



explore
experience
engage

THE GALÁPAGOS 2019 Voyages



CONTENTS

A Galápagos Invitation	2
GALÁPAGOS ADVENTURES	
Birds, Wildlife, and Natural History	4
Wildlife Specialities.	5
A Day in the Galápagos	6
Land Activities.	7
Underwater Galápagos.	8
THE BEST ITINERARIES	
The Penguin Voyage	10
The Albatross Voyage.	12
Guayaquil Excursions	14
EXPERT LEADERS	
Dr. Irby Lovette & Fausto Rodriguez	16
Dr. Emma Greig & Dr. Leo Campagna	17
TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS	
Our Galápagos Origins.	19
Food and Accommodations	20
Registration and Details	21
Art-Oriented Experience	22

A GALÁPAGOS INVITATION

Join us on a journey of intimate wildlife encounters and scientific exploration designed for Cornell Lab of Ornithology members. Going beyond the typical visitor experience of marveling at Galápagos wildlife, we will explore the deeper biological, environmental, and historical significance of the islands and their natural inhabitants. Our encounters on the land and in the water will be enhanced by an intellectual framing of the many scientific insights that have been sparked by the Galápagos and its organisms, from Darwin's visit in 1835 to the most current research and discoveries.

These trips for Lab members are organized 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 vast local knowledge; we have worked together since 2012. I know of no better ambassador to the islands and their natural history!

Our expert team of Lab scientists returns regularly to the Galápagos to continue our own research and teach a Biology/Humanities curriculum for a select group of Cornell freshmen. We enjoy sharing this same kind of enriched travel experience with Lab members. Our goal is to create the trip-of-a-lifetime for you by sharing an intellectually inspiring and deeply satisfying understanding of the natural history, ecology, evolution, and animal behavior of the Galápagos and its spectacular wildlife.

Best Regards,

Irby Lovette

Irby Lovette
Fuller Professor of Ornithology
Director, Fuller Evolutionary Biology Program, Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Senior Associate Director for Academic Affairs, Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Director, Cornell Museum of Vertebrates

A close-up photograph of a Galapagos Iguana (Amblyrhynchus cristatus) perched on a dark, porous volcanic rock. The iguana's skin is a mix of bright pink, black, and light green scales. It has a prominent crest of spines along its back and head. The background is a blurred view of the ocean and more rocks.

explore

GALÁPAGOS ADVENTURES

We have carefully selected two itineraries offered by Galápagos Best to ensure that we visit the best locations in the Galápagos for birds and wildlife. By pairing the leadership of a top Galápagos National Park naturalist with professional scientists from the Cornell Lab, our trips are unique in offering an especially deep and integrated interpretation of the wonders of the archipelago. We make a special effort to visit highland sites with particularly high bird diversity (and lots of giant tortoises), and each day's activities are designed to maximize our interactions with the spectacular wildlife of the Galápagos.

BIRDS, WILDLIFE, AND NATURAL HISTORY

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 enjoy an exuberance of seabirds and search out many charismatic avian endemics—ranging from Darwin's Finches to the endangered Galápagos Petrel. Yet we pay equal attention to the other animals of the archipelago, from fur seals to iguanas to giant tortoises, making our trips a truly holistic wildlife-oriented experience. From marveling at the mating display of a Blue-footed Booby to watching a sea lion give birth, one of the most special aspects of visiting the Galápagos with our small group is observing first-hand the most intimate moments in the lives of its creatures.

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



WILDLIFE SPECIALITIES

Although the Galápagos is celebrated for its menagerie of iconic creatures—from Galápagos Penguins and Darwin's Finches to Giant Tortoises and Marine Iguanas—no simple list of Galápagos species can do full justice to the intimate experience of walking among these largely fearless animals. Beyond simply observing each species, some of the most memorable moments on any trip involve special encounters with animals that are behaving in spectacular ways. Every trip has many such encounters that by their nature can't be predicted in advance. These serendipitous wildlife spectacles help explain why the archipelago retains its sense of wonder for all visitors.



Mammals

- ☐ Galápagos Fur Seal
- ☐ Galápagos Sea Lion
- ☐ Bottlenose Dolphin
- ☐ Common Dolphin
- ☐ Whales of many species



Reptiles

- ☐ Galápagos Giant Tortoise
- ☐ Pacific Green Sea-Turtle
- ☐ Galápagos Marine Iguana
- ☐ Galápagos Land Iguana
- ☐ Lava Lizard species
- ☐ Galápagos Racer



A Sample of Galápagos Birds

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White-cheeked Pintail | <input type="checkbox"/> Red-footed Booby |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Flamingo | <input type="checkbox"/> Blue-footed Booby |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red-billed Tropicbird | <input type="checkbox"/> Nazca Booby |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Galápagos Dove | <input type="checkbox"/> Flightless Cormorant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dark-billed Cuckoo | <input type="checkbox"/> American Oystercatcher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Smooth-billed Ani | <input type="checkbox"/> Various migratory shorebird species |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Galápagos Rail | <input type="checkbox"/> Brown Noddy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Galápagos Penguin | <input type="checkbox"/> Lava Gull |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 breeding storm-petrel species | <input type="checkbox"/> Swallow-tailed Gull |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waved Albatross | <input type="checkbox"/> Galápagos Short-eared Owl |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Galápagos Petrel | <input type="checkbox"/> Galápagos Hawk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Galápagos Shearwater | <input type="checkbox"/> Galápagos Flycatcher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lava/Striated Heron | <input type="checkbox"/> Galápagos Vermilion Flycatcher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-crowned Night Heron | <input type="checkbox"/> Galápagos Martin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Great Blue Heron | <input type="checkbox"/> Galápagos Yellow Warbler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Galápagos Brown Pelican | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 endemic mockingbird species |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Great Frigatebird | <input type="checkbox"/> 15 endemic Darwin's finch species |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Magnificent Frigatebird | |



A DAY IN THE GALÁPAGOS

Each day of our voyage is different and every excursion offers new opportunities to experience the natural wonders of the Galápagos. Most days involve several trips to land at the best locations within the Galápagos National Park, as well as one or two opportunities for snorkeling. As savvy field biologists, we take full advantage of the times when birds and other animals are most active, usually waking early and heading to shore during the beautiful early morning light. 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, including the tool-using Woodpecker Finch and the delicate Warbler Finches. We return to the ship for nearly all meals. In keeping with the intellectually enhanced theme of these journeys, we take advantage of moments aboard ship for short presentations and informal discussions about current research that are inspired by 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.

In April and May, ocean water temperatures in the Galápagos are usually warm and particularly comfortable for swimming and snorkeling. The islands may be green after rains, sparking the breeding of landbirds, land iguanas, and giant tortoises. In November, Galápagos ocean waters are typically cool and productive, creating good feeding conditions for seabirds and marine mammals. At this time the islands are likely to be dry and starkly beautiful, just as they were when Darwin visited in 1835.



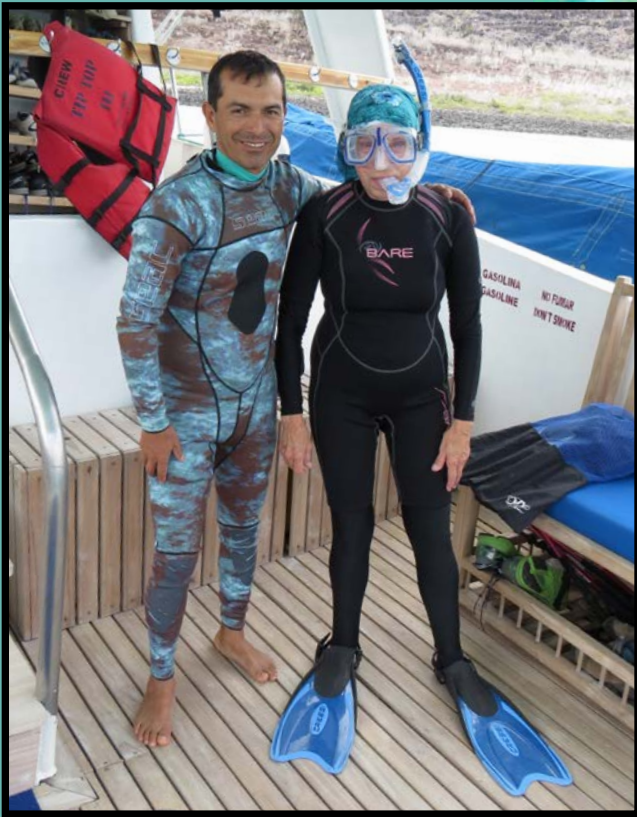
These trips are best suited for participants who are in good general health and who have good mobility. We transit between ship and shore by stepping down into Zodiac boats, and although all outings are optional, you won't want to opt out of our many walks or opportunities to snorkel. This voyage falls into the "active vacation" category in that we offer several outings and activities every day. Don't be surprised to find yourself satisfied but pleasantly tired in the evenings!

LAND ACTIVITIES

Hiking

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 few hundred feet of elevation change, 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 rough 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 along a trekking pole to help with balance on uneven terrain.





The Galápagos sits at the crossroads of three rich ocean currents, filling its underwater world with a great diversity of life. One of the best ways to experience this hidden world is to don a snorkeling mask and fins and drift alongside Pacific Green Sea-Turtles, dozens of species of colorful fish, and perhaps a curious Galápagos Penguin! Our two itineraries offer equal opportunities to snorkel in wonderful locations.



UNDERWATER GALÁPAGOS

Swimming and Snorkeling

The underwater world of the Galápagos is spectacular, but many travelers 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, no matter your level of prior experience. 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 dinghy. All gear is provided.



experience



THE BEST ITINERARIES

We follow two itineraries that we have nicknamed the “Penguin” and “Albatross” voyages in honor of two of our favorite Galápagos animals. Most travelers join us for one itinerary, but it is also possible to do both itineraries back-to-back and experience the entire archipelago over two weeks, with almost no overlap in sites. Each island in the Galápagos is truly different and we struggle to answer queries about which itinerary is preferable, since to us they both are wonderful. Penguins are usually seen on both itineraries, but in much greater numbers on their namesake trip. We sometimes see albatrosses at sea on both trips, but visit their breeding colony only on the Albatross Voyage. Flightless Cormorants are found only in the western islands visited on the Penguin itinerary.



THE PENGUIN VOYAGE

Spring Penguin Voyage: April 10–20, 2019

Fall Penguin Voyage: October 9–19, 2019

SCHEDULE

Wednesday Fly from USA to Guayaquil

Thursday Your choice of activities around Guayaquil

Friday Fly to Galápagos, embark on Tip Top II
8 days / 7 nights voyage in Galápagos

Friday Fly from Galápagos to Guayaquil;
overnight in Guayaquil

Saturday Fly home from Guayaquil

Please see the following itinerary page for more details.

On this adventure we visit the largest and wildest Galápagos islands, witness 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 make a special trip to the highlands to walk among the Galápagos Giant Tortoises and to find the finches and other endemics that occupy these special habitats. We will watch serene land iguanas at close range and snorkel among friendly Galápagos Sea Lions. The rich marine waters are often the feeding grounds of whales and dolphins, and always filled with Galápagos Shearwaters, Galápagos Petrels, various storm-petrels, and many other seabirds.

PENGUIN VOYAGE



Wednesday: Fly from USA to Guayaquil, transfer to five-star hotel.

Thursday: Recovery (or adventure!) day. Choose one of the three excursions described on page 14. Optional and included in tour price

Friday: We fly together to the Galápagos and arrive on Baltra Island. We may see ground finches before we even leave the airport on our way to the nearby harbor where we board the Tip Top II. After lunch on board we land on tiny Isla Mosquera where we can walk freely among friendly Galápagos Sea Lions, bright crimson Sally Light-foot Crabs, Blue-footed Boobies, and a variety of other birds. Snorkeling orientation off the beach or in the adjacent channel.



Saturday: We start the day at Sullivan Bay on Isla Santiago with a stroll across a lava field that is only a few hundred years old. We are likely to take advantage of the excellent nearby snorkeling, potentially accompanied by penguins. We spend the afternoon on small Isla Rábida where the red sand beach leads to coastline habitats with diverse finches, Galápagos and Vermilion Flycatchers, Galápagos Mockingbirds, and American Flamingos.

Sunday: Overnight we cross the equator twice as we sail to the western islands. We start the day at Punta Espinoza on Isla Fernandina to see massive groups of marine iguanas, Flightless Cormorants, Galápagos Sea Lions, Galápagos Hawks, Galápagos Mockingbirds, and many other marine and land birds. We then transit through rich marine waters where we might spot whales, dolphins, or pelagic birds. In the evening we paddle quietly through Elizabeth Bay,

a mangrove forest festooned with Brown Pelicans, Lava Herons, Galápagos Penguins, Flightless Cormorants, Blue-footed Boobies, green sea turtles, golden rays, and more.

Monday: Our visit to Urbina Bay on Isla Isabela takes us

across a region of recent geological uplift to find wild giant tortoises, colorful land iguanas, Galápagos Mockingbirds, large flocks of ground finches, Dark-billed Cuckoos, and various coastline bird species. With time for snorkeling, the afternoon offers a visit to Tagus Cove, a natural harbor that sheltered Darwin on the *Beagle*, and now home to Galápagos Penguins and Flightless Cormorants.

Tuesday: We start the day on the scenic coastline of Puerto Egas on the island of Santiago, which is rich in coastal wildlife including Galápagos Fur Seals, marine iguanas, and many resident and migratory birds. In the afternoon

we venture to a scenic overlook on the small island of Bartolomé in an area of particularly notable geological features including the iconic Pinnacle Rock. Nearby waters offer excellent snorkeling.

Wednesday: On the small cinder-cone island of Sombbrero Chino we stroll among cacti and past lava tunnels and other evidence of active volcanic geology. Snorkeling in this area is excellent, with a possibility of penguins. During lunch we transit through waters rich in seabirds, including storm-petrels and the endemic Galápagos Petrel. In the afternoon at Cerro Dragon we will be on the lookout for American Flamingos, White-cheeked Pintails, Galápagos Mockingbirds, and abundant land iguanas.

Thursday: We spend the entire day in the highlands of Isla Santa Cruz, a strikingly different habitat from the arid coastal zone. We stroll among some of the largest wild Giant Tortoises in the Galápagos while searching out a variety of highland bird specialties, including Small and Large Tree-Finches, Vegetarian Finch, Warbler Finch, and the famous Woodpecker Finch. In the late afternoon we stop in the town of Puerto Ayora for an opportunity to shop on our way back to the Tip Top II.

Friday: On our last morning we visit beautiful North Seymour, where we land among Galápagos Sea Lions and Swallow-tailed Gulls, then walk through a colony of Blue-footed Boobies, Magnificent Frigatebirds, and Great Frigatebirds while keeping an eye out for land iguanas underfoot. We then head for the airport at nearby Isla Baltra to fly back to the mainland. Overnight at hotel in Guayaquil.

Saturday: Fly home from Guayaquil.

TRIP LEADERS

Spring 2019: Professor Irby Lovette, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and Fausto Rodriguez, Galápagos Best

Fall 2019: Dr. Leo Campagna and Dr. Emma Greig, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and Fausto Rodriguez, Galápagos Best



THE ALBATROSS VOYAGE

Fall Albatross Voyage: October 16–26, 2019

This voyage travels through the central and southern islands, spanning some of the geologically newest and oldest parts of the archipelago. We will see a great variety of the creatures that make the Galápagos so special and come away with a keen appreciation for their biological importance. We will visit the famed Waved Albatross colony on the island of Española and the remote, sea-bird-filled island of Genovesa. Other avian highlights include Galápagos Penguins, multiple endemic species of the mockingbirds that inspired Darwin's thinking about evolution, and rich booby and frigatebird colonies. We will search out wild giant tortoises in the highlands, find land iguanas in the lowlands, and see hundreds of marine iguanas along the coastlines. This trip visits sites with the most inquisitive Galápagos Sea Lions, which can make for hilariously fun snorkeling companions.

Please see the following itinerary page for more details.

ALBATROSS VOYAGE

Wednesday: Fly from USA to Guayaquil, transfer to five-star hotel.

Thursday: Recovery (or adventure!) day. Choose one of the excursions described on page 14. Optional and included in tour price.

Friday: We fly together to the Galápagos and arrive on Baltra Island. We may see ground finches before we even leave the airport on our way to the nearby harbor where we board the Tip Top II. After lunch on board we disembark at Las Bachas on Isla Santa Cruz, where we will see more finches, marine iguanas, boobies, and a variety of coastal birds. Snorkeling orientation off the beautiful white-sand beach.

Saturday: After an overnight passage northwards across the equator we arrive at Isla Genovesa, where the rest of the world will seem 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, Fur Seals, and other specialties. The snorkeling in protected Darwin Bay is often wonderful.

Sunday: On the islet of South Plaza we walk among an impressive density of land iguanas—a reminder of what Galápagos was like before humans arrived—and watch nesting seabirds such as Galápagos Shearwaters and Red-billed Tropicbirds, along with Cactus Finches and a variety of other birds. In the afternoon we enjoy snorkeling off Isla Santa Fe, then land among Sea Lions to stroll through an arid landscape to a seaside 'forest' of towering cacti that is home to the huge, endemic Santa Fe land iguana.

Monday: On Isla San Cristóbal we venture inland to find the endemic mockingbird and other land birds. Later we land on the beautiful beach at Cerro Brujo where we are likely to find Sea Lions, marine iguanas, boobies, and other memorable birds. In the afternoon we will go

offshore to snorkel at Kicker Rock, a massive landmark that Darwin illustrated in his *Voyage of the Beagle*, and which supports nesting colonies of many seabirds.

Tuesday: We awaken at Isla Floreana, where we visit the famous Post Office Bay, the site of many human adventures and tragedies during the early settlement of the archipelago, and enjoy the wildlife in nearby coastal habitats. In the afternoon we find Galápagos Sea Lions, American Flamingos, frigatebirds, boobies, and many other species at Punta Cormorant. We snorkel at Devil's Crown, a submerged crater with incredibly high fish density and many seabirds.

Wednesday: Isla Española is special as the sole nesting site of the Waved Albatross. Our spring visit coincides with their likely courtship period, and our fall visit with the time when the ungainly albatross chicks are just becoming independent of their parents. Inquisitive Española Mockingbirds are endemic to this one island, and we will see many colorful marine iguanas, Nazca and Blue-footed Boobies, and large Española lava lizards. In the afternoon we stroll along a serene sandy beach where the Galápagos Sea Lions greatly outnumber us humans, and finches and mockingbirds are all around. Excellent snorkeling possibilities.

Thursday: We spend the entire day in the highlands of Isla Santa Cruz, a strikingly different habitat from the arid coastal zone. We will walk among some of the largest wild giant tortoises in the Galápagos while searching out

a variety of highland bird specialties, including Small and Large Tree-Finches, Vegetarian Finch, Warbler Finch, and the Woodpecker Finch. In the late afternoon we stop in the town of Puerto Ayora for an opportunity to shop on our way back to the Tip Top II.

Friday: On our last morning we paddle quietly through the mangrove forests and lagoon at Black Turtle Cove, sighting Lava Herons, Galápagos Yellow Warblers, green sea turtles, and rays. We then head for the airport at nearby Isla Baltra to fly back to the mainland. Overnight at hotel in Guayaquil.

Saturday: Fly home from Guayaquil.



TRIP LEADERS

Spring 2019: Professor Irby Lovette, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and Fausto Rodriguez, Galápagos Best

Fall 2019: Dr. Leo Campagna and Dr. Emma Greig, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and Fausto Rodriguez, Galápagos Best

GUAYAQUIL EXCURSIONS

New for 2019! We have always advised our travelers to arrive a day early in Guayaquil, partly as a buffer against unforeseen international travel delays and partly to have the chance to recharge before we fly out to the Galápagos. We now make this extra day, including the additional hotel night, a standard component of our comprehensive offering. You can spend your Thursday in Guayaquil relaxing at our five-star hotel, or at no extra cost you can join the talented guides from Galápagos Best on a 2–3 hour Guayaquil history tour, or venture farther afield on a guided birding and natural history adventure to a coastal wildlife preserve. If you want to spend more than a day on the mainland, Galápagos Best can guide you to additional birding destinations around the Tumbesian region of Ecuador.



📍 THE CITY OF GUAYAQUIL

In recent years, Ecuador's largest city has undergone an urban renaissance. Galápagos Best's highly experienced city guides can show you popular sights, including the iguana park and riverside promenade, explain the city's 500-year history, and recommend local restaurants.



📍 CHURUTE MANGROVE RESERVE

The "Manglares Churute" is a reserve located in the outskirts of Guayaquil that makes a perfect day trip for nature-oriented travelers. The reserve comprises 50,000 hectares of mangroves and dry tropical forest habitats, with spectacular opportunities to watch birds and other animals. Among the 300+ bird species are specialties such as the Horned Screamer, Roseate Spoonbill and many other herons and waders, Laughing Falcon, and with luck the charismatic Andean Cock-of-the-Rock.

📍 TUMBESIAN REGION, SOUTHERN ECUADOR

The Tumbesian region of southwestern Ecuador is renowned for having some of the world's highest bird diversity. If you have a few days or longer to explore the Ecuadorian mainland, this area is easy to reach from Guayaquil. Galápagos Best can line up an expert guide and arrange all logistics to provide you the best opportunity for spotting birds and other wildlife across a range of habitats and elevations, from lowland Pacific forests to the highlands of the Andes. Among the most popular destinations for our birders are protected areas such as the Buenaventura Reserve, Copalinga Reserve, and Tapichalaca Reserve. Galápagos Best takes pride in tailoring these customized trips to the wishes, preferred pace, and birding expertise of each set of travelers. Galápagos Best will work with you to craft a special experience. These longer excursions are not included in our package cost.

A man in a park ranger uniform, including a tan cap with a red 'C' and a green short-sleeved shirt with a 'PARQUE NACIONAL' patch, is pointing his right index finger towards a tree in a dense, green forest. He is wearing a yellow and black watch on his left wrist and sunglasses on his cap. The background is filled with lush tropical vegetation and trees.

engage

EXPERT LEADERS

Our unusual team of leaders means that experts with first-hand knowledge of the local biology are available to answer your questions and enhance your experience. All of our trips are limited to 13–15 passengers along with one or two expert researchers from the Cornell Lab. We combine natural history discovery with deep background on scientific and historical context, helping us to fully appreciate both the wonders of the Galápagos and their influences on our broader understanding of evolution, ecology, animal behavior, and related disciplines.

PROFESSOR IRBY LOVETTE

CORNELL LAB OF ORNITHOLOGY



Dr. Irby Lovette of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology is the Director of the Fuller Evolutionary Biology Program, Senior Associate Director of Academic Affairs, and Fuller Professor of Ornithology. He first traveled to the 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 birds worldwide, including the Galápagos

Mockingbirds that were 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. His lab group has published more than 240 scientific papers and Irby is the lead editor of the Cornell 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 seventh year. This special program engages freshmen who take a Galápagos-themed version of Cornell's core Evolutionary Biology course, an art course on field sketching and biological illustration techniques, and a writing seminar on human perspectives about Galápagos from the earliest explorers to today. As part of this curriculum, the students visit Galápagos with Irby and Fausto during Cornell's spring break. Irby will serve as the volunteer Lab leader on the Spring 2019 expeditions.

FAUSTO RODRIGUEZ

GALÁPAGOS BEST

Fausto Rodriguez is one of the most experienced and biologically knowledgeable guides in the Galápagos; he has been the local leader of all of our Cornell Lab Galápagos trips for students and members. Fausto was raised in the countryside of the Ecuadorian Andes. He fell in love with the Galápagos on his first trip in 1990, when an initially short visit turned into a lifelong passion for the archipelago. After working as a mate aboard various Galápagos ships, Fausto then completed the rigorous training to become a licensed Galápagos National Park Naturalist. He later took a three-year interlude in London, earning degrees in Languages and Tourism, before returning to the Galápagos as a naturalist. Fausto has particular interests and expertise 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 almost three decades ago. In addition to his guiding expertise, 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. EMMA GREIG

CORNELL LAB OF ORNITHOLOGY

Dr. Emma Greig is the leader of the Cornell Lab's Project FeederWatch, a major citizen science program in which people survey birds that visit feeders in backyards, nature centers, and community areas across North America. Emma holds a Ph.D. in behavioral ecology from the University of Chicago and she has studied birds in Australia, Malaysia, Hawaii, and most recently in the Sonoran Desert of Arizona, where she leads a long-term project on Verdins. Emma uses her Verdin project to teach undergraduates about evolution, ecology, and behavior. In her scientific work, Emma pursues two lines of inquiry: one on understanding how birds adapt to changing modern environments, and the other on the evolution of bird song. She has spent

many hours hiding behind bushes collecting audio recordings of a diverse assortment of avian characters, from Magnificent Riflebirds in the rainforests of Australia, to Black-tailed Gnatcatchers in the suburban mesquite trees of Ajo, Arizona. Emma has authored many scientific papers, but her most recent literary contribution is the text of the coloring book *Backyard Birds and Blossoms: Nurturing Your Nature at Home*. Emma will serve as one of the two volunteer Cornell Lab leaders on the Fall 2019 expeditions.



DR. LEO CAMPAGNA

CORNELL LAB OF ORNITHOLOGY

Dr. Leonardo Campagna has been a Research Scientist in the Lab's Fuller Evolutionary Biology Program since 2013. Leo explores topics in bird evolution with a particular emphasis on understanding why and how birds diversify into multiple species. Most of his fieldwork takes place in South America, where he is widely known for his work on a species-rich group of colorful songbirds known as the 'capuchino' seed-eaters. These small grassland birds are close cousins of the finches of the Galápagos, and like Darwin's finches, the capuchinos are exceptional in that many species have originated over an unusually short period of time. Leo grew up in both coastal Patagonia and California as the son of an Argentinian marine mammal scientist and conservation leader, and Leo's own career as an evolutionary biologist was sparked by long summers spent camping at remote sites in the midst of Magellanic Penguins and Darwin's Rheas, along with elephant seals and southern sea lions. Coming full circle, Leo now returns to Patagonia every year as the professor for a Cornell course that trains students in field research at some of those same wildlife colonies. Leo has led numerous field expeditions and courses in Argentina and other South American countries, including the Galápagos. He is the author of many scientific papers on bird evolution and he serves as the director of the Fuller Lab's International Scholar Research Support Program, which provides Latin American scientists with sophisticated training in evolutionary genomics. Leo greatly enjoys interacting with Lab members on our Galápagos trips, and he looks forward to explaining why his favorite capuchino seedeaters are to 'sexual selection' what Darwin's finches are to the study of 'natural selection.' Leo will be the volunteer co-leader of the Fall 2019 expeditions.





TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

We pay special attention to making your Galápagos experience one of immersive wonder in this unique biological setting. All of these trips are officially offered by Galápagos Best and led by Naturalist Guide Fausto Rodriguez, with Cornell Lab scientists serving as volunteer co-leaders. The Spring 2019 trips will be co-led by Professor Irby Lovette, while the Fall 2019 trips are co-led by Dr. Emma Greig and Dr. Leo Campagna.

OUR GALÁPAGOS ORIGINS

These Galápagos opportunities for Lab members arose from a special set of undergraduate courses we teach at Cornell University: each March for nearly a decade, we have brought a group of freshman students to the Galápagos as part of a learning adventure. The Galápagos curriculum comprises more than half of the total classwork across these students' spring semester, including an intensive evolutionary biology course, a humanities course on the history and literature of the Galápagos, and a studio art course in which the students learn the basics of biological illustration—which they then deploy in their sketchbooks while in the Galápagos.

As word of this student curriculum spread, we started getting queries from Lab members about opportunities to travel with us in the Galápagos. Our first trip for Lab members was in 2012, and it became immediately apparent that the Galápagos offers a similar sense of wonder to every first-time visitor, whether a young college student or an experienced world traveler. We now run just a few such trips for members every year and greatly look forward to the opportunity to share such an inspiring place with the Lab of Ornithology community.

The spirit of our Galápagos courses continues to inform our voyages for Lab members. Although you won't need to

complete any homework assignments or take any tests, we believe that the best way to appreciate any special place is to understand it in a larger context. We therefore strive to add a scientific, environmental, and historical framework on top of the natural history immersion that makes visiting the Galápagos an incredible experience.

This fun yet scholarly approach is part of what sets our Galápagos trips apart. We also celebrate the fact that Lab of Ornithology members tend to be wonderful traveling companions: you are smart, inquisitive, and very enthusiastic about our close-up encounters with birds and with all Galápagos wildlife!



All of our Lab of Ornithology volunteer co-leaders are professional scientists or artists rather than full-time tour guides. Our partnership provides professional expertise from the Cornell Lab, deep local and natural history knowledge from Fausto, and experienced trip operations from Galápagos Best. This unique combination ensures that each of our trips is a truly special opportunity for all participants!



Illustration by Liz Clayton Fuller



FOOD AND ACCOMMODATIONS

Voyaging in Galápagos

The Tip Top II pictured above is a luxurious 104' catamaran with large, air conditioned cabins and private baths, along with extensive communal sitting, viewing, and dining areas. Our small group will have the vessel to ourselves to ensure an especially tailored experience.

Local Cuisine

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

Hotel in Guayaquil

Guayaquil is Ecuador's largest and most exuberant city. While in transit to and from Galápagos we stay in a full-service, five-star hotel that is close to both the airport and to Guayaquil's many excellent restaurants and local attractions.

Nearly All-Inclusive

Nearly all costs from the time you arrive in Guayaquil until you depart for home are covered. In fact, many expenses fully included in our package are not covered in the packages quoted by most other Galápagos tour operators.

COSTS

DOUBLE OCCUPANCY PER CABIN:

\$7550 PER PERSON

SINGLE OCCUPANCY PER CABIN:

\$8550 PER PERSON

We may be able to accommodate solo travelers in their own cabin depending on availability. Alternatively, let us know if you are traveling alone or have an odd number of people in your group, as we can often pair you up with a friendly cabinmate who is also looking to share.

Fully Included:

- ☐ 3 nights of five-star hotel accommodation in Guayaquil
- ☐ Your choice of a Thursday excursion from Guayaquil
- ☐ Round-trip flight to Galápagos from Guayaquil
- ☐ All Galápagos entry and National Park fees
- ☐ Food and lodging aboard ship
- ☐ All gratuities including those to Galápagos Best staff
- ☐ Wetsuits and snorkeling equipment
- ☐ All airport transfers
- ☐ Special guiding team that includes both local and Cornell experts

Not included:

- ☐ Personal bar tab aboard ship
- ☐ Lunches and dinners in Guayaquil
- ☐ Round-trip flight to Guayaquil from USA
- ☐ Fees charged by financial institutions for transfer of payment

REGISTRATION AND DETAILS

How to Register

Please initiate the registration process by emailing Myrah Bridwell (mb252@cornell.edu), the Cornell Lab's knowledgeable, in-house Galápagos trip coordinator. She will email you the registration form and important policy and travel information. Completed registration forms should be returned to Myrah, who will then forward the information to Galápagos Best, the operator of these trips for Lab of Ornithology members.

Registration & Payment

Once you receive the registration materials from Myrah, your name is added to the manifest of your preferred trip on a tentative basis. Your place on a given trip is solidified once you have submitted your registration materials and a 50% deposit. In cases where a registration and deposit are not submitted within 30 days of your receiving the materials, Myrah will contact you regarding your interest in remaining on the manifest. All payments are made directly to Galápagos Best.

Financial Details

Galápagos Best requires an initial deposit of 50% of the total tour price in order to finalize your registration. The balance of the tour price is due 90 days in advance of your scheduled arrival in Guayaquil. Payment options to Galápagos Best include a personal check sent to their USA office, credit card payments via PayPal, or bank-to-bank wire transfers. Your total cost will be adjusted to include any transaction fees charged by financial institutions for transfer of payment.

Booking Flights to Ecuador

Our tour-packages are nearly all-inclusive within Ecuador, but you will need to book your own flights from your home to Guayaquil. From the USA there are many convenient routings to Guayaquil via New York-area airports and/or via hubs in Houston, Miami, or Panama City, Panama. Once your booking is complete, Galápagos Best will coordinate with you to ensure that you are met at the Guayaquil airport.

Trips and Medical Insurance

As a general best practice we recommend to all travelers that they obtain third-party trip insurance in the event of a health emergency or other situation precludes their participation in their Galápagos trip. As of 2018, the Government of Ecuador requires that all incoming international visitors show evidence of international health insurance and medical evacuation insurance. If your standard insurance coverage does not provide these benefits, you will need to purchase temporary travel insurance coverage.

Contingencies

Itineraries in the Galápagos are managed by the National Park. It is possible (though unlikely) that the Park will vary our itinerary prior to our trip. Excursions on land and in the water are always subject to current conditions; rarely, high surf can make it dangerous to land in some locations. In the unlikely event that we need to change Cornell Lab leaders, we will make every effort to substitute in an expert scientist with equivalent background and travel skills.



Have Questions?

Please contact Myrah with questions about anything related to these Galápagos trips. We will be happy to respond by email or phone. Our goal is to ensure that every Cornell Lab traveler is entirely informed and comfortable with their forthcoming Galápagos experience!

Email: mb252@cornell.edu

Cancellation Fees

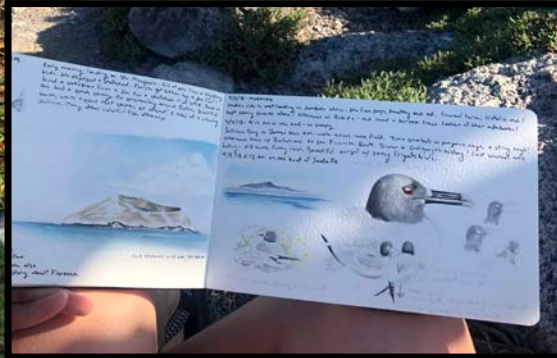
Galápagos Best applies the following fees if you must cancel your pre-paid tour reservation:

- ☐ Prior to 180 days in advance of arrival: 10% of total package cost
- ☐ 90-179 days in advance: 30% of total package cost
- ☐ 60-89 days in advance: 50% of total package cost
- ☐ 59 or fewer days in advance: 90% of total package cost



INTERESTED IN A SPECIAL ART-ORIENTED EXPERIENCE?

We are gauging Lab member interest in this potential offering and would love to hear from you. The Cornell Lab's integration of science and art dates to our origin more than 100 years ago, when founding Lab scientist Dr. Arthur Allen worked with his life-long friend, the pioneering bird painter Louis Agassiz Fuertes, on dozens of art projects that increased public appreciation of birds and their conservation.



Following the principle that artistic creation makes us better scientific observers, our Galápagos curriculum for undergraduates includes a beginner-level biological art practicum. Mentored by Liz Clayton Fuller, a professional artist who is an alumna of the Lab's well-known Bartels Art Residency Program, students learn basic drawing, field sketching, and watercolor techniques that they then utilize in their Galápagos field journals. These freshmen tell us that the artistic immersion helps them feel a deeper sense-of-place while they are in the Galápagos—and many of them continue to sketch for fun even after the class is long over.

Participants would leave Galápagos carrying a sketchbook filled with drawings and paintings, enriched by the experience of the incredible islands. With sufficient interest, this combination of art and Galápagos natural history could be a special offering for 2020 and beyond. If you find this an intriguing possibility, please let us know by sending an email to Myrah Bridwell (mb252@cornell.edu). We will greatly appreciate your thoughts and feedback at this early planning stage!

We would enjoy your feedback on whether there is potential interest about similarly art-enriched Galápagos trips for Cornell Lab members. We envision this trip to be a combination of art and science, both enriching the other—art facilitating the stillness and keen observation that begets scientific observations. This special experience would include enhanced opportunities for field sketching, painting, and journaling. No prior art experience would be expected, though we would likely get participants started through a set of art exercises done at home in advance of the trip.