



EXPLORE
ENGAGE
EXPERIENCE

The Galápagos

Dear Lab of Ornithology members and friends,

I invite you to join me on a journey through Las Islas Encantadas designed specifically for the Cornell Lab of Ornithology community. Beyond the typical tourist experience of marveling at Galápagos wildlife, we will explore the deeper biological, geological, and historical significance of these islands and their natural inhabitants. Our encounters on land and water will be enhanced by the intellectual framing of the many discoveries and insights that have been sparked by the Galápagos and its organisms, from Darwin's time to the present.

These trips for Lab members are organized by and offered by Galápagos Best, a boutique tour operator based in Ecuador. Our local leader and expedition operator, Fausto Rodriguez, is an exceptionally skilled Galápagos naturalist and guide with infectious enthusiasm and deep local knowledge; we have worked together often and I know of no better ambassador to the islands and their natural inhabitants.

After 15 years as a Cornell professor of evolutionary biology, I return regularly to Galápagos to continue my own research and teach a special Biology/Humanities curriculum for a select group of Cornell freshmen. I enjoy sharing this background in science and teaching with Lab members on our special trips. My goal is to pass along to you an intellectually inspiring and deeply satisfying understanding of the natural history, ecology, evolution, and behavior of Galápagos and its wildlife.

Best regards,



Irby Lovette
Professor, Ecology & Evolutionary Biology, Cornell University
Director, Fuller Evolutionary Biology Program, Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Associate Director for Academic Affairs, Cornell Lab of Ornithology

The Galápagos Archipelago is an awe-inspiring marvel of the natural world.

More than birding, more than sightseeing, this close-up, in-depth tour is like no other!



Each day we will explore stunning island and marine habitats, interact with creatures found nowhere else in the world, and learn about the biological and evolutionary processes that underlie the many wildlife spectacles that surround us.

Our experiences and discussions will cover all aspects of Galápagos natural history. As appropriate for trips offered to Cornell Lab of Ornithology members, birds are the most ubiquitous and conspicuous component of the local fauna. We will be sure to enjoy an exuberance of seabirds and search out many charismatic avian endemics—ranging from Darwin's Finches to the elusive Galápagos Petrels. Equal attention is paid to the other animals of the archipelago, making our trips a truly holistic wildlife-oriented experience.

Mammals:

- GALÁPAGOS SEA LIONS
- GALÁPAGOS FUR SEALS
- DOLPHINS (VARIOUS SPECIES)
- WHALES (VARIOUS SPECIES)

Reptiles:

- GIANT TORTOISES
- GALÁPAGOS LAND IGUANAS
- MARINE IGUANAS
- LAVA LIZARDS

Seabirds:

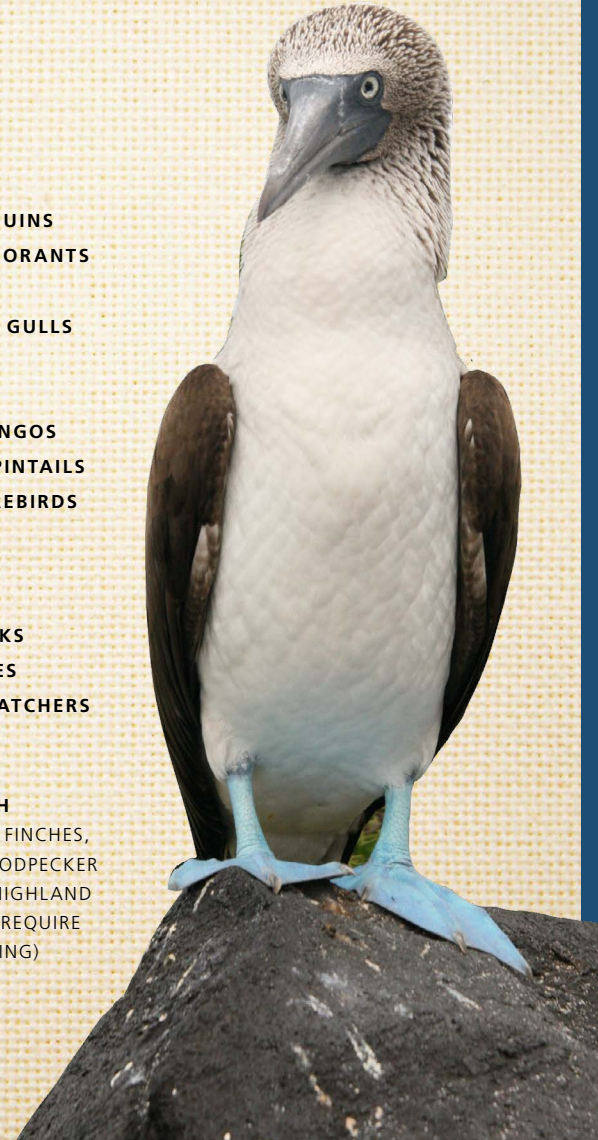
- BLUE-FOOTED BOOBIES
- NAZCA BOOBIES
- GREAT FRIGATEBIRDS
- MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRDS
- RED-BILLED TROPICBIRDS
- GALÁPAGOS SHEARWATERS
- GALÁPAGOS PETRELS
- GALÁPAGOS STORM-PETRELS
- WAVED ALBATROSSES
- AND MORE!

Waterbirds:

- GALÁPAGOS PENGUINS
- FLIGHTLESS CORMORANTS
- LAVA GULLS
- SWALLOW-TAILED GULLS
- LAVA HERONS
- BROWN NODDIES
- AMERICAN FLAMINGOS
- WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAILS
- MIGRATORY SHOREBIRDS
- AND MORE!

Landbirds:

- GALÁPAGOS HAWKS
- GALÁPAGOS DOVES
- GALÁPAGOS FLYCATCHERS
- GALÁPAGOS MOCKINGBIRDS
- GALÁPAGOS FINCH SPECIES (DARWIN'S FINCHES, INCLUDING THE WOODPECKER FINCH AND OTHER HIGHLAND TREE FINCHES THAT REQUIRE DEDICATED SEARCHING)
- AND MORE!



Daily Schedule

Every day is different during our voyages around the archipelago, and every excursion offers new opportunities to experience the natural wonders of Galápagos. Most days involve several trips to land at special locations within the Galápagos National Park, as well as one or two opportunities for snorkeling or other water activities. As experienced field biologists, we take full advantage of the times when birds and other animals are most active, usually waking early and heading to shore so that we are the first group to visit each site. We also venture deeper into the larger islands to search out giant tortoises, tree finches, and other denizens of the wetter forests found at higher elevations. We return to the ship for nearly all meals. In keeping with the intellectually enhanced theme of these journeys, we take advantage of quieter moments aboard ship for short lectures and informal discussions of our daily encounters with geology and wildlife. Every evening ends with a recap of what we have experienced that day and a preview of the day to come.



Activity Descriptions

These trips are best suited for participants who are in good general health and with reasonably good mobility. We transit between ship and shore in small boats, and although all outings are optional, you won't want to miss out on our walks on the islands nor on the many opportunities to swim and snorkel. You are likely to find that this voyage falls into the "active vacation" category in that you will want to participate in several outings and activities every day.

WALKS

Our walks on land vary in duration (typically 1-3 hours) and in the type of terrain underfoot. We pause frequently to watch animals or talk about natural history. Several walks have a bit of elevation gain/loss, but most are across relatively flat areas. Footing can be more challenging than the distances we travel: trails in Galápagos are maintained but not groomed, in the sense that they cross whatever substrate is present at the site. Terrain includes sandy dirt paths like those in a manicured park, crinkly lava outcroppings, and even fresh lava fields that are only a few hundred years old. Many walks also involve stepping up or down. It is common for some of our participants to bring a walking pole, or the equivalent, to help with balance on uneven terrain.

SWIMMING AND SNORKELING

Most travelers come to Galápagos to see the terrestrial and coastline creatures, but the underwater world of the archipelago is also truly spectacular—and offers the amazing opportunity to swim with penguins! Many of our traveling companions arrive with some level of trepidation—from mild to acute—about snorkeling; every snorkeling outing is at your discretion and we will always be very happy to help you feel comfortable in the water. Snorkeling conditions range from beginner to intermediate; in some places we snorkel right off the beach in calm, clear water, whereas in other places we get into deeper water directly from the Zodiac.



Customized for Cornell Lab of Ornithology Members



These trips are offered by Galápagos Best and have been specially tailored to the Lab of Ornithology membership; they include a dedicated academic visiting leader, Cornell Professor Irby Lovette, Director of the Fuller Evolutionary Biology Program at the Lab. These are unlike any other tours to the Galápagos:

- Every trip for Lab members includes a full week of exploration in the islands.
- Each journey has been customized with Lab members in mind, including visits to highland sites with particularly high bird diversity (and lots of giant tortoises).
- We limit our groups to only 14 participants so that we are able to access less frequented sites and take best advantage of the serendipitous natural spectacles that we encounter along the way.
- Our unusually high ratio of leaders to participants means that experts with first-hand knowledge of the local biology are always at hand to answer your questions.
- We combine natural history discovery with deep background on scientific and historical matters, helping us to fully appreciate both the wonders of Galápagos and the influences they have had on our broader understanding of evolution, ecology, animal behavior, and related disciplines.



Cost & Accommodations

Nearly all costs are covered from the time you arrive in Guayaquil until you depart for home. Prices are listed on the expedition descriptions (next page).

Included:

- TWO NIGHTS OF FIVE-STAR HOTEL ACCOMMODATION IN GUAYAQUIL
- ALL AIRPORT TRANSFERS
- THE ROUND-TRIP FLIGHT TO GALÁPAGOS FROM GUAYAQUIL
- ALL GALÁPAGOS ENTRY AND GALÁPAGOS NATIONAL PARK FEES
- FOOD AND LODGING ABOARD SHIP
- ALL GRATUITIES INCLUDING THOSE TO GALÁPAGOS BEST STAFF AND SHIP CREW MEMBERS

Not included:

- PERSONAL BAR TAB ABOARD SHIP
- LUNCHEES OR DINNERS IN GUAYAQUIL
- SATELLITE PHONE USAGE
- YOUR ROUND-TRIP FLIGHTS FROM YOUR HOME TO GUAYAQUIL

All quoted prices are per person, double occupancy per cabin. The single supplement for a solo cabin is +90% of the regular rate. Let us know if you are travelling alone or have an odd number of people in your group, as we can often pair you with a friendly cabin-mate looking to share.

FOOD

The chef aboard our ship will indulge our group with locally inspired dishes, including sustainably managed fish harvested from Galápagos waters, salads, and local fruits. If you have special dietary considerations, rest assured that the crew is skilled at catering to all typical dietary needs and constraints.

VOYAGING IN GALÁPAGOS

All of the ships we employ are well equipped with air-conditioned lounging and dining areas, comfortable outdoor viewing decks, and double-occupancy air-conditioned cabins with private baths.

HOTEL IN GUAYAQUIL

Guayaquil is Ecuador's largest and most exuberant city. While in transit to and from Galápagos we stay in full-service, five-star hotels that are close to both the airport and to Guayaquil's many excellent restaurants and local attractions. If you have extra time to spend on the mainland, Galápagos Best can arrange for excursions and activities in or near the city, or farther afield.



Travel & Registration

FLYING TO ECUADOR

We always transit to and from Galápagos via the coastal Ecuadorian city of Guayaquil, which has direct air service from the USA and from Quito. Participants are responsible for making their own round-trip airline arrangement to travel from their home to Guayaquil; this international air travel is not included in the Galápagos Best package cost. Be sure to check the individual trip itineraries for recommended travel dates. It is important to arrive in Guayaquil no later than the day before (or even earlier) we fly from the mainland to Galápagos. Arrival and departure nights in a five-star Guayaquil hotel are included in the Galápagos Best package price. Additional nights of lodging in Guayaquil can be arranged via Galápagos Best at a modest additional charge.

EXPEDITION REGISTRATION

All payments and official registration should be made directly with the expedition operator, Galápagos Best. As these trips are open only to members and friends of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, please initiate this process by sending an email to **Lynn Swain (MLS539@cornell.edu)** and **Professor Irby Lovette (IJL2@cornell.edu)** at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. We can answer any questions you might have, take your reservation, and put you in contact with Galápagos Best to make your logistical and financial arrangements.

PRIVATE TRIPS TO GALÁPAGOS

With advance notice we may be able to arrange special trips for families or groups wishing to travel privately in Galápagos, or for pre-existing groups of about 14 participants. These special arrangements generally require about a year of advance planning.

EXTENSIONS IN MAINLAND ECUADOR

Galápagos Best is able to arrange special extensions on mainland Ecuador, ranging from day-trip natural history excursions from Guayaquil to longer adventures at preeminent birding destinations in the Amazonian lowlands or the Andes. Please let us know if you would like us to help arrange a customized itinerary.



Expedition Leaders



Fausto Rodriguez is one of the most experienced and biologically knowledgeable guides in Galápagos. Fausto was raised in the countryside of the Ecuadorian Andes, just south of Quito. He first visited Galápagos in 1990 and immediately fell in love with the islands. After working as a mate aboard various Galápagos ships, in 1996 he completed the rigorous training to become a licensed Galápagos National Park Naturalist,

and shortly thereafter he spent several years in London where he was awarded a degree in Languages and Tourism from South Bank College. Fausto has particular interests in geology, plants, birds, marine life, and mammals. He is especially passionate about guiding and teaching, and is still just as excited about the Galápagos Islands and their natural history as when he first visited the archipelago. Fausto is the owner/operator of Galápagos Best, which has served as the official organizer for many previous visits of Cornell Lab members as well as for Cornell's undergraduate Galápagos Curriculum students.



Dr. Irby Lovette is based at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology where he is the Director of the Fuller Evolutionary Biology Program, Associate Director of Academic Affairs, and Professor of Evolutionary Biology. He first spent six months in Galápagos in 1991 as a young field assistant working on the now-famous study of Darwin's Finches on tiny Isla Daphne, a project later featured in the Pulitzer Prize-winning book *The Beak of the Finch*. In more recent years, Irby has studied the evolution of island birds worldwide, including the Galápagos mockingbird radiation that was an important inspiration for Charles Darwin. More generally, Irby's research addresses questions about the ecology, evolution, behavior, and conservation of birds and other animals. He has published more than 130 scientific papers and is the lead editor of the Lab's *Handbook of Bird Biology* textbook. At Cornell, Irby has won multiple awards for teaching and mentoring. His undergraduate "Galápagos curriculum" is now in its fourth year; this special program engages freshman students from minority backgrounds who take both a Galápagos-themed version of Cornell's core Evolutionary

Biology course and a special writing seminar on human perspectives about Galápagos, from the earliest explorers to today's residents and visitors. As part of this curriculum, the students visit Galápagos with Irby and Fausto every year during Cornell's spring break.



March 17–26, 2016

The Penguin Voyage *(Central and Western Islands)*

Price: \$6,500 per person

Appropriate for children and families.

This adventure to the heart of the Galápagos will treat you to numerous natural spectacles, including the largest marine iguana colonies and many endemic species such as Galápagos Penguins and Flightless Cormorants. Ventures into the highlands to see giant tortoises and land iguanas are balanced with excellent snorkeling opportunities and close-up encounters with Galápagos sea lions and fur seals. The spectacular volcanic backdrops provide excellent birding opportunities for Darwin's Finches and other land birds, boobies and many other seabirds, and an assortment of migrant visitors.

We sail through some of the richest marine waters of the archipelago with good chances of encountering dolphins, whales, and abundant seabirds.

June 11–20, 2016

The Three Booby Voyage *(Central and Far Eastern Islands)*

Price: \$6,950 per person

Appropriate for most adults.

This trip is named after the three booby species—Blue-footed, Nazca, and Red-footed—that we will enjoy at close range. It includes a special excursion to remote Isla Genovesa, where Red-footed Boobies and Great Frigatebirds nest among an exuberance of other seabirds. One highlight is a storm-petrel colony where Short-eared Owls lurk outside of active petrel nest burrows. We will also visit the famed Waved Albatross colony on the island of Española, search out giant tortoises in the highlands, and see a great variety of the other animals that make Galápagos so special.

This voyage covers a lot of ground as we travel through the central and northeastern islands. After our week together we will come away with a keen appreciation for the biological importance of Galápagos and its wildlife.

June 18–27, 2016

The Flightless Cormorant Voyage *(Central and Far Western Islands)*

Price: \$6,950 per person

Appropriate for most adults.

On this adventure, we will circumnavigate the largest Galápagos islands, see some of the most spectacular landscapes formed by active volcanoes, and visit the largest marine iguana colonies. We are sure to come face-to-face with Galápagos Penguins and Flightless Cormorants, along with many finches and other endemic birds. We will make a special trip to search for the endangered Galápagos Vermillion Flycatcher, and watch serene land iguanas at close range. We will sail through rich marine waters that are feeding grounds for whales and dolphins, as well as for Galápagos Shearwaters, various storm-petrels, and many other seabirds.

This voyage travels through the central and western islands. During our week together we will see a great variety of the creatures that make Galápagos so special, and will come away with a keen appreciation for their biological importance.

The Penguin Voyage

Depart USA on March 17

Return to USA on March 26

Many travellers choose to arrive a day early in Guayaquil as a buffer against unforeseen international travel delays.

- MAR. 17** Arrive Guayaquil; Welcome Dinner and overnight in Guayaquil
- MAR. 18** Fly to Galápagos, embark on *Fragata*
- MAR. 18-25** 8 days / 7 nights voyage in Galápagos
- MAR. 25** Fly from Galápagos to Guayaquil; overnight in Guayaquil
- MAR. 26** Fly home from Guayaquil

CENTRAL AND WESTERN ISLANDS

- **ISLA ISABELA** (THE LARGEST OF THE ISLANDS OF THE ARCHIPELAGO AND THE RESULT OF FIVE ACTIVE VOLCANOES THAT HAVE FUSED TOGETHER);
- **ISLA FERNANDINA** (THE YOUNGEST AND MOST VOLCANICALLY ACTIVE OF THE LARGE GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS); AND,
- **SANTA CRUZ, RABIDA, AND SANTIAGO** (THE CENTRAL ISLANDS).

VESSEL

THE YATE *FRAGATA* IS A COMFORTABLE 75' MOTOR YACHT THAT ACCOMMODATES OUR 14 PASSENGERS IN DOUBLE CABINS WITH PRIVATE BATHS.

DETAILED ITINERARY

March 16th or earlier (optional): If you have the opportunity, consider arriving early in Ecuador for a rest day before departing for Galápagos, or for trip extensions on the mainland.

Thursday, March 17: Fly from USA to Guayaquil (hotel in Guayaquil)

Friday, March 18: We will fly together to Baltra Island and arrive in Galápagos. We may see ground finches before we even leave the airport! And seabirds and marine life as we board the *Fragata*. Our visit to Isla Mosquera will include wonderful beaches, abundant Galápagos sea lions, boobies, frigatebirds, and other coastal and marine bird life.

Saturday, March 19: Today we will cross the equator twice as we sail to the far side of Isla Isabela! Punta Vicente Roca features spectacular scenery and volcanic geology, a giant sea cave, Galápagos Penguins, Flightless Cormorants, Brown Noddies, Blue-footed and Nazca Boobies, Galápagos fur seals, green sea turtles, and is a great place for a snorkeling adventure. We will later explore Punta Espinoza on Isla Fernandina in search of massive groups of marine iguanas, Flightless Cormorants, Galápagos sea lions, Galápagos Hawks, Galápagos Mockingbirds, and many other marine and land birds.

Sunday, March 20: Our visit to Urbina Bay on Isla Isabela will include examples of geological uplift, giant tortoises, land iguanas, Galápagos Mockingbirds, large flocks of ground finches, Dark-billed Cuckoos, and various coastline species. A special stop at Tagus Cove is of historical interest as this protected bay was visited by Darwin, pirates, and generations of mariners. Today it is inhabited by Galápagos Penguins, Flightless Cormorants, Galápagos Mockingbirds, Dark-billed Cuckoos, and more. Fantastic snorkeling.

Monday March 21: Puerto Egas on Isla Santiago (James Island) offers the best opportunities for close views of Galápagos fur seals, as well as Galápagos sea lions, Galápagos Mockingbirds, American Oystercatchers, Galápagos Hawks, several kinds of boobies and finches,

and it is particularly good for migrant shorebirds. Snorkeling possibilities. On the smaller island of Sombrero Chino - an arid cinder-cone - lava cactus, lava tunnels, lava lizards, swimming and snorkeling are our objectives.

Tuesday, March 22: Today we venture into the highlands of Isla Santa Cruz to search out abundant giant tortoises and several species of ground and tree finches. We have a good chance of spotting Vegetarian Finches and Woodpecker Finches, plus a chance at the elusive Galápagos Rail, along with many other Galápagos specialties. We will lunch in the highlands and have time for souvenir shopping in Puerto Ayora.

Wednesday, March 23: On Isla Isabela, the protected coves at Las Tintoreras have exuberant marine life, including green sea turtles, rays, marine iguanas, and many kinds of birds. At Puerto Villamil we will see the giant tortoise breeding center, American Flamingos, migratory shorebirds, the 'wall of tears' at a colonial-era penal colony.

Thursday, March 24: Our exploration of Isla Rabida will take in this island's highly diverse volcanic geology and colorful beaches, diverse finches, Galápagos Flycatchers, and coastal birds. We will circumnavigate Isla Daphne, famous for long-term studies of ground finch evolution. At Cerro Dragon on Isla Santa Cruz, we will be on the lookout for American Flamingos, White-cheeked Pintails, Galápagos Mockingbirds, and land iguanas.

Friday, March 25: On Isla Santa Cruz at Black Turtle Cove, we will investigate the mangrove forests and lagoon, sighting Lava Herons, Galápagos Yellow Warblers, green sea turtles, and rays. We return to the airport on Isla Baltra for our flight to the mainland. Night in hotel in Guayaquil.

Saturday, March 26: Fly home from Guayaquil, or arrange to stay on in Ecuador for additional adventures on the mainland.

The Three Booby Voyage

Depart USA on June 11

Return to USA on June 20

Many travellers choose to arrive a day early in Guayaquil as a buffer against unforeseen international travel delays.

- JUNE 11** Arrive Guayaquil; Welcome Dinner and overnight in Guayaquil
- JUNE 12** Fly to Galápagos, embark on *Angelito*
- JUNE 12–19** 8 days / 7 nights voyage in Galápagos
- JUNE 19** Fly from Galápagos to Guayaquil; overnight in Guayaquil
- JUNE 20** Fly home from Guayaquil

CENTRAL AND NORTHEASTERN ISLANDS

NORTH SEYMOUR, SOMBERO CHINO, BARTOLOMÉ, GENOVESA, SANTIAGO, RABIDA, SANTA CRUZ, ESPAÑOLA, SANTA FE, AND SOUTH PLAZA.

VESSEL

THE YATE *ANGELITO* IS A COMFORTABLE 70' MOTOR YACHT THAT ACCOMMODATES OUR 14 PASSENGERS IN DOUBLE CABINS WITH PRIVATE BATHS.

DETAILED ITINERARY

June 10th or earlier (optional): If you have the opportunity, consider arriving early in Ecuador for a rest day before departing for Galápagos, or for trip extensions on the mainland.

Saturday, June 11: Fly from USA to Guayaquil (hotel in Guayaquil)

Sunday, June 12: We will fly together to Baltra Island and arrive in Galápagos. We may see ground finches before we even leave the airport, and seabirds and marine life as we board the *Angelito*. We will spend the afternoon at North Seymour, where we will land among Galápagos sea lions and Swallow-tailed Gulls, then walk through a colony of Blue-footed Boobies and Magnificent Frigatebirds while keeping an eye out for land iguanas underfoot.

Monday, June 13: On the small cinder-cone island of Sombrero Chino, we will walk among cacti, past lava tunnels and other evidence of active volcanic geology. Snorkeling in this area is excellent. On nearby Bartolomé, we will snorkel around Pinnacle Rock, the most famous landmark in Galápagos, on our way to finding Galápagos Penguins.

Tuesday, June 14: After an all-night sail to the northeast, we will arrive at Genovesa, where it is easy to realize that the rest of the world is very, very far away. We will see hundreds of nesting boobies and frigatebirds, thousands of nesting shearwaters and petrels, and likely spot some of the resident Short-eared Owls along with Lava Gulls, Sharp-beaked Ground-Finches, and other specialties. The snorkeling in protected Darwin Bay is wonderful.

Wednesday, June 15: Puerto Egas on Isla Santiago (James Island) offers the best opportunities for close views of Galápagos fur seals, as well as Galápagos sea lions, Galápagos Mockingbirds, American Oystercatchers, Galápagos Hawks, several kinds of boobies and finches, and is particularly good for migrant shorebirds. On nearby Rabida, we will find many Galápagos sea lions, and likely American Flamingos and White-cheeked Pintails.

Thursday, June 16: Today we venture into the highlands of Isla Santa Cruz to search out abundant giant tortoises and several species of ground and tree finches. We have a good chance of spotting Vegetarian Finches and Woodpecker Finches, plus a chance at the elusive Galápagos Rail, along with many other Galápagos specialties. We will lunch in the highlands and have time for souvenir shopping in Puerto Ayora.

Friday, June 17: Isla Española is special as the sole nesting site of the Waved Albatross, and our visit is timed to coincide with the middle of breeding. Inquisitive Española Mockingbirds are endemic to this island, and we will see many colorful marine iguanas, Nazca and Blue-footed Boobies, and large Española lava lizards. In the afternoon we will stroll along a serene sandy beach where the Galápagos sea lions greatly outnumber us humans, and finches and mockingbirds are all around.

Saturday, June 18: On Isla Santa Fe, we will land among even more sea lions and take a stroll through the arid landscape to a seaside cliff replete with many seabirds. On the offshore islet of South Plaza, we will walk among an impressive density of giant land iguanas, a reminder of what Galápagos was like before humans arrived.

Sunday, June 19: On our last morning, we will rise early and paddle through a quiet mangrove lagoon, looking for green sea turtles, Lava Herons, and Galápagos Yellow Warblers. Fly to mainland and overnight in Guayaquil.

Monday, June 20: Fly home from Guayaquil, or arrange to stay on in Ecuador for additional adventures on the mainland.

The Flightless Cormorant Voyage

Depart USA on June 18

Return to USA on June 27

Many travellers choose to arrive a day early in Guayaquil as a buffer against unforeseen international travel delays.

- JUNE 18** Arrive Guayaquil; Welcome Dinner and overnight in Guayaquil
- JUNE 19** Fly to Galápagos, embark on *Angelito*
- JUNE 19–26** 8 days / 7 nights voyage in Galápagos
- JUNE 26** Fly from Galápagos to Guayaquil; overnight in Guayaquil
- JUNE 27** Fly home from Guayaquil

CENTRAL AND FAR WESTERN ISLANDS

- **ISLA ISABELA** (THE LARGEST OF THE ISLANDS OF THE ARCHIPELAGO AND THE RESULT OF FIVE ACTIVE VOLCANOES THAT HAVE FUSED TOGETHER)
- **ISLA FERNANDINA** (THE YOUNGEST AND MOST VOLCANICALLY ACTIVE OF THE LARGE GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS)
- **SANTA CRUZ AND FLOREANA** (THE CENTRAL ISLANDS)

VESSEL

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DETAILED ITINERARY

June 17th or earlier (optional): If you have the opportunity, consider arriving early in Ecuador for a rest day before departing for Galápagos, or for trip extensions on the mainland.

Saturday, June 18: Fly from USA to Guayaquil (hotel in Guayaquil)

Sunday, June 19: We will fly together to Baltra Island and arrive in Galápagos. We may see ground finches before we even leave the airport, and seabirds and marine life as we board the *Angelito*. We will spend the afternoon at Las Bachas, a beautiful white coral beach on Isla Santa Cruz, where we will refresh our snorkeling skills and where we are likely to see American Flamingos and other wading birds behind the dunes where green sea turtles nest.

Monday, June 20: Our visit to tiny Isla Mosquera will include wonderful beaches, abundant Galápagos sea lions, boobies, frigatebirds, Lava Gulls, marine iguanas, and other coastal and marine life. On Cerro Dragon ("Dragon Hill") of Isla Santa Cruz, we will discover enormous land iguanas and many land birds including finches, Galápagos Flycatchers, and Galápagos Mockingbirds.

Tuesday, June 21: After an overnight voyage across the equator, we will visit Tagus Cove, a protected bay that was visited by Darwin, pirates, and later generations of mariners. Today it is inhabited by Galápagos Penguins, Flightless Cormorants, Galápagos Mockingbirds, Dark-billed Cuckoos, and more. Fantastic snorkeling. In the afternoon we will cross a narrow straight to Punta Espinoza on Isla Fernandina in search of massive groups of marine iguanas, Flightless Cormorants, Galápagos sea lions, Galápagos Hawks, Galápagos Mockingbirds, and many other marine and land birds.

Wednesday, June 22: Our visit to Urbina Bay on Isla Isabella will take us across a region of geological uplift to find giant tortoises, land iguanas, Galápagos Mockingbirds, large flocks of ground finches, Dark-billed Cuckoos, and various coastline species. In the afternoon we will paddle quietly through Elizabeth Bay, a mangrove forest festooned

with Brown Pelicans, Lava Herons, Galápagos Penguins, Blue-footed Boobies, green sea turtles, golden rays, Galápagos sea lions, and more.

Thursday, June 23: On Isla Isabela, we will visit Punta Moreno and cross lava flows to view spectacular coastline scenery along with American Flamingos, White-cheeked Pintails, Galápagos Penguins, Flightless Cormorants, strange endemic cacti, and several species of ground finches. In the afternoon we will sail through some of the richest marine waters of the archipelago, where deep upwelling brings nutrients for plankton, fish, and everything that eats them, including whales and exuberant seabirds.

Friday, June 24: We will stroll among Galápagos sea lions and marine iguanas as we disembark in the tiny town of Puerto Villamil, where we will visit a giant tortoise breeding center and look for American Flamingos and migratory shorebirds on our way to the 'wall of tears' in a colonial-era penal colony. We will venture to the highlands of Sierra Negra to search for tree and ground finches, Vermillion Flycatchers, Galápagos Flycatchers, and Galápagos Yellow Warblers.

Saturday, June 25: We will wake off Isla Floreana where we will find Galápagos sea lions, American Flamingos, frigatebirds, boobies, and various other birds on our way to a scenic green sea turtle nesting beach. We will snorkel at Devil's Crown, a mostly submerged crater with incredibly high fish density and many seabirds. In the afternoon we will visit Post Office Bay, the site of many human tragedies during the early settlement of the archipelago. In the evening we will visit Puerto Ayora, the largest town in Galápagos.

Sunday, June 26: On our last morning, as a very appropriate conclusion to our voyage, we will circumnavigate Isla Daphne. This island is the site of the famous research on finches that is the best-documented example of rapid natural selection in the wild. Fly to mainland and overnight in Guayaquil.

Monday, June 27: Fly home from Guayaquil, or arrange to stay on in Ecuador for additional adventures on the mainland.