



This stunning male Black-crested Coquette was one of 41 species of hummingbirds to be seen on the tour! (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

THE BEST OF COSTA RICA

LEADER: DANI LOPEZ-VELASCO

Our Best of Costa Rica tour was a great success. Birdquest has been operating tours to Costa Rica for many years now, and our knowledge of the country is probably unrivalled, as are our itineraries. At just twice the size of Wales, this little country has an impressive list of no less than 906 species, with the latest addition being a species we found during our tour! The many specialities only found in Costa Rica and Panama, good lodges, easy trails and overall great birding- certainly make this one of the most enjoyable birding trips in the world. This year, we recorded an impressive 507 species in just 13 full days of birding. There are too many highlights to list them all, but amongst others, we had great views of the scarce and often elusive Slaty-breasted Tinamou, several Jabirus, walk-away views of perched Barred Forest Falcon and Semiplumbeous and White Hawks, several Black Guans and impressive Great Curassows, Sunbittern, 4 species of Quail-Doves including mega views of the highly sought-after Chiriqui Quail-Dove, singing Lesser Ground-Cuckoo and very good views of the endangered Great Green Macaw. We were lucky enough to also see no less than 8 species of owls including Costa Rican Pygmy, Spectacled, Striped, Bare-shanked and Vermiculated Screech Owls. Costa Rica is a wonderful place for hummingbirds, and we certainly did very well with these little gems, seeing an impressive 41 species, including the endemic and endangered Mangrove

Hummingbird, plus excellent views of both near-endemic White-crested and Black-crested Coquettes and the delightful Snowcap. Resplendent Quetzals, one of the most stunning birds of the world, are always a favourite, and we had the chance to study several splendid males in detail. Always a welcome sight, Baird's Trogon, the tiny American Pygmy Kingfisher, Rufous-winged and Chestnut-colored Woodpeckers, the rarely seen Keel-billed Motmot, near-endemic Streak-breasted Treehunter and Ochraceous Pewee, the secretive Grey-throated Leafhopper, the scarce Bare-crowned Antbird, as well as Pied Puffbird and Northern Royal Flycatcher all showed well. Strange-looking Boat-billed Herons were studied at close range, a very cooperative Streak-chested (Spectacled) Antpitta gave the best possible views, as did 6 species of manakins, including lekking Long-tailed, Orange-collared, Red-capped and Blue-crowned. A couple of stunning male Turquoise Cotingas and a single male Snowy Cotinga were certainly highlights, as was the traditionally difficult Lovely Cotinga, of which we saw a brilliant male just outside of our accommodation. No less than 17 species of wrens were recorded, as were the 5 species of nightingale-thrushes that occur in Costa Rica. The highly sought-after Wrenthrush, or Zeledonia, skulking Black-faced Anthrushes and Silvery-fronted Tapaculos, beautiful Golden-browed Chlorophonias and huge-billed Nicaraguan Seed Finches also performed, and the rarely seen bamboo specialist Peg-billed Finch also gave very good and prolonged views, together with Volcano Juncos and Timberline Wrens. Excitingly, a California Gull found by us during the tour, near Tarcoles, has already been accepted by the Costa Rican rarities committee as a new addition to the country's list.

Our first morning of the tour began in the lovely gardens of Hotel Bougainvillea, where we began to familiarize ourselves with some common Costa Rican species, including Red-billed Pigeon, White-winged Dove, Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, Blue-diademed Motmot, Tropical Kingbird, Great Kiskadee, Clay-colored Robin (Costa Rica's national bird), Blue-grey Tanager and several Rufous-collared Sparrows. A pair of Greyish Saltators also showed well, while overhead, noisy flocks of Finsch's (Crimson-fronted) Parakeets shot past us. Surprisingly, our only Melodious Blackbirds of the trip were seen here.

After meeting up with our driver, Tacaco, we drove towards La Selva OTS, stopping en route at El Tapir reserve. Although now pretty much abandoned, the flowering shrubs around the parking lot attract several interesting hummingbirds. Within a few minutes, we had seen 8 species, including great views of male Black-crested Coquette, Snowcap, Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer and Green Thorntail. Our first great looking Keel-billed Toucans with their huge, rainbow colored, banana-like bills; Black-cheeked Woodpeckers and Thick-billed Seed Finches were also encountered.



Black-crested Coquette and Snowcap, both delightful regional endemics, showed very well on the first morning (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Moving on, we finally arrived at La Selva, a birder's paradise and one of the leading tropical research facilities in the world. As soon as we all checked into our rooms, we started birding, first around the entrance to the reserve, where surprisingly a Green Ibis didn't want to leave the track, and later on we ventured into

the real forest, birding from several well maintained trails. Amongst the highlights, a Ruddy Quail-Dove crossed the trail in front of us, good views of a Grey-chested Dove, several flocks of Olive-throated Parakeets, displaying Stripe-throated Hermits and a nice, brightly colored male Black-throated Trogon. Unfortunately, a careful study of the Grey-rumped Swift flocks didn't reveal the hoped for Spot-fronted, which is sometimes seen here. Woodcreepers were abundant, and we had our first views of Northern Barred, Cocoa, Wedge-billed and Streak-headed. A fruiting tree was packed with Masked Tityras and the only Black crowned Tityra of the trip also put in a brief attendance. Nearby, a pair of Cinnamon Becards gave good views, as did our first manakin of the trip, a beautiful male White-collared. Long-tailed Tyrant and Rufous Mourner were eventually seen too. Several species of wrens were logged, including noisy Band-backed, Stripe-breasted and Bay. A calling Green Shrike-Vireo was, predictably, not visible, but Chestnut-headed Oropendolas, Scarlet-rumped Caciques and Black-cowled Orioles were much more obliging. We also had outstanding views of a pair of Olive-backed Euphonias and also of a pair of Scarlet-thighed Dacnises. A showy pair of Great Curassows inside the forest was much appreciated, and after a short wait at a favoured spot outside of the reserve, we were lucky enough to have great views of one of the birds of the trip, a stunning Great Green Macaw which gave amazing flight views in the perfect afternoon light. The last hour of daylight was spent at some nearby grassy fields, where we had Giant Cowbird, several Red-winged Blackbirds, an all too brief Slate-colored Seedeater- a rarely seen species in Costa Rica- several Indigo Buntings including some nice males, and also our main target here, the near-endemic Nicaragua Seed Finch.



La Selva is probably the easiest place in the world to see Great Curassow (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

After dinner, we went for an owling session, but even though we heard Common Potoo, Crested Owl and Vermiculated Screech Owl, none of them cooperated by being lured into view.

The next day was spent again at La Selva, mostly targeting species we hadn't seen the day before. Great Tinamou, of which 2 birds showed extremely well, 2 more Green Ibis, a nice Sunbittern fishing at the river bank and several flocks of Orange-chinned parakeets were some of the day's highlights. It was a good day for trogons, with 3 Slaty-tailed, 2 Gartered and 2 Black-throated being seen. A fine Broad-billed Motmot gave good views, but sadly Rufous Motmot was only heard. Collared Aracaris were plentiful, and a pair of Cinnamon Woodpeckers were most welcome. Although it took a while, a well camouflaged singing Green Shrike-Vireo was, at last, found in a tree just outside the dining hall, and almost at the same time, we spotted a Pied Puffbird on a nearby tree. A male Fasciated Antshrike was also seen sitting on its nest, and a pair of territorial Western Slaty Antshrikes was studied at close range. Noisy White-ringed Flycatchers gave good

views from the bridge, and we had the chance to study the plumage and voice differences of both Yellow-olive and Yellow-margined Flatbills, while vocal White-breasted Wood-Wrens eventually gave satisfying views. Other species seen included Golden-winged Warbler, Green Honeycreeper, a pair each of Crimson-collared and Plain-colored Tanagers, our only Dusky-faced Tanagers of the trip, a flock of Black-faced Grosbeaks, a showy male Blue-black Grosbeak and our first Orange-billed Sparrow. After a lot of searching we eventually found 2 day roosting Vermiculated Screech Owls, and while doing so we also located a roosting cute-looking Mexican Porcupine. In the afternoon, we spent some time looking for the shy Olive-backed Quail-Dove, ending up having brief views of one near the trail. La Selva is probably the best place in the world to see the highly sought-after Snowy Cotinga, but for some reason it had proved very elusive in the weeks prior to our arrival. It was therefore a relief when a stunning male perched on a dead tree in front of us, much to the delight of everyone!



Trogons were abundant at La Selva, and both Slaty-tailed (on the left) and Gartered (on the right), plus Black-throated, gave great views (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

A quick visit to the grassy fields outside the reserve gave us much better views of Nicaraguan Seed Finch, and after some hard work, we eventually lured 3 White-throated Crakes into view. Just before dinner, a Short-tailed Nighthawk gave good, although brief, flight views at a stakeout near our accommodation.

We had a couple of hours in the early morning before leaving towards Arenal, and we focused on 3 important, although difficult, La Selva species that we had missed: Semiplumbeous Hawk, Slaty-breasted Tinamou and Blue-chested Hummingbird. In the end, it turned out to be a very productive and successful outing, seeing all 3 of them! First, the tinamou, which was calling near the trail and ended up showing very well for all of us. Next on the agenda was Blue-chested Hummingbird, and we briefly saw a male near its display area. And last, a Semiplumbeous Hawk was found sitting and continuously calling near the river. After good, albeit brief, views, it flew off and was soon lost. A nice male Rufous-winged Woodpecker in the station clearing was a welcome find too. Other good birds included 2 Great Curassows, 2 Great Green Macaws loudly calling above the canopy, a pair of Chestnut-colored Woodpeckers, Band-tailed Barbthroat and Purple-crowned Fairy, a calling Black-capped Pygmy-Tyrant, an obliging pair of Rufous-tailed Jacamars, Black-throated Wren and a small group of Red-throated Ant-Tanagers.



The elusive Slaty-breasted Tinamou, on the left, showing its bright red-colored legs, and Great Tinamou, on the right, were seen very well at La Selva (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

After an early lunch, we set off towards Arenal. In the last hour of daylight, we did some birding along the entrance road to our hotel, which resulted in great looks at a Fasciated Tiger-Heron fishing in a fast flowing stream, as well as a large group of Pale-vented Pigeons, a pair of Black Phoebes, 2 Grey-crowned Yellowthroats, a single Yellow-throated Euphonia and a group of Black-headed Saltators. At night, a Black-and-White Owl was seen calling just outside one of our cabins.



8 species of owls were seen on the tour, including this nice Black-and-white Owl (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

The next day, we awoke to heavy rain, which made birding around the grounds of Arenal Observatory Lodge somewhat difficult. Birds were less responsive under the rain, although after some persistence, we managed to track down most of our targets. A Barred Forest-Falcon shot past over the trail and a few Vaux's Swifts and White-crowned Parrots flew overhead. The verbain hedges attracted several hummers, including Scaly-breasted, Violet-headed, Brown Violetear, Black-crested Coquette, White-necked Jacobin, Violet-crowned Woodnymph and Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer. A Pale-billed Woodpecker perched nicely for us, and we encountered a few mixed flocks in which we enjoyed sightings of Plain and Streak-crowned Antvireos, Slaty Antwren, Sulphur-rumped Myiobius (S-r Flycatcher) and Black-and-White and Golden-crowned Warblers. Both Dull-mantled and smart looking Spotted Antbirds and Song Wren, uttering its weird song, eventually showed very well, and a female White-ruffed Manakin near our cabins was the only one of the trip. Other interesting species seen through the morning included Scale-crested Pygmy Tyrant, our first Brown Jays of the trip, several showy White-throated Thrushes (W-t Robins) and a couple of Black-faced Solitaires. Black-headed Nightingale-thrushes were thankfully very responsive and we had gripping views of them, but on the other hand, a singing Northern Nightingale-Wren didn't cooperate. Several tanager species were also seen including Emerald, Silver-throated and Bay-headed. Around the dining hall we also had a pair of Orange-bellied Trogons and a few Black-striped Sparrows. An all-too-brief Green-fronted Lancebill at its usual perch near the waterfall couldn't be relocated, despite waiting for its reappearance. This morning's real star of the show was definitely the stunning male Lovely Cotinga, which perched in the scope for 10 minutes, allowing us to have great views of this highly sought-after bird. This species is very scarce through all its range, and can easily be missed, although Arenal is nowadays one of the best places to see it.



Arenal is a great place to see antbirds, such as Spotted, on the left, and Dull-mantled, on the right (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

In the afternoon we birded another area, close to the lake, and were rewarded with sightings of the localized Keel-billed Motmot, as well as Long-billed Hermit, Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner, White-fronted Nunbird, Rufous Piha, Tropical Parula and Olive-sided Flycatcher. A pair of perched White Hawks gave excellent views, but despite hearing several Thicket Antpittas, light was fading quickly and we decided to try for them the following day. Once it got dark, we did some owling nearby, but the forest was quiet.

Again, heavy rain in the early morning wasn't of much help, although we recorded a few new birds, best of them being the scarce Bare-crowned Antbird. Apart from that, we also had a group of Grey-headed Chachalacas, Spotted Woodcreeper and an elusive Mourning Warbler. Thicket Antpitta is well known for its skulking habits, and unfortunately all birds heard in the morning were in very dense cover. Still, we worked very hard for a close calling one, climbing through a very slippery slope full of all sorts of spiky branches. After a while, the bird started to get closer and closer, but, sadly, even though it was just a few meters from us, the dense undergrowth of the particular spot where the bird was singing from prevented us from seeing it. It then started raining hard again, so we had to give up, but at least we left knowing we had tried as hard as we could possibly have. This is birding, and despite all your efforts, sometimes certain birds simply don't cooperate.

After having a picnic breakfast, we set off in the bus for the dry northwest. The lovely and very birdy Hacienda Solimar was our next destination, and after leaving our belongings in our rooms, we started birding around our cabins, adding several new species, including the Hook-billed Kite, Laughing Falcon, American Kestrel, a nice pair of Double-striped Thick-knees, a single Solitary Sandpiper, our first Yellow-naped Amazons (Y-n Parrots), 2 Plain-capped Starthroats, a pair of colorful Turquoise-browed Motmots, both Scissor-tailed and Brown-crested Flycatchers, White-lored Gnatcatcher and several Eastern Meadowlarks .



Both Turquoise-browed Motmot and Double-striped Thick-Knee are specialities of the dry northwest (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

In the late afternoon, we decided to visit some nearby salt pans. It was high tide and the light was excellent, so we enjoyed great and very close views of a nice assortment of waders, including many Black-necked Stilts, Semipalmated, Grey and Wilson's Plovers, "Western" Willets, Lesser Yellowlegs, Marbled Godwits, Surfbirds and Stilt Sandpipers. We also got to study in detail the subtle differences between Semipalmated and Western Sandpipers and Short-billed and Long-billed Dowitchers, side by side. Amongst the large numbers of Laughing Gulls we picked out several Royal Terns and single Elegant and Cabot's (split from Sandwich) Terns. At night, we went to a spot close to our lodge where Northern Potoo is regularly seen, but unfortunately, after half an hour without any response, we decided to give up and headed back to our accommodation, seeing a Nine-banded Armadillo on the way.

Early the next morning, we explored some forested hills close to our lodge, which produced many interesting species and various northwest specialities, including White-fronted Amazon (W-f Parrot), Cinnamon Hummingbird, several obliging Black-headed Trogons, a pair of Rose-throated Becards, plenty of Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, a pair of unobtrusive Greenish Elaenias, singing Banded Wren, several smart looking Rufous-capped Warblers, both Streak-backed and Spot-breasted Orioles, Scrub Euphonia, Blue Grosbeak and Stripe-headed Sparrow.

It was a very good morning for day-roosting owls, with excellent looks at a pair of impressive Spectacled Owls, a pair of Pacific Screech Owls, and best of all, a Striped Owl we found while looking for the Ground Cuckoo! Added to that, 3 Ferruginous Pygmy Owls were also seen, as well as a Lesser Nighthawk roosting on a branch. The highlight of the morning though was the singing Lesser Ground Cuckoo that performed exceedingly well, giving great scope views.



A pair of day-roosting Spectacled Owls, as well as a pair of Pacific Screech Owls, gave walk-away views at Solimar (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Next on the agenda was the open farmland around the Hacienda. This had been an extremely dry year, with no rain at all in the past several months, so the little water left was fully packed with birds. Our main target here, the huge Jabiru Stork, was quickly found, with no less than 7 seen well, although a bit distantly. Other species of note were a flock of more than 200 Black-bellied Whistling Ducks, many Bare-throated Tiger-Herons, Wood Storks, Roseate Spoonbills, Blue-winged Teals, (American) Purple Gallinules and American Coots. Our only sightings in the tour of Limpkin, Snail Kite, Harris's Hawk and Plain-breasted Ground Dove were also logged here. Mangrove Cuckoo was also heard, but unfortunately stopped calling before we could get on it.

By mid-morning it was already very hot, and we started heading towards a completely different place, the well-known, and hopefully cooler, Monteverde reserve. With an hour of light left when we arrived, we quickly set off for our first cloud-forest birding, and managed to get splendid views of a pair each of delightful Golden-browed Chlorophonias and Elegant (Blue-hooded) Euphonias. Ochraceous Wren, Slaty-backed Nightingale-thrush, Common Bush Tanager and White-naped (Yellow-throated) Brush-Finch were also added to our list. On the way back, a pair of Coyotes was seen extremely well as they walked along the road in front of our vehicle.

By dawn of the next day, we were all ready and excitingly waiting near the entrance to the reserve, for one of the most stunning birds in the world to show up, the mythical Resplendent Quetzal. Living up to our hopes, they performed just the way we all had wanted! We got terrific views of an adult male and a female feeding on small avocado fruits just a few meters from us. Wow, what a bird! The rest of the morning was spent walking various trails inside the reserve, where we had fabulous looks at a very responsive Silvery-fronted Tapaculo. One of the highlights of the morning was definitely the Barred Forest-Falcon that we found perched on a branch above the trail, spending more than 15 minutes staring at us just a few meters away. We couldn't have asked for better views of this shy species! A Pair of Black Guans showed very well too, as did an obliging male Orange-bellied Trogon and several Blue-throated Toucanets. A short wait at a favoured place produced brilliant views for everyone of Green-fronted Lancebill, and we had amazing views of the usually very shy Grey-throated Leaf-tosser near its nest. We spent some time searching through several mixed flocks which contained several specialities, including Red-faced Spinetail, Spotted Barbtail, Western Woodhaunter, Streak-breasted Treehunter, Slaty Antwren, Yellowish Flycatcher, Eye-ringed Flatbill, Mountain Elaenia, the tiny Ochraceous Wren, Mountain Thrush, Slate-throated Whitestart (S-r Redstart), Three-striped Warbler and delightful Spangle-cheeked Tanagers.



Typical view of a Resplendent Quetzal, here a male, in the cloudforest at Monteverde, with a Bromeliad on the left (Dani Lopez-Velasco)



We couldn't have asked for better views of Barred Forest Falcon (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Later we headed over to the famous hummingbird gallery. As usual the show put by the hummers was incredible, and we spent a fair amount of time admiring these incredible creatures. The usual suspects were all in attendance, with Green Hermit, Green Violetear, Magenta-throated Woodstar, Stripe-tailed Hummingbird, the endemic Coppery-headed Emerald, Purple-throated Mountaingem, Green-crowned Brilliant and the impressive Violet Sabrewing. Also in the area we had a pair of Highland Hepatic Tanagers, a Blue-diademed Motmot and some of us also managed to have brief views of a pair of highly vocal Black-breasted Wood Quails. While driving back to the hotel we also had brief views of an Olingo.



Magenta-throated Woodstar, on the left, and the endemic Coppery-headed Emerald, on the right, were on attendance at the hummingbird feeders in Monteverde (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

In the afternoon, we paid a visit to a nearby patch of evergreen woodland where our primary target was the regional endemic Chiriqui Quail-Dove. After some time, one was found right next to the track giving us mind-blowing views of this scarce species as it walked past us and eventually crossed the trail. Lekking Long-tailed Manakins were also a highlight for everyone. We also enjoyed sightings of several elegant, almost tern-like, Swallow-tailed Kites, a Bat Falcon perched on a dead tree, Band-tailed Pigeons, a Rufous-and-White Wren singing its heart out and giving good views, a skulking Orange-billed Nightingale-thrush and a Wood Thrush. Several White-eared Ground-Sparrows feeding on the forest floor made us lay on the ground in various funny and painful postures, before most of us finally had decent views of them. A good assortment of North American wood-warblers were also seen, including Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Green, Wilson's, Yellow and Black-and-White, plus Ovenbird.



The shy and rarely-photographed Chiriqui Quail-Dove and the lovely White-eared Ground Sparrow were seen very well in the lower Monteverde area (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

The next morning was spent at Santa Elena reserve. Sadly, no Three-wattled Bellbirds had arrived yet (they arrived very late this year, and later we found out we were a week or so early), but we had some good sightings nevertheless. Calling Highland Tinamous and Buff-fronted Quail-Doves were unfortunately a bit too distant to lure into view, but a covey of 15 Black-breasted Wood Quails that slowly crossed the track in front of us, one after the other, was a real treat. A brief Green Hermit was recorded, and finally, after hearing quite a few, we tracked down 2 singing Prong-billed Barbets. Other highlights of the morning included a pair of nest building Barred Becards, high in the canopy, several Northern Tufted Flycatchers, a single White-throated Spadebill, Olive-striped Flycatcher, a pair of very showy Ruddy-capped Nightingale-thrushes, a few colourful Collared Whitestarts (Collared Redstarts) and our first Sooty-capped Bush-Tanagers and Yellow-thighed Finches, as well as a small group of Central American Spider Monkeys and a single Alfaro's Pygmy

Squirrel. It was getting late, and we were soon on our way towards our next destination, Carara reserve, in the Pacific lowlands. En route, we made a few stops, which gave us opportune sightings of Tricoloured Heron, Grey Hawk, a first summer Franklin's Gull, Belted Kingfisher and Grey-breasted Martin.

Once we settled in our lovely hotel, we squeezed in an hour of birding before dark, seeing a soaring Zone-tailed Hawk, a gorgeous group of flying Scarlet Macaws, good views of a singing Riverside Wren, a Swainson's Thrush, several Northern Waterthrushes, a nice adult male Summer Tanager and, best of all, a stunning group of 2 males and 2 females of delightful Painted Buntings.

We spent most of the next day at Carara National Park, definitely one of the birdiest national parks in the Americas. First bird of the day was a calling pair of Spectacled Owls just above our heads while having breakfast at the hotel. After this good start we set off for the reserve. Over the next couple of hours, we had very good luck with most of the specialities. After some patient waiting, a pair a Black-faced Antthrushes decided to slowly walk around us, giving great views to everyone. At the usual place near the river we enjoyed full frame scope views of Boat-billed Heron, while nearby an (American) Purple Gallinule fed at the pool edge. Several hummingbirds were evident, including Stripe-throated Hermit, Band-tailed Barbthroat, Scaly-breasted Hummingbird, Purple-crowned Fairy and Long-billed Starthroat. A nice White-whiskered Puffbird revealed its presence by its high pitched call, leading to us enjoying very close views of it. We also had good luck in seeing a nice male Black-throated Trogon, our only Fiery-billed Aracari of the trip and quite a few Black-mandibled Toucans (split from Chestnut-mandibled). Antshrikes were abundant, with Barred, Great and Black-hooded all noted. Dusky and Chestnut-backed Antbirds, Dot-winged Antwren, Tawny-crowned Greenlet, White-winged Becard, Black-bellied Wren and White-shouldered Tanager were all seen too. Amongst flycatchers, the real star was a pair of nesting Northern Royal Flycatchers, with supporting cast including Bright-rumped Attila and Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher. Eventually, both Slate-headed Tody-Flycatcher and Northern Bentbill, uttering its strange call, showed well. As if we were watching fiery balls, a lek of actively displaying Orange-collared Manakins was definitely one of the highlights of the day. Several migrants, such as Yellow-throated and Philadelphia Vireos and the scarce Magnolia Warbler were also recorded.



Carara is a great place to see lekking Orange-collared Manakins (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

After lunch, we set off on our mangrove boat tour along the Rio Tarcoles estuary. We started upriver in the marsh and pasture habitat where we had good views of Boat-billed Heron, Collared Plover, Southern Lapwings and a single White-tailed Kite, as well as a migrant juvenile Peregrine Falcon. Overhead, a flock of Costa Rican Swifts were seen. A pair of Yellow-headed Caracaras perched on the bow of our boat and got a free ride for some time, giving great views. The tide was going up, pushing the shorebird towards the edges of the mudflats, and we picked Greater Yellowlegs amongst others.



Both Collared Plover and Southern Lapwing were recorded along the Tarcoles (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Eventually, we arrived in the estuary's mangrove habitat where we recorded Plumbeous Kite, Mangrove Vireo and several smart-looking Prothonotary and Mangrove (split from Yellow) Warblers. We saw no less than 5 species of kingfishers, at point blank range, including mega views of the tiny American Pygmy. The best bird of the afternoon however was certainly the highly localized endemic Mangrove Hummingbird. After waiting for more than half an hour at a favoured place, and when we were about to give up, a nice male came and gave good views near the boat. On the way back, a Collared Forest-Falcon was found on a dead tree and allowed us to have great views. After one of the best birding days of the tour, we all happily went to bed.



5 species of kingfishers were seen on our mangrove boat tour. Here, an American Pygmy on the left, and a Green on the right (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

We still hadn't seen Streak-chested (Spectacled) Antpitta, so right after an early breakfast we went to a particularly good area for it. It was only a matter of minutes before we heard one, and, after some searching, we ended up having mind-blowing views of this great bird as it sang from a log on the forest floor. A Great Tinamou walked in front of us for some time, a group of Muscovy Ducks was seen in the river, and a Charming Hummingbird proved to be our only sighting of the trip. One of the other highlights of the morning was the lovely near-endemic Baird's Trogon, of which 2 pairs showed exceedingly well.



This singing Streak-chested Antpitta performed superbly at Carara (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

So, with our homework done, we set off for a nearby patch of mangrove, to try to find a couple of mangrove specialities we had missed on the boat tour. Luckily, it didn't take long before Northern Scrub and Panamanian Flycatchers were located and seen at close range. With some time left, we decided to check the nearby Tarcoles beach. Out in the sea, lots of Magnificent Frigatebirds were following a fishing boat, and we managed to see several Brown Boobies mixed in. A large group of gulls and terns were roosting on the sandbar, mostly formed by Laughing Gulls and Royal terns, but some scanning eventually revealed 2 Franklin's Gulls and a few Elegant Terns. We were almost leaving when suddenly I picked out an odd-looking medium-sized gull in the middle of the flock. All medium-large sized gulls are rare in Costa Rica, so we moved a bit closer to have better views. The flock then took off, but luckily the gull was soon relocated and identified as a second cycle California Gull. We took several record shots to confirm the sighting, and, as I write this, the bird has already been accepted as the first for Costa Rica and Central America.



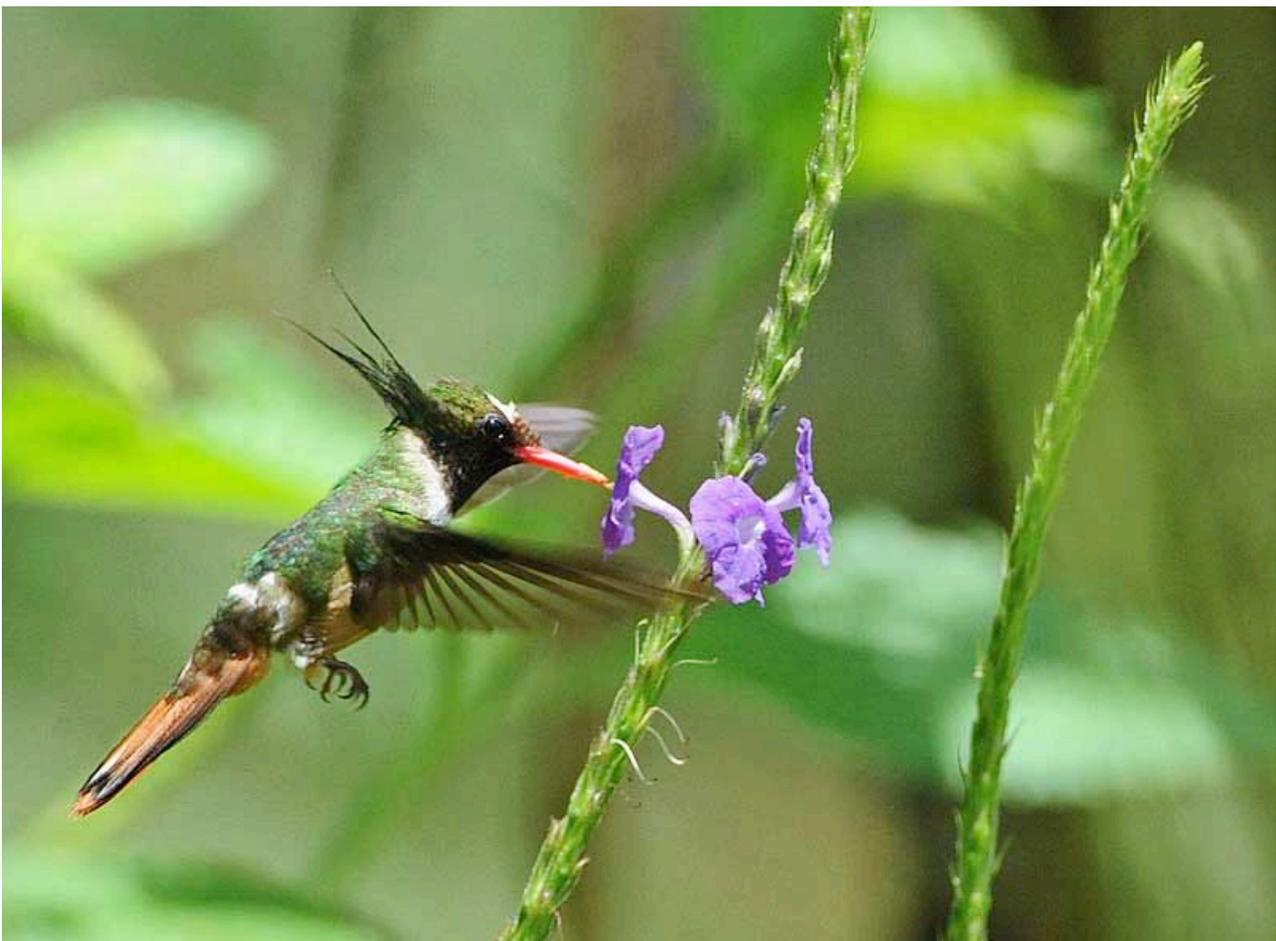
While checking Tarcoles Beach for terns, we found the first-ever California Gull for Costa Rica and Central America (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Our journey then took us south and east, with our final destination being Talari Lodge. Our target for the afternoon was Turquoise Cotinga, but, unfortunately, we encountered a car accident on our way (luckily, it was just a minor crash, with no injured people), which blocked the road for nearly 2 hours. This meant a late

arrival at the lodge, with little daylight left, and thus no Cotinga was seen. While having dinner at the lodge, we observed a Gray Four-eyed Opossum, a mammal tick for all of us.

The first couple of hours of the following morning were spent birding on the lovely and birdy hotel grounds, which resulted in several good sightings. The best bird, by far, was the brilliant male Turquoise Cotinga that posed in the scope, framed by perfect morning light. With the pressure off, we continued birding. A pair of Grey-necked Wood Rails was seen just outside our cabins, and 3 Scaled Pigeons sat quietly atop a tree. There were lots of swifts up in the air, with plenty of Chestnut-collareds offering good views. Other birds at the site included a nice pair of delightful Olivaceous Piculets, several Red-crowned Woodpeckers, a nesting Lineated Woodpecker, both Lesser and Greenish Elaenias, Paltry Tyrannulet, Orange-billed Nightingale-thrush, an early Yellow-green Vireo, lots of Tennessee and Chestnut-sided Warblers, Yellow Crowned Euphonias, brightly colored Green and Red-legged Honeycreepers, lots of Cherrie's Tanagers and a nice Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

After a good breakfast we headed off towards Los Cusingos, the home of the late neotropical ornithology legend, Dr. Alexander Skutch. Upon arriving, we had a look around the garden first, where the highlight was undoubtedly the male White-crested Coquette that put on a great show, feeding on the verbain hedges right next to us. This stunning near-endemic can at times be quite difficult to connect with, so it was a rare pleasure to have such great views. Also amongst the same flowers we got good views of a female Garden Emerald. Once inside the forest we came across a small antswarm, with Tawny-winged and Ruddy Woodcreepers, and Grey-headed Tanagers all in attendance. It was also a great day for manakins, with displaying Red-capped Manakins doing the "moon-walk" dance being a real treat, as were lekking Blue-crowned Manakins.



White-crested Coquette can at times be quite difficult to see. This fully-plumaged male gave fantastic views at Los Cusingos (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

A roosting Common Potoo we knew of was unfortunately flushed by some disrespectful photographers just a couple of minutes before we arrived, which was pretty annoying. After angrily explaining to them that no photo is worth disturbing a bird, we kept birding, seeing Rufous Piha, Sulphur-rumped Myiobius and Speckled and Bay-headed Tanagers.



Tawny-winged, on the left, and Ruddy Woodcreepers, on the right, put on a great show while attending an antswarm at Los Cusingos (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

We then continued our journey, making various stops along the way. On the first, we got our targets, Fork-tailed Flycatcher and Tropical Mockingbird, rather quickly. Then, we stopped to look for White-tailed Emerald, but sadly there were almost no flowers at the spot and no emeralds were seen. Our next stop along the Panamericana Highway was far more productive. Immediately upon stepping off the bus, we were treated to one of the country's best hummingbird spectacles with dozens of Fiery-throated, Volcano and Magnificent Hummingbirds and Green Violetears, crowded around several feeders at nearly arm's length. After everyone had enough of the hummer festival, we ventured into the nearby forest, where the highlight for all of us was the highly sought after and usually skulking Wrenthrush (or Zeledonia), of which 2 gave pretty good views, showing their orange crests. We also enjoyed good views of other highland specialities such as Sooty Thrush (Sooty Robin), Black-cheeked Warbler, Slaty Flowerpiercer and Large-footed Finch. A pair of Black-and-yellow Phainoptilas (B-a-y Silky-Flycatchers) was sadly only seen in flight.



Gorgeous Fiery-throated, left, and Magnificent Hummingbirds, right, were common at near Cerro de la Muerte (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Afterwards, we drove down into the Savegre Valley, stopping en route for Dusky Nightjar. Unfortunately it was very windy and it soon started to rain, so no nightjars were heard. We kept driving down until reaching a favoured spot for the scarce Bare-shanked Screech Owl. By then the wind had dropped a bit, and after some work, we had walk-away views of this fantastic owl. Well satisfied with our sightings, we made it just in time for a great dinner at one of the best hotels in Costa Rica, the famous Hotel de Montaña Savegre.



We had great views of Bare-shanked Screech Owl on our first night at Savegre (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

We started birding early the next morning around our cabins, seeing a good variety of species, including Dark Pewee, Flame-colored Tanager, Ruddy-capped Nightingale-thrush, Acorn Woodpecker and Slaty Flowerpiercer. A pair of lovely Long-tailed Silky-Flycatchers gave great scope views. After breakfast we were driven up the mountain by the hotel staff, and started birding along La Quebrada trail. We soon started picking up specialities. First, a busy mixed flock containing Spot-crowned Woodcreeper, Ruddy Treerunner, a pair of Buffy Tuftedcheeks, several Lineated Foliage-gleaners and a single Streak-breasted Treehunter. Several other flocks encountered had similar species, plus Barred Becard, Northern Tufted Flycatcher,

Yellow-winged and Brown-capped Vireos and Flame-throated Warblers. Collared Whitestarts and Sooty-capped Bush Tanagers were common, and while hiking up through huge and ancient oak trees festooned with moss and bromeliads, Black-faced Solitaires sang their ethereal songs. Black-billed Nightingale-thrush was our last of all five Thrush-nightingales that occur in the country to be seen, with a couple of nice encounters in the forest. A nice male Collared Trogon sat up nicely for us, and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was also seen. One of the star birds here was the scarce regional endemic Ochraceous Pewee, which also gave great scope views.



Collared Whitestarts and Blue-throated Toucanets were easily seen above Savegre (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Once near the entrance to Los Robles trail, we waited near the nesting area of a pair of Costa Rican Pygmy Owls. It was already quite late in the morning, and after half an hour there was no sign of the owls. Our hopes of seeing them were by then pretty low, until suddenly a bird started singing. It took a while but eventually we found it, and within seconds, both members of the pair were seen perched on a branch. We got fantastic views of these delightful tiny owls, and once we were all happy, we went down to the hotel for lunch, picking up a pair of Black-capped Flycatchers on the way. Back at Savegre, we enjoyed good views of several hummingbirds, including Scintillant and Stripe-tailed, as well as Grey-tailed Mountaingem.

We had a lot of things left to do, so we hurried up the valley towards the famous Cerro de la Muerte, where, amidst great scenery, it took us little time to find our 2 main targets, Volcano Junco and Timberline Wren, both showing very well near the summit. The enigmatic, little-known bamboo specialist Peg-billed Finch is only rarely seen across its small range, but this has been a good year for flowering bamboo, and we had fabulous looks at several males and females as they busily fed in the flowers together with Slaty Flowerpiercers.



The rarely-seen Peg-billed Finch proved easy this year at Cerro de la Muerte (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

With Barred Parakeet still missing and having only prior poor views of the Black-and-yellow Phainoptila, we decided to try a nearby location which is usually good for them. We spent the last 2 hours of the afternoon there, which resulted in flight views of the parakeets, but frustratingly only brief views of the phainoptilas. On the other hand, a pair of Golden-browed Chlorophonias showed very well, together with a Black-capped Flycatcher, several Sooty Thrushes and a small flock of Spangle-cheeked Tanagers. On the way back to the lodge we heard 2 Dusky Nightjars calling close by, but it was getting late for dinner, so were forced to head back to our accommodation.

The last morning of the tour was spent at Tapanti National Park. It's a pretty long way from Savegre, and we only arrived there by mid-morning. On the way, we made a stop to look for the difficult Buffy-crowned Wood-Partridge at a place where we've seen it in the past. This time, we heard them calling very close, but the spot was covered with thick vegetation and frustratingly, we couldn't get any views.

Once in Tapanti, we went straight to the best trail. It was too late for the usual Scaled Antpitta to show, but still, even though bird activity was rather low, we managed to see most of our targets. Both White-bellied Mountaingem and Black-bellied Hummingbird eventually showed well, and we also had brief views of a Green Hermit. A single Killdeer was our only sighting of this striking shorebird during the whole tour, as was a male Red-headed Barbet. Also new was Golden-bellied Flycatcher, of which a pair sat nicely on top of a tree. We also enjoyed good views of Prong-billed Barbets, Torrent Tyrannulet, Slaty-capped Flycatcher, Blackburnian Warbler and Tawny-capped Euphonia. Lastly, an American Dipper actively feeding on the stream pretty close to us was popular, and on the way back to the entrance we admired a Chestnut-headed Oropendola colony. The weather started to get really bad as we got close to our final destination, some marshy areas with scattered trees near Cartago. Luckily, we succeeded in seeing the localized White-throated Flycatcher, but it then got extremely foggy and windy, so Sedge Wren, our other target here, was missed.

Still, it had been a great last full day of birding, and we happily moved on towards San Jose, for our last night of the tour. We enjoyed a great dinner and spent some time reminiscing about the best birds of the trip. In the early morning, just before leaving, we squeezed in some last minute birding, which brought us our last new bird of the trip in form of an Orchard Oriole. We had suddenly reached the end of the tour, and before long we were all at the airport saying goodbye. It had proved to be a fantastic tour, with lots of good birds seen in great company. As Costa Ricans would say, Pura Vida!



Swallow-tailed Kites are always a delightful sight (Dani Lopez-Velasco)



2 pairs of Baird's Trogons, a range-restricted species classified as Near Threatened by Birdlife, were seen in the Carara area (Dani Lopez-Velasco)



This cracking male Long-tailed Manakin was seen at Monteverde (Dani Lopez-Velasco)



If not calling, White-whiskered Puffbirds, sitting motionless in the understory, like this one seen at Carara, can be quite difficult to see (Dani Lopez-Velasco)



Volcano Junco is a speciality of the Cerro de la Muerte area (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

Species which were heard but not seen are indicated by the symbol (H).

Species which were only recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (LO).

Species which were not personally recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (NL).

Species marked with the diamond symbol (◊) are either endemic to the country or local region or considered 'special' birds for some other reason (e.g. it is only seen on one or two Birdquest tours; it is difficult to see across all or most of its range; the local form is endemic or restricted-range and may in future be treated as a full species).

Conservation threat categories and information are taken from *Threatened Birds of the World*, BirdLife International's magnificent book on the sad status of the rarest 10% of the world's avifauna, and updates on the BirdLife website: <http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/home>

E = Endangered, **V** = Vulnerable, **NT** = Near Threatened, **DD** = Data Deficient.

Great Tinamou *Tinamus major* A total of 4 seen at La Selva and Carara.

Highland Tinamou ◊ *Nothocercus bonapartei* (H) One heard in the Monteverde area.

Slaty-breasted Tinamou ◊ *Crypturellus boucardi* Great views of one at La Selva.

Grey-headed Chachalaca *Ortalis cinereiceps* Several seen in the Arenal area.

Crested Guan *Penelope purpurascens* Seen on both slopes, but most common at La Selva.

Black Guan ◊ *Chamaepetes unicolor* 3 seen in the Monteverde area and another one at Tapanti.

Great Curassow ◊ *Crax rubra* 4 birds seen at La Selva.

Buffy-crowned Wood Partridge ◊ *Dendrortyx leucophrys* (H) Heard very close over Savegre.

Black-breasted Wood Quail ◊ *Odontophorus leucolaemus* Seen at Monteverde, and great views at Santa Elena.

Black-bellied Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna autumnalis* A flock of 200 at Solimar and a further 20 at Tarcoles river.

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata* Seen at La Selva and Carara.

Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors* Small flocks at Solimar and near Cartago.

Least Grebe *Tachybaptus dominicus* First seen at Solimar, and then 3 seen on a small pond near Cartago.

Wood Stork *Mycteria Americana* Seen at various places, with up to 15 at Solimar and around Tarcoles river.

Jabiru *Jabiru mycteria* Up to 7 adults of this impressive-looking species seen at Solimar.



Several Great Tinamous were seen very well on the tour (Dani Lopez-Velasco)



Large flock of Black-bellied Whistling Ducks at Solimar (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Green Ibis *Mesembrinibis cayennensis* A total of 4 seen very well at La Selva.



Green Ibis at La Selva (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

American White Ibis *Eudocimus albus* Small numbers seen in lowlands of both slopes: max of 50 at Tarcoles river.

Roseate Spoonbill *Platalea ajaja* Small numbers seen at Solimar and Tarcoles river.

Fasciated Tiger Heron *Tigrisoma fasciatum* Good views of one fishing on a fast flowing stream in Arenal.

Bare-throated Tiger Heron *Tigrisoma mexicanum* Widespread in suitable habitat; common at Solimar - 20+ seen.



Close-up of a Bare-throated Tiger Heron at Carara (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Boat-billed Heron *Cochlearius cochlearius* Several roosting birds seen in the Carara area.



Strange-looking Boat-billed Herons proved easy to see at Carara (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

- Black-crowned Night Heron** *Nycticorax nycticorax* The only ones of the trip were seen at Solimar.
- Yellow-crowned Night Heron** *Nyctanassa violacea* Up to 15 seen at Tarcoles river.
- Green Heron** *Butorides virescens* Small numbers seen at various places.
- Western Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis* Common in open country.
- Great Blue Heron** *Ardea herodias* Seen at several places, with up to 10 at Solimar.
- Great Egret (Great White E)** *Ardea alba* Fairly common at suitable habitat.
- Tricolored Heron (Louisiana H)** *Egretta tricolor* Highest day count of 10 at Tarcoles.
- Little Blue Heron** *Egretta caerulea* A few seen at various locations.
- Snowy Egret** *Egretta thula* Small numbers seen on both slopes.
- Brown Pelican** *Pelecanus occidentalis* Common in the Pacific, with 100 seen at Tarcoles beach.
- Magnificent Frigatebird** *Fregata magnificens* Up to 50 seen at Tarcoles beach.
- Brown Booby** *Sula leucogaster* 4 birds following a fishing boat at Tarcoles beach.
- Neotropic Cormorant (Olivaceous C)** *Phalacrocorax brasilianus* Fairly common in the lowlands near water.
- Anhinga** *Anhinga anhinga* Scattered sightings, with up to 20 at Solimar.
- Turkey Vulture** *Cathartes aura* Seen almost daily.
- Black Vulture** *Coragyps atratus* Common and widespread.
- King Vulture** *Sarcoramphus papa* 4 birds seen at La Selva.
- Western Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus* Seen at several places, including 5 at Tarcoles.
- Hook-billed Kite** *Chondrohierax uncinatus* 2 birds seen at Solimar and another one at Tapanti.
- Swallow-tailed Kite (American S-t K)** *Elanoides forficatus* Delightful raptors, our best views at Arenal.
- White-tailed Kite** *Elanus leucurus* One seen perched during our boat tour on the Tarcoles, and 1 one near San Isidro.
- Snail Kite** *Rostrhamus sociabilis* Great views of an immature at Solimar.



Immature Snail Kite showing its characteristic bill (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Double-toothed Kite *Harpagus bidentatus* Brief views of a bird at Arenal.

Plumbeous Kite *Ictinia plumbea* One bird seen in flight in Carara.

Sharp-shinned Hawk *Accipiter striatus* 1 bird seen in the Monteverde area.

Semiplumbeous Hawk ◊ *Leucopternis semiplumbeus* Fine views of a bird at La Selva on our last morning.

White Hawk *Leucopternis albicollis* A pair of perched adults gave great views at Arenal.



Arenal is usually a good place to see several species of raptors, including this nice White Hawk (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Common Black Hawk *Buteogallus anthracinus* 7 of the so-called “Mangrove Black Hawk” seen along the Tarcoles.

Harris's Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus* 1 bird seen perched on a tree at Solimar.

Grey Hawk *Buteo plagiatus* A total of 4 birds seen on the tour.

Roadside Hawk *Buteo magnirostris* Fairy common and widespread.

Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus* A few birds noted at several locations, with our best views near Tapanti.

Short-tailed Hawk *Buteo brachyurus* 3 birds seen, with fine views of a soaring bird near San Isidro.

Zone-tailed Hawk *Buteo albonotatus* Good studies of a bird in flight above our hotel in Carara.

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis* 3 birds of the local *costaricensis* subspecies at Savegre and Cerro de la Muerte.

Northern Crested Caracara *Caracara cheriway* Widespread, noted at several locations.

Yellow-headed Caracara *Milvago chimachima* Common at Carara; great views of a pair on our boat at Rio Tarcoles.

Laughing Falcon *Herpetotheres cachinnans* Fine views of a bird on our first afternoon at Solimar

Barred Forest Falcon *Micrastur ruficollis* Best were walk-away views of a perched adult metres away at Monteverde.

Collared Forest Falcon *Micrastur semitorquatus* An adult perched nicely for us at Rio Tarcoles.

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius* 1 bird seen at Solimar and another one near Tapanti.

Bat Falcon *Falco ruficularis* 1 bird in the Monteverde area and another one near Talari.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* 1 juvenile along the Tarcoles River.

Sunbittern *Eurypyga helias* Good scope views of a bird at La Selva.

White-throated Crake *Laterallus albigularis* 3 birds were eventually seen near La Selva.

Grey-necked Wood Rail *Aramides cajaneus* A pair gave brief views at Talari.

Purple Gallinule (American P G) *Porphyrio martinicus* Seen near La Selva and Carara.

Common Gallinule *Gallinula galeata* A single bird seen on a small pond near Cartago.

American Coot *Fulica americana* 3 birds noted at Solimar and a further 2 near Cartago.

Limpkin *Aramus guarauna* Good views of 3 birds at Solimar.

Double-striped Thick-knee *Burhinus bistriatus* Excellent studies at Solimar.

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus* Seen at several places, with up to 50 at Colorado Salt pans.

Southern Lapwing *Vanellus chilensis* 4 birds along the Rio Tarcoles.

Grey Plover (Black-bellied P) *Pluvialis squatarola* Highest count of 50 at Colorado Salt pans.

Semipalmated Plover *Charadrius semipalmatus* At least 100 were seen at Colorado.

Wilson's Plover *Charadrius wilsonia* 30 birds seen at Colorado.

Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus* A single bird seen on the pastures near the entrance to Tapanti.

Collared Plover *Charadrius collaris* A pair was seen at close range along the Rio Tarcoles.

Northern Jacana *Jacana spinosa* Common in suitable habitat in the lowlands, with at least 50 birds seen at Solimar.

Short-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus griseus* A flock of around 50 birds was seen at Colorado.

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus* See note.

Marbled Godwit *Limosa fedoa* 5 were present at Colorado salt pans.

Hudsonian Whimbrel *Numenius hudsonicus* Several seen at Colorado and along Tarcoles river.

Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca* A single bird seen near the mouth of the Tarcoles.

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* 3 birds were seen at Colorado.

Solitary Sandpiper *Tringa solitaria* A total of 5 birds seen on the tour.

Willet *Tringa semipalmata* Birds of the subsp. *inornata* seen at several Pacific Coast spots, inc. c100 at Colorado.

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius* Widespread.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* 20 birds were present at Colorado Salt pans.

Surfbird *Aphriza virgata* 5 were seen at Colorado.

Red Knot *Calidris canutus* A single bird found in a large shorebird flock at Colorado.

Sanderling *Calidris alba* Only seen at Tarcoles beach, where a group of 10 was noted.

Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla* Around 400 birds at Colorado, with smaller nos. at Rio Tarcoles mudflats.

Western Sandpiper *Calidris mauri* c500 birds at Colorado, with smaller numbers seen at Rio Tarcoles mudflats.

Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla* Over 50 birds seen at a couple of spots.

Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus* A flock of 15 was seen well at Colorado.

Black Skimmer *Rynchops niger* 30 birds at Colorado and a further 15 at Tarcoles beach.

California Gull *Larus californicus* See note.

Laughing Gull *Leucophaeus atricilla* Common along the Pacific Coast.

Franklin's Gull *Leucophaeus pipixcan* 3 first summer birds seen on the Pacific Coast.

Royal Tern *Thalasseus maximus* Over 200 birds seen at a few sites on the Pacific Coast.

Elegant Tern *Thalasseus elegans* 1 bird at Colorado and 2 at Tarcoles beach.

Cabot's Tern *Thalasseus acutiflavus* 1 bird seen at Colorado and at least 10 at Tarcoles beach.

Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon, Feral D) *Columba livia* Small numbers of feral birds seen at cities.

Scaled Pigeon *Patagioenas speciosa* Only seen at Talari, where 2 birds were seen.

Band-tailed Pigeon *Patagioenas fasciata* Small numbers seen at several places.

Pale-vented Pigeon *Patagioenas cayennensis* Largest count of 20 near Arenal.

Red-billed Pigeon *Patagioenas flavirostris* Fairly common.

Ruddy Pigeon *Patagioenas subvinacea* 2 seen very well at San Gerardo, others heard.

Short-billed Pigeon *Patagioenas nigrirostris* 4 seen at La Selva and Carara.

White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica* Fairly common and widespread.

Inca Dove *Columbina inca* Abundant in the dry northwest.

Common Ground Dove *Columbina passerina* Widespread.

Plain-breasted Ground Dove *Columbina minuta* Our only sighting referred to 2 birds seen at Solimar.

Ruddy Ground Dove *Columbina talpacoti* Fairly common.

White-tipped Dove *Leptotila verreauxi* A total of 13 birds seen on the tour.

Grey-chested Dove ◊ *Leptotila cassinii* Seen at La Selva and Arenal.

Buff-fronted Quail-Dove ◊ *Geotrygon costaricensis* (H) Heard at Santa Elena, and a probable flushed there.

Olive-backed Quail-Dove ◊ *Geotrygon veraguensis* One bird seen at La Selva.

Chiriqui Quail-Dove ◊ *Geotrygon chiriquensis* Great views of one in the Monteverde area.

Ruddy Quail-Dove *Geotrygon montana* Good views of one crossing the trail at La Selva.

Great Green Macaw ◊ *Ara ambiguus* (E) Fabulous views of one outside La Selva, and 2 more glimpsed in the forest.

Scarlet Macaw *Ara macao* Fairly common around Carara.

Finsch's Parakeet (Crimson-fronted P) ◊ *Aratinga finschi* Fairly common in the Central Valley.

Olive-throated Parakeet *Aratinga nana* 30 seen at La Selva.

Orange-fronted Parakeet *Aratinga canicularis* Several birds seen in the Northwest.

Barred Parakeet *Bolborhynchus lineola* A small flock of 5 seen near Cerro de la Muerte.

Orange-chinned Parakeet (Tovi P) *Brotogeris jugularis* Fairly common in the lowlands of both slopes.

Brown-hooded Parrot *Pyrilia haematotis* Several flocks seen around Arenal.

White-crowned Parrot *Pionus senilis* Widespread.

White-fronted Amazon (W-f Parrot) *Amazona albifrons* Several birds seen at Solimar.

Red-lored Amazon (R-l Parrot, Yellow-cheeked A) *Amazona autumnalis* Pretty common around La Selva.

Yellow-naped Amazon ◊ (Y-n Parrot) *Amazona auropalliata* Seen at Solimar and Carara.

Mealy Amazon (Mealy Parrot) *Amazona farinosa* Several seen at La Selva.

Smooth-billed Ani *Crotophaga ani* 3 birds seen near San Isidro.

Groove-billed Ani *Crotophaga sulcirostris* Common and widespread

Lesser Ground Cuckoo ◊ *Morococcyx erythropygus* 2 seen at Solimar, inc. great scope views of a singing bird.

Squirrel Cuckoo *Piaya cayana* A total of 8 birds seen on both slopes.

Mangrove Cuckoo *Coccyzus minor* (H) Heard at Solimar.

Pacific Screech Owl ◊ *Megascops cooperi* Superb views of 2 day-roosting birds at Solimar, on a 4 owl morning!

Bare-shanked Screech Owl ◊ *Megascops clarkia* A bird showed exceedingly well on the way down to Savegre.

Vermiculated Screech Owl ◊ *Megascops vermiculatus* 2 birds found on a day roost at La Selva.

Black-and-white Owl *Strix nigrolineata* Good views of 1 at Arenal and then 2 day roosting birds at Orotina square.

Crested Owl *Lophotrix cristata* (H) Heard only at La Selva.

Spectacled Owl *Pulsatrix perspicillata* Excellent views of a pair at Solimar, and then another pair near Carara.

Costa Rican Pygmy Owl *Glaucidium costaricanum* A nesting pair gave great views above Savegre.

Ferruginous Pygmy Owl *Glaucidium brasilianum* 3 birds seen well at Solimar.

Striped Owl ◊ *Pseudoscops clamator* A bird was found by chance in the morning at Solimar and gave great views.



This Striped Owl was found by chance while looking for a Lesser Ground Cuckoo! (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Common Potoo (Grey P) *Nyctibius griseus* (H) See note.

Short-tailed Nighthawk *Lurocalis semitorquatus* 1 seen in flight at dusk at La Selva.

Lesser Nighthawk *Chordeiles acutipennis* Great views of one on a day roost at Solimar.



This Lesser Nighthawk was seen on its daytime roost at Solimar (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Pauraque (Common Pauraque) *Nyctidromus albicollis* 15 seen at scattered places.

Dusky Nightjar ♦ ***Antrostomus saturatus* (H)** Heard near Cerro de la Muerte, but strong winds hampered us.

Chestnut-collared Swift *Streptoprocne rutila* 40 seen over Talari.

White-collared Swift *Streptoprocne zonaris* Fairly common and widespread.

Costa Rican Swift ♦ ***Chaetura fumosa*** Only noted at Carara, where over 30 were seen.

Grey-rumped Swift *Chaetura cinereiventris* Fairly common around la Selva.

Vaux's Swift *Chaetura vauxi* Recorded at several places.

Band-tailed Barbthroat *Threnetes ruckeri* 1 at La Selva and another one at Carara.

Green Hermit *Phaethornis guy* 1 seen briefly at Santa Elena and another one at Tapanti.

Long-billed Hermit *Phaethornis longirostris* Seen at Arenal and Carara.

Stripe-throated Hermit *Phaethornis striigularis* Up to 4 displaying at La Selva, with others seen also at Carara.

Green-fronted Lancebill *Doryfera ludovicae* 1 'LO' bird at Tapanti, then great views of one at Monteverde.

Scaly-breasted Hummingbird *Phaeochroa cuvierii* First seen at Arenal, then a few more around Carara.

Violet Sabrewing ♦ ***Campylopterus hemileucurus*** Up to 15 at feeders at Monteverde. Also seen above San Isidro.

White-necked Jacobin *Florisuga mellivora* A few seen on both slopes.

Brown Violetear *Colibri delphinae* A single bird was recorded at Arenal.

Green Violetear *Colibri thalassinus* Common at Monteverde and Savegre.

Green-breasted Mango *Anthracothorax prevostii* Just 2 seen at Solimar.

Violet-headed Hummingbird *Klais guimeti* 4 at El Tapir and at least 5 at Arenal.

Black-crested Coquette ♦ ***Lophornis helenae*** Great views of males at El Tapir and Arenal.

White-crested Coquette ♦ ***Lophornis adorabilis*** An adult male gave showed very well at Los Cusingos.

Green Thorntail *Discosura conversii* Singles at el Tapir, Arenal and Tapanti.

Garden Emerald ♦ ***Chlorostilbon assimilis*** 1 female at Los Cusingos.

Fiery-throated Hummingbird ♦ ***Panterpe insignis*** Common around Cerro de la Muerte.

Coppery-headed Emerald ♦ ***Elvira cupreiceps*** Several of these endemic hummers seen in the Monteverde Area.

Stripe-tailed Hummingbird *Eupherusa eximia* Seen in the Monteverde area as well as at Savegre.

Black-bellied Hummingbird ♦ ***Eupherusa nigriventris*** 3 birds were recorded at Tapanti.

Violet-crowned Woodnymph (Purple-c W, Blue-c W) *Thalurania colombica* Recorded at various places.

Cinnamon Hummingbird *Amazilia rutila* 3 were seen at Solimar.
Rufous-tailed Hummingbird *Amazilia tzacatl* Common.
Blue-chested Hummingbird ◇ *Amazilia amabilis* A displaying bird was seen briefly at La Selva.
Charming Hummingbird ◇ (Beryl-crowned H) *Amazilia decora* 1 at Carara was the only sighting of the trip.
Mangrove Hummingbird ◇ *Amazilia boucardi* (E) 1 male seen on the mangrove boat tour along the Tarcoles.
Steely-vented Hummingbird *Amazilia saucerrottei* 1 seen at Solimar.
Snowcap ◇ *Microchera albocoronata* 5, both males and females, seen at El Tapir.
Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer ◇ (Red-footed P) *Chalybura urochrysis* 2 at El Tapir and 1 at Arenal.
White-bellied Mountaingem ◇ *Lampornis hemileucus* 2 were seen at Tapanti.
Purple-throated Mountaingem ◇ *Lampornis calolaemus* Fairly common in the Monteverde area.



Purple-throated Mountaingem showings its iridescent throat and forecrown (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Grey-tailed Mountaingem ◇ *Lampornis cinereicauda* 3 seen at Savegre.
Green-crowned Brilliant *Heliodoxa jacula* Fairly common at Monteverde.
Magnificent Hummingbird (Rivoli's H) *Eugenes fulgens* Common around Cerro de la Muerte and Savegre.
Purple-crowned Fairy *Heliothryx barroti* 1 seen at La Selva and another one at Carara.
Plain-capped Starthroat *Heliomaster constantii* 2 were seen at Solimar.
Long-billed Starthroat *Heliomaster longirostris* 1 near Carara.
Magenta-throated Woodstar ◇ *Calliphlox bryantae* 4 seen at Monteverde.
Ruby-throated Hummingbird *Archilochus colubris* 2 at Hotel Bougainvillea.
Volcano Hummingbird *Selasphorus flammula* Fairly common around Cerro de la Muerte.
Scintillant Hummingbird ◇ *Selasphorus scintilla* 5 seen at Savegre.
Resplendent Quetzal ◇ *Pharomachrus mocinno* A total of 8 birds seen, with 6 at Monteverde and 2 above Savegre.



Resplendent Quetzal ranks amongst the world's best birds (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Slaty-tailed Trogon *Trogon massena* 3 gave good views at La Selva, with several more heard.

Black-headed Trogon *Trogon melanocephalus* 4 seen at Solimar.

Baird's Trogon ♦ *Trogon bairdii* (NT) 2 pairs gave excellent views at Carara. Also heard at Los Cusingos.

Gartered Trogon (Northern Violaceous T) *Trogon caligatus* Seen at La Selva and Arenal.

Black-throated Trogon *Trogon rufus* 3 birds seen at La Selva and another one at Carara.

Collared Trogon *Trogon collaris* Males seen well at Savegre and Tapanti.

Orange-bellied Trogon *Trogon aurantiiventris* 2 at Arenal and 2 in the Monteverde area. See note.



Male, on the left, and female, on the right, Orange-bellied Trogons (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

American Pygmy Kingfisher *Chloroceryle aenea* After much searching, 1 performed brilliantly at Tarcoles.

Green Kingfisher *Chloroceryle americana* Regular sightings.

Amazon Kingfisher *Chloroceryle amazona* A total of 4 birds seen on the tour.

Ringed Kingfisher *Megaceryle torquata* Several birds seen, including 3 at Rio Tarcoles.

Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon* 1 bird seen on the way to Carara and another one at Rio Tarcoles.

Blue-diademed Motmot *Momotus lessonii* First seen at Hotel Bougainvillea, then recorded at various other sites.

Rufous Motmot *Baryphthengus martii* (H) Heard only at La Selva.

Keel-billed Motmot ◊ *Electron carinatum* Fine views of this localized species near Arenal.

Broad-billed Motmot *Electron platyrhynchum* 2 birds seen at La Selva.



Broad-billed Motmot at La Selva (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Turquoise-browed Motmot ◊ *Eumomota superciliosa* Fairly common in the Northwest.

Rufous-tailed Jacamar *Galbula ruficauda* An obliging pair at La Seva was our only sighting this year.

Pied Puffbird *Notharchus tectus* Good scope views of a perched bird at La Selva.

White-whiskered Puffbird *Malacoptila panamensis* Very close views of one at Carara. Also heard at La Selva.

White-fronted Nunbird *Monasa morphoeus* 1 bird was seen well at Arenal.

Red-headed Barbet *Eubucco bourcierii* (LO) A leader-only bird was seen briefly at Tapanti.

Prong-billed Barbet ◊ *Semnornis frantzii* Fine views of several birds at Santa Elena and Tapanti.

Blue-throated Toucanet ◊ *Aulacorhynchus caeruleogularis* 6 at Monteverde, 1 at Savegre and 2 at Tapanti.

Collared Aracari *Pteroglossus torquatus* Fairly common at La Selva.

Fiery-billed Aracari ◊ *Pteroglossus frantzii* Just one bird seen at Carara.



Collared Aracaris were seen several times at La Selva (Dani Lopez-Velasco)



Fiery-billed Aracaris showing its distinctive bill color (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Keel-billed Toucan *Ramphastos sulfuratus* Fairly common on the Caribbean Slope.

Black-mandibled Toucan *Ramphastos ambiguus* Many fine views.

Olivaceous Piculet *Picumnus olivaceus* A pair showed very well at Talari.

Acorn Woodpecker *Melanerpes formicivorus* Fairly common around Savegre.

Golden-naped Woodpecker ◊ *Melanerpes chrysauchen* 2 birds at Carara.

Black-cheeked Woodpecker *Melanerpes pucherani* Fairly common on the Caribbean slope.

Red-crowned Woodpecker *Melanerpes rubricapillus* Several seen at Carara and Talari.

Hoffmann's Woodpecker *Melanerpes hoffmannii* Several sightings at scattered sites.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker *Sphyrapicus varius* 1 bird seen above Savegre and another one at Hotel Bougainvillea.

Rufous-winged Woodpecker ◊ *Piculus simplex* 1 at La Selva gave good scope views.

Cinnamon Woodpecker *Celeus loricatus* A pair was seen at La Selva.

Chestnut-colored Woodpecker *Celeus castaneus* A pair was seen at La Selva on our last morning.

Lineated Woodpecker *Dryocopus lineatus* Surprisingly, only one bird seen, at Talari.

Pale-billed Woodpecker *Campephilus guatemalensis* Good views of one at Arenal.

Slaty Spinetail *Synallaxis brachyura* (H) Heard-only at Arenal.

Red-faced Spinetail *Cranioleuca erythrogastra* 4 seen in the Monteverde area.

Spotted Barbtail *Premnoplex brunnescens* A few birds seen in mixed flocks at Savegre and Monteverde.

Ruddy Treerunner ◊ *Margarornis rubiginosus* 17 of these delightful birds in the Monteverde area and Savegre.

Buffy Tuftedcheek ◊ *Pseudocolaptes lawrencii* 2 birds at Savegre were the only ones of the trip.

Lineated Foliage-gleaner *Syndactyla subalaris* 2 above Savegre.

Western Woodhaunter *Hylocichla ustulata* (LO) 1 leader-only bird was seen briefly at Monteverde.

Streak-breasted Treehunter ◊ *Thripadectes rufobrunneus* Singles at Monteverde, Santa Elena and Savegre.

Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner *Automolus ochrolaemus* 2 seen around Arenal.

Grey-throated Leaf-tosser *Sclerurus albigularis* Great views of a bird near its nest at Monteverde.



The usually very secretive Grey-throated Leaf-tosser was seen very well at Monteverde (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Plain Xenops *Xenops minutus* Just 3 birds seen, at Carara

Tawny-winged Woodcreeper *Dendrocincla anabatina* 3 attending an antswarm at Los Cusingos gave great views.

Ruddy Woodcreeper *Dendrocincla homochroa* 3 birds attending an antswarm at los Cusingos.

Wedge-billed Woodcreeper *Glyphorhynchus spirurus* Regularly encountered.

Northern Barred Woodcreeper *Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae* A total of 10 recorded; highest count 4 at La Selva.

Cocoa Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus susurrans* Probably the most common woodcreeper, many seen, more heard.

Spotted Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus erythropygius* Seen at Arenal and Monteverde.

Streak-headed Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes souleyetii* Noted at several places.

Spot-crowned Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes affinis* 3 seen well above Savegre.

Fasciated Antshrike *Cymbilaimus lineatus* 3 birds at La Selva, including one on the nest.

Great Antshrike *Taraba major* Fine views of a pair at Carara.

Barred Antshrike *Thamnophilus doliatus* A pair showed well along the river trail at Carara.

Black-hooded Antshrike ◊ *Thamnophilus bridgesi* Fairly common at Carara.

Western Slaty Antshrike ◊ *Thamnophilus atrinucha* A territorial pair was seen well at La Selva.



Western Slaty Antshrike at La Selva (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

- Plain Antvireo** *Dysithamnus mentalis* Singles at Arenal and Monteverde.
Streak-crowned Antvireo ◊ (Streaked-c A) *Dysithamnus striaticeps* Very good views of a pair at Arenal.
Slaty Antwren *Myrmotherula schisticolor* Seen at Arenal, Monteverde and Tapanti.
Dot-winged Antwren (Dotted-w A) *Microrhophias quixensis* Fairly common around Carara.
Dusky Antbird *Cercomacra tyrannina* 4 birds seen at Arenal and at least 10 at Carara.
Bare-crowned Antbird ◊ *Gymnocichla nudiceps* Brief views of this scarce species at Arenal.
Chestnut-backed Antbird *Myrmeciza exsul* 3 birds seen at Carara, several more heard.



Chestnut-backed Antbirds were common at Carara (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

- Dull-mantled Antbird** ◊ *Myrmeciza laemosticta* A single bird out in the open gave excellent views at Arenal.
Bicolored Antbird *Gymnophthys leucaspis* (H) Heard only at Arenal, where heavy rain prevented us from seeing it.
Spotted Antbird *Hylophylax naevioides* Excellent views of these smart looking 2 birds at Arenal.
Black-faced Antthrush *Formicarius analis* A pair at Carara showed exceptionally well after some effort.
Streak-chested Antpitta ◊ (Spectacled A) *Hylopezus perspicillatus* Mega views of a singing bird at Carara.

Thicket Antpitta ◊ (**Fulvous-bellied A**) *Hylopezus dives* (**H**) Several heard at Arenal. We tried hard, but to no avail.

Silvery-fronted Tapaculo ◊ *Scytalopus argentifrons* Excellent looks at 2 of these skulking birds at Monteverde.

Greenish Elaenia *Myiopagis viridicata* Seen at Solimar and Talari.

Yellow-bellied Elaenia *Elaenia flavogaster* A pair at La Selva and another pair at Talari.

Lesser Elaenia *Elaenia chiriquensis* A single bird near Talari.

Mountain Elaenia *Elaenia frantzii* Fairly common in the highlands.

Southern Beardless Tyrannulet *Camptostoma obsoletum* A single bird seen at Carara.

Torrent Tyrannulet *Serpophaga cinerea* One bird was recorded at Tapanti.

Paltry Tyrannulet *Zimmerius vilissimus* Fairly common and widespread.

Olive-striped Flycatcher *Mionectes olivaceus* Just one bird seen at Santa Elena.

Ochre-bellied Flycatcher *Mionectes oleagineus* Fairly common at La Selva.

Slaty-capped Flycatcher *Leptopogon superciliaris* Just 2 birds seen at Tapanti.

Northern Scrub Flycatcher *Sublegatus arenarum* Great views of 1 on a small mangrove patch near Tarcoles beach.

Black-capped Pygmy Tyrant *Myiornis atricapillus* (**H**) Heard at La Selva; the bird was too high up to see it!

Northern Bentbill *Oncostoma cinereigulare* 2 birds seen at Carara, and a few more heard.



Northern Bentbill showing its odd-shaped bill (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Scale-crested Pygmy Tyrant *Lophotriccus pileatus* 2 seen at Arenal, several more heard.

Slaty-headed Tody-flycatcher *Poecilatriccus sylvia* A couple seen well at Carara.

Common Tody-flycatcher *Todirostrum cinereum* Fairly common and widespread.

Eye-ringed Flatbill *Rhynchocyclus brevirostris* 1 gave good views at Monteverde.

Yellow-olive Flatbill (Y-o Flycatcher) *Tolmomyias sulphurescens* Pretty common and widespread.

Yellow-margined Flatbill (Y-m flycatcher) *Tolmomyias flavotectus* A single bird seen at La Selva.

White-throated Spadebill *Platyrinchus mystaceus* 1 seen briefly at Santa Elena.

Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans* 5 birds seen at scattered places.

Northern Tufted Flycatcher *Mitrephanes phaeocercus* First seen at Santa Elena, and then 5 recorded at Savegre.

Olive-sided Flycatcher *Contopus cooperi* A single bird seen at Arenal.

Dark Pewee ◊ *Contopus lugubris* 2 seen at Savegre and another one at Tapanti.

Ochraceous Pewee ◊ *Contopus ochraceus* 1 gave excellent views at Savegre.

Tropical Pewee *Contopus cinereus* A few birds seen on both slopes.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher *Empidonax flaviventris* 4 birds recorded throughout the tour.

White-throated Flycatcher ◊ *Empidonax albigularis* Brief views of one near Cartago, on a foggy, windy afternoon.

Yellowish Flycatcher *Empidonax flavescens* Fairly common in the Monteverde area.

Black-capped Flycatcher ◊ *Empidonax atriceps* Seen at Savegre and Tapanti.

Long-tailed Tyrant *Colonia colonus* 5 birds seen at La Selva.

Piratic Flycatcher *Legatus leucophaeus* Fairly common and widespread.

Social Flycatcher *Myiozetetes similis* Many fine views.

Grey-capped Flycatcher *Myiozetetes granadensis* Numerous in the lowlands and foothills.
Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus* Common but always nice to see.
White-ringed Flycatcher *Conopias albobittatus* A few seen well at La Selva.
Golden-bellied Flycatcher ◊ *Myiodynastes hemichrysus* 2 birds seen well at Tapanti.
Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher *Myiodynastes luteiventris* An early bird at Talari.
Streaked Flycatcher *Myiodynastes maculatus* Scattered sightings on both slopes.
Boat-billed Flycatcher *Megarynchus pitangua* Widespread.
Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus* Common and widespread.
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus forficatus* Several birds recorded in the dry northwest.
Fork-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus savana* A single bird gave good scope views near Talari.
Rufous Mourner *Rhytipterna holerythra* 2 birds were seen at La Selva.
Dusky-capped Flycatcher *Myiarchus tuberculifer* 5 birds seen and a few more heard.
Panamanian Flycatcher ◊ (Panama F) *Myiarchus panamensis* See note.



Panamanian Flycatchers are typically found in mangrove forest areas (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Great Crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus crinitus* 3 birds seen at Carara.
Brown-crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus tyrannulus* 10 birds seen around Solimar.
Bright-rumped Attila ◊ (Flammulated A) *Attila spadiceus* 3 seen well at La Selva, 1 at Carara. Many more heard.
Lovely Cotinga ◊ *Cotinga amabilis* Great scope views of an adult male perched on a tree near our cabins at Arenal.
Turquoise Cotinga ◊ *Cotinga ridgwayi* (V) Excellent studies of 2 bright adult males at Talari and near Los Cusingos.
Rufous Piha *Lipaugus unirufus* 1 seen at Arenal and 3 at Los Cusingos.
Snowy Cotinga ◊ *Carpodectes nitidus* Fabulous views of one adult male at La Selva.
White-ruffed Manakin *Corapipo altera* One female seen at Arenal.
Blue-crowned Manakin *Lepidothrix coronata* 2 males were seen well at Los Cusingos.
White-collared Manakin *Manacus candei* 6 birds seen at La Selva, including several adult males..



La Selva is a good place to see White-collared Manakins (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Orange-collared Manakin ◇ *Manacus aurantiacus* Great looks at lekking males at Carara



Male Orange-collared Manakin at Carara (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Long-tailed Manakin ◇ *Chiroxiphia linearis* 2 displaying adult males in the Monteverde area

Red-capped Manakin *Dixiphia mentalis* 3 lekking males doing the “moon-walk” at Los Cusingos was a highlight.



Male Red-capped Manakin showing its bright yellow thighs while displaying at Los Cusingos (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Northern Royal Flycatcher *Onychorhynchus mexicanus* 2 seen very well at Carara, including one near its nest.



Seeing the crest of a Northern Royal Flycatcher is no easy thing (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Sulphur-rumped Myiobius (S-r Flycatcher) *Myiobius sulphureipygius* 1 at Arenal and another at Los Cusingos.

Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher *Terenotriccus erythrurus* 2 showed well at Carara.

Black-crowned Tityra *Tityra inquisitor* A single bird seen at La Selva.

Masked Tityra *Tityra semifasciata* Widespread, seen on both slopes.

Thrush-like Schiffornis (T-I Manakin, T-I Mourner) (H) *Schiffornis turdina* Heard only at Carara.

Barred Becard *Pachyramphus versicolor* A nest-building pair at Santa Elena and singles at Savegre and Tapanti.

Cinnamon Becard *Pachyramphus cinnamomeus* A total of 5 birds seen at La Selva.

White-winged Becard *Pachyramphus polychopterus* 2 birds at Carara were our only ones of the trip.

Rose-throated Becard *Pachyramphus aglaiae* 4 birds at Solimar and a single bird at Carara.

Rufous-browed Peppershrike *Cyclarhis gujanensis* Seen on a patch of mangrove in the Tarcoles area.

Green Shrike-Vireo *Vireolanius pulchellus* Great views of one at La Selva; others heard there and at Carara.

Mangrove Vireo *Vireo pallens* Good views on our mangrove boat tour along the Tarcoles

Yellow-throated Vireo *Vireo flavifrons* 1 at Carara and another one near San Isidro

Yellow-winged Vireo *Vireo carmioli* 5 birds seen at Savegre
Brown-capped Vireo *Vireo leucophrys* 3 birds were recorded at Savegre.
Philadelphia Vireo *Vireo philadelphicus* A total of 4 birds were seen.
Yellow-green Vireo *Vireo flavoviridis* An early bird was seen at Talari.
Tawny-crowned Greenlet *Hylophilus ochraceiceps* Fine views of a single bird at Carara.
Lesser Greenlet *Hylophilus decurtatus* Frequently seen on both slopes.
Brown Jay *Psilorhinus morio* Several seen at various places.
White-throated Magpie-jay *Calocitta formosa* c15 seen in the northwest; our first sighting of 3 birds near Arenal.
Black-and-yellow Phainoptila *(B-a-y Silky-Flycatcher)* *Phainoptila melanoxantha* See note. **Long-tailed Silky-Flycatcher** *Ptilogonys caudatus* Excellent scope views of several birds in the Savegre area.



Long-tailed Silky Flycatchers were easy to see at Hotel de Montaña Savegre (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Mangrove Swallow *Tachycineta albilinea* Regular sightings, with highest numbers seen at Rio Tarcoles.
Grey-breasted Martin *Progne chalybea* Small numbers seen in both the Caribbean and Pacific lowlands.
Blue-and-white Swallow *Notiochelidon cyanoleuca* Widespread.
Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis* Fairly common at middle-elevations.
Southern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis* Widespread in the lowlands of both slopes.
Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* Fairly common.
Band-backed Wren (Banded-b W) *Campylorhynchus zonatus* 4 birds seen at La Selva.
Rufous-backed Wren *Campylorhynchus capistratus* Fairly common in the northwest.
Black-throated Wren *Pheugopedius atrogularis* 2 seen at La Selva.
Black-bellied Wren *Pheugopedius fasciatoventris* 2 gave good views at Carara.
Rufous-breasted Wren *Pheugopedius rutilus* 4 birds seen at Carara, with several more heard there and at Talari.
Banded Wren (H) *Thryophilus pleurostictus* Heard at Solimar.
Rufous-and-white Wren *Thryophilus rufalbus* Good views of a singing bird in the lower Monteverde area.
Riverside Wren *Cantorchilus semibadius* A total of 4 recorded in the Carara area.
Bay Wren *Cantorchilus nigricapillus* Several seen at La Selva and Arenal.
Stripe-breasted Wren (Striped-b W) *Cantorchilus thoracicus* Fairly common on the Caribbean slope.
House Wren *Troglodytes aedon* Numerous and widespread.
Ochraceous Wren *Troglodytes ochraceus* Seen at Monteverde and Savegre.
Timberline Wren *Thryorchilus browni* Brilliant looks at this regional endemic at Cerro de la Muerte.



Timberline Wren is a regional endemic restricted to the highlands (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

- White-breasted Wood Wren *Henicorhina leucosticta*** Seen at several locations in the lowlands
- Grey-breasted Wood Wren *Henicorhina leucophrys*** Recorded at various locations in the highlands
- Northern Nightingale-Wren (Nightingale W) *Microcerculus philomela* (H)** Several heard at Arenal, but none showed.
- Song Wren *Cyphorhinus phaeocephalus*** Very good views at Arenal Observatory Lodge.
- Long-billed Gnatwren *Ramphocaenus melanurus* (H)** Surprisingly, only heard at Carara.
- White-lored Gnatcatcher *Polioptila albiloris*** Several seen at Solimar.
- Tropical Gnatcatcher *Polioptila plumbea*** Widespread.
- Tropical Mockingbird *Mimus gilvus*** 2 seen near Talari.
- Black-faced Solitaire** ◊ *Myadestes melanops* 10 birds were recorded throughout the tour.
- Black-billed Nightingale-thrush** ◊ *Catharus gracilirostris* Several seen at Savegre.
- Orange-billed Nightingale-thrush *Catharus aurantiirostris*** Seen well in the lower parts of Monteverde and Talari.
- Slaty-backed Nightingale-thrush *Catharus fuscater*** 2 seen in the Monteverde area.
- Ruddy-capped Nightingale-thrush** ◊ *Catharus frantzii* 2 at Santa Elena followed by several at Savegre.
- Black-headed Nightingale-thrush** ◊ *Catharus mexicanus* Fantastic views of 3 birds at Arenal.



All 5 species of Costa Rican nightingale-thrushes were seen on the tour, including this nice Black-headed (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus* Single migrants at Carara and Talari.
Wood Thrush *Hylocichla mustelina* 7 birds were seen throughout the tour.
Sooty Thrush ◊ (Sooty Robin) *Turdus nigrescens* Fairly common around Cerro de la Muerte.
Mountain Thrush ◊ (Mountain Robin) *Turdus plebejus* Several seen around Monteverde and Cerro de la Muerte.
Clay-colored Thrush *Turdus grayi* Common and widespread.
White-throated Thrush (W-t Robin) *Turdus assimilis* 4 seen in the Arenal area, with another near Monteverde.



Several White-throated Thrushes were seen on the trip (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

American Dipper *Cinclus mexicanus* A single bird showed very well at Tapanti.
House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* Seen a few times around cities.
Scrub Euphonia *Euphonia affinis* Only noted at Solimar, where 6 were seen.
Yellow-crowned Euphonia ◊ *Euphonia luteicapilla* Recorded at scattered sites.
Yellow-throated Euphonia *Euphonia hirundinacea* Seen at Carara.
Elegant Euphonia (Blue-hooded/Blue-rumped E) *Euphonia elegantissima* A pair showed well near Monteverde.
Olive-backed Euphonia *Euphonia gouldi* Recorded each day at La Selva.
Tawny-capped Euphonia ◊ *Euphonia anae* Good views at Tapanti.
Golden-browed Chlorophonia ◊ *Chlorophonia callophrys* See note.
Ovenbird *Seiurus aurocapilla* A single bird seen briefly in the lower parts of Monteverde.
Northern Waterthrush *Parkesia noveboracensis* 11 birds seen on the tour.
Golden-winged Warbler *Vermivora chrysoptera* 2 birds at La Selva and 1 at Arenal.
Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia* 10 birds seen on both slopes.
Prothonotary Warbler *Protonotaria citrea* Fine views of several birds on the mangrove boat tour along the Tarcoles.
Flame-throated Warbler ◊ *Oreothlypis gutturalis* Excellent looks above Savegre.
Tennessee Warbler *Leiothlypis peregrina* Regularly encountered.
Grey-crowned Yellowthroat *Geothlypis poliocephala* 3 seen around Arenal.
Mourning Warbler *Geothlypis philadelphia* Brief views of one at Arenal.
Olive-crowned Yellowthroat *Geothlypis semiflava* A few seen outside La Selva.
American Redstart *Setophaga ruticilla* 4 sightings.
Tropical Parula *Setophaga pitiauyumi* A handful of sightings.
Magnolia Warbler *Setophaga magnolia* A bird was seen well at Carara.
Blackburnian Warbler *Setophaga fusca* Only one sighting, at Tapanti.
American Yellow Warbler *Setophaga aestiva* Fairly common and widespread.

Mangrove Warbler *Setophaga petechia* Seen well in mangroves near Colorado Salt pans and the Tarcoles River.



Immature male Mangrove Warbler (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Chestnut-sided Warbler *Setophaga pensylvanica* The most common North American warbler seen on the tour.
Black-throated Green Warbler *Setophaga virens* Several birds seen.
Buff-rumped Warbler *Myiothlypis fulvicauda* 4 seen at Arenal and another one near Carara.
Rufous-capped Warbler (Chestnut-capped W) *Basileuterus rufifrons* Seen at Solimar and in the Monteverde area.
Black-cheeked Warbler ♦ ***Basileuterus melanogenys*** Fairly common above Savegre.
Golden-crowned Warbler *Basileuterus culicivorus* Regular sightings.
Three-striped Warbler *Basileuterus tristriatus* Several seen in the Monteverde area.
Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla* Notably common in the highlands.
Slate-throated Whitestart (S-t Redstart) *Myioborus miniatus* Pretty common at Monteverde and Tapanti.
Collared Whitestart ♦ **(C Redstart) *Myioborus torquatus*** Many good views at Santa Elena and Savegre. Very smart!
Wrenthrush ♦ **(Zeledonia) *Zeledonia coronata*** 2 of these skulking birds were seen near Cerro de la Muerte.
Chestnut-headed Oropendola *Psarocolius wagleri* Seen at la Selva and Tapanti.
Montezuma Oropendola *Psarocolius montezuma* Fairly common in the lowlands.
Scarlet-rumped Cacique *Cacicus microrhynchus* Excellent views of a couple of small flocks at La Selva.
Yellow-billed Cacique *Amblycercus holosericeus* (H) Heard only at La Selva.
Spot-breasted Oriole *Icterus pectoralis* 2 birds seen at Solimar.
Black-cowled Oriole *Icterus prothemelas* Several birds seen in the Caribbean lowlands.
Orchard Oriole *Icterus spurius* One seen on our last morning at Hotel Bougainvillea.
Baltimore Oriole *Icterus galbula* Many fine views.
Streak-backed Oriole *Icterus pustulatus* 2 seen at Solimar.
Giant Cowbird *Molothrus oryzivorus* A small flock in pastures outside La Selva was our only sighting of the tour.
Bronzed Cowbird *Molothrus aeneus* Around 30 birds seen.
Melodious Blackbird *Dives dives* Surprisingly, only seen at Hotel Bougainvillea.
Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus* Widespread in open country.
Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus* Very common.
Eastern Meadowlark *Sturnella magna* A few seen at Solimar, San Isidro and near Cartago.
Bananaquit *Coereba flaveola* Fairly common and widespread.
Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis* Common, especially in the highlands.
Volcano Junco ♦ ***Junco vulcani*** Excellent looks at 4 birds at Cerro de la Muerte.
Stripe-headed (Striped-h S) Sparrow *Peucaea ruficauda* 6 were recorded at Solimar.
White-eared Ground Sparrow ♦ ***Melospiza leucotis*** 3 seen in the Monteverde area.

Black-striped Sparrow *Arremonops conirostris* 3 at Arenal Observatory Lodge were our only ones of the trip.

Orange-billed Sparrow *Arremon aurantirostris* 9 birds were recorded on both slopes; our first sighting at La Selva.

Large-footed Finch ◊ ***Pezopetes capitalis*** Several seen at Savegre and Cerro de la Muerte.

White-naped Brush Finch (Yellow-throated B F) *Atlapetes albinucha* A single was seen in the Monteverde area.

Yellow-thighed Finch ◊ ***Pselliophorus tibialis*** Small flocks at Santa Elena, Cerro de la Muerte and Savegre.

Common Bush Tanager *Chlorospingus flavopectus* Common at Monteverde and Tapanti.

Sooty-capped Bush Tanager ◊ ***Chlorospingus pileatus*** First seen at Santa Elena, and pretty common at Savegre.

Dusky-faced Tanager *Mitrospingus cassinii* Only seen at La Selva.

Grey-headed Tanager *Eucometis penicillata* 4 birds seen at an antswarm at Los Cusingos.

White-shouldered Tanager *Tachyphonus luctuosus* Recorded at Carara and Los Cusingos.

Crimson-collared Tanager ◊ ***Ramphocelus sanguinolentus*** Great views at La Selva and Arenal. Spectacular.



Crimson-collared Tanager (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Passerini's Tanager *Ramphocelus passerinii* Common in the Caribbean Slope

Cherrie's Tanager *Ramphocelus costaricensis* Several birds seen at Talari and Los Cusingos

Blue-grey Tanager *Thraupis episcopus* Common and widespread at lower elevations

Palm Tanager *Thraupis palmarum* Fairly common on both slopes

Plain-colored Tanager ◊ ***Tangara inornata*** 4 birds seen at La Selva

Emerald Tanager *Tangara florida* 4 birds gave good views at Arenal Observatory Lodge

Silver-throated Tanager *Tangara icterocephala* Scattered sightings, highest count of 10 at Tapanti

Speckled Tanager *Tangara guttata* 3 at Los Cusingos were our only ones of the tour

Bay-headed Tanager *Tangara gyrola* Seen at Arenal, Talari and Los Cusingos

Golden-hooded Tanager *Tangara larvata* Numerous and widespread

Spangle-cheeked Tanager ◊ ***Tangara dowii*** Many good views at Monteverde, Santa Elena and Savegre.

Scarlet-thighed Dacnis *Dacnis venusta* A pair gave excellent views at La Selva; another pair seen above San Isidro.

Blue Dacnis *Dacnis cayana* 6 seen at La Selva.

Shining Honeycreeper ◊ ***Cyanerpes lucidus*** A few seen at La Selva.

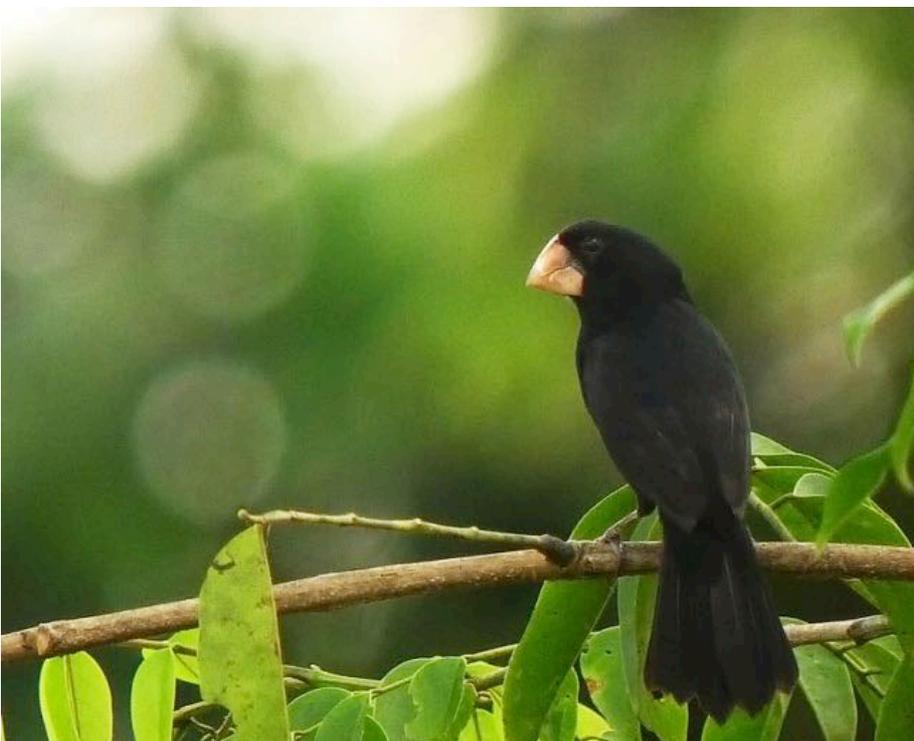
Red-legged Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes cyaneus* Regular sightings of this stunning bird.

Green Honeycreeper *Chlorophanes spiza* Several birds seen throughout the tour.



Male Green Honeycreepers are always stunning (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

- Slaty Flowerpiercer** *Diglossa plumbea* Common at Savegre and Cerro de la Muerte
- Peg-billed Finch** ◊ *Acanthidops bairdi* Great close-up views of 4 feeding on flowering bamboo nr Cerro de la Muerte.
- Blue-black Grassquit** *Volatinia jacarina* A few sightings in open country.
- Slate-colored Seedeater** ◊ *Sporophila schistacea* (LO) 1 leader-only bird seen in pastures outside la Selva.
- Variable Seedeater** *Sporophila corvina* Common in both slopes.
- White-collared Seedeater** *Sporophila torqueola* Several seen, being particularly common around Solimar.
- Thick-billed Seed Finch** *Oryzoborus funereus* A few seen in the Caribbean slope.
- Nicaraguan Seed Finch** ◊ *Oryzoborus nuttingi* Cracking views of 4 birds in a pasture area near La Selva.



The localized Nicaraguan Seed Finch gave great views in a certain area of pastures close to La Selva (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

- Yellow-faced Grassquit** *Tiaris olivaceus* Scattered sightings.
- Flame-colored Tanager (Stripe-backed T)** *Piranga bidentata* Common around Cerro de la Muerte.

Highland Hepatic Tanager *Piranga lutea* A pair seen well at Monteverde.
Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra* 12 records on both slopes, including some nice adult males.
Red-throated Ant Tanager *Habia fuscicauda* 3 seen at La Selva and 2 at Arenal.
Carmioli's Tanager ♂ (H) *Chlorothraupis carmioli* Surprisingly, only heard at La Selva.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak *Pheucticus ludovicianus* 4 birds recorded.
Black-faced Grosbeak *Caryothraustes poliogaster* Fine looks at several flocks at La Selva.



Black-faced Grosbeak at La Selva (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

Black-headed Saltator *Saltator atriceps* 6 seen at Arenal
Buff-throated Saltator *Saltator maximus* Several birds recorded on both slopes
Greyish Saltator *Saltator coerulescens* Only seen at Hotel Bougainvillea, where up to 4 were recorded
Blue-black Grosbeak *Cyanocompsa cyanooides* 2 birds seen well at La Selva
Blue Grosbeak *Passerina caerulea* 3 were recorded at Solimar
Indigo Bunting *Passerina cyanea* Up to 8 birds, including nice adult males, were seen outside La Selva
Painted Bunting *Passerina ciris* Excellent views of 4 birds near our accommodation at Carara

MAMMALS

Hoffmann's Two-toed Sloth *Choloepus hoffmanni* 1 seen on 2 dates at La Selva.
White-faced Capuchin (W-throated C, W-throated C Monkey) *Cebus capucinus* 5 in the Monteverde area
Mantled Howler (M H Monkey) *Alouatta palliata* Several sightings
Central American Spider Monkey (Black-handed S M) *Ateles geoffroyi* 5 at Santa Elena
Variegated Squirrel *Sciurus variegatoides* Common with several different colour morphs seen
Red-tailed Squirrel (Tropical Red S) *Sciurus granatensis* 1 at Carara
Alfaro's Pygmy Squirrel (Central American Dwarf S) *Microsciurus alfari* 1 at Santa Elena
Nine-banded Armadillo *Dasypus novemcinctus* Nice views of one at Solimar
Mexican Porcupine *Coendou mexicanus* Great looks at one at La Selva
Central American Agouti *Dasyprocta punctata* Scattered sightings
Coyote *Canis latrans* Great views of 2 on the road to Santa Elena



One of the Coyotes seen on the way down from Santa Elena (Dani Lopez-Velasco)

White-nosed Coati *Nasua narica* Several seen well

Olingo *Bassaricyon gabbii* 1 seen briefly at Monteverde

Gray Four-eyed Opossum *Philander opossum* Fine looks at one at Talari

Collared Peccary *Tayassu tajacu* Rather common at La Selva.

NOTES TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

A single bird was seen very well together with the Long-billed Dowitchers at Colorado, allowing us to study in detail the subtle differences between these 2 similar species.

California Gull *Larus californicus*

A second-cycle bird was found while checking the Laughing Gull and tern flock at Tarcoles Beach. A detailed description and several record shots were taken, and the record has already been accepted by the national committee as the first for Costa Rica and Central America!

Common Potoo (Grey P) (H) *Nyctibius griseus*

Heard at La Selva, but although we tried hard for it, it never got close enough. A day-roosting bird we knew of at Los Cusingos was unfortunately flushed by some photographers just a minute before arriving

Orange-bellied Trogon *Trogon aurantiiventris*

Now considered by the IOC to be a color morph of Collared Trogon.

Panamanian Flycatcher ◊ (Panama F) *Myiarchus panamensis*

Brief views on our mangrove boat tour and then excellent looks at 2 on a patch of mangrove near Tarcoles beach.

Black-and-yellow Phainoptila ◊ (B-a-y Silky-Flycatcher) *Phainoptila melanoxantha*

Flight views of a pair and then brief views of another individual near Cerro de la Muerte.

Golden-browed Chlorophonia ◊ *Chlorophonia callophrys*

Fabulous looks at a very obliging pair in the Monteverde area, where many more were heard, followed by another pair near Cerro de la Muerte