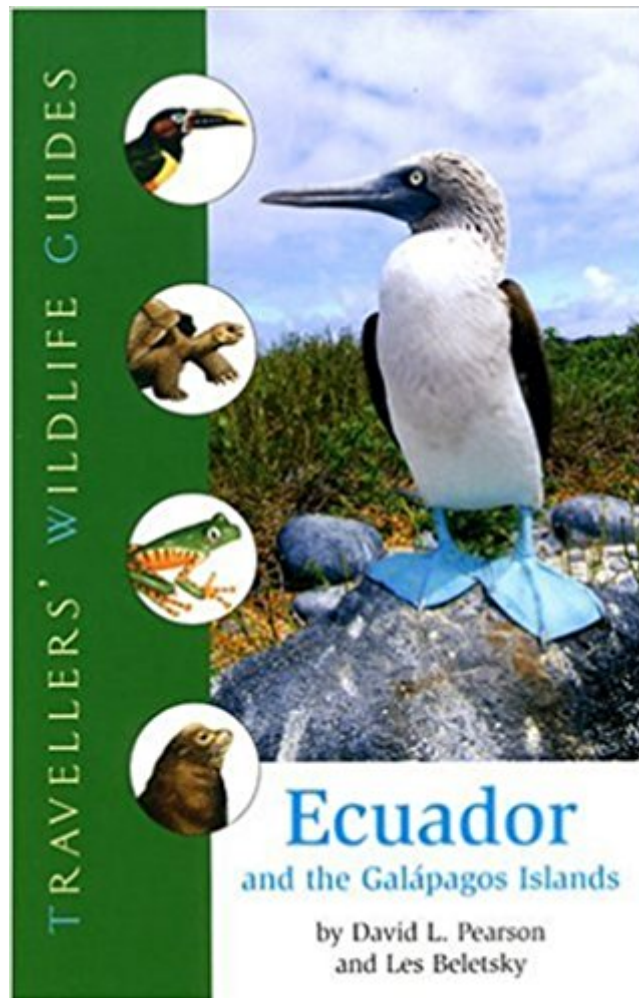




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# Travellers' Wildlife Guides Ecuador And The Galapagos Islands



## Synopsis

Travellers to Ecuador want to experience tropical forests and other stunning habitats and catch glimpses of exotic wildlife: toucans and parrots, monkeys and anteaters, frogs and toads, crocodiles and snakes. On the Galapagos Islands, curious visitors want to see with their own eyes the exotic, unique, tame wildlife that stimulated Charles Darwin to formulate the theory of evolution. In this book is all the information you need to find, identify, and learn about Ecuador's magnificent animal life. The authors, professional biologists, selected for color illustrations more than 500 of Ecuador's most common insects, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals -- the species you are most likely to see. In one easy-to-carry, entertainingly written, beautifully illustrated book, you will have as constant companion on your journey: - Identifying and location information on the most frequently spotted animals - Up-to-date information on the ecology, behavior, and conservation of the families of animals to which the pictured species belong - Information on Ecuador's habitats and on the most common plants you will encounter - Brief descriptions of the region's most frequently visited parks and reserves.

## Book Information

Series: Travellers' Wildlife Guides

Paperback: 475 pages

Publisher: Interlink Pub Group; 2 edition (May 26, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1566565308

ISBN-13: 978-1566565301

Product Dimensions: 5.6 x 1.3 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 18 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #25,822 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #2 in [Books > Travel > South America > Ecuador & Galapagos Islands](#) #7 in [Books > Travel > Central America > General](#) #10 in [Books > Travel > South America > General](#)

## Customer Reviews

"...these books would be my first choice as an introduction to the natural environments of these beautiful parts of the world. For those who enjoy well-illustrated field guides, these volumes are a visual treat."--COPEIA (2001)"Having recently returned from a wonderful trip to both areas, the arrival of this book just prior to departure could not have been better timed. Chapters deal with

essential topics such as the geography, habitats, climate, parks and nature reserves. This is clearly a well researched and easily read book and a very welcome addition to this relatively new series."--David Clugston, for SCOTTISH BIRD NEWS (December 2000)"They neatly fill a niche in the travel market, concentrating on the species most likely to be seen, but also covering a wide range of taxa. ...indispensable to all travellers interested in the natural world."--BTO NEWS"I have just returned from those Enchanted Isles and found Beletsky's guide omnipresent, dog-eared and tightly clutched in the sea-salted hands of many a visitor. I am surprised that the Sea Lions and Blue Footed Boobies did not have their own copies! This guide is a truly indispensable accessory for those fortunate enough to have visited those Islands of wonder and enchantment. It is also a great whetter of one's appetite! Other books have their strengths, but when push comes to shove, or in this case just going around..., one wants a thorough compliment to one's naturalist (to make all those notations when one gets back home, of course) and also a look into what is to come. Accurate and beautifully illustrated." --A Reader at .COM

Even though I'm a professional wildlife biologist, I've always found it difficult while travelling to identify animals I'm not familiar with and to get good, on-site information about them, unless I'm with an expert guide or willing to lug around several heavy books (a bird book, a mammal book, etc.). I've produced the Ecotravellers' Wildlife Guides to help solve this problem. The books in the series are aimed at travellers with an interest in animals, at people for whom some of the best moments of any trip to places like southern Mexico are unexpected encounters with birds and mammals, reptiles and amphibians, fish and other marine organisms. You will find in these books information on (1) common animals likely to be seen, (2) those that are commonly pointed out by tour-guides and tourist literature, (3) some threatened ones that are, for example, subjects of conservation attention, and (4) some that are of special ecological significance. The books, endorsed by the Wildlife Conservation Society, are real field guides, with extensive color artwork produced by some of the world's top wildlife artists. To give you an idea of the "depth" of coverage, the Tropical Mexico book (which covers the Yucatan Peninsula, Cancun region, Oaxaca, Chiapas, and Tabasco states) includes detailed information and color illustrations on 104 plates of about 250 bird species, 55 mammals, 95 species of amphibians and reptiles, and 150 coral reef fish and other marine organisms - the book truly covers most of the animals you might encounter in this large region. Additionally, initial chapters in each book introduce the country or region, its habitats and climate, its common trees and other plants, and describe conservation projects and ecotourism there, as well as major eco-attractions (national parks, nature reserves, etc.). My hopes are that these books will

be put to good use in the field by ecotravellers, will make trips more enjoyable, and will assist in conservation in a small way by helping to educate people about the wildlife and habitats in the countries through which they travel. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is a pretty useful book and the only one in its niche that I am aware of. Others have described the good points (quality plates depicting the wildlife and thorough discussions of individual species), but I wanted to point out a few flaws. First, for a book designed for travelers it is annoyingly heavy at 2.1 pounds. This meant that I left it at home when I took my trip. Second, it has a surprisingly brief discussion of Ecuador's overall geography and natural environment. A mere five and a half pages are devoted to this topic (an additional six and a half pages are devoted to describing specific habitat types, but most of this text is a user unfriendly list of descriptions of plant species associated with each habitat type). Third, the weight of the book is particularly annoying because it includes a considerable amount of generic information that seems to be taken from a textbook but seems unnecessary in a travelers guide. For example, there are sections discussing "What Is Natural History?", "What is Ecology and What Are Ecological Interactions?", and "General Characteristics and Classification of Mammals". Fourth, the detailed descriptions of all the species covered are in a different section of the book than the plates. This means that you have to flip back and forth between the plates and the text if you want to see the animals you are reading about. Finally, though much of the book is devoted to discussion and depiction of birds, the list of "References and Additional Reading" oddly omits what is indisputably the best current field guide to the birds of Ecuador: "The Birds of Ecuador", vol II by Robert S. Ridgely & Paul J. Greenfield (2001). In fact, it omits a reference to any field guide to Ecuador's birds but does puzzlingly include a reference to a field guide to the birds of Costa Rica.

I was so happy to find this book because for someone who is going into the jungles of Ecuador and not the Galapagos, or not just the Galapagos, there is almost nothing to use as a reference for wildlife you may encounter in the rainforest. But this book saved the day! It has many species and even plants. Keep in mind it is from 2010 and some scientific names have changed since then. Also, you might want to recheck other common names for some species. The book is kind of on the heavy side compared to most field guides. My only complaint is the book doesn't lay open on the table, making it a little difficult to study and flip back and forth. Other than that, this book is a life saver!!! 1 month until I'm out in the Rainforest!!! WooHoo!

It is very basic, covering a wide range of subjects. Such a wide range that unfortunately it didn't cover any of them particularly well. I ended up using it very seldom because it only had the most common of any one taxa. Also, the illustrations aren't very good. I wouldn't really recommend it, to be honest.

Tries to cover too much in one guide. As a result, some things are left out and many descriptions that are included are too brief. It would be better if Galapagos was a separate, more extensive book and Ecuador birds were separated from mammals and reptiles. It's not worthless as a guide, but could be much improved.

This is a heavy book to travel with. Much of it is background information and text, not pictures or the field guide portion of it. But I didn't see any better resources online if you want to have a guide for almost everything you're likely to see in Ecuador. I traveled to the and the Galapagos and referenced the book constantly, though I mostly left it in the camp or hotel instead of taking it out on hikes during the day.

I chose this book for my trip to Ecuador because it included non-birds, and I didn't know of a book that covered everything but birds, nor did I want to bring two separate guides. This book did include nearly all the birds, monkeys and other animals I saw in 25 days in several different ecosystems, though it could have been stronger in the area of frogs and invertebrates (spiders, ants, butterflies, snails...) and the segregation of Galapagos species into their own section was somewhat inaccurate, as several of them can also be seen on Isla de la Plata. (The jungle lodge I visited had several copies of this book on their shelves for visitor use, which I think can be considered an endorsement.) I came home perfectly satisfied with it, even though we had to rely on our naturalists for a few identifications. I'll admit to having cut out most of the text section and left it at home to save on weight, taking along only the color plates and brief habitat descriptions. Fortunately, the color pages do include enough region and habitat information on each entry to help distinguish similar species. Now that I'm home, I'll put it back together and enjoy reading the text as a way of softening the blow of leaving Ecuador. I can't wait to go back and explore more, and I didn't even try to cover the Galapagos!

Most of the wildlife-birds, especially, that we saw in three different eco zones of Ecuador- Quito,

Cloud Forest, Low Rain Forest, were not found in the book! Picked up a book in country, that was much better.

This is a gift for my granddaughter, a Biology major about to take her first trip to Ecuador. I glanced through it and it appeared to be more than adequate for a student tourist.

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