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Cheepers! Birding on a Budget (937) 974-0802 or (937) 862-4505
www.cheepersbirding.com
Cindy and Jim Beckman, Owners

WELCOME TO OUR NEWSLETTER

Welcome to Volume 1, Issue 1 of Cheepers! News issued by Cindy and Jim Beckman.

As many of you know, Cheepers! Birding on a Budget was formed shortly after we completed a successful March 2009 birding trip to Panama in search of a Harpy Eagle deep in the jungle of the Darien Province. Working with a partner in Panama, we offered a very inexpensive birding trip that almost guaranteed a Harpy Eagle chick in the nest. We ended up with a group of 13 and had a wonderful time birding the Canal Zone, traveling to the Darien, staying in a native Embera village for 4 days, and spending an overnight in tents near the Harpy nest. When the trip was over, several members of the group asked us, "Where are you taking us next?"

As we love birding and traveling to international birding locations, we decided organizing and leading birding trips to premier locations around the world would be a great way to spend our early retirement years. We formed Cheepers! with the goal of providing affordable options for international birding during challenging economic times. We offer birding trips to some of the world's best birding locations using expert in-country guides while staying at comfortable (but not expensive) lodges and maintaining a lower per-day cost than the vast majority of other birding tour companies.

Our newsletter will be used to inform you of current Cheepers! events, scheduled trips, trip report highlights, and special offers. We hope you enjoy what we provide.

Panama Trip Report – January 7-17, 2010

Cheepers! just completed 9 full days of Panama birding with 375 species seen and heard. 349 were seen by the group, four were seen by one person only and 22 were heard.

Our 12-person group birded all the Canal Zone and the Chiriqui Highlands prime birding spots including Pipeline Road, Plantation Road, Achote Road, the Ammo Dump, Summit Gardens, Summit Ponds, Old Gamboa Road, Panama City Metropolitan Park,

Panama City Mudflats, Madden Dry Forest, La Amistad International Park, Santa Clara, Fortuna Forest Reserve, Palo Seco Forest, and Cerro Azul.

The group also visited the Panama Canal Miraflores Locks, where we enjoyed a scrumptious buffet dinner, while watching ships transit the locks.

Advantage Panama Tours provided all ground transportation, lodging, meals, and birding guides.

Guido Berguido, owner and lead birding guide for Advantage Panama, was our guide for the entire trip. Guido is an outstanding bilingual birding guide and has excellent knowledge of all aspects of Panama (flora, fauna, history, current events, etc).

This was the 4th Panama birding trip for Cheepers! owners Cindy and Jim Beckman. We look forward to a return trip in 2011.

San Diego Bird Festival



Jim at the 7th Annual Georgia's Colonial Birding & Nature Festival in October 2009

Cindy and Jim will have a vendor booth at the San Diego Bird Festival on March 4, 5 and 6. Birding & Optics Expo exhibitor hours are 9AM to 8PM on March 4 and March 5 and 11AM to 3PM on March 6. The festival will be based out of the Marina Village Conference Center in Mission Bay.

Cheepers! will be promoting scheduled 2010 and 2011 birding trips to

Belize, Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Namibia, and South Africa.

In addition, details for possible birding trips to Australia, Columbia, Panama, and Peru are in the works and may be finalized in time for the festival.

Each San Diego Festival participant who registers for a Cheepers! trip by April 6, 2010 will receive a

free birding guide from Cheepers for their destination country and will receive an entry to win a Z-Bolt Laser Pen, with the drawing to be held on April 10, 2010.

See page 4 for a similar offer for birders who cannot attend the San Diego Festival.

CHEEPERS! - Costa Rica 2010 Updates

Cheepers! is accepting registrations for the following 2010 Costa Rica birding trips:

Join us for a 10-day trip to **Central Costa Rica** where we visit the most renowned birding sites in the central part of the country: La Selva Biological Station, Arenal Volcano, Monteverde and Carrera National Park.

This trip begins on July 16, ends on July 25, and is priced at \$2100 (the single supplement is \$345).

We will overnight at La Selva Biological Station on nights 1, 2 and 3, at the Arenal Volcano Observatory Lodge on

nights 4 and 5, at the Monteverde Cloud Forest Lodge on nights 6 and 7, and at Villa Lapas on nights 8 and 9.

You can depart for home on day 10 or join us for a 10-day visit to remote areas of **Southern Costa Rica**: Corcovado National Park, Wilson's Botanical Gardens, Las Cruces Biological Station and Los Quetzales National Park.

This trip begins on July 25, ends on August 2, and is priced at \$2182 (the single supplement is \$480).

We will overnight at Villa Lapas on night 1, at Marengo Lodge on nights 2,3 and 4 (with the

possibility of the day 3 overnight at the Sirena Station tent camp in the most remote section of Corcovado National Park), at Las Cruces Biological Station and/or Wilson Biological Gardens on nights 5, 6 and 7, and at Savegre Mountain Lodge on nights 8 and 9.

For those of you interested in combining the Central and Southern trips, we are offering a reduced price of \$3890 for the 18-day combined trip. This represents a \$392 discount. The single supplement for the combined trip is \$825.

Visit our website for detailed itineraries and registration information for these two trips.



Resplendent Quetzal

Possible at Monteverde

Probable at Savegre Mountain Lodge

The combined trip will cover the tropical wet forests in the Caribbean lowlands and foothills of the Central Volcanic Mountain range, the northern limits of the Northern Plain of Costa Rica, the Arenal Volcano National Park, the cloud forest at Monteverde, the coast at Carara National Park, the wilderness of the Oso Peninsula, the premontane wet forest of Las Cruces, and the highest mountains of the Talamanca Mountain Range with elevations ranging between 7,200 and 11,000 feet.

Truly a wide diversity of habitats and birding opportunities.

CHEEPERS!

- Brazil 2010 Updates

Cheepers! is accepting registrations for the following 2010 Brazil birding trips:

Join us for a 16-day trip to **Brazil** where we will bird in the Cerrado, Amazonia and Pantanal biomes.

We will visit Chapada dos Guimares National Park, Jardim de Amazonia, Cristalino Lodge, Pouso Alegre Farm, Puma Lodge, and Pantanal Wildlife Center.

This trip begins on October 2, ends on October 17, and is priced at \$4790 (the single supplement is \$500).

We will overnight at the Hotel Turismo in Chapada on nights 1, 2 and 3, at

Pousada Jardim de Amazonia on nights 4, 5 and 6, at Cristalino Lodge on nights 7 thru 10, at Pouso Alegre on nights 11 and 12, at Puma Lodge on night 13, and at the Pantanal Wildlife Center on nights 14 and 15.

You can depart for home on day 16 or join us for an 8-day visit to the **Atlantic Forests** of coastal eastern Brazil, where we will bird Ubatuba and the Itatiaia National Park.

This trip begins on October 17, ends on October 24, and is priced at \$2390 (the single supplement is \$250).

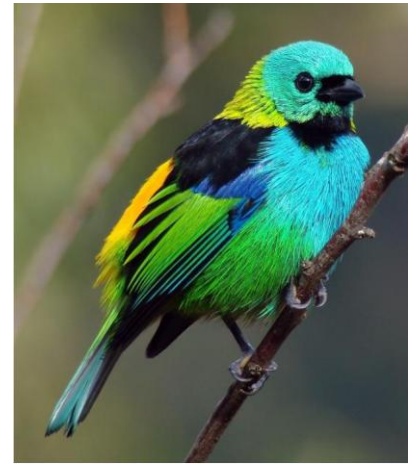
We will overnight at the Hotel Solar das Aguas Cantantes in Ubatuba on

nights 1, 2 and 3 and at Hotel Ype in Itatiaia National Park on nights 4 thru 7.

For those of you interested in combining these 2 trips, we are offering a reduced price of \$6890 for the 23-day combined trip. This represents a \$300 discount. The single supplement for the combined trip is \$750.

Visit our website for detail itineraries and registration information for these two trips.

At less than \$300 per day and including some of the best that Brazil has to offer (such as Cristalino Lodge), these tours are an exceptional value!



Green-headed Tanager

CHEEPERS!

- 2011 Confirmed Trips

For 2011, Cheepers! has confirmed trip dates to Ecuador in February and Belize in March.

The itineraries for these trips will be very similar to the Ecuador and Belize trips scheduled for 2010 but final costs are not yet available (see the website under 2010 Trips to

review the current 2010 itineraries). We are accepting registrations for these trips to allow San Diego Birding Festival participants the opportunity to take advantage of the free field guide for registrations received by April 6, 2010.

We are working on more

trips (including Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador and the Galapagos, Panama, Peru, South Africa and Namibia, and Australia and Papua New Guinea), but have not finalized itineraries, dates or costs. Each trip, as it becomes finalized, will be reported in a future Newsletter and updated on our web site.



CHEEPERS!

- Partner and Custom Tours

The world's the limit.

If there is a destination that you'd like to visit, one that is not listed on our website, contact us! With partners offering tours all over the world, we may be able to find just what you are looking for.

Check our website for exciting partner trips to

Namibia and South Africa.

We are also working with partners to schedule trips to Australia, Colombia and Peru. Please contact us if you are interested in these destinations.

Each trip, as it becomes finalized, will be reported in a future Newsletter and updated on our web site.

If you have a birding group of 6 or more, we can design the perfect trip for your group using the same strategies we apply when we organize our own tours – best sites, best guides, comfortable accommodations – for a lower per-day cost.

Where in the world would you like to bird next?

CHEEPERS! - Promotions and Discounts

Cheepers! is offering a free field guide to your destination country if you register for a Cheepers! trip by March 1, 2010. In addition, you will receive one entry to win a Z-Bolt Laser Pen, with the drawing to be held on April 10, 2010.

Cheepers! is offering a repeat customer discount of \$100 off the price of your next Cheepers! trip if you register at least 4 months prior to trip departure.

CHEEPERS!

Birding on a Budget

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We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.cheepersbirding.com

CHEEPERS! - Appreciation to our Customers

Cheepers!, founded during tough economic times, appreciates the confidence our customers have shown in their acceptance of our concept of affordable birding tours.

We scheduled four trips in early 2010; Panama Canal Zone and Chiriqui Highlands in January, Ecuador in February, Belize in March, and Panama Canopy Lodge and Tower in April.

All 4 trips sold out.

In addition, we were asked to develop a June custom California

Specialties tour for a group of 8 birders. We developed a custom itinerary that provides an opportunity for the group to find over 90% of their target species with a trip cost lower than the competition's standard tours which offered an opportunity for the group to find less than 50% of their target species.

Our goal to provide affordable birding trips to premier birding locations is working.

There will be some

exceptions to our concept of affordable trips. If a location provides exceptional birding, we may stay at higher-priced lodges (i.e. Cristolino Lodge in Brazil).

As a testimonial to the value and birding opportunities provided by Cheepers!, over half of the birders who participated in the Panama Harpy Eagle trip signed up for the February 2010 Ecuador trip.

Thanks to everyone who has supported us.

CHEEPERS! - About the Owners

Cindy and Jim Beckman have birded in 10 countries on 5 continents since 1995 and have established contacts with expert guides in many of the world's best birding locations. Both Cindy and Jim are members of the Board of Directors of the Dayton Audubon Society and have been supporters of the Ohio Young Birders Club since its inception in 2006.

Cindy is a retired public school teacher. She has

organized and led trips for groups of as many as 70 students and parents, as well as for smaller groups of friends, family, and birders to destinations such as Ecuador, Panama, Olympic National Park, Florida, Louisiana, southeast Arizona, and southern California. Cindy wrote about her experiences with young birders who she mentored during her 35 years as an educator,

earning her WildBird Magazine's 2007 "Birder of the Year" award. She is an avid photographer, eager to share images with fellow travelers.

Jim is a retired IT Project Manager who has been an avid birder for 15 years. He has traveled extensively for most of his adult life, and loves to share birding experiences with others.