



A [Tropical Birding](#) CUSTOM tour

COSTA RICA

1 – 13 March 2016



This accommodating **Spotted Antbird** featured on a good morning for antbirds at Arenal that included *Ocellated* and *Zeledon's* Antbirds too (*photo by Jose Illanes*)

Tour Leaders: Sam Woods and Jose Illanes

Photos in this report were taken by Jose Illanes/Tropical Birding on this tour, unless otherwise indicated.

INTRODUCTION

Costa Rica is indisputably one of the World's greatest birding countries; a small country hemmed in by the Caribbean Sea on one side and Pacific Ocean on the other, it is dissected in the center with a series of mountain ranges that are rich in bird species endemic to the region. A series of excellent national and private protected areas provide plentiful habitats for a staggering array of species within a small country that barely exceeds the US state of West Virginia in size. This tour was set up for a bird club from Africa, much along the lines of our regular Costa Rica Introtour; it visited some of the most revered birding sites in the country, but added another too, in the form of Arenal Observatory

Lodge, perched in full view of the dramatic volcanic cone of the same name. One of the many appeals to birding Costa Rica is that in a short time a variety of different birding regions can be visited, and a large bird list compiled. This tour set out to do just that; we started out within the dry Central Valley, near where San Jose's international airport is located; after that we took our first dip into the foothill forests of the Caribbean slope in Braulio Carrillo National Park. Having descended into this wet and humid area from the drier Central Valley, we continued to drop in altitude after this as we visited one of the most famous tropical research facilities in the world, La Selva Biological Station. After two nights there we returned to the middle elevations on the Caribbean side of the mountains, although this time were based at the superb Arenal Observatory Lodge. After there, we ascended higher into the mountains, where we visited several reserves in the Monteverde area, where some of our birding was done within moss-drenched cloudforests. A stark change in scene followed as we descended to near sea level on the Pacific side of the mountains, where we visited the lowland jungles of Carara National Park, and also took a leisurely boat ride along the Tarcoles River. Our final stop of the tour saw us return to the mountains, and cloudforests, but this time higher still, into the Oak forests in and around the Savegre Valley.

By spending time in all of these markedly different areas, we racked up a bird list of **447 species**, more than **420 of which were seen**. The highlights were many and varied, as Costa Rica boasts a veritable bounty of stunning tropical bird species. To highlight this, when it came to the voting for the top birds of the tour, 23 different species were nominated. Included on this list of popular birds were **Black-crested Coquettes** seen searching for nectar among the flowers of our lodge in Arenal; a pair of **Great Tinamous** seen having a prolonged, and sometimes violent, territorial dispute in the lowland jungle at La Selva; dramatic **Yellow-throated and**



Keel-billed Toucans seen in the same area-true "cartoon birds"; the fiery male **Orange-collared Manakin** found just in the nick of time at Carara; the tame, regular pair of **Black-and-white Owls** at Arenal; an obscenely accommodating **Spotted Antbird** that thrilled the photographers in particular at the same site; another "photographer's bird" in the form of an obliging **Turquoise-browed Motmot** near Carara (*photo above*); the electric male **Painted Bunting** in our lodge garden near there too; the male **Turquoise Cotinga** seen during a short, but thrilling, stop on the outskirts of San Isidro; a surprisingly cooperative **Agami Heron** that showed to all along a forested rivulet at La Selva; several bright **Flame-throated Warblers** that lit up the trees in Savegre; a

striking **Ocellated Antbird** hiding in the shadowy undergrowth of the forest in Arenal; the conspicuous **Acorn Woodpeckers** of the Savegre Hotel and Spa; the unusually tame **Spotted Wood-Quails** on the same hotel grounds; the always popular, and dare I say "cute", **Collared Redstart** in the same Oak forests; and the only hummingbird to make the selection, the immaculate **White-throated Mountain-Gem**, which attended the birdy feeders in the same hotel too. Lastly, from the beautiful to the just plain odd, in the form of a small rookery of **Boat-billed Herons** seen during a very popular boat trip through the mangroves of the Tarcoles River. And, these were just the ones that did NOT make the top five! Surprising and handsome omissions from this larger selection included, **Fiery-throated Hummingbird, Violet Sabrewing, Baird's and Collared Trogons, Long-tailed Manakin, White-throated Magpie-Jay, Long-tailed Silky-Flycatcher, Spangle-cheeked Tanager, and Golden-browed Chlorophonia**, but then I guess this merely illustrates what an extraordinary place for birds that Costa Rica is. It is extremely popular for good reason.

After the votes were in, the final TOP FIVE BIRDS OF THE TOUR were as follows:

- 1 **Scarlet Macaw** (Tarcoles)
- 2 **Resplendent Quetzal** (Monteverde)
- 3 **Three-wattled Bellbird** (Monteverde)
- 4 **Wrenthrush** (Los Quetzales National Park, near Savegre)
- 5 **Fiery-billed Aracari** (Hotel Villa Lapas Garden, near Carara)



Agami Heron La Selva

Day 1: The Central Valley

The tour began with an afternoon meet and some frenetic birding near our hotel, located within the *Central Valley* of Costa Rica (also where the international airport is located). It was frenetic, because this was our first stop in the country, and for some of the group, their first dip into the considerable riches of birding in tropical America. Birding the edge of a lake we quickly found **Hoffman's Woodpecker**, a common endemic of the area; followed by **Gray and Short-tailed Hawks** on the wing; **Cinnamon and Steely-vented Hummingbirds**; a few **Green-breasted Mangos**; **Masked Tityras**, **Yellow-throated Euphonias**, and **Stripe-headed Sparrows** perched in the trees alongside the lake; and Northern Jacanas and a smattering of waterbirds on the lake itself. A good dose of wintering North American breeders were found bright **Baltimore Orioles**, vivid male **Summer Tanagers**, deep **Blue Grosbeaks**, and hyperactive **Yellow Warblers**. Just before leaving this area for another late afternoon short stop, one of the best finds of the afternoon came, in the form of a perched **Plain-capped Starthroat**. We ended this frantic first birding period at a local farm, where a flurry of wings got us onto a flock of **Crested Bobwhites**, while a **Gray-crowned Yellowthroat** sung nearby. The day came to a close with a **Common Pauraque** flying around us, and a post-dinner check of a nest box in the garden revealed a **Tropical Screech-Owl** following a short wait.

BIRD OF THE DAY: SUMMER TANAGER

Day 2: Braulio Carrillo National Park to La Selva



We started by birding immediately around the grounds of our *Alajuela* hotel. The day before had closed with an owl at its end, and so the day began too; same garden, but different owl, this time a **Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl** glaring down at us from its garden perch (*photo left, by Sam Woods*). The other main garden target was the bright orange male **Spot-breasted Oriole** that frequents the yard, and it did not take long to track him down either. After breakfast we headed up into the hills, moving out of the dry *Central Valley*, onto the wet Caribbean slope of the mountains. Our

destination was the sweaty foothills of *Braulio Carrillo National Park*, at an elevation of 500m/ft. I had forewarned the group that the birding was set to be considerably more challenging on this morning, as we entered forest for the first time, where the birding is by nature more challenging.



However, I had not banked on the birding being as slow as it turned out to be! With considerable effort, as we walked the *Sendero Las Palmas*, we chalked up a couple of good sightings, with a prolonged 'scope view of a **Blue-and-gold Tanager**, a **Stripe-breasted Wren** hiding in a vine tangle, and then good looks at a **Black-headed Nightingale-Thrush**, with very little in between. Lunch was sandwiched between a couple of visits to *El Tapir Hummingbird Garden*, where the hoped for Snowcap was seen, although only the considerably duller female for most, aside from Sheelagh and Sam who got glimpses of the male there. One of the local **Black-crested Coquettes** was more cooperative and showed to all; and the garden also held our first fiery-rumped male **Passerini's Tanagers**, (*photo left*), **Golden-hooded Tanagers**, and also produced our only **Emerald Tanagers** of the trip. Sheelagh also picked out a male **Red-capped Manakin** foraging high in the canopy, which sadly did not remain for all to see.

It was all too soon time to push on down to *La Selva*, located on the wet and humid Caribbean lowlands, stopping for a confiding **Laughing Falcon** (thanks to our eagle-eyed driver, *Didier*), a crowd-pleasing juvenile **Bare-throated Tiger-Heron** by the roadside, and **Mangrove Swallow** en-route. We opted to bird an open, cultivated area just outside the grounds of the biological station, where we tracked down a series of parrots: **Red-lored Parrot**, **Crimson-fronted and Olive-throated Parakeets**, and two **Great Green Macaws** being the undoubted highlights. A **Green Ibis** feeding in a field alongside and a pair of **Bat Falcons** also featured too.

BIRD OF THE DAY: BARE-THROATED TIGER-HERON

Day 3: La Selva

Following the day before's relative paucity of birds, we needed a big day, and *La Selva* does "Big Days" very well indeed. This is just what we got, with a flood of birds coming from dawn to dusk, as we sweated our way around just a fraction of the trails that dissect the property. The day opened with birds like **Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer** foraging in a roadside *Heliconia*; a tiny **Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher** in some roadside trees, **Long-tailed Tyrant** and **White-ringed Flycatcher** near the famous (*for birds*) *La Selva* clearing; and a pair of handsome woodpeckers sharing the same stand of trees: **Chestnut-colored and Cinnamon Woodpeckers**. For part of the morning we were joined by a couple of the local guides for *La Selva* (*Jorge and Octavio*), and we enjoyed a busy time along the trails with them, getting **Gartered and Slaty-tailed Trogon**, which opened a three-trogon day for us; **White-whiskered Puffbird**, several tame **Rufous Mourners**, and the endemics **Yellow-crowned Euphonia** and **Black-throated Wren**. The same area brought our first sloth of the tour, although it was little more than a barely recognizable ball of messy fur. The dashing, must see **Strawberry Poison Frog** was also seen nearby. Crossing the Stone Bridge to bird the clearing and primary forest on the far side, we were stopped in our tracks by a pair of **Broad-billed Motmots** sitting quietly by the bridge itself. Our trip to the other side of the river was made very worth while,

once a male **Great Curassow** was seen sitting in a tree close by; we also added a male **Black-crowned Antshrike** along the same trail, and were shown the menacing **Fer-de-Lance** (a venomous snake) tucked in next to a large tree buttress. The morning came to an end with a scarce regional endemic, **Plain-colored Tanager** and a **Blue Dacnis**.

After lunch on site we returned to the far side of the river, in the hope of finding a tinamou, or one of the trogons we were missing. This worked on both counts, when our third species of trogon of the day was found, in the form of a male **Black-throated Trogon**. However, the calling Great Tinamous were expected to be somewhat harder to get a

look at. But Vernon found one standing alongside the trail, which then began a prolonged and violent fight with what was presumably a rival male in a territorial dispute. The birds flared up to their greatest size, cocked their tails, and regularly made jousting movements towards each other, often ending in direct contact; and this was repeated for over 15-

minutes. This was a sensational way to add **Great Tinamou** to the list (*photo right*), and thus was a landslide victor of the BIRD OF THE DAY vote, by the sheer nature of the sighting. A beautiful bright green **Emerald Basilisk**, which appears more dinosaur than lizard, was also popular on that side too. **Rufous Motmot** also joined



the list during the afternoon walk there, but as somewhat upstaged by a pair of dramatic and accommodating **Pale-billed Woodpeckers** on the way back towards the lodge, capping a good day for woodpeckers with 5 species seen. At the close of the day the few still present, following a long day on our feet; added **Black-cowled Oriole**, **Bright-rumped Attila**, and **Blue-chested Hummingbird**.

BIRD OF THE DAY: GREAT TINAMOU

Day 4: La Selva to Arenal (via Catarata del Toro)

After two nights staying in the relatively simple accommodations at *La Selva Biological Station*, we moved on to somewhere highly different by the evening, *Arenal Observatory Lodge*, in full view of the 1670m-high volcano. We did not get there until late however, as we took most of our final morning at La Selva to try and plug some bird gaps, before driving west to Arenal, and stopping at the small private reserve of *Catarata del Toro* in the mountains, en-route.

After yesterday's flurry of new birds at *La Selva*, it was predictably slower as we worked to find some of the scarcer birds we were missing. However, shortly after breakfast Otto found of the area's key birds, with a ghostly white male **Snowy Cotinga** sitting high in the trees. Two different males were seen over a five-minute period. The birds were a little more distant than hoped, but all got to see at least one all the same. The clearing held a pair of very showy **Slaty-tailed Trogons**, (*photo this page*), as well as a few giant **Green Iguanas** lazing in the trees overhead. **Yellow-throated (Chestnut-mandibled) Toucans** also gave some of their best looks of the tour there too. We finished our time at *La Selva* with a walk along a near trail, where upgraded views of both **Black-throated Wren** and **Long-billed Gnatwren** were had; and **Red-throated Ant-Tanager** and **Fasciated Antshrike** were added to the trip list. We also visited a lek (display site) of the **White-collared Manakin**, where most people got some looks at the striking males as they perched deep in the understory. The end of the walk, and our time, at *La Selva* was, however, the most dramatic of all as Sally indicated she had a heron in a narrow rainforest creek, which turned out to be the rare and shy **Agami Heron**, (*photo page 3*). In spite of this reputation though the bird remained in full view of all, giving the entire group present one of the birds of the trip! While we packed up the bus, a male **Great Curassow** (*photo, next page*), walking the edge of the clearing, made it ever more difficult to tear ourselves away from this amazing birding area.



We made a short afternoon stop at *Catarata del Toro*, which hosts not only a dramatic waterfall on site, but also has a series of feeders, which drew us there in order to track down some of their unique attendees. Within a short time of arriving we picked up the first of the key specials at the site, with a male **White-bellied Mountain-Gem**. Pretty much all of the hummingbirds on site were new to us, with this representing our first visit to the lower mountains, and so we enjoyed our first looks at **Green Hermit**, **Violet Sabrewing**, and **Green-crowned Brilliant**. A **Slaty-backed Nightingale-Thrush** was seen hopping along a near forest path by some; and another key species was seen hopping around the garden, **Sooty-faced Finch**, a bird for which this site offered our only chance. After getting good views of that, late on our visit in came several **Coppery-headed Emeralds**, a Costa Rican country endemic, and better still, a few male **Black-bellied Hummingbirds** that posed for a while just as we'd given up hope of this species. Again, this was our only chance of the tour. With three birds seen that we could not see anywhere else, we pushed on towards *Arenal*, making stops for such striking birds as **Keel-billed Toucan**, **White-throated Magpie-Jay** and **White-fronted Parrot** along the way, before we rolled into *Arenal Observatory Lodge* at the end of the day. Our birding for the day did not officially close until after we had seen a pair of **Black-and-white Owls** hanging around a streetlight on the lodge property, in full glorious view, at close range.

BIRD OF THE DAY: AGAMI HERON



Day 5: Arenal

By staying at *Arenal Observatory Lodge*, we not only had smashing views of the volcanic cone nearby, but could also bird right on site, as the gardens are littered with hummingbird-friendly flowers, and the lodge also possesses trails going deeper into the forest too. The morning started right outside our rooms, where a **Golden-olive Woodpecker** and a group of Scarlet-thighed Dacnis were found, **Red-legged Honeycreepers** foraged in the purple *Verbena* flowers, and hummingbirds flitted in and out of there too, which included further **Violet-headed Hummingbirds**. We gradually moved to the veranda overlooking the near volcano, which also has a centerpiece fruit feeder. At the feeder, as usual, the most prominent visitor was **Montezuma Oropendola**, giving unrivaled views, but many other birds came in our breakfast time there, including **Tennessee Warbler**, **Palm Tanager**, **Green and Red-legged Honeycreepers**, **Brown Jay**, and **Gray-headed Chachalaca**. Below the feeders, **White-nosed Coatis**, a mammal related to a raccoon, mopped up whatever fruit fell down from above, while **Black-striped Sparrows** hopped around nearby. The local verbena flowers were also in good condition for hummingbirds, attracting our only **Brown Violetears** of the tour.



After breakfast we took a popular trail leading through rich forest towards a waterfall. We worked our way through the extensive and well-manicured grounds of the lodge, in order to reach there, noting several **Black-crested Coquettes**, **Green Thorntails**, and **White-necked Jacobins** at the flowers en-route. Along the trail the birding was very slow, but did produce some good specialties, most notably a **Dull-mantled Antbird** seen by all, **Carmioli's Tanager**, and **Streak-crowned Antvireo**. Another **Slaty-tailed Trogon** was seen, but we were thwarted by calling *Nightingale Wren* and *Thicket Antpitta* that never came in. A small troop of **Central American Spider Monkeys** were also the only ones seen on the tour. In the afternoon we birded some roadside forest nearby, stopping for a confiding **Fasciated Tiger-Heron** before we got there. In the forest **White-throated Thrush** and an **Orange-bellied Trogon** were new, and a **Rufous-tailed Jacamar** was now seen by all, after only some seeing it earlier at La Selva. The late afternoon birding was slow and rather frustrating, as considerable effort was put into tracking down the calling *Bare-crowned Antbirds* and *Thicket Antpittas*, but coming up empty-handed. We did, however, add some other birds like **Russet Antshrike** and **Black-headed Saltator**, and get great views of **Keel-billed Toucan** and **White-throated Magpie-Jay**.

BIRD OF THE DAY: BLACK-AND-WHITE OWL (for the evening before!)

Day 6: Arenal to Monteverde

We spent much of the morning again around Arenal, around the excellent lodge we had stayed in the past two nights, before we rose up in altitude (to around 1500m/4920ft), and checked into our next hotel, Cala Lodge, close to the edge of the famous Monteverde cloudforest reserve.

We started out on the edge of the *Arenal Observatory Lodge Property*, which was simply alive with birds. It was one of the best day openers of the tour; as birds came thick and fast at the forest edge, at a scenic lookout with a view of the huge *Arenal Lake* below. Just after arriving, parrots came into the trees overhead, which held two we had only seen previously passing high overhead: **Brown-hooded and White-crowned Parrots**, and also included close perched **Red-lored Parrot** too. The close cecropias attracted a veritable siege of birds, from a **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** shinning up a trunk, a scarce winter visitor from North America, to a pair of gaudy **Crimson-collared Tanager**, to further **Scarlet-thighed Dacnises**. Other notable birds were a close **Long-tailed Tyrant** showing off its namesake appendage, **Yellow-throated Euphonia** and **Masked Tityra**. We had come to this spot to search for two rarer species; **Lovely Cotinga**, and **Three-wattled Bellbird**. We did manage to find a distant bellbird to some relief, although the very rare cotinga was a no show. We were not to know at that stage of course that this would be just the first, and worst, of three bellbird showings! In the same area we also added **White-collared Seedeater**, **Slaty**

Spinetail, and **Wilson's Warbler** to the trip list, and got **Black-cowled Oriole** for those who were not present for the first view at *La Selva*. This was all in an hour's birding, before breakfast! After breakfast with more **Montezuma Oropendolas** and **Red-legged Honeycreepers** for company (*photo this page*), we made another attempt at the Waterfall Trail, for our final birding in the Arenal area. We had precious little time, and the trail was far from birdy, but it proved very worthwhile. In just a few hours we found **Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant**, a stunning bright male **Black-and-yellow Tanager**, an absurdly cooperative male **Spotted Antbird** that sat in glorious view for 5 whole minutes; and then walked into a small antswarm on the way back. When army ants move through the forest floor searching for insect prey, many prey items flee the phalanx of ants, and there are a number of birds that try to pick off the fleeing insects. While the viewing was not easy, we did manage to find **Bicolored**, **Chestnut-backed**, **Zeledon's**, **Spotted**, and **Ocellated Antbirds** in attendance (*photo below*), for a dramatic close to our time at Arenal. On the way back to the lodge to pack up, several **Crested Guans** posed in the lodge garden too.



By late afternoon, we had driven around Lake Arenal and arrived at the town of *Santa Elena* (seeing our first **Emerald Toucanets**, and further **Hoffman's Woodpeckers** en-route), a small town that houses the droves of tourists that visit the nearby Monteverde cloudforest reserve. The habitat around town is drier than in that park, and we tracked down a pair of **White-eared Ground-Sparrows**, a brace of **Rufous-capped Warblers**, a **Blue-crowned Motmot**, but best of all, a pair of boisterous **Gray-necked Wood-Rails**, before dusk called time on our day and we checked into our quaint, family-run,

mountain lodge.

BIRD OF THE DAY: GRAY-NECKED WOOD-RAIL

Day 7: Monteverde

We awoke with some excitement, for this was set to be one of the standout days of the tour. We birded first around the grounds of our lodge on the outskirts of *Santa Elena* town, then post-breakfast spent the bulk of the day within *Monteverde's* cloudforest, before finishing in a very different small forest reserve on the edge of town. Starting around the lodge, highlights included a tree with three **Orange-bellied Trogons** in attendance, and a **Plain Wren** in the garden, the latter of which was new for us. Vernon took up temporary residence on the veranda post-breakfast, where he and Jose saw a male and female **Canivet's Emerald** visited the *Porterweed*.

We were soon in one of the most hallowed destinations for Ecotourists in the country, the reserve of *Monteverde*. While popular (there was a jam of tourist vehicles as we arrived), we were soon away from the jam and on the forest trails, where we found a series of "ovenbirds" or *furanriids*, **Red-faced Spinetail**, **Lineated Foliage-Gleaner**, **Spotted Barbtail**, and a regional endemic, **Streak-breasted Treehunter**. Among the other birds along the trail were spritely **Slate-throated Redstarts (Whitestarts)**, a **Prong-billed Barbet** found hiding in the undergrowth by Jose, an inconspicuous **Eye-ringed Flatbill** located by Joy, an active **Ochraceous Wren** (another regional endemic), and a tame **Black Guan** (*photo page 12*), that



posed for the photographers in the group. Several **Golden-browed Chlorophonias** excited some, and frustrated others, by showing through a narrow window, and a **Black-faced Solitaire** was well picked out in the gloomy forest by Jane, and then skillfully lined up in a 'scope by Jose through the slimmest of openings. We also saw several northern migrants, in the form of **Black-throated Green-Warblers**, which would soon be departing north for North America. However, all of these birds were overshadowed by two other species seen during the morning; first a calling male **Three-wattled Bellbird** led people to hog the 'scope for as much as they dared, and then we visited a nesting site for Costa Rica's most famous bird of all: **Resplendent Quetzal**, (*photo left*). We arrived to find the nest being guarded by local park staff, and a female sitting nearby. Then a large figure, trailing bright emerald feathers in its wake arrived, a fully tailed male *Resplendent Quetzal*. The group went into overdrive with cameras and appreciative murmurs, for this is indeed one of the World's classic birds. We spent a good 15 minutes or more with these incomprehensibly beautiful tropical birds, before we dragged ourselves away and left the quetzals to their nesting duties. Having bagged both bellbird and quetzal, the walk back to lunch was cheerful, and we even

managed to see the hard-to-see **Silvery-fronted Tapaculo** on the way back. It was a good view of the bird, which is not to say everyone saw it well, but some did manage to see its namesake front, as it flitted around in the gloomy undergrowth below us.

Over lunch inside the reserve Jose managed to hand feed one of the local **Common Chlorospingus**, and we also visited the local *Hummingbird Gallery*, not an art event, but a set of hummingbird feeders, with a series of hummingbirds permanently in attendance during daylight hours. The threatening ash-colored clouds overhead eventually unloaded on us, and some light rain fell, but under the shelter of the hummingbird gallery, we were nonplussed, enjoying a procession of birds coming in to feed on the sugar water, like **Coppery-headed Emerald**,

Stripe-tailed Hummingbird, Violet Sabrewing, Green Violetear, Magenta-throated Woodstar, and the ever-popular Purple-throated Mountain-Gem, an attractive name and an attractive bird.



In the afternoon we drove only fifteen minutes from our morning's destination, where the habitat changes subtly, and we birded in dry forest for the remainder of the afternoon. Our main target was **Long-tailed Manakin**, and it did not take too long to locate a spectacular, fully tailed male, which was 'scoped for all. On any other day this surely would be one of the birds of the day, but on a day with bellbird and quetzal...! We managed to find another small antswarm, which was being attended by **Ruddy, Olivaceous, and Northern Barred Woodcreepers**, and **Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush**. Our time at this small and excellent private reserve closed with another sighting of **Hoffman's Two-toed Sloth**, and a new monkey for us, with **White-fronted Capuchin** lurking around the car park. In the regular bird of the day vote only one species got nominated...

BIRD OF THE DAY: RESPLENDENT QUETZAL

Day 8: Curi-Cancha to Carara

We had another morning in the Monteverde area to try and see the few birds we had not yet tracked down. For this we visited another small private reserve (our third reserve visited in this rich area), *Curi-Cancha*, not far from Santa Elena town. This reserve is particularly good for the usually difficult **Gray-throated Leaf-tosser**, which was duly tracked down and put on a good show, as it sang at eye level in front of us all for some time. We also added **Plain Antvireo, Smoky-brown Woodpecker,**

Yellowish Flycatcher, Spotted Woodcreeper, and (for some) **White-throated Spadebill**. Two of the most stellar sightings of the morning though was a surprise pair of **Black-breasted Wood-Quail** that shuffled across the trail in front of Sam initially. Soon after they were tempted back into view for all. After seeing the continental divide, which marks the division of the Caribbean and Pacific slopes, we walked back to the entrance, finding a calling **Golden-bellied Flycatcher** en-route; and then, around the hummingbird feeders in the reserve, we found a fruiting tree being attended by a male **Golden-browed Chlorophonia** and male and female **Elegant Euphonias** for a grandstand finish to our time in the Monteverde area.

We then moved down into the steamy *Pacific lowlands*, planning to stop in an area of mangroves near *Tarcoles*, although this plan was scrapped to some degree when a roadside group of **Scarlet Macaws** were spotted. While they are expected in this area, the views were spectacular, and low, making these some of the most popular birds of the entire tour. The same spot was good for other parrots too, with **White-fronted and Yellow-naped Parrots** and **Orange-fronted Parakeet** seen in the same area too. The mangroves were quiet, although a mangrove form of Yellow Warbler was seen; and nearby Jose spotted one of Costa Rica's most beautiful birds, a smashing **Turquoise-browed Motmot**. In the late afternoon we checked into our hotel for the next two nights, *Hotel Villa Lapas*, named after the *Scarlet Macaws* that roam the area, and perched close to the edge of *Carara National Park*.



BIRD OF THE DAY: SCARLET MACAW



Day 10: Carara and the Tarcoles River Cruise

After a walk around our hotel grounds, and breakfast, we visited the lowland rainforest in Carara National Park, one of the most revered sites in Costa Rican birding. On the hotel property we saw our first **Black-hooded Antshrike** but little more. As with forest birding everywhere though, even the best of sites can be tough going at times, and that is how it turned out initially. After seeing a **Northern Ghost Bat** before we commenced our walk along one trail in the park, the birding appeared slow at first. However, even on a "slow" walk, we had good looks at **Double-toothed Kite**, **Black-headed Trogon** and **Barred Antshrike**, got **Riverside Wren**, and also our first **Tawny-crowned Greenlets**. Sensing a distinct lull in what activity we had, we turned back and planned to spend some time along another of the park's trails. On the return journey, we picked up **Charming Hummingbirds** and **Blue-throated Goldentail**, which were both visiting the same flowering tree; **Gartered Trogon**, **White-shouldered Tanager**, **Plain Xenops**, and one of the birds of the morning, when a calling **Royal Flycatcher** was tracked down. On the other trail we added another stellar bird, when another group alerted us to a male **Baird's Trogon**. Aside from this an antswarm attracted both **Bicolored** and **Chestnut-backed Antbirds** and **Tawny-winged Woodcreeper** for those who were not distracted by the nearby *Baird's Trogon*. A small flock of wild **Muscovy Ducks** also gave prolonged views there, (*photo below*).



After a hot slog in the very humid jungles of *Carara National Park*, it was a popular decision to go on a boat ride in the afternoon along the *Tarcoles River*, following a midday break around the lodge. Assisted by an experienced local birdman and boat driver, we were soon seeing **Northern Jacanas**, **Bare-throated Tiger-Heron**, **Little Blue Heron**, **Purple Gallinule**, and **Southern Lapwing**. A pair of **Grayish Saltators** perched by the river were less expected however, and the only ones of the entire tour. **White Ibis** were seen feeding along the bank, and a very

obliging **Common Black-Hawk** let us drift right up to it (*photo below*). Several **Ospreys** patrolled the area, as did a handful of **Yellow-headed Cararas**, and once we entered the mangroves we got cracking views of **Boat-billed Heron**, an oddity that had a small nesting colony in the area, and soon after saw some **Roseate Spoonbills** resting in the mangroves overhead. Sally spotted a lithe **Plumbeous Kite** perched in the mangroves too, and we also saw a golden-colored **Prothonotary Warbler**, a wintering species from North America. We tried for a number of songbirds that call the mangroves home, having success with some, like **Rufous-browed Peppershrike**, "**Mangrove**" **Yellow Warbler**, and a cooperative **Mangrove Vireo**. However, a calling *Panama Flycatcher* eluded for the second time in two days. Compensation was provided in some form by the rarer still **Northern Scrub Flycatcher**. On the way back to the dock, following this very popular boat ride, Jose spotted over a dozen **Scissor-tailed Flycatchers** resting in the trees, several **Yellow-naped Parrots** and **Scarlet Macaws** flew over, and a handful of **Lesser Nighthawks** emerged to hawk on the wing, just before we pulled on to finish the tour. In the end, it had been a heady day for birds, with many new additions.

BIRD OF THE DAY: BOAT-BILLED HERON

Day 11: Carara to Savegre

Before breakfast we walked around the Hotel Villa Lapas grounds in the hope of tracking down one of the regular **Fiery-billed Aracaris** that had eluded us thus far. Just as we were forced to guide our way towards the breakfast table up popped a **Fiery-billed Aracari** to save our day and Sam's neck! That was good enough alone, for our short pre-breakfast walk (35 minutes), but this was then

complimented by views of a superb male **Painted Bunting**. Some overhead **Costa Rican Swifts** were also seen during the walk, and a welcome get-back bird that we had missed during the afternoon before's boat ride; and a **Yellow-green Vireo** was seen the restaurant. After this exciting start, we returned to *Carara National Park*, but were greeted with a very quiet forest indeed; few birds and few birders, both strange scenarios for this park! With some work, we gleaned **Slate-headed Tody-Flycatcher** and **Northern Bentbill** from the walk, although neither were seen by all. A **Streak-chested Antpitta** was only seen by a few of the group, although a **White-whiskered Puffbird** and **Turquoise-browed Motmot** were more cooperative. Other sightings included **Long-billed Gnatwren**, **Long-billed Hermit**, **Dusky Antbird**, and **Rufous-breasted Wren**. The morning's standout sighting



though came right near the end, when Vernon spotted a fiery-chested male **Orange-collared Manakin** perched in full, glorious view (*photo below*). The morning's walk suddenly felt worthwhile, in spite of the hours of seeming inactivity, and birds playing hard to get! Another sloth was seen sleeping in a ball closeby too.



After packing up and taking lunch, we departed for Savegre, driving via the town of *San Isidro*. Although we had very little time by the time we got there, we decided to try for the scarce **Turquoise Cotinga** near the city along the way. By the time we arrived we were looking at a maximum time of 30 minutes in which to find the bird, due to the necessary further travel time required. However, Jose spotted one within less than a minute of getting out of the bus to relieve the stress very quickly. However, he spotted this so quickly that not all were ready and this electric blue bird soon took off towards the nearby forest. Panic set in, before Bob spotted another nearby, which this time remained in the 'scope for all. **Red-crowned Woodpecker** and a

gaudy male **Cherrie's Tanagers** completed our new additions in the area, and twenty minutes later we continued to climb higher into the *Talamanca Mountains*, as we headed towards Savegre. There was just enough time for one more bird as we descended the Savegre Valley towards our hotel, where we stopped for a **Dusky Nightjar**, which duly obliged by flying low over our heads.

BIRD OF THE DAY: ORANGE-COLLARED MANAKIN

Day 12: Savegre & Cerro de la Muerte

After getting a tip off the evening before we specifically visited an area of the lodge property right after dawn in the hope of the rare, and usually difficult to see **Spotted Wood-Quail**. Recently, a pair had become somewhat habituated in the area, but were best looked for a short time after dawn, when the trail is quieter. So that is exactly when we visited, and sure enough, a pair of these handsome gamebirds were found scratching around in the leaf litter for all to see. As we had not been up these high elevations before on the tour (i.e. 2200m/7220ft), and the area is rich in regional endemics, new birds came at a steady rate through the day, even at this late stage of the tour. In our short pre-breakfast walk, we added such spectacular birds as **Long-tailed Silky-Flycatcher**, (*photo page 18*), **Acorn Woodpecker**, **Collared Redstart** (*photo next page*), and **Spangle-cheeked Tanager**, as well as **Yellow-winged Vireo**, **Yellow-thighed Finch**, better views of **Golden-browed Chlorophonia** for some, and **Flame-colored Tanagers** in the garden. After breakfast, with the weather looking good, we drove up to higher altitudes still, to just over 3400m/11,150ft at *Cerro de la Muerte*, where some higher elevation species dwell. They took a little more work than usual, but eventually we tracked down a pair of both **Volcano Junco** (*photo page 20*), and **Timberline Wren**, and also spotted some female **Volcano Hummingbirds** and **Slaty Flowerpiercers**. Our next stop was the road to Providencia, a road swathed in tall primary cloud forest, which is part of the vast *Los Quetzales National Park*. Our reason for visiting this area was to make our first attempt at **Wrenthrush**, a bird that some in the group had marked out as one of their key target birds on their "shopping lists". It took a lot of time before one was

finally heard calling, and after some initial panic, we all managed close looks at this odd bird, which could well be a monotypic bird family, although is currently still considered a *New World Warbler*, even if a short-tailed, long-legged, one that appears more like a mini-*antpitta* than a warbler! The same road brought us our first, and ever-popular **Flame-throated Warblers**, as well as a pair of **Black-and-yellow Silky-Flycatchers**, **Black-capped Flycatcher**, the scarce **Buffy Tuftedcheek**, and a scoped **Barred Becard**. We also bumped into a few **Townsend's Warblers** too. Heading back down to the lodge for lunch, we found **Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush**, while over lunch some of us in the garden at the time, saw some **Sulphur-winged Parakeets** flying around the property.



Around lunchtime we enjoyed the feeders at the lodge, which were attended by 6 species of hummingbirds (**Green Violetear**, **White-throated Mountain-Gem**, and **Volcano**, **Scintillant**, **Stripe-tailed**, and **Magnificent Hummingbirds**-[photo page 38](#)), while the other feeders played host to **Silver-throated** and **Flame-colored Tanagers** ([photo page 19](#)), and **Acorn Woodpecker**. After a short break, we went for a walk down to the Savegre River, directly from the hotel, taking in an adult **Yellowish Flycatcher** feeding a youngster on the way down, and soon running into a feeding party of birds beside the river that held a handful of new birds for us: **Brown-capped Vireo**, **Ruddy Treerunner**, **Spot-crowned Woodcreeper**, and **Black-cheeked Warbler**, in addition to more **Spangle-cheeked Tanagers** and **Sooty-capped Chlorospingus**, ([photo page 22](#)). Further long the trail, much to Otto and Vernon's delight, we located a **Torrent Tyrannulet**, a bird they had frustratingly missed during a previous tour in Ecuador. There were no *American Dippers* though as hoped. A bit further along Vernon picked up a **Dark Pewee** that was a good find, and also led us to mixed species flock, where Jose found a **Hairy Woodpecker** hiding in its midst. On the way back to the lodge after a bumper day, we found a pair of confiding **Tufted Flycatchers**, the

final addition to the bird list of the day, in spite of some owling done after dinner, when a distant *Bare-shanked Screech-Owl* only answered briefly before falling silent. Due the high number of endemic species in this area, even the experienced travelers in the group racked up over twenty lifers on this day, with others even nearly forty lifebirds!



BIRD OF THE DAY: WRENTHRUSH

Day 13: Savegre & Paraiso Quetzal to San Jose

This was to be our final birding of the trip, and with us having done so well the day before, we opted to get a lift up to some of the hotel's higher trails, for some of the more difficult species in the area: *Silvery-fronted Jay*, *Costa Rican Pygmy-Owl*, and *Ochraceous Pewee*. Unfortunately, the first two were not heard or seen in our time up there, although we did get good looks at a pair of **Ochraceous Pewees**, and got some cracking views of several **Collared Trogons**, which was the seventh trogon of the tour. Another highlight was an overflight of raptors, which involved triple figures of **Swainson's Hawks**, with a handful of **Broad-winged Hawks** mixed in. After lunch back at our wonderful hotel in Savegre, it was time to say our goodbyes to the hummingbirds (like the **White-throated Mountain-Gem-photo next page**), and other amazing birds of this magical valley; a **Red-tailed Hawk** passed overhead just before leaving, and as we ascended the Savegre Valley for the final time, a **Yellow-bellied Siskin** was added to the trip list feeding by the roadside, the final new bird of the trip. We had just enough time to go for some upgraded views of **Fiery-throated Hummingbird** at the Paraiso Quetzal feeders, where many of these birds were fighting for a place at the feeders with **Magnificent Hummingbirds** and **Green Violetears**, while **Long-tailed**

Silky-Flycatcher, Golden-browed Chlorophonia, Black-and-yellow Silky-Flycatcher, Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush, and Large-footed Finch were seen closeby.



All too soon we were on the road back to San Jose, pulling into our hotel near San Jose's international airport for one final night, when vicious debate ensued about the birds of the trip! It had been a thoroughly enjoyable tour, with some fantastic birds and places visited. Who could forget the manic search for a Turquoise Cotinga, or the extended time spent close to a pair of Resplendent Quetzals, or the sight of a group of wild Scarlet Macaws feeding at eye level, or the Wrenthrush hopping around on the forest floor. There were simply too many highlights to mention-4 motmots, 37 species of hummingbirds, 5 toucan species, 13 species of woodpecker, 13 species of parrots, 17 species of antbird, 6 manakin species, 24 warbler species, over 30 species from the tanager family, not to mention 16 mammal species. This group of South African birders left with a feeling they had visited somewhere special, and who would disagree after such an amazing time!



White-throated Mountain-Gem Savegre (top); and **Red-legged Honeycreeper Arenal**



Resplendent Quetzal *Monteverde*



SPECIES LISTS

The taxonomy of the bird list follows: Clements, James F., White, Anthony W., and Fitzpatrick, John W. The Clements Checklist of Birds of the World. Cornell, 2007.

This list is up to date with the major changes published by Cornell up until August 2015.

Regional endemic bird species are indicated in **RED** and with a *.

(H) indicates a species that was HEARD only.

(GO) indicates a species recorded by the GUIDE ONLY.

BIRDS:

TINAMOUS: TINAMIDAE

Great Tinamou *Tinamus major*: A prolonged territorial dispute between 2 birds was seen in La Selva.

Little Tinamou *Crypturellus soui*: Heard only, at La Selva. (H)

DUCKS, GEESE, AND WATERFOWL: ANATIDAE

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna autumnalis*: Seen in the Central Valley, and en-route to Arenal.

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata*: Good views were had of a group of 4 in Carara.

Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors*: A small group was seen in San Miguel in the Central Valley.

GUANS, CHACHALACAS, AND CURASSOWS: CRACIDAE

Gray-headed Chachalaca *Ortalis cinereiceps*: Seen well at Arenal, and also around Monteverde too.

Crested Guan *Penelope purpurascens*: Good looks at both La Selva and in the lodge garden at Arenal.

***Black Guan *Chamaepetes unicolor*:** Several were seen in the Monteverde area.

Great Curassow *Crax rubra*: Two separate males were seen, at length, in La Selva.

NEW WORLD QUAIL: ODONTOPHORIDAE

Crested Bobwhite *Colinus cristatus*: A covey of 4 were seen near our hotel in the Central Valley.

***Black-breasted Wood-Quail *Odontophorus leucolaemus*:** A pair was seen at Curi-Cancha, near Monteverde.

Spotted Wood-Quail *Odontophorus guttatus*: 2 different pairs were seen in Savegre.

GREBES: PODICIPEDIDAE

Least Grebe *Tachybaptus dominicus*: 2 were seen in the Central Valley.

STORKS: CICONIIDAE

Wood Stork *Mycteria americana*: One was seen in flight in the Central Valley, and others around Tarcoles.

FRIGATEBIRDS: FREGATIDAE

Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens*: Many were seen along the coast in the Carara area.

CORMORANTS AND SHAGS: PHALACROCORACIDAE

Neotropic Cormorant *Phalacrocorax brasilianus*: Seen twice, in the Central Valley and the Tarcoles area.

ANHINGAS: ANHINGIDAE

Anhinga *Anhinga anhinga*: One was seen in the Central Valley, and another on the Tarcoles boat ride.

PELICANS: PELECANIDAE

Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis*: Seen on our two days near the coast in the Tarcoles/Carara area.

HERONS, EGRETS, AND BITTERNS: ARDEIDAE

Fasciated Tiger-Heron *Tigrisoma fasciatum*: One showed well near Arenal Observatory Lodge.

Bare-throated Tiger-Heron *Tigrisoma mexicanum*: 1 juvenile near La Selva; others in the Carara area.

Great Blue Heron *Ardea Herodias*: 4 sightings, in the Central Valley, and the Tarcoles area.

Great Egret *Ardea alba*: Scattered sightings throughout.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*: Seen in the Central Valley and in Tarcoles.

Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea*: Recorded in La Selva, Arenal and Tarcoles.

Tricolored Heron *Egretta tricolor*: Just two sightings around Tarcoles.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*: Scattered sightings throughout; seen on 7 days.

Green Heron *Butorides virescens*: 1 was seen in the Central Valley, and another 3 on our Tarcoles boat trip.

Agami Heron *Agamia agami*: One of the birds of the trip, found by Sally, at La Selva.

Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*: Just 1 was seen in a Boat-billed Heron colony in Tarcoles.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron *Nyctanassa violacea*: 3 were seen on the Tarcoles boat trip.

Boat-billed Heron *Cochlearius cochlearius*: Several birds were seen at a small colony near Tarcoles.

IBISES AND SPOONBILLS: THRESKIORNITHIDAE

White Ibis *Eudocimus albus*: A few were seen in the Tarcoles area.

Green Ibis *Mesembrinibis cayennensis*: Seen twice in La Selva.

Roseate Spoonbill *Platalea ajaja*: 3 were seen on the Tarcoles boat ride.

NEW WORLD VULTURES: CATHARTIDAE

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus*: Recorded on every day of the tour.

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*: Recorded on all but one day of the tour.

OSPREY: PANDIONIDAE

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*: Seen in the Central Valley, Tarcoles and Savegre.

NOTE: The IOC list splits Osprey into 2 species, when this becomes **Western Osprey, *P. haliaetus***.

HAWKS, EAGLES, AND KITES: ACCIPITRIDAE

White-tailed Kite *Elanus leucurus*: One was seen on the Tarcoles River boat ride.

Swallow-tailed Kite *Elanoides forficatus*: 3 sightings, in Arenal and the Monteverde area.

Ornate Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus ornatus*: Seen briefly in flight at both Monteverde and Savegre.

Double-toothed Kite *Harpagus bidentatus*: One was seen perched in Carara.

Plumbeous Kite *Ictinia plumbea*: 2 were seen on the Tarcoles boat ride.

Common Black-Hawk *Buteogallus anthracinus*: Seen very well on the boat ride in Tarcoles.

Barred Hawk *Morphnarchus princeps*: One flew over El Tapir.

Roadside Hawk *Rupornis magnirostris*: One was seen near Jaco.

Harris's Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus*: 1 was seen on the Tarcoles boat trip.

Gray Hawk *Buteo plagiatus*: Seen 5 times on the tour.

Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus*: 1 seen near Catarata del Toro & others at Savegre.

Short-tailed Hawk *Buteo brachyurus*: Seen in the Central Valley and Savegre.

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis*: Seen twice in Savegre.

RAILS, GALLINULES, AND COOTS: RALLIDAE

Gray-necked Wood-Rail *Aramides cajaneus*: A pair was seen in our hotel garden in Monteverde.

Purple Gallinule *Porphyrio martinicus*: 3 were seen along the Tarcoles River.

Common Gallinule *Gallinula galeata*: One was seen by Jose in the Central Valley. **(GO)**

American Coot *Fulica americana*: 2 were seen in the Central Valley.

STILTS AND AVOCETS: RECURVIROSTRIDAE

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus*: Seen in the Central Valley and in Tarcoles.

PLOVERS AND LAPWINGS: CHARADRIIDAE

Black-bellied Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*: 1 was seen at Tarcoles.

Southern Lapwing *Vanellus chilensis*: Excellent views were had along the Tarcoles River.

Wilson's Plover *Charadrius wilsonia*: 2 were seen at Tarcoles.

Killdeer *Charadrius vociferous*: 1 was seen in the Central Valley.

JACANAS: JACANIDAE

Northern Jacana *Jacana spinosa*: Seen in the Central Valley and along the Tarcoles River.

SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES: SCOLOPACIDAE

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*: Recorded in the Central Valley in Tarcoles.

Willet *Tringa falvipes*: Seen in Tarcoles and close to Jaco.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*: Seen several times in and around Tarcoles.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*: 1 was seen in Tarcoles.

Western/Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris sp.*: A probable Western was seen briefly in Tarcoles.

GULLS, TERNS, AND SKIMMERS: LARIDAE

Laughing Gull *Leucophaeus atricilla*: A few large groups were seen en-route to Tarcoles.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*: A small group was seen along the coast on the way to Tarcoles.

Royal Tern *Thalasseus maximus*: A few were seen along the coast on the way to Tarcoles.

PIGEONS AND DOVES: COLUMBIDAE

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*: Commonly recorded in urban areas.

Pale-vented Pigeon *Patagioenas cayennensis*: Recorded around La Selva, Arenal and near Carara.

Red-billed Pigeon *Patagioenas flavirostris*: Recorded on 7 days of the tour.

Band-tailed Pigeon *Patagioenas fasciata*: This highland pigeon was seen at Monteverde and Savegre.

Ruddy Pigeon *Patagioenas subvinacea*: Seen only briefly in Savegre.

Short-billed Pigeon *Patagioenas nigrirostris*: Seen at El Tapir, La Selva and around Carara.

Inca Dove *Columbina inca*: Recorded in the Central Valley and near Carara.

Common Ground-Dove *Columbina passerine*: Seen in the Central Valley, and also near Carara.

Ruddy Ground-Dove *Columbina talpacoti*: Seen repeatedly in the Carara area.

Blue Ground-Dove *Claravis pretiosa*: Jose saw one near Carara. **(GO)**

White-tipped Dove *Leptotila verreauxi*: Seen around La Selva and Carara.

Gray-chested Dove *Leptotila cassini*: Seen at both La Selva and Carara.

Buff-fronted Quail-Dove *Zentrygon costaricensis*: One was seen by Vernon and Sam at Savegre.

Chiriqui Quail-Dove *Zentrygon chiriquensis*: Heard in the Monteverde area. **(H)**

White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica*: A common species, seen on half of the tour days.

CUCKOOS: CUCULIDAE

Squirrel Cuckoo *Piaya cayana*: Seen in the Central Valley, La Selva, and around Carara.

Striped Cuckoo *Tapera naevia*: Heard in the Central Valley on our first day. **(H)**

Groove-billed Ani *Crotophaga sulcirostris*: Recorded on at least 4 days of the tour.

OWLS: STRIGIDAE

Tropical Screech-Owl *Megascops choliba*: A nesting bird was seen in our hotel garden in Alajuela.

***Bare-shanked Screech-Owl *Megascops clarkii*:** Heard just a couple of times in Savegre. **(H)**

Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl *Glaucidium brasilianum*: 1 was seen in our hotel garden near San Jose airport.

Black-and-white Owl *Ciccaba nigrolineata*: A wonderful pair was seen very close at Arenal.

NIGHTJARS AND ALLIES: CAPRIMULGIDAE

Lesser Nighthawk *Chordeiles acutipennis*: 4 birds were seen on our boat ride on the Tarcoles River.

Common Pauraque *Nyctidromus albicollis*: Seen in the Central Valley and at the Carara hotel.

***Dusky Nightjar *Antrostomus saturates*:** One swooped very low over our heads at Savegre.

SWIFTS: APODIDAE

White-collared Swift *Streptoprocne zonaris*: Recorded on 5 days of the tour (e.g. Savegre).

***Costa Rican Swift *Chaetura fumosa*:** 6+ were seen over the Hotel Villa Lapas (Carara).

Gray-rumped Swift *Chaetura cinereiventris*: Recorded regularly around La Selva.

Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift *Panyptila cayennensis*: A couple of brief sightings in La Selva.

HUMMINGBIRDS: TROCHILIDAE

White-necked Jacobin *Florisuga mellivora*: Just recorded on our 2 days in Arenal.

Bronzy Hermit *Glaucis aeneus*: A single was seen by just a few people in Carara.

Green Hermit *Phaethornis guy*: Recorded at feeders at Catarata del Toro and Monteverde.

Long-billed Hermit *Phaethornis longirostris*: 1 was seen in Carara.

Stripe-throated Hermit *Phaethornis striigularis*: Seen at La Selva, Arenal and Carara.

Brown Violetear *Colibri delphinae*: A couple of birds were seen at Arenal.

Green Violetear *Colibri thalassinus*: Seen at the feeders at Monteverde, Curi-Cancha & Carara.

Purple-crowned Fairy *Heliophryx barroti*: One was seen at Arenal by Otto and Sandy.

Green-breasted Mango *Anthracothorax prevostii*: 2 were seen in the Central Valley.

Green Thorntail *Discosura conversii*: Seen well at flowers at El Tapir and Arenal.

Black-crested Coquette *Lophornis helenae*: Seen at El Tapir and Arenal.

Green-crowned Brilliant *Heliodoxa jacula*: Seen at feeders in Catarata del Toro and Monteverde.

Magnificent Hummingbird *Eugenes fulgens*: Coming to feeders at Savegre and Paraiso Quetzal.

Plain-capped Starthroat *Heliomaster constantii*: One was seen perched in the Central Valley.

***Fiery-throated Hummingbird *Panterpe insignis*:** A stunner; seen best at the Paraiso Quetzal feeders.

***White-bellied Mountain-Gem *Lampornis hemileucus*:** A male & female were seen at Catarata del Toro.

***Purple-throated Mountain-Gem *Lampornis calolaemus*:** At feeders in Catarata del Toro & Monteverde.

White-throated Mountain-Gem *Lampornis castaneiventris*: A popular visitor to the Savegre feeders.

***Magenta-throated Woodstar *Calliphlox bryantae*:** Came to feeders at Monteverde; also at Curi-Cancha.

***Volcano Hummingbird *Selasphorus flammula*:** Seen at Savegre, Cerro del la Muerte & Paraiso Quetzal.

***Scintillant Hummingbird *Selasphorus scintilla*:** A few females came to the feeders at Savegre.



Canivet's Emerald *Chlorostilbon canivetii*: Seen by Vernon and Jose in our Monteverde lodge garden.

Violet-headed Hummingbird *Klais guimeti*: Visited flowers at El Tapir and Arenal.

Scaly-breasted Hummingbird *Phaeochroa cuvierii*: Seen in Arenal and Tarcoles.

Violet Sabrewing *Campylopterus hemileucurus*: Visited feeders at Monteverde & Catarata del Toro.

Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer *Chalybura urochrysis*: 1 was seen visiting a Heliconia at La Selva.

Crowned Woodnymph *Thalurania colombica*: Recorded at both El Tapir and Arenal.

Stripe-tailed Hummingbird *Eupherusa eximia*: Visited feeders at Monteverde and Savegre.

***Black-bellied Hummingbird *Eupherusa nigriventris*:** 2 beautiful males were seen at Catarata del Toro.

***Coppery-headed Emerald *Elvira cupreiceps*:** Seen at Catara del Toro and Monteverde feeders.

***Snowcap *Microchera albocoronata*:** Sam and Sheelagh saw a male at El Tapir; everyone else only a female.

Blue-chested Hummingbird *Amazilia amabilis*: 1 was seen at La Selva.

***Charming Hummingbird *Amazilia decora*:** A dueling pair was seen along a trail in Carara.

Steely-vented Hummingbird *Amazilia saucerrottei*: 2 were seen in the Central Valley.

Rufous-tailed Hummingbird *Amazilia tzacatl*: A common species seen on at least 8 days.

Cinnamon Hummingbird *Amazilia rufica*: Seen twice in the Central Valley.

Blue-throated Goldentail *Hylocharis eliciae*: A few were seen well in Carara.

TROGONS: TROGONIDAE

Resplendent Quetzal *Pharomachrus mocinno*: A female and a pair were seen at Monteverde.

Voted as one of the TOP FIVE BIRDS OF THE TOUR.

Slaty-tailed Trogon *Trogon Massena*: Seen very well at both La Selva and Arenal.

Black-headed Trogon *Trogon melanocephalus*: 3 birds were seen in Carara.

***Baird's Trogon *Trogon bairdii*:** A male was 'scoped at Carara.

Gartered Trogon *Trogon caligatus*: Seen twice at La Selva, and also in Carara.

Black-throated Trogon *Trogon rufus*: A pair and a male were seen in La Selva.

***Orange-bellied Trogon *Trogon aurantiiventris*:** A male in Arenal, and another 3 in Monteverde.

Collared Trogon *Trogon collaris*: 3 birds were seen one morning in Savegre.

MOTMOTS: MOMOTIDAE

Blue-crowned Motmot *Momotus coeruliceps*: A few were seen in the Monteverde area.

Rufous Motmot *Baryphthengus martii*: 2 singles were seen in La Selva.

Broad-billed Motmot *Electron platyrhynchum*: A pair was seen at La Selva.

Turquoise-browed Motmot *Eumomota superciliosa*: 1 was seen in Tarcoles and another in Carara.

KINGFISHERS: ALCEDINIDAE

Ringed Kingfisher *Megaceryle torquata*: 1 was seen in the Central Valley and another around Tarcoles.

Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon*: 1 was seen on the Tarcoles boat trip.

Amazon Kingfisher *Chloroceryle amazona*: Just the one was seen near Arenal.

Green Kingfisher *Chloroceryle americana*: Seen at Tarcoles and near Carara.

PUFFBIRDS: BUCCONIDAE

White-necked Puffbird *Notharchus hyperrhynchus*: Heard calling distantly in La Selva. (H)

Pied Puffbird *Notharchus tectus*: Frustratingly heard close but not located in La Selva. (H)

White-whiskered Puffbird *Malacoptila panamensis*: Seen in La Selva and Carara.

JACAMARS: GALBULIDAE

Rufous-tailed Jacamar *Galbula ruficauda*: Seen in La Selva and Arenal.

TOUCANS-BARBETS: SEMNORNITHIDAE

***Prong-billed Barbet *Semnornis frantzii*:** Jose found one perched low at Monteverde.

TOUCANS: RAMPHASTIDAE

Emerald Toucanet *Aulacorhynchus prasinus*: Seen at Monteverde and Savegre.

Collared Aracari *Pteroglossus torquatus*: Seen several times at La Selva.

***Fiery-billed Aracari *Pteroglossus frantzii*:** Seen in our hotel garden near Carara.

Yellow-throated Toucan *Ramphastos ambiguus*: Seen in La Selva, Arenal and Carara.

Formerly known as *Chestnut-mandibled* or *Black-mandibled Toucan*.

Keel-billed Toucan *Ramphastos sulfuratus*: Seen at La Selva, Arenal and en-route to Monteverde.

WOODPECKERS: PICIDAE

Acorn Woodpecker *Melanerpes formicivorus*: Seen in the hotel garden at Savegre.

Black-cheeked Woodpecker *Melanerpes pucherani*: Seen in La Selva and Arenal.

Red-crowned Woodpecker *Melanerpes rubricapillus*: A pair was seen in San Isidro.

***Hoffman's Woodpecker *Melanerpes hoffmannii*:** Seen in the Central Valley and around Monteverde.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker *Sphyrapicus varius*: 1 was seen at Arenal.

Smoky-brown Woodpecker *Picoides fumigatus*: 1 was seen in Curi-Cancha, near Monteverde.

Hairy Woodpecker *Picoides villosus*: Seen a couple of times in Savegre.

***Rufous-winged Woodpecker *Piculus simplex*:** 1 was seen at La Selva.

Golden-olive Woodpecker *Colaptes rubiginosus*: 1 was seen in Arenal and another near Monteverde.

Cinnamon Woodpecker *Celeus loricatus*: Seen twice in La Selva.

Chestnut-colored Woodpecker *Celeus castaneus*: Seen well in La Selva.

Lineated Woodpecker *Dryocopus lineatus*: Just 1 was seen in the Central Valley.

Pale-billed Woodpecker *Campephilus guatemalensis*: A marvelous pair was seen in La Selva.

FALCONS AND CARACARAS: FALCONIDAE

Barred Forest-Falcon *Micrastur ruficollis*: Heard close at Savegre. **(H)**

Collared Forest-Falcon *Micrastur semitorquatus*: Heard along one of the Carara trails. **(H)**

Crested Carara *Caracara cheriway*: Recorded on 6 days of the tour.

Yellow-headed Carara *Milvago chimachima*: Seen in the Central Valley and around Tarcoles.

Laughing Falcon *Herpetotheres cachinnans*: Seen well near La Selva, and a few others seen.

Bat Falcon *Falco ruficularis*: A pair was seen near La Selva.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*: 1 flew past on the Tarcoles boat trip.

NEW WORLD & AFRICAN PARROTS: PSITTACIDAE

Orange-chinned Parakeet *Brotogeris jugularis*: Seen in the Central Valley, at La Selva and in Tarcoles.

Brown-hooded Parrot *Pyrilia haematotis*: Only flyovers in La Selva, but seen well perched in Arenal.

White-crowned Parrot *Pionus senilis*: Seen perched in Arenal, and others seen in flight in San Isidro.

Red-lored Parrot *Amazona autumnalis*: Good views of perched birds in both La Selva and Arenal.

Yellow-naped Parrot *Amazona auropalliata*: A few pairs flew over the Tarcoles River.

White-fronted Parrot *Amazona albifrons*: Seen in Arenal and Tarcoles.

Mealy Parrot *Amazona farinosa*: Perched birds were seen in La Selva.

***Sulphur-winged Parakeet *Pyrrhura hoffmanni*:** Several groups were seen in flight in Savegre.

Olive-throated Parakeet *Eupsittula nana*: A few were seen perched in La Selva.

Orange-fronted Parakeet *Eupsittula canicularis*: 2 were seen perched in Tarcoles.

Great Green Macaw *Ara ambiguous*: 2 small groups were seen in flight in La Selva.

Scarlet Macaw *Ara macao*: Excellent views were had of a small group in Tarcoles.

Voted as BIRD OF THE TRIP

***Crimson-fronted Parakeet *Psittacara finschi*:** Seen in La Selva, and another pair was seen in the city of Cartago.

TYPICAL ANTBLRDS: THAMNOPHILIDAE

Fasciated Antshrike *Cymbilaimus lineatus*: A pair was seen in La Selva.

Barred Antshrike *Thamnophilus doliatus*: 2 were seen in Carara.

Black-crowned Antshrike *Thamnophilus atrinucha*: A pair was seen in La Selva.
Formerly known as *Western Slaty-Antshrike*.

***Black-hooded Antshrike *Thamnophilus bridgesi*:** A few were seen in Carara.

Russet Antshrike *Thamnistes anabatinus*: 1 was found by Jose in Arenal.

Plain Antwreos *Dysithamnus mentalis*: A male was seen in Curi-Cancha.

***Streak-crowned Antwreos *Dysithamnus striaticeps*:** A pair was seen in Arenal.

Slaty Antwren *Myrmotherula schisticolor*: Seen by Jose and some of the group in Monteverde.

Dot-winged Antwren *Microrhophias quixensis*: Seen on several occasions in Carara.

Dusky Antbird *Cercomacra tyrannina*: A male and a female were both seen in Carara.

Bare-crowned Antbird *Gymnocichla nudiceps*: Heard frustratingly close at Arenal. (H)

Chestnut-backed Antbird *Myrmeciza exsul*: Seen in both Arenal and Carara.

Dull-mantled Antbird *Myrmeciza laemosticta*: Seen well in Arenal.

Zeledon's Antbird *Myrmeciza zeledoni*: 1 attended an antswarm with *Ocellated Antbird* at Arenal.

Bicolored Antbird *Gymnophthys bicolor*: Seen at Braulio, Arenal and Carara.

Spotted Antbird *Hylophylax naevioides*: Excellent views were had of a male at Arenal.

Ocellated Antbird *Phaenostictus mcleannani*: 1 attended an antswarm with *Bicolored*, *Spotted*, and *Zeledon's Antbirds*.

ANTPITTAS: GRALLARIIDAE

Streak-chested Antpitta *Hylopezus perspicillatus*: A couple of people had close views of a bird at Carara.

***Thicket Antpitta *Hylopezus dives*:** Heard frustratingly close at Arenal. (H)

TAPACULOS: RHINOCRYPTIDAE

***Silvery-fronted Tapaculo *Scytalopus argentifrons*:** Seen well by some of the group in Monteverde.

ANTTHRUSHES: FORMICARIIDAE

Black-faced Antthrush *Formicarius analis*: A calling bird was seen by Vernon in Carara.

OVENBLRDS AND WOODCREEPERS: FURNARIIDAE

Gray-throated Leaf-tosser *Sclerurus albigularis*: 1 showed very well at Curi-Cancha.

Olivaceous Woodcreeper *Sittasomus griseicapillus*: Seen twice in the Monteverde area.

Ruddy Woodcreeper *Dendrocincla homochroa*: 1 was seen well in the Monteverde area.

Tawny-winged Woodcreeper *Dendrocincla anabatina*: 1 was seen at an antswarm in Carara.

Plain-brown Woodcreeper *Dendrocincla fuliginosa*: Just 1 was seen at La Selva.

Wedge-billed Woodcreeper *Glyphorhynchus spirurus*: Seen twice in La Selva.

Northern Barred Woodcreeper *Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae*: 1 was seen at La Selva, and another at an antswarm in dry forest near Monteverde.

Cocoa Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus susurrans*: Seen twice at La Selva and in the Carara area.

Spotted Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus erythropygius*: 1 was seen at Curi-Cancha.

Streak-headed Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*: Recorded in the Central Valley, La Selva, Arenal, Monteverde

area, and in Tarcoles.

Spot-crowned Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes affinis*: Seen on several occasions in Savegre.

Plain Xenops *Xenops minutus*: Seen twice in Carara.

Buffy Tuftedcheek *Pseudocolaptes lawrencii lawrencii*: 1 was seen along the road to Providencia.

Lineated Foliage-gleaner *Syndactyla subalaris*: 1 was seen in the Monteverde reserve.

Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner *Automolus ochrolaemus*: 1 was seen in a mixed flock at Arenal.

***Streak-breasted Treehunter *Thripadectes rufobrunneus*:** A pair was seen in Monteverde reserve.

Spotted Barbtail *Premnoplex brunnescens*: 1 showed well to all at Monteverde.

***Ruddy Treerunner *Margarornis rubiginosus*:** 3 or 4 birds were seen in a large mixed flock in Savegre.

Red-faced Spinetail *Cranioleuca erythroptis*: 2 were seen in Monteverde reserve.

Slaty Spinetail *Synallaxis brachyuran*: A nesting bird was seen at close range at Arenal.

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS: TYRANNIDAE

Brown-capped Tyrannulet *Ornithion brunneicapillus*: One was heard in Arenal. (H)

Southern Beardless Tyrannulet *Camptostoma obsoletum*: Heard in Carara. (H)

Greenish Elaenia *Myiopagis viridicata*: 2 were seen in the Carara area.

Yellow-bellied Elaenia *Elaenia flavogaster*: One was heard in the Central Valley. (H)

Mountain Elaenia *Elaenia frantzii*: Seen at our Monteverde lodge, and also around Savegre.

Torrent Tyrannulet *Serpophaga cinerea*: Ee found a couple of them in Savegre.

Olive-striped Flycatcher *Mionectes olivaceus*: Seen two or three times in Arenal.

Ochre-bellied Flycatcher *Mionectes oleaginous*: 1 showed well at La Selva, and could even be scoped.

Paltry Tyrannulet *Zimmerius vilissimus*: Seen at El Tapir, La Selva, Curi-Cancha, and in Savegre.

Northern Scrub-Flycatcher *Sublegatus arenarum*: Seen in the mangroves, on our Tarcoles boat ride.

Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant *Lophotriccus pileatus*: 1 showed well in Arenal.

Nothorn Bentbill *Oncostoma cinereigulare*: A close, though brief, bird was seen by some in Carara.

Slate-headed Tody-Flycatcher *Poecilatriccus sylvia*: 1 was seen along a trail in Carara.

Common Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum cinereum*: Recorded at El Tapir, La Selva, Arenal, and Carara.

Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum nigriceps*: One was seen in La Selva.

Eye-ringed Flatbill *Rhynchocyclus brevirostris*: Seen in the main reserve at Monteverde.

Yellow-olive Flycatcher *Tolmomyias sulphurescens cinereiceps*: Just the one seen, in La Selva.

Yellow-margined Flycatcher *Tolmomyias assimilis flavotectus*: 1 was seen in La Selva.

White-throated Spadebill *Platyrinchus mystaceus*: 1 was seen well by some in Curi-Cancha.

Royal Flycatcher *Onychorhynchus coronatus*: One was seen late in the morning at the park in Carara.

Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher *Myiobius sulphureipygius*: One each at Arenal and Carara.

Tufted Flycatcher *Mitrephanes phaeocercus*: A couple of confiding birds were seen in Savegre.

***Dark Pewee *Contopus lugubris*:** A pair was found by Vernon in Savegre.

***Ochraceous Pewee *Contopus ochraceus*:** This rare, endemic, flycatcher showed at length in Savegre.

Western Wood-Pewee *Contopus sordidulus*: A calling bird was seen at San Isidro.

Eastern Wood-Pewee *Contopus virens*: 1 was seen near Carara.

Tropical Pewee *Contopus cinereus*: One showed at Arenal, and another was seen on the Tarcoles boat trip.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher *Empidonax flaviventris*: 1 was seen at our hotel by Carara, by Sam only. (GO)

Acadian Flycatcher *Empidonax virescens*: 1 was seen at La Selva.

- Yellowish Flycatcher *Empidonax flavescens*:** Recorded at Curi-Cancha and Savegre.
- Black-capped Flycatcher *Empidonax atriceps*:** 2 different birds were seen in the Savegre area.
- Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans*:** 2 singles were seen in Arenal.
- Long-tailed Tyrant *Colonia colonus*:** This handsome flycatcher was seen at La Selva and Arenal.
- Bright-rumped Attila *Attila spadiceus*:** One was seen well at La Selva late one afternoon.
- Rufous Mourner *Rhytipterna holerythra*:** 4 were seen in one day at La Selva; our only sightings.
- Dusky-capped Flycatcher *Myiarchus tuberculifer*:** Seen around La Selva, Monteverde and Savegre.
- Panama Flycatcher *Myiarchus panamensis*:** Close calling birds were heard in mangroves at Tarcoles. **(H)**
- Brown-crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus tyrannulus*:** 1 was seen in the Central Valley.
- Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus*:** A common and conspicuous bird in lowland areas throughout.
- Boat-billed Flycatcher *Megarynchus pitangua*:** Recorded at La Selva, Carara and Savegre.
- Social Flycatcher *Myiozetetes similis*:** Commonly encountered in lowland areas throughout.
- Gray-capped Flycatcher *Myiozetetes granadensis*:** Seen on a few days of the tour, in La Selva and Arenal.
- White-ringed Flycatcher *Conopias albovittatus*:** A typically vocal bird was seen in La Selva.
- *Golden-bellied Flycatcher *Myiodynastes hemichrysus*:** A noisy bird was seen in Curi-Cancha.
- Streaked Flycatcher *Myiodynastes maculatus*:** Seen in the Central Valley, and near Carara.
- Piratic Flycatcher *Legatus leucophaeus*:** Seen in La Selva and Arenal, also heard in the Carara area.
- Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus*:** Recorded on all but a few days of the tour.
- Scissor-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus forficatus*:** 20 or more birds were seen on our Tarcoles boat trip.

COTINGAS: COTINGIDAE

- *Turquoise Cotinga *Cotinga ridgwayi*:** A short diversion, with very little time to spare, saw us looking for this bird on the outskirts of San Isidro. Jose took all of 30 seconds to locate a marvelous male!
- Rufous Piha *Lipaugus unirufus*:** A bird called just the once, in Carara. **(H)**
- *Three-wattled Bellbird *Procnias tricarunculatus*:** This recently arrived migrant was seen 3 times on the tour, distantly in Arenal, then much better in the main Monteverde. ***VOTED AS ONE OF THE BIRDS OF THE TOUR***
- *Snowy Cotinga *Carpodectes nitidus*:** 2 males were seen for a short time at La Selva.

MANAKINS: PIPRIDAE

- Long-tailed Manakin *Chiroxiphia linearis*:** 2 smashing males and a female were seen in the Monteverde area.
- White-ruffed Manakin *Corapipo altera*:** Single males were seen briefly, and only by some, in El Tapir and Arenal.
- White-collared Manakin *Manacus candei*:** A couple of males were seen lekking at La Selva.
- *Orange-collared Manakin *Manacus aurantiacus*:** A gorgeous male was found by Vernon in Carara.
- White-crowned Manakin *Dixiphia pipra*:** A female was seen in the Braulio area.
- Red-capped Manakin *Ceratopipra mentalis*:** Sandy found a male at El Tapir, which only stuck around for a few to see it. A female was also seen at La Selva.

TITYRAS AND ALLIES: TITYRIDAE

- Black-crowned Tityra *Tityra inquisitor*:** A pair was seen near the town of Tarcoles.
- Masked Tityra *Tityra semifasciata*:** Recorded in the Central Valley, La Selva, Arenal, and Monteverde.
- Barred Becard *Pachyrhamphus versicolor*:** Seen twice in the Savegre area.

Cinnamon Becard *Pachyramphus cinnamomeus*: Seen twice in La Selva, then again in Arenal.

Rose-throated Becard *Pachyramphus aglaiae*: 1 in the Central Valley was followed by others in the Carara area.

VIREOS, SHRIKE-BABLERS & ERPORNIS: VIREONIDAE

Mangrove Vireo *Vireo pallens*: 1 was seen well, during our boat trip into the mangroves at Tarcoles.

Yellow-throated Vireo *Vireo flavifrons*: 2 were seen in the Central Valley, and another single in Arenal.

***Yellow-winged Vireo *Vireo carmioli*:** Seen a handful of times in Savegre.

Brown-capped Vireo *Vireo leucophrys*: Just seen the once, in Savegre.

Philadelphia Vireo *Vireo philadelphicus*: 1 was seen in El Tapir Hummingbird Garden.

Yellow-green Vireo *Vireo flavoviridis*: Vernon and Sam saw one in our Carara hotel garden.

Tawny-crowned Greenlet *Hylophilus ochraceiceps*: 2 were seen inside Carara.

Lesser Greenlet *Hylophilus decurtatus*: Seen a handful of times in both La Selva and Carara.

Rufous-browed Peppershrike *Cyclarhis gujanensis*: 2 were seen during our Tarcoles boat ride.

CROWS, JAYS, AND MAGPIES: CORVIDAE

White-throated Magpie-Jay *Calocitta formosa*: Seen well around Arenal, and also again in Monteverde. A surprising omission from the birds of the trip lists!?

Brown Jay *Psilorhinus morio*: Seen a number of times in the Monteverde area.

SWALLOWS: HIRUNDINIDAE

Blue-and-white Swallow *Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*: A commonly encountered species, on more than half of the days.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis*: Recorded on 5 days of the tour, including in La Selva.

Southern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*: Recorded on at least 5 days of the tour.

Gray-breasted Martin *Progne chalybea*: Seen near La Selva and around Tarcoles.

Mangrove Swallow *Tachycineta albilinea*: Seen around La Selva, and also in the Tarcoles/Carara area.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*: Recorded on four days of the tour, including within the Central Valley.

Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*: Seen by Jose in the Tarcoles area. (GO)

WRENS: TROGLODYTIDAE

Nightingale Wren *Microcerculus philomela*: Heard twice in Arenal. (H)

House Wren *Troglodytes aedon*: Recorded at La Selva, Arenal, Monteverde and Carara.

***Ochraceous Wren *Troglodytes ochraceus*:** Seen once each, at Monteverde and Savegre.

***Timberline Wren *Thryorchilus browni*:** A pair was seen in the paramo at Cerro del la Muerte.

Band-backed Wren *Campylorhynchus zonatus*: A pair was seen in La Selva.

Rufous-naped Wren *Campylorhynchus rufinucha*: Seen in the Central Valley and in the Carara area.

***Black-bellied Wren *Pheugopedius fasciatoventris*:** Heard just once or twice in Carara. (H)

Rufous-breasted Wren *Pheugopedius rutilus*: Seen a couple of times in Carara.

***Black-throated Wren *Pheugopedius atrogularis*:** Seen on two days in La Selva.

Rufous-and-white Wren *Thryophilus rufalbus*: Seen twice in the Monteverde area.

***Stripe-breasted Wren *Cantorchilus thoracicus*:** One was seen at Braulio Carrillo and La Selva.

Plain Wren *Cantorchilus modestus*: Seen within our lodge garden at Monteverde.

***Riverside Wren *Cantorchilus semibadius*:** One was seen in Carara.

Bay Wren *Cantorchilus nigricapillus*: A pair was seen at El Tapir.

White-breasted Wood-Wren *Henicorhina leucosticte*: Seen near Monteverde.

Gray-breasted Wood-Wren *Henicorhina leucophrys*: Seen in Monteverde and Savegre.

GNATCATCHERS: POLIOPTILIDAE

Tawny-faced Gnatwren *Microbates cinereiventris*: One was seen at Arenal by some people.

Long-billed Gnatwren *Ramphocaenus melanurus*: Seen once in La Selva and again in Carara.

White-lored Gnatcatcher *Polioptila albiloris*: 1 was seen in the Central Valley.

Tropical Gnatcatcher *Polioptila plumbea*: Seen in La Selva, Arenal, and in the Carara area.

THRUSHES AND ALLIES: TURDIDAE

*Black-faced Solitaire *Myadestes melanops*: Some good views were had at Monteverde and Savegre.

*Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus gracilirostris*: Seen at Savegre and Paraiso Quetzal.

Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus aurantiirostris*: Seen several times in the Monteverde area.

Slaty-backed Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus fuscater*: 1 at Catarata del Toro, and some also saw one at Monteverde.

Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus frantzii*: A few were seen at Savegre.

Black-headed Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus mexicanus*: 1 showed to all of us in Braulio Carrillo.

Wood Thrush *Hylocichla mustelina*: Recorded at La Selva, the Monteverde area, and Carara.

*Sooty Thrush *Turdus nigrescens*: Seen regularly around Savegre.

Mountain Thrush *Turdus plebejus*: Seen regularly in the mountains (Monteverde and Savegre).

Pale-vented Thrush *Turdus obsoletus*: 1 was seen feeding with Mountain Thrushes in Monteverde.

Clay-colored Thrush *Turdus grayi*: Costa Rica's national bird was seen daily.

White-throated Thrush *Turdus assimilis*: Seen in Arenal twice and once in Monteverde.

SILKY-FLYCATCHERS: PTILOGONATIDAE

*Black-and-yellow Silky-Flycatcher *Phainoptila melanoxantha*: A pair was seen on the Providencia Road, and a male was seen at Paraiso Quetzal.

*Long-tailed Silky-Flycatcher *Ptilogonys caudatus*: Seen regularly in Savegre, including in our hotel garden. Also seen at Paraiso Quetzal.

NEW WORLD WARBLERS: PARULIDAE

Ovenbird *Seiurus aurocapilla*: Seen a couple of times in Monteverde, and also seen at Carara.

Louisiana Waterthrush *Parkesia motacilla*: Vernon saw one of these in Savegre.

Northern Waterthrush *Parkesia noveboracensis*: A few were seen in the Carara area.

Golden-winged Warbler *Vermivora chrysoptera*: Jose and some of the group saw 1 in Monteverde.

Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia*: Seen at Arenal, Monteverde, Tarcoles, and Savegre.

Prothonotary Warbler *Protonotaria citrea*: 1 was seen in the mangroves on our Tarcoles boat trip.

*Flame-throated Warbler *Oreothlypis gutturalis*: 3 different birds were seen in the Savegre area.

Tennessee Warbler *Oreothlypis peregrine*: Recorded on 7 days of the tour, at a number of sites.

Gray-crowned Yellowthroat *Geothlypis poliocephala*: 2 were seen in the Central Valley.

American Redstart *Setophaga ruticilla*: 1 was seen at Tarcoles.

Tropical Parula *Setophaga pitiayumi*: Oddly, only heard the once on the tour, at Arenal. (H)

Yellow Warbler *Setophaga petechial*: Seen in the Central Valley and also near Carara.

- Yellow (Mangrove) Warbler *Setophaga petechia bryanti*:** 5 birds were seen on our Tarcoles boat trip.
- Chestnut-sided Warbler *Setophaga pensylvanica*:** The most regularly recorded warbler, seen on 8 days.
- Townsend's Warbler *Setophaga townsendi*:** A few were seen in Savegre.
- Black-throated Green Warbler *Setophaga virens*:** Several were seen in the Monteverde area.
- Rufous-capped Warbler *Basileuterus rufifrons*:** Seen well in our lodge garden in Monteverde.
- *Black-cheeked Warbler *Basileuterus melanogenys*:** Seen twice in the Savegre area.
- Golden-crowned Warbler *Basileuterus culicivorus*:** Recorded in Arenal, Monteverde and Curi-Cancha.
- Three-striped Warbler *Basileuterus tristriatus*:** Singles were seen in both Arenal and Monteverde.
- Buff-rumped Warbler *Myiothlypis fulvicauda*:** We had some great views of a confiding pair in Arenal.
- Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla*:** Recorded on 4 days (Arenal, Monteverde, and Savegre).
- Slate-throated Redstart *Myioborus miniatus*:** Recorded on both of our days in the Monteverde area.
- *Collared Redstart *Myioborus torquatus*:** Several views were had in the Savegre area.
- *Wrenthrush *Zeledonia coronate*:** 1 showed well to all of us the Providencia Road.
- *VOTED AS ONE OF THE TOP FIVE BIRDS OF THE TOUR*

TANAGERS AND ALLIES: THRAUPIDAE

- White-shouldered Tanager *Tachyphonus luctuosus*:** Seen on both days in the park at Carara.
- *White-throated Shrike-Tanager *Lanio leucothorax*:** Frustratingly heard only distantly in Arenal. (H)
- Crimson-collared Tanager *Ramphocelus sanguinolentus*:** This spectacular bird was seen very well in Arenal.
- Passerini's Tanager *Ramphocelus passerinii*:** Commonly encountered in Braulio, La Selva, and Arenal.
- *Cherrie's Tanager *Ramphocelus costaricensis*:** Several were seen in the area in and around San Isidro.
- *Blue-and-gold Tanager *Bangsia arcaei*:** A long view was had of a bird at Braulio.
- Blue-gray Tanager *Thraupis episcopus*:** Encountered on around half of the days, at numerous sites.
- Palm Tanager *Thraupis palmarum*:** Commonly encountered in the lowlands.
- Golden-hooded Tanager *Tangara larvata*:** Seen at La Selva, Arenal, and also in San Isidro.
- Speckled Tanager *Tangara guttata*:** 1 showed briefly at El Tapir.
- *Spangle-cheeked Tanager *Tangara dowii*:** Seen two or three times in Savegre, including within our hotel grounds.
- *Plain-colored Tanager *Tangara inornata*:** Seen twice in La Selva.
- Bay-headed Tanager *Tangara gyrola*:** 1 was seen by some, albeit briefly, at Carara.
- Emerald Tanager *Tangara florida*:** 2 were seen at El Tapir Hummingbird Garden.
- Silver-throated Tanager *Tangara icterocephala*:** Seen at El Tapir, Arenal, Monteverde, and Savegre.
- Scarlet-thighed Dacnis *Dacnis venusta*:** Recorded on both days in Arenal.
- Blue Dacnis *Dacnis cayana*:** Singles were seen on 2 days in La Selva.
- Red-legged Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes cyaneus*:** Amazing views were had at Arenal on both of our days there.
- Green Honeycreeper *Chlorophanes spiza*:** Recorded once in La Selva, and twice in Arenal.
- *Black-and-yellow Tanager *Chrysothlypis chrysomelas*:** A gorgeous, striking, male was seen at Arenal.
- *Slaty Flowerpiercer *Diglossa plumbea*:** Seen feeding on shrubs in the garden of our Savegre hotel.
- Blue-black Grassquit *Volatinia jacarina*:** Seen in the Central Valley and also near Carara.
- Variable Seedeater *Sporophila corvine*:** The black-breasted Caribbean race was seen at La Selva and Arenal; the white breasted form was seen on the Pacific side, around Carara.
- White-collared Seedeater *Sporophila torqueola*:** Recorded twice in Arenal.
- Bananaquit *Coereba flaveola*:** Recorded regularly around La Selva and Arenal.

Yellow-faced Grassquit *Tiaris olivaceus*: Seen several times in Arenal, and also in Monteverde.

Dusky-faced Tanager *Mitrospingus cassinii*: 2 were seen at La Selva.

Buff-throated Saltator *Saltator maximus*: Recorded at La Selva, Arenal, and around Carara.

Black-headed Saltator *Saltator atriceps*: A pair was seen in Arenal.

Grayish Saltator *Saltator coerulescens*: 2 birds were seen on the Tarcoles boat ride.

BUNTINGS AND NEW WORLD SPARROWS: EMBERIZIDAE

***Sooty-capped Chlorospingus *Chlorospingus pileatus*:** Formerly known as Sooty-capped Bush-Tanager.

Seen regularly around Savegre.

Common Chlorospingus *Chlorospingus flavopectus*: Seen in the highlands at Monteverde and Savegre.

Stripe-headed Sparrow *Peucaea ruficauda*: 3 were seen in the Central Valley.

Black-striped Sparrow *Arremonops conirostris*: Typically showed very well at Arenal.

Orange-billed Sparrow *Arremon aurantiirostris*: Seen a couple of times in both La Selva and Carara.

Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch *Arremon brunneinucha*: 2 singles were seen at Savegre.

***Sooty-faced Finch *Arremon crassirostris*:** 1 was seen well at Catarata del Toro.

***Volcano Junco *Junco vulcani*:** A pair was seen in the paramo at Cerro de la Muerte.

Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis*: Recorded regularly in the highlands.

***Large-footed Finch *Pezopetes capitalis*:** Seen along the Providencia Road and then better at Paraiso Quetzal.

White-eared Ground-Sparrow *Melospiza leucotis*: A pair was seen twice at Cala Lodge, Monteverde.

***Yellow-thighed Finch *Pselliophorus tibialis*:** This oddity was seen several times in the Savegre area.

CARDINALS AND ALLIES: CARDINALIDAE

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra*: Recorded on 8 different days, including some gorgeous red males.

Flame-colored Tanager *Piranga bidentata*: Regularly seen around our hotel garden in Savegre.

Red-throated Ant-Tanager *Habia fuscicauda*: A pair was seen at La Selva.

Carmioli's Tanager *Chlorothraupis carmioli*: A few were observed along a forest trail in Arenal.

Black-faced Grosbeak *Caryothraustes poliogaster*: Surprisingly only 1 was found, at La Selva.

Blue-black Grosbeak *Cyanocompsa cyanoides*: Recorded twice in La Selva.

Blue Grosbeak *Passerina caerulea*: 4 were seen during our afternoon in the Central Valley.

Painted Bunting *Passerina ciris*: A popular male was seen in the garden of the Hotel Villa Lapas.

TROUPIALS AND ALLIES: ICTERIDAE

Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus*: A couple of groups seen; near Catarata del Toro, and Tarcoles.

Eastern Meadowlark *Sturnella magna*: Seen on a farm in the Central Valley, and another near Monteverde.

Melodious Blackbird *Dives dives*: Scattered sightings, including within the Central Valley.

Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus*: Commonly encountered, mostly in lowland areas.

Shiny Cowbird *Molothrus bonariensis*: This recent colonizer was seen 3 times at La Selva.

Bronzed Cowbird *Molothrus aeneus*: A single group was seen on the Tarcoles boat ride.

Giant Cowbird *Molothrus oryzivorus*: A single perched bird was found at La Selva.

Black-cowled Oriole *Icterus prothemelas*: Singles were seen at La Selva and Arenal.

Streak-backed Oriole *Icterus pustulatus*: Heard in near a mangrove area in Tarcoles. (H)

Spot-breasted Oriole *Icterus pectoralis*: This gorgeous orange bird was seen in our hotel garden in Alajuela.

Baltimore Oriole *Icterus galbula*: Recorded on 8 different days of the tour.

Chestnut-headed Oropendola *Psarocolius wagleri*: Just 2 birds were found in La Selva.

Montezuma Oropendola *Psarocolius montezuma*: Recorded regularly around La Selva and Arenal.

FINCHES, EUPHONIAS & ALLIES: FRINGILLIDAE

***Yellow-crowned Euphonia *Euphonia luteicapilla*:** Just seen the once in Arenal.

Yellow-throated Euphonia *Euphonia hirundinacea*: Recorded in the Central Valley, Arenal and Monteverde.

Elegant Euphonia *Euphonia elegantissima*: A pair shared was seen at Curi-Cancha.

Olive-backed Euphonia *Euphonia gouldi*: Seen first at El Tapir, followed by multiple sightings in La Selva.

***Tawny-capped Euphonia *Euphonia annae*:** Vernon found a stunning male along the trail at Braulio.

***Golden-browed Chlorophonia *Chlorophonia callophrys*:** Seen in Monteverde, Curi-Cancha, Savegre & Paraiso Quetzal.

Yellow-bellied Siskin *Spinus xanthogastrus*: The final new species on the tour, as we left Savegre.

OLD WORLD SPARROWS: PASSERIDA

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*: Seen on just 3 days of the tour.

MAMMALS:

Common Opossum *Didelphis marsupialis*: A couple of babies were playing possum in Hotel Villa Lapas.

Northern Tamandua *Tamandua mexicana*: Vernon lucked into 1 at Arenal.

Hoffmann's Two-toed Sloth *Choloepus hoffmanni*: 3 singles at La Selva, and another in the Monteverde area.

Brazilian Long-nosed Bat *Rhynchonycteris naso*: Seen at both La Selva and Carara.

Northern Ghost Bat *Diclidurus albus*: This marvelous creature was seen in the park at Carara.

White-throated Capuchin-Monkey *Cebus capucinus*: Seen on two days in the Monteverde area.

Mantled Howler-Monkey *Alouatta palliate*: Recorded at La Selva once, and in Carara on two occasions.

Central American Spider Monkey *Ateles geoffroyi*: Also known as Geoffroy's Spider Monkey. 3 at Arenal.

Alfaro's Pygmy Squirrel *Microsciurus alfari*: 1 was seen in Monteverde's cloudforest.

Red-tailed Squirrel *Sciurus granatensis*: Recorded on 6 days of the tour, including around Savegre.

Variiegated Squirrel *Sciurus variegatoides*: Recorded in the Central Valley, La Selva, and Carara.

Mexican (Dwarf) Hairy Porcupine *Coendou mexicanus*: 2 were seen; 1 in La Selva and another in Savegre.

Central American Agouti *Dasyprocta punctate*: Seen in La Selva, Monteverde, Curi-Cancha, and Carara.

White-nosed Coati *Nasua narica*: Recorded in Arenal, Monteverde, and Carara.

Collared Peccary *Tayassu tajacu*: Recorded regularly in La Selva.

OTHERS:

Marine Toad *Rhinella (Bufo) marina*: Seen regularly at the Hotel Villa Lapas.

Red-eyed Leaf Frog *Agalychnis callidryas*: 4 were seen at Hotel Villa Lapas

Strawberry Poison Frog *Oophaga (Dendrobates) pumilio*: Seen on both days in La Selva.

Common Rain Frog *Craugastor (Eleutherodactylus) fitzingeri*: Seen at Hotel Villa Lapas.

Black River Turtle *Rhinoclemmys annulata*: 2 were seen at La Selva.

Common Basilisk *Basiliscus basiliscus*: 1 in the Central Valley, and several in Carara.

Emerald Basilisk *Basiliscus plumifrons*: 1 of these beautiful creatures was seen at La Selva.

Brown Basilisk *Basiliscus vittatus*: 1 was seen at La Selva.

Spinytail Iguana (Ctenosaur) *Ctenosaura similis*: Observed regularly in the Carara area.

Green Iguana *Iguana iguana*: These huge reptiles were seen at La Selva and in Tarcoles.

Green Spiny Lizard *Sceloporus malachiticus*: A male and female were seen at Savegre Hotel.

Common House Gecko *Hemidactylus frenatus*: An introduced species, seen on more than half of the days.

Central American Ameiva *Ameiva festiva*: Also known as *Central American Whiptail*. Seen in La Selva and Arenal.

Reticulated Ameiva *Ameiva leptophrys*: Seen inside the forest at Carara.

Green Parrot Snake *Leptophis ahaetulla*: 1 was seen by Vernon and Jose in La Selva.

Cloudy Snail-eater *Sibon nebulatus*: 1 crossed the road in front of the bus at night in Arenal.

Fer-de-Lance *Bothrops asper*: One was seen at La Selva.

American Crocodile *Crocodylus acutus*: A few were seen on the Tarcoles boat ride.

Common Morpho *Morpho peleides*: A few of these massive butterflies were seen in La Selva and around Carara.

Owl Butterfly species *Caligo sp.*: 1 was seen at Braulio Carrillo.

Giant Helicopter Damselfly *Megaloprepus caerulatus*: This massive damselfly was seen in Monteverde.

Leafcutter Ant *Atta cephalotes*: Recorded regularly at lowland sites.

Bullet Ant *Paraponera clavata*: Recorded in La Selva and Carara.



Magnificent Hummingbird Savegre