

Tropical Birding Tours

Costa Rica: Photo Tour



Tour Guide: Ben Knoot

The photos in this report were photographed by guide Ben Knoot unless otherwise stated.

Tour Introduction

Costa Rica truly one of a kind destination for bird and wildlife photographers. It is not only an excellent introduction to tropical bird photography but it is one of those countries you can repeatedly revisit and photograph new and beautiful species each time. This photo tour is an excellent combination of the Atlantic and Pacific Slopes as well as a combination of high and low elevations. In this report you will find summaries of our day-to-day activities, a few highlight photos from that day and of course, fun anecdotes from the guests, the guide and our overall experience while in this epic country. There were many excellent birds seen and photographed on this trip, but eventually the group was able to narrow down a list of their **TOP FIVE** and even a **TOP BIRD** of the trip.

Top Five Birds

1. **Resplendent Quetzal**
2. **Golden-browed Chlorophonia**
3. **King Vulture**
4. **Turquoise-browed Motmot**
5. **Three-wattled Bellbird**

Bird of the Trip



Resplendent Quetzal - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Itinerary

February 19th.....	Arrival/Hotel Robledal Grounds
February 20th.....	Cinchona/Laguna del Lagarto
February 21st.....	Laguna del Lagarto
February 22nd.....	Laguna del Lagarto
February 23rd.....	Laguna del Lagarto/Sarapiqui
February 24th.....	Donde Cope
February 25th.....	Sarapiqui/Frogs Heaven/La Fortuna
February 26th.....	San Ramon/Hacienda la Pacific
February 27th.....	Tenorio Volcano Hummingbirds
February 28th.....	Hacienda La Pacifica/La Ensenada
March 1st.....	Hacienda La Pacifica/Cerro Lodge
March 2nd.....	Tarcoles River Cruise/Carrara NP
March 3rd.....	Cerro Lodge/Paraiso Quetzal
March 4th.....	Paraiso Quetzal/Batsu Gardens
March 5th.....	Paraiso Quetzal/San Jose
March 6th.....	Departures

Tour Summary

Day 1 (Arrival in San Jose - February, 19th)

The tour began this afternoon with a short walk around the grounds of our hotel; [Hotel Robledal](#). It was sunny and very windy, not ideal for photography, but ever encouraged the group was introduced to some of the local birds. Highlights included; [Lesson's Motmot](#), [Spot-breasted Oriole](#), [Great Kiskadee](#), [Social Flycatcher](#), [Yellow Warbler](#), [Blue-gray Tanager](#), [Rufous-naped Wren](#), [Inca Dove](#), [Cinnamon Hummingbird](#), [Cinnamon-bellied Saltator](#) and [Melodius Blackbird Woodpecker](#). After this lovely garden walk, we met up for our first dinner together and went over the general plan for the next two weeks. We hit the pillows eager to start our tour the next morning.



Rufous-naped Wren - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

Day 2 (San Jose to Laguna del Lagarto via Cinchona Mirador - February, 20th)

We started with a quick morning walk around the lodge which produced new species like; **Lineated Woodpecker, Hoffmann's Woodpecker, Ferruginous Pygmy Owl, Squirrel Cuckoo, Palm Tanager, Red-billed Pigeon, Great-tailed Grackle and White-winged Dove.**



Hoffmann's Woodpecker - Photo by Guest: Phyllis

After a quick breakfast, we packed up our little minibus, met our local driver (who I've had many times before) and set off for our first destination. We stopped briefly at the local market to pick up snacks, water and afterwards, we finally arrived at our lunch destination; **Cinchona Mirador**. Not only does this "soda" have fantastic food, natural juices and friendly people but it also has some incredible fruit feeders. Though the light was really tough, we were treated to some great birds like; **Northern Emerald Toucanet, Red-headed Barbet, Prong-billed Barbet, Common Chloropsingus, Tennessee Warbler Silver-throated Tanager, Crimson-collared Tanager, Clay-colored Thrush, Baltimore Oriole**, and a host of wonderful hummingbirds like; **Violet Sabrewing, Brown Violetear, Green-crowned Brilliant and Rufous-tailed Hummingbird.**



Prong-billed Barbet - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

After lunch, we still had a bit of a drive but before we got going, we quickly stopped down the road for a resting **Bat Falcon**. Unfortunately, the bird was really distant and the light was still rather poor. It is unfortunate our day was met with such sunny and hot conditions but as it is with birding, photography, and life in general, we cannot control the weather. So, after making the best of our current situation, we continued on and took the 3hr drive towards our next stop and our base for the next three nights.

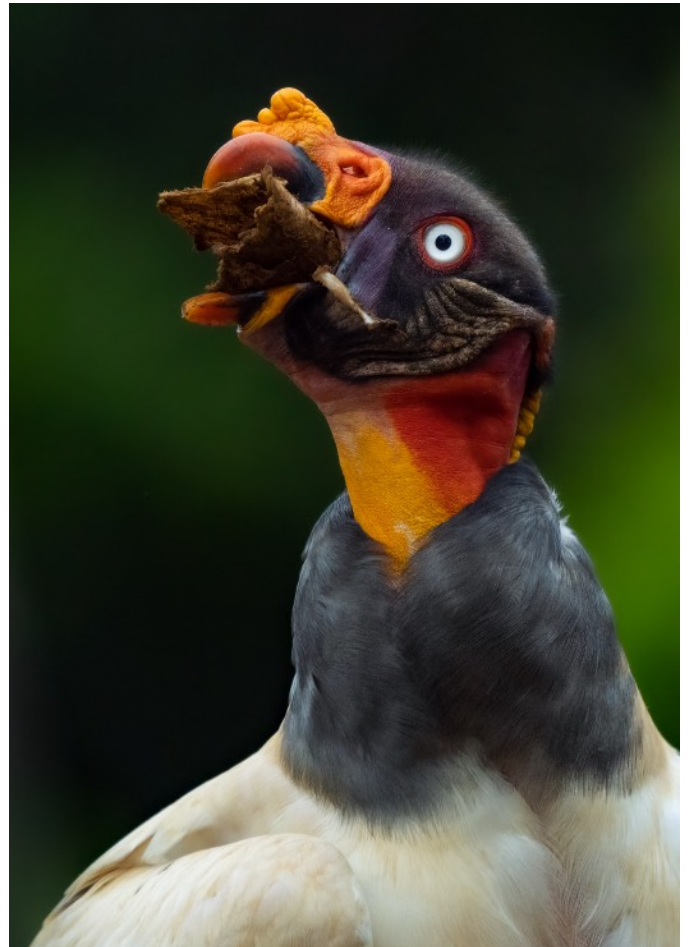
After our drive, we arrived in **Laguna del Lagarto**. This lodge is a treasure trove for photographers. Boasting a very impressive species list but more importantly, this lodge is set up to please and accommodate photographers specifically. There are numerous feeding stations that attract a wonderful variety of birds. We spent the afternoon photographing the feeders and over the course of the next two full days, enjoyed the fruit feeders, trails, the King Vulture Hide, the snake photoshoot and some guests even ventured out into the lagoon. The following photos were taken during our time at this wonderful lodge.

Days 3&4 - (Laguna del Lagarto - February 21st & 22nd)

During the course of these two full days, we did every activity the lodge and the nearby grounds could provide and we saw a multitude of wonderful species like; **Keel-billed Toucan, Yellow-throated Toucan, Brown-hooded Parrot, Black-cowled Oriole, Red-lored Parrot, Olive-backed Euphonia, Red-legged Honeycreeper, Plain-colored Tanager, Summer Tanager, Black-cheeked Woodpecker, Streak-headed Woodcreeper, Collared Aracari, Black-and-white Owl, Green Honeycreeper, Great Green Macaw, King Vulture, Montezuma Oropendola, Green Ibis, Russet-naped Wood-rail, Red-capped Manakin, Crimson-fronted Parakeet, Slaty-tailed Trogon, Gartered Trogon, Northern and Louisiana Waterthrush, Cocoa Woodcreeper, Black Vulture, Crested Caracara, Great Currasow**, and many, many others. There are simply too many species here to list, it is a place you have to see for yourself. We also had one afternoon with a number of snakes; **Eyelash Pitviper** (several color variations), **Hognose Pitviper, Fer-de-Lance** and a beautiful **Boa Constrictor**.



Great Currasow - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



King Vulture - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Yellow-throated Toucan - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



King Vulture - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Keel-billed Toucan - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Brown-hooded Parrot - Photo by Guest: Don



Red-lored Parrot - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Black-cheeked Woodpecker - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Montezuma Oropendola - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Brown-hooded Parrot - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Brown-hooded Parrot - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

Day 5 (Laguna del Lagarto to Sarapiquí - February, 23rd)

We took one last morning to photograph around the lodge and then took the long ride back down towards the slightly more crowded area of [Puerto Viejo de Sarapiquí](#). The afternoon was a bit ominous looking so we decided to stick close the lodge. Around the grounds of [La Quinta de Sarapiquí](#), we got our first looks at [Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth](#), [Black Caiman](#) and [Mantled Howler Monkey](#). We also saw wonderful bird species like; [Scarlet-rumped Tanager](#), [Bright-rumped Attila](#), [Gray-headed Chachalaca](#), [Common Tody Flycatcher](#), [American Pygmy Kingfisher](#), [Mistletoe Tyrannulet](#), [Gray-capped Flycatcher](#), [Chestnut-sided Warbler](#), [Yellow-bellied Elaenia](#) and [Lesser Greenlet](#). After this fun walk, we spent a few of the darker and wetter minutes of the afternoon rains sitting at the feeders on the grounds of our hotel. There wasn't anything super special here so we called it an afternoon, grabbed some dinner and enjoyed a good restful night.



Mistletoe Tyrannulet - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Gray-capped Flycatcher - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Mantled Howler Monkey - Photo by Guest: Barbara

Day 6 (Donde Cope - February, 24th)

Today we had our full day with one of the local guides near Sarapiquí; Cope. We spend the entire day around his feeding area, and walking around his local hotspots. Upon first arrival, his house [Donde Cope](#) doesn't look like much. However, his wonderful backyard consists of a pond, numerous hummingbird feeders, rice, seed and fruit feeders and fruiting trees and flowering plants galore, it really is a little slice of heaven! Cope is also one of the coolest and most entertaining dudes around. He is funny and an excellent local guide/birder. The few hours we spent at his house we managed; [Chestnut-headed Oropendola](#), [Montezuma Oropendola](#), [Orange-chinned Parakeet](#), [Red-legged Honeycreeper](#), [Green Honeycreeper](#), [Russet-naped Wood-rail](#), [Green Kingfisher](#), [Pale-vented Pigeon](#), [Snowy Egret](#), [Bay Wren](#), and [Scarlet-rumped Tanager](#), to name a few. The hummingbirds were numerous as well. We saw; [White-necked Jacobin](#), [Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer](#), [Rufous-tailed Hummingbird](#), [Long-billed Hermit](#) and the very cute [Stripe-throated Hermit](#). After we had our fill of the feeders, we went out on the trails to find some of Cope's hotspot birds. It was a tough day but we did manage our number one target, the [Crested Owl](#). We also managed to see a [Great Potoo](#) but the light was extremely difficult. After a lovely day we returned to our hotel for the evening.



Green Kingfisher - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Chestnut-headed Oropendola - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Crested Owl - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Orange-chinned Parakeet - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

Day 7 (Sarapiquí to Frog Heaven to La Fortuna - November, 25th)

We woke up early this morning and walked around the lodge to see what other birds we could photograph. We ran into many of the same species but added a few new ones like; **Red-throated Ant-tanager**, **Buff-rumped Warbler**, **Steak-headed Woodcreeper**, **Wedge-billed Woodcreeper**, **Broad-billed Motmot** and a very tricky **Stripe-breasted Wren**. After this nice walk around we went back to the hotel for a spot of breakfast and after packing up the minibus, we set off for our next destination; **Frogs Heaven**. Here we spent two hours photographing frogs that the local guides spend time finding around the grounds. With some fun setups, backgrounds, perches and a wonderful helper, we were able to photograph the following frogs; **Red-eyed Tree Frog**, **Tiger Frog**, **Crowned Tree Frog**, **Glass Frog**, **Blue-jeans Poison Dart Frog** and **Green-and-black Poison Dart Frog**. During this time I was giving instruction so I did not take any photos.



Striped-breasted Wren - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

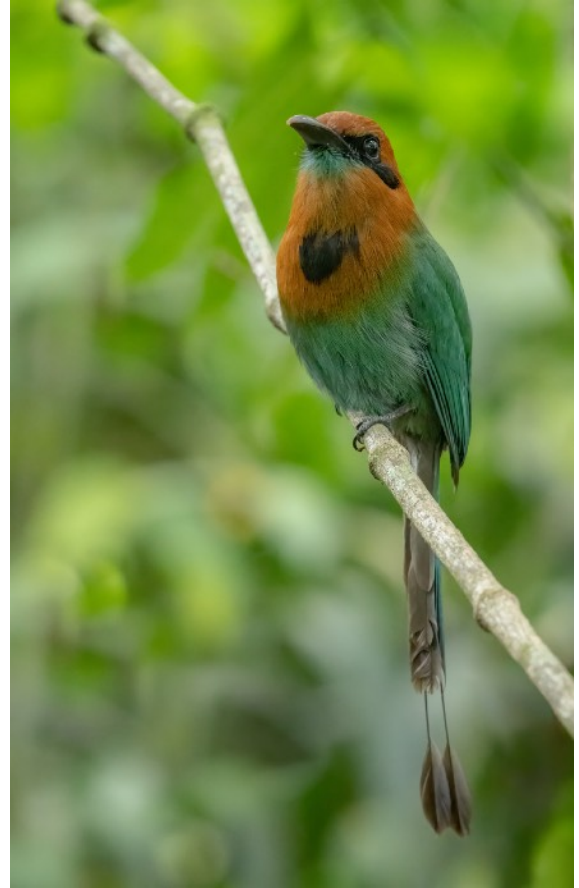


Wedge-billed Woodcreeper - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

We left Frogs Heaven and enjoyed a really nice typical dish prepared by a small local restaurant and left for our next overnight halt in La Fortuna. Before we turned in for the evening, we had one more stop to make. [Sendero Bogarin](#) is one of my most favorite locations for trail walking and field photography in Costa Rica. A few miles or so of flat, well maintained dirt trails hosts hundreds of species of birds, many different mammals including the highly sought after Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth, lots of fun reptiles and a grand variety of trees, foliage and flowers. We saw wonderful birds as well of course. Birds like; [Broad-billed Motmot](#), [Cocoa Woodcreeper](#), [Keel-billed Motmot](#), [White-throated Crake](#), [Gray-headed Chachalaca](#), [Rufous-tailed Jacamar](#), [White-collared Manakin](#), [Laughing Falcon](#), [Scarlet-rumped Tanager](#), [Buff-throated Saltator](#) and [Black-headed Saltator](#). A few members of the group who took a shorter route through the trails were able to see a [Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth](#). The photo opportunities were not brilliant as I understand it but that is always a fun animal to see. We also managed a brilliant [Green Basilisk](#) on our trail walk.



Laughing Falcon - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Broad-billed Motmot - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Rufous-tailed Jacamar - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



White-throated Crake - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



White-collared Manakin - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

Day 8 (San Ramon Bellbirds to Hacienda la Pacifica - February, 26th)

We left La Fortuna incredibly early to get to our destination very early. But it was an incredibly worth-while wake -up call and drive. We met our local guide for access onto a local farmland and from there we were treated to the sounds and sights of the incredibly unique and bewildering, **Three-wattled Bellbird**. We also had quick views of **Masked Tityra**, **Hook-billed Kite** and **Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher**.



Three-wattled Bellbird - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

After this great success, we returned to another bird feeding station just before the town of San Ramon called [Canopy San Luis](#). Here, a few members of the group decided to walk the trails for a reported [Rufous-vented Ground Cuckoo](#). One member of the group who put in extra effort while we returned after no success was able to see this rare and enigmatic bird. This bird is never to be expected when visiting Costa Rica but if the opportunity should arise, it is definitely a bird one should try and see. The feeders attracted a variety of good birds like [Black-cheeked Woodpecker](#), [Emerald Tanager](#), [Silver-cheeked Tanager](#), [Bay-headed Tanager](#) [Tawny-capped Euphonia](#), [Speckled Tanager](#), [Common Chlorospingus](#), [Crimson-collared Tanager](#), [Chestnut-capped Brush-finch](#) and a very brief view of a [Black-headed Nightingale Thrush](#). We got a little food and well deserved drink and we left for our next overnight halt, [Hacienda la Pacifica](#), our first introduction into the pacific dry forest. We had a nice walk around the lodge bagging species like; [Rufous-naped Wren](#), [Yellow-naped Parrot](#), [Limpkin](#), [White-fronted Parrot](#), [Turquoise-browed Motmot](#) and our first good looks at the weird little named the [Agouti](#) and then by far our best photoshoot with [Mantled Howler Monkey](#).



Speckled Tanager - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Emerald Tanager - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot - Photo by



Tawny-capped Euphonia - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Mantled Howler Monkey - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

Day 9 (Tenorio Volcano - February, 27th)

This morning we had an appointment with a great little spot up the Tenorio Volcano. Located roughly an hour away from our hotel, the Tenorio Volcano is an entirely new habitat and vastly different from the dry, hot pacific forests. We essentially go from brown and dry to green and lush and that's what makes this day so fun and so incredible. Our first stop up the mountain was to a place called [El Tapir Nature Valley Reserve](#). This is a private reserve that has a multitude of verbena bushes that attract a variety of hummingbirds and a wonderful forest trail that holds a stunning array of small song birds. We started in the front of the property and found several of our target birds right away. These included; [Blue-throated Golden-tail](#), [Violet-headed Hummingbird](#), [Rufous-tailed Hummingbird](#) a female [Snowcap](#). After several hours here and with no sight of the male Snowcap, we continued on to another patch of flowers and on our walk there saw; [Yellow-throated Euphonia](#), a [White-nosed Coati](#) troop and a [Morelet's Seedeater](#). Now at the next verbena patch, we only waited a few minutes before the star of the show made his first appearance. We hung out with the male [Snowcap](#) for a few hours and we were able to have a few photo shoots with this striking little hummingbird. Other birds present were [Acadian Flycatcher](#), [Black-headed Tody Flycatcher](#), [Crowned Woodnymph](#) and on the way back we were treated to a resting [Eyelash Pitviper](#) (green morph).



Blue-throated Golden-tail - Photo by Guest: Steven

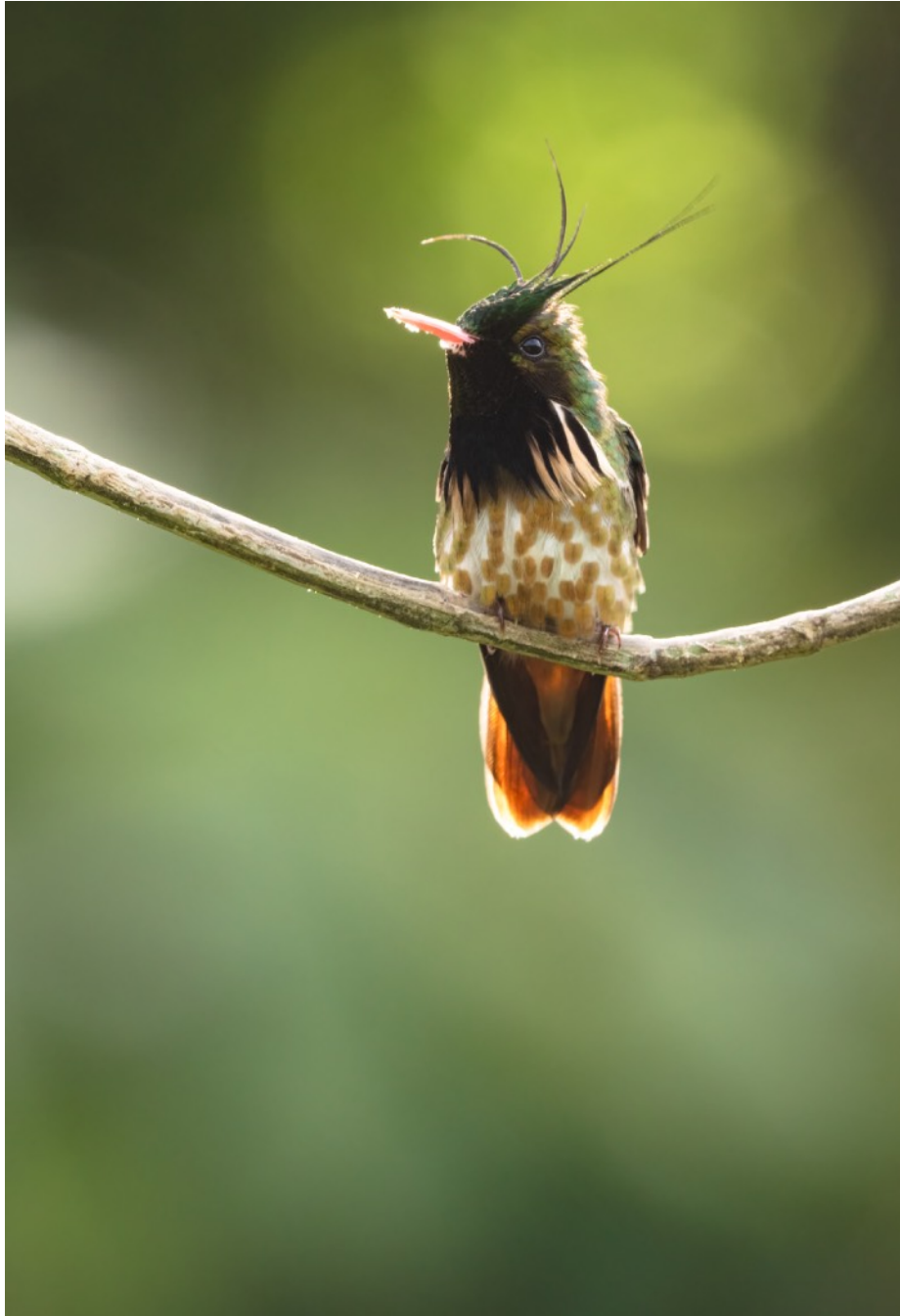


Violet-headed Hummingbird - Photo by Guide: Ben Knot



Snowcap - Photo by Guest: Patricia

After this tremendous morning and start to the day, we grabbed a terrific lunch in a new restaurant nestled in the forest and then visited our next and final garden for the day. Just a few acres (if even) set alongside the roadside is greatly named “[Bird Songs Garden](#)”. And here we photographed many of the same species but we added the main target; [Black-crested Coquette](#). The owner of this small garden is amazingly kind and funny. His excitement surrounding his now famous male and female Black-crested Coquettes are so incredibly pure. I would highly recommend a visit to this wonderful garden. After some time here and great success with both of our targets, we ventured back to Hacienda la Pacifica for a terrific dinner and another nights rest.



Black-crested Coquette - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

Day 10 (Hacienda la Pacifica to La Ensenada - February, 28th)

The morning walk around the grounds proved fruitful starting off with a camouflaged **Common Pauraque** that posed well for photos. We also were able to photograph the local **Agouti, White-lined Bat, Variegated Squirrel, Mantled Howler Monkey, Mangrove Cuckoo, Orange-fronted Parakeet, Black-headed Trogon, Yellow Warbler and Brown-crested Flycatcher.**



Common Pauraque - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



White-lined Bat - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

Now it was time to hit the coast. Along our several hour drive we made a brief stop for **Stripe-headed Sparrow** and a **Double-striped Thick-knee** and wound up in **La Ensenada** for lunch. After a delicious typical lunch, we unpacked the bus and settled into our rooms. I gave everyone some break time or free time to walk around before we ventured out to our afternoon shoot. There were some good birds around like; **Orange-fronted Parakeet**, **White-necked Puffbird**, **Streak-backed Oriole**, **Black-headed Trogon**, **Turquoise-browed Motmot**, **Pacific Screech Owl**, **Rose-throated Becard**, **Groove-billed Ani**, and **White-fronted Parrot**.



Turquoise-browed Motmot - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Orange-fronted Parakeet - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

For the afternoon shoot, I took the group to a rather special little place. The reason we stay in La Ensenada primarily is for this spot. Just behind the lodge lay a stunning and secluded lagoon. This lagoon is a perfect size. It is big enough to attract a ton of birds both large and small. It is also large enough to attract crocodiles of all sizes. Not only is the lagoon full of birds but it is set perfectly for the late afternoon light. We enjoyed a full few hour session with some great waterbirds like; **Wood Stork, Great Egret, Bare-throated Tiger Heron, Black-necked Stilt, Southern Lapwing, Least Sandpiper, Northern Jacana, Tricolored Heron, Common (Mangrove) Black Hawk, Mangrove Swallow, Barn Swallow, Roseate Spoonbill, Green Heron and Black-bellied Whistling Duck.** We stayed in this spot for hours until the sun set. We returned to the lodge for a wonderful dinner and a quick photoshoot with a **Pacific Screech Owl** that night had us in bed early ready to walk the grounds one morning more.



Northern Jacana - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



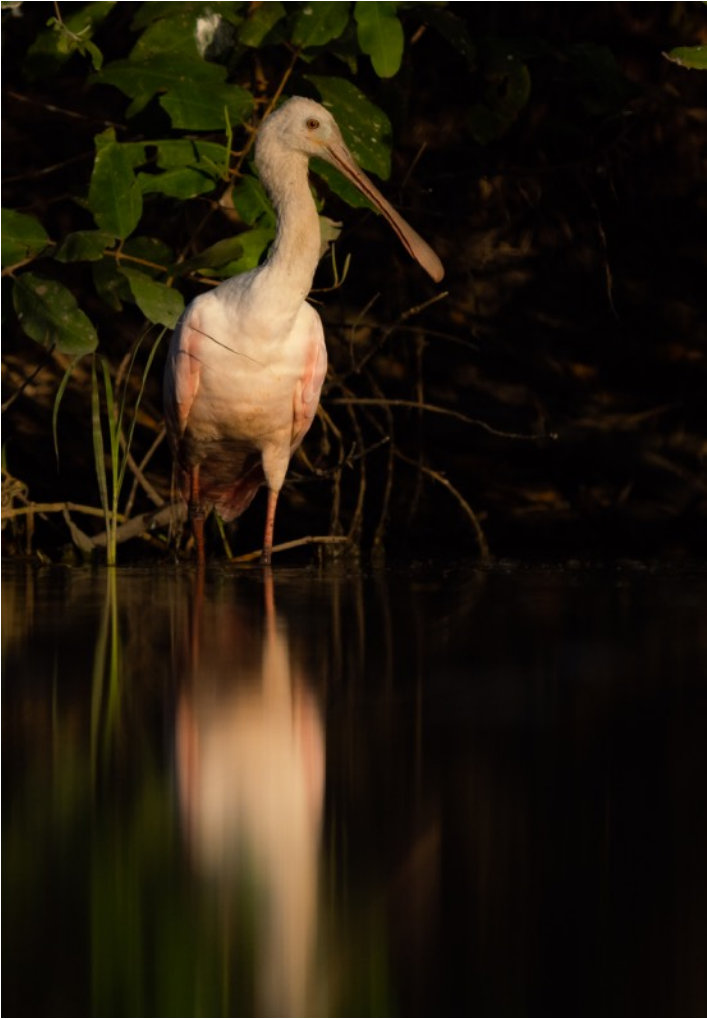
Bare-throated Tiger Heron - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Common (Mangrove) Black Hawk - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Northern Jacana - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



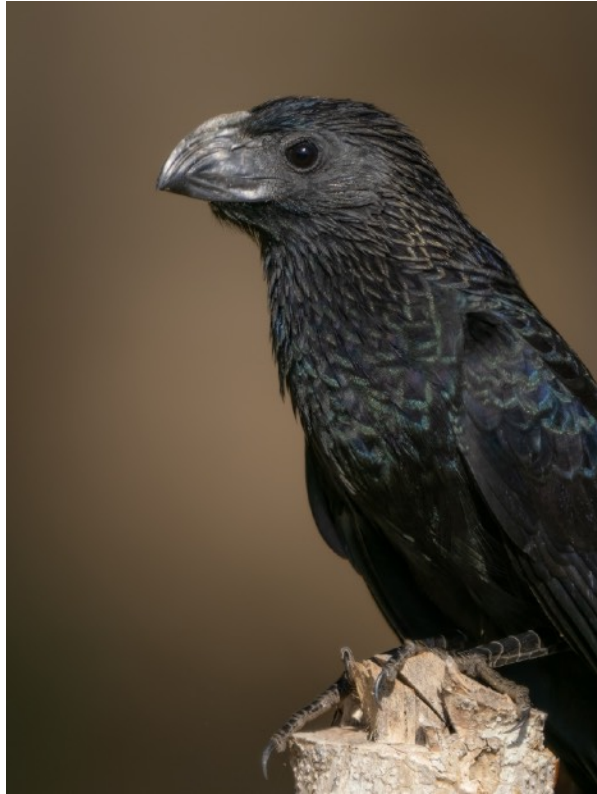
Roseate Spoonbill - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Black-necked Stilt - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

Day 11 (La Ensenada to Cerro Lodge - March, 1st)

We took one last walk around the grounds for the dry pacific specialties. We saw many of the same birds but did much better on a few photography wise. The amount of time we spend at La Ensenada is a great combination of afternoons and mornings for this very reason. We spent a few hours walking around in the morning, searching through the mangroves, coastlines and dry forests. After a lovely walk and a great breakfast, we packed up the bus and hit the road on towards our next destination. On the way, we made a chance stop for a **Long-tailed Manakin**. Unfortunately, only a young male was found but we did manage a stunning **Northern Barred Woodcreeper**. Also a wonderful location for dry pacific birds, Cerro Lodge is nestled on the hills overlooking the vast pacific ocean; it is stunning.



Groove-billed Ani - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Pacific Screech Owl - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Ferruginous Pygmy Owl - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



White-throated Magpie Jay - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

This afternoon we walked around [Cerro Lodge](#) and we had some mild success but overall, nothing extravagant came of it. We managed a few [Scarlet Macaw](#) images, a [Lineated Woodpecker](#), [Turquoise-browed Motmot](#), but overall the highlight of the afternoon and the evening was a good cold beer shared between friends while over-looking the setting of the sun. It was a truly beautiful moment!

Day 12 (Tarcoles River Cruise and Carara National Park - March, 2nd)

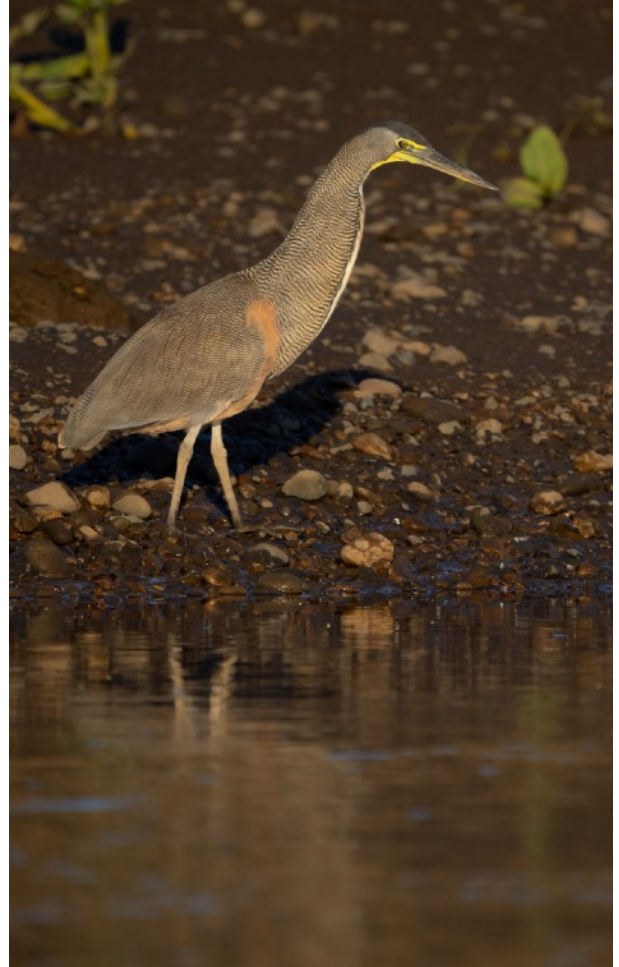
We woke early this morning to make our appointment with the boatman down on the [Tarcoles River](#). This is one of the coolest outings we do. The river is packed with birds and the boatmen are incredibly knowledgeable making the trip the experience what it is. Over the course of our three hours we photographed; [Amazon Kingfisher](#), [Ringed Kingfisher](#), [Green Kingfisher](#), [American Pygmy Kingfisher](#), [Mangrove Swallow](#), [Yellow-headed Caracara](#), [Common \(mangrove\) Black Hawk](#), [Yellow-crowned Night-heron](#), [Boat-billed Heron](#), [Green Heron](#), [Bare-throated Tiger Heron](#), [Osprey](#), [Roseate Spoonbill](#), [Royal Tern](#), [Magnificent Frigatebird](#), [Ruddy Turnstone](#), [Collared Plover](#), [Spotted Sandpiper](#), [Whimbrel](#), [Brown Pelican](#), [Great Egret](#), [Snowy Egret](#), [Yellow-naped Parrot](#), [Scarlet Macaw](#), [Tropical Pewee](#), [Panama Flycatcher](#), [Yellow \(mangrove\) Warbler](#), [Neotropic Cormorant](#) and the ever impressive [American Crocodile](#).



Ringed Kingfisher - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Common (mangrove) Black Hawk - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Bare-throated Tiger Heron - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Osprey - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Collared Plover - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Magnificent Frigatebird - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Yellow-naped Parrot - Photo by Guide: Ben Knot



Green Kingfisher - Photo by Guide: Ben Knot



Brown Pelican - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

After the boat trip, we went back to Cerro Lodge for lunch and a quick rest. A few members of the group opted to rest for the afternoon so I took a small group over to [Carara National Park](#). At this point it was late afternoon and it was quite hot. The birds were being difficult and elusive but we did manage to see a few good species. [Dot-winged Antbird](#), [Northern Bentbill](#), [Long-billed Gnatwren](#), [Rufous-breasted Wren](#) and [Rufou-and-white Wren](#) were seen but evaded us with relative ease in the thick forest. We did manage to photograph a [Great Tinamou](#), [Gray-headed Tanager](#) and a [Purple-crowned Fairy](#). On the road back to the lodge, we ran into a group of about 18 [Scarlet Macaw](#) interacting in the trees high above our heads. Always a joy to see these guys! We got back to the lodge and enjoyed another stunning sunset while the local [Cinnamon Hummingbird](#) entertained us by the restaurant. Another wonderful day.



Gray-headed Tanager - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Cinnamon Hummingbird - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

Day 13 (Orotina to Cerro del Muertes - March, 3rd)

Today we left for [Orotina](#) where we'd meet up with another local guide for some dry forest bird specialties. Well...we tried but boy o' boy was it a tough morning. It was very sunny, hot and slow. Sometimes this happens, you go out where you know there are birds and yet, you get nothing or at most, very little. We were able to see; [Turquoise-browed Motmot](#), [Black-headed Trogon](#), [Souther Lapwing](#), [Double-striped Thick-knee](#), [Striped Cuckoo](#), [Long-tailed Manakin](#), [Brown-crested Flycatcher](#) and [Chestnut-capped Warbler](#). After this, we ventured over to our next and final lodge for the tour, [Paraiso Quetzal](#). The afternoon was wet and cold but for those who ventured out we were treated to wonderful highland species. These species are accounted in the next entry. We enjoyed the lovely hospitality of this world famous lodge and turned in for the evening, ready to enjoy every activity the highlands had to offer.



Volcano Hummingbird - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

Day 14 (Cerro del Muertes and Batsu Gardens - March, 4th)

Today was our full day in the [Cerro del Muertes](#) area and we were not going to waste a minute of it. We started with an extremely wet and cold morning photographing a male **Resplendent Quetzal** at his new nesting site, just above the lodge. As it was rather cold and rainy, we decided to return to the lodge for some hot coffee and breakfast. Afterwards we had a walk around the lodge photographing species like; **Talamanca Hummingbird**, **Fiery-throated Hummingbird**, **Golden-browed Chlorophonia**, **Sooty Thrush**, **Mountain Thrush**, **Sooty-capped Chlorospingus**, **Rufous-collared Sparrow**, **Slaty Flowerpiercer**, **Long-tailed Silky Flycatcher**, **Black-and-Yellow Silky Flycatcher**, **Hairy Woodpecker**, **Black-thighed Grosbeak**, **Black-capped Flycatcher**, **Black-billed Nightingale Thrush**, **Ruddy-capped Nightingale Thrush**, **White-throated Mountain Gem**, **Flame-colored Tanager**, **Yellow-thighed Finch**, **Large-footed Finch** and the occasional fly over **Barred Parakeet** and **Blue-and-white Swallow**.



Resplendent Quetzal - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Talamanca Hummingbird - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Fiery-throated Hummingbird - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Golden-browed Chlorophonia - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

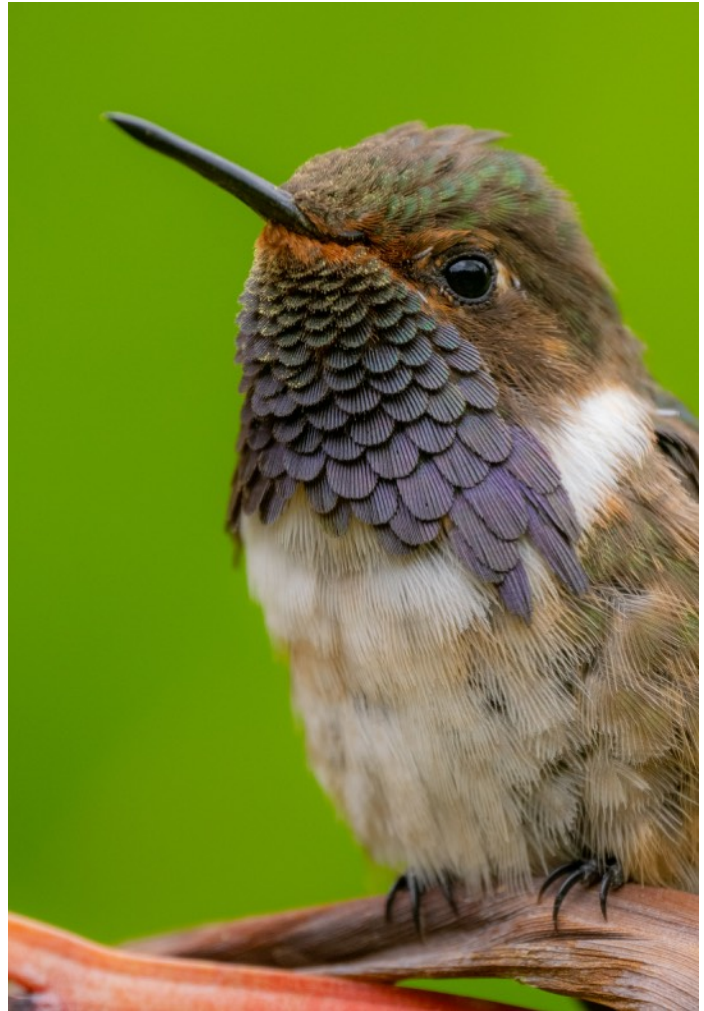


Black-and-yellow Silky Flycatcher - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

For the early afternoon we made a quick visit over to another wonderful feeder setup called [Batsu Gardens](#). Here we saw many of the same highland species but added [Flame-colored Tanager](#), [Silver-throated Tanager](#), [Tennessee Warbler](#), [Stripe-tailed Hummingbird](#), [White-throated Mountain Gem](#), [Volcano Hummingbird](#), [Acorn Woodpecker](#), [Lesser Violetear](#), [Clay-colored Thrush](#), and a quick look at a [Sulphur-winged Parakeet](#).



Flame-colored Tanager - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Volcano Hummingbird - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

Though we were doing well, it was time to move on to the main event of the afternoon. Paraiso Quetzal is famous for its Resplendent Quetzal tours. Local guides will take clients out to local farms where farmers have set up perches, nesting sites and conservation efforts for the quetzal. Well, this afternoon it was our turn and as we waited underneath a very cozy canopy, we watched as several males and females taunted us. They flew from tree to tree until finally we were able to photograph both male and female [Resplendent Quetzal](#) on the perches. What a wonderful way to end the day.



Resplendent Quetzal - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot



Resplendent Quetzal - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

Day 15 (Cerro del Muertes and Batsu Gardens - March, 5th)

We spent a final morning photographing on the grounds of [Paraiso Quetzal](#) to catch any missed species. We added several great species like; [Ruddy Treerunner](#), [Collared Redstart](#), [Black-capped Flycatcher](#), [Spot-crowned Woodcreeper](#), [Mountain Elaenia](#) and a few of us managed to see some incredible great birds like [Buffy-crowned Wood Partridge](#) and [Peg-billed Finch](#). Though we were not able to get any photos of the last two species, they are great to see, especially on the grounds of this iconic and wonderful lodge. Unfortunately, at this point it was time to move on and journey back down to San Jose. Most took the afternoon off but few managed several of the same species on the grounds of [Hotel Robledal](#) as we did the first afternoon and morning. After our COVID-19 test, we gathered for our last dinner and went to bed, very content with the trip!



Collared Redstart - Photo by Guide: Ben Knoot

Day 16 (Guest Departures - March, 6th)

Guests departed this day or the next.

Species Account

*Seen - We saw this species but from the guides perspective, it was not a good photo opportunity

*Photographed - This species was photographed with a good opportunity according to the guide

Summary:

- 178 Bird species with good photographic opportunity
- 255 Bird species seen overall
- 22 Other animals with good photographic opportunity
- 25 Other animals seen overall

Species	Seen	Photographed
Birds		
<i>Tinamous</i>		
Great Tinamou		Photographed
<i>Ducks, Geese and Waterfowl</i>		
Black-bellied Whistling Duck	Photographed	
Muscovy Duck	Photographed	
Blue-winged Teal	Photographed	
<i>Guans, Chachalacas and Currasows</i>		
Gray-headed Chachalaca		Photographed
Crested Guan	Photographed	
Great Currasow		Photographed
Buffy-crowned Wood Partridge	Photographed	
<i>Storks</i>		
Wood Stork		Photographed
<i>Frigatebirds</i>		
Magnificent Frigatebird		Photographed
<i>Cormorants and Shags</i>		
Neotropic Cormorant		Photographed

Species	Seen	Photographed
<i>Pelicans</i>		
Brown Pelican		
<i>Hérons, Egrets and Bitterns</i>		
Bare-throated Tiger Heron		
Great Blue Heron		
Great Egret		
Snowy Egret		
Little Blue Heron		
Tricolored Heron		
Cattle Egret		
Green Heron		
Black-crowned Night Heron		
Yellow-crowned Night Heron		
Boat-billed Heron		
<i>Ibises and Spoonbills</i>		
White Ibis		
Green Ibis		
Roseate Spoonbill		
<i>New World Vultures</i>		
Black Vulture		
Turkey Vulture		
King Vulture		
<i>Osprey</i>		
Osprey		
<i>Hawks, Eagles and Kites</i>		
Swallow-tailed Kite		
Hook-billed Kite		

Species	Seen	Photographed
Gray-headed Kite		
Plumbeous Kite		
Common Black Hawk		
Roadside Hawk		
Gray Hawk		
Broad-winged Hawk		
Short-tailed Hawk		
<i>Rails, Gallinules and Coots</i>		
Russet-naped Wood Rail		
White-throated Crake		
<i>Limpkin</i>		
Limpkin		
<i>Thick-Knees</i>		
Double-striped Thick-Knee		
<i>Stilts and Avocets</i>		
Black-necked Stilt		
<i>Plovers and Lapwings</i>		
Collared Plover		
Southern Lapwing		
<i>Jacanas</i>		
Northern Jacana		
<i>Sandpipers and Allies</i>		
Spotted Sandpiper		
Whimbrel		
Ruddy Turnstone		
Sanderling		
Least Sandpiper		

Species	Seen	Photographed
<i>Gulls, Terns and Skimmers</i>		
Laughing Gull	Yes	No
Royal Tern	No	Yes
<i>Pigeons and Doves</i>		
Rock Pigeon	Yes	No
Pale-vented Pigeon	No	Yes
Red-billed Pigeon	Yes	No
Inca Dove	No	Yes
Ruddy Ground Dove	No	Yes
White-tipped Dove	No	Yes
White-winged Dove	Yes	No
<i>Cuckoos</i>		
Squirrel Cuckoo	No	Yes
Mangrove Cuckoo	Yes	No
Groove-billed Ani	No	Yes
Striped Cuckoo	Yes	No
Rufous-vented Ground Cuckoo	Yes	No
<i>Owls</i>		
Pacific Screech Owl	No	Yes
Crested Owl	No	Yes
Ferruginous Pygmy Owl	No	Yes
Black and White Owl	No	Yes
<i>Nightjars and Allies</i>		
Lesser Nighthawk	Yes	No
Dusky Nightjar	Yes	No
Common Pauraque	No	Yes
<i>Potoos</i>		

Species	Seen	Photographed
Great Potoo	Yes	No
<i>Swifts</i>		
White-collared Swift	Yes	No
<i>Hummingbirds</i>		
Green Hermit	Yes	No
Band-tailed Barbthroat	Yes	No
Purple-crowned Fairy	Yes	No
Long-billed Hermit	Yes	No
Blue-throated Goldentail	No	Yes
White-necked Jacobin	No	Yes
Stripe-throated Hermit	No	Yes
Black-crested Coquette	No	Yes
Lesser Violetear	No	Yes
Brown Violetear	No	Yes
Snowcap	No	Yes
Green-crowned Brilliant	No	Yes
Talamanca Hummingbird	No	Yes
Violet-headed Hummingbird	No	Yes
Fiery-throated Hummingbird	No	Yes
White-throated Mountain-gem	No	Yes
Volcano Hummingbird	No	Yes
Scintillant Hummingbird	No	Yes
Violet Sabrewing	No	Yes
Bronze-tailed Plumateer	No	Yes
Crowned Woodnymph	Yes	No
Stripe-tailed Hummingbird	Yes	No
Rufous-tailed Hummingbird	No	Yes

Species	Seen	Photographed
Cinnamon Hummingbird		
<i>Trogons</i>		
Resplendent Quetzal		
Slaty-tailed Trogon		
Black-headed Trogon		
Black-throated Trogon		
Gartered Trogon		
<i>Motmots</i>		
Lesson's Motmot		
Broad-billed Motmot		
Keel-billed Motmot		
Turquoise-browed Motmot		
<i>Kingfishers</i>		
Ringed Kingfisher		
Belted Kingfisher		
Amazon Kingfisher		
Green Kingfisher		
American Pygmy Kingfisher		
<i>Puffbirds</i>		
White-necked Puffbird		
<i>Jacamars</i>		
Rufous-tailed Jacamar		
<i>New World Barbets</i>		
Red-headed Barbet		
<i>Toucan Barbets</i>		
Prong-billed Barbet		
<i>Toucans</i>		

Species	Seen	Photographed
Northern Emerald Toucanet		
Collared Aracari		
Yellow-throated Toucan		
Keel-billed Toucan		
<i>Woodpeckers</i>		
Acorn Woodpecker		
Black-cheeked Woodpecker		
Hoffmann's Woodpecker		
Hairy Woodpecker		
Lineated Woodpecker		
<i>Falcons and Caracaras</i>		
Crested Caracara		
Yellow-headed Caracara		
Laughing Falcon		
Bat Falcon		
<i>New World & African Parrots</i>		
Sulphur-winged Parakeet		
Orange-chinned Parakeet		
Barred Parakeet		
Brown-hooded Parrot		
White-crowned Parrot		
Red-lored Parrot		
Yellow-naped Parrot		
White-fronted Parrot		
Orange-fronted Parakeet		
Great Green Macaw		
Scarlet Macaw		

Species	Seen	Photographed
Crimson-fronted Parakeet	Yes	No
<i>Typical Antbirds</i>	No	No
Barred Antshrike	Yes	No
Black-crowned Antshrike	No	No
Dot-winged Antwren	Yes	No
<i>Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers</i>	No	No
Plain-brown Woodcreeper	No	Yes
Wedge-billed Woodcreeper	No	Yes
Northern Barred Woodcreeper	No	Yes
Cocoa Woodcreeper	No	Yes
Streak-headed Woodcreeper	No	Yes
Spot-crowned Woodcreeper	Yes	No
Ruddy Treerunner	No	Yes
<i>Tyrant Flycatchers</i>	No	No
Mountain Elaenia	No	Yes
Mistletoe (Paltry) Tyrannulet	No	Yes
Common Tody Flycatcher	No	Yes
Black-headed Tody Flycatcher	Yes	No
Tropical Pewee	No	Yes
Yellowish Flycatcher	No	Yes
Black-capped Flycatcher	No	Yes
Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher	Yes	No
Dusky-capped Flycatcher	Yes	No
Brown-crested Flycatcher	No	Yes
Bright-rumped Atilla	No	Yes
Great Kiskadee	No	Yes
Boat-billed Flycatcher	Yes	No

Species	Seen	Photographed
Social Flycatcher		
Gray-capped Flycatcher		
Streaked Flycatcher		
Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher		
Tropical Kingbird		
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher		
<i>Manakins</i>		
White-collared Manakin		
Red-capped Manakin		
Long-tailed Manakin		
<i>Tityras and Allies</i>		
Masked Tityra		
Rose-throated Becard		
<i>Cotingas</i>		
Three-wattled Bellbird		
<i>Crows, Jays and Magpies</i>		
White-throated Magpie Jay		
<i>Swallows</i>		
Blue-and-white Swallow		
Southern Rough-winged Swallow		
Gray-breasted Martin		
Mangrove Swallow		
Barn Swallow		
<i>Wrens</i>		
House Wren		
Rufous-breasted Wren		
Stripe-breasted Wren		

Species	Seen	Photographed
Rufous-and-white Wren	Yes	No
Rufous-naped Wren	No	Yes
Gray-breasted Wood Wren	Yes	No
<i>Gnatcatchers</i>	No	No
White-lored Gnatcatcher	Yes	No
<i>Thrushes and Allies</i>	No	No
Black-billed Nightingale Thrush	No	Yes
Ruddy-capped Nightingale Thrush	No	Yes
Wood Thrush	Yes	No
Sooty Thrush	No	Yes
Mountain Thrush	No	Yes
Clay-colored Thrush	No	Yes
<i>Silky-Flycatchers</i>	No	No
Black and Yellow Silky-Flycatcher	No	Yes
Long-tailed Silky-Flycatcher	No	Yes
<i>New World Warblers</i>	No	No
Louisiana Waterthrush	No	Yes
Northern Waterthrush	No	Yes
Prothonotary Warbler	Yes	No
Tennessee Warbler	No	Yes
Yellow Warbler	Yes	No
Chestnut-capped Warbler	Yes	No
Chestnut-sided Warbler	No	Yes
Buff-rumped Warbler	Yes	No
Wilson's Warbler	Yes	No
Collared Redstart	No	Yes
<i>Tanagers and Allies</i>	No	No

Species	Seen	Photographed
Gray-headed Tanager		
White-shouldered Tanager		
Scarlet-rumped Tanager		
Blue-gray Tanager		
Palm Tanager		
Golden-hooded Tanager		
Crimson-collared Tanager		
Emerald Tanager		
Speckled Tanager		
Bay-headed Tanager		
Plain-colored Tanager		
Silver-throated Tanager		
Red-legged Honeycreeper		
Green Honeycreeper		
Slaty Flowerpiercer		
Peg-billed Finch		
Variable Seedeater		
Bananaquit		
Yellow-faced Grassquit		
Buff-throated Saltator		
Cinnamon-bellied Saltator		
<i>Buntings and New World Sparrows</i>		
Sooty-capped Chlorospingus		
Common Chlorospingus		
Stripe-headed Sparrow		
Orange-billed Sparrow		
Chestnut-capped Brushfinch		

Species	Seen	Photographed
Rufous-collared Sparrow		
Large-footed Finch		
Yellow-thighed Finch		
<i>Cardinals and Allies</i>		
Summer Tanager		
Flame-colored Tanager		
Red-throated Ant Tanager		
Black-thighed Grosbeak		
<i>Troupials and Allies</i>		
Melodious Blackbird		
Great-tailed Grackle		
Black-cowled Oriole		
Streak-backed Oriole		
Spot-breasted Oriole		
Baltimore Oriole		
Scarlet-rumped Cacique		
Chestnut-headed Oropendola		
Montezuma Oropendola		
<i>Euphonias</i>		
Yellow-throated Euphonia		
Olive-backed Euphonia		
Tawny-capped Euphonia		
Golden-browed Chlorophonia		
<i>Old World Sparrows</i>		
House Sparrow		
Mammals/Other Fauna		
Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth		

Species	Seen	Photographed
White-lined Bat		
White-throated Capuchin		
Mantled Howler Monkey		
Red-tailed Squirrel		
Variegated Squirrel		
White-nosed Coati		
Central American Agouti		
Tiger Tree Frog		
Red-eyed Tree Frog		
Crowned Treefrog		
Glass Frog		
Green and Black Poison Frog		
Strawberry Poison Frog		
Common (Plumed) Basilisk		
Spinytail Iguana		
Green Iguana		
Common House Gecko		
Boa Constrictor		
Eyelash Pit Viper		
Hognose Pit Viper		
Fer-de-Lance		
Spectacled Caiman		
American Crocodile		
Common Blue Morpho		

Guests Top 5





