most common mineral being limestone. According to some geologist the land we will be birding was exposed after the impact of a meteorite 65 million years ago, leaving traces in the areas such as the well named Anillo de Cenotes, a series of sink holes that are present in the area and expose the underground network of rivers. This area lacks almost entirely surface rivers, and this geology has given way to unique ecosystems that are inhabited by the extraordinary birds of this area.

The Yucatan Peninsula has a tropical climate, which ranges from semi-arid in the northwest to humid in the south, with temperatures between 28C (83F) - 33C (92F), and night temperatures between 19C (65F) - 24C (74F). Rainfall averages 8 days per month, and 7 hours of sunlight on average. The sea temperature for this period ranges from 26C (78F) to 29C (84F).

Our main goal is to do birding in the early and cool hours of the day, travel or resting some during the hottest hours of the day, and enjoy dinner in the evenings. We encourage everyone to keep hydrated and avoid direct sun. Water, hats and sunblock are always useful on our daily activities. Since the Yucatan Peninsula is a flat area the terrain will be flat with no climbing elevation of any sort, and birding will be mainly in flat terrain, and will only require some climbing in archaeological sites as we have to use stairs to get from one structure to others. The highest area we will visit is located at 500 ft. near the town of Muna on route to the archaeological site of Uxmal.

The red circle on the map is where we will start (Cancun), and in general terms then we go to Rio Lagartos (blue), then on to Merida (Yellow), followed by Coba (White), and then back to Cancun. We will bird in two states, Quintana Roo and Yucatan.



## **Itinerary:**

### **Day 1 - Friday, Nov 15**

Arrival to Cancun International Airport: IATA code CUN. Check into hotel. Group dinner and tour itinerary review.

Overnight in Puerto Morelos.

### **Day 2 – Saturday, Nov 16**

Early morning birding in the Toh Reserve, this area is a private reserve that hosts some great species of birds such as the Turquoise Browed Motmot, named locally in Mayan as the Toh bird due to its characteristic Vocalization, other birds in the area include Gray-throated Chat, after an early lunch we drive to the boarding area where we will take our ferry to Cozumel

Overnight in Cozumel.

### **Day 3 – Sunday, Nov 17**

We will enjoy birding all day on the gorgeous island of Cozumel, Some of the species we will look for today include Cozumel Emerald, Cozumel Vireo, Black Catbird, Caribbean Elaenia, Yucatan Vireo, White-crowned Pigeon and Caribbean Dove, as well as some localized sub-species of this island such as Western Spindalis, Blue-grey Gnatcatcher, Rufous-browed Peppershrike, Yellow Warbler, Yellow-faced Grassquit and Bananaquit. Overnight in Cozumel.

### **Day 4 – Monday, Nov 18**

Today will be a day of traveling, after an early breakfast we take the ferry back to mainland, our destination is the coastal town of Rio Lagartos, along the way we will do some stops along the route for casual birding and lunch at a nice restaurant where we will also admire a gorgeous Cenote (sink hole) and in the evening after our arrival we will devote time for some casual birding near Rio Lagartos.

Overnight in Rio Lagartos.

### **Day 5 – Tuesday, Nov 19**

Today we will explore the thorn coastal scrub of the northern Yucatan Peninsula, this strip of habitat, unique to this coastal shore, is home to some amazing endemics such as Yucatan Wren, the striking Mexican Sheartail, and chances for Black-throated Bobwhite, Yucatan Woodpecker, and many other great birds, after a nice lunch we drive about 3 hours to the capital city of Merida where we will spend two nights.

Overnight in Merida.

### **Day 6 – Wednesday, Nov 10**

Today we will devote our birding near the gorgeous archaeological site of Uxmal, some of the species possible here include Bat Falcon, Rufous-browed Peppershrike, White-browed (Carolina) Wren, Yellow-lored Parrot, Ferruginous Pygmy Owl, Rose-throated Becard, Spotbreasted Wren, Orange Oriole, Yucatan Woodpecker and the striking Yucatan Jays, in the afternoon we will do some casual birding near a local hacienda.

Overnight in Merida.

### Day 7 – Thursday, Nov 21

Today we will explore the thorn scrub near Merida, our main target in this area is the recently split Yucatan Gnatcatcher, other species in the area include White-eyed Vireo, Couch's Kingbird, American Flamingo, Roseate Spoonbill, various herons and egrets, American White and Brown Pelicans, Anhinga and Common Black Hawk and the fantastic Mangrove Vireo after our birding and lunch we will do a 3 hour drive to the small town of Coba, at night and if the weather allows we will check out the surroundings for Yucatan Nightjar and Yucatan Poorwill.

Overnight in Coba.

### Day 8 – Friday, Nov 22

Today we will begin our birding checking out the wetlands near our hotel, then we will get into the archaeological site of Coba where we will look for some cool species such as Rosethroated Tanager, Black-headed Trogon, Wedge-tailed Sabrewing and White-bellied Emerald, Lesson's Motmot, among many other birds, then we will have lunch and start our drive back to Cancun where we will relax and get ready for next day's departure.

Overnight in Cancun.

### Day 9 – Saturday, Nov 23

Transfer from hotel, and departure from Cancun International Airport.

### Trip Includes:

- Bird Guide(s)
- Driver
- Tour Vehicle & Fuel
- Hotel (Double Occupancy)
- All Meals & Beverages (nonalcoholic)
- Water in Van
- Preserve Fees

### Trip Does Not Include:

- Airfare
- Guide(s) & Driver Tips
- Alcoholic Drinks
- Snacks & Other Drinks
- Personal Items

### Trip Fees:

- Double: \$3,550.00
- Single: \$4,100.00

### Max People:

10 people





### **Our Guide:**

Eric Antonio Martinez was born in Oaxaca, Mexico. At the age of eight his passion for birds was born, which led him to travel throughout his entire country in search of endemic birds and regional specialties. In 2008 he spent two seasons at the Long Point Bird Observatory in Ontario, Canada, monitoring bird migration; he also worked at the Navopatia field station in southern Sonora Mexico and was part of a bird banding team at the Pemex Bird Observatory in Veracruz Mexico. He now owns Mexico Birding Tours which is one of the few Mexican-owned birding companies, and leads tours in Oaxaca, Chiapas, Veracruz, the Yucatan peninsula, Baja California, and central México. Each year he spends a few weeks birding in Cuba with his Cuban wife Jilly and their daughter Dacnis.

