



This magnificent Bare-necked Umbrellabird at Arenal was our inevitable bird-of-the-trip (all photos taken on this tour by Pete Morris unless otherwise indicated)

ULTIMATE COSTA RICA

31 MARCH – 22 APRIL 2017

LEADER: PETE MORRIS

It had been a while since I'd been to this great birding destination. Indeed 15 years had passed since my previous visit with my late great friend Paul Coopmans, so it was a pleasant surprise to be asked to return to this wonderful country. Much had changed – it's now a far more affluent and modern country, but still impeccably clean and friendly. Many new sites are now available, and in the intervening years, our average bird list has increased by nearly 20%!! I knew I'd have my work cut out to get up to speed, but I can proudly report that with the help of our very capable driver, a few excellent local guides, great help from my colleague Dani, and an excellent group, we did very well. Indeed this year's Ultimate Costa Rica tour was, yet again, a highly successful visit to this wonderful country. As with all Birdquest tours, we focused on finding the specialities rather than building a big list, though we still ended up recording an impressive 590 species between us, including just a handful that were heard only. This included a high percentage of the country's specialities that were on offer on our itinerary. With its three endemic bird areas, regional endemism is a strong influence in the Costa Rican



It wasn't just about the rarities! More widespread species such as Sunbittern were equally appreciated!

avifauna, and many of these charismatic species were among the tour highlights. Picking out the highlights from nearly 600 species is never easy, but one bird really did stand out – the unexpected superb sighting of a Bare-necked Umbrellabird which was inevitably our bird-of-the-trip! Other cotingids also delighted! Three-wattled Bellbirds have to be seen (and heard) to be believed, Yellow-billed and Snowy Cotingas showed well and colour was added by Turquoise and Lovely Cotingas. Nightbirds did us proud, with fantastic views of superb species such as Bare-shanked Screech Owl, Crested Owl and Dusky Nightjar. Our 42 species of hummingbirds included an incredible encounter with a White-tipped Sicklebill, antswarms were attended by such charismatic species as Ocellated Antbird and Northern Barred Woodcreeper, and we enjoyed fine encounters with skulkers such as Thicket and Streak-chested Antpittas. But then who can forget the flashy Sunbitterns, the showy Sungrebes, the displaying Long-tailed Manakins, the amazing Snowcaps or the unique Zeledonia? Or the amazing quail-doves and variety of crakes and rails, and three species of wood-quail at point blank range!! Oh, and then there was the Resplendent Quetzal... just dazzling! In fact there were far too many highlights, so I'd better get on with the report!!

Having gathered at our pleasant hotel outside of San José, we kicked off the tour with an early start and a bit of a damp squib, as most nightbirds refused to reveal their presence in the cold mountain air at Vólcan Irazú. Indeed, as the sun rose, we had little to show for our efforts other than the distant calls of a Dusky Nightjar. The daylight came quickly, and very soon we began exploring the forest patches, canyons and paramo on the lower slopes of the mighty Irazú. And very quickly the specialities came... Sooty Thrushes, Black-billed Nightingale-Thrushes and Large-footed Finches hopped along the road, whilst the gulleys held Hairy Woodpeckers, Mountain Elaenias, wonderful Black-cheeked and Flame-throated Warblers and our first Yellow-winged Vireo. Higher up, it didn't take long to find some Volcano Juncos on the road, Black-capped Flycatchers flicked along



Two highlights from our first morning out: Volcano Junco and Flame-throated Warbler.

the hedges, numerous displaying Volcano Hummingbirds were present and other high altitude specialities we enjoyed included Fiery-throated Hummingbird, singing Timberline Wrens, Mountain Thrush, Slaty Flowerpiercer and several groups of Sooty-capped Bush Tanagers.

Moving on, our progress was somewhat hampered by a fire, meaning that we could not get to our intended destination, so 'plan b' was activated and we sat down for an early lunch. Eucalypts burn well, and after lunch the fire was still burning, the road still closed, but Luis managed to find a detour and we arrived at our unimpressive looking site with not much time on our hands. Fortunately, we soon found the scarce Cabanis's Ground Sparrow, a Costa Rica endemic (having being split from Prevost's Ground Sparrow) and gained some excellent views of this charming bird. Most other species were largely ignored in my focus on the sparrow, but we did also enjoy our first Cabanis's Wrens as well as Finsch's Parakeets, Variable Seedeaters (of the Blackish form) and Buff-throated and Greyish Saltators. Having lost time to the fire, we were soon on our way again, continuing our journey to the foothills of the Talamanca Mountains and to Rancho Naturalista. With only one night at Rancho Naturalista, we were keen to get there in time to witness the hummingbird pools in action, and we arrived just in time to do so. For the next hour or so we watched a procession of birds visiting the stream, and these included our first fabulous Snowcaps, an obliging pair of Tawny-throated Leaf-tossers, Wood Thrush, Kentucky Warbler and a number of other hummingbirds such as Green Hermit, Crowned Woodnymph and Black-eared Fairy. It was already quite dark at the secluded pools, and many of the above birds were actually watched in the spotlight!

Our pre-dawn start the next morning saw us enjoying coffee and snacks on the veranda before making our way down to the moth lamp with our excellent local guide, Harry. It was a strange spectacle as we watched moth-savvy birds taking advantage of the easy pickings. Plain-brown and Spotted Woodcreepers, Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner, Plain Antvireo, Red-throated Ant Tanagers, Yellow-bellied and Slaty-capped Flycatchers, White-breasted Wood Wren, Kentucky Warbler and Orange-billed Sparrows all made many visits, coming right out into the open on occasions. It took a while, but eventually our main target, the localized near-endemic Tawny-chested Flycatcher, made an appearance, and showed extremely well. We then explored the forest for a while, soon finding confiding Dull-mantled Antbirds, Rufous Mourner, and an unusually cooperative Northern Schiffornis. White-ruffed and White-crowned Manakin proved easy to find though the singing Zeledon's Antbirds proved a little more tricky. Canada and Golden-crowned Warblers showed up along with a Brewster's Warbler (hybrid Golden-winged x Blue-winged Warbler), and we spent some time playing hide-and-seek with a pair of Purplish-backed Quail-Doves which kept wondering off every time we saw them! With a number of good birds in the bag, we returned for a hearty breakfast, and having packed up and said goodbyes, Harry took us to a couple of nearby birding spots. One of these proved to be a trip highlight as a stunning pair of Sunbitterns



Two of the tour's early specialities... the endemic Cabanis's Ground Sparrow and the localized Tawny-chested Flycatcher.

attended their chicks in a nest, even doing the full wing flashing in response to some Black Phoebes in the river. Wow!! Nearby, we found the localized White-throated Flycatcher, which soon gave good views in the scope, as well as Olive-crowned and Grey-crowned Yellowthroats, Passerini's Tanagers and our only Black-headed Saltators of the trip.

We then continued our journey back towards Cartago before making our way up the Pan-American highway. The gloomy skies and rain that had been threatening was now upon us, and as we made our way up onto Cerro de la Muerte, it really was a pretty gloomy picture. We paused at Paraiso Quetzales, and enjoyed some wet Admirable and Fiery-throated Hummingbirds, and as the rain beat down, continued on to the lovely Savegre Hotel. The rain had lightened a little, and some of us ventured out for a while, enjoying the antics of Acorn Woodpeckers and Flame-coloured and Silver-throated Tanagers at the feeders, Yellow-thighed Finches



The gorgeous Fiery-throated Hummingbird... one of the best!



We were delighted to find a family of Spotted Wood Quails.

hopping around on the ground, and smart Long-tailed Silky Flycatchers, and we also found Stripe-tailed Hummingbirds and Grey-tailed Mountain-gems feeding on the copious flowers in the garden.

Early the following morning, we again explored close to our hotel. The lovely gardens and numerous birds were impressive. Slaty Flowerpiercers, Yellowish Flycatchers and Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrushes played in the flowers, Blue-throated Toucanets and a Black Guan searched for fruit, a pair of Dark Pewees posed nicely, Scintillant Hummingbirds were seen, and before long we found our first stunning Resplendent Quetzal. Now that really is a bird that makes an impression, no wonder Roger Tory Peterson called this “the most beautiful bird in the New World”! Not far from there we found a pair of Spotted Wood Quails looking after their four chicks and enjoyed remarkably intimate views of these stunning birds. It was then time for some well-earned breakfast.

After breakfast, we were driven up to the lodge’s impressive Los Robles forest reserve, named for the beautiful oak forest there. Amidst the oak trees festooned with moss and bromeliads, where Black-faced Solitaires sang their beautiful, fluty and ethereal songs, we soon found another wonderful Resplendent Quetzal. A Costa Rican Pygmy Owl called, but refused to show, but we had rather more luck with a group of Sulphur-winged Parakeets which gave great views around a nest hole! Ruddy Pigeon and Collared Trogons also showed well, and we then spent the rest of the morning walking slowly back down to the hotel, following a lovely trail along a small stream. Here we successfully tracked down a number of much-wanted species. Skulkers included the unique Wrenthrush (one of which showed well) and an obliging Silvery-fronted Tapaculo, whilst mixed flocks held plenty of other new species including Northern Tufted Flycatchers, Ochraceous Wren, Black-faced Solitaire, Barred Becard, Brown-capped Vireo, Spangle-cheeked Tanager and smart Collared Whitestarts. We also tracked down a number of furnarids including the sometimes difficult Streak-breasted Treehunter, numerous Ruddy Treerunners and our only Spot-crowned Woodcreepers of the trip.

After a fine lunch, we made our way back to Paraiso Quetzales. We once again enjoyed the hummingbird spectacle, before heading off to adjacent areas. It was again overcast with threatening leaden skies, and unsurprisingly, our birding was somewhat curtailed. However, in the time we did have, we managed a few excellent birds including our first Black-and-yellow Phainoptilas, a rare White-fronted (or Zeledon’s) Tyrannulet and a male Black-thighed Grosbeak, albeit a little distant. A few Barred Parakeets flew over, but the less than



The scarce Sulphur-winged Parakeet is often a tough bird to see perched.

pleasant weather forced us back to our lovely lodge. Under clearing skies, more and more groups of Barred Parakeets shot over, some even at eye-level, but as is typical, most never stopped, and the one group that did, immediately became invisible! A planned nightbirding session that night proved a little disappointing. Granted, the Dusky Nightjar showed well, but sadly the owls stayed quiet and invisible!

The following morning was a different kettle of fish! A superb pre-breakfast stroll first yielded a cracking Golden-browed Chlorophonia, one of the most striking endemics, that were watched at length as they fed on some berries. Nearby we found a very obliging Streak-breasted Treehunter followed by a fine male Black-thighed Grosbeak and then another speciality, the rare Ochraceous Pewee. Another obliging Wrenthrush followed and

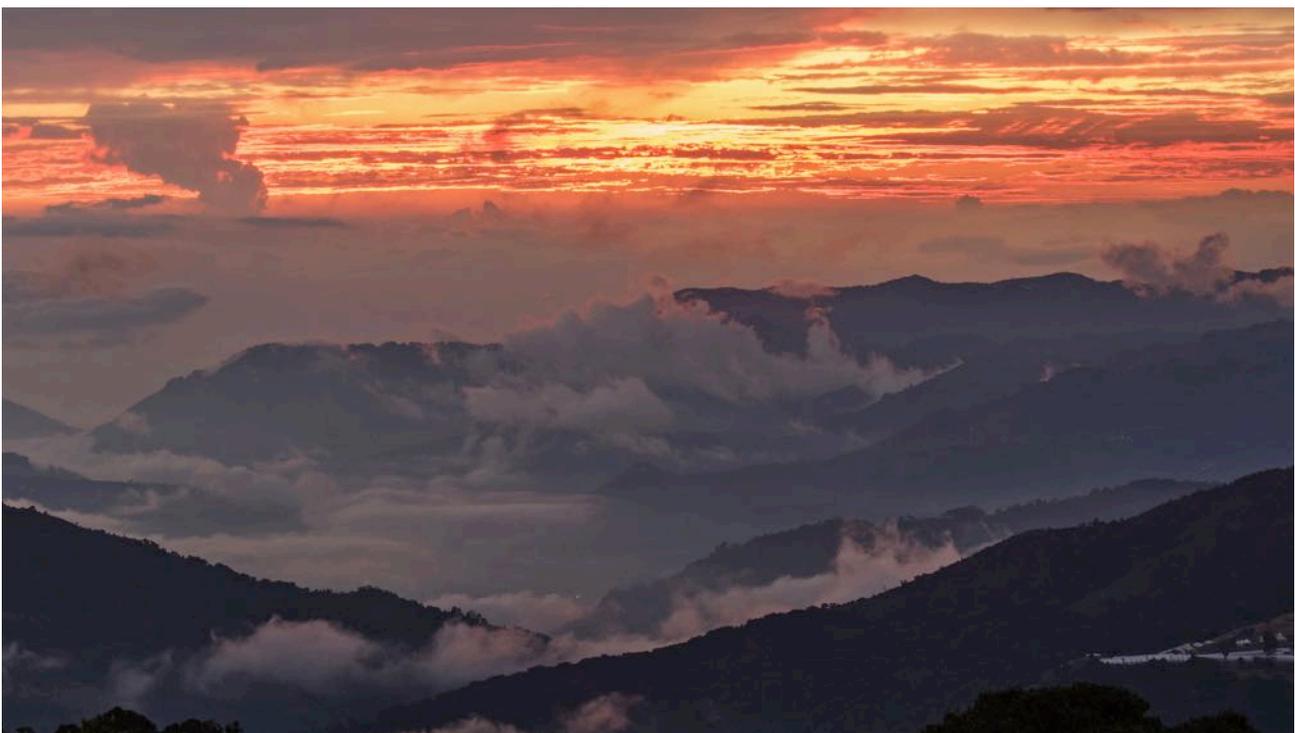


A gorgeous Golden-browed Chlorophonia. One of the very best!

we admired many tame birds around the grounds before tucking into a hearty breakfast. After breakfast we explored another fine area of oak forest. Of course by now, most of the birds were familiar to us, but we did manage to eventually track down a few more targets. First we managed to find Yellow-bellied Siskins and a shy Buffy Tuftedcheek, and this was followed by a couple of sightings of Silvery-throated Jay (an increasingly difficult endemic) and finally, a Costa Rican Pygmy Owl that posed in the scope. All in all, a pretty good haul at Cerro de la Muerte. Further up the mountain, very little bamboo was seeding, though we did find more Volcano Juncos and Slaty Flowerpiercers. With more rain now falling, we headed on to San Isidro where, rain was still falling!



Some rarities from Cerro de la Muerte, clockwise from top left: White-fronted Tyrannulet; Ochraceous Pewee; Costa Rican Pygmy Owl and Black-thighed Grosbeak, and below, the magnificent sunset from our lodge!





This Dusky Nightjar showed fantastically well on Cerro de la Muerte

We paused in the most unlikely of birding spots in San Isidro where, amazingly, we quickly found a superb male Turquoise Cotinga drying out in a treetop. Having sated ourselves on this beauty we made our way to a patch of flowering eucalypt trees. A few hummers were present although the light and distance didn't make viewing them easy! Nevertheless we did find a few Snowy-bellied Hummingbirds, and, as we were leaving, another Turquoise Cotinga, this time a female. We arrived at the lovely Talari Lodge just in time for some of us to see a Grey-necked Wood Rail on the lawn!

Next morning we started off with some very enjoyable early morning birding at Talari. The grounds of the hotel were, as usual, very birdy, and amongst other things, we saw smart Fiery-billed Aracaris, an obliging pair of Olivaceous Piculets, colourful Lesson's Motmots, a confiding Grey-headed Tanager, Rufous-breasted Wren, Yellow-crowned Euphonias, Streaked Saltator, tame White-tipped Doves and a rather more furtive Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush. As we ate breakfast, noisy Grey-headed Chachalacas and numerous colourful Cherrie's Tanagers came to the bananas.



A gorgeous male Turquoise Cotinga, and a confiding Grey-headed Tanager.

We then made our way to Los Cusingos, the home of the late ornithological legend, Dr. Alexander Skutch. The beautiful gardens and a patch of forest have been preserved and we spent the morning exploring these. We were greeted by a few tanagers at the feeders and soon after our first striking Black-hooded Antshrike and a vocal and showy Chestnut-backed Antbird. We had a look around the gardens, where we had great views of our first Scaly-breasted Hummingbird but not many other hummingbirds. We then hit the trails, soon finding our first Black-throated and Slaty-tailed Trogons and a sneaky Black-faced Antthrush. A calling Baird's Trogon gave some views, a noisy Rufous Piha showed well, and we were delighted to track down a Grey-headed Kite for close perched views. Los Cusingos is also a great place for manakins, and during our visit we enjoyed great views of lekking Blue-crowned, Orange-collared and Red-capped Manakins. Sadly Green Shrike-Vireo and Yellow-bellied Tyrannulet were heard only, but just as we were leaving, we found a fine Tawny-winged Woodcreeper which was most obliging, rounding off our visit nicely.

Onwards ever onwards, we then continued our journey, stopping for lunch en route, before arriving for a pleasant afternoon excursion around San Vito. Here, the local marsh held our first Purple Gallinules, Scaled Pigeons, Pale-breasted Spinetail, Crested Oropendola (a recent coloniser from Panama), drinking Costa Rican Swifts and, most importantly a fine Chiriqui Yellowthroat (split from Masked), which performed superbly, at one of its few accessible sites in Costa Rica. Afterwards, we had success in finding another important southern speciality, the scarce Costa Rican Brush Finch (split from Stripe-headed). In the same area we found a few other nice additions, including Slaty Spinetail and jolly Rufous-capped Warblers, before driving the short distance to our accommodation at Las Cruces Field Station.



Above, a Tawny-winged Woodcreeper and Scaly-breasted Hummingbird at Los Cusingos, and below, Chiriqui Yellowthroat and Costa Rican Brushfinch near to San Vito.





Charming Hummingbird and Garden Emerald were both seen well in the Wilson Botanical Gardens.

We spent all of the next morning walking around the Wilson Botanical Gardens enjoying good weather and the many birds present. A Mottled Owl called for a while pre-dawn, but refused to show itself. Early morning we located a calling Barred Forest Falcon, whilst a bottle brush tree by the dining room attracted our first Charming Hummingbirds, and while watching the tree we found other new species including huge Crested Guans and showy Short-billed Pigeons. After breakfast, and with little success with our hummingbird targets, we made our way to one of the forest trails. Unfortunately it seemed rather quiet, though a major success was gaining excellent views of a trio of smart Marbled Wood Quails. Brown-hooded Parrots were found perched, Grey-chested Doves fed on the trails, and other species included excellent views of Spot-crowned Euphonia, a couple of Scale-crested Pygmy Tyrants uttering their distinctive calls, and several White-throated Thrushes feeding on the ground. We then staked out some verbain flowers where coquettes were conspicuous by their absence, but a male Garden Emerald showed superbly well. As usual, time was not on our side, and we headed south. As we made our way deeper into the agricultural landscape towards the Panama border, we found Smooth-billed Anis and despite the hot and dry conditions found a few different birds including a female Sapphire-throated Hummingbird, Red-breasted Blackbirds, our only Isthmian Wrens of the trip, a group of Brown-throated Parakeets and a smart Bare-throated Tiger Heron on its nest. A stop at a river crossing yielded good numbers Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks along with Wood Storks, Roseate Spoonbills, Little Blue and Tricoloured Herons, Black-necked Stilt, Southern Lapwing, Greater Yellowlegs and Solitary and Least Sandpipers. Nearby we found our first Grey-lined Hawk and flocks of Red-lored Amazons were fairly common. As it got dark, we arrived at the Esquinas Rainforest Lodge just in time for dinner, pausing for Pauraques as we went.



One of several Pauraques in the Esquinas area.



Goodies from the Esquinas Rainforest Lodge, clockwise from top left: the lovely Baird's Trogon; the endangered Black-cheeked Ant Tanager; the often elusive Green Shrike-Vireo and the scarce White-throated Shrike-Tanager.



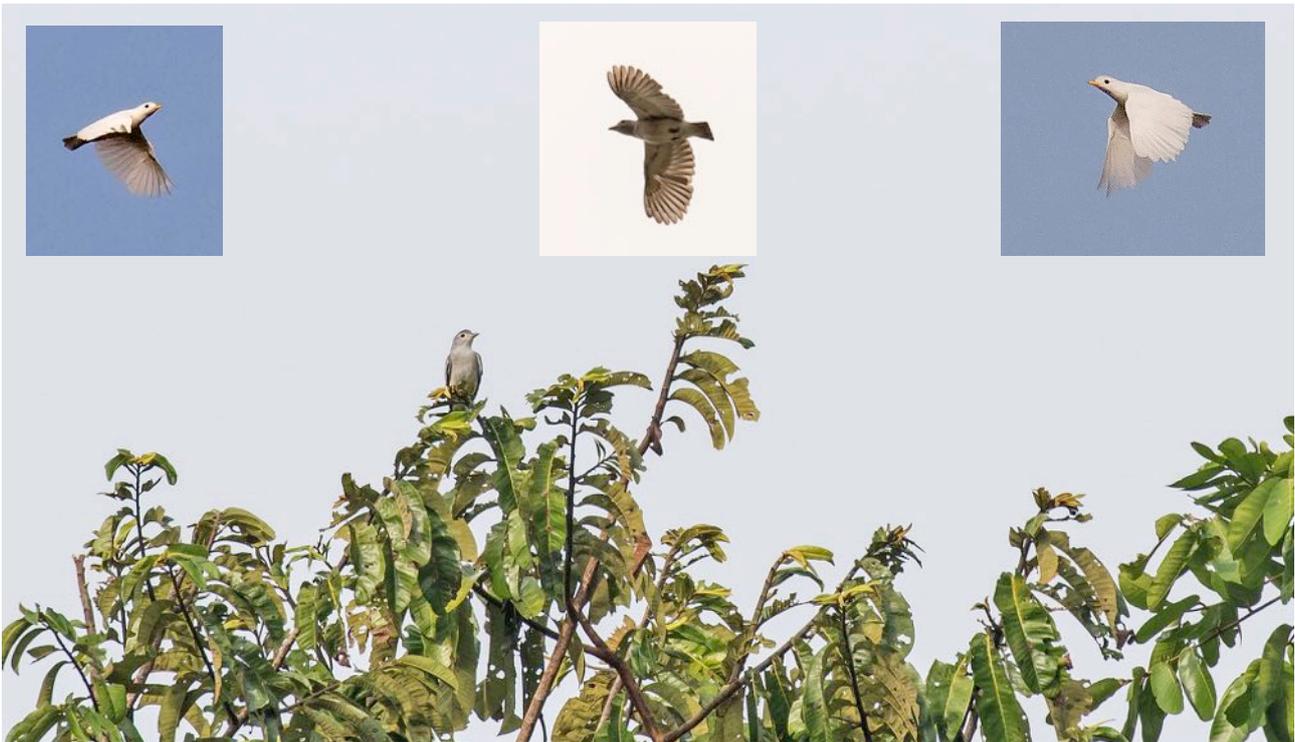
We had the following day to explore the rather hot and humid forests that surround the Esquinas Rainforest Lodge. At dawn, we found a pair of Spectacled Owls in the garden, before setting off on one of the trails. These area is home to a number of interesting species, and the main target, the localized Black-cheeked Ant Tanager once again proved easy to find. Also in the forest we were pleased to find mixed flocks which held Black-striped and Ruddy Woodcreepers, some unusually calm Western Woodhaunters and Tawny-crowned Greenlets. Gorgeous Orange-collared Manakins glowed from the undergrowth, a male Baird's Trogons showed very well indeed and a fine male Ruddy Quail-Dove wandered along the trail. Other good species found during the morning included a fine pair of Golden-naped Woodpeckers, noisy Scarlet-rumped Caciques and timid Riverside Wrens, whilst a female White-crested Coquette showing well just by our cabins was a definite bonus! During the heat of the day, a siesta was offered, but some keen souls wanted more! Of course this was never going to end well as I was soon running back to the chalets to alert everyone. We were soon back at the flock we'd found and enjoying a fabulous pair of White-throated Shrike-Tanagers, as well as a calling Green Shrike-Vireo which, for a change, was easy to find in its canopy home, and showed superbly, and we found a distinctive-looking Long-tailed Woodcreeper moving with the flock. The whirlwind soon passed, and the mid-afternoon strollers continued on their way, adding a fine pair of Rufous-winged Woodpeckers and a pair of Grey-necked Wood Rails. We all reconvened post siesta and returned to look for woodpeckers and rails. No sign of course, but we did find a pair of Buff-rumped Warblers showing their contrasting rumps as they flicked around the lawn, and then, amazingly,

an adult Ornate Hawk-Eagle appeared, granting brilliant perched views as it sat proudly on its avian prey which I believe was most likely a Little Tinamou. As the temperatures dropped a little, we birded out in the open country of La Gamba, where we were successful in finding Rusty-margined Flycatcher, a recent coloniser from Panama, and Scrub Greenlet as well as a few other open country species. An evening outing was very successful too, as we spotlighted a cracking Striped Owl perched right by the roadside. What a lovely owl!



The fabulous Striped Owl and brilliant Ornate Hawk-Eagle with prey (Little Tinamou?) at the Esquinas Rainforest Lodge.





A perched female Yellow-billed Cotinga at the Rincon Bridge with flying males and female inset.

The following morning, we set off for Rincon in the early morning, way before dawn, in order to seek out Yellow-billed Cotinga, one of the most localized of the south Pacific slope regional endemics, presently classified as endangered. After a tense wait, this year we were again in luck with the “white bird”. After the odd brief flight views and a few tityra false alarms (both Masked and Black-crowned Tityras were present), all of a sudden they started to appear and we scoped up several of the 6+ birds present. We also found another Turquoise Cotinga. Great stuff! Here we also watched Mangrove Swallows, numerous toucans and our first Yellow-billed Cacique. We then moved to a nearby beach where we soon located the endemic Mangrove Hummingbird, another endangered species, several of which showed very well indeed, as did our first Mangrove Warbler. Here, Brown Boobys were seen offshore, and an intriguing seabird photographed at huge distance by one member of the group remained a mystery, but may well have been a jaeger (small skua).



The endemic Mangrove Hummingbird showed very well indeed.

With the success of bagging the specialities reasonably quickly, we decided to hightail it north along the coast, pausing for a lavish meal as we went! As we approached the Carara area, our first Scarlet Macaws of the trip, always a very welcome sight, were noted. We made it to Tarcoles in good time, and boarded our boat to explore the peaceful Tarcoles River. Heading downriver, the number of American Crocodiles was at times pretty impressive, particularly given their huge size (some were up to 6 meters or 20 feet!). Eventually we arrived in the estuary's mangrove habitat where we enjoyed fine views of several Roseate Spoonbills and American White Ibis. Magnificent Frigatebirds soared overhead, and our good luck with the mangrove specialities continued, with great views of Mangrove Vireo and Panamanian and Northern Scrub Flycatcher. Hoffman's Woodpeckers and our first Rufous-browed Peppershrikes were added, several (Mangrove) Common Black Hawks were seen, our first Orange-fronted Parakeets and Yellow-naped Amazons were admired and we saw our only Plumbeous Kites of the tour. Some smart Boat-billed Herons were much admired, and an American Pygmy Kingfisher showed well. We rounded off the trip watching a few shorebirds as a Western Osprey carried a fish into the sunset and migrant American Cliff Swallows drifted overhead. It was a pleasant afternoon! We then made our way to our Carara Hotel, donned our wristbands and investigated the bar, for those wristbands were good for more than the dinner!! We also had a peep at the juvenile Spectacled Owl just outside the bar!



American Crocodile, Yellow-naped Amazon, American Pygmy Kingfisher and a Western Osprey flying off into the sunset!





One of our main targets in Carara National Park was Streak-chested Antpitta. We were not disappointed!

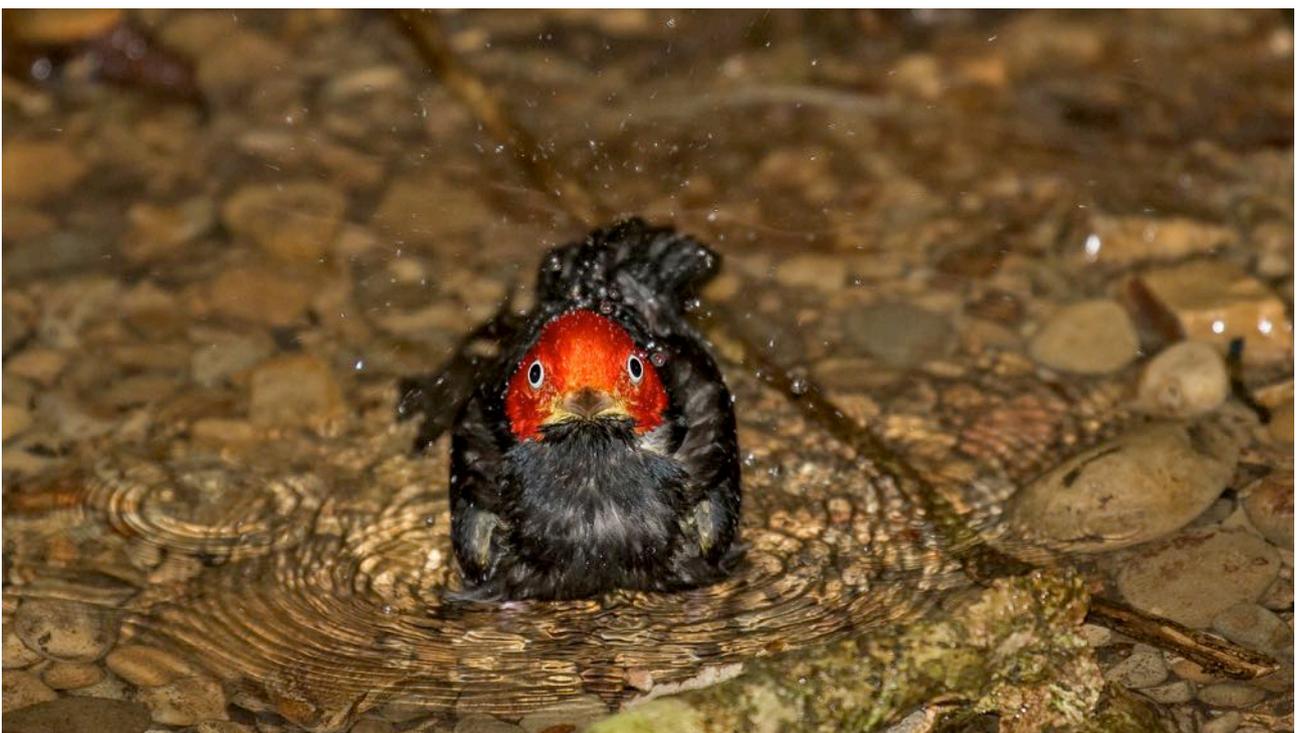
We spent most of the next day at the excellent Carara National Park. As the park has rather strange and restrictive opening hours, we began along a trail where we found a fine Northern Royal Flycatcher. Several White-whiskered Puffbirds sat motionless in the midstorey, Pale-billed Woodpeckers tapped away, and Dusky Antbirds chortled from the undergrowth. Here, we also found our first stunning Turquoise-browed Motmot, Rufous-tailed Jacamar and Northern Bentbill. We then shifted location, admired a Gartered Trogon in the car park and bought our permits to enter the reserve. The excellent trails allow easy access to some great forest, and we were soon admiring new species such as Rufous-backed Wren, a Band-tailed Barbthroat feeding at close range and Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher. We quickly found one of our main targets, a cracking Streak-chested Antpitta which showed well and at close range, and while watching him, a stunning Black-faced Antthrush performed brilliantly in the forest. Further on a Long-billed Gnatwren showed well, and then some tale-tale calls led us to a small antswarm that was attended by numerous Bicoloured Antbirds and Northern Banded Woodcreepers amongst others. Scarlet Macaws and agile Central American Spider Monkeys also obliged, but as the day wore on, the exponential rise in tourists sent us back to the bus, pausing only for an impressive tarantula as we went!



Central American Spider Monkey and a huge tarantula in Carara National Park.



More highlights from Carara National Park: Bicoloured Antbird, an intricately marked Northern Barred Woodcreeper, White-whiskered Puffbird and a bathing Red-capped Manakin.





Our first Great Tinamou in Carara National Park caused some excitement.

After a pleasant lunch and a break, we headed back to the forest and settled by a small stream. Over the next hour or so, a procession of birds came down to bathe. Numerous attractive Red-capped and Blue-crowned Manakins delighted, colourful Chestnut-sided Warblers joined the action and even a couple of Ruddy Quail-Doves, Stripe-throated Hermits and a Southern Nightingale-Wren joined in. However, the real stars of the show were a couple of diminutive Stub-tailed Spadebills and a hulking Great Tinamou!

After a final morning admiring Turquoise-browed Motmots and a look around the hotel area where we found White-shouldered Tanagers and a fine male Painted Bunting as well as admiring the juvenile Spectacled Owl which by now had been joined by an adult, we packed up. Having seen pretty much all of our targets within



Stunning Turquoise-browed Motmots delighted several times. Amazing to think they make their own spatules.

Carara reserve, we decided to stop off in the dry country a little further north, in search of several specialities. We quickly started adding species such as White-lored Gnatcatcher, Greenish Elaenia, Nutting's Flycatcher and Olive Sparrow. Our first Ferruginous Pygmy Owl popped up into view but the calling Lesser Ground Cuckoos were less obliging, and despite some effort, remained heard only and glimpsed. A couple of Western Kingbirds were also a surprise.

Moving north, we stopped at various mangrove areas and estuaries, mostly searching in vain for Rufous-necked Wood Rails. Some large flocks of (American) Royal Terns and Laughing Gulls held a few Cabot's Terns, and one particularly productive area of salt pans held large numbers of birds and held our attention for a while. Here we found numerous Black Skimmers and a good selection of waders which included Marbled Godwit, Short-billed Dowitcher, (Western) Willet, Wilson's Plover, Semipalmated, Least, Stilt and Western Sandpipers, many of which were coming into fine plumage, and even a lone Wilson's Phalarope.



Black Skimmers and (American) Royal Terns, and below, Semipalmated (left) Western and three Stilt Sandpipers.



As usual we had appointments to keep, and made our way to the excellent Hacienda Solimar. We hit the ground running, and went straight out across the impressive wetlands, admiring the huge flocks of Black-bellied Whistling Ducks. Peregrines were causing havoc, and flocks of birds were flying all around. On one occasion, a Peregrine caught a Blue-winged Teal in front of us, then having carried it several hundred metres, dropped it, and the lucky duck flew off! Bare-throated Tiger Herons were extremely common, the hordes of Roseate Spoonbills and Wood Storks were joined by Limpkins and stately Jabirus, and the numbers of Muscovy Ducks were higher than just about anywhere I have seen. Diversion from the wetland birds was provided



Pacific Screech Owl, Lesser Ground Cuckoo and Double-striped Thick-knees around Hacienda Solimar.

by numerous Snail Kites, Laughing Falcons and a Harris's Hawk. A pair of Spot-breasted Orioles showed well as did Plain-breasted Ground Doves, and we were pleased to find a lovely pair of Double-striped Thick-knees just at the end of the day.

The following day we had a fairly obvious list of targets to look for around the finca, and most of them were to be found in the dry forest. The birds fell thick and fast as one after another we notched up a Collared Forest Falcon perched in a tall tree, several smart Black-headed Trogons, gorgeous displaying Long-tailed Manakins, melodious Banded Wrens, an obliging Northern Bentbill, and the pre-breakfast highlight, a stunning Lesser Ground Cuckoo though sadly, we only heard the calling Thicket Tinamous. Whilst eating breakfast we admired nest-building Streak-backed Orioles, and nearby found a covey of Spot-bellied Bobwhites, numerous White-fronted Amazons and some comical White-throated Magpie-Jays. Our next highlight was a spectacular roosting Pacific Pygmy Owl, and we went on to track down other goodies such as Stripe-headed Sparrow, Cinnamon Hummingbird, Green-breasted Mango, Canivet's Emerald, Blue-vented Hummingbird, and, after some searching, the diminutive Scrub Euphonia. We also had a fantastic mammal highlight in the form of a gorgeous Northern Tamandua!! By now it was warming up!

After a fine lunch, our journey took us up the winding road to Monteverde arriving in good time to check in to our hotel and then visit a nearby patch of evergreen woodland where our primary target was Chiriqui Quail-Dove. After a bit of wandering around we came across one of the doves walking on the trail, and went on to



The wetland bonanza at Hacienda Solimar! Black-bellied Whistling Ducks, Bare-throated Tiger Heron and a stately Jabiru!



secure some excellent views of this smart species. Simply stunning! A few other species such as Rufous-and-white Wren, Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush and superb White-eared Ground Sparrows showed up before we made our way back to our lovely lodge.

The following day, after an early breakfast, we headed up to the Santa Elena reserve. The birding seemed a little slow, and we had to work for our birds, but ultimately we came away with some great rewards from the beautiful cloud forest! Pride of place went to the magnificent Three-wattled Bellbird which jumped from perch to perch emitting its bizarre calls right in front of us! Truly a bird that has to be seen to be believed! Other

highlights during the morning included a feeding Black Guan, another superb male Resplendent Quetzal and a tootling pair of Prong-billed Barbets. Slaty-backed Nightingale-Thrushes showed well, a Buff-fronted Quail-Dove potted along the path, and we also had close-up sightings of “Orange-bellied” Trogon (nowadays considered to be merely a colour morph of Collared Trogon). Flocks included Ruddy Treerunners, colourful Spectacled Whitestarts and Black-eared Warblers, but as the morning wore on, we knew it was time to pluck up the courage and start heading downhill, San Gerardo bound!



A couple of images from our amazing Three-wattled Bellbird encounter at Santa Elena.

Our bags, beer and other essentials had already been transported on Giovanni's quad-bike, so we had a couple of hours to bird our way down. The weather was clear which made for great views of the impressive Arenal Volcano as we approached the station, but the birds were fairly quiet, though we did add a few notable new species on the way down including Lineated Foliage-gleaner, Golden-bellied Flycatcher and a singing Pale-vented Thrush which showed extremely well. We arrived at the lodge in time for lunch. The lodge is somewhat rustic, but this is made up for by the breathtaking scenery, the tranquillity and relaxing atmosphere, and the quality of the surrounding forest, though accessing the latter is not all straightforward as some of the trails are a little 'undulating'. The station hosts Giovanni and Ivannia looked after us well during our visit with Ivannia's tasty home cooking giving us the energy for all the walking we did up and down the hilly trails! The only downside is that the Bare-necked Umbrellabird, the star bird of the area, has become much harder to find these days, and like many before us, we failed to connect with this beast!

Our efforts during our two and a half days at the site were rewarded though. The two 'best' birds were perhaps Blue-and-gold Tanagers which showed very well at a couple of locations and the rare Sooty-faced Finch, which, after much effort, showed well on our final morning. For those not hiding from the rain, Highland Tinamou showed well on the trail, whilst we all gained our first views of amazing Great Curassows on this trip at least. Other notable species during our visit included a perched Bicolored Hawk, a bold Grey-throated Leaf-tosser, Red-faced Spinetails, Spotted Barbtails, the scarce Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaner, an impressive Brown-billed Scythebill, a couple of fine Ocellated Antbirds attending an antswarm, a retiring Black-headed Antthrush walking quietly on the forest floor, two flocks of restless Rufous-browed Tyrannulets, several White-throated Spadebills, sneaky Song Wren and Northern Nightingale-Wren (both seen well by some), more obliging Band-backed and Black-throated Wrens, attractive Black-headed Nightingale-Thrushes, Azure-hooded Jay (an often tricky one to see) and Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch. From the station veranda, with its spectacular view of the

volcano, we saw American Swallow-tailed Kite and Black Hawk-Eagle as well as Scarlet-thighed Dacnis, whilst the constant sound and antics of the Montezuma Oropendolas was never far away!

After our adventures down at San Gerardo we returned to Santa Elena. Those that walked out were amazed at how much easier the walk out was than anticipated, those that went on the procession of quad bike rides enjoyed the experience! We then made our way to some hummingbird feeders close to the Monteverde Reserve. It's fair to say that the hummingbird experience was better than the lunch, but we survived and walked away with Purple-throated Mountain-gems, smart Magenta-throated Woodstars, and the endemic Coppery-headed Emerald as well as numerous stunning Violet Sabrewings, Green-crowned Brilliants and Lesser Violetears. We then downed tools and rested for a bit before returning to Santa Elena. Initially the mist and light rain were not too encouraging, but once darkness set in we soon had a fabulous Bare-shanked Screech Owl fixed in the beam of the spotlight and life was good! We then went on to a fabulous dinner and some book signing with my friend Robert Dean, the illustrator of the Costa Rica bird guide, and a Monteverde resident!



The wonderful Bare-shanked Screech Owl at Santa Elena.



The sometimes tricky Chiriqui Quail-Dove near to Monteverde.

The following morning, we made a brief excursion close to our lodge where we were delighted to find not one, but two entertaining groups of Black-breasted Wood Quails running around on the forest floor in comical fashion. Our third species of wood quail seen superbly on the tour! We returned to the lodge for breakfast and admired a Blue-throated Toucanet feeding in the lodge garden. We then packed up and headed to the delightful Celeste Mountain Lodge, located on the forested slopes of Tenorio Volcano, one of two dormant volcanoes in the northern section of the country that are of huge importance for a large number of migratory forest species. We arrived in time for a lovely lunch, whilst watching Crimson-collared Tanagers and Black-cowled Orioles amongst others. Sadly, soon after lunch, the heavens opened, and an absolutely torrential downpour wiped out some of the afternoon. We did find our first White Hawk from the bus, and some sharp spotting brought us excellent views of a Central American Pygmy Owl. Our quest for Lovely Cotinga was sadly not successful but a few other species were found during the search including noisy Northern Mealy Amazons, lively Yellow Tyrannulets, showy Olive-crowned Yellowthroats, our first Black-faced Grosbeaks and a Rufous-winged Tanager, but more heavy rain forced us to retire to our comfortable lodge.



A fine male Black-crested Coquette and a Spotted Antbird. Two highlights from Heliconias Lodge.

The following morning was spent birding the various trails around Heliconias Lodge. We lucked straight into a pair of superb Tody Motmots, one of the stars of the place, which showed superbly, but things went down hill from there, and despite much effort, and with the help of a local friend, Henry, we struggled to find much at all. It's almost incomprehensible how forests can go so quiet! We did see a confiding Spotted Antbird, an obliging Northern Nightingale-Wren, a Blue-black Grosbeak and Olive-backed Euphonias, but we knew there was so much more lurking undetected. Fortunately a fine male Black-crested Coquette did pull things round a little, as did some enormous pizzas at lunch! In the afternoon we returned to the Celeste side where, much to some of the group's delight, we enjoyed amazing views of a White-tipped Sicklebill. We then made another attempt for the Lovely Cotinga, and although a male was seen at close range, it disappeared before everyone had seen it, and never reappeared. A slightly disappointing end to the day's birding for some. We then made our way to Caño Negro, arriving after dark and all in need of a shower! Sadly the electricity supply couldn't cope, but all came good in the end!



Our amazing White-tipped Sicklebill encounter near to Celeste Mountain Lodge.

The following day we made our way to a jetty where we immediately got some great looks at a singing Grey-headed Dove. We then embarked on a very enjoyable boat ride. The riverbanks were lined with goodies, and very soon we were enjoying great birds such as obliging Rufous-naped Wood Rails, several stunning Sungrebes and the extremely localized Nicaraguan Grackle. More Boat-billed Herons showed well, our only Northern Beardless Tyrannulet and Canebrake Wrens popped up, and garrulous Finsch's and Olive-throated Parakeets fed amongst the brilliant orange flowering *Erythrina* trees. We also explored areas of riverside marsh and wetlands. Here, the main prize was the ultra skulking Yellow-breasted Crake which was seen well on several occasions, even walking just in front of us, and we also flushed a Grey-breasted Crake during our search. Collared Plovers, Pectoral Sandpipers and Green Ibises were added to our tally, and pools held a lone Glossy Ibis, a Lesser Scaup and a small group of American Wigeon. Another Jabiru flew over, Lesser Yel-

low-headed Vultures quartered the marsh, and on the way back we added Mangrove Cuckoo and a confiding pair of Spot-breasted Wrens. I think that qualifies as a decent pre-breakfast session!



Some highlights from our Cano Negro boat trip... Nicaraguan Grackle, Grey-headed Dove, the localized Spot-breasted Wren, a flying Yellow-breasted Crake (by Ian Lewis) and a lovely female Sungrebe.





We saw plenty of Boat-billed Herons on the tour... Pinnated Bittern and Nicaraguan Seedfinch were seen well around Los Chiles!



With the mercury rising we headed on, but the roadside habitat was very dry, and we had no luck with our quarry, the Nicaraguan Seedfinch. We decided to detour, and this ultimately proved to be a good move as we found first a White-tailed Kite, then a brilliant cryptic Pinnated Bittern, a singing Ruddy-breasted Seedeater, and finally, when the rain eased, a hulking near-endemic Nicaraguan Seedfinch! Back on track, we picked up a quick lunch and headed for La Fortuna. Our late afternoon here was a little frustrating. We found our first Broad-billed Motmot, but the calls of Uniform Crakes emanating from the damp forest simply frustrated us and they never revealed themselves! We then made our way up to the stunning Arenal Observatory Lodge, our home for the next two nights. Post dinner those that wished has sublime views of a fabulous Black-and-white Owl, not a bad way to finish the day!

We awoke the following morning to the amazing site of the Arenal Volcano looming over us as Great Curassows and White-nosed Coatis fed in front of the deck, and the verbain hedge in front of the lodge attracted

Green Thorntails, Violet-headed Hummingbirds, Brown Violetears and the localized Blue-throated Sapphire. We explored one of the trails pre-breakfast without too much success. Thicket Antpittas proved as elusive as usual (glimpses and no more), some Song Wrens and smart Stripe-breasted Wrens did show, but the mixed flocks revealed little more than Carmiol's Tanagers. Then BANG!! A local guide waved us down to say he'd just seen a Bare-necked Umbrellabird, and after a slightly frustrating flight view, there it was, in plain view in front of us, scrapping for palm fruits with the Crested Guans as Great Curassows walked below. It was a pinch yourself moment that fortunately lasted several minutes! Bird of the trip was sealed and grins donned by all!



Great Curassows are like 'chuks' in Costa Rica these days!!





Three great highlights from Arenal: Bare-crowned Antbird, Keel-billed Motmot and the lovely Rufous-winged Woodpecker.

Breakfast tasted good that morning! We then headed down a little to a lower area where we soon found the much-wanted Keel-billed Motmot which, as usual, was paired with a Broad-billed Motmot. Very strange!! Nearby we found a fine pair of Rufous-winged Woodpeckers and a Fasciated Antshrike, and then got some great looks at the rather strange Bare-crowned Antbird. Other than the horrid antpitta, all was really falling into place! After a fine lunch, we explored around the observatory a little more, finding several more Stripe-breasted Wrens, the desired Streak-crowned Antvireo and a very obliging Black-throated Wren. After dinner we had another look at the Black-and-white Owl and also enjoyed the incredible Red-eyed Tree Frogs and a Horned Viper!



Nocturnal highlights from Arenal: the amazing Red-eyed Tree Frog and the lovely Black-and-white Owl.



It would have been difficult to get much better views of Uniform Crake!

Having hit our targets, we left Arenal early and headed back to La Fortuna. This time we found Uniform Crakes within seconds and ended up getting amazing views of two pairs, one nest building at close range! Rufous-naped Wood Rails and White-throated Crakes also showed incredibly well, Grey-headed Chachalacas fed at the feeders and we even bumped in to a lovely male Hooded Warbler. Moving on, we stopped at a local hummingbird garden on the foothills of Vólcan Poás, and here we were delighted to find several striking Black-bellied Hummingbirds and a male White-bellied Mountain-gem as well as a surprise White-throated Flycatcher. Hook-billed Kite was added en route, and we made a second stop at some other feeders, but this proved to be a total washout as we endured some of the heaviest rain I have ever seen! Somehow the Violet Sabrewings kept going and a White-naped Brushfinch popped up, but it was still stair-rotting it down when we left!!



Three more of the excellent hummingbirds we saw... Violet Sabrewing, White-bellied Mountain-gem and Black-bellied Hummingbird.



This Vermiculated Screech Owl showed very well at La Selva.

Our final port-of-call on our Costa Rican odyssey was OTS La Selva, a biologist's paradise, and one of the leading tropical research facilities in the world. It also happens to be extremely birdy. Our first afternoon we explored just close to the lodge, enjoying fine views of magnificent Great Green Macaws in the pasture close to our hotel. A good start! Then walking to dinner we found a fine Semiplumbeous Hawk and a very obliging Short-tailed Nighthawk, and walking back, a wonderful Vermiculated Screech Owl. All good stuff.

Much of the bird activity was around our accommodation and between there and the dining hall, and during our various sessions we gradually found more goodies. Perhaps the main prize was the rare Snowy Cotinga, a male of which was seen on two mornings. Slaty-breasted Tinamou proved tough this year, though most people managed some views. Chestnut-colored and Cinnamon Woodpeckers gave great views, more Great



Breakfasts at La Selva were enlivened by Chestnut-colored Woodpecker and Snowy Cotinga!

Tinamous and Great Curassows were found (at what is possibly the easiest place in the world to see this crazy cracid), Keel-billed and Chestnut-mandibled Toucans were frequent and other goodies included a couple of Tiny Hawks, another Sunbittern, Blue-chested Hummingbird, tiny Pied Puffbirds, Black-crowned Antshrike, tiny Black-capped Pygmy Tyrants, the scarce White-ringed Flycatcher, a nesting pair of Northern Royal Flycatchers, a party of vocal Purple-throated Fruitcrows, gorgeous displaying White-collared Manakins popping at their lek, Bay Wrens, smart Olive-backed Euphonias, colourful Shining Honeycreepers, Plain Tanager and noisy Dusky-faced Tanagers.

We also made a day long excursion to Braulio Carrillo National Park and some adjacent areas. Birding is never easy there, but we did manage some good highlights including Black-and-yellow Tanager and Tawny-capped and White-vented Euphonias at a fruiting tree, a mixed flock which held Russet Antshrike, Streak-crowned Antvireo and Emerald and Tawny-crested Tanagers, and a lovely antswarm with numerous stunning Ocellated Antbirds. Sadly, the Lattice-tailed Trogon only called a couple of times and refused to be seen. A nearby garden held some wonderful Snowcaps, and after a large lunch, we spent some time with a talented local guide who showed us an incredible Thicket Antpitta at point blank range, a stunning Crested Owl, some amazing Honduran White Bats and a roosting Great Potoo! Last ditch efforts failed to reveal the trogon, though more Black-and-yellow Tanagers and an Olive-backed Quail-Dove were seen

We took it easy on our final morning at La Selva, though did manage our best views of the Slaty-breasted Tinamou and the Tiny Hawks amongst others, and then showered, packed and made our way back towards San José, and the relatively short drive to the airport. Time to relax and reflect back on what had been another amazing trip around this brilliant country!



After some frustrating experiences, seeing Thicket Antpitta so well was a relief!



The gorgeous Resplendent Quetzal. Always destined to be a favourite on any Costa Rican tour!!

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

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).

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

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

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

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>

(EW) = Extinct in the wild, **(CR)** = Critically Endangered, **(EN)** = Endangered, **(VU)** = Vulnerable, **(NT)** = Near Threatened, **(DD)** = Data Deficient.

For polytypic species, the subspecies seen on the tour, where known, is placed in parentheses at the end of the species comment. Generally, species listed with trinomials are not currently split by the IOC.

The species names and taxonomy used in the report mostly follows Gill, F & D Donsker (Eds). **2017. IOC World Bird List (v 7.2)**. This list is updated several times annually and is available at <http://www.worldbirdnames.org>. Please note, this was the current version when the report checklist was created. Some alternative names are given in parentheses.

All of our checklists are powered by our partner iGoTerra (www.igoterra.com) who provide web and mobile applications for bird and wildlife enthusiasts and businesses. Their suite of services cover observations, rankings, lists, photos and trip management tools.

Great Tinamou *Tinamus major* (NT) Two forms seen well: *castaneiceps* at Carara and *fuscipennis* at La Selva.

Highland Tinamou ◊ *Nothocercus bonapartei* Several heard at San Gerardo, and a couple seen well there [*frantzii*].

Little Tinamou *Crypturellus soui modestus* (H) A few heard, the first at Esquinas Rainforest Lodge [*modestus*].

Thicket Tinamou ◊ *Crypturellus cinnamomeus* (H) Heard near Hacienda Solimar, but no luck [*praepes*].

Slaty-breasted Tinamou ◊ *Crypturellus boucardi* A few sightings at La Selva, but generally quite tricky [*costaricensis*].

Black-bellied Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna autumnalis* 1000s at Hacienda Solimar was most impressive [*fulgens*].

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata* c40 seen well at Hacienda Solimar, and a handful of others.

American Wigeon *Anas americana* 5 seen on the boat trip at Caño Negro.

Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors* Biggest numbers were at Hacienda Solimar and Caño Negro.

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis* One drake seen on the boat trip at Caño Negro.

Grey-headed Chachalaca ◊ *Ortalis cinereiceps* Several seen well, the first at Talari Lodge, San Isidro.

Crested Guan *Penelope purpurascens* Many seen well, the first at the Wilson Botanical Gardens [*aequatorialis*].



Crested Guans are remarkably tame and easy to see in Costa Rica!

Black Guan ◊ *Chamaepetes unicolor* (NT) One at Cerro de la Muerte, and a couple at Monteverde.

Great Curassow ◊ *Crax rubra* (VU) Several seen well at a few sites. Many were tame!

Spot-bellied Bobwhite ◊ *Colinus leucopogon* Four flushed at Hacienda Solimar were the only ones [*dickeyi*].

Marbled Wood Quail *Odontophorus gujanensis* (NT) Brilliant views of a trio at the Wilson Botanical Gardens [*castigatus*].

Black-breasted Wood Quail ◊ *Odontophorus leucolaemus* Stunning views of two groups at Monteverde.

Spotted Wood Quail ◊ *Odontophorus guttatus* Brilliant views of a pair and four young near to Savegre Lodge.

Least Grebe *Tachybaptus dominicus* Just a few seen, the first on the way to Esquinas Lodge [*brachypterus*].

Wood Stork *Mycteria americana* First in good numbers on the Coto 47 road right in the southeast.

Jabiru *Jabiru mycteria* A couple seen well at Hacienda Solimar, and another at Caño Negro.

Green Ibis *Mesembrinibis cayennensis* c5 seen at Caño Negro, and a couple at La Selva.

American White Ibis *Eudocimus albus* Seen in small numbers at several wetlands [nominated].

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* One seen at Caño Negro.

Roseate Spoonbill *Platalea ajaja* Small numbers at several wetlands, the first on the boat trip at Tarcoles.

Bare-throated Tiger Heron *Tigrisoma mexicanum* Plenty. First seen on a nest on the Coto 47 road in the southeast.

Boat-billed Heron *Cochlearius cochlearius* Great views on the boat trip at Tarcoles and at Caño Negro [*panamensis*].

Pinnated Bittern ◇ *Botaurus pinnatus* Superb views of one at Media Queso, near Los Chiles [nominate].

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* Just a handful seen, the first near Rancho Naturalista [*hoactli*].

Yellow-crowned Night Heron *Nyctanassa violacea* A couple on the boat trip at Tarcoles were the only ones [nominate].

Green Heron *Butorides virescens* Largest numbers at Hacienda Solimar and Caño Negro [nominate].

Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* Common and widespread.

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias* Just a few seen, with c10 at Hacienda Solimar the biggest count [nominate].

Great Egret *Ardea alba* Widespread in small numbers in wetlands [*egretta* = American G E].

Tricolored Heron *Egretta tricolor* A few seen, first at the productive river on the Coto 47 road [*ruficollis*].

Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea* A few seen, first at the productive river on the Coto 47 road right in the southeast.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula* Small numbers seen at several wetlands [nominate].

Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis* Seen on the Tarcoles boat trip and along the coast further north.

Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens* Seen on the Tarcoles boat trip and along the coast further north.

Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster* Three seen off of Playa Sándalo in the southeast [*etesiac*].

Neotropic Cormorant *Phalacrocorax brasilianus* Only on the boat trip at Caño Negro and at Media Queso [nominate].

Anhinga *Anhinga anhinga* Small numbers, first at the productive river on the Coto 47 [*leucogaster*].



An Anhinga during the Cano Negro boat trip.

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura* Common and widespread.

Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture *Cathartes burrovianus* Seen on the boat trip at Caño Negro and at Media Queso [nominate].

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus* Common and widespread.

King Vulture *Sarcoramphus papa* Just one seen over the Esquinas Rainforest Lodge.

Western Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* Small numbers at several sites, the first over Rancho Naturalista [*carolinensis*].

White-tailed Kite *Elanus leucurus* (NL) A couple spotted from the moving bus.

Grey-headed Kite *Leptodon cayanensis* Great views of a perched adult at Los Cusingos (Skutch's Garden) [nominate].

Hook-billed Kite *Chondrohierax uncinatus* One seen circling over the lower slopes of the Vólcan Poas.

Swallow-tailed Kite *Elanoides forficatus* Small numbers on several dates, the first on the way to Rancho Naturalista.

Black Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus tyrannus* An adult seen circling at San Gerardo [*serus*].

Ornate Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus ornatus* (NT) Great views of a perched adult at Esquinas Rainforest Lodge [*vicarius*].

Tiny Hawk *Accipiter superciliosus* Excellent views of a juv and then an adult at La Selva [*fontainieri*].

Bicolored Hawk *Accipiter bicolor* Great views of one perched at San Gerardo [nominate].

Mississippi Kite *Ictinia mississippiensis* A cracking flock of 50+ seen over La Selva.

Plumbeous Kite *Ictinia plumbea* Four on the Tarcoles Boat Trip were the only ones.



A (Mangrove) Common Black Hawk on the Tarcoles boat trip, and a Bicolored Hawk from San Gerardo.

Snail Kite *Rostrhamus sociabilis* At least six seen at the Hacienda Solimar [nominate].

Common Black Hawk ◊ *Buteogallus anthracinus* A handful seen; first on the Tarcoles boat trip [*bangsi* = Mangrove B H]

Roadside Hawk *Rupornis magnirostris* Two forms: *griseocauda* on the Caribbean slope *petulans* on the Pacific slope.

Harris's Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus* One seen at Hacienda Solimar [*harrisii*].

White-tailed Hawk *Geranoaetus albicaudatus* Good views of one at Media Queso, Los Chiles [*hypospodius*].

White Hawk *Pseudastur albicollis* Singles seen near to Celeste Lodge and again near to Guapiles [*costaricensis*].

Semiplumbeous Hawk ◊ *Leucopternis semiplumbeus* Excellent views of one at La Selva in the late afternoon sun.

Grey Hawk *Buteo plagiatus* Just a few seen, the first at Carara NP.

Grey-lined Hawk *Buteo nitidus* Just one seen by the productive river on the Coto 47 road [*blakei*].

Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus* A total of about 10 migrants seen, the first around Talari Lodge [nominate].

Short-tailed Hawk *Buteo brachyurus* Singles seen along the Guacalillo Road and at Hacienda Solimar [*fuliginosus*].

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis* A few seen early in the tour, especially at Cerro de la Muerte [*costaricensis*].

Sunbittern *Eurypyga helias* Brilliant views of a pair feeding a chick near to Rancho Naturalista, and again at La Selva.

Sungrebe *Heliornis fulica* Superb views of 3 on the boat trip at Caño Negro, including both males and females.

White-throated Crake *Laterallus albigularis* See note.



We enjoyed several great views of White-throated Crakes during the trip.

Grey-breasted Crake *Laterallus exilis* Good views of one in flight flushed from a marsh on the Caño Negro boat trip.
Grey-necked Wood Rail *Aramides cajaneus* Excellent views for some at Talari Lodge at Esquinas Lodge [nominate].
Rufous-naped Wood Rail ◊ *Aramides albiventris* Great views on the Caño Negro boat trip and at La Fortuna [*plumbeicollis*].
Uniform Crake ◊ *Amaurolimnas concolor* Brilliant views of two pairs near to La Fortuna [*guatemalensis*].
Yellow-breasted Crake ◊ *Porzana flaviventer* At least three seen well on the Caño Negro boat trip [*woodi*].
Purple Gallinule *Porphyrio martinica* Seen at several sites, the first at the small marsh near to San Vito.



The IOC now recognize these two as separate species. Grey-necked Wood Rail from Esquinas Rainforest Lodge (above) and Rufous-naped Wood Rail from our Cano Negro boat trip.



American Coot *Fulica americana* (NL) One spotted from the bus on our first day.

Limpkin *Aramus guarana* At least 8 seen at Hacienda Solimar, and a few on the Caño Negro boat trip [*dolosus*].

Double-striped Thick-Knee *Burhinus bistriatus* Excellent views of a pair at Hacienda Solimar [nominate].

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus* Largest numbers between Carara and Hacienda Solimar [nominate].

Southern Lapwing *Vanellus chilensis* Reasonably common these days. First seen on the Coto 47 road [*cayennensis*].

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* First on the Tarcoles boat trip, then largest numbers on the pans at Punta Morales.

Semipalmated Plover *Charadrius semipalmatus* Greatest numbers were on the salt pans at Punta Morales.

Wilson's Plover *Charadrius wilsonia* About 12 on the salt pans at Punta Morales [*beldingi*].

Collared Plover *Charadrius collaris* At least three seen in open grassy areas on the boat trip at Caño Negro.

Northern Jacana *Jacana spinosa* Seen at a number of sites. Greatest numbers during the boat trip at Caño Negro.

Short-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus griseus* c30 on the salt pans at Punta Morales.

Marbled Godwit *Limosa fedoa* c30 on the salt pans at Punta Morales [*fedoa*].

Whimbrel (Hudsonian W) *Numenius [phaeopus] hudsonicus* Seen at a number of sites, the first at Playa Sándalo.

Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca* One on the Coto 47 road and a few during the boat trip at Caño Negro.

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* Small numbers, the first at sites between Carara and Hacienda Solimar.

Solitary Sandpiper *Tringa solitaria* Small numbers, the first on the Coto 47 road right in the southeast.

Willet (Western W) *Tringa [semipalmata] inornata* Seen at a few sites, the first on the Tarcoles boat trip.

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius* Small numbers at a number of sites, some coming into summer plumage.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* Just a few, including 4 on the Tarcoles boat trip [*morinella*].

Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus* Best were the c20 on the pans at Punta Morales, many in breeding plumage.

Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla* Biggest numbers (50+) were seen during the Caño Negro boat trip.

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos* c10 seen well during the Caño Negro boat trip.



Marbled Godwits, Western Willets and Black-necked Stilts (left) and Pectoral Sandpipers.

Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla* (NT) c30 on the salt pans at Punta Morales.

Western Sandpiper *Calidris mauri* c10 on the salt pans at Punta Morales. A few elsewhere.

Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus tricolor* One in non-breeding plumage on the salt pans at Punta Morales.

Black Skimmer *Rynchops niger* c40 on the salt pans at Punta Morales [nominate].

Laughing Gull *Leucophaeus atricilla* Common along the coast north of Carara [*megalopterus*].

Royal Tern *Thalasseus maximus* Common along the coast north of Carara [nominate = American R T].

Cabot's Tern *Thalasseus acutirostris* c12 along the coast between Carara and Hacienda Solimar [nominate].

Rock Dove (Feral) *Columba livia 'feral'* (introduced) Pleasingly not too common!

Scaled Pigeon *Patagioenas speciosa* c6 in the San Vito area were the only ones.

Band-tailed Pigeon *Patagioenas fasciata* Seen at a few upland sites, the first at Volcán Irazú [*crissalis*].

Pale-vented Pigeon *Patagioenas cayennensis* A few in the lowlands, the first along the Coto 47 road [*pallidicrissa*].

Red-billed Pigeon *Patagioenas flavirostris* Small numbers at many sites, first at Ujurrás on the way to Rancho Naturalista.

Ruddy Pigeon *Patagioenas subvinacea* (NT) A few seen well on Cerro de la Muerte, first near Savegre Lodge [nominate].

Short-billed Pigeon ♦ *Patagioenas nigrirostris* More heard than seen, the first seen very well at Las Cruces.

Inca Dove *Columbina inca* Especially common around Hacienda Solimar.

Common Ground Dove *Columbina passerina* Small numbers, mostly between Carara and Hacienda Solimar [*neglecta*].



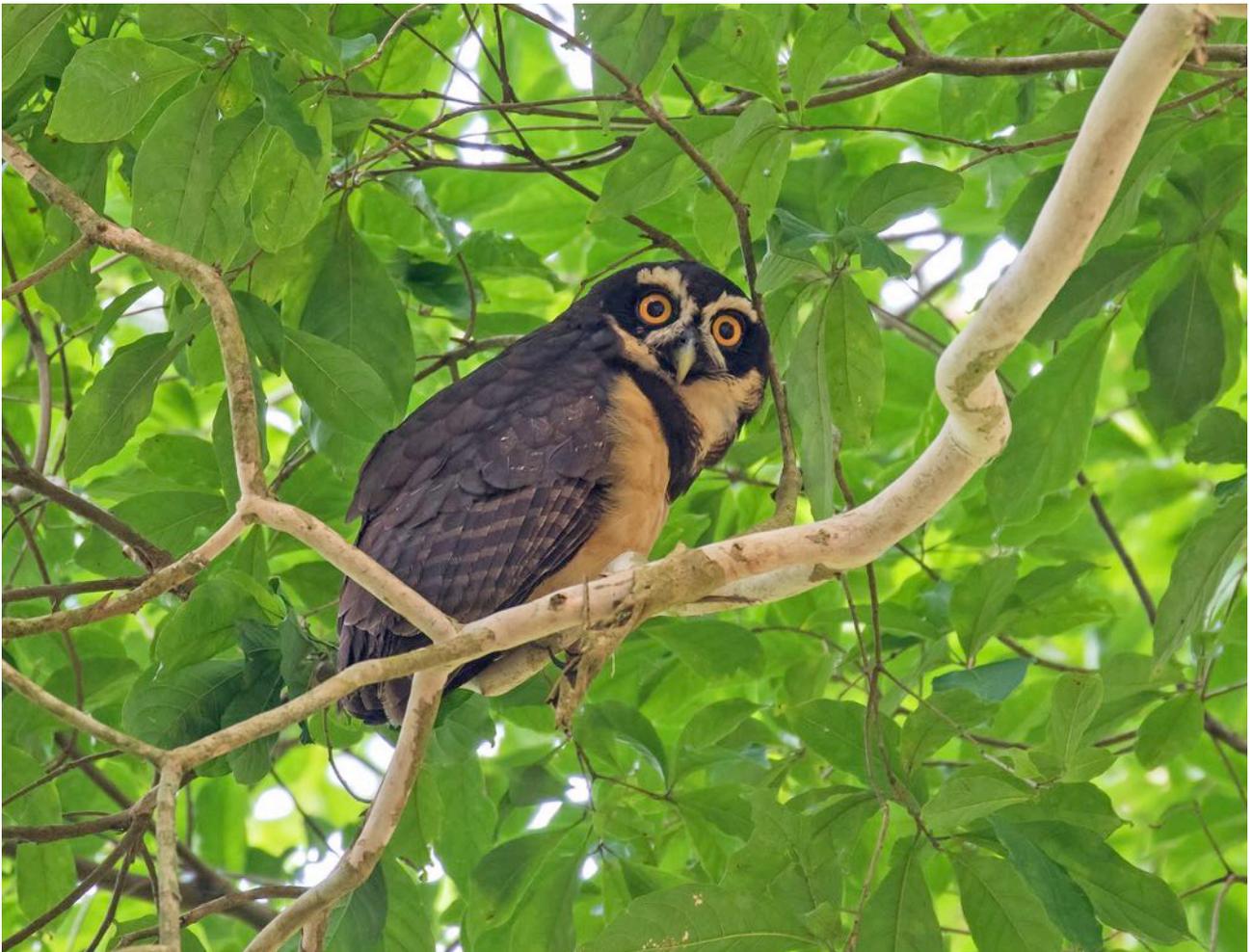
Short-billed Pigeon in the Wilson Botanical Gardens.

- Plain-breasted Ground Dove** *Columbina minuta* A few seen well at Hacienda Solimar [*elaeodes*].
- Ruddy Ground Dove** *Columbina talpacoti* The commonest and most widespread of the ground doves [*rufipennis*].
- Blue Ground Dove** *Claravis pretiosa* A handful seen at Esquinas Rainforest Lodge, Carara and at Media Queso.
- Ruddy Quail-Dove** *Geotrygon montana* Seen well at Esquinas Rainforest Lodge and again at Carara [nominated].
- Olive-backed Quail-Dove** ◇ *Leptotrygon veraguensis* One seen briefly at La Selva and another at El Tapir.
- White-tipped Dove** *Leptotila verreauxi* Fairly common and widespread after our first sighting near Talari Lodge [nominated].
- Grey-headed Dove** ◇ *Leptotila plumbeiceps* Superb views of a singing bird at Caño Negro [nominated].
- Grey-chested Dove** ◇ *Leptotila cassinii* Two forms: *cerviniventris* in the Caribbean *rufinucha* on the Pacific side.
- Buff-fronted Quail-Dove** ◇ *Zentrygon costaricensis* Good views of one on the trail at the Santa Elena Reserve.
- Purplish-backed Quail-Dove** ◇ *Zentrygon lawrencii* A pair seen at Rancho Naturalista, and one briefly at San Gerardo.
- Chiriqui Quail-Dove** ◇ *Zentrygon chiriquensis* Brilliant views of one at the Sanctuario Ecologica at Santa Elena.
- Mourning Dove** *Zenaida macroura* One seen in flight on the slopes of the Vólcan Irazú [*carolinensis-group*].
- White-winged Dove** *Zenaida asiatica* Seen in small numbers at several sites, first on the way to Rancho Naturalista [*australis*].
- Smooth-billed Ani** *Crotophaga ani* Only in the southeast in the Coto 47 Road and Esquinas Rainforest Lodge areas.
- Groove-billed Ani** *Crotophaga sulcirostris* Fairly common, first noted near to Rancho Naturalista.
- Striped Cuckoo** *Tapera naevia* (H) Only heard during the boat trip at Caño Negro.
- Lesser Ground Cuckoo** ◇ *Morococcyx erythropygus* Briefly along the Guacalillo Road then fantastic views at Hacienda Solimar.
- Squirrel Cuckoo** *Piaya cayana* Small numbers at several sites, the first near to San Vito [*thermophila*].
- Yellow-billed Cuckoo** *Coccyzus americanus* A migrant in a large tree at La Selva was elusive to most.
- Mangrove Cuckoo** *Coccyzus minor* Excellent views of one during the boat trip at Caño Negro.
- Pacific Screech Owl** ◇ *Megascops cooperi* An excellent day-roosting adult seen brilliantly at Hacienda Solimar.
- Bare-shanked Screech Owl** ◇ *Megascops clarkii* Brilliant views of one at the Santa Elena Reserve.
- Vermiculated Screech Owl** ◇ *Megascops vermiculatus* Superb views of one at La Selva. A couple of others heard.
- Mottled Owl** *Strix virgata centralis* (H) Sadly, only heard at the Wilson Botanical Gardens, despite coming close [*centralis*].
- Black-and-white Owl** *Strix nigrolineata* Brilliant views on two nights at Arenal Observatory.
- Crested Owl** *Lophotrix cristata* Stunning views of a roosting adult near to Braulio Carillo NP [*stricklandi*].
- Spectacled Owl** *Pulsatrix perspicillata* Superb views at Esquinas Rainforest Lodge and at Carara [*perspicillata-group*].
- Costa Rican Pygmy Owl** ◇ *Glaucidium costaricanum* Excellent views of one at Cerro de la Muerte.
- Central American Pygmy Owl** ◇ *Glaucidium griseiceps* Excellent views of one near to Celeste Mountain Lodge.
- Ferruginous Pygmy Owl** *Glaucidium brasilianum* 1 along the Guacalillo Road and 3 at Hacienda Solimar [*ridgwayi*].
- Striped Owl** *Pseudoscops clamator* Brilliant views in plantations near to the Esquinas Rainforest Lodge [*forbesi*].
- Great Potoo** *Nyctibius grandis* Excellent views of one near to Guapiles (near Braulio Carillo NP) [nominated].



Crested Owl and Great Potoo were seen on the same memorable afternoon!





These Spectacled Owls entertained the hordes at our hotel near to Carara NP.



Short-tailed Nighthawk *Lurocalis semitorquatus* Seen well at La Selva, including perched in the spotlight [stonej].

Pauraque *Nyctidromus albicollis* Many seen well, the first great looks near to Esquinas Rainforest Lodge [nominate].

Dusky Nightjar ◇ *Antrostomus saturatus* Brilliant views of one at Paraiso Quetzales, Cerro de la Muerte.

Chestnut-collared Swift *Streptoprocne rutila* Just a few along the Coto 47 road in the southeast [brunnitorques].

White-collared Swift *Streptoprocne zonaris* First seen at Talari Lodge; common during the second half of the tour [bouchellii].

Costa Rican Swift ◇ *Chaetura fumosa* Only a few seen well, the first low over the pool at the marsh at San Vito.

Grey-rumped Swift *Chaetura cinereiventris* A few identified at La Selva [phaeopygos].

Vaux's Swift *Chaetura vauxi* Seen well from the platform in the Wilson Botanical Gardens [richmondj].

Chimney Swift *Chaetura pelagica* (NT) A few swifts over La Selva appeared to be this species.

Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift *Panyptila cayennensis* A couple over Talari Lodge and a few over La Selva.

White-tipped Sicklebill ◇ *Eutoxeres aquila* Stunning views of one at Celeste Mountain Lodge. Brilliant bird [salvini].

Band-tailed Barbthroat *Threnetes ruckeri* Excellent views of one feeding at Carara NP [ventosus].

Green Hermit *Phaethornis guy* Good numbers seen, the first in the hummingbird pools at Rancho Naturalista [coruscus].

Long-billed Hermit *Phaethornis longirostris* Small numbers at several sites, the first at Los Cusingos [cephalus].

Stripe-throated Hermit *Phaethornis striigularis* First seen at Rancho Naturalista though best views at Carara NP [saturatus].

Scaly-breasted Hummingbird ◇ *Phaeochroa cuvierii* First seen well at Los Cusingos (Skutch's Garden) [maculicauda].

Violet Sabrewing ◇ *Campylopterus hemileucurus* First at Rancho Naturalista but many great looks subsequently [mellitius].

White-necked Jacobin *Florisuga mellivora* First at Esquinas Rainforest Lodge and a few elsewhere [nominate].

Brown Violetear *Colibri delphinae* A few seen well at Arenal Observatory.

Lesser Violetear *Colibri cyanotus* First seen at Vólcan Irazú, but largest numbers at Monteverde [cabanidis].

Green-breasted Mango *Anthracothorax prevostii* Just a few, with best views around Hacienda Solimar [gracilirostris].

Violet-headed Hummingbird *Klais guimeti* A few in Verbena hedges, especially at Arenal and El Tapir [merrittii].

Black-crested Coquette ◇ *Lophornis helenae* Brilliant views of a male at Heliconias Lodge, and for some at El Tapir.

White-crested Coquette ◇ *Lophornis adorabilis* Excellent views of a female at the Esquinas Rainforest Lodge.

Green Thorntail *Discosura conversii* Good views of a couple at the Arenal Observatory.

Canivet's Emerald ◇ *Chlorostilbon canivetii* A few seen around Hacienda Solimar and Monteverde [salvini].

Garden Emerald ◇ *Chlorostilbon assimilis* Excellent views of a male in the garden at the Wilson Botanical Gardens.

Fiery-throated Hummingbird ◇ *Panterpe insignis* First at Vólcan Irazú, then amazing views at Paraiso Quetzales [nominate].

Coppery-headed Emerald ◇ *Elvira cupreiceps* Excellent views of a male at Monteverde and at Cataratas del Toro.

Stripe-tailed Hummingbird ◇ *Eupherusa eximia* Excellent views in the garden at Savegre Lodge [egregia].

Black-bellied Hummingbird ◇ *Eupherusa nigriventris* Great views of c6 in the gardens at Cataratas del Toro.

Crowned Woodnymph *Thalurania colombica* Quite a few seen, the first at Rancho Naturalista [venusta].

Sapphire-throated Hummingbird ◇ *Lepidopyga coeruleogularis* A single female seen along the Coto 47 road [nominate].

Blue-throated Sapphire ◇ *Hylocharis eliciae* A male seen well feeding in Verbena at Arenal Observatory [eliciae].

Cinnamon Hummingbird *Amazilia rutila* Two seen well coming to pygmy owl calls at Hacienda Solimar [corallirostris].

Rufous-tailed Hummingbird *Amazilia tzacatl* Common and widespread. First seen well around San Isidro [nominate].

Blue-chested Hummingbird *Amazilia amabilis* Just a couple of sightings at La Selva.

Charming Hummingbird ◇ *Amazilia decora* Excellent views at the Wilson Botanical Gardens and Esquinas Lodge.



Two more specialities... Purple-throated and Grey-tailed Mountain-gems.



The variety of hummingbirds in Costa Rica was quite extraordinary! Snowcap (always a favourite), Magenta-throated Woodstar and Admirable Hummingbird.



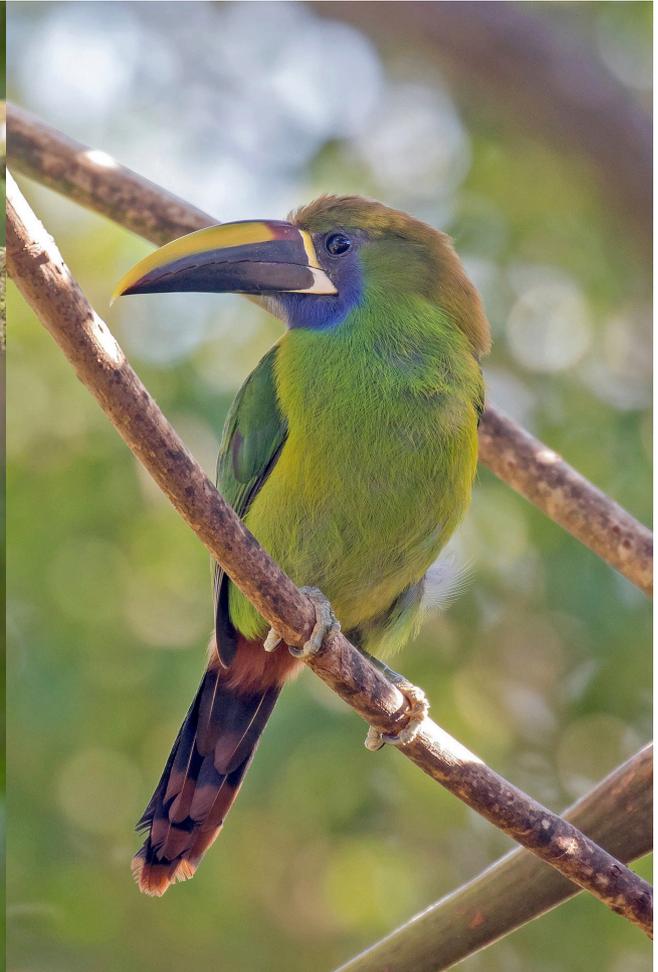
- Mangrove Hummingbird** ◇ *Amazilia boucardi* (EN) Great views of at least five in the mangroves at Playa Sándalo.
- Snowy-bellied Hummingbird** ◇ *Amazilia edward* A few in a flowering eucalypt near San Isidro and another at Talari Lodge.
- Blue-vented Hummingbird** ◇ *Amazilia hoffmanni* See note.
- Snowcap** ◇ *Microchera albocoronata* First seen at Rancho Naturalista, then great views at El Tapir [*parvirostris*].
- Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer** *Chalybura urochrysis* Great views of one or two at La Selva [*melanorrhoea*].
- White-bellied Mountaingem** ◇ *Lampornis hemileucus* Just one male seen in the gardens at Cataratas del Toro.
- Purple-throated Mountaingem** ◇ *Lampornis calolaemus* Excellent views of a few on the feeders at Monteverde [*pectoralis*].
- Grey-tailed Mountaingem** ◇ *Lampornis cinereicauda* A few seen well in the grounds of the Savegre Hotel .
- Green-crowned Brilliant** *Heliodoxa jacula* Common at the feeders at Monteverde and Cataratas del Toro [*henryi*].
- Admirable Hummingbird** ◇ *Eugenes spectabilis* Plenty seen very well at the sites around Cerro de la Muerte.
- Purple-crowned Fairy** *Heliothyx barroti* Several seen, the first seen in the hummingbird pools at Rancho Naturalista.

Magenta-throated Woodstar ◊ *Calliphlox bryantae* Great views at the feeders at Monteverde.
Volcano Hummingbird ◊ *Selasphorus flammula* See note.
Scintillant Hummingbird ◊ *Selasphorus scintilla* Just three seen in the gardens at the Savegre Hotel.
Resplendent Quetzal ◊ *Pharomachrus mocinno* (NT) Brilliant views at Cerro de la Muerte and Santa Elena [*costaricensis*].
Lattice-tailed Trogon ◊ *Trogon clathratus* (H) Sadly only heard in Braulio Carillo NP.
Slaty-tailed Trogon ◊ *Trogon massena* Just a few seen the first a fine male at Los Cusingos (Skutch's Garden) [*hoffmanni*].
Black-headed Trogon ◊ *Trogon melanocephalus* Several seen well near to Hacienda Solimar.
Baird's Trogon ◊ *Trogon bairdii* (NT) Seen briefly at Los Cusingos, then much better at Esquinas Rainforest Lodge.
Gartered Trogon *Trogon caligatus* A few seen, the best views at Carara NP [*concinus*].
Black-throated Trogon *Trogon rufus* First seen at Rancho Naturalista, and a couple of others later in the trip [*tenellus*].
Collared Trogon *Trogon collaris* See note.
American Pygmy Kingfisher *Chloroceryle aenea* Excellent views during the Tarcoles boat trip.
Green Kingfisher *Chloroceryle americana* A few at several sites, largest numbers on the Caño Negro boat trip [*septentrionalis*].
Amazon Kingfisher *Chloroceryle amazona* A few at several sites, largest numbers on the Caño Negro boat trip.
Ringed Kingfisher *Megaceryle torquata* Largest number on the Caño Negro boat trip [nominate].



More colour! Black-headed Trogon, Green Kingfisher and American Pygmy Kingfisher!

Tody Motmot ◊ *Hylomanes momotula* Excellent views of a pair at Heliconias, perched low down at close range [nominate].
Lesson's Motmot ◊ *Momotus lessonii* First seen at Talari Lodge with small numbers at several sites subsequently [nominate].
Rufous Motmot *Baryphthengus martii* Great views of 2 or 3 at La Selva [*semirufus*].
Keel-billed Motmot ◊ *Electron carinatum* (VU) Excellent views of one along the Peninsula Road at Arenal.
Broad-billed Motmot *Electron platyrhynchum* A few seen, the first at Sendero Bogarin, La Fortuna [*minus*].
Turquoise-browed Motmot ◊ *Eumomota superciliosa* Stunner! Several in the Carara and Hacienda Solimar areas [*australis*].
Rufous-tailed Jacamar *Galbula ruficauda* Several seen well, the first at Las Cruces [*melanogenia*].
Great Jacamar *Jacamerops aureus* (NL) Three seen near to La Fortuna.
Pied Puffbird *Notharchus tectus* A couple seen in the tree tops at La Selva [*subtectus*].
White-whiskered Puffbird *Malacoptila panamensis* Two forms: nominate seen well at Carara; *inornata* at La Selva.
Red-headed Barbet *Eubucco bourcierii* (H) Sadly only heard at San Gerardo [*salvini*].
Prong-billed Barbet ◊ *Semnormis frantzii* Good views of a couple at the Santa Elena Reserve. Others heard.
Blue-throated Toucanet ◊ *Aulacorhynchus caeruleogularis* Seen well at Savegre Lodge, and at Monteverde [nominate].
Collared Aracari *Pteroglossus torquatus* First around Celeste Mountain Lodge. Also plenty around La Selva [nominate].
Fiery-billed Aracari ◊ *Pteroglossus frantzii* Seen brilliantly at Talari Lodge, and a few others seen well in the southeast.
Keel-billed Toucan *Ramphastos sulfuratus* First at Rancho Naturalista and more towards the end of the tour [*brevicarinatus*].
Yellow-throated Toucan (Chestnut-mandibled T) *Ramphastos [ambiguus] swainsonii* (NT) Plenty seen well.
Olivaceous Piculet *Picumnus olivaceus* A pair seen well at Talari Lodge, with a few others heard [*flavotinctus*].
Acorn Woodpecker *Melanerpes formicivorus* Excellent views around the Savegre Hotel [*striatipectus*].
Golden-naped Woodpecker ◊ *Melanerpes chrysauchen* Good looks at 3+ at Esquinas Rainforest Lodge.



Just how many amazing birds did we see?! Lesson's Motmot, Blue-throated Toucanet and the stunning Keel-billed Toucan!



Black-cheeked Woodpecker *Melanerpes pucherani* Several seen well after the first at Celeste Mountain Lodge.

Red-crowned Woodpecker *Melanerpes rubricapillus* Common in the southeast, the first in the San Isidro area [nominate].

Hoffmann's Woodpecker ◊ *Melanerpes hoffmannii* Plenty seen in the north, the first on the Tarcoles boat trip.

Hairy Woodpecker *Leuconotopicus villosus* A couple on Vólcan Irazú and a few on Cerro de la Muerte [extimus].

Rufous-winged Woodpecker ◊ *Piculus simplex* Pairs seen well at Esquinas and along the Peninsula Road at Arenal.

Golden-olive Woodpecker *Colaptes rubiginosus* A few seen, the first at Ujurrás. Best was one at Cala Lodge [yucatanensis].

Cinnamon Woodpecker *Celeus loricatus* Good views of a female at La Selva [diversus].

Chestnut-colored Woodpecker ◊ *Celeus castaneus* Brilliant views of a pair at La Selva.

Lineated Woodpecker *Dryocopus lineatus* Around six seen, the first along the Coto 47 road [nominate].

Pale-billed Woodpecker ◊ *Campephilus guatemalensis* Excellent views at Esquinas and Carara NP [nominate].

Northern Crested Caracara *Caracara cheriway* Small numbers at various sites, most common around Esquinas.

Yellow-headed Caracara *Milvago chimachima* Small numbers at several sites, mostly in the southeast [cordata].

Laughing Falcon *Herpetotheres cachinnans* Three at Hacienda Solimar and a two more later in the trip [nominate].

Barred Forest Falcon *Micrastur ruficollis* An adult showed well at Las Cruces, Wilson Botanical Gardens [interstes].

Collared Forest Falcon *Micrastur semitorquatus* Brilliant views of an adult near to Hacienda Solimar [naso].

Merlin *Falco columbarius* A single flew over at Cerro de la Muerte [columbarius = Taiga].

Bat Falcon *Falco ruficularis* A pair at Cataratas del Toro and another pair over La Selva [petoensis].

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* See note.

Barred Parakeet *Bolborhynchus lineola* See note.

Orange-chinned Parakeet *Brotopogon jugularis* Pretty common and widespread - first around San Isidro [nominate].

Brown-hooded Parrot ◊ *Pyrilia haematotis* Mostly in flight at several sites, but seen well perched at Las Cruces [nominate].

Blue-headed Parrot *Pionus menstruus* Small numbers in the southeast, mostly around Esquinas [rubrigularis].

White-crowned Parrot ◊ *Pionus senilis* First seen at Rancho Naturalista and many more seen well subsequently.

White-fronted Amazon ◊ *Amazona albifrons* Good numbers around Hacienda Solimar and a few in Monteverde [nana].

Red-lored Amazon *Amazona autumnalis* First seen along the Coto 47 road; many more seen well subsequently [salvini].

Yellow-naped Amazon ◊ *Amazona auropalliata* (VU) Seen well on the Tarcoles boat trip, at Carara and Hacienda Solimar.

Northern Mealy Amazon ◊ *Amazona guatemalae* (NT) Best were of perched birds near Celeste and at La Selva [virenticeps].

Sulphur-winged Parakeet ◊ *Pyrhura hoffmanni* Brilliant views of c5 at Los Robles above the Savegre Hotel [nominate].

Olive-throated Parakeet ◊ *Eupsittula nana* First seen well on the Caño Negro boat trip and a few others [astec].

Orange-fronted Parakeet *Eupsittula canicularis* Seen at Tarcoles, Carara NP and Hacienda Solimar [nominate].

Brown-throated Parakeet *Eupsittula pertinax* Three seen in flight along the Coto 47 road [ocularis].

Great Green Macaw ◊ *Ara ambiguus* (EN) Brilliant views of up to 7 at La Selva, perched and in flight [nominate].

Scarlet Macaw *Ara macao* Plenty seen well, especially on the Tarcoles boat trip and at Carara NP [nominate].



Collared Forest Falcon and Scarlet Macaw... two birds that are always great to see!

Finsch's Parakeet ◊ *Psittacara finschi* Fairly common. First seen near to Rancho Naturalista.
Pale-breasted Spinetail *Synallaxis albescens* One seen well in the small marsh at San Vito [*latitabunda*].
Slaty Spinetail *Synallaxis brachyura* Seen well near to San Vito and at San Gerardo and others heard [*nigrifumosa*].
Red-faced Spinetail *Cranioleuca erythrops* A couple seen at San Gerardo. Others heard only [*rufigenis*].
Spotted Barbtail *Premnoplex brunnescens* A few furtive individuals seen at San Gerardo [*brunneicauda*].
Ruddy Treerunner ◊ *Margarornis rubiginosus* Plenty seen well in flocks on Cerro de la Muerte and Santa Elena [nominate].
Buffy Tuftedcheek ◊ *Pseudocolaptes lawrencii* Two or three eventually seen well at Cerro de la Muerte.
Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaner ◊ *Anabacerthia variegaticeps* Good views of one at San Gerardo [nominate].
Lineated Foliage-gleaner *Syndactyla subalaris* Seen well on the way to and at San Gerardo [*lineata*].
Western Woodhaunter *Hyloctistes virgatus* Excellent views of a few at Esquinas Rainforest Lodge [nominate].
Streak-breasted Treehunter ◊ *Thripadectes rufobrunneus* Great views a few times on Cerro de la Muerte.



The smart Streak-breasted Treehunter can be a real tough one to see at times!

Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner *Automolus ochrolaemus* See note.
Tawny-throated Leaf-tosser ◊ *Sclerurus mexicanus* Great views of a couple at the pools at Rancho Naturalista [*pullus*].
Grey-throated Leaf-tosser ◊ *Sclerurus albigularis* (NT) Excellent views of one at San Gerardo [*canigularis*].
Plain Xenops *Xenops minutus* A small number at scattered sites, the first at Rancho Naturalista [*ridgwayi*].
Plain-brown Woodcreeper *Dendrocincla fuliginosa* A few at Rancho Naturalista were the only ones [*ridgwayi*].
Tawny-winged Woodcreeper ◊ *Dendrocincla anabatina* Excellent views at Los Cusingos and at Carara NP [*saturata*].
Ruddy Woodcreeper *Dendrocincla homochroa* A confiding bird seen at Esquinas Rainforest Lodge [*acedesta*].
Long-tailed Woodcreeper ◊ *Deconychura longicauda* Excellent views in mixed flocks at Esquinas R L and Carara NP [*typica*].
Olivaceous Woodcreeper *Sittasomus griseicapillus* A handful seen, the first at the Wilson Botanical Gardens [*sylvioides*].
Wedge-billed Woodcreeper *Glyphorhynchus spirurus* A handful seen, the first in Carara NP [*pectoralis*].
Northern Barred Woodcreeper *Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae* Incredible views at ants in Carara NP; a few others [*hesperius*].
Cocoa Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus susurrans* Reasonably common, especially by voice. First at Esquinas [*costaricensis*].
Black-striped Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus lachrymosus* Great views of several at Esquinas Rainforest Lodge [*eximius*].
Spotted Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus erythropygius* Seen well at several sites, the first at Rancho Naturalista [*punctigula*].
Streak-headed Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes souleyetii* Common in open woodland. First at Ujurrás [*compressus*].
Spot-crowned Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes affinis* Only seen on the walk from Los Robles to the Savegre Hotel [*neglectus*].
Brown-billed Scythebill *Campylorhamphus pusillus* Excellent views of a responsive bird at San Gerardo [*borealis*].
Fasciated Antshrike *Cymbilaimus lineatus* Males seen at Arenal and again at La Selva [*fasciatus*].
Great Antshrike *Taraba major* (H) Heard a couple of times, but no luck [*transandeanus-group*].
Barred Antshrike *Thamnophilus doliatus* A few seen, more heard. First seen on the Tarcoles boat trip [*intermedius*].
Black-hooded Antshrike ◊ *Thamnophilus bridgesi* Several seen well, the first at Los Cusingos (Skutch's garden).
Black-crowned Antshrike *Thamnophilus atrinucha* A couple showed well at La Selva [nominate].



Black-hooded Antshrike (a female) and Black-striped Woodcreeper, both captured at the Esquinas Rainforest Lodge.

- Russet Antshrike** *Thamnistes anabatinus* A single at Rancho Naturalista and a pair at Braulio Carillo NP.
- Plain Antvireo** *Dysithamnus mentalis* A few seen with best views at Rancho Naturalista [*septentrionalis*].
- Streak-crowned Antvireo** ◇ *Dysithamnus striaticeps* Seen well at Arenal and another in a flock at Braulio Carillo NP.
- Checker-throated Antwren** *Epinecrophylla fulviventris* A male at Rancho Naturalista and another at Braulio Carillo NP.
- Slaty Antwren** *Myrmotherula schisticolor* A few seen with best views in Carara NP and at San Gerardo [nominate].
- Dot-winged Antwren** *Microrhophias quixensis* Several seen in a flock at Carara NP [*virgatus*].
- Dusky Antbird** *Cercomacra tyrannina* A couple seen well at Carara NP, and several heard at various sites [*crepera*].
- Bare-crowned Antbird** ◇ *Gymnocichla nudiceps* Brilliant views of a male along the Peninsula Road at Arenal.
- Chestnut-backed Antbird** *Myrmeciza exsul* Many seen well, the first singing at Los Cusingos [*exsul-group*].
- Dull-mantled Antbird** ◇ *Myrmeciza laemosticta* Excellent views of a pair at Rancho Naturalista and another at Arenal.
- Zeledon's Antbird** ◇ *Myrmeciza zeledoni* Generally elusive but seen at Rancho Naturalista and San Gerardo [nominate].
- Bicolored Antbird** *Gymnopithys bicolor* Good numbers at antswarms at Carara and Braulio Carillo NPs [*olivascens*].
- Spotted Antbird** *Hylophylax naevioides* A real stunner with several great looks, the first at Heliconias Lodge [*capnitis*].
- Ocellated Antbird** ◇ *Phaenostictus mcleannani* A couple at San Gerardo then fabulous in Braulio Carillo NP [*saturatus*].



The fantastic Ocellated Antbird... unquestionably one of the best-looking antbirds!

Black-faced Antthrush *Formicarius analis* Seen at Los Cusingos then several seen well in Carara NP [*hoffmanni*].

Black-headed Antthrush *Formicarius nigricapillus* Decent views of one at San Gerardo and others heard there [nominate].

Streak-chested Antpitta ◇ *Hylopezus perspicillatus* Brilliant views of a showy individual in Carara NP [*lizanoi*].

Thicket Antpitta ◇ *Hylopezus dives* After frustrating experiences at Arenal, amazing views near Braulio Carillo NP [*nominate*].

Ochre-breasted Antpitta *Grallaricula flavirostris* (H) One heard at San Gerardo [*costaricensis*].

Silvery-fronted Tapaculo ◇ *Scytalopus argentifrons* Brilliant views of a couple above the Savegre Hotel [nominate].

White-fronted Tyrannulet ◇ *Phyllomyias zeledoni* Superb views of a singing bird just near to Paraiso Quetzales [nominate].

Greenish Elaenia *Myiopagis viridicata* A few seen, the first along the Guacalillo Road, north of Carara NP [*accola*].

Yellow-bellied Elaenia *Elaenia flavogaster* Fairly common and noisy in open country, the first at Ujurrás [*subpagana*].

Mountain Elaenia *Elaenia frantzii* Common at Vulcan Irazú and on Cerro de la Muerte [nominate].

Yellow-bellied Tyrannulet ◇ *Ornithion semiflavum* (H) One heard at Los Cusingos (Skutch's Garden).

Northern Beardless Tyrannulet *Camptostoma imberbe* One seen on the boat trip at Caño Negro.

Torrent Tyrannulet *Serpophaga cinerea* One seen near to the entrance of Braulio Carillo NP [*grisea*].

Yellow Tyrannulet *Capsiempis flaveola* A couple seen well near to Celeste Mountain Lodge [*semiflava*].

Mistletoe Tyrannulet *Zimmerius parvus* Fairly common, especially by voice. First seen near to Paraiso Quetzales.

Rufous-browed Tyrannulet ◇ *Phylloscartes superciliaris* Seen in mixed flocks at San Gerardo [nominate].

Olive-striped Flycatcher *Mionectes olivaceus* Just one seen at Santa Elena [nominate].

Ochre-bellied Flycatcher *Mionectes oleagineus* Small numbers at a few sites, the first at Rancho Naturalista [*assimilis*].

Slaty-capped Flycatcher *Leptopogon superciliaris* Three at Rancho Naturalista were our only ones [nominate].

Northern Scrub Flycatcher *Sublegatus arenarum* A couple on the Tarcoles boat trip were the only ones [nominate].

Black-capped Pygmy Tyrant *Myiornis atricapillus* Great views at La Selva. Tiny, the Neotropics' smallest passerine!

Northern Bentbill ◇ *Oncostoma cinereigulare* Plenty heard with singles seen at Carara NP and Hacienda Solimar.

Scale-crested Pygmy Tyrant *Lophotriccus pileatus* Regularly heard and a few seen, the first at Las Cruces [*luteiventris*].

Slaty-headed Tody-Flycatcher *Poecilatriccus sylvia* (H) Its quiet purrs were heard at a couple of sites [*schistaceiceps*].

Common Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum cinereum* Fairly common and widespread. First seen at Ujurrás [*wetmorei*].

Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum nigriceps* A few heard, and a couple seen well at San Gerardo.

Eye-ringed Flatbill *Rhynchocyclus brevirostris* A single in a flock at Esquinas Rainforest Lodge was our only one [nominate].

Yellow-olive Flatbill *Tolmomyias sulphurescens* First seen at the Esquinas Rainforest Lodge [*cinereiceps*].

Stub-tailed Spadebill ◇ *Platyrinchus cancrinus* Brilliant views of two (or the same bird twice?) in Carara NP.

White-throated Spadebill *Platyrinchus mystaceus* Seen well at San Gerardo, even erecting its yellow crest [*neglectus*].

Golden-crowned Spadebill *Platyrinchus coronatus* (H) Sadly, only heard at Los Cusingos [*superciliaris*].

Tawny-chested Flycatcher ◇ *Aphanotriccus capitalis* (VU) Brilliant views at Rancho Naturalista - **the** site for this species!

Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans* Seen a few times, the first upsetting the Sunbitterns near Rancho Naturalista [*arnicola*].

Northern Tufted Flycatcher *Mitrephanes phaeocercus* A few at Cerro de la Muerte and Monteverde [*aurantiventris*].

Olive-sided Flycatcher *Contopus cooperi* (NT) Six or so of this migrant seen, the first few on Cerro de la Muerte.

Dark Pewee ◇ *Contopus lugubris* Great views of a pair just near to the Savegre Hotel.

Ochraceous Pewee ◇ *Contopus ochraceus* Brilliant views of one or two individuals near to Paraiso Quetzales.

Tropical Pewee *Contopus cinereus* A few seen, the first during the Tarcoles boat trip [*brachytarsus-group*].

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher *Empidonax flaviventris* Seen well at Rancho Naturalista and a few others during the trip.

Acadian Flycatcher *Empidonax virescens* One identified in Carara NP.

White-throated Flycatcher ◇ *Empidonax albigularis* Great views near Rancho Naturalista and at Cataratas del Toro [*australis*].

Yellowish Flycatcher ◇ *Empidonax flavescens* Several seen well at Cerro de la Muerte and near San Gerardo [*australis*].

Black-capped Flycatcher ◇ *Empidonax atriceps* Seen well at Vólcan Irazú. Also common on Cerro de la Muerte.

Long-tailed Tyrant *Colonia colonus* A single at Arenal was our only one [*leuconota*].

Piratic Flycatcher *Legatus leucophaeus* Common, especially by voice. First seen near to San Isidro.

Rusty-margined Flycatcher *Myiozetetes cayanensis* A pair seen near to the Esquinas Rainforest Lodge [*hellmayri*].

Social Flycatcher *Myiozetetes similis* Two forms: *columbianus* widespread, first at San Vito; *texensis* in the north.

Grey-capped Flycatcher *Myiozetetes granadensis* Fairly common, especially in the far southwest [nominate].

Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus* Common and widespread [*guatemalensis*].

White-ringed Flycatcher ◇ *Conopias albobittatus* Pairs seen at La Selva on two dates [*distinctus*].

Golden-bellied Flycatcher ◇ *Myiodynastes hemichrysus* A couple seen well on the walk down to San Gerardo.

Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher *Myiodynastes luteiventris* A few, the first at Rancho Naturalista. Very similar to Streaked!

Streaked Flycatcher *Myiodynastes maculatus* Plenty seen well, the first around San Isidro [*maculatus-group*].

Boat-billed Flycatcher *Megarynchus pitangua* Common, especially by voice. First seen around Ujurrás [*mexicanus*].

Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus* Common and widespread [*satrapa*].

Western Kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis* A couple along the Guacalillo Road, north of Carara NP, were a surprise.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus forficatus* Several on the Tarcoles boat trip and a couple at Hacienda Solimar.
Fork-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus savana* Just a couple, including one seen by all along the Coto 47 road [*monachus*].
Eastern Kingbird *Tyrannus tyrannus* One seen at Heliconias, then some impressive migrating flocks at La Selva.
Rufous Mourner *Rhytipterna holerythra* Seen at several sites, the first seen well at Rancho Naturalista [nominate].



Two species that well illustrate the diversity in the tyrant flycatcher family... the tiny Black-capped Pygmy-Tyrant, the Neotropic's smallest passerine, and the chunky Rufous Mourner! Below, the amazing Northern Royal Flycatcher is now placed in the family Tityridae!



Dusky-capped Flycatcher *Myiarchus tuberculifer* First at Rancho Naturalista, and a few later in the trip [*nigricapillus*].
Panamanian Flycatcher ◊ *Myiarchus panamensis* At least four seen well during the Tarcoles boat trip [*actiosus*].
Nutting's Flycatcher ◊ *Myiarchus nuttingi* Just one, along the Guacalillo Road, north of Carara NP [*flavidior*].
Great Crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus crinitus* A few seen, the first in Carara NP.

Brown-crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus tyrannulus* Several seen well near to Hacienda Solimar [*brachyurus*].
Bright-rumped Attila *Attila spadiceus* Heard at a number of sites; seen at Esquinas Rainforest Lodge [*citreopyga*].
Lovely Cotinga ◇ *Cotinga amabilis* One seen well but quite briefly near to Celeste Mountain Lodge.
Turquoise Cotinga ◇ *Cotinga ridgwayi* (VU) Great views of a male and female near San Isidro, and one at the Rincon Bridge.
Three-wattled Bellbird ◇ *Procnias tricarunculatus* (VU) Best were the great views of the amazing male at Santa Elena.
Rufous Piha *Lipaugus unirufus* Great views of one at Los Cusingos and a couple of others heard [nominat].
Snowy Cotinga ◇ *Carpodectes nitidus* Good views of fine male around the restaurant at La Selva.
Yellow-billed Cotinga ◇ *Carpodectes antoniae* (EN) Great views of 4+ males and 2+ of females at the Rincon Bridge.
Purple-throated Fruitcrow *Querula purpurata* A group of about 6 seen well at La Selva.
Bare-necked Umbrellabird ◇ *Cephalopterus glabricollis* (EN) Amazing! See note.
Long-tailed Manakin ◇ *Chiroxiphia linearis* The displaying birds at Hacienda Solimar provided a real Attenborough moment!
White-ruffed Manakin ◇ *Corapipo altera* A couple at Rancho Naturalista and another briefly at Braulio Carillo NP [nominat].
Blue-crowned Manakin *Lepidothrix coronata* Great views at Los Cusingos and even better at Carara NP [*velutina*].
White-collared Manakin ◇ *Manacus candei* Briefly at Arenal and then great views of several at La Selva. Stunners!
Orange-collared Manakin ◇ *Manacus aurantiacus* Great views at Los Cusingos and at Esquinas. Another stunner!!
White-crowned Manakin *Pseudopipra pipra* A couple of males seen well at Rancho Naturalista [*anthracina*].
Red-capped Manakin *Ceratopipra mentalis* Great views at Los Cusingos and even better at Carara NP [nominat].



Amazing manakins! Clockwise from top left: Red-capped, Blue-crowned, White-collared and Orange-collared Manakins.

Sharpbill ◇ *Oxyruncus cristatus* One seen well at San Gerardo was a pleasant surprise [*frater*].
Northern Royal Flycatcher ◇ *Onychorhynchus mexicanus* Great views at Carara NP and a nesting pair at La Selva [nominate].
Sulphur-rumped Myiobius *Myiobius sulphureipygius* A few seen, the first at Carara NP [*aureatus*].
Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher *Terenotriccus erythurus* A few seen well in Carara NP [*fulvularis*].
Black-crowned Tityra *Tityra inquisitor* Several seen well at Esquinas, and a few others later in the trip [*fraserii*].
Masked Tityra *Tityra semifasciata* Widespread in small numbers. First in the Wilson Botanical Gardens [*costaricensis*].
Northern Schiffornis *Schiffornis veraepacis* Great views of one at Rancho Naturalista; heard at Carara NP [nominate].
Barred Becard *Pachyramphus versicolor* One seen at Los Robles above the Savegre Hotel [*costaricensis*].
Cinnamon Becard *Pachyramphus cinnamomeus* A few seen, the first during the Tarcoles boat trip [*fulvidior*].
White-winged Becard *Pachyramphus polychopterus* Singles in Carara NP and at La Selva [*similis*].
Rose-throated Becard *Pachyramphus aglaiae* At least four seen around the Hacienda Solimar [*hypophaeus*].
Rufous-browed Peppershrike *Cyclarhis gujanensis* A few seen; best views during the Tarcoles boat trip [*subflavescens*].
Green Shrike-Vireo ◇ *Vireolanius pulchellus* Excellent views of one at the Esquinas Rainforest Lodge [*verticalis*].
Mangrove Vireo ◇ *Vireo pallens* Great views of one on the Tarcoles boat trip [nominate].
Yellow-throated Vireo *Vireo flavifrons* c6 of these smart migrants seen during the tour, the first at Los Cusingos.
Yellow-winged Vireo ◇ *Vireo carmioli* First seen at Vólcan Irazú and quite common around Cerro de la Muerte.
Brown-capped Vireo *Vireo leucophrys* Just two, between Los Robles and the Savegre Hotel [*costaricensis*].
Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus* Just a few seen, the first at Carara NP [nominate].
Yellow-green Vireo *Vireo flavoviridis* Small numbers at a few sites. Most obvious around Hacienda Solimar.
Scrub Greenlet *Hylophilus flavipes* One seen well in open country near to Esquinas Rainforest Lodge [*viridiflavus*].
Tawny-crowned Greenlet *Hylophilus ochraceiceps* Good views of one at Esquinas and a couple at Arenal [*pacificus*].
Lesser Greenlet *Hylophilus decurtatus* Common by voice; several seen after the first at Los Cusingos [nominate].
Azure-hooded Jay ◇ *Cyanolyca cucullata* Great views of a couple at San Gerardo [nominate].
Silvery-throated Jay ◇ *Cyanolyca argentigula* It took some effort to see 2 well, but briefly, on Cerro de la Muerte [*albior*].
Brown Jay *Psilorhinus morio* Common and noisy. First seen on our first day out [*palliatus*].
White-throated Magpie-Jay ◇ *Calocitta formosa* Seen well at Hacienda Solimar and one in Monteverde [*pompata*].



The whacky White-throated Magpie-Jay showed well on a few occasions.



Black-and-yellow Phainoptila and Long-tailed Silky-Flycatcher were both easily found in the highlands.

- Black-and-yellow Phainoptila** ◇ *Phainoptila melanoxantha* Several seen well on Cerro de la Muerte [*parkeri*].
- Long-tailed Silky-Flycatcher** ◇ *Ptiliogonys caudatus* Several seen well at various sites on Cerro de la Muerte.
- Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia* Several seen over open country near to Esquinas Rainforest Lodge [nominate].
- Mangrove Swallow** *Tachycineta albilinea* Plenty seen. Greatest numbers on the Tarcoles boat trip.
- Grey-breasted Martin** *Progne chalybea* Common and widespread in the lowlands [nominate].
- Blue-and-white Swallow** *Notiochelidon cyanoleuca* Fairly common and widespread.
- Northern Rough-winged Swallow** *Stelgidopteryx serripennis* First seen on the way to Rancho Naturalista [*serripennis-group*].
- Southern Rough-winged Swallow** *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis* Seen with Northern R-w S near Rancho Naturalista!
- Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica* Good numbers of migrants seen [*erythrogaster*].
- American Cliff Swallow** *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota* Best were the good numbers on the Tarcoles boat trip.
- Band-backed Wren** *Campylorhynchus zonatus* Several seen around the lodge at San Gerardo [*costaricensis*].
- Rufous-backed Wren** ◇ *Campylorhynchus capistratus* A smart wren. Plenty seen after the first at Carara NP [nominate].
- Black-throated Wren** ◇ *Pheugopedius atrogularis* A cracking wren, seen at San Gerardo and incredibly well at Arenal.
- Black-bellied Wren** *Pheugopedius fasciatoventris* (H) A few heard but sadly none would show [*melanogaster*].
- Spot-breasted Wren** ◇ *Pheugopedius maculipectus* Brilliant views of a pair on the boat trip at Caño Negro [*umbrinus*].
- Rufous-breasted Wren** *Pheugopedius rutilus* A few seen well, the first at Talari Lodge [*hyperythrus*].
- Banded Wren** ◇ *Thryophilus pleurostictus* Excellent views of a few around Hacienda Solimar [*ravus*].
- Rufous-and-white Wren** *Thryophilus rufalbus* Several seen in the Carara NP area and at Monteverde [*castanonotus*].
- Cabanis's Wren** ◇ *Cantorchilus modestus* First seen well at Ujurrás and then again around Monteverde.
- Canebrake Wren** ◇ *Cantorchilus zeledoni* Excellent views of one during the boat trip at Caño Negro.
- Isthmian Wren** ◇ *Cantorchilus elutus* A couple seen well along the Coto 47 road right in the southeast. Others heard.
- Riverside Wren** ◇ *Cantorchilus semibadius* Seen well at Esquinas Rainforest Lodge, Rincon Bridge and Carara NP.
- Bay Wren** *Cantorchilus nigricapillus* A pair seen very well at La Selva and others heard there [*costaricensis*].
- Stripe-breasted Wren** ◇ *Cantorchilus thoracicus* After hearing a few, we finally got great looks at several at Arenal.
- House Wren** *Troglodytes aedon* Common and widespread [*intermedius*, part of the southern musculus group].
- Ochraceous Wren** ◇ *Troglodytes ochraceus* Several seen well at Cerro de la Muerte and near San Gerardo [nominate].
- Timberline Wren** ◇ *Thryorchilus browni* Good views of several on Vólcan Irazú and also seen at Cerro de la Muerte.
- White-breasted Wood Wren** *Henicorhina leucosticta* Several seen well, first at Rancho Naturalista.
- Grey-breasted Wood Wren** *Henicorhina leucophrys* Heard at a few sites. First seen at Cerro de la Muerte [*collina*].
- Northern Nightingale-Wren** ◇ *Microcerculus philomela* Seen well (by some) at San Gerardo, Arenal and Heliconias Lodge.



Glorious wrens! There are few better than the excellent Black-throated Wren above. Banded Wren is a great songster whilst Cabanis's Wren is one of three species that we saw that were formerl lumped together as Plain Wren! Clear as mud no doubt!!



- Southern Nightingale-wren** *Microcerculus marginatus* A few heard and a couple seen at Carara NP [*luscinia*].
- Song Wren** *Cyphorhinus phaeocephalus* Seen well at San Gerardo and again at Arenal [*richardsoni*].
- Long-billed Gnatwren** *Ramphocaenus melanurus* Easy to hear, we saw them well in Carara NP [*rufiventris*].
- White-lored Gnatcatcher** ◊ *Polioptila albiloris* A pair along the Guacalillo Road and one at Hacienda Solimar [nominate].
- Tropical Gnatcatcher** *Polioptila plumbea* Seen at several sites with best views in the drier areas [*superciliaris*].
- Tropical Mockingbird** *Mimus gilvus* Just a couple seen in the San Isidro area. A recent colonist [*tolimensis*].
- Black-faced Solitaire** ◊ *Myadestes melanops* Quite elusive. Many heard, seen well at Cerro de la Muerte and Santa Elena.
- Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush** ◊ *Catharus gracilirostris* Common at Vólcan Irazú and Cerro de la Muerte [*gracilirostris*].
- Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush** *Catharus aurantiirostris* Seen well at Talari Lodge and Monteverde [*griseiceps*].
- Slaty-backed Nightingale-thrush** ◊ *Catharus fuscater* A few seen well at Santa Elena and San Gerardo [*hellmayri*].
- Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush** ◊ *Catharus frantzii* Confiding birds seen at Cerro de la Muerte and Santa Elena [*frantzii*].
- Black-headed Nightingale-Thrush** ◊ *Catharus mexicanus* A smart bird, seen well at San Gerardo and Arenal [*carrikeri*].
- Swainson's Thrush** *Catharus ustulatus* Small numbers of this widespread migrant at several sites.
- Wood Thrush** *Hylocichla mustelina* (NT) Great views of several, the first in the stream at Rancho Naturalista.
- Sooty Thrush** ◊ *Turdus nigrescens* Common and confiding at Vólcan Irazú and Cerro de la Muerte.
- Mountain Thrush** ◊ *Turdus plebejus* Seen well at Vólcan Irazú, Cerro de la Muerte and Santa Elena [nominate].
- Pale-vented Thrush** ◊ *Turdus obsoletus* Great views of one at San Gerardo, and others heard there. A tricky bird [nominate]!
- Clay-colored Thrush** *Turdus grayi* Costa Rica's national bird was common and widespread [*casius*].
- White-throated Thrush** *Turdus assimilis* Two forms: *cnephusus* in Wilson Botanical Gardens; *leucauchen* at San Gerardo.



We saw plenty of great thrushes on the tour too. Above, Black-billed and Slaty-backed Nightingale-Thrushes and below, Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush and the seldom seen Pale-vented Thrush, an excellent songster but not much of a looker!



- House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus* (introduced) This pest was surprisingly scarce, seeming to favour gas stations!
- Yellow-bellied Siskin** *Spinus xanthogastrus* Two on Cerro de la Muerte were our only ones [nominate].
- Scrub Euphonia** *Euphonia affinis* After some searching, three seen well near to Hacienda Solimar [nominate].
- Yellow-crowned Euphonia** ◇ *Euphonia luteicapilla* Seen at a few sites, the first at Talari Lodge.
- Thick-billed Euphonia** *Euphonia laniirostris* A few seen coming to the feeders at Las Cruces [*crassirostris*].
- Yellow-throated Euphonia** *Euphonia hirundinacea* Several seen well after the first in Monteverde [*gnatho*].
- Spot-crowned Euphonia** ◇ *Euphonia imitans* Excellent views at Las Cruces, Wilson Botanical Gardens.
- Olive-backed Euphonia** ◇ *Euphonia gouldi* A couple at Heliconias, then excellent views at La Selva [*praetermissa*].
- White-vented Euphonia** *Euphonia minuta* One coming to a fruiting tree in Braulio Carillo NP [*humilis*].
- Tawny-capped Euphonia** ◇ *Euphonia anaeae* A male seen well in Braulio Carillo NP [nominate].
- Golden-browed Chlorophonia** ◇ *Chlorophonia callophrys* Brilliant views of a pair at Paraiso Quetzales.
- Ovenbird** *Seiurus aurocapilla* Six or so seen, the first on the trail at Rancho Naturalista.
- Northern Waterthrush** *Parkesia noveboracensis* Quite a few seen, especially in the Carara area.
- Golden-winged Warbler** *Vermivora chrysoptera* (NT) See note.
- Flame-throated Warbler** ◇ *Oreothlypis gutturalis* A real cracker, first at Vólcan Irazú. Plenty more on Cerro de la Muerte.
- Tennessee Warbler** *Leiothlypis peregrina* Plenty seen, especially on Cerro de la Muerte.
- Grey-crowned Yellowthroat** *Geothlypis poliocephala* Seen near Rancho Naturalista, Celeste and Caño Negro [*palpebralis*].
- Chiriqui Yellowthroat** ◇ *Geothlypis chiriquensis* Great views of a male near to San Vito.
- Mourning Warbler** *Geothlypis philadelphia* Just one seen well along the Coto 47 road in the far southeast.
- Kentucky Warbler** *Geothlypis formosa* Great views of two or three cracking males at Rancho Naturalista.
- Olive-crowned Yellowthroat** *Geothlypis semiflava* Best views were near to Celeste and at Caño Negro [*bairdij*].



Above, smart Spot-crowned and Olive-backed Euphonias. Below, Black-cheeked Warbler and the gorgeous Collared Whitestart.



- Hooded Warbler** *Setophaga citrina* A fine male showed well along the Sendero Bogarin at La Fortuna.
- American Redstart** *Setophaga ruticilla* A few seen, best on the Tarcoles boat trip.
- Tropical Parula** *Setophaga pitayumi* Seen/heard at a number of sites. First seen in the Wilson Botanical gardens [*inornata*].
- Blackburnian Warbler** *Setophaga fusca* Just 4 or 5 seen in total including a fine male near Celeste Mountain Lodge.
- American Yellow Warbler** *Setophaga aestiva* Biggest numbers were along the Coto 47 road right in the southeast.
- Mangrove Warbler** *Setophaga petechia* One at Playa Sándalo, but best on the Tarcoles boat trip [*erithachorides*].
- Chestnut-sided Warbler** *Setophaga pensylvanica* Plenty, including many stunning males; first at Rancho Naturalista.
- Black-throated Green Warbler** *Setophaga virens* Just a handful seen, the first on Cerro de la Muerte.
- Buff-rumped Warbler** *Myiothlypis fulvicauda* Two forms: *veraguensis* in the southeast; *leucopygia* elsewhere.
- Rufous-capped Warbler** *Basileuterus rufifrons* Seen on a number of occasions, first near to San Vito [*delatitrii*-group].
- Black-cheeked Warbler** ◇ *Basileuterus melanogenys* A real cracker, seen at Vólcan Irazú and Cerro de la Muerte [n nominate].
- Golden-crowned Warbler** *Basileuterus culicivorus* Seen at a few sites, the first at Rancho Naturalista [*culicivorus*-group].
- Black-eared Warbler** ◇ *Basileuterus melanotis* A few seen well at Santa Elena.
- Canada Warbler** *Cardellina canadensis* Very few seen, the first couple at Rancho Naturalista.
- Wilson's Warbler** *Cardellina pusilla* A few on Vólcan Irazú, and quite common at Cerro de la Muerte.
- Slate-throated Whitestart** *Myioborus miniatus* First seen at Las Cruces; common in the Monteverde area [*comptus*].
- Collared Whitestart** ◇ *Myioborus torquatus* A stunner, seen well at Vólcan Irazú, Cerro de la Muerte and Santa Elena.
- Wrenthrush** ◇ *Zeledonia coronata* It took some work but we got some good looks at two spots on Cerro de la Muerte.
- Eastern Meadowlark** *Sturnella magna* A handful seen, especially around Hacienda Solimar [*alticola*].

Red-breasted Blackbird *Sturnella militaris* First noted along the Coto 47 road in the far southeast.
Yellow-billed Cacique *Amblycercus holosericeus* Just a couple seen, the best from the Rincon Bridge [nominate].
Chestnut-headed Oropendola *Psarocolius wagleri* Most obvious around La Selva [ridgwayi].
Crested Oropendola *Psarocolius decumanus* Small numbers, including a few at nests near San Vito [melanterus].
Montezuma Oropendola ◊ *Psarocolius montezuma* Common and conspicuous. Great action at the colony at San Gerardo.
Scarlet-rumped Cacique *Cacicus microrhynchus* Excellent looks at the Esquinas Rainforest Lodge [nominate].
Streak-backed Oriole *Icterus pustulatus* Excellent views, including nest building, at Hacienda Solimar [sclateri].



A displaying Montezuma Oropendola and a nest-building Streak-backed Oriole.

Baltimore Oriole *Icterus galbula* Small numbers seen throughout the trip.
Spot-breasted Oriole ◊ *Icterus pectoralis* Good views of a pair at Hacienda Solimar [espinachij].
Black-cowled Oriole ◊ *Icterus prosthemelas* A few seen well, the first at the Celeste Mountain Lodge [nominate].
Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus* Especially impressive were the breeding birds at Caño Negro [grinnellii].
Shiny Cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis* Just three seen, the first at San Gerardo [cabanisii].
Bronzed Cowbird *Molothrus aeneus* Widespread in small numbers [nominate].
Melodious Blackbird *Dives dives* First seen near Rancho Naturalista. Expanding its range south due to deforestation!
Nicaraguan Grackle ◊ *Quiscalus nicaraguensis* Excellent views of several during the Caño Negro boat trip.
Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus* Very common and widespread [peruvianus].
Bananaquit *Coereba flaveola* Surprisingly, not that common. First seen in San Isidro [mexicana].
Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis* Particularly common at Vólcan Irazú and Cerro de la Muerte [costaricensis].
Volcano Junco ◊ *Junco vulcani* Great views at Vólcan Irazú and again at Cerro de la Muerte.
Stripe-headed Sparrow *Peucaea ruficauda* A pair showed well at Hacienda Solimar [nominate].
Cabanis's Ground Sparrow ◊ *Melospiza cabanisi* After a tense (due to limited time) search, great views of a pair at Ujurrás.
White-eared Ground Sparrow ◊ *Melospiza leucotis* A real stunner, seen well around Monteverde [nominate].
Olive Sparrow *Arremonops rufivirgatus* Seen well along the Guacalillo road and at Hacienda Solimar [superciliosus].
Black-striped Sparrow *Arremonops conirostris* First at Las Cruces but easiest at Celeste, Arenal and La Selva [striaticeps].
Orange-billed Sparrow *Arremon aurantirostris* Two forms: *rufidorsalis* in the Caribbean; nominate in the Pacific.
Chestnut-capped Brushfinch *Arremon brunneinucha* A couple near the Savegre Hotel; others at San Gerardo [elsae].
Costa Rican Brushfinch ◊ *Arremon costaricensis* Great views of a couple of this scarce bird near to San Vito.
Sooty-faced Finch ◊ *Arremon crassirostris* Took some effort but we finally saw a singing male well at San Gerardo.
Large-footed Finch ◊ *Pezopetes capitalis* Easy to see at Vólcan Irazú and at Cerro de la Muerte.
White-naped Brushfinch *Atlapetes albinucha* Just one, during the torrential downpour at Cinchona [parvirostris].
Yellow-thighed Finch ◊ *Pselliophorus tibialis* Plenty seen at Cerro de la Muerte, even hopping around the gardens.
Common Bush Tanager *Chlorospingus flavopectus* Most common in the San Gerardo/Monteverde area [regionalis].
Sooty-capped Bush Tanager ◊ *Chlorospingus pileatus* Easy to see at Vólcan Irazú and at Cerro de la Muerte.
Dusky-faced Tanager *Mitrospingus cassinii* Great views of a small group at La Selva [costaricensis].



Two more highland specialists: Sooty-capped Bush Tanager and Large-footed Finch.

- Grey-headed Tanager** *Eucometis penicillata* Several seen very well, the first at Talari Lodge [*stictothorax*].
- White-shouldered Tanager** *Tachyphonus luctuosus* First at Esquinas, and some good flocks at Carara NP [*nitidissimus*].
- Tawny-crested Tanager** *Tachyphonus delatrii* A flock of c6 with an understory flock in Braulio Carillo NP.
- White-lined Tanager** *Tachyphonus rufus* A couple on the first day and one at La Selva were the only ones.
- White-throated Shrike-Tanager** ◇ *Lanio leucothorax* Great views of a pair at Esquinas and a male at Arenal [*melanopygius*].
- Crimson-collared Tanager** ◇ *Ramphocelus sanguinolentus* Great views at Celeste Mountain Lodge [*apricus*].
- Passerini's Tanager** ◇ *Ramphocelus passerinii* First seen at Rancho Naturalista; common along the Caribbean Coast.
- Cherrie's Tanager** ◇ *Ramphocelus costaricensis* Common in the southeast, first seen around San Isidro.
- Blue-grey Tanager** *Thraupis episcopus* Common and widespread throughout the trip [*cana*].
- Palm Tanager** *Thraupis palmarum* Common in the lowlands, first seen around San Isidro [*atripennis*].
- Blue-and-gold Tanager** ◇ *Bangsia arcae* (NT) Brilliant views of two different birds at San Gerardo [*caeruleigularis*].
- Plain-colored Tanager** *Tangara inornata* A group of three seen at La Selva [*rava*].
- Emerald Tanager** *Tangara florida* A couple seen well in a mixed flock at Braulio Carillo NP.
- Silver-throated Tanager** *Tangara icterocephala* Seen well at a few sites, the first at the Savegre Hotel [*frantzii*].
- Speckled Tanager** *Tangara guttata* Just a handful seen, the first at Talari Lodge [*eusticta*].
- Bay-headed Tanager** *Tangara gyrola* Small numbers at several sites, the first at Los Cusingos [*bangsi*].



Female Cherrie's and male Passerini's Tanagers. The males of the two are virtually identical!

Rufous-winged Tanager *Tangara lavinia* One seen coming to a fruiting tree near to Celeste Lodge [cara].

Golden-hooded Tanager *Tangara larvata* Fairly common and widespread, the first at Rancho Naturalista.

Spangle-cheeked Tanager ◊ *Tangara dowii* Surprisingly just a few seen at Los Robles above the Savegre Hotel.

Scarlet-thighed Dacnis *Dacnis venusta* A few seen well at San Gerardo and again at Arenal [nominated].

Blue Dacnis *Dacnis cayana* A couple in San Isidro and a few around La Selva.

Shining Honeycreeper ◊ *Cyanerpes lucidus* A male at Carara and then great views of a few at La Selva [isthmicus].

Red-legged Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes cyaneus* Quite a few seen, the first around San Isidro [carneipes].

Green Honeycreeper *Chlorophanes spiza* Several seen, the first at Talari Lodge [argutus].

Black-and-yellow Tanager ◊ *Chrysothlypis chrysomelas* Some good looks around Braulio Carillo NP [titanota].

Slaty Flowerpiercer ◊ *Diglossa plumbea* Plenty seen at Vólcan Irazú and Cerro de la Muerte.

Slate-colored Grosbeak *Saltator grossus* (H) Just one heard at Arenal [saturatus].

Black-headed Saltator *Saltator atriceps* A couple near to Rancho Naturalista were the only ones [nominated]!

Buff-throated Saltator *Saltator maximus* The common saltator of the lowlands, first seen at Ujurrás [magnoides].

Greyish Saltator *Saltator coerulescens* Small numbers seen, the first on the drive to Rancho Naturalista [grandis-group].

Streaked Saltator *Saltator striatipectus* Just a few seen, the first in the grounds of Talari Lodge [furax].

Blue-black Grassquit *Volatinia jacarina* Seen at several sites, the first around Ujurrás [splendens].

Variable Seedeater *Sporophila corvina* See note.

White-collared Seedeater *Sporophila torqueola* At least 15 noted at Hacienda Solimar; smaller numbers elsewhere [moreletti].

Ruddy-breasted Seedeater *Sporophila minuta* A male was seen at Media Queso near to Los Chiles [centralis].

Thick-billed Seed Finch *Oryzoborus funereus* Seen along the Coto 47 Road and near to Esquinas [ochrogyne].

Nicaraguan Seed Finch ◊ *Oryzoborus nuttingi* Took some searching out, we eventually found a male near Los Chiles.

Yellow-faced Grassquit *Tiaris olivaceus* Small numbers seen, first in open country near Rancho Naturalista [pusillus].

Flame-colored Tanager *Piranga bidentata* Great views around the feeders at the Savegre Hotel [citrea].

Tooth-billed Tanager *Piranga lutea* A couple seen well near to Celeste Mountain Lodge [testacea].

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra* Just a few seen at Arenal and at La Selva [nominated].

Scarlet Tanager *Piranga olivacea* Good numbers of these vivid migrants seen well. First seen at Talari Lodge.

Red-throated Ant Tanager *Habia fuscicauda* A few seen well at Rancho Naturalista and again at La Selva [nominated].

Black-cheeked Ant Tanager ◊ *Habia atrimaxillaris* (EN) Great views of 2 or 3 groups at Esquinas Rainforest Lodge.

Carmioli's Tanager ◊ *Chlorothraupis carmioli* First at Rancho Naturalista; others at Heliconias, Arenal and La Selva [nominated].

Black-thighed Grosbeak ◊ *Pheucticus tibialis* A couple seen near to Paraiso Quetzales including a singing male.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak *Pheucticus ludovicianus* A male at San Vito and seen again in Monteverde.

Black-faced Grosbeak ◊ *Caryothraustes poliogaster* A couple near Celeste then common at La Selva [scapularis].

Blue-black Grosbeak *Cyanocompsa cyanooides* Heard on several occasions, seen at Heliconias Lodge [caerulescens].

Painted Bunting *Passerina ciris* (NT) A male seen well at our hotel at Carara [pallidior].



Painted Bunting and Flame-colored Tanager... hotel garden birds in Costa Rica!



This amazing Northern Tamandua was perhaps the mammalian highlight of the trip!

MAMMALS

Common Opossum (Black-faced O) *Didelphis marsupialis* (LO) One when owling at Esquinas Rainforest Lodge.

Northern Tamandua *Tamandua mexicana* A brilliant sighting at Hacienda Solimar.

Hoffmann's Two-toed Sloth *Choloepus hoffmanni* A total of four of these weird creatures seen well!

Honduran White Bat *Ectophylla alba* Amazing creatures under the banana leaves. Incredible they stayed!

White-faced Capuchin (W-throated C, W-throated C Monkey) *Cebus capucinus* Seen at a few sites, first at Esquinas.

Mantled Howler (M H Monkey) *Alouatta palliata* Great sounds and seen several times.

Central American Spider Monkey (Black-handed S M) *Ateles geoffroyi* Amazing views in Carara NP.

Variegated Squirrel *Sciurus variegatoides* Quite a few seen

Red-tailed Squirrel (Tropical Red S) *Sciurus granatensis* Also reasonably plentiful.

Montane Squirrel (Panama Mountain S) *Syntheosciurus brochus* We believe we saw this one a couple of times.



The gorgeous Honduran White (Tent-making) Bats.

Central American Agouti *Dasyprocta punctata* Quite common and comical!

Forest Rabbit (Tapiti, Brazilian R/Cottontail) *Sylvilagus brasiliensis* One seen at Hacienda Solimar.

Dice's Rabbit (Mountain R) *Sylvilagus dicei* (NL) One spotted on one of our journeys.

Northern Raccoon (Common R) *Procyon lotor* One causing havoc amongst the waterbirds at Hacienda Solimar.

White-nosed Coati *Nasua narica* Quite a few seen including some pallid old-looking individuals!

Collared Peccary *Tayassu tajacu* Scarily confiding and smelly at La Selva!!



Costa Rica was full of amazing insects too, such as the unbelievable Owl Butterfly!



One of the Neotropic's most feared creatures, a *Fer-de-lance* snake, alongside a *Horned Viper* and a *Green Poison-dart Frog*.





Typical Costa Rican scenery... the amazing Arenal Volcano, and a couple more special birds: Blue-and-gold Tanager and the endemic Coppery-headed Emerald.





The stunning Wood Thrush, one of the Nearctic's best winter visitors!

NOTES TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST

The most up to date referenced taxonomic list referred to in the Tour Report is that of the IOC World Bird Names. (Gill, F and Donsker, D Eds). 2017. IOC World Bird Names v7.2. Available at <http://www.worldbirdnames.org>

White-throated Crake *Laterallus albigularis*

We recorded two subspecies of this widespread crake. We enjoyed great views of the form *cinereiceps* near to Caño Negro and especially at Sendero Bogarin, near to La Fortuna, and we heard the nominate form at the marsh near to San Vito.

Blue-vented Hummingbird *Amazilia hoffmanni*

First seen at Hacienda Solimar and then a few seen well around Monteverde, especially around Cala Lodge. Note that the IOC has now split this species from Steely-vented Hummingbird *A. saucerrottei*.

Volcano Hummingbird *Selasphorus flammula*

We noted two forms of this small and attractive species. The nominate *flammula* (Purple-throated) was first seen well at the Irazú Volcano, whilst the form *torridus* (Heliotrope-throated) was the form on Cerro de la Muerte where it was common.

Collared Trogon *Trogon collaris*

We saw two forms of this widespread species. The form *puella* (Bar-tailed) was first seen around Savegre Lodge on Cerro de la Muerte, whilst the form *aurantiventris* (Orange-Bellied) was seen well in the Monteverde area, the first at Santa Elena. The latter was in the past sometimes regarded as a separate species.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

We logged seven of the form *tundrius* in total. They were most conspicuous at Hacienda Solimar where one was watched catching a Blue-winged Teal which it flew c300m with before dropping it and the teal flew off!!

Barred Parakeet *Bolborhynchus lineola*

We saw 100s in flight over Cerro de la Muerte and Paraiso Quetzales in particular. Many of the groups were low down so colour at least was evident. One flock even landed but became instantly invisible!! A species that seems to be in permanent orbit [nominated]!!

Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner *Automolus ochrolaemus*

We noted two quite different forms of this widespread species, and with such marked differences vocally across its range, it's hard to believe a split is not on the way! The Caribbean form, *hypophaeus* was first seen well at Rancho Naturalista, whilst the Pacific form, *exsertus*, was first seen well at Los Cusingos (Skutch's Garden).

Bare-necked Umbrellabird ♦ *Cephalopterus glabricollis*

Amazing! Stunning views of a fine individual by the Arenal Observatory. A real surprise, and seen brilliantly, even feeding on palm fruits! Looking at available illustrations, such as in Handbook of Birds of the World, I think it was quite possibly a female.

White-breasted Wood Wren *Henicorhina leucosticta*

We saw two forms of this widespread species. It's worth keeping a track of this one as splits are likely! The forms we saw were *costaricensis* at Rancho Naturalista and *pittieri* seen at Los Cusingos (Skutch's Garden) and heard at Esquinas Rainforest Lodge.

Golden-winged Warbler *Vermivora chrysoptera*

In actual fact, the one and only male bird that we saw at Rancho Naturalista was not a pure Golden-winged Warbler but in actual fact a male Brewster's Warbler, an uncommon hybrid between Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers!

Variable Seedeater *Sporophila corvina*

We saw two very different forms of this species, and indeed the two forms are treated as separate species by the Handbook of Birds of the World/Birdlife International. The nominate all black form was common in the Caribbean lowlands, being first seen around Ujurrás on the way to Rancho Naturalista. This all black Caribbean form is split by HBW as Black Seedeater. The pied form *hoffmanni* was first seen at San Vito and was common in the southwest. This form is split as part of a species known as Black-breasted Seedeater *S. ophthalmica* by HBW.



A couple more goodies from Monteverde... White-eared Ground Sparrow and White-fronted Amazon.

APPENDIX 1

TOP 10 BIRDS OF THE TOUR

- 1st BARE-NECKED UMBRELLABIRD
- 2nd TURQUOISE COTINGA
- 3rd RESPLENDENT QUETZAL
- 4th Snowcap
- 5th White-tipped Sicklebill
- 6th Three-wattled Bellbird
- 7th Crested Owl
- 8th Snowy Cotinga
- 9th Uniform Crake
- 10th Zeledonia

A total of 36 species received at least one vote!



Let's finish how we started... hope you enjoyed it !!