

Panama Photography Trip Report 2009

By Arthur Morris



Long-billed Hermit, photo by Arthur Morris

Ten happy photographers joined Linda Robbins, our assistant Rich Garrett, and me for a great trip to Panama. We spent our first three nights at Canopy Tower (and our last four at Canopy Lodge. We spent a good deal of time working at Linda's killer hummingbird set-ups and a good deal more working with a local reptile and amphibian wrangler do macro at set-ups. In addition, we did have some success photographing perched tropical bird species (though that action was nowhere as good as it was when Linda and I visited in December 2008.

Included in the group were IPT veterans Joe Barranco, Jane Ellison, Geri George, Alejandro (who flew up from Chile), Patti Corapi, Eleanor Briccetti, and Bob Wilmschen (and wife Betty who served as our administrative assistant during the hummingbird sessions; her job was to keep track of the times and rotations. Hers was such an important task that she was offered several bribes.) Joining the veterans were Bob Lewis and wife Hanno and Peter Hawrylyshyn (whom Linda and I met on BPN). Peter, like Linda, is addicted to hummingbird photography.

You can get a pretty good idea of the fun that was had by reading the e-mails below.

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Artie & Linda - A quick thank-you to say how much I enjoyed the Panama IPT. The lodges were great and the photography was amazing. The hummingbird action at the RFDC rivaled the best sites I've visited in Costa Rica and Ecuador. Looking down at the sloths, toucans, and cotingas from atop the Canopy Tower offered unique photographic perspectives. The macro sessions (frogs and bugs) added another new dimension to our rain forest experience. It was, however, the nonstop instruction from both of you on technical details, set-ups, Photoshop tips and techniques that was most valuable. I couldn't have asked for more. Thanks again and take care. - *Peter Hawrylyshyn*

Artie, First of all, I loved the trip. It was the best hummingbird workshop I have ever been on. The reason of course was the photography of the hummingbirds and the great setups by Linda and Rich. There were a lot of subjects and I was always pissed when my hour was up! Linda's system is awesome. I have attended two other hummingbird workshops but using the long lens with the optical triggering of the flashes made this one great. I can't say enough about Linda! She is a very hard worker and will do anything to help you and to make it right. I was also very surprised and pleased that you both agreed with Mikie G's idea of suggestion to have an extra day of hummingbird photography even though it meant lots of time on the bus. It meant a lot of extra work for Linda and Rich and they both jumped on it. I would do this workshop again and I will only do a hummingbird workshop with Linda! The other reason I loved the workshop was the participants. I am not a "birder" but everyone never hesitated to help me find a bird or identify a bird. Plus, everyone was fun to be around. I made some great friends on this trip. All in all, it was an awesome trip. Linda is outstanding and her methods are the best. Rich knows his stuff and helped every time anyone needed it. The participants were great. I had a lot of fun. What more could you ask for? - *Joe Barranco*

Hi Arthur: I hope you are home by now and have had the chance to get a well-deserved rest after 2 back to back trips. For me Panama completely surpassed my expectations. After 10 continuous hours of editing together with Linda on the last day, I was left with a large number of pictures that have really pleased me as well as people that have had a chance to review them. Many thanks for a great trip, and if you have a chance, please convey my thanks to Linda and Rich for all of their efforts and positive energy. At this time, I would like to remind you to write down my name for the Galapagos 2011 trip. Best regards, *Alejandro Furman*

Later and love to you all and hope to see you again somewhere down the road.

Artie