



TECHNICAL REPORT

Techniques for Bird-watching Tourism in Nicaragua A Flight into the Future

SHORT COURSE II FOR TOUR OPERATORS & NATURE GUIDES

Reserva Privada El Jaguar, May 2006



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TECHNIQUES FOR BIRD-WATCHING IN NICARAGUA A FLIGHT INTO THE FUTURE

SHORT COURSE II FOR TOUR OPERATORS & NATURE GUIDES

By

Jerry Bauer
Nicaragua Project Team Leader
USDA Forest Service
Assistant Director, International Cooperation
International Institute of Tropical Forestry
Río Piedras, Puerto Rico

Wayne J. Arendt, Ph.D
Research Wildlife Ornithologist
International Institute of Tropical Forestry

and

Sandy Coria
Assistant Project Manager
Nicaragua/USAID Project

in collaboration with

CANATUR
CLUSA Nicaragua
Reserva Silvestre Privada Nebliselta El Jaguar

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Course participant observing birds using spotting scope.

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American Swallow-tailed Kite, a South-American migrant to El Jaguar Private Reserve.



Heliconia (Lobster Claw) flower, bright colors such as this attract birds.

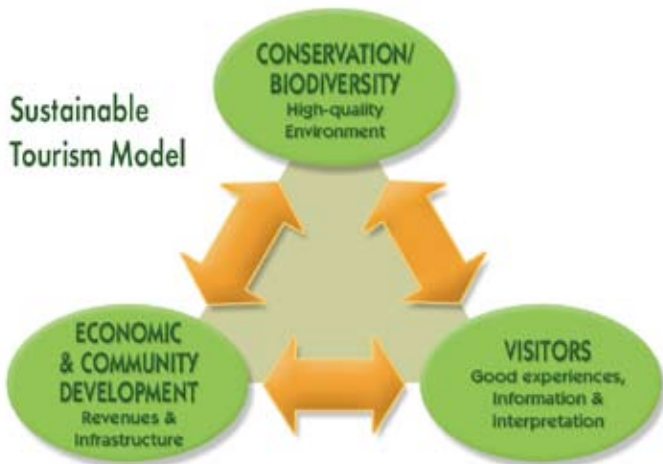
INTRODUCTION

USAID Nicaragua supports rural development programs to improve economic conditions and incomes of the rural poor. A key piece of this development strategy is to improve skills and knowledge of local tour operators and nature guides.

As part of USAID's goal of "Fostering Economic Growth from National Protected and Forested Areas" the USDA Forest Service is assisting the Government of Nicaragua by developing sustainable tourism training. The Forest Service is taking a sustainable tourism triangle approach that involves 1) Conservation of Biodiversity, 2) Economic and Social Development and 3) providing a Quality Visitor Experience. The outcome will be that the Nicaraguan Pacific Coast Region, and the Protected Areas in this region, will be recognized as a world-class tourism destination and serve as a model for sustainable tourism projects. By aligning outcome-based communications and interpretive planning with management goals, tourism will produce sustainable benefits for the environment, Protected Areas, local businesses, and locals and international visitors. The elements of this strategy consist of:

- Focusing on benefits as desired outcomes.
- Creating synergy between conservation/biodiversity, economic/social development, and quality visitor experiences. (*see Sustainable Tourism Model below*)
- Developing public-private partnerships between local NGOs involved with co-management, MARENA and the private sector.
- Working closely with INTUR and the tourism industry with all action items.

As part of this strategy, USAID provided financial support through the USDA PASA agreement (PASA No. 596-P- 00-01-00099-00) for US Forest Service advisors to design and teach this bird-watching short-course.



Instructors Cem Basman and Jerry Bauer (top), Vicky Basman (bottom).

OBJECTIVES OF THE TRAINING

- To present an overview of bird-watching tourism and how it can contribute to sustainable tourism development in Nicaragua.
- To provide enhanced knowledge and skills to Nicaragua tour operators and nature guides for development of bird-watching tours (Avitourism).
- To increase participant knowledge about bird ecology and identification techniques.
- To help create a working network between Nicaraguan tour operators and protected area managers and local communities to enhance bird-watching tourism opportunities.



Dr. Wayne Arendt lecturing participants about bird ecology.

TRAINING COURSE DESCRIPTION

A two-day training course titled “Techniques for Bird-watching Tourism in Nicaragua, A Flight into the Future” was held in Jinotega from 10-12 May 2006. The course was taught by a team of “Tour Guides” (instructors) from the US Forest Service, International Institute of Tropical Forestry and Indiana University and local biologist. Specific advisor expertise consisted of: ornithology, tourism planning, parks management, interpretation, marketing & communication, photography and graphic design (see Appendix 1 for a short bio on each Instructor). This course covered bird-watching/guiding techniques for tour operators and guides, equipment needed for bird-watching, marketing techniques, information on who participates in bird-watching, where to go in Nicaragua, and examples of economic impact from bird-watchers (see Appendix 2 for a course agenda). The course was attended by 22 participants consisting of local tour operators and small hotel and eco-lodge employees (see Appendix 3 for the participant list).

Classroom activities were structured around lectures on specific subjects, using previously developed training materials, manuals and visual aids. Several exercises were used to involve the participants in an interactive participation process. Visual aids were used to demonstrate specific techniques and show examples for Nicaragua and other countries. A CD was made with all course materials and given to the participants. This CD contains:

1. Course Agenda
2. Participant List
3. Technical presentations

4. Handouts in electronic format
5. Technical background information about bird-watching and economic impacts from this activity

In addition, one copy of the following materials was given to each participant:

1. Brochu and Merriman. 2003. Interpretación Personal, conectando su audiencia con los recursos patrimoniales.
2. The Ecotourism Society. 1995. Directrices para el Ecoturismo, una guía para los operadores de turismo naturalista. (The Ecotourism Society. 1995. Ecotourism Guidelines, for nature tour operators.)

The following books were used but not given to each participant:

1. Brochu, Lisa. 2003. Interpretive Planning.
2. Ham, Sam. 1992. Interpretación Ambiental, una guía para gente con grandes ideas y presupuestos pequeños. (Ham, Sam. 1992. Environmental Interpretation, a practical guide for people with big ideas and small budgets.)

A participant evaluation of the course was given when the training terminated. High scores, were given in all categories. One hundred percent of the participants rated the course as excellent (77%) or very good (23%). One hundred percent of the participants felt that the course surpassed (45%) or met (55%) their expectations; while 68% of the participants thought the course was sufficient in length, and 32% percent thought the course was too short. In their evaluations of the technical sessions 53% graded all sessions excellent, while 38% rated them very good and 9% good (see Appendix 4).





Dr. Jeff McCreary and Liliana Duriaux discussing bird identification.



Dr. Cem Basman demonstrating interpretation techniques for tour guides.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Some of the expected results from this workshop are:

- The bird list of all species found in Nicaragua (Lista Patrón de Aves de Nicaragua) will be updated by ALAS and reprinted. The private sector will provide half of the financing for this publication and USAID through, the PASA, will provide the other half. This bird-list was originally published in 2000 and with new scientific data collected in the last few years it is now outdated.
- CANATUR and ALAS agreed to work together and develop a Memorandum of Understanding between the two organizations to develop bird-watcher tours in Nicaragua.
- Tour operators now understand how bird-watching tourism can and will contribute to sustainable tourism development in Nicaragua.
- Tour operators have a better understanding of El Jaguar Private Reserve and have a new interest in working with them to bring tourists to this and other private reserves.
- Course participants now have enhanced knowledge and skills for development of bird-watching tours (Avitourism).
- Participant knowledge about bird ecology and identification techniques was increased.
- A network between Nicaraguan tour operators and protected area managers and local communities to enhance bird-watching tourism opportunities that was established during the first aviturismo course, held in march 2006 was strengthened.
- During course field activities participants discovered three new bird species for the Jaguar reserve.



Biologist Marvin Torrez removing bird from mist net.



Course instructors Marvin Torrez and Sergio Vilchez during classroom instruction.



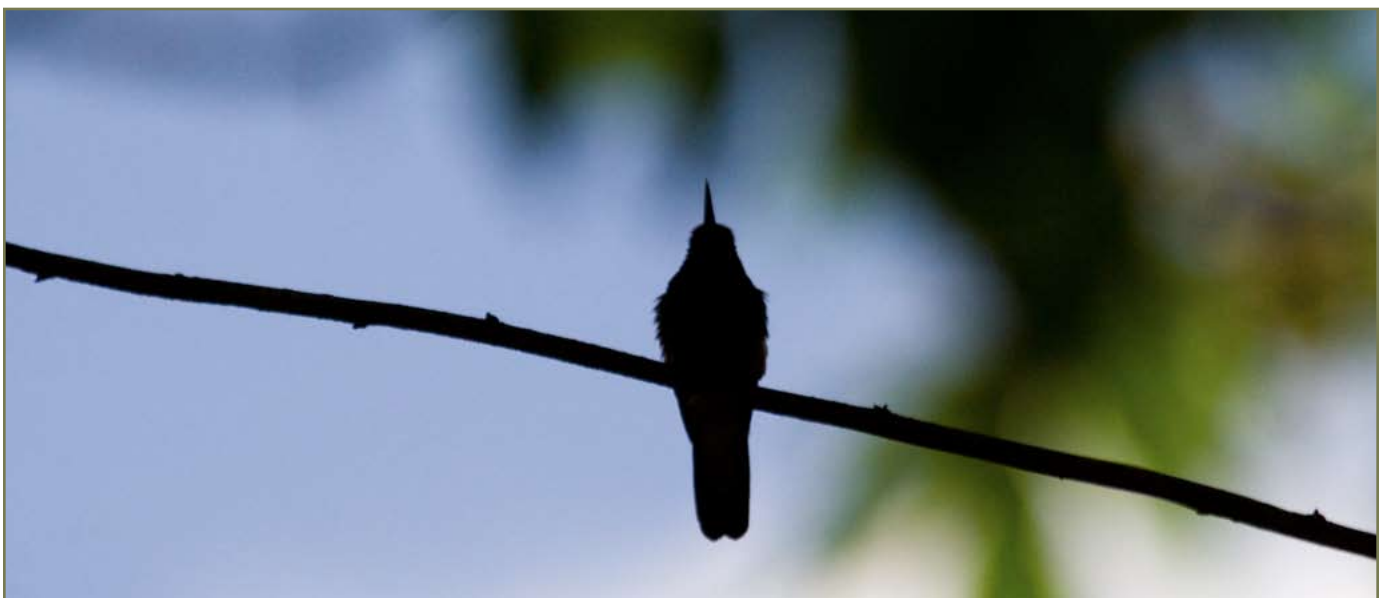
Local guide Jhonny attending class session.



Instructor Jerry Bauer at closing session.

PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

- Me ha parecido super interesante, muy organizado y sobre todo muy productivo, aprendí muchas cosas nuevas, tuve experiencias totalmente nuevas y me sentí muy motivada durante casi todo el tiempo.
- Estos talleres son muy importantes también por el intercambio de conocimiento y conectividad en el negocio (turismo).
- Excelente, creo que abre un gran abanico de preguntas relacionadas al futuro del aviturismo en Nicaragua y nos da el ABC sobre el tema.
- Gracias por estar interesados en el desarrollo del turismo en nuestro País, en nombre de todos los “Nicas” mil gracias a todos.
- Ha sido una experiencia increíble tanto para mi como para la mayoría de mis compañeros. Sigán así, Nicaragua se los agradece al igual que yo. Gracias.
- Todo estaba muy bueno, me encanto y también me gustó como creen en Nicaragua y nosotros los nicaragüenses. Muchas Gracias.
- Pienso que debe haber una continuación de esto con nuevos enfoques, pero antes que nada los felicito por esta iniciativa, todo a mi criterio estuvo bien, puede extenderse un poco más.





Dr. Wayne Arendt

Wildlife Scientist, USDA-Forest Service, International Institute of Tropical Forestry.

Dr. Arendt is an ornithologist with more than 35 years of experienced conducting research in Latin America and the Caribbean. He has more than 100 scientific articles about bird ecology and behavior.



Dr. Cem Basman

Assistant Professor, School of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Indiana University.

Dr. Cem Basman is an Assistant Professor with the Department of Recreation and Park Administration at Indiana University Bloomington. Dr. Basman teaches tourism, outdoor recreation and heritage interpretation at Indiana University. He is also a Certified Interpretive Trainer (CIT) and a Sanctioned Trainer for the Certified Interpretive Guide Program (CIG) from the National Association for Interpretation. Currently, he is conducting research in the area of sustainable recreation and tourism development in Nicaragua and Panama.



Lica Vicky Basman

Heritage Interpretation Consultant

Lica Basman operates her own consulting company providing expertise in the areas of heritage interpretation and recreation planning. She has many years experience working throughout the U.S. She is also a Certified Interpretive Trainer (CIT) and a Sanctioned Trainer for the Certified Interpretive Guide Program (CIG) from the National Association for Interpretation. She is also a member of the board of directors for the National Association for Interpretation.



Jerry Bauer

Scientific Biologist, USDA-Forest Service, International Institute of Tropical Forestry.

Ing. Bauer, Nicaragua Project Team Leader, is professional, conservationist with more than 30 years of experience in the Latin America and Caribbean region. Jerry provides expertise in interpretation and tourism promotion/marketing. He is an Adjunct professor with Department of Forestry, Southern Illinois University and an associate with the School of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation at Indiana University. Jerry is also a Certified Interpretive Guide Program (CIG) from the National Association for Interpretation.



Lica Sandra Coria

Lica Coria, Nicaragua Project Assistant, is an international consultant providing expertise in facilitation, project organization and management and tourism promotion/marketing. She has worked throughout Central America and the Caribbean with several international and local organizations.



Dr. Jeffrey McCreary

Dr. McCreary is a well-known scientist in Latin America, having worked more than 15 years in the region, mostly in Central America. He has taught at Nicaraguan universities, organized seminars and short-course, and conducted research and conservation activities in ten countries. Jeffrey was a US Fullbright scholar to Nicaragua in 2002.



Lic. Jorge Paniagua

Lic. Paniagua, Project Art Director and and Graphic Designer. His international experience includes several European countries, Nicaragua, Panama, Jamaica. He is an expert designer for web, multimedia, calendars, books, posters, etc. He has taught graphic design techniques to universities, local NGOs, local government agencies and provided consultancies to Government of Nicaragua, GTZ, AID, UNDP, World Bank, and other international organizations.



Biol. Marvin Torrez

Biol. Torrez is the lead scientist conducting long-term avian research at the El Jaguar field station. Biol. Torrez is an expert bird-watcher and knows the avifauna of this region well.



Biol. Sergio Vilchez

Biol. Vilchez is the assistant scientist conducting long-term avian research at the El Jaguar field station. Biol. Vilchez is an expert bird-watcher and knows the avifauna of this region well.



Jhonny, Oscar, Moisés

Jhonny, Oscar, and Moises are local community member nature-guides who work with El Jaguar in the development of their ecotourism program. Each of them knows the natural history of the area and are expert bird-watchers. They are all self-taught, but learning more and more as they gain more experience.





Opposite page: Course participants learning interpretation techniques using local objects.

Yaosca Acevedo practicing her bird-watching techniques.

Course participants during field activities.



Day 1, Tuesday

- 3:00 – 5:00 pm Arrive and room check-in.
- 6:00 – 6:30 pm Dinner.
- 6:30 – 7:00 pm General course introduction, objectives, expectations, personal introductions, icebreaker – Guide Sandra Coria.
- 7:00 – 7:30 pm Introduction to El Jaguar Private Reserve – Guides Liliana & Georges Duriaux, owners.

Day 2, Wednesday

- 6:30 AM **Field Session #1** Early Morning Bird Watch.
Guides Sergio Vilchez/ Marvin Torrez / Dr. Wayne Arendt / Jeff McCrary / Local Guides Moises, Oscar, Jhonny
- 8:00 AM Breakfast
- 9:00 – 11:00 AM **Field Session #2** Introduction to bird monitoring techniques (mist netting).
Guides: Sergio Vilchez/ Marvin Torrez / Dr. Wayne Arendt / Dr. Jeff McCreary (handling birds, banding, equipment use binoculars, spotting scopes)
- 11:00 – 12:00 pm **Class Session #1** Birds: form, function, ecology, and identification. Guide Dr. Wayne Arendt
- 12:00 – 12:30 pm **Class Session #2** Nature and Wildlife-related Tourism – Guide Jerry Bauer
- statistics on birdwatching
 - statistics on nature tourism
 - expectations of tourists
- 12:30 – 2:30 Lunch
- 2:30 – 4:00 pm **Class Session #3** Equipment for birding – Guides Jerry Bauer / Dr. Jeff McCrary
- Ideas on type of equipment used- binoculars, spot scopes, tripods, cameras, playback & bird calls, field guides, site guides
- 4:00 – 5:00 pm **Field Session #3** Evening Birdwatch – Guides Sergio Vilchez/ Marvin Torrez / Dr. Wayne Arendt / Dr. Jeff McCrary / Local Guides Moises, Oscar, Jonny
- 5:00 – 6:00 pm Free.
- 6:00 pm Dinner.
- 7:00 pm Expert one on one discussions with participants.



IITF technical assistant Helen Cortes learning bird-watching techniques.

Field practice exercise



Day 3, Thursday

- 6:30 AM **Field Session #4** Early Morning Bird Watch – Guides Sergio Vilchez/ Marvin Torrez / Dr. Wayne Arendt / Dr. Jeff McCrary / Local Guides Moises, Oscar, Jonny
- 8:00 AM Breakfast
- 9:00 – 11:00 pm **Field Session #5** Introduction to bird monitoring techniques (mist netting) – Guides Sergio Vilchez/ Marvin Torrez / Dr. Wayne Arendt (handling birds, banding, Equipment use (binoculars, spotting scopes)
- 11:00 – 12:30 pm **Class Session #4** How, Where, When, Why of bird-watching, Guide - Dr. Jeff McCrary
- Working with bird-watchers
 - Important birds for your site
 - Where to bird-watch in Nicaragua
- Class Session #5** Marketing bird-watching Tours, Guides - Jerry Bauer / Sandy Coria / Jorge Paniagua.
- Class Session #6** Profile of a bird-watcher, Guides - Jerry Bauer / Sandy Coria
- 12:30 – 2:30 pm Lunch
- 2:30 – 5:00 pm **Class Session #7** Heritage Interpretation, Guides - Cem Basman / Vicki Basman
- 5:00 – 6:00 pm **Field Session #6** Evening Bird Watch – Guides Sergio Vilchez/ Marvin Torrez / Dr. Wayne Arendt / Jeff McCrary / Local Guides Moises, Oscar, Jonny
- 6:00 pm Dinner
- 7:00 pm Expert one on one discussions with participants



Day 4, Friday

6:30 AM	Field Session #7 Early Morning Bird Watch – Guides Sergio Vilchez/ Marvin Torrez / Dr. Wayne Arendt / Dr. Jeff McCrary / Local Guides Moises, Oscar, Jonny
8:00 AM	Breakfast
9:00 AM	Depart

Technical Presentations (audio-visual)

1	Birds, Form, Function, Ecology, and Identification Synopsis	Dr. Wayne Arendt
2	Nature and Wildlife-related Tourism, Why is it Important?	Jerry Bauer
3	Bird-watching Equipment, for the Well-equipped Bird-watcher	Jerry Bauer / Sandy Coria
4	Bird-watching Tourism, Who, What, When, Where, and Why	Dr. Jeff McCrary
5	Marketing Ecotourism	Jerry Bauer, Sandy Coria, Jorge Paniagua
6	Profile of a bird-watcher	Jerry Bauer / Sandy Coria
7	Thematic Interpretation	Dr. Cem Basman / Vicki Basman

Handouts (background information). PDF files given to participants

1	Why are Birds so Interesting
2	Mating Coloration
3	Economic of Birding
4	Binocular Basics
5	Birding Binoculars and Accessories
6	Chart of Binocular Specifications
7	The Advantages of Spotting Scopes over Binoculars
8	Heritage Interpretation
9	American Birding Association's Principles of Birding Ethics
10	Web-page References for Bird-watchers

Technical Information (background information) PDF files given to participants

1	The Economic Impact of the 2nd Annual Florida Panhandle Birding and Wildflower Festival.
2	Establishing a Birding-Related Business, A Resource Guide.
3	Birding in the United States: A Demographic and Economic Analysis, Addendum to the 2001 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, Report 2001-1.

APPENDIX 3

Training Course Participant List

	Nombre	Institución
1	Ma. Guadalupe Munguía	Desarrollo Turístico INTUR
2	Vianney de Carmen Fornos García	Momboturs
3	Yaoska Acevedo	Detour
4	Octavio Guerrero	ECOTOURS
5	Polle von Poppel	VapuesTours
6	José Jesús Aguilera	ALAS
7	Guillermo Bovadilla	Careli Tours
8	Guillermo Rocha	Shuvar Tours
9	Peter Arcia	Solentiname Tours
10	Enrique Jarquín	Solentiname Tours
11	Roberto Darce	Solentiname Tours
12	Gerald Duran	Solentiname Tours
13	Werner Schlienz	Solentiname Tours
14	Fidel Bustos	Outdoor
15	Roger Rodríguez	ICN Tours
16	Máximo Bonilla	Momboturs
17	Freder Ortega	Momboturs
18	Roberto Lumbí	Nica Adventures
19	Martín Soto	Soltours
20	Juan José Canales	ARAUCARIA
21	Alfonso Tapia	ARAUCARIA
22	Gilbert Aragón	ARAUCARIA
23	Donald Reyes	ARAUCARIA

SUMMARY OF BIRD-WATCHING COURSE PARTICIPANT EVALUATION (1 being lowest score and 5 being highest score)						
Evaluación por Sesión	Calificación					
	1	2	3	4	5	total
	poor	needs improvement	good	very good	excellent	
Avistamiento de Aves	0	0	5	7	10	22
Ejercicio de Campo (monitoreo y anillado)	0	0	1	8	13	22
Forma, Función, Ecología e Identificación de Aves	0	0	3	11	8	22
Turismo en la Naturaleza y Vida Silvestre	0	0	2	8	12	22
Equipos para observación de aves	0	0	2	5	15	22
¿Qué, cómo, cuándo y dónde?	0	0	1	7	14	22
Mercadeo	0	0	1	13	8	22
Perfil del Bird-watcher	0	0	1	11	10	22
Interpretación	0	0	1	6	15	22
TOTAL	0	0	17	76	105	198
PERCENTAGE	0%	0%	9%	38%	53%	100.00%

EXPECTATIVAS DE LOS PARTICIPANTES		
El Contenido de este Taller...		
Sobrepaso	10	45%
Cumplió	12	55%
No Cumplió	0	0%
TOTAL	22	100%

LA DURACION DE ESTE TALLER...		
Corto	7	32%
Mucho	0	0%
Suficiente	15	68%
TOTAL	22	100%

En general la calidad del curso fue...		
Excelente	17	77%
Muy útil	5	23%
Algo útil	0	0%
No útil	0	0%
TOTAL	22	100%



Group photo of course participants and instructors.

Apoiando el desarrollo econ3mico de las 1reas Protegidas
y 1reas de Conservaci3n a trav3s del Desarrollo de Turismo Sostenible

La C1mara Nacional de Turismo, USAID/Nicaragua y el
Departamento de Agricultura de los E.U.A. se permiten invitarles al

**Taller sobre Aviturismo y su importancia
dentro del Turismo Sostenible en Nicaragua**

- Ing. Jerry Bauer • Dr. Wayne Arendt • Dr. Cem Basman •
- Dr. Jeff McCrary • Lic. Sergio Vilchez • Lic. Marvin Torrez •

Reserva Privada El Jaguar • Jinotega • 9 de Mayo al 12 de Mayo

Favor confirmar su asistencia antes del d1a 20 de Abril:

Arq. Judith Acevedo judithturismo2000@yahoo.com / Sandra Coria sandracoria@mac.com

(Los gastos de alojamiento y alimentaci3n, ser1n cubiertos por el Comit3 Organizador. Ver anexo)



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**Apoyando el Desarrollo Económico
de las Áreas Protegidas y Áreas de Conservación
a través del Desarrollo de Turismo Sostenible**



**Aviturismo en Nicaragua
Un Vuelo Hacia el Futuro**

