

VOLUME 17, NO. 3 Fall 1999

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Join us in the Wilds of Venezuela

Join BCI staff and renowned mammalogist Dr. José Ochoa on our 2000 encore trip to Venezuela! This one-of-a-kind natural history tour will begin on Venezuela's northwestern coast, where some 80,000 acres of peninsulas, keys, coral reefs, and mangroves await us at the Morrocoy National Park. Red-howler monkeys, crab-eating foxes, pacas, deer, flamingos, and a rich array of bats can all be found in this reserve. During the day, we will boat to frigatebird and brown booby rookeries then snorkel among coral and beds of turtle-grass. When night falls, we will sample the local bat fauna, including vampire bats (*Desmodus rotundus*) that roost in nearby Indio Cave.

Next we will observe rapidly changing ecosystems as we travel up the slopes of the Coastal Mountain Range to the 270,000-acre Henry Pittier National Park. More than 500 species of birds live in or migrate through this region each year, choosing from damp cloud forests, arid savannas, and shrubby deciduous forests to supply their food or shelter. The bat diversity is no less stunning, with more than 50 species, including the omnivorous spear-nosed bat (*Phyllostomus hastatus*) with a wingspan of nearly two feet!

Southwest of the buzzing metropolis of Caracas lies Guatopo National Park, our final site on the tour. This lush green enclave boasts trees over 100 feet tall in a meeting of tropical and premontane forests. The 300,000 acres of preserved wilderness is a haven for jaguar, tapir, sloths, parrots, colorful snakes, and the occasional prehensile-tailed porcupine. We can expect to catch more than 15 species of forest bats here as well, such as the delicate sac-winged bat (*Saccopteryx bilineata*).

Don't miss this unforgettable wildlife bonanz. Make your reservation today!

March 25 thru April 1, 2000

Projected cost: \$2,365.00
(from Caracas, Venezuela)

For a complete itinerary and registration information, contact Cullen Geiselman at (512) 327-9721 or via e-mail: cgeiselman@batcon.org

Read about more bat trip opportunities inside!

BCI Founder's Circle tour of Botswana and Zambia on page 19.

Year 2000 workshop dates and details on page 17.



Day and night on BCI's 1999 Venezuela tour:



Top right: Founder's Circle members had an unexpected thrill helping a South American herpetologist capture, tag, and release this 19-foot anaconda. Working with bats certainly seemed easy by comparison. In total, we caught 31 species, including vampire and fishing bats. Above, Merlin Tuttle shows off a great fruit-eating bat (*Artibeus lituratus*), which we are likely to see again on our year 2000 tour.

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