

PHS Travels to The Amazon: Orchids of Peru

April 9 – 18, 2012

Dear PHS Members and Guests,

We invite you to join fellow PHS members for a once in a lifetime opportunity to travel to Peru in search of orchids, history and the breathtaking natural scenery of the Amazon Basin. Co-sponsored by the ACEER Foundation, the Amazon Conservation Association and West Chester University, we will travel from the sophisticated city of Lima to the remote research station of Wayqecha to explore the flora and fauna of Manu Cloud Forest from the only canopy walkway system in the cloud forests of the Andes. We will explore the sacred city of Machu Picchu and Cusco, the oldest continuously inhabited city in the western hemisphere. We will stay at a hotel that houses the world's largest native species orchid garden, and is alive with the color and motion of 15 species of hummingbirds and 108 species of butterflies. We will also be joined by local guides and orchid experts, and John Salventi of Parkside Orchids and Chela Kleiber of PHS will accompany our group.

Peru is home to over 2,000 species of orchids, with many more likely to be discovered. Orchids are the biological indicators of cloud forests and rain forests. With their complex life requirements they are one of the first plants to suffer from subtle changes in their environment, and thus they serve as potent indicators of unwelcome changes in nature. This trip will raise your awareness of the wild sources of this captivating plant, and change the way you look at orchids, and any life form, forever.

When you travel with us, or participate in any PHS program, you demonstrate your belief in the power of building communities and transforming lives through horticulture. Great organizations don't just happen; they reflect the loyalty and support of their members. Please join us on this wonderful adventure together!

Sincerely,

Drew Becher

President

Chela Kleiber

Senior Education Programs Manager

## **Day 1, Monday, April 9**

Travel from your getaway city to arrive in Lima, most flights arriving in the evening. We will stay at the Ramada Inn at the airport as we will leave early the next morning for our flight to Cusco.

*Meals – inflight*

## **Day 2, Tuesday, April 10**

Lima to Wayqecha

After breakfast we will return to the airport for our morning flight to Cusco. Our local guide and bus will meet us upon our arrival. Cusco is the oldest continuously inhabited city in the western hemisphere, distinguished by colonial Spanish architecture built upon the foundations of ancient Incan temples. We will return here in a few days, but today our bus will take us on a four hour journey through the Andes mountains to Wayqecha. Upon arrival at the site, there will be a short orientation before dinner. After dinner, there will be a short lecture focusing on orchid species of the cloud forest, with emphasis on those found in the Wayqecha region.

*Meals – Breakfast, box lunch on the road, dinner*

## **Day 3, Wednesday, April 11**

Manu Cloud Forest, Wayqecha

This day will be spent exploring the site and trails. This site, from top to bottom, straddles seven climate zones. Where the Andes meet the Amazon, a wealth of biodiversity marks the birthplace of the world's greatest river. The great river begins as a trickle of snowmelt on the 20,000 foot peaks of southeastern Peru, swells into a mountain torrent through Altiplano and cloud forests, and reaches the sweltering lowlands in meandering tributaries. Our site provides an unparalleled opportunity to see a wide variety of orchids and rare indigenous plants and animals in this cloud forest environment.

After breakfast the morning will be spent with our orchid guide, who will lead a moderately rugged hike from the lodge along Spectacled Bear Trail, and along some orchid transects where it is possible to see a diverse variety of orchids.

After lunch at the lodge, the group will go to the Manu Cloud Forest Observatory, the only canopy walkway system in the cloud forests of the Andes. This is a unique opportunity to view the forest canopy and species orchids that grow in the treetops. We will return at sunset. Alternately, you may choose to visit other trails at Wayqecha or simply relax this afternoon.

*Meals – Breakfast, lunch, dinner at the lodge*

#### **Day 4, Thursday, April 12**

Manu Cloud Forest, Wayqecha and Yucay

We will enjoy sunrise over the Amazon Basin, the world's largest wilderness. Looking east from the lodge we can see the Madre de Dios River. In the words of the great environmentalist, Aldo Leopold, "ever since some maps of South America have shown a short heavy line running eastward beyond the Andes, a river without beginning and without end, and labeled it the River of the Mother of God. That short heavy line... has always seemed the perfect symbol of the Unknown Places of the earth." We will depart after breakfast and travel over a magnificent mountain pass and descend into the Sacred Valley. Along the way we will stop for a boxed lunch. If time permits we will stop at the market in Pisac. After arriving in Yucay, the afternoon and evening will be on our own to relax or explore the small town.

*Meals – Breakfast, boxed lunch on the road and dinner at the hotel*

#### **Day 5, Friday, April 13**

Yucay and Machu Picchu

After an early breakfast we travel through the historic Urubamba Valley to Ollantaytambo, where we will transfer to the train to Machu Picchu, the Lost City of the Incas. The 90 minute train will take us to Aguas Calientes, Machu Picchu Village, where we will check into the Pueblo Hotel. This hotel is owned and operated by Inkaterra, a company recognized for promoting sustainable tourism in Peru for 30 years. According to the American Orchid Society, the grounds of this hotel contain the world's largest native species orchid garden that is open to the public, and also includes 155 native birds species, 15 species of hummingbirds alone, 108 butterfly species and more than 200 tree species.

After lunch we will join Inkaterra's biologist and orchid guide, Carmen Soto, for a two to three hour walk along the hotel's paths, including the orchid garden, to observe some of the hotel's 372 orchids in bloom. From the largest orchid flower in the world, the *Phragmipedium caudatum*, to tiny flowering specimens properly appreciated only through a magnifying glass, there are orchids to amaze both the newly inquisitive and the expert, including species new to science which were discovered on the hotel grounds. Dinner will be at the Pueblo Hotel.

*Meals – Breakfast, lunch and dinner*

## **Day 6, Saturday, April 14**

### Machu Picchu

After an early breakfast we will depart for the journey to Machu Picchu to view the sunrise. The topography, geology and hydrology of Machu Picchu create nine life zones, and contain a wide diversity of flora and fauna species. There are more than 1,000 species of orchids within the Sanctuary of Machu Picchu as well as a wide variety of ferns, begonias, palms, and bromeliads. The Sanctuary has many species of fauna as well, including the ocelot, spectacled bear, and a great variety of birds including the solitary eagle, the Andean condor, and cock-of-the-rock, Peru's national bird.

We will explore the architectural remains of plazas, temples, homes, cemeteries and more than 100 irrigated terraces that formed the structure for the Incan agricultural system. The day will provide an ongoing opportunity for discussions of Incan cultural traditions, including their agricultural and medical practices.

After our guided tour, you may hike from Machu Picchu to the Sun Gate, where the famous Inca Trail enters Machu Picchu Sanctuary. Along the way you may see *Epidendrums*, *Lycastes*, *Sobralias* and perhaps a *Phragmipedium caudatum*. The views of the Sanctuary from the Sun Gate are framed by mountains all around. You will also have lunch on your own, either in the Sanctuary or down in the town of Aguas Calientes, where there are many intimate restaurants from which to choose.

On our return journey from Machu Picchu there will be an optional visit to the INC museum and gardens. This will require a 20 minute walk along the railway to get to and from the museum. Those who choose not to visit the museum and gardens will return to the hotel. For those opting to go to the museum buses run continually between Aguas Calientes and Machu Picchu. Dinner will be at the hotel.

*Meals – Breakfast and dinner*

## **Day 7, Sunday, April 15**

### Machu Picchu and Cusco

After breakfast we will have time to relax and stroll the hotel grounds before we board our two-hour train trip to Ollantaytambo. We will be met by the bus to take us to Cusco, and will lunch at a restaurant on the way in the Sacred Valley. On the way to Cusco we will tour the textiles galleria and observe local artisans weave wool from alpacas and llamas, creating traditional woven rugs of Sassayhuaman, high above Cusco. We arrive in Cusco at the Hotel Libertador in time for dinner.

*Meals – Breakfast, lunch and dinner*

## **Day 8, Monday, April 16**

Cusco

After breakfast we will have a walking tour of the main squares of Cusco, the cathedral and nearby churches. If time permits, we will visit the local market. Lunch and dinner will be on your own. We will provide suggestions of shopping areas and other places of interest to explore during this free day.

*Meals – Breakfast*

## **Day 9, Tuesday, April 17**

Cusco and Lima

The morning will be on your own after breakfast, then we depart for the airport for our flight to Lima. We will be met at the airport and taken by bus to tour the city of Lima.

After the tour we will enjoy an early farewell dinner at Rosa Nautica, a restaurant on the pier in the Pacific Ocean. Late night flights leave this evening.

*Meals – Breakfast and dinner*

## **Day 10, Wednesday, April 18**

International flights arrive in the US.

### **Travel Notes:**

This trip takes place in the Andes Mountains. Elevations range from 8,000 – 12,000 feet. Travelers may experience challenges with altitude sickness, and hiking may produce shortness of breath. The trails at Wayqecha are moderately rugged and steep. This trip includes pacing for the altitude, but travelers are asked to wear good hiking boots.

The roads to Wayqecha include narrow dirt roads and steep mountain passes over high elevations.

Our lodgings are at four or five star hotels, except for Wayqecha, which is a research station in the cloud forests of the Andes. The accommodations at Wayqecha are in unheated, unisex cabins, with four persons sharing a bathroom. We recommend warm clothing and raingear.

## **Tour Conditions**

**Land arrangements:** Double occupancy: \$3,995 per person. There is a maximum of 14 participants. Single supplement: \$800 per person. Please note there is no single supplement for the two nights at Wayqecha as we will be housed in shared cabins. Price includes: all overnight lodging while on the trip at the hotels indicated; meals as noted on the itinerary including mineral water, sodas, coffee or tea, taxes and gratuity; admission to sites mentioned in the itinerary; guides as indicated all transportation within Peru including bus and driver gratuities, train and flights between Lima and Cusco. Fee does not include international airfare.

**Donation:** Fee includes a tax-deductible donation of \$200 per person, which will be used to support the programs of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.

**Registration:** A \$500 deposit is required to hold a reservation. The balance is due January 6, 2012.

**Refunds and Cancellations:** All cancellations must be made in writing and are effective upon receipt in our office. The following fees apply and are per person: \$100 from time of booking to 90 days prior to departure; \$350 from 89 to 61 days prior to departure; full penalty from 60 to 0 days prior to departure.

**Insurance and International Airfare:** We require travel insurance. **Please do not purchase insurance or airline tickets until the trip has been confirmed.** Please visit [www.squaremouth.com/20668](http://www.squaremouth.com/20668) for insurance information.

For more information, please contact:

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## **RESPONSIBILITY CLAUSE**

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and ACEER act only as agents with respect to all transportation, hotels, and all matters of reservations and tour operation. We and our agents accept no responsibility for loss, damage, injury, accident, delay or irregularity, expense or liability caused by the defect of any vehicle or negligence or default of any independent contractors, their employees, agents, or representatives. Nor do we accept responsibility for losses or delays arising from sickness, pilferage, labor disputes, machinery breakdown, quarantine, government restraints, war, acts of terrorism, weather conditions, or acts of God. All such losses or expenses shall be borne by the tour participant, as tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated and as described in this brochure.

We reserve the right to substitute services, features, and hotels of similar quality without notice. We reserve the right to cancel any tour prior to departure in which case the entire payment will be refunded without further obligation on our part. We likewise reserve the right to decline to accept or retain any tour participant at any time without being under any obligation to assign any reason therefore. In the event of the exercise of this right, we shall be under no liability to such person(s) except to refund such amount as our absolute discretion deems reasonable to attribute to the uncompleted portion of the tour. No refund will be made for the unused portion of any tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. Baggage is carried at the owner's risk entirely.

The tour participant agrees, on behalf of himself, his dependents, heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns, to abide by the above conditions and to release and hold harmless The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and ACEER, and any of their representatives from any and all liability for any delays, damage, loss, injury, or death occurring in relation to this tour.

Any payment constitutes agreement by the individual tour participant with the terms and conditions contained in this brochure.