

Heath River Wildlife Centre



Highlights

- Remote location on the Bolivian bank of the Heath River.
- Accessible in a day from Lima or Cusco.
- Macaw clay lick just minutes from the lodge.
- Canopy viewing platform.
- Mammal clay licks.
- Impressive biodiversity and list of recorded species.
- The only lowland 'pampas' accessible from Peru.
- Very comfortable lodge with good facilities.

Situation

On the east bank of the secluded Heath River on the border between Peru and Bolivia in the Tambopata-Madidi region.

Activities

Rainforest hikes, canoe excursions, macaw clay lick visit, lake visits, hike to the pampas, canopy platform, night visits to mammal clay lick.

Heath River Wildlife Centre is a 20-bed lodge located about 6 hours by boat from Puerto Maldonado on the east (or Bolivian) bank of the secluded Heath River. This river marks the remote Amazon-region border between Peru and Bolivia. The lodge is actually on the Bolivian bank and the spectacular macaw clay lick is on the opposite Peruvian bank. The lodge also borders two radically different ecosystems of rainforest and lowland savannah. Heath River runs through the heart of the **Tambopata-Madidi** reserve areas of Peru and Bolivia, a vast and largely inaccessible wilderness totalling more than 13,700 sq. km./5,290 sq. miles.

Heath River Wildlife Center is the only eco-lodge on this river. And it offers a spectacular large macaw clay lick which is incredible for a lodge that is reachable in six hours from a jet airport with daily connections to the outside world.

Only ten minutes by boat from the lodge, a comfortable floating hide just 30m/100ft from the lick allows you to witness one of nature's most spectacular displays ? a tumultuous gathering of brightly-coloured macaws and parrots. Visitors have seen up to 260 macaws there at one time, which makes it one of the

top five of the world's 100 known licks. The red-and-green macaw is the predominant large macaw on the lick and there are also plenty of the smaller chestnut-fronted macaws. Macaws visit the clay lick throughout the year, but they are seen in largest numbers from July to September. A trail grid with mapped fruiting trees allows easier tracking of the wildlife which includes 6 monkey species and 480 bird species. There are also healthy populations of tapirs. These huge nocturnal animals are regularly seen in and around the river and nearby lake and also at the mammal clay licks which are sometimes visited at night. There are also jaguars here although these are seen a lot less frequently - you'd be very lucky to see one! Capybaras, the world's largest rodent (weighing up to 55 kilograms!), are frequently seen along the river, and giant river otters frequent nearby oxbow lakes.

There is a viewing platform built at the top of a huge tree which gives you an amazing view over the jungle canopy. Getting up to it is quite an adventure as you climb a vertical steel-and-cable ladder, complete with safety harness and hard hats.

A really unique feature of a visit to the lodge is the only lowland pampas accessible from Peru. This is a different ecosystem and a place where large blue-and-yellow macaws go to roost each evening.

Heath River lodge consists of 10 double bungalows built in the style of, and using the same materials as, the local indigenous communities. Local wood, bamboo and palm fronds for roofing are used. All materials used have been sustainably harvested or brought in from distant areas. For example, the wood used in the construction is collected from the river as, each rainy season, hundreds of trees are washed into the river as it cuts its everchanging course.

Each bungalow has good quality foam mattresses and all beds have cotton sheets and quilts (best for hot tropical conditions). All the rooms are screened with insect netting and beds are furnished with individual mosquito nets. All bungalows are private and separated from each other and have private toilets (flush) and hot showers. The dining area is separate from the other facilities but close to all bungalows and the nearby kitchen area. Food is good, not gourmet, and uses a variety of fresh vegetables, fruits, grains and meats in the menu. The cooks are used to providing for vegetarian diets. The centre does not have any electricity in the rooms, but a generator provides electricity to the main building at key times of day and is available to recharge cameras and batteries.

A stay at Heath River Wildlife Centre can be combined with a stay at Sandoval Lake Lodge.





© Tribes Travel | www.tribes.co.uk | web@tribes.co.uk | 01728 685 971