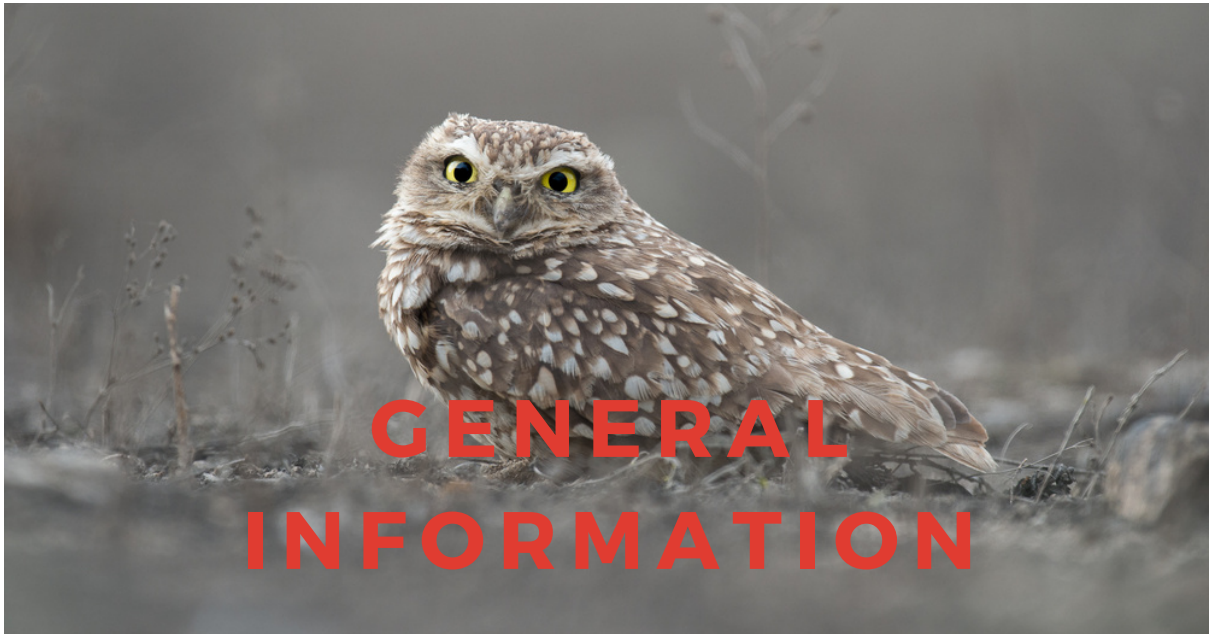




LOMAS DE LACHAY

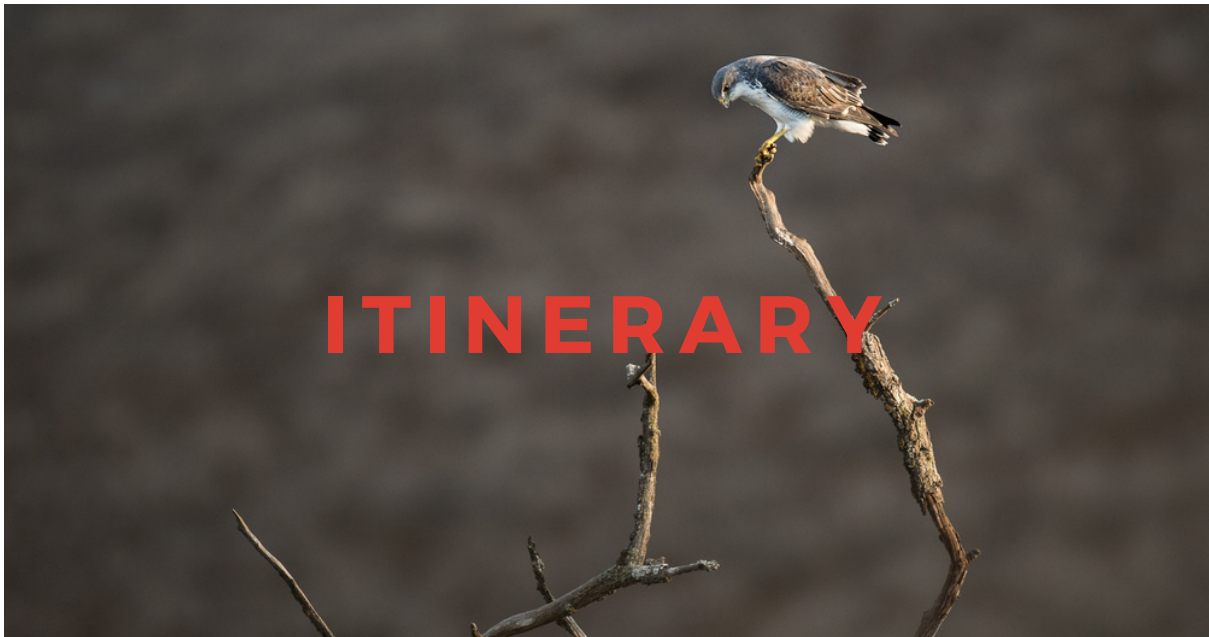
BIRDING & PHOTOGRAPHY TOUR

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Located in one of the driest deserts in the world, the Lomas de Lachay Reserve has a truly unique ecosystem whose principal source of moisture is fog from the ocean. The reserve support severe drought conditions in summer (December to May) and enjoy the moisture from heavy fog in the winter (June to November). The humid conditions during the wet season allows the extraordinary growth of seasonal vegetation and even small patches of forest in the area.

FOUR ENDEMIC BIRDS CAN BE FOUND IN THIS RESERVE: COASTAL MINER, THICK-BILLED MINER, RAIMONDI'S YELLOW-FINCH AND CACTUS CANASTERO.



We depart early in the morning towards Lomas de Lachay located 100 km (65 miles) north of Lima. On the way to the reserve we will scan the agricultural fields looking for Peruvian Thick-knees. After scoring this bird we enter the reserve, the landscape in this area looks pretty desartic, but this is the habitat of the endemic Coastal Miner and Least Seedsnipe.

Further on we will notice how the vegetation starts to appear on both sides along the road. Birds like the uncommon austral migrant Tawny-throated Dotterel, Yellowish Pipits, Burrowing Owls and Peruvian Meadowlarks prefer this open habitat with low vegetation. We will pay attention to the raptors here, as the Variable Hawks and Black-chested Buzzard-Eagles constantly soars above these plains.

Once we enter the main part of the reserve the landscape changes dramatically, mountains covered with dense vegetation and trees growing along the creeks, it's hard to imagine that the desert is only a couple of miles away. The trees in this valley are the place to look for the auricularis subspecies of Masked Yellowthroat, sometimes considered a separate species called Black-lored Yellowthroat.

We'll walk along a trail to a waterhole where flocks of birds gather together to drink as this is the only permanent water source in the reserve. It's not uncommon to see Andean Tinamous crossing the trail in this area early in the morning. Along the trail to the waterhole we can observe species like Mountain Parakeets, Peruvian Sheartail, Oasis Hummingbird, Band-tailed Sierra-finch, Collared Warbling-finch and the endemic Raimondi's Yellow-finch.

After walking these trails we'll drive to Quebrada Guayabito located on the dry side of the reserve. This area is home to the endemic Cactus Canastero and also Short-tailed Field Tyrant and Grayish Miner.

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The Peruvian coast is located in the middle of one of the driest deserts in the world, the Atacama desert. Despite that, during the winter months (June to November) the atmosphere is saturated with high levels of humidity due to the condensation caused by the cold Humboldt current. Rains are very uncommon here (except during “El Niño” events), but drizzle is present almost everyday during the winter months. Temperatures ranges from 30°C (86°F) during the austral summer (December to March) to 13°C (55°F) from June to November.



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