



BIRDING

Home to more than 600 species of birds—including the keel-billed toucan, harpy eagle, blue-crowned motmot and endangered jabiru stork and scarlet macaw—Belize is a bird-watcher's Eden. The country is so forested that birders can sometimes spot up to 50 species in a single excursion. Top birding spots include:

Half Moon Caye Natural Monument

Established to protect the red-footed booby bird, this sanctuary on the southeast corner of Lighthouse Reef Atoll features bird-watching platforms for easy viewing.

- » LOCATION: About a two-hour boat ride from Ambergris Caye or Caye Caulker

Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary

Inland lagoons and swamps help support the resident and migratory birds of Belize in this sanctuary, which is home to the massive jabiru stork.

- » LOCATION: 30 miles northwest of Belize City in the Belize District

Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve

Home to rare bird species like the orange-breasted falcon and rufous-capped warbler, this 300-square-mile forest is a must-see.

- » LOCATION: South of the western highway in the Coyo District

Blue Hole National Park

The wondrous 25-foot-deep sinkhole surrounded by forests and hanging vines is the perfect setting to see keel-billed toucans and white hawks.

- » LOCATION: About 12 miles southeast of Belmopan on the Hummingbird Highway in the Cayo District

Five Blues Lake National Park

The park is within 4,000 acres of limestone hills and tropical forests, a natural habitat for 217 unique bird species. Location: On the border of Stann Creek and Cayo Districts

Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary

With the Maya Mountains as a majestic backdrop, this sanctuary and jaguar preserve is home to a large population of birds.

- » LOCATION: Off the Southern Highway in the Stann Creek Districts

Mayflower Bocawina National Park

There are 238 different types of birds in the 7,000-acre paradise, including motmots, great green macaws and toucans.

- » LOCATION: Off the Southern Highway in the Stann Creek Districts