RESPLENDENT QUITZAL; it did NOT win the BIRD-OF-THE-TOUR!

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Birds which are in the photos are highlighted in RED
**Introduction:**

This custom tour followed the itinerary of our popular [COSTA_RICA: THE INTOTOUR](#), although added 2 extra sites (Arenal & La Ensenada).

Costa Rica is one of the World’s premier destinations for both birding and wildlife watching. This unique country boasts the enviable statistic that 25% of its total land area is protected, and it is is regularly classified as one of the greenest countries in the world. A network of super lodges, within a small country allows easy and comfortable access to a variety of habitats, and produces a diverse bird list in even a short visit to this phenomenal nature destination. Evidence of its credentials as both a premier birding and wildlife destination were proven on this tour, which bore a bird list of over 500 species in two weeks, including 30 species of raptor, 6 owls, 2 potoos, 35 hummingbirds, 5 kingfishers, 4 motmots, 3 puffbirds, 8 trogons, 14 parrots, 12 woodpeckers, 26 warblers, 17 wrens, 13 thrushes, and a host of other neotropical groups represented, including bellbird, tinamou, tityra, becard, greenlet, tapaculo, antbird, leaffasser, foliage-gleaner, woodhaunter, woodcreeper, treerunner, spinetail, fruitcrow, tyrannulet, elaenia, gnatwren and gnatcatcher, among others. The bird experience was coupled with a myriad of other wildlife experiences; including regular encounters with sloths at La Selva; close-ups of colorful Strawberry Poison Frogs there too; marauding groups of White-nosed Coatis stripping fruiting trees of their bounty in the mountains; and a variety of cool reptiles from a bright yellow Eyelash Pit-Viper to giant, prehistoric-looking lizards called Spinytail Iguanas (Ctenosaurs), and basilisk lizards skipping across the water’s surface, a behavior which has earned them another name, the “Jesus Christ Lizard”. Botanically, it was also an interesting time with the lavish garden of our San Jose hotel adorned with bright pink, yellow, red, and purple blossoms during our visit; and some of the trees within the wider countryside sporting vibrant blooms in this dry season too, frequently reflected in their names with such evocative monikers as “Golden Shower”, “Pink Trumpet”, and “Flamboyant”.

The substantial bird list was produced by dipping into a variety of habitats as we crisscrossed the country; we began our tour in the birdy gardens of our San Jose hotel, before we left for the middle elevation forests of the northern, Caribbean slope at Braulio Carrillo; from there we dropped down
into the steamy lowlands of the Caribbean slope, before we moved west, and back into the Caribbean foothills at Arenal where the impressive volcanic cone itself took center stage. From there we headed up into the mountains and our first experience of Costa Rica’s lush cloudforests at world famous Monteverde. Following our first session in the mountains we moved west into the tropical dry forest and wetlands of the northwest Pacific around La Ensenada, and also visited neighboring Hacienda Solimar, where Jabiru were the main attraction along with a host of other waterbirds, raptors, shorebirds and dry country species. Moving out of the northern Pacific lowlands we traveled to the decidedly wetter lowlands of the South Pacific at Carara National Park, where we birded not only the humid forests within the park, but also enjoyed a relaxing boat ride along the Tarcoles River, exploring muddy edges and mangroves that flank the river for a myriad waterbirds. Lastly, we returned once more to the mountains, although this time to the higher elevation mountains of the Talamanaca Cordillera and the Oak forests of the Savegre valley, home to Resplendent Quetzal and many other montane endemics shared only with neighboring Panama.

By covering lowlands at near sea level up into the high mountain forests and paramos up to above 3,000m/9,854ft, as well as ensuring we covered the main regions of both the Caribbean and Pacific slopes, and the Central Valley too, we ensured a healthy and varied bird list, and picked up many regional endemics (over 60 endemics were seen), and specialties along the way. Some of the many avian highlights included multiple sightings of the incomparable Resplendent Quetzal in the mountains; two striking cotingas in the lowlands and foothills in the form of the ghostly-white Snowy Cotinga at La Selva, and the electric blue Turquoise Cotinga near the town of San Isidro; the inconceivably bright emerald-and-yellow Golden-browed Chlorophonia was very popular in Monteverde’s bromeliad-laden cloud forests; the strange Boat-billed Heron was both comical and confiding, exposing its namesake bill to us at a traditional roost site in Carara National Park; a confiding covey of Black-breasted Wood-Quails within the grounds of our Monteverde lodge. A good run on nightbirds saw us bag a brace of
day-roosting potoos (Great Potoo near La Selva and Northern Potoo west of Monteverde); an extremely obliging Dusky Nightjar in the picturesque Savegre Valley; and 6 species of owl, including a dramatic pair of Black-and-white Owls at Arenal Observatory Lodge, a roosting pair of Spectacled Owls at Hacienda Solimar, and a fantastic Striped Owl which rewarded Happy and Sam for their late night efforts.

Arenal Volcano, viewed from the lodge we stayed in

Itinerary:

March 1st: ARRIVAL in San Jose/Night Hotel Bougainvillea, (San Jose area).
March 2nd: Braulio Carrillo National Park to La Selva/Night Hacienda Sueno Azul, (near La Selva).
March 4th: La Selva to Catarata del Toro; to Arenal/Night Arenal Observatory Lodge.
March 5th: Arenal/Night Arenal Observatory Lodge.
March 6th: Arenal to Monteverde/Night Cala Lodge, (near Monteverde).
March 7th: Monteverde & Bajo del Tigre/Night Cala Lodge, (near Monteverde).
March 8th: Curi Cancha to La Ensenada/Night La Ensenada.
March 9th: Hacienda Solimar & La Ensenada/Night La Ensenada.
March 10th: La Ensenada to Carara National Park/Night Hotel Villa Lapas, (near Carara).
March 11th: Carara National Park & Tarcoles River Cruise/Night Hotel Villa Lapas, (near Carara).
March 12th: Carara N.P. to Savegre via San Isidro/Night Trogon Lodge, Savegre.
March 13th: Savegre/Night Savegre Lodge.
March 14th: Cerro de la Muerte & Restaurante La Georgina/Night Paraiso Quetzal.
March 15th: Paraiso Quetzal, Providencia Rd. & Lankester Gardens/Night Hotel Bougainvillea.
March 16th: Hotel Bougainvillea & DEPARTURE.
Tour Summary:

March 2nd: Hotel Bougainvillea (San Jose), Braulio Carrillo NP & La Selva

Hotel Bougainvillea: Central Valley (c.900m/2950ft)

Braulio Carrillo National Park: Caribbean Middle-elevations (500m/1640ft)

La Selva: Caribbean lowlands (40m/130ft)

The grounds of the **Hotel Bougainvillea** have become something of a legend amongst visiting birders; lavish, well-manicured grounds, with colorful blooms and plentiful foraging grounds for birds, means it is a must-see for the first morning while we waited for the breakfast buffet to open. Virtually the first bird we saw was Costa Rica’s subdued national bird, the ever-present **Clay-colored Thrush**, which was to accompany us throughout the tour. **Hoffman’s Woodpeckers** were vocal and conspicuous, much like their **Red-bellied** counterparts in North America. **Red-billed Pigeons** were also around, as were a pair of **Grayish Saltators**, which were only recorded within the gardens of the hotel on the entire tour. However, our best sighting was of a pair of **White-eared Ground-Sparrows**, a bird that is much cooler than it sounds.
After breakfast we loaded up our bags into our tour bus, met with our experienced and jovial driver, Luis, and headed off into the hills, and **Braulio Carrillo National Park**. I had forewarned the group that this site often provides some of the most challenging birding of the entire tour, by virtue of a narrow winding forest trail, and also that the best birds often hang out in mobile, canopy-dwelling feeding flocks at the tops of tall trees. And so it proved, with many frustrated (guides included) that the passing flocks rarely stayed for long and rarely gave views required to pull out the necessary species. We managed though to all see several male **Tawny-capped Euphonias**, a spritely **Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher**, a party of **Scarlet-rumped Caciques** (the only ones of the tour), and several **Carmiol's (Olive) Tanagers**; while only some of the group connected with **Blue-and-gold Tanager**, **Black-and-yellow Tanager**, and several **Emerald Tanagers**, all of which quickly moved on. After a few hours we moved down the road and stood overlooking a bank of Porterweed flowers, where these small purple flowers attracted **Green Thorntail**, a spectacular male **Black-crested Coquette** ([see page 5](#)), and both an adult and immature male **Snowcap**.

After a plentiful lunch we continued north and descended into the Caribbean lowlands, where we spent the final part of the afternoon around **La Selva**. This turned out to be the most bird-filled part of the day; **Long-tailed Tyrants** sallied for insects from the water tower; **Crested Guans** bounded clumsily up into the treetops; a brace of cool woodpeckers were lured in with the aid of playback (**Cinnamon and Chestnut-colored Woodpeckers**); while we open up our toucan account for the trip, with both **Collared Aracaris** and **Black-mandibled (Chestnut-mandibled) Toucans** seen during a busy few hours there; and both **Chestnut-headed and Montezuma Oropendolas** fed excitedly amongst the fiery-orange blossoms on site. Other noteworthy sightings, among a flurry of new birds, included **Black-cowled Oriole**, *perched* **Bat Falcon**, **Shining Honeycreeper**, and **Yellow-crowned Euphonia**. However, the afternoon came to a standstill when Bernice cried the immortal words, “I have the COTINGA!” that led us soon after to an “Ariel white” male **Snowy Cotinga**, one of the sightings not only of the day but of the entire tour. We retired that night, tired from an eventful first day in the field, but excited at the prospect of what a full day could bring at La Selva the next day…
March 3rd: La Selva

La Selva: Caribbean lowlands (40m/130ft)

We were eager to make it to the famous La Selva clearing for the regular flurry of early morning activity, although that did not stop us from bringing the bus to a halt for a fortuitous Green Ibis perched by the road en-route. Quickly that morning we began to realize we were in the midst of a very special time for Snowy Cotingas with several more white males picked up in the first few hours of the morning, creating a visible buzz amongst the many bird groups gathered at this popular site. Male Passerini’s Tanagers were conspicuous with their bright scarlet rumps revealed (see page 6), as they regularly flew in and out of the fruiting shrubs in the clearing, one of which also held a striking male White-collared Manakin (photo, Cameron Cox, below) too. This clearing also offered up Olive-backed Euphonias on this day on several occasions. After breakfast on site we met with our keen-eyed local guide, Joel, who was to accompany us in our day and a half there, and proved a vital asset for the group, having an intimate knowledge of the birds in the area. Shortly after he joined the group we added the first trogon of three that morning, with a male Gartered Trogon perched at the edge of the soccer pitch; while both Slaty-tailed and Black-throated Trogons were also seen well by the end of play that day too. One of the clear consequences of a long history of protection afforded to species and areas in Costa Rica, is that some species which would be popularly hunted elsewhere in their range (e.g. the Amazon of South America), and are usually therefore shy and difficult to see, are much easier to see in Costa Rica. This was quickly displayed to us firsthand when a Great Tinamou walked nonchalantly passed us, allowing all of us great looks! Soon after we had our first, rather underwhelming sloth experience, when a messy ball of unrecognizable fur represented a Hoffman’s Two-toed Sloth, one of five sloths seen on the tour. We also enjoyed extreme close-ups of one of Costa Rica’s most conspicuous frogs, the stunning Strawberry Poison Frog. Our good run on woodpeckers continued when we found a super male Rufous-winged Woodpecker calling from the treetops. Other notable morning sightings included a tiny, tiny Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher expertly found hiding in the treetops by our local guide; the subdued Plain-colored Tanager also perched high in the trees; a super-confiding Green Shrike-Vireo that spurned its usual habit of calling incessantly from the canopy and came down to eye-level; a Broad-
billed Motmot was the first from that highly desired group to be seen during the tour; and the morning finished when another guide put us on to a White-necked Puffbird perched by the bridge. It turned out to be a three-toucan day, as we added the dashing Keel-billed Toucan to the other two species seen the previous day.

In the afternoon we visited a different trail, but were delayed from doing this, first by a brief rain shower, and then by a male Great Curassow, which walked out into the open (photo above), and caused momentary pandemonium amongst the gathered birding groups! This time we crossed the large suspension bridge to access the easy trails on the far side of the river. Birds came thick and fast again, like the previous afternoon: As we crossed the bridge a volunteer from the biological station gestured towards a large shape clamped on to the side of a large rainforest tree, Pale-billed Woodpecker; a pair of Black-crowned (Western Slaty) Antshrikes foraged close to the path; a Double-toothed Kite was found perched, (a raptor with the peculiar habit of following around troops of monkeys in order to prey on insects fleeing the marauding monkeys); and one of the world’s smallest birds, Black-capped Pygmy-Tyrant was found perched overhead, while calling incessantly. Then we moved to a specific area where we were told the rare White-fronted Nunbird had been regularly seen recently, a bird which has undergone rapid population crash in recent times, but might now be making something of a comeback. Thankfully, we soon found this carrot-billed puffbird sitting quietly, and soon after Cameron found a couple of Purple-throated Fruitcrows, while some of us took in our best views yet of a pair of Black-
throated Trogons nearby. Joel also took us to a safe spot, where we stood at a safe distance from a brilliant yellow morph Eyelash Pit-Viper, one of the most attractive snakes in the country, (photo below). Towards the end of the afternoon we crossed back across the bridge, picking up a Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift gliding above the bridge on the way. We closed the afternoon combing the forest edge for one of La Selva’s most special birds, and thankfully just moments after alighting from the bus there they were, a superb pair of giant Great Green Macaws flapped lazily into a tree for us to view through the scopes. A Gray-crowned Yellowthroat was the final additional species of the day in the same area.

March 4th: La Selva to Catarata del Toro & Arenal

La Selva: Caribbean lowlands (40m/130ft)

Catarata del Toro: Caribbean upper foothills

Arenal: Caribbean middle elevations (600m/1970ft)

With just a final morning left within the lowland forest at the glorious La Selva Biological Station, we set about plugging some notable gaps on our list. A delay in the arrival of coffee at our lodge outside La Selva caused a delay in us leaving the lodge, although we filled the time by observing our first Green Kingfishers and Fasciated Tiger-Herons of the tour! Once we arrived at the La Selva restaurant for breakfast we found that even this open-air building was not bird-free, a White-necked Jacobin buzzing around above the buffet! The, now expected, daily encounter with a pure white male Snowy Cotinga...
followed shortly after (our third sighting in three days on site). Somehow Rufous-tailed Jacamar, despite being vocal the previous day had eluded us completely, but we put this record straight with prolonged views of up to three birds that morning, once we got out on the trails. The same area held a striking Fasciated Antshrike, which after an initial struggle rewarded us all with super looks. We also targeted two regional endemic wrens: Black-throated and Stripe-breasted Wrens, and were afforded great views of both eventually. It turned out to be a good morning for sloths too, with two further Hoffman’s Two-toed Sloths, as well as a mobile Brown Three-toed Sloth, our best sloth sighting of the tour. Dense tangles hosted a pair of Long-billed Gnatwrens that impressed all with their comical, oversized bills, but not with their ability to avoid binoculars frequently with their agility and frequent mobility! We also enjoyed some excellent looks at Rufous Mourner that morning, and went off on hot pursuit of Rufous Motmot, which had thus far eluded us. However, as we attempted to cross over the suspension bridge once more, we were blocked by a barricade of scopes, focused on an extremely tame Semiplumbeous Hawk, (photo left). We spent a bit of time with the hawk, taking photos from every possible angle, before we crossed to the other side and quickly picked up our Rufous Motmot, before we set about leaving this magnificent site behind, soon after picking up our first King Vulture as it rose on a thermal over La Selva. As we were preparing to leave La Selva reluctantly behind, we were to enjoy one further finale, when a cacophony of activity around the restaurant revealed that the agitated Passerini’s Tanagers and Green Honeycreeper were reacting to a young Boa Constrictor coiled up within the tree.
Our next destination was Arenal, the site of Costa Rica’s most dramatic volcano, the flanks of which host middle elevation forest. However, before reaching Arenal we made a stop off at a relatively little birded site in the upper foothills, **Catarata del Toro** (“CDT”), which sports not only the famous waterfall in its name (“catarata”=waterfall), but a set of crowded hummingbird feeders. En-route we enjoyed further views of three separate **Laughing Falcons**; made a stop at the dayroost of a **Great Potoo**, which had become so reliable in the area they had even erected a sign indicating “Potoo” with an arrow pointing towards the bird! (*photo below*); while Cameron skillfully picked up a high-flying, dark morph, **Hook-billed Kite** from a moving vehicle, while he was situated at the back; and a rushing mountain stream hosted our first **Torrent Tyrannulet**. The CDT feeders were fantastic, bringing us our first views of the splendid **Violet Sabrewing**, **Green Hermit**, and the flashy endemic, **Coppery-headed Emerald**, although the hoped-for **Black-bellied Hummingbird**, (normally regular there), was completely absent during our two hour session. We had also been hoping to catch up with **Sooty-faced Finch** there, which provided our only shot of this bird on the tour, as an individual regularly drops in to feed on grain laid out for the birds. While we waited, we did see a single **Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch** come in to feed on the rice; and also noticed a pair of superb **Spangle-cheeked Tanagers** foraging in the trees overhead. After two hours, and a further journey ahead of us, we decided we had to let the finch go, and pull out. Sam stopped back for one final look to see if anything was munching on the grain, and incredibly there was the **Sooty-faced Finch**, which had dropped in at the “last chance saloon” to reward us all for our vigilance, (*see photo, page 12*).

We had precious little time to bird once we reached **Arenal**, although we did pick up our first **White-throated Magpie-Jay** on the way there, and after dinner were seriously delayed from returning to our rooms for a well-needed rest, when a pair of **Black-and-white Owls** were found standing sentry on some roadside wires! It seems the best sighting of the day was
saved until well after dark. Although, our experienced driver, who had taken numerous bird groups over the past few decades had informed us to keep an eye out for the owls, we were not expecting them to be quite that easy!

March 5th: Arenal

Caribbean middle elevations (600m/1970ft)

The group met shortly after dawn, right outside their cabins, where we were glued to the action happening in the trees, garden shrubs, flowers, and hedgerows all around. The action was non-stop, and new birds came thick and fast: Black-striped Sparrows called from the low shrubs; a Gray-headed Chachalaca was observed clambering around the treetops; a scarlet-and-black Crimson-collared Tanager graced the treetops; and even a male Spotted Antbird was tempted into the open at the forest edge! Over breakfast we checked out the feeders from the balcony, which also afforded splendid views of the cone of the Arenal Volcano, (photo page 4), smoldering in full view of the breakfast table. The feeders were disappointingly quiet, with mainly Montezuma Oropendolas showing interest in the fruit, and frequently observed squabbling with each other for scraps, while White-nosed Coatis scurried around...
the floor below, hoping to reap rewards from the squabbles overhead. The banks of flowers around the lodge hosted a variety of hummingbirds that shot in and out at high speed, and regularly fought with each other for the rich nectar on offer. Among the “colibris” visiting were Steely-vented Hummingbird, Violet-headed Hummingbird, White-necked Jacobin, Green and Stripe-throated Hermits, Crowned Woodnymph, and Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer. These Porterweed hedgerows also hosted some very confiding Red-legged Honeycreepers and Bananaquits. While we enjoyed the crisp views of the volcano, another bird group put us on to a glowing perched White Hawk clearly visible from the balcony—thanks Chris! White-crowned Parrots were seen regularly both passing overhead and perching in convenient positions for close examination.

The remainder of the day was largely spent checking the trails within the grounds of the Arenal Observatory Lodge, where Striped Woodhaunter, Black Hawk-Eagle, Song Wren, Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant, and a pair of Dull-mantled Antbirds were the highlights. Outside the forest a magnificent male Yellow-faced Grassquit proclaimed it’s territory from a fence, (photo page 14). That night we not only bumped into one of the same Black-and-white Owls hanging out by an insect-covered streetlight (photo above), but the few (Happy and Dede), who took part in a night foray also enjoyed a super pair of calling Spectacled Owls lighting up the spotlight.

March 6th: Arenal to Monteverde

Arenal: Caribbean middle elevations (600m/1970ft)

Monteverde: Lower mountains (1500m/4920ft)

On our last morning in the shadow of Arenal Volcano, we had just enough time to walk a forest trail for a few hours before we ascended into the mountains for the first time. Unlike the previous morning though, when we struggled to find any kind of flock (which would potentially hold a decent amount of new species for us), we immediately walked into a large flock that held Golden-crowned Warbler, Buff-
throated Foliage-gleaner, Streak-crowned Antvireo, Tawny-crowned Greenlet, Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher, Wedge-billed Woodcreeper, and Slaty Antwren. Further along the trail we had a long try for a close-calling Thicket Antpitta, which never came out into the open. Some of the group also added Bicolored Antbird and Black-headed Nightingale-Thrush to their lists during the same walk. Other sightings that morning included prolonged scope views of a male Scarlet-thighed Dacnis, a pair of White Hawks from the main lookout at the lodge, Slaty Spinetail, and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, a rare migrant species in Costa Rica.

After lunch en-route, we spent much of the afternoon heading to one of Costa Rica’s most famous natural areas; Monteverde. There was no time to go into the reserve itself on this day, so we contented ourselves by birding the grounds of our lodge, which worked out well with Emerald Toucanet, Rufous-and-white Wren, Chestnut-collared Swift, Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush, and two species of hummingbird feeding in their small row of Porterweed, Steely-vented Hummingbird and Canivet’s Emerald. However, the undoubted star turn of the afternoon was a run in with a covey of Black-breasted Wood-Quails, which came scurrying through the undergrowth close to the lodge giving fantastic close views in the process.
March 7th: Monteverde & Bajo del Tigre

Monteverde: Lower mountains (1500m/4920ft)

This was to be one of the standout days of the tour; not because of masses of birds necessarily, but a set of high-end species seen very well. We spent a short time before breakfast again in grounds of our lodge. Observing a pair of White-eared Ground-Sparrows, and a few people being granted a glimpse of a Gray-necked Wood-Rail too. During breakfast the lodge feeders livened up once fruit had been put in place, attracting our first Blue-crowned Motmot, and giving us cracking looks at a Hoffman’s Woodpecker too. After breakfast we were quickly on our way to Monteverde, one of the most famous natural areas in the country, by virtue of the beautiful, bromeliad-laden cloudforest held within this large protected area. Our birding began right in the parking lot, where a fruiting tree was shaking under the weight of many White-nosed Coatis rummaging within its branches. Plentiful Mountain Thrushes shared the tree with them too. However, we had been hoping for a Resplendent Quetzal to be in attendance too, but it turned out we missed a male which dropped in for just a few minutes while we were distracted by our first siege of new montane species, during our first period within the mountains. The hummer feeders at the entrance to the reserve quickly yielded Magenta-throated Woodstar and Stripe-tailed Hummingbird, as well as further Violet Sabrewings.

We then walked among the tall cloudforest trees, admiring their rich burden of bromeliads weighing heavily on their limbs. The birding was initially quite slow, save for a super Slaty-backed Nightingale-
**Thrush** that showed to all. The beautiful melodies of the **Black-faced Solitaire** could be heard emanating from the cloudforest, and, after several false starts, we got some great looks at this orange-billed songster. New additions came in the form of a very confiding **Tufted Flycatcher** and several **Yellowish Flycatchers** too. Taking a side trail we picked up our first **Prong-billed Barbets**, a pair giving their positions away with their loud duet. A flurry of panicked alarm calls in the canopy betrayed the presence of a mobbing party of passerines in the canopy, which were clearly agitated by the presence of something predatory in the treetops. We watched the frantic birds jumping around excitedly and glowing among them were half a dozen or so **Golden-browed Chlorophonias** within the mix, including several dazzling emerald green and vivid yellow males. Bernice H was in the right place at the right time, getting the only looks at a **Silvery-fronted Tapaculo** in the area, which the rest of us would have to wait nervously right until the very last day to see. In virtually the same spot we all got cracking looks at a female **Orange-bellied Trogon**, not long before we added another from that family, although one with significantly more appeal. As we wandered back towards the parking lot for lunch, a small crowd with scopes trained alerted us to the star sighting of the morning; a pair of **Resplendent Quetzals** had set up shop and began excavating a nest in the area (*photo page 15*), affording excellent views of the male with his famous, iridescent emerald-green tail hanging down below it, while the female sat closeby. We could not have asked for better views of one of Costa Rica’s flagship species, and walked away completely satisfied with these stellar looks which were close enough, and long enough for us all to enjoy at great length. Lunch felt fantastic after this late flurry of spectacular birds in the morning.

After lunch we took in some of the hummingbirds at another set of feeders which held all the regulars, including **Coppery-headed Emerald**, **Violet Sabrewing**, **Magenta-throated Woodstar**, **Stripe-tailed Hummingbird**, **Green Violet-ear**, **Green-crowned Brilliant**, and several glittering **Purple-throated Mountain-Gems**. Another short walk was taken along the same trail we had undertaken in the morning, where we stumbled upon the same pair of **quetzals** again, and picked up our only **Black Guans** of the trip, thanks to Bernice H’s keen eyesight.
The remainder of the afternoon was spent in the Monteverde area, although in a very different habitat; the distinctly dryer, more open montane dry forest of Bajo del Tigre, which lies just kilometers from the much wetter cloudforest within the reserve. With the changing habitat came a changing avifauna too, and, of course, this is why we were there; to target some other specialties more likely, or absent, from the cloudforest. Our main hope was that the regular Three-wattled Bellbirds had set up territory in the area, a species that usually migrates back into the area in early March. A quick talk with the local ranger heightened our excitement, with news that a male bellbird had appropriately recently set up territory on the “Bellbird Trail”. We hurried towards the spot, but made sure we stopped for another bird on the way that should not be scoffed at either; with several male Long-tailed Manakins located en-route. As we moved along the trail the loud “BOK!” calls of the bellbird reached our ears and jangled the nerves. All too soon the bird was clearly right beside us as we stood looking into the treetops from the Bellbird Trail. It did not take long to locate a unique male Three-wattled Bellbird, which we watched, spellbound, for some time, (photo above). The highlight of the show coming when a female bird sidled up to the male, which the male clearly thought was a call to arms, and attempted to mate with her, but was quickly brushed aside! Amazingly, within just a few hours Resplendent Quetzal had been relegated to “second-class citizen”.

March 8th: Curi Cancha to La Ensenada National Wildlife Refuge

Curi Cancha: Lower mountains (1550m/5100ft)

La Ensenada National Wildlife Refuge: North Pacific lowlands (Sea level)

Once again, our short, pre-breakfast birding was focused in the lodge garden where we got better looks on this day of Gray-necked Wood-Rail, before finding a Golden-olive Woodpecker in the garden, and also our only Ruby-throated Hummingbird of the trip. After breakfast, rather than return to the usual crowds gathered in the reserve at Monteverde, we opted to visit a smaller reserve closeby, Curi Cancha. This wonderful reserve allows easy access to similar elevation cloudforest to that within Monteverde, and so we continued to target some of the same lower mountain specialties during the morning; then we
moved west into the Pacific lowlands of the northwest in the afternoon, where the habitat and birdlife changed markedly.

Our Curi Cancha visit worked out well with a pair of Orange-bellied Trogons satisfying everyone’s cravings for a male of that species; although we had barely latched eyes on them, when Cameron drew us away, with the significant news he had a Gray-throated Leaffilser right beside him! We lapped this up quickly after. Our morning walk led us to three further furnariids to add to our trip list, with the endemic Streak-breasted Treehunter, a spritely Red-faced Spinetail, the scarce Ruddy Woodcreeper, and Olivaceous Woodcreeper were all also added that morning. Another small gathering of Golden-browed Chloropinias was also much appreciated; and while enjoying views over the continental divide a calling Barred Hawk joined the trip list too. Calling Red-headed Barbets though frustrated there and never would be soon during the trip. A fortuitous encounter with a local handyman, who's long term gain is to become a bird guide, meant we had a slight change of plan for late that morning, as he offered us the chance to see a couple of roosting nightbirds on a nearby ranch that he worked on. A mere ten-minute drive out of Monteverde, he led us to a roosting Northern Potoo, (photo above), and soon after to a roosting adult Pacific Screech-Owl. We scoped a male Scrub Euphonia in the area too, which was new for us at this stage.

We took our lunch a little later than planned after our potoo diversion, and then headed west into the lowlands of the Pacific Northwest. The habitat quickly changed to a much drier habitat with sparser trees, offering some of the easiest birding of the tour. En-route we quickly began picking up species typical of the region, with perched Orange-fronted Parakeets; a Yellow-olive Flycatcher sitting within a leafless
tree, a super-approachable pair of **Turquoise-browed Motmots** *(photo below)*; a roosting **Lesser Nighthawk** found from the moving vehicle by Ed H.; several **Blue Grosbeaks** along the route; and then once we had arrived at **La Ensenada** we enjoyed both a flyover **Crane Hawk**, and a tree which held a handful of both **Streak-backed and Spot-breasted Orioles** providing a fitting finale to the day.

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**March 9th: La Ensenada National Wildlife Refuge & Hacienda Solimar**

*La Ensenada National Wildlife Refuge: North Pacific lowlands (sea level)*

*Hacienda Solimar: North Pacific lowlands (sea level)*

A pre-breakfast walk around the lodge grounds began auspiciously with a flurry of **Black-headed Trogons** feeding in a fruiting fig by our cabins; surely one of the easiest trogons to come by in the country, once in this habitat. Parrots also featured heavily that morning, and unlike at many more thickly
forested sites, we enjoyed good, perched views of the species at La Ensenada that morning. **White-fronted and Yellow-naped Parrots** were new for us, but we also enjoyed our best looks yet at both **Orange-fronted and Orange-chinned Parakeets** perched in some open trees above us. Other birds seen during this short morning walk included **Rose-throated Becard, Barred Antshrike**, and **Cinnamon Hummingbird**.

After breakfast, and after bumping into a bird group the evening before who spoke rapturously about a nearby ranch-turned private reserve, we decided to check it out, with one huge target in mind; *Jabiru*, a small population of 2-3 pairs exists on the property. After an hours drive we met with our local guide to show us around the ranch, who took us straight to a pair of roosting Spectacled Owls! Not long after we had emerged out of the welcome shade of the woods, we managed to coax a Lesser Ground-Cuckoo into the open, making standing in the sweltering heat worthwhile for a short time, although we quickly retreated into the comfort of our air-con bus shortly after. This turned out to be one of the best morning’s birding of the entire tour, with plentiful birds, and in spite of the heat we survived by using the air-conditioned vehicle as much as possible as we moved around this massive private reserve. *Jabirus* were quickly located, and by the end of our short, three-hour session within the reserve we had seen two juveniles standing in their nests, as well as several adults both foraging, and in flight overhead. In the wetter areas within the ranch, the pools were loaded with birds, including literally thousands of **Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks** (creating a cacophony of sound when they all took to the air at once on several, memorable occasions); hundreds of **Bare-throated Tiger-Herons**, both foraging, and standing guard by their tree-based nests; a pair of **Muscovy Ducks** took flight during a period when a **Peregrine Falcon** terrorized the local waterbirds by diving among them, but soaring out of the melee with nothing to show for its antics. Working our way...
along the dirt tracks we came upon a pair of tiny Plain-breasted Ground-Doves, amongst the many Common Ground-Doves and Inca Doves in the area. One wet stretch of land hosted a handful of Snail Kites, while a small flock of Blue-winged Teal held a pair of Green-winged Teal among them too, a rarity in the country. Three Double-striped Thick-knees were seen stalking through the dusty plains too (photo page 20), as were a pair of Southern Lapwing. All too soon though, our time on this very special reserve came to a close, having added a swathe of new species to the checklist, and hit our main target, the Jabiru, with ease.

We returned to the lodge within La Ensenada National Wildlife Refuge for lunch, and took a break from the heat thereafter. In the afternoon we visited a different part of this refuge/working cattle ranch, where ponds have been created to farm the salt produced there. The “Salinas” is also a rich area for birds, with the ponds themselves attracting a variety of migrant waders/shorebirds, and the mangroves fringing them holding an array of bird species special to that habitat. On the ponds we located Willet, Lesser Yellowlegs, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Whimbrel, and Black-necked Stilt. Skirting the mangroves that border the salt ponds we quickly located several maroon-headed “Mangrove” (Yellow) Warblers (photo above), and several Common (Mangrove) Black-Hawks, but with further effort also found Northern Scrub Flycatcher, two Mangrove Hummingbirds, a pair of Mangrove Vireos and a Mangrove Cuckoo to round out a great days birding.

March 10th: La Ensenada National Wildlife Refuge to Carara National Park

La Ensenada National Wildlife Refuge: North Pacific lowlands (sea level)

Carara National Park: South Pacific lowlands (Sea level)

A final walk was undertaken in the dry lowlands of the Pacific Northwest, within the La Ensenada National Wildlife Refuge. The action though opened right around our cabins, where we admired a stunning Turquoise-browed Motmot sharing a branch with an equally stunning Black-headed Trogon. Then we pursued, and not for the first time, a calling Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl, which this time gave itself up, and once we had seen one we added another during the morning walk! The sounds of Thicket
Tinamou could be heard emanating from the dry woodland but we could not get a view despite much effort. However, in the same area a Banded Wren was found by Barbara, which was one of our final major targets in the area. Other new additions in this area included Streaked Flycatcher and a singing Yellow-green Vireo. We enjoyed some last looks of the trip at Stripe-headed Sparrows, Spot-breasted Oriole, Canivet’s Emerald, Cinnamon Hummingbird, extreme close ups of a Panama Flycatcher, and a swathe of waterbirds during one final look at the Salinas, where this time the regular shorebirds were joined by a score of Wilson’s Plovers too.

Then we hit the road again, heading south along the coast to our grand hotel, the Villa Lapas, on the edge of Carara National Park. We arrived, with plans to have lunch and then, after a short break, to head into Carara National Park for the first time. The action right in the hotel grounds though kept us gripped and boded well for our coming days in the area...Lapas means “macaw”, and, as if to prove the point, not long after we had lunch and checked into our new hotel, we were watching a pair of Scarlet Macaws perched in their garden, much to Ed J’s obvious delight. In the shade of a large cluster of leaves a horde of Tent-making Bats slept huddled together (photo above), and a Green Parrot Snake was found wrapped around the handrail of the bridge in the garden, thankfully a harmless species. The hotel garden also held the first Louisiana Waterthrush of the tour.

During the latter part of the afternoon we walked the beautiful River Trail within the national park, and just a short bus ride from the hotel. We had barely stepped foot on the path, when the local ranger gestured us to two separate Northern Ghost Bats hanging in the shade of some large palm leaves, (photo page 66). This beautiful pure white bat was a great opener to our time on the trail, and was quickly followed by another star mammal in the form of our sixth sloth of the tour, in the parking lot. We had
barely finished with the bat when a first flock was encountered bringing a sudden rush of new species for us, including **Black-hooded Antshrike**, **Dot-winged Antwren**. Indeed, it turned out to be a good afternoon for antbirds, with **Dusky Antbird** added later on too. We were stopped in our tracks by a **Rufous-tailed Jacamar** dust bathing in the middle of the trail, while overhead a handful of **Costa Rican Swiftlets** were noted. However, the sighting of the afternoon was a **Royal Flycatcher** that obliged us by showing very well.

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**March 11th: Carara National Park & Tarcoles River Cruise**

**Carara National Park: South Pacific lowlands (Sea level)**

The morning saw us return to the River Trail within **Carara National Park**, with plenty still to play for there; and then in the afternoon we enjoyed a relaxing afternoon boat ride along the Tarcoles River, where we entered into the mangroves as well as searched the river edges for waterbirds. Before we set off for Carara that morning we had some time spare before breakfast to bird the hotel grounds, which are extensive and offer excellent birding; we found **Rose-throated Becard**, and also got some intermittent looks at a noisy **Riverside Wren**, appropriately enough by the river. However, the blooming shrubs in the garden were often a focus of our attentions, as a stream of hummingbirds came in to visit: **Rufous-tailed Hummingbirds** dominated, but we also saw **Steely-vented Hummingbird**, and added two new species, **Blue-throated Goldentail** and **Scaly-breasted Hummingbird**. Unfortunately, just as the group split up for breakfast a **Collared Forest-Falcon** darted in and landed in the garden of the hotel, but only stayed long enough for Ed H, Sam and Cameron to see it. Along the River Trail, once inside the park, the birding was often quiet that morning, and we picked up little of note until we visited a roosting site for **Boat-billed Heron**, where at least 3 birds were seen with their comically swollen bills. We did flush a young **Royal Flycatcher** out of its hanging nest, precariously positioned right over the trail.
Orange-collared Manakin was surprisingly difficult on this tour along the River Trail, with some getting good looks at the fiery-colored male, although many people had to settle for just the dowdy female. Although we had heard a number of Chestnut-backed Antbirds on the tour previously, finally on this day we all got stellar looks at the bird, and could properly add it to our trip list. Shortly after enjoying the Boat-billed Herons, we picked up a “hissing” White-whiskered Puffbird closeby. We also added another hummingbird along the trail, with several, if brief, encounters with Long-billed Hermits along there too.

In the late morning we switched location and walked some of the trails around the HQ of the park, and walked into a small but significant army ant swarm, which held Gray-headed Tanager, Bicolored and Chestnut-backed Antbirds, and both Northern Barred and Tawny-winged Woodcreepers in attendance. Over lunch at the lodge, some could not resist keeping a keen eye on the garden, which paid off handsomely for Ed J. who first found a sharp male Painted Bunting, (photo above), and followed this not long after by finding a handful of Fiery-billed Aracaris plundering a fruiting fig tree in the garden, much to everyone’s obvious delight.

In the afternoon, we enjoyed a very relaxing boat ride along the Tarcoles River. With our successes in the wetlands of La Ensenada and Hacienda Solimar earlier on the tour, we were looking for little from the trip in terms of new birds, but it was a very relaxing and enjoyable way to spend an afternoon. Funnily enough, our main target was found before we had reached the boat dock, when our bird enthusiast driver, Luis, pointed out a female American Pygmy-Kingfisher perched close to the road, which posed for an age for a series of excellent photos. Once on board the boat we took in all 5 possible species of kingfisher on the tour, including 3-4 further pygmy-kingfishers, and our only Belted Kingfisher of the tour. Herons were also well represented with Bare-throated Tiger-Heron, Tricolored Heron, Little Blue Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, and Yellow-crowned Night-Heron all seen that afternoon. Several Purple Gallinules prowling the muddy edges were also the only ones seen on the trip, and we also enjoyed further sightings of Northern Jacanas on the cruise too.
After a while, we entered into a wide channel that passes into the mangroves, where we found a number of **Common (Mangrove) Black-Hawks** standing sentry along the edge of the creek; noted half a dozen or so **Plumbeous Kites** passing overhead; saw several bright yellow **Prothonotary Warbler** working their way through the mangroves; and also saw a couple of young **Panama Flycatchers** there too, a mangrove specialist in Costa Rica. While we slowly moved along the channel **Mangrove Swallows** circled around the boat, frequently using the roof of the boat as a perch. At the end of the afternoon, with the river swathed in that rich orange-tinted afternoon light which is such a joy to be part of, we watched a variety of parrots passing overhead: Scarlet Macaws flapped lazily across the open sky above us; and Yellow-naped Parrots passed overhead too. We docked in the late afternoon just as the first Lesser Nighthawks of the evening began to emerge. After dinner an offer was made to search for **Striped Owls** between Carara and Jaco, with only one person taking up the offer, in the knowledge that there had been few recent reports in the area. Thankfully though this not dissuade Happy, who persevered, even after we glimpsed one that flew off and out of sight before we could even get it in our bins. We continued on scanning every roadside wire we could, as they are known to favor these to hunt from, and finally on the outskirts of Jaco we found one perched on an open wire, which tolerated us getting out of the bus, and ogling it at length, while we fired off numerous shots of this impressive owl. For Happy and me I am sure this was one of the sightings of the tour.

**March 12th: Carara National Park to Savegre (via San Isidro)**

**Carara National Park: South Pacific lowlands (Sea level)**

**San Isidro: South Pacific Middle Elevations (c.700m/2295ft)**

**Savegre: Upper Mountains (2135m/7000ft)**

Another morning was spent in the lowland jungle of the South Pacific in **Carara National Park**, before we departed for our last session in the mountains, in Savegre. There was virtually no time to bird within **Savegre** on arrival, as we took our time getting there, taking in some birding sites around San Isidro en-route, to great affect.

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The day began, as it did the previous one, with a short period of birding in the garden of the Hotel Villa Lapas, where we saw another Riverside Wren (again on the other side of the river from us though), a male Rose-throated Becard, another group of Fiery-billed Aracaris (photo page 25), and a Muscovy Duck was seen flying upriver. Breakfast was also interrupted for a male Slaty-tailed Trogon, which Ed J had found through a diligent eye on the surrounding forest, even through breakfast! Once in Carara, we got some great looks at a Stub-tailed Spadebill, a bird that is full of character. Our main target there was clearly the Baird’s Trogon, this providing our final chance to find it. The bird made us work for it, and it was not until we moved onto our third trail of the morning we heard one calling, and with more than a little effort eventually got great looks at a pair of these stunning trogons, (photo below). Other highlights of our morning included our only sighting of Kentucky Warbler, our best views yet of the handsome Riverside Wren, a male Red-capped Manakin (which unfortunately did not linger for all to see it), and, finally, looks for all of a male Bay-headed Tanager.

Just before lunch, we packed up our things, and hit the road for Savegre, stopping en-route for lunch, before we headed northeast towards the foothill town of San Isidro. Our driver, just as keen as we were to add new birds to our list, through his local contacts had us following another vehicle to the site of a nesting Pearl Kite, which had only been found just a few days earlier! The same area that held the kite, also held Tropical Mockingbird, and several stunning Fork-tailed Flycatchers too, and our only Sharp-shinned Hawk of the tour. Another nearby area yielded our only Smooth-billed Anis of the tour, and a male Red-breasted Blackbird, which due to time constraints and another more appealing target pulling us away, was only seen by half of the group before it disappeared in a ditch out of sight of the road. Then, we stopped off in an area, where we hoped to find the aquamarine Turquoise Cotinga. We had barely been there five minutes when Cameron calmly announced that we should forget the hawk we had been struggling to get a view of, and take a look at the male Turquoise Cotinga he had in his scope instead! We duly obliged. With time wearing on, and after adding Red-crowned Woodpecker to the list, and still with some miles to go in order to reach the valley of Savegre higher in the mountains to the west, we had to leave San Isidro behind. We arrived in the Savegre Valley after dark, and so decided to have a quick try for Dusky Nightjar before we reached our lodge, which was quickly lured in, and landed within a few meters of us on a roadside fencepost.
March 13th: Savegre

Savegre: Upper Mountains (2135m/7000ft)

The final leg of the trip was to be situated within the Talamanca Cordillera in the south, at higher elevations in the mountains than we had been before. Correspondingly, we had a myriad species to find in the area. One of the wonders of this area, is just how easy the birding is, and very quickly new birds flooded onto our list, by simply walking the grounds of our lodge. While some waited for the early morning meet-up they had were gifted another look at a pair of Resplendent Quetzals, before we set about seeing plenty of new birds; nearly thirty new birds were added to the list on this day alone! Next to where we met up we quickly located a nesting Sooty Thrush (photo below); and the flowering shrubs and lodge feeders were regularly visited by Volcano Hummingbirds, Green Violet-ears, White-throated Mountain-Gems, and Magnificent Hummingbird. Every now and then a Scintillant Hummingbird would zoom in and out too, although the best views of a male were not had until near the close of the day. As we walked around the well-kept garden, we flushed a couple of Large-footed Finches out of the flowerbeds, and a couple of Collared Redstarts descended from the higher trees to pick insects off the sides of the lodge. One of the most common songbirds up at these lofty altitudes is the Sooty-capped Bush-Tanager (Chlorospingus), and it did not take long for us to log the first of what would be many in the coming days. However, the biggest stir of the morning walk around the lodge was the first sighting of a Long-tailed Silky-Flycatcher, a bird that Bernice J. and others had positioned high on their hit list for the tour. Although we were to see many in the coming days, they were always greeted with enthusiasm and no one ever tired of them, and with their bright yellow tones and distinctive long-tailed, long-crested shape, rightly so! Another regional endemic was found in the lodge grounds in the form of the typically confiding Black-capped Flycatcher, and our first, brief, Black-cheeked Warbler, which left many hoping for more sightings. Anyone who had experienced the more elusive members of the nightingale-thrushes were pleasantly surprised today, when we were
greeted with the usual regular close-ups of Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrushes through the day, beginning with a confiding one in the lodge parking lot before breakfast. After picking up our first Yellow-bellied Siskin, we had breakfast on site, enjoying a warming cup of tea, when we fed the addictions of the coffee addicts too. Post-brekkie, we hit a small flock within the grounds, which brought us our first encounter with the comical Yellow-thighed Finch, a bird which appears rather unremarkable being basically all charcoal gray, with the exception of its bright lemon-yellow thighs (photo below), which actually caused some people in the group to break out in laughter at the sight of them! Having exhausted most of what we could add within the grounds – although very happy that we had amassed some 15 or so new species before we had even left the lodge – we decided to bird higher up the valley. Picking up our one and only trip Black Phoebe on the way out of the lodge, we then visited an area where we’d hoped to locate an Ochraceous Pewee, which had recently been seen by another Tropical Birding group a few weeks previous. Although we failed on that note, on playing a call of Costa Rican Pygmy-Owl in order to try and stir up the pewee, we were rewarded with something even better: a Costa Rican Pygmy-Owl, which swooped in and landed on a mossy limb above us, causing some excitement among the local songbirds in the area. While we were doing well with wood warblers on the trip, with comfortably over 20 species, people were still longing for an encounter with the stunning Flame-throated Warbler, which came that morning, and then repeatedly over the coming days, a much-appreciated common species in the high mountains. We also picked up our first Yellow-winged Vireos and Black-billed Nightingale-Thrushes in the same area; and after seeing our first Acorn Woodpeckers of the trip, we returned to the lodge for lunch.

After lunch, due to space issues, we transferred from our first luxury lodge in the valley to another. Once checked in, we went for a walk along their trails, where we continued to add new montane species: first Ruddy Treerunner, followed by Hairy Woodpecker (with its rich buff breast, looking distinctly different in Costa Rica compared to the US), Buffy Tuftedcheek and Spot-crowned Woodcreeper. On the way back towards the lodge we also were treated to good views of a female Barred Becard and finally nailed...
down a male **Scintillant Hummingbird**. We had another pre-dinner try for **Bare-shanked Screech-Owl** but unfortunately only received some lackluster, distant responses from the owl.

**March 14th: Cerro de la Muerte, La Georgina, Savegre & Paraiso Quetzal**

*Cerro de la Muerte: Paramo (3000m/9845ft)*

*La Georgina: Upper Mountains (2800m/ft)*

*Savegre: Upper Mountains (2135m/7000ft)*

Flushed with the successes from the day before, we were now fine-tuning our targets in the high mountains. With the weather looking fantastic and bright blue skies overhead, with little hint of any rain in sight, we decided to ascend up to **Cerro de la Muerte** for the morning, an area of stunted shrubs and grasses known as *paramo*, at the highest point of the tour. This area is a key spot for some of the highest elevation birds in the country, notably *Peg-billed Finch* (*an erratic and unpredictable species*), *Slaty Flowerpiercer*, *Volcano Junco*, and *Timberline Wren*. Before we left the Savegre Valley though a distinctive song heard out of the bus window had us out of the vehicle in a flash and searching for the culprit. Despite its continual song, the **Rufous-browed Peppershrike** proved tricky to find, as it positioned itself well; however, we eventually tracked down the canopy bird which was rooted to a single spot, making it the perfect scope view for all as it sung continually from the treetops. Not long after we had got out of the vehicle, an extremely confiding pair of *Volcano Juncos* calmed the nerves (*photo above*), before we tried a spot for the **Timberline Wren**. The wren responded quickly with up to three different individuals dancing around us for a while. These took a bit more work, for while they were close, they moved at hyper-speed, meaning some work was required until we all got cracking looks at these spritely birds. There were only a few **Slaty Flowerpiercers** present, indicating a distinct lack of flowers in the area, an so rather than spend long hours searching for *Peg-billed Finch*, we opted to descend down to the montane Oak forest behind La Georgina restaurant, and try for some other species. Notably, I was hoping to track down a Wrenthrush, as it can be a great spot for getting decent looks at the bird. Unfortunately, after scouring the area for around an hour very few birds were heard at all, when suddenly as we headed back to the vehicle, with seemingly little hope, a
close **Wrenthrush** began calling repeatedly. It initially kept to deep cover, and appeared like it was going to remain hidden, but then hopped up into a relatively open area of bamboo, at eye level, affording all present excellent views of this strange bird, which has been variously thought of as a warbler, although many still believe should be considered in its own separate family.

After lunch back at the distinctly extravagant **Savegre Lodge**, with gorgeous photos and paintings of quetzals splashed all over the walls; we enjoyed our last moments at this fantastic lodge, enjoying birds both in and around the lodge grounds. Part of the great finale there was a **Collared Redstart** which decided to flit in and out of the restaurant, *(photos page 31)*, picking off insects that had been attracted to the lodge lights the previous night, and a **Silver-throated Tanager** came in to feed too, *(photo above)*, which gave us plenty of angles at which to photograph them at length. An **Emerald Toucanet** turned up in the garden too, a little worse for wear, as it had flown into one of the windows, and so it sat there, stunned, for a while, before it disappeared once more. The garden was alive with birds: **Flame-colored Tanagers, Yellow-thighed Finch**, an **Acorn Woodpecker** came into the grain feeder, while the usual selection of hummingbirds darted between the sugar feeders *(Green Violet-ear, Magnificent Hummingbird, White-throated Mountain-Gem)*. Just before we left the lodge, a flash of green and bright yellow landed in the lodge garden momentarily: **Sulphur-winged Parakeets**, an endemic that had been strangely lacking until that time. Later that afternoon, after checking out of our wonderful setting, we took a walk lower down in the valley, which was very active, with several flocks coming past us at close range. Among the birds in the flocks were several **Spangle-cheeked Tanagers**, a trio of extremely confiding **Black-cheeked Warblers**, yet more **Collared Redstarts**, several **Ruddy Treerunners**, the only **Lineated Foliage-gleaner** of the trip, and both **Brown-capped and Philadelphia Vireos** too. A **Gray-breasted Wood-Wren** gave atypical views in the open at the time of the passing flock too.
After that we worked our way up the valley, trying unsuccessfully to find an American Dipper on the way up, but finding yet another male **Resplendent Quetzal**, which was perched at the perfect angle above the road, with its flagship feature, it’s remarkable glistening emerald green tail “train” hanging down in full view below him (*see photo title page*). This seemed the perfect way to end our time in the so-called “Valley of the Quetzal”! Shortly after, we checked in to the **Paraiso Quetzal** lodge for our last night in the field, surrounded by beautiful, higher elevation cloudforest. There was time on arrival to admire the virtual swarm of **Fiery-throated Hummingbirds** around their feeders, and take note of large flocks of vocal **Barred Parakeets** flying overhead, somewhat of a surprise, as this is normally a scarce bird. A nighttime foray for screech-owls and saw-whet owls came back empty-handed again.

**March 15th: Paraiso Quetzal & Lankester Gardens to San Jose**

**Paraiso Quetzal: Upper Mountains (2650m/8695ft)**

**Lankester Gardens: Central Valley (1300m/4265ft)**

We spent our the first part of our final birding day birding around the grounds of **Paraiso Quetzal**, with one of their experienced local guides. With our wish list in hand (and having virtually tripped over a **Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush** foraging around the lodge), we set about plugging some gaps in our list. Soon after dawn we filled in one of these with the first of four separate sightings that day of
the odd **Black-and-yellow Silky-Flycatcher**, which with its distinctly shorter tail and lack of crest appears more *cotinga-like* than silky-flycatcher-like (*photo below*). Soon after the high-pitched “peeps” of an **Ochraceous Pewee** reached our ears, and after some straining this way and that we found an angle for the ‘scope to get it for all present, bringing much relief to the guide in particular, after several other failed attempts at recent stakeouts earlier in Savegre! Over the next hour we were bombarded with sightings of **Barred Parakeets**, which were in the area in atypically large numbers due to an abundance of fruit in the area for them at the time. We even managed to get several, close perched views, a rarity with this species anywhere in their range, where the species is more typically seen as an unsatisfactory, high-flying, dot! A little off-trail work was required to add our final trogon of the trip, but with the assistance of a local ranger were led to a cavity where a female **Collared Trogon** peered out from her nest at us. While we stood there a distant **Spotted Wood-Quail** left us no option but to wish desperately that it were closer, although a calling **Silvery-fronted Tapaculo** gave us greater hope, being well within playback range. We played the call and repeatedly the bird came in, making sure every one present had seen it; a rare occurrence indeed with this slippery species, which inhabits the darkest corners of the forest floor. Using the well-worn technique of playing the call of a **Costa Rican Pygmy-Owl** brought in a procession of mobbing birds including a group of FIFTEEN **Spangle-cheeked Tanagers**, supported by **Black-capped Flycatchers**, **Flame-throated Warblers**, **Yellow-winged Vireos**, and the ever-popular **Long-tailed Silky-Flycatcher**, on occasion. We enjoyed a relaxed breakfast back at the lodge, surrounded by the usual swarm of hummingbirds at their hectic feeders. Dominant in terms of numbers were **Fiery-throated Hummingbirds**, which had **White-throated Mountain-Gem, Magnificent Hummingbirds**, and **Green Violet-ears** for company too; while alongside a **Hairy Woodpecker** repeatedly returned to attend to its nest hole. After trying unsuccessfully, to try and track down the rare **Silvery-throated Jay** nearby once again, but getting great looks at **Yellow-bellied Siskin** for everyone for the first time, we had to leave the cloudforest, and highlands, behind, and head back towards Costa Rica’s capital, San Jose.
En-route we passed through the town of Cartago, and realizing we still had a few hours of daylight on our hands, decided to have a look in on Lankester Gardens. Amazingly, we had somehow missed the common Crimson-fronted Parakeet up until this point, which was quickly put right when we were stuck in a traffic jam in the city, and pulled up alongside a pair of these urban parakeets perched on the wires alongside, which screamed repeatedly while sitting in the heart of all the traffic chaos! At Lankester Gardens we enjoyed final looks at Rufous-capped Warblers, Paltry Tyrannulets Barred Antshrike, and lots of foraging Yellow-faced Grassquits; but also added White-naped Brush-Finch, and managed to get views for the whole group of several Eye-ringed Flatbills in the gardens. One of the final additions of the trip was a Magnolia Warbler feeding high in a tree, (which was eventually trumped for last addition of the trip by an Orchard Oriole, seen on the departure day by the Jacksons). We also noted a Green Spiny Lizard clinging to the wall of the rock garden, topping off what is a great trip for other animals, as well as birds.

With these beautiful botanical gardens closing, and dusk approaching, there was nothing left to do but reluctantly return to the plush surroundings of the Hotel Bougainvillea for our final night. Once there we reflected back on what had been an extremely enjoyable, and extremely productive trip, with more than 500 bird species recorded, not to mention multiple views of sloths, monkeys, and poison dart frogs. All we had to do then, was to assign just five species out of this to a list of the best birds of the trip. The results are shown on the next page...
TOP FIVE BIRDS OF THE TOUR:
(As voted for by participants and guides combined)

1. THREE-WATTLED BELLBIRD - Bajo del Tigre
2= SNOWY COTINGA - La Selva
2= TURQUOISE-BROWED MOTMOT - La Ensenada area
4= LONG-TAILED SILKY-FLYCATCHER - Savegre
4= RESPLENDENT QUETZAL - Monteverde & Savegre

Emerald Toucanet Savegre
BIRD & ANIMAL LISTS:

**BIRDS**

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 2013 (e-Bird/Clements version 6.8).

H indicates a species that was HEARD only.

GO indicates a species recorded by the GUIDE ONLY.

END and * indicates a REGIONAL ENDEMIC.

**TINAMOUS: TINAMIDAE**

Great Tinamou  
*Tinamus major*  
Costa Rica is an exceptional country in which to see this normally shy species; three sightings in total, two at La Selva, and another extremely close bird which walked up to Bernice J. at Carara National Park.

Thicket Tinamou  
*Crypturellus cinnamomeus*  
H  
A close calling bird remained within a dense thicket at La Ensenada.

**DUCKS, GEESE and WATERFOWL: ANATIDAE**

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck  
*Dendrocygna autumnalis*  
Seen on four days of the tour, although the best sightings came within Hacienda Solimar, where literally thousands were seen in the air at a single time, a memorable spectacle from the tour.

Muscovy Duck  
*Cairina moschata*  
Two sightings; two in flight at Hacienda Solimar, and another single flying in the grounds of the Villa Lapas.

Blue-winged Teal  
*Anas discors*  
Seen on two days of the tour; at Hacienda Solimar, and near the town of San Isidro.

Green-winged Teal  
*Anas crecca*  
Two were seen in a large flock of Blue-winged Teal in Hacienda Solimar by Cameron and Ed J.

**GUANS, CHACHALACAS and CURASSOWS: CRACIDAE**

Gray-headed Chachalaca  
*Ortalis cinereiceps*  
Only recorded at the one site, Arenal, where we saw them on four occasions.

Crested Guan  
*Penelope purpurascens*  
Wonderfully common and tame in Costa Rica’s forests; seen on five days of the tour, in La Selva and Arenal.

* Black Guan  
*Chamaepetes unicolor*  
END  
Just seen on the one day, in Monteverde, when Bernice H. found a close individual, while we walked off a large lunch.

Great Curassow  
*Crax rubra*  
A single, extremely tame, male was seen foraging around the main clearing at La Selva.
NEW WORLD QUAIL: ODONTOPHORIDAE

* Black-breasted Wood-Quail  * Odotophorus leucomaeus  * END
One of the sightings of the tour, was finding a covey of three birds in the grounds of Cala Lodge (Monteverde), shortly after our arrival there. The birds came running through the undergrowth several times, passing within just meters of us all, allowing rare close and good looks at the species.

Spotted Wood-Quail  Odotophorus guttatus  H
Only heard, from some distance above Paraiso Quetzal.

STORKS: CICONIIDAE

Jabiru  * Jabiru mycteria
A visit to Hacienda Solimar, near La Ensenada, was well rewarded with views of at least four different Jabirus, a couple of young birds on nests, and views of adults, both feeding and in flight.

Wood Stork  * Mycteria Americana
Hundreds, if not thousands, were seen during a fantastic, bird-filled, morning within the wetlands of Hacienda Solimar. (Recorded on four days in total, including on the Tarcoles River cruise).

FRIGATEBIRDS: FREGATIDAE

Magnificent Frigatebird  Fregata magnificens
Good numbers were seen in the La Ensenada area; recorded on four days of the day.

BOOBIES and GANNETS: SULIDAE

Blue-footed Booby  Sula nebouxii  GO
Cameron saw one in the Gulf of Nicoya, from La Ensenada, unfortunately he was alone at the time!

Brown Booby  Sula leucogaster
Around twenty birds were seen assembled around a fishing boat, during a short stop en-route between La Ensenada and Carara. (This was the lone sighting of the tour).

CORMORANTS and SHAGS: PHALACROCORACIDAE

Neotropic Cormorant  Phalacrocorax brasilianus
Recorded on five different days of the tour.

ANHINGAS: ANHINGIDAE

Anhinga  Anhinga anhinga
Seen on five days of the tour; in La Selva, at Sueno Azul, Hacienda Solimar, and on the Tarcoles River cruise.

PELICANS: PELECANIDAE

Brown Pelican  Pelecanus occidentalis
Seen on two days of the tour, with good numbers seen along the coast, during the journey between La Ensenada and Carara.

HERONS, EGRETS and BITTERNS: ARDEIDAE

Least Bittern  Ixobrychus exilis
A tough bird in Costa Rica; one was seen briefly in flight at Hacienda Solimar.
**Fasciated Tiger-Heron**  *Tigrisoma fasciatum*
Two were seen around the Sueno Azul Hotel, near La Selva, and another was seen en-route to Arenal.

**Bare-throated Tiger-Heron**  *Tigrisoma mexicanum*
Recorded on five days of the tour; with the greatest numbers coming within Hacienda Solimar, where hundreds were seen in a morning there, including several birds attending their nests high in the trees.

**Great Blue Heron**  *Ardea Herodias*
Recorded on three days of the tour; at Hacienda Solimar, Tarcoles River and Hotel Sueno Azul.

**Great Egret**  *Ardea alba*
Recorded on ten days of the tour, at numerous sites.

**Snowy Egret**  *Egretta thula*
Seen on four days; at Sueno Azul, Hacienda Solimar, La Ensenada, and along the Tarcoles River.

**Little Blue Heron**  *Egretta caerulea*
Seen on four different days; in Sueno Azul, La Ensenada, and along the Tarcoles River.

**Tricolored Heron**  *Egretta tricolor*
Recorded at three different sites, on two days: La Ensenada, Hacienda Solimar and the Tarcoles River.

**Cattle Egret**  *Bubulcus ibis*
Recorded on seven days of the tour, at a number of sites.

**Green Heron**  *Butorides virescens*
Seen on three different days; at Hacienda Solimar, La Ensenada and along the Tarcoles River.

**Black-crowned Night-Heron**  *Nycticorax nycticorax*
Just seen twice; with two at Solimar and one along the Tarcoles River.

**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron**  *Nyctanassa violacea*
Seen on three days of the tour; at La Ensenada, and on the Tarcoles River cruise.

**Boat-billed Heron**  *Cochlearius cochlearius*
Three birds were seen at a regular roost site one day in Carara National Park.

**IBISES and SPOONBILLS: THRESKIORNITHIDAE**

**White Ibis**  *Eudocimus albus*
Recorded on three days; at Solimar, at the Hotel Villa Lapas, and along the Tarcoles River.

**Green Ibis**  *Mesembrinibis cayennensis*
A fortuitous sighting one morning en-route to La Selva, where one was seen perched close to the road.

**Roseate Spoonbill**  *Platalea ajaja*
Up to 4 different birds were seen, with sightings on three days; at Solimar, La Ensenada, and along the Tarcoles River.

**NEW WORLD VULTURES: CATHARTIDAE**

**Black Vulture**  *Coragyps atratus*
Commonly encountered; seen daily.

**Turkey Vulture**  *Cathartes aura*
Commonly encountered; seen daily.

**King Vulture**  *Sarcoramphus papa*
Only seen on two days of the tour; the first was gliding over La Selva; and then several were seen on another day, both at Carara, and on the drive between there and Savegre. Ed J., especially, enjoyed spectacular views over Carara.
OSPREY: PANDIONIDAE

Osprey  
Pandion haliaetus

Seen on five separate occasions; at Sueno Azul, Hacienda Solimar, La Ensenada, and the Tarcoles River.

HAWKS, EAGLES and KITES: ACCIPITRIDAE

Pearl Kite  
Gampsonyx swainsonii

Through an amazing stroke of luck, our driver spoke to a local guide he knew as we passed through San Isidro, only to find out that a nesting Pearl Kite had been discovered in the area just days earlier; 15 mins later we were watching it.

White-tailed Kite  
Elanus leucurus

Seen twice; Cameron saw one during the drive between La Selva and Arenal; and another was seen from the Hotel Bougainvillea (near San Jose) on the final morning, by Ed and Bernice J.

Hook-billed Kite  
Chondrohierax uncinatus

Cameron spotted a dark morph overhead, during the journey between La Selva and Arenal.

Swallow-tailed Kite  
Elanoides forficatus

Seen regularly through the tour; recorded on eight days.

Black Hawk-Eagle  
Spizaetus tyrannus

A great spot by Bernice J. along the Waterfall Trail at Arenal.

Snail Kite  
Rostrhamus sociabilis

A scarce species in Costa Rica, three of which (both adults and immatures) were seen at Hacienda Solimar.

Double-toothed Kite  
Harpagus bidentatus

While walking a trail at La Selva another birding group put us on to one perched.

Plumbeous Kite  
Ictinia plumbea

Just recorded during the Tarcoles River cruise, when around half a dozen birds were seen in the mangroves.

Sharp-shinned Hawk  
Accipiter striatus

Just the one sighting, of a bird dashing past that was picked up by Cameron, on the outskirts of San Isidro.

Crane Hawk  
Geranospiza caerulescens

Two were seen, both singles in flight, at La Ensenada, and Carara National Park.

Common Black-Hawk  
Buteogallus anthracinus

A mangrove specialist, along the Pacific coast in Costa Rica we saw them first at La Ensenada (where several individuals were seen); and then on the Tarcoles River trip we saw at least five birds in the mangroves there.

NB. In the Garrigues/Dean field guide this form is considered a separate species from Common Black-Hawk, and is named "Mangrove Black-Hawk", although it is generally considered the same species by most authors now.

Barred Hawk  
Morphnarchus princeps

A single sighting from Curi Cancha, near Monteverde.

Roadside Hawk  
Rupornis magnirostris

Four singles were seen; at La Selva and La Ensenada.

Harris’s Hawk  
Parabuteo unicintus

Just seen on the one morning, around Hacienda Solimar, where two birds were seen.

White Hawk  
Pseudastur albicollis

Seen on two consecutive mornings from the balcony/lookout at Arenal.

Semiplumbeous Hawk  
Leucopternis semiplumbeus

During a truly fantastic tour for raptors, we enjoyed unbeatable looks at one sitting by the main bridge at La Selva.
Broad-winged Hawk  *Buteo platypterus*
Recorded on eight days of the tour, including more than fifteen seen migrating overhead while near San Isidro.

Gray Hawk  *Buteo plagiatus*
Single birds were seen on five separate days; our best sighting was found by our super driver, en-route to La Selva.

Short-tailed Hawk  *Buteo brachyurus*
Three birds were seen; one at Catarata del Toro, another single at La Ensenada, and a final single at Carara.

Zone-tailed Hawk  *Buteo albonotatus*
Bernice J. saw one on the journey to La Ensenada.

Red-tailed Hawk  *Buteo jamaicensis*
Just two sightings; one at Curi Cancha, and another gliding above the Savegre Valley.

**RAILS, GALLINULES and COOTS: RALLIDAE**

White-throated Crake  *Laterallus albigularis*  H
Just heard the once, while in Carara National Park.

Gray-necked Wood-Rail  *Aramides cajaneus*
*Seen, albeit briefly, on two separate mornings in the grounds of Cala Lodge in Monteverde.*

Purple Gallinule  *Porphyrio martinicus*
Just seen on the one day, when two were seen alongside the Tarcoles River.

**LIMPKIN: ARAMIDAE**

Limpkin  *Aramus guarauna*
Only recorded on one morning, when at least six birds were seen in Hacienda Solimar.

**THICK-KNEES: BURHINIDAE**

Double-striped Thick-knee  *Burhinus bistriatus*
Seen at two sites, on two separate days; with a maximum of three seen at both La Ensenada and Hacienda Solimar.

**STILS and AVOCETS: RECURVIROSTRIDAE**

Black-necked Stilt  *Himantopus mexicanus*
Seen on four days of the tour, with biggest numbers being seen at the Salinas in La Ensenada.

**PLOVERS and LAPWINGS: CHARADRIIDAE**

Black-bellied Plover  *Pluvialis squatarola*
Just seen the once, when three birds were seen at La Ensenada.

Southern Lapwing  *Vanellus chilensis*
Four birds were seen at Hacienda Solimar, and two were seen on the outskirts of San Isidro.

Wilson’s Plover  *Charadrius wilsonia*
Eighteen were seen one morning on the Salinas in La Ensenada.

Semipalmated Plover  *Charadrius semipalmatus*
A few singles were seen at La Ensenada, and another was seen during the Tarcoles River cruise.

Killdeer  *Charadrius vociferous*
Three birds were seen during our morning in Hacienda Solimar.
JACANAS: IACANIDAE

Northern Jacana  
*Jacana spinosa*
Good numbers were seen around Hacienda Solimar, with others seen near La Selva and alongside the Tarcoles River.

SANDPIPERS and ALLIES: SCOLOPACIDAE

**Spotted Sandpiper**  
*Actitis macularius*
Recorded on five different days of the tour.

**Solitary Sandpiper**  
*Tringa solitaria*
A few birds were seen along a drainage ditch at Hacienda Solimar.

**Willet**  
*Tringa semipalmata*
Seen on three days of the tour, with up to five birds at La Ensenada, and others seen on the Tarcoles River.

**Lesser Yellowlegs**  
*Tringa flavipes*
A few were seen on our two visits to the Salinas at La Ensenada.

**Whimbrel**  
*Numenius phaeopus*
A handful of birds were seen on the Salinas at La Ensenada, and a few were seen along the Tarcoles River.

**Ruddy Turnstone**  
*Arenaria interpres*
Just one bird was seen, at La Ensenada.

**Stilt Sandpiper**  
*Calidris himantopus*
Up to twenty birds were seen on the Salinas at La Ensenada.

**Sanderling**  
*Calidris alba*  
GO
A single bird was seen by Cameron only, while at La Ensenada.

**Least Sandpiper**  
*Calidris minutilla*
Recorded on three days of the tour; at La Ensenada and on the Tarcoles River.

**Semipalmated Sandpiper**  
*Calidris pusilla*
Up to 125 birds were seen on the Salinas at La Ensenada.

**Western Sandpiper**  
*Calidris mauri*
Up to 200 birds were seen on the Salinas in La Ensenada.

GULLS, TERNs and SKIMMERS: LARIDAE

**Laughing Gull**  
*Leucophaeus atericeps*
Recorded on three days of the tour, with the biggest numbers coming as we journeyed along the coast.

**Royal Tern**  
*Thalasseus maximus*
A large tern roost seen during the journey between Ensenada and Carara was dominated by this species.

**Sandwich Tern**  
*Thalasseus sandvicensis*  
GO
Cameron saw a few in the Gulf of Nicoya.

**Elegant Tern**  
*Thalasseus elegans*
Five birds were seen around Punta Caldera.

PIGEONS and DOVES: COLUMBIDAE

**Rock Pigeon**  
*Columba livia*
Seen on four days of the tour, around towns during various journeys.

**Red-billed Pigeon**  
*Patagioenas flavirostris*
A commonly encountered species, (including within the grounds of our hotel near San Jose), seen on at least nine days.
Band-tailed Pigeon  
*Patagioenas fasciata*
Small numbers were seen during our time in the mountains.

Ruddy Pigeon  
*Patagioenas subvinacea*
Two of these montane pigeons were seen; one inside the reserve at Monteverde, and another in Savegre.

Short-billed Pigeon  
*Patagioenas nigrirostris*
Just recorded at La Selva, where they were seen on each of our days in the area.

White-winged Dove  
*Zenaida asiatica*
Seen a number of times on the tour, on seven of the days.

Inca Dove  
*Columbina inca*
Recorded on five days of the tour, with good numbers particularly in the dry Pacific Northwest.

Common Ground-Dove  
*Columbina passerine*
Commonly encountered in the Pacific Northwest.

Plain-breasted Ground-Dove  
*Columbina minuta*
A pair were seen in Hacienda Solimar.

Ruddy Ground-Dove  
*Columbina talpacoti*
Seen regularly in the lowlands, recorded on at least eight days of the tour.

Blue Ground-Dove  
*Columbina pretiosa*
Heard along the River Trail in Carara.

White-tipped Dove  
*Leptotila verreauxi*
Seen in small numbers throughout the tour, seen on eight different days.

Gray-chested Dove  
*Leptotila cassini*
Two birds were seen at Arenal; a few more were seen in Carara National Park also.

Chiriqui Quail-Dove  
*Geotrygon chiriquensis*
Cameron was fortunate to see one of these elusive doves in Bajo de Tigre.

**CUCKOOS: CUCULIDAE**

Squirrel Cuckoo  
*Piaya cayana*
Recorded five times; an always popular, dramatic species, seen at La Selva, La Ensenada, and Carara.

Mangrove Cuckoo  
*Coccyzus minor*
During an extraordinary session in the mangroves at La Ensenada we managed to track down this species, along with *Mangrove Hummingbird, Mangrove Vireo, “Mangrove” Warbler, Common (“Mangrove”) Black-Hawk, and Northern Scrub Flycatcher.*

Striped Cuckoo  
*Tapera naevia*
One was heard calling while cruising along the Tarcoles River.

Lesser Ground-Cuckoo  
*Morococcyx erthropygus*
A wonderful sighting came during a stiflingly hot morning in Hacienda Solimar. The bird was heard calling and responded quickly to a burst of playback by hopping up into a bush, where it could be scoped for some time.

Smooth-billed Ani  
*Crotophaga ani*
Up to seven different birds were seen on the outskirts of San Isidro.

Groove-billed Ani  
*Crotophaga sulcirostris*
Commonly encountered on the tour; seen on at least eight days of the trip.
**OWLS: STRIGIDAE**

Pacific Screech-Owl  
*Megascops cooperi*
A roosting bird was seen on a ranch near Monteverde (in the same area where we also were shown a roosting Northern Potoo); and another was seen at night at La Ensenada by Dede, Happy, and Sam.

* Bare-shanked Screech-Owl  
*Megascops clarkia*  
Unfortunately, despite trying several times, only few distant calls were heard in Savegre.

Crested Owl  
*Lophostrix cristata*
Bernice J. and Dede both heard one at night from their rooms in Arenal.

Spectacled Owl  
*Pulsatrix perspicillata*
We enjoyed an amazing run on this species on the tour; Sam and Cameron saw a pair in the grounds of the Sueno Azul Hotel, another pair was seen by Dede, Happy and Sam at Arenal, and a roosting pair was seen at Hacienda Solimar.

* Costa Rican Pygmy-Owl  
*Glaucidium costaricanum*  
On the first attempt at playing the call of this owl, in order to stir up local passerines, the owl itself flew in at Savegre.

Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl  
*Glaucidium brasilianum*
After initially struggling to track down calling birds at La Ensenada, we then saw two very well there one morning.

Mottled Owl  
*Ciccaba virgate*
One was heard calling in Santa Elena town.

Black-and-white Owl  
*Ciccaba nigrolineata*
A spectacular pair was seen at Arenal, initially found perched on roadside wires close to our cabins; then one of the same pair was seen hanging around a streetlight in the same area the following night.

Striped Owl  
*Pseudoscops clamator*
For Sam and Happy at least, one of the BIRDS-OF-THE-TOUR, as they were the only people game enough that night to go in search of Striped Owls perched around street lamps near Carara. After finding one after five minutes, things were looking very fortuitous. Unfortunately, the bird took flight and disappeared before we even saw it’s face. So we persevered and found another that merely looked at us nonchalantly, while we “oohed” and “ahed” and snapped tons of photos of it! I feel that if more people were there this would have been a shoe-in for one of the birds of the tour.

**NIGHTJARS and ALLIES: CAPRIMULGIDAE**

Lesser Nighthawk  
*Chordeiles acutipennis*
Seen on three different days; Ed H. found one (from a moving vehicle!), roosting beside the road en-route to La Ensenada, and three birds were seen gliding overhead at dusk, over the Tarcoles River.

Short-tailed Nighthawk  
*Lurocalis semitorquatus*
One was seen distantly at dusk near La Selva.

Common Pauraque  
*Hydropsalis cayennensis*
Seen around five times, including at Arenal, and La Ensenada.

* Dusky Nightjar  
*Antrostomus saturates*  
We arrived in Savegre shortly after dusk, tried a spot for it before we checked into our hotel and minutes later were watching one sat on a fencepost just a few meters away! Another was seen by Sam at Paraiso Quetzal.

**POTOOS: NYCTIBIIDAE**

Great Potoo  
*Nyctibius grandis*
A fantastic roosting bird was seen on the journey between La Selva and Arenal. The bird had become so reliable over the previous six months that a roadsign had been erected with the words “POTOOS” on it!
Northern Potoo  
* Nyctibius jamaicensis*
A stunning roosting bird was seen within dry country on a ranch near Monteverde. The same place also hosted a roosting *Pacific Screech-Owl*, making for a memorable 30-minute visit!

**SWIFTS: APODIDAE**

**Chestnut-collared Swift**  
* Streptoprocne rutila*
Just seen a couple of times, both in the Monteverde area, including a large flock gliding over Cala Lodge one evening.

**White-collared Swift**  
* Streptoprocne zonaris*
Seen twice, both at La Selva, and at Savegre.

**Vaux's Swift**  
* Chaetura vauxi*
Seen on two days of the tour, including around Braulio Carrillo National Park.

* Costa Rican Swift  
* Chaetura fumosa  
**END**

Seen on all three days in Carara, including over the Hotel Villa Lapas.

**Gray-rumped Swift**  
* Chaetura cinereiventris*
Recorded on two days at La Selva.

**Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift**  
* Panyptila cayennensis*
One was seen circling a clearing several times, at La Selva.

**HUMMINGBIRDS: TROCHILIDAE**

**White-necked Jacobin**  
* Florisuga mellivora*
Recorded on three days; at La Selva (where one was flying around the restaurant!), and twice at Arenal.

**Band-tailed Barbthroat**  
* Threnetes ruckeri*
A superb close-perched bird was watched for some time at La Selva.

**Green Hermit**  
* Phaethornis guy*
Seen well at the feeders at Catarata del Toro and Monteverde, with others seen feeding in Porterweed in Arenal.

**Long-billed Hermit**  
* Phaethornis longirostris*
3-4 birds were seen along the River Trail at Carara one morning.

**Stripe-throated Hermit**  
* Phaethornis striigularis*
Seen on three days of the tour, in both La Selva, and Arenal.

**Green Violet-ear**  
* Colibri thalassinus*
Seen regularly at the feeders in the mountains (Monteverde and Savegre).

**Purple-crowned Fairy**  
* Heliothyx barroti*
Seen on three occasions, in La Selva, Arenal, and Carara, although each time was typically brief with few people in the group getting a look.

**Green Thorntail**  
* Discosura conversii*
Just recorded at the one site; El Tapir, on the very first day of the tour.

**Black-crested Coquette**  
* Lophornis helenae*
A super male was seen feeding on the verbena flowers in El Tapir, and another male was seen by the cabins at Arenal.

**Green-crowned Brilliant**  
* Heliodoxa jacula*
Recorded at two sets of feeders; at Catarata del Toro, and Monteverde.

**Magnificent Hummingbird**  
* Eugenes fulgens*
Seen daily at Savegre, where they were regular visitors to feeders at Trogon and Savegre Lodges, and Paraiso Quetzal.
Plain-capped Starthroat  *Heliomaster constant*
One was seen, though briefly, in the garden at Hotel Villa Lapas, on the edge of Carara National Park.

* Fiery-throated Hummingbird  *Panterpe insignis*  END
Just recorded at the one site, Paraiso Quetzal, where they were the most abundant bird at the feeders.

* Purple-throated Mountain-Gem  *Lampornis calolaemus*  END
Recorded on three days of the tour; at the feeders at Catarata del Toro, Monteverde, and Curi Cancha.

White-throated Mountain-Gem  *Lampornis castaneoventris*
Recorded on the final three days of the tour; regular at feeders at Trogon Lodge, Savegre Lodge, and Paraiso Quetzal.

* Magenta-throated Woodstar  *Calliphlox bryantae*  END
Seen on the one day, when 2-3 birds were seen at the feeders at Monteverde.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird  *Archilochus colubris*
Just one was seen; in the garden of Cala Lodge.

* Volcano Hummingbird  *Selasphorus flammula*  END
Commonly encountered at the feeders at Savegre, and also seen at Cerro del la Muerte.

* Scintillant Hummingbird  *Selasphorus scintilla*  END
A scattering of sightings around Savegre; a male was seen just above Savegre Lodge one afternoon.

Canivet’s Emerald  *Chlorostilbon canivetii*
A female was seen in the garden of Cala Lodge (Monteverde); a male and female were also seen at La Ensenada.

Violet-headed Hummingbird  *Klais guimeti*
Commonly seen visiting the blooming Porterweed flowers at Arenal.

Scaly-breasted Hummingbird  *Phaeochroa cuvierii*
Only seen on two of our days in the Carara area, including within the garden of the Hotel Villa Lapas.

Violet Sabrewing  *Campyropterus hemileucurus*
Seen visiting the feeders at Catarata del Toro and at Monteverde.

Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer  *Chalybura urochrysa*
Two birds were seen briefly one morning in Arenal.

Crowned Woodnymph  *Thalurania colombica*
A common bird at El Tapir on the first day; then seen again at Arenal.

Stripe-tailed Hummingbird  *Eupherusa eximia*
Three birds were coming to the feeders at Monteverde, and a single was also seen at the Savegre feeders too.

* Coppery-headed Emerald  *Elvira cupreiceps*  END
A true Costa Rica country endemic; seen first at Catarata del Toro, and then again at the Monteverde feeders.

* Snowcap  *Microchera albcoronata*  END
A young male and adult male were seen visiting the verbena flowers at El Tapir, one our first day.

Blue-chested Hummingbird  *Amazilia amabilis*
Just a few people got looks at several brief birds in La Selva.

* Mangrove Hummingbird  *Amazilia boucardi*  END
Two birds were seen during a great session in the mangroves of La Ensenada (one of these was a male); the same session also yielded Mangrove Cuckoo, Mangrove Vireo, Mangrove Warbler, and Northern Scrub Flycatcher.

Steely-vented Hummingbird  *Amazilia saucerrottei*
Seen in Arenal, in the garden of Cala Lodge (Monteverde), and then again in the garden of our hotel in Carara.
Rufous-tailed Hummingbird  
Amazilia tzacati
The most frequently encountered hummingbird on the tour; seen at El Tapir, La Selva, Arenal, and Carara.

Cinnamon Hummingbird  
Amazilia rutila
Seen on our two days in La Ensenada.

Blue-throated Goldentail  
Hylocharis eliciae
A male was seen visiting some flowers in the garden of the Hotel Villa Lapas.

**TROGONS: TROGONIDAE**

Resplendent Quetzal  
Pharomachrus mocinno
The bird you simply cannot leave Costa Rica without! We first saw a nesting pair several times in Monteverde, then saw another pair in Savegre, and finally, had a male sitting right over the road at Savegre too. All of these sightings were prolonged and top quality leaving no one in any doubt they were watching one of the World’s most amazing birds. **ONE OF THE BIRDS OF THE TOUR.**

* Lattice-tailed Trogon  
Trogon clathratus  
**END/H**
Two separate birds were heard on our first day at Braulio Carrillo, but were completely unresponsive, actually moving away in response to playback, preventing us getting the full sweep of trogons for the trip!

Slaty-tailed Trogon  
Trogon Massena

Black-headed Trogon  
Trogon melanoleucus
One of the most numerous of the trogons seen on the tour. While only seen on three days of the tour (mainly in La Ensenada, where they are positively common), good numbers were seen. Each morning in La Ensenada a handful of birds came in and perched in a large tree above our cabins, giving wonderful views; on one occasion a male even perched side-by-side with a Turquoise-browed Motmot, making for a fantastic opening to the day.

* Baird’s Trogon  
Trogon bairdii  
**END**
The trogon we had to work the hardest for. Two walks along the River Trail in Carara turned up nothing, and after several hours we bumped into a pair on another set of trails in Carara.

Gartered Trogon  
Trogon caligatus

Black-throated Trogon  
Trogon rufus

* Orange-bellied Trogon  
Trogon aurantiiventris  
**END**
A female was seen during our morning in Monteverde; and another pair were seen at Curi Cancha the following day.

Collared Trogon  
Trogon collaris
Just seen the once, when a female at a nest cavity was shown to us at Paraiso Quetzal.

**MOTMOTS: MOMOTIDAE**

Blue-crowned Motmot  
Momotus coeruliceps
Seen three times on the tour, with sightings at Carara and in the Monteverde area. The best views came at Cala Lodge, where a bird was a regular visitor to their fruit feeder over breakfast one morning.

Rufous Motmot  
Baryphthengus martii
Just one was seen, shortly before we left La Selva.
Broad-billed Motmot  
*Electron platyrhynchum*

Two different birds were seen on one day in La Selva.

Turquoise-browed Motmot  
*Eumomota superciliosa*

This spectacular bird was seen regularly in the La Ensenada area, including right above our cabins there; another pair were also seen during the Tarcoles River cruise. Seen on four different days of the tour. **ONE OF THE BIRDS OF THE TOUR**, due to its stunning coloration, and the unbeatable views enjoyed.

**KINGFISHERS: ALCEDINIDAE**

Ringed Kingfisher  
*Megaceryle torquata*

Seen 5-6 times on the tour.

Belted Kingfisher  
*Megaceryle alcyon*

One was seen on the Tarcoles River trip.

Amazon Kingfisher  
*Chloroceryle amazon*

Seen 4-5 times on the trip, including within Hacienda Solimar, Hotel Sueno Azul and along the Tarcoles River.

Green Kingfisher  
*Chloroceryle americana*

Seen on five occasions on the tour, with the best sightings coming along the Tarcoles River.

American Pygmy-Kingfisher  
*Chloroceryle aenea*

One was seen very close (see photo page 3) near the dock at Tarcoles; another four were seen on the cruise itself there.

**PUFFBIRDS: BUCCONIDAE**

White-necked Puffbird  
*Notharchus hyperrhynchus*

One was seen perched by the bridge at La Selva.

White-whiskered Puffbird  
*Malacoptila panamensis*

One was seen along the River Trail at Carara.

White-fronted Nunbird  
*Monassa morphoeus*

At least three birds were seen at La Selva, thanks to our local guide, Joel, who took us to a stakeout. This species was absent for a number of years in La Selva, having declined nationally, although is making a comeback.

**JACAMARS: GALBULIDAE**

Rufous-tailed Jacamar  
*Galbula ruficauda*

Three birds were seen one morning at La Selva; and another bird was seen dust bathing in the trail at Carara.

**NEW WORLD BARBETS: CAPTONIDAE**

Red-headed Barbet  
*Eubucco bourcierii*

Two different birds were heard at Curi Cancha.

**TOUCAN-BARBETS: SEMNORNITHIDAE**

* Prong-billed Barbet  
*Semnornis frantzii*  

END

Two pairs were seen in Monteverde, and another pair were seen in Curi Cancha.

**TOUCANS: RAMPHASTIDAE**

Emerald Toucanet  
*Aulacorhynchus maxillaris*

Seen on four different days, with several sightings at Monteverde, Curi Cancha, and a single bird seen in the garden of Savegre Lodge, which had unfortunately flown in to a window and was stunned.
Collared Aracari *Pteroglossus torquatus*

*Seen on two days in La Selva, and others were seen on the journey between there and Arenal.*

*Fiery-billed Aracari* *Pteroglossus frantzii*  

*Ed J. found a group of three birds plundering the fruit from a fig tree in the garden of Hotel Villa Lapas (Carara), and presumably the same group was seen there the following morning.*

**Black (Chestnut)-mandibled Toucan**  
*Ramphastos ambiguous swainsonii*

*Seen on seven different times on the tour, in both La Selva and Carara.*

Keel-billed Toucan  
*Ramphastos sulfuratus*

*Seen on three different days of the tour; several times at La Selva, and on the journey between Arenal and Monteverde.*

**WOODPECKERS: PICIDAE**

Acorn Woodpecker  
*Melanerpes formicivorus*

*Up to six were seen in a day in the Savegre area.*

Black-cheeked Woodpecker  
*Melanerpes pucherani*

*Seen on five different days; at La Selva and Arenal.*

Red-crowned Woodpecker  
*Melanerpes rubricapillus*

*A male was seen at the Turquoise Cotinga site in San Isidro.*

*Around Carara a number of birds were seen which were presumed hybrids of Red-crowned & Hoffman’s.*

*Hoffman’s Woodpecker*  
*Melanerpes hoffmanii*  

*See[n in the Hotel Bougainvillea garden near San Jose, at Cala Lodge, and regularly in the La Ensenada area.*

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**  
*Sphyrapicus varius*

*One was seen in Arenal.*

**Hairy Woodpecker**  
*Picoides villosus*

*See[n once in Savegre, and a nesting bird was also seen at Paraiso Quetzal.*

*Rufous-winged Woodpecker*  
*Piculus simplex*  

*A male was seen well at La Selva by all in the ‘scope; and another was seen there by just a few people.*

**Golden-olive Woodpecker**  
*Colaptes rubiginosus*

*Just the one was seen, within the garden of Cala Lodge (Monteverde).*

**Cinnamon Woodpecker**  
*Celeus loricatus*

*A pair were seen extremely well on the first day at La Selva by all, and another was seen by just a few people.*

**Chestnut-colored Woodpecker**  
*Celeus castaneus*

*Two sightings at La Selva; with the first involving a pair seen very well by all, moments after a pair of Cinnamon Woodpeckers were seen in the same area.*

**Lineated Woodpecker**  
*Dryocopus lineatus*

*One was seen at La Selva.*

**Pale-billed Woodpecker**  
*Campephilus guatemalensis*

*Seen on 4-5 occasions, in La Selva, Arenal and in La Ensenada.*

**FALCONS and CARACARAS: FALCONIDAE**

**Barred Forest-Falcon**  
*Micrastur ruficollis*  

*One was heard calling in Monteverde.*
Collared Forest-Falcon  
* * *

Just as the group split up to head to breakfast at Villa Lapas, a Collared Forest-Falcon flew in and perched in the garden; Cameron and Sam alerted the group, but unfortunately the bird only remained long enough for Ed H. to see it.

Crested Carara  
* * *

Seen five or six times, including at Hacienda Solimar and along the Tarcoles River.

Yellow-headed Caracara  
* * *

Seen on five days of the tour; mainly in the Pacific northwest, but also along the Tarcoles River.

Laughing Falcon  
* * *

Seen four times in the La Selva area.

American Kestrel  
* * *

A few people saw one out of the window of the bus during the journey between La Selva and Arenal.

Bat Falcon  
* * *

Two singles were seen in La Selva.

Peregrine Falcon  
* * *

Two birds were seen in Hacienda Solimar, one of which was causing havoc among the masses of ducks gathered there.

PARROTS: PSITTACIDAE

* Sulphur-winged Parakeet  
Pyrrhura hoffmanni  

Six birds were seen from Savegre Lodge, and two flew over us at Paraiso Quetzal.

* Crimson-fronted Parakeet  
Aratinga finschi  

Although this species is common, and usually seen within the hotel grounds in San Jose, we struggled to see this bird until the final day of the tour, when a pair were seen sitting on wires in the middle of the city of Cartago, and several more flyovers were had in Lankester Gardens shortly after.

Olive-throated Parakeet  
Aratinga nana  

Seen regularly, as flyovers, in La Selva and Arenal.

Orange-fronted Parakeet  
Aratinga canicularis  

Great views were had at La Ensenada where this species was commonly encountered.

Great Green Macaw  
Ara ambiguous  

We saw a pair which overflew us and landed in a tree, in La Selva, much to Ed J’s delight, as the macaws were a major motivation for this trip.

Scarlet Macaw  
Ara macao  

La pas means macaw, and so it was appropriate than our first sighting, of two perched birds, came within the Hotel Villa Lapas, shortly after we arrived. Seen numerous times over our three days in Carara, with great looks of flying birds daubed in fantastic late afternoon light heading to roost, from the boat along the Tarcoles River.

Barred Parakeet  
Bolborhynchus lineola  

Normally a tricky species to see, although due to an abundance of fruiting trees in Paraiso Quetzal, hundreds were seen flying around low, and even perched close on several occasions. A lucky run for this species!

Orange-chinned Parakeet  
Brotogeris jugularis  

Recorded on five days of the tour, with our best sightings coming in La Ensenada and San Isidro, where birds were seen well perched, rather than passing overhead at high speed like they were seen at La Selva.

Brown-headed Parrot  
Pyrilia haemototis  

Just two birds were seen passing over high in flight at La Selva.
White-crowned Parrot  
*pionus senilis*  
*seen on five days of the tour, in both La Selva and Arenal, where several birds were seen very well perched.*

White-fronted Parrot  
*amazona albibrons*  
*just recorded at La Ensenada, where a handful of birds were seen, including some perched individuals.*

Red-lobed Parrot  
*amazona autumnalis*  
*seen a few times around La Selva, where several were also seen perched.*

Mealy Parrot  
*amazona farinose*  
*A few were seen in La Ensenada and at least one was seen on the Tarcoles River trip.*

**TYPICAL ANTBIRDS: THAMNOPHILIDAE**

Fasciated Antshrike  
*cymbilaimus lineatus*  
*A female was seen by just a few people at La Selva; then, the following day, a pair was seen well there by all.*

Barred Antshrike  
*thamnophilus doliatus*  
*three sightings: a male was seen in La Ensenada, another two males were seen along the River Trail at Carara, and a final male was seen in Lankester Gardens in the Central Valley.*

Black-crowned Antshrike  
*thamnophilus atrinucha*  
*A pair was seen at La Selva.*

*Taxonomic Note: This species was recently re-named, its old name was Western Slaty Antshrike.*

*Black-hooded Antshrike  
*thamnophilus bridgesi*  
*end*  
*A few were seen on both of our visits to the River Trail in Carara National Park.*

Plain Antvireo  
*dysithamnus mentalis*  
*A single male was seen in Curi Cancha.*

*Streak-crowned Antvireo  
*dysithamnus striaticeps*  
*end*  
*A pair was seen in a mixed flock with at Arenal.*

Slaty Antwren  
*myrmotherula schisticolor*  
*two females were seen at Arenal, and a male was seen at Curi Cancha.*

Dot-winged Antwren  
*microrhopias quixensis*  
*although only seen at Carara, they were regularly encountered there, with up to six seen in one mixed flock.*

Dusky Antbird  
*cercomacra tyrannina*  
*recorded on two days at Carara, with a pair on one day, and several females seen the next.*

Chestnut-backed Antbird  
*myrmeciza exsul*  
*three singles were seen in Carara, with the best view being of a male attending a small army ant swarm with Gray-headed Tanager, Bicolored Antbird and Northern Barred and Tawny-winged Woodcreepers.*

Dull-mantled Antbird  
*myrmeciza laemosticta*  
*A male was seen by everyone at Arenal.*

Bicolored Antbird  
*gymnopithys leucaspis*  
*after a brief sighting in Arenal, a better view came of a single bird attending a small army ant swarm in Carara.*

Spotted Antbird  
*hylophylax naevioides*  
*two single males were seen at Arenal; a beautiful, small antbird.*

**ANTPITTAS: GRALLARIIDAE**

Streak-chested Antpitta  
*hylopezus perspicillatus*  
*heard at both Braulio Carrillo NP and Carara NP.*
* Thicket Antpitta  
* Hyllopezus dives  
Despite considerable effort, a close-calling bird could not be seen in Arenal.

**TAPACULOS: RHINOCRYPTIDAE**

* Silvery-fronted Tapaculo  
* Scytalopus argentifrons  
Bernice H. saw one pretty well in Monteverde, while the rest of us caught up with a sighting at Paraiso Quetzal.

**ANTTHRUSHES: FORMICARIIDAE**

Black-faced Antthrush  
* Formicarius analis  
One was heard one afternoon in Carara, and another, distant bird was heard calling from the Hotel Villa Lapas.

**OVENBIRDS and WOODCREEPERS: FURNARIIDAE**

Gray-throated Leaftosser  
* Sclerurus albicollis  
Thanks to some sterling work from Cameron, we all got to see one of these scarce birds very close at Curi Cancha.

Olivaceous Woodcreeper  
* Sittasomus griseicapillus  
Just the one sighting, at Curi Cancha.

Plain-brown Woodcreeper  
* Dendrocincla fuliginosa  
Only one was seen, along one of the trails at La Selva.

Tawny-winged Woodcreeper  
* Dendrocincla anabatina  
One bird was seen attending an army ant swarm in Carara (with Gray-headed Tanager, Bicolored and Chestnut-backed Antbirds and a Northern Barred Woodcreeper).

Ruddy Woodcreeper  
* Dendrocincla homochroa  
One of these scarce woodcreepers was seen in Curi Cancha.

Wedge-billed Woodcreeper  
* Glyphorynchus spirurus  
Surprisingly difficult on this tour, with just two birds seen, in Arenal.

Northern Barred Woodcreeper  
* Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae  
Three sightings in all; two in La Selva, and another was seen (at an ant swarm) in Carara.

Cocoa Woodcreeper  
* Xiphorynchus susurrans  
A few were seen in La Selva, and another was seen in Carara.

Spotted Woodcreeper  
* Xiphorynchus erythropygius  
One was seen in Braulio Carrillo, and another was seen in Arenal.

Streak-headed Woodcreeper  
* Lepidocolaptes souleyetii  
Two were seen at La Selva and another was seen in Carara.

Spot-crowned Woodcreeper  
* Lepidocolaptes affinis  
This montane species was seen several times in the Savegre area, including from the bar of the Savegre Lodge by some!

Plain Xenops  
* Xenops minutus  
Seen twice at La Selva, once in Arenal, and then twice again in Carara.

Buffy Tuftedcheek  
* Pseudocolaptes lawrencii  
One was seen above Savegre Lodge.

Lineated Foliage-gleaner  
* Syndactyla subularis  
One was seen in a large mixed flock below Savegre Lodge, which also held Spangle-cheeked Tanager, Black-cheeked Warbler, Collared Redstart, Spot-crowned Woodcreeper, and Ruddy Treerunner.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Striped Woodhaunter</th>
<th>Hyloctistes subulatus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heard at Braulio, but then seen by all at Arenal.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner</th>
<th>Automolus ochrlaemus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One was seen along a trail at Arenal.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>* Streak-breasted Treehunter</th>
<th>Thripadectes rufobrunneus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A bird showed very well at Curi Cancha, near Monteverde.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>* Ruddy Treerunner</th>
<th>Margarornis rubiginosus</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two pairs were seen within mixed flocks in Savegre.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Red-faced Spinetail</th>
<th>Cranioleuca erythrops</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surprisingly scarce on this this tour, with just one bird seen, at Curi Cancha.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slaty Spinetail</th>
<th>Synallaxis brachyura</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One was seen close to our accommodations in Arenal.</td>
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### TYRANT FLYCATCHERS: TYRANNIDAE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greenish Elaenia</th>
<th>Myiopagis viridicata</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A few were seen in the garden of our hotel in Carara.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yellow-bellied Elaenia</th>
<th>Elaenia flavogaster</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A few were seen around our cabins in Arenal.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mountain Elaenia</th>
<th>Elaenia frantzii</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commonly encountered in the mountains, especially around Savegre.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Torrent Tyrannulet</th>
<th>Serpophaga cinerea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recorded twice; one was seen near Arenal, and another pair was found in Savegre.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Olive-striped Flycatcher</th>
<th>Mionectes olivaceus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One was seen by some of the group and Sam at La Selva.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ochre-bellied Flycatcher</th>
<th>Mionectes oleaginosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One was seen at both La Selva and Carara.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slaty-capped Flycatcher</th>
<th>Leptopogon superciliaris</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A few were seen in mixed flocks at Arenal.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paltry Tyrannulet</th>
<th>Zimmerius parvus</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One was seen at La Selva, another pair in Lankester Gardens in the Central Valley, and a couple were seen in Savegre.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Northern Scrub-Flycatcher</th>
<th>Sublegatus arenarum</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One was seen briefly in the mangroves at La Ensenada.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Black-capped Pygmy-tyrant</th>
<th>Mylornis atricapillus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A pair of these tiny birds was seen at La Selva.</td>
<td></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale-crested Pygmy-Tyrant</th>
<th>Lophotriccus pileatus</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One was seen very well at Arenal.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Northern Bentbill</th>
<th>Oncostoma cinereigulare</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There was just one brief sighting along the River Trail at Carara, when only one or two people got to see it.</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slate-headed Tody-Flycatcher</th>
<th>Poecilotriccus Sylvia</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One was seen well along the River Trail at Carara.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Tody-Flycatcher</th>
<th>Todirostrum cinereum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recorded on six days of the tour; at El Tapir, La Selva, Arenal, and Carara.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher  * Todirostrum nigriceps
Our local guide picked this tiny bird out in the canopy very well, in La Selva. Thanks Joel!

Eye-ringed Flatbill  * Rhyynchoclycus brevirostris
After a short sighting in La Selva, it was pleasing to track this down for all in Lankester Gardens.

Yellow-olive Flycatcher  * Tolmyias sulphurescens
Seen on four days of the trip; in the La Ensenada area, and in Carara.

Yellow-margined Flycatcher  * Tolmyias assimilis
Heard several times in La Selva.

Stub-tailed Spadebill  * Platyrichinus cancrominus
We enjoyed repeated good looks at this charismatic bird in Carara National Park.

Royal Flycatcher  * Onychorhynchus coronatus
A bird was nesting over the trail at Carara, which gave us great close looks on both of our visits to the River Trail.

Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher  * Terenotriccus erythrurus
One was seen at Braulio Carrillo National Park.

Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher  * Myiobius sulphureipygimus
Seen on three occasions; at Braulio, Arenal, and Carara.

Tufted Flycatcher  * Mitrephanes phaeocercus
Two were seen in Monteverde, and another couple of obliging birds were seen around Savegre.

* Ochraceous Pewee  * Contopus ochraceus
This scarce and difficult endemic was seen on our final full days birding, at Paraiso Quetzal.

Eastern Wood-Pewee  * Contopus virens
A single migrant bird was seen in Tarcoles.

Tropical Pewee  * Contopus cinereus
Seen at La Selva and Arenal.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher  * Empidonax flaviventris
Just the one was seen, in Carara National Park.

Acadian Flycatcher  * Empidonax virescens
One was seen by some people at La Selva.

Yellowish Flycatcher  * Empidonax flavescens
Just seen in Monteverde, where three were seen in the reserve, and another was seen in nearby Curi Cancha.

Black-capped Flycatcher  * Empidonax atriceps
Recorded regularly in the Savegre area.

Black Phoebe  * Sayornis nigricans
Only seen once, in the grounds of Trogon Lodge on Savegre.

Long-tailed Tyrant  * Colonia colonus
A great flycatcher, which proved very popular with the group; seen three times at La Selva and at least once at Arenal.

Bright-rumped Attila  * Attila spadiceus
Heard regularly in the lowlands, although only seen once, on our first morning in La Selva.

Rufous Mourner  * Rhytipterna holerythra
We had two good sightings in La Selva, and another bird was seen in Arenal.

Dusky-capped Flycatcher  * Myiarchus tuberculifer
Seen on at least five occasions; in El Tapir, La Selva, and also near Monteverde.
Panama Flycatcher  
*Myiarchus panamensis*

This bird is largely confined to mangroves in Costa Rica (though strangely not in some countries, like Panama); so we were a little surprised to see one outside of mangroves in La Ensenada, (although in reality, the mangroves were only a few hundred meters away). Then we saw another in mangroves at the same site the following day.

Nutting’s Flycatcher  
*Myiarchus nuttingi*

At least one bird was seen in La Ensenada.

Great Crested Flycatcher  
*Myiarchus crinitus*

Calling birds were seen in La Selva and Carara.

Brown-crested Flycatcher  
*Myiarchus tyrannulus*

A number of these flycatchers were seen in La Ensenada.

Great Kiskadee  
*Pitangus sulphuratus*

Would be a justified choice for the national bird of Costa Rica, so abundant is it through the lowlands, where we saw many of them (recorded on 12 days of the tour). A familiar face, and voice, throughout the tour.

Boat-billed Flycatcher  
*Megarynchus pitangua*

Recorded multiple times at La Selva.

Social Flycatcher  
*Myiozetetes similis*

A common species, recorded regularly on the tour; at La Selva, Arenal, La Ensenada, and Carara.

Gray-capped Flycatcher  
*Myiozetetes granadensis*

Seen regularly at La Selva, and also seen in Arenal and Carara too.

White-ringed Flycatcher  
*Conopias albovittatus*

One was seen around the restaurant at La Selva, and another was seen at Arenal.

Streaked Flycatcher  
*Myiodynastes maculatus*

One was seen at La Ensenada; and several more were seen in the Hotel Villa Lapas garden.

Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher  
*Myiodynastes luteiventris*

Two birds were seen in Arenal, and another was seen in La Ensenada.

Piratic Flycatcher  
*Legatus leucophaius*

Seen on at least five occasions; at La Selva, Arenal, in the garden of the Villa Lapas, and in San Isidro.

Tropical Kingbird  
*Tyrannus melancholicus*

One of Costa Rica’s most widespread birds, seen on each day of the tour.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher  
*Tyrannus forficatus*

Seen on all three days in the La Ensenada area, with up to seven birds seen in a day.

Fork-tailed Flycatcher  
*Tyrannus savana*

At least five birds were seen in the San Isidro area.

**Cotingas: Cotingidae**

Purple-throated Fruitcrow  
*Querela purpurata*

Two birds were found by Cameron at La Selva.

*Turquoise Cotinga  
*Cotinga ridgwayi*  

Thanks to a combination of our driver’s hot tip (about the site), and Cameron’s keen eyesight, we saw a beautiful male near the town of San Isidro, (on the journey between Carara and Savegre).

Rufous Piha  
*Lipaugus unirufus*  

Heard once in Carara National Park.
* Three-wattled Bellbird  
Procnias tricarunculatus  
END

A spectacular male was seen calling in Bajo del Tigre (near Montverde); at one point a female landed next to it and initiated him to try and mate with her, only for the female to then reject him! The incredible sound of the bird, the bizarre wattles created a whole experience that was rated very, very highly by the group, leading this bird to be easily voted as the BIRD-OF-THE-TOUR.

* Snowy Cotinga  
Carpodectes nitidus  
END

We enjoyed remarkable success with this species at La Selva; sighting at least one ghostly-white male on each of our three days in La Selva. It is an unpredictable species, at other times being absent for weeks! ONE OF THE BIRDS OF THE TOUR.

**MANAKINS: PIPRIDAE**

White-ruffed Manakin  
Corapipo altera
Just one female was seen, at Arenal.

Long-tailed Manakin  
Chiroxiphla linearis
Three males were seen shortly before the “Three-wattled Bellbird” show at Bajo del Tigre; and another male and female were seen at La Ensenada.

Red-capped Manakin  
Ceratopipra mentalis
A gorgeous male was seen at Carara, although unfortunately did not stick around long enough for all to see.

White-collared Manakin  
Manacus candei
As usual this bird was easily seen around the clearing at La Selva, where a male came in to feed in a fruiting tree and showed well to all. However, this was the only sighting of the trip.

* Orange-collared Manakin  
Manacus aurantiacus  
END

Surprisingly difficult on this tour; while everyone saw at least a female, only some got to see a male or two as they did not stay for long at each sighting. A rather disappointing showing for this cracking bird.

**TITYRAS and ALLIES: TITYRIDAE**

Black-crowned Tityra  
Tityra inquisitor
Two pairs were seen in the La Selva area.

Masked Tityra  
Tityra semifasciata
Seen on at least seven occasions, with our best looks coming at La Ensenada and La Selva.

Speckled Mourner  
Laniocera rufescens
Literally the first bird heard of the day at Braulio, which refused to come in.

Barred Becard  
Pachyramphus versicolor
A female was seen very well just above the lodge at Savegre.

Cinnamon Becard  
Pachyramphus cinnamomeus
Seen a few times at La Selva (where the best views were had in the clearing), and another was seen at Arenal.

White-winged Becard  
Pachyramphus polychropterus
One was seen in a high canopy flock at Carara.

Rose-throated Becard  
Pachyramphus aglaiae
Three different birds were seen at La Ensenada, and a couple of males were seen in the garden of the Villa Lapas too.
**VIREOS: VIREONIDAE**

*Vireo pallens*

During a great session in the mangroves at La Ensenada we picked up a pair of these vireos, Mangrove Warbler, two Mangrove Hummingbirds, a Mangrove Cuckoo, Common (Mangrove) Black-Hawk, and a Northern Scrub-Flycatcher. Panama Flycatcher was also seen in another set of mangrove at the same site.

*Vireo flavifrons*

Recorded twice on the tour; at Braulio and Carara.

*Vireo carmioli*  

A highland endemic, shared with the mountains of western Panama; we saw a number of them in the Savegre area.

*Vireo leucophrys*

After a brief sighting in Curi Cancha, another was seen much better in Savegre.

*Vireo philadelphicus*

Two singles were seen; one in Savegre, and another in Lankester Gardens.

*Vireo flavoviridis*

A singing bird was seen in La Ensenada; another was heard singing in the garden of the Villa Lapas.

*Hylophilus ochraceiceps*

One was seen in a large mixed flock in Arenal.

*Hylophilus decurtatus*

Seen five times on the tour, in Braulio, La Selva, and several times in Carara.

*Vireolanius pulchellus*

One gave unbeatable looks at La Selva, coming down to only five feet off the ground and around fifteen feet away.

*Cylarhis gujanensis*

After missing it in the mangroves of the Pacific Northwest, we were relieved to find a bird at Savegre.

**CROWS, JAYS and MAGPIES: CORVIDAE**

*Cyanolyca cucullata*

We targeted this scarce species at Curi Cancha, but unfortunately only heard one while there.

*Calocitta formosa*

While several were seen to and from Arenal, the sightings went up a notch at La Ensenada, where they are positively common. This is proven well when a daily siege of them arrives in the open air restaurant to raid food!

*Psilorhinus morio*

Seen on six different days of the tour, including at the feeders at Catarata del Toro, and at Cala Lodge.

**SWALLOWS: HIRUNDINIDAE**

*Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*

Recorded regularly through the tour; seen on around eight days.

*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*

Firmly identified on just a couple of days on the tour; at La Selva, and between Arenal and Monteverde.

*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*

Seen at La Selva and Arenal, and also near Monterverde.

*Progne chalybea*

Seen at La Selva and on the Tarcoles River cruise.
Mangrove Swallow *Tachycineta albilinea*
A few were seen at La Ensenada; and along the Tarcoles River birds chose to regularly perch on our boat.

Bank Swallow *Riparia riparia*
One was seen by Cameron in Hacienda Solimar.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*
Recorded at La Selva, along the Tarcoles River, and at Hacienda Solimar.

Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon pyrrhona*
One was seen at La Selva.

**WRENS: TROGOLODYTIDAE**

Scaly-breasted Wren *Microcerculus marginatus*
One was seen fleetingly in Carara.

House Wren *Troglodytes aedon*
Recorded on at least eight days of the tour, including at La Selva, in Monteverde area, Carara, and Lankester Gardens.

*Ochraceous Wren* *Troglodytes ochraceus* END
One was seen at Monteverde, another in Curi Cancha, and then finally two were seen at Savegre.

*Timberline Wren* *Troglodytes browni* END
Three birds showed well at Cerro del la Muerte.

Band-backed Wren *Campylorhynchus zonatus*
Excellent views were had of a nesting pair in La Selva, with further good looks coming by our cabins at Arenal too.

Rufous-naped Wren *Campylorhynchus rufinucha*
Two were seen in the garden of the Hotel Bougainvillea; others were seen around La Ensenada.

*Black-bellied Wren* *Pheugopedius fasciaoventris* END
One was seen well along the River Trail at Carara.

Rufous-breasted Wren *Pheugopedius rutilus*
Two different birds were seen along the River Trail at Carara.

*Black-throated Wren* *Pheugopedius atrogularis* END
Two were seen well on our final morning in La Selva.

Banded Wren *Thryophilus pleurostictus*
Barbara found this wren for everyone on our final morning in La Ensenada.

Rufous-and-white Wren *Thryophilus rufalbus*
A pair were seen in the garden of our Monterverde lodge.

*Stripe-breasted Wren* *Cantorchilus thoracicus* END
Two were seen at La Selva, and another was seen at Arenal.

Plain Wren *Cantorchilus modestus*
One was seen on the journey to Monteverde.

*Riverside Wren* *Cantorchilus semibadius* END
Seen on two consecutive mornings in the Villa Lapas garden, although the best views were inside Carara.

White-breasted Wood-Wren *Henicorhina leucophrys*
One was seen through the ‘scope at La Selva.

Gray-breasted Wood-Wren *Henicorhina leucophrys*
Seen in the mountains, at both Monteverde and Savegre.
Song Wren  
*Cyphorhinus phaeocephalus*
Two birds came in close late one afternoon at Arenal.

**GNATCATCHERS: POLIOPTILIDAE**

Long-billed Gnatwren  
*Ramphocaenus melanurus*
Seen three times on the tour; at La Selva, Arenal, and Carara.

White-lored Gnatcatcher  
*Polioptila albiloris*
Surprisingly, just the one seen, en-route to La Ensenada.

Tropical Gnatcatcher  
*Polioptila plumbea*
Two were seen; one at El Tapir, and another in Carara.

**THRUSHES and ALLIES: TURDIDAE**

* Black-faced Solitare  
*Myadestes melanops*  
END
We enjoyed three sightings in Monteverde, where their regular, beautiful calls made for a wonderful backdrop.

* Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush  
*Catharus gracilirostris*  
END
Seen on all three of our days around Savegre, where a number of them showed typically well.

Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush  
*Catharus aurantiirostris*
Seen on three places; once each at Cala Lodge (Monteverde), Bajo del Tigre, and Lankester Gardens.

Slaty-backed Nightingale-Thrush  
*Catharus fuscater*
After a frustratingly brief sighting at Catarata del Toro; we all got good looks at one inside Monteverde.

Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush  
*Catharus frantzii*
See on at least three occasions in the Savegre area.

Black-headed Nightingale-Thrush  
*Catharus mexicanus*
Seen twice, though briefly, at Arenal.

Veery  
*Catharus fuscens*
One was seen by a few members of the group in the garden of Cala Lodge.

Swainson’s Thrush  
*Catharus ustulatus*
Two were seen at Curi Cancha.

Wood Thrush  
*Hylocichla mustelina*
Just the one was seen, a single bird at La Selva.

* Sooty Thrush  
*Turdus nigrescens*  
END
Commonly encountered in the high mountains of Savegre, including a nesting bird in the garden of Trogon Lodge.

Mountain Thrush  
*Turdus plebejus*
Seen in the mountains at both Monteverde and Savegre.

Clay-colored Thrush  
*Turdus grayi*
Costa Rica’s familiar national bird, seen almost every day of the tour.

White-throated Thrush  
*Turdus assimilis*
Seen at both Arenal and Monteverde.

**MOCKINGBIRDS and THRASHERS: MIMIDAE**

Tropical Mockingbird  
*Mimus gilvus*
Four birds were seen on the outskirts of San Isidro.
SILKY-FLYCATCHERS: PTILOGONATIDAE

* Black-and-yellow Silky-Flycatcher *Phainoptila melanoxantha* END
Three sightings (at least five birds) around Paraiso Quetzal, on the final day of the tour.

* Long-tailed Silky-Flycatcher *Ptilogonys caudatus* END
A bird that was high on many a wish list in the group, and which did not disappoint, with six-seven sightings in the Savegre area/Paraiso Quetzal. Voted for as ONE OF THE TOP FIVE BIRDS OF THE TOUR.

NEW WORLD WARBLERS: PARULIDAE

**Worm-eating Warbler** *Helmitheros vermivorum*
One was seen at Arenal.

**Louisiana Waterthrush** *Parkesia motacilla*
One was seen in the garden of the Hotel Villa Lapas by Sam, Ed J and Bernice J.

**Northern Waterthrush** *Parkesia noveboracensis*
After one at Arenal, others were seen at La Ensenada, Lankester Gardens, and along the Tarcoles River.

**Golden-winged Warbler** *Vermivora chrysoptera*
Recorded on five occasions; at Braulio, La Selva, Curi Cancha, and Lankester Gardens.

**Black-and-white Warbler** *Mniotilta varia*
One was seen at Cala Lodge, another at Curi Cancha, and lastly, in Lankester Gardens.

**Prothonotary Warbler** *Protonotaria citrea*
One was seen briefly in La Ensenada, and then another three were seen in the mangroves on the Tarcoles River cruise.

* Flame-throated Warbler *Oreothylpis gutturalis* END
A common endemic in the high mountains, where they were seen regularly around Savegre.

**Tennessee Warbler** *Oreothlypis peregrine*
Small numbers were seen at many sites; seen on at least ten days of the tour.

**Gray-crowned Yellowthroat** *Geothlypis poliocephala*
One was seen moments after we scored a pair of Great Green Macaws at La Selva.

**Kentucky Warbler** *Geothlypis formosa*
One was seen in Carara National Park.

**Common Yellowthroat** *Geothlypis trichas* GO
Sam was the only one to see one at Cala Lodge (Monteverde).

**Tropical Parula** *Setophaga pitiayumi*
One was seen at Arenal.

**Magnolia Warbler** *Setophaga magnolia*
One was seen by some of the group on our final afternoon at Lankester Gardens.

**Yellow Warbler** *Setophaga petechia*
Seen at least five times on the tour, including within the grounds of our San Jose hotel.

**Mangrove (Yellow) Warbler** *Setophaga petechial bryanti*
A handful of birds were seen in the mangroves at La Ensenada, and a few more were seen along the Tarcoles River.

**Chestnut-sided Warbler** *Setophaga pensylvanica*
Seen on at least eight days of the tour; at La Selva, Arenal, Carara, and at Lankester Gardens.

**Townsend’s Warbler** *Setophaga tonsendi*
One was seen in a mixed flock at Curi Cancha.
### Black-throated Green-Warbler  
*Setophaga virens*

Seen on at least eight days of the tour; at Arenal, Monteverde, Curi Cancha, and in the Savegre area.

### Rufous-capped Warbler  
*Basileuterus rufifrons*

One was seen at the Hotel Bougainvillea, near San Jose; and others were seen at Cala Lodge and Lankester Gardens.

### Black-cheeked Warbler  
*Basileuterus melanogenys*  
**END**

This highland endemic was seen first in the garden of Trogon Lodge, but better views came of three birds in a large mixed flock in the lower Savegre Valley.

### Golden-crowned Warbler  
*Basileuterus culicivorus*

Seen at three different sites on the tour; Arenal, Bajo del Tigre and Curi Cancha.

### Buff-rumped Warbler  
*Mathylypis fulvicauda*

Seen feeding along the trails at La Selva, Arenal, and Curi Cancha.

### Wilson's Warbler  
*Cardelina pusilla*

Recorded on six days of the tour, (in Arenal, Bajo del Tigre, in Cala Lodge, at Savegre, and at Paraiso Quetzal).

### Slate-throated Redstart  
*Myioborus miniatus*

Only seen in the Monteverde area, where the best views were right in the parking lot!

### Collared Redstart  
*Myioborus torquatus*  
**END**

One of Savegre's star birds, seen repeatedly in the area, although the best views came of a bird which gleaned insects off the side of the building at Savegre Lodge. A wonderful photogenic bird.

### Wrenthrush  
*Zeledonia coronate*  
**END**

A taxonomic oddity, also known as Zeledonia. After one toyed with us at Savegre, we got cracking looks, for the entire ensemble of people present at La Georgina.

### TANAGERS and ALLIES: THRUPIDAE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gray-headed Tanager</th>
<th><em>Eucometis penicillata</em></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This ant-following tanager was seen at a small army ant swarm in Carara, which was also being attended by Chestnut-backed and Bicolored Antbirds, and Tawny-winged and Northern Barred Woodcreepers.</td>
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<tr>
<th>White-shouldered Tanager</th>
<th><em>Tachyphonus luctuosus</em></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seen twice in Carara National Park.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Tawny-crested Tanager</th>
<th><em>Tachyphonus delatrii</em></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A few were seen by some of the group, in our first mixed flock of the tour, at Braulio Carrillo National Park.</td>
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<tr>
<th>White-lined Tanager</th>
<th><em>Tachyphonus rufus</em></th>
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<tr>
<td>Just seen the once, at the El Tapir hummingbird garden.</td>
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</table>

### White-throated Shrike-Tanager  
*Lanio leucothorax*  
**END**

A disappointing showing for the species, only heard in Braulio, and only a few people seeing a brief bird in Carara.

### Crimson-collared Tanager  
*Ramphocelus sangui*  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passerini’s Tanager</th>
<th><em>Ramphocelus passerini</em></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very conspicuous around the main clearing at La Selva, where they were a regular feature over our three days in the area. Dramatically, our last male there was mobbing a small Boa Constrictor curled up in a tree, along with other birds like Green Honeycreeper, clearly offended by the presence of this snake.</td>
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### Cherrie’s Tanager  
*Ramphocelus costaricensis*  
**END**

Seen on three different days; at Carara, along the Tarcoles River, and near the town of San Isidro.
* Blue-and-gold Tanager  
* Bangsia arcsei

One was seen by just a few people in Braulio on our first day.

Blue-gray Tanager  
* Thraupis episcopus

Regularly recorded through the tour; seen on ten days of the tour.

Palm Tanager  
* Thraupis palmarum

Seen on six days of the tour; including regularly in La Selva, and also in the Carara area.

Golden-hooded Tanager  
* Tangara larvata

La Selva proved, once again, a great place it is to see this species, and see it well, as regular close views were obtained by the restaurant there. Also seen at Arenal and Carara; seen on eight days of the tour.

Speckled Tanager  
* Tangara guttata

Some of the group managed to see one within one of the fast-moving mixed feeding flocks in Braulio on our first day.

* Spangle-cheeked Tanager  
* Tangara dowii

A beautiful highland endemic, which was first seen at Catarata del Toro; then a pair was seen in Monteverde, and then repeatedly in Savegre, (including one flock of fifteen birds at Paraíso Quetzal).

* Plain-colored Tanager  
* Tangara inornata

Two singles were seen at La Selva.

Bay-headed Tanager  
* Tangara gyrola

One was seen by some at Arenal, although we had to wait until Carara, for good views for the whole group.

Emerald Tanager  
* Tangara florida

At least three sightings were had in Braulio on our first day. Another was seen by Cameron at Arenal too.

Silver-throated Tanager  
* Tangara icterocephala

Seen on seven different days of the tour; at Braulio, Catarata del Toro, Arenal, Monteverde, Curi Cancha, and Savegre.

Scarlet-thighed Dacnis  
* Dacnis venusta

Seen on three occasions in Arenal, including a male, which we scoped as it fed in a fruiting tree for over five minutes.

Blue Dacnis  
* Dacnis cayana

A single female bird was seen several times feeding by the restaurant at La Selva.

Shining Honeycreeper  
* Cyanerpes lucidus

Seen at both La Selva and Arenal.

Red-legged Honeycreeper  
* Cyanerpes cyaneus

Excellent views in Arenal, where several males were seen feeding up close in the verbena flowers by the lodge.

Green Honeycreeper  
* Chloropanes spiza

At least five sightings; one at Braulio, and two each at both La Selva and Arenal.

* Black-and-yellow Tanager  
* Chrysothlypis chrysoloma

A frustrating showing for the species; just a few people got on to a male at Braulio, and a couple of females at Arenal.

* Slaty Flowerpiercer  
* Diglossa plumbea

Generally a common, highland endemic, which was seen a number of times in Savegre, Cerro de la Muerte and near Paraíso Quetzal. A male and female showed particularly well in the garden of Savegre Lodge.

* Peg-billed Finch  
* Acanthopapis bairdii

Unfortunately, only Sam got a view of a very brief male seen in the Providencia area of Cerro del Muerte.

Blue-black Grassquit  
* Volatinia jacarina

Seen four times on the tour; around El Tigre, and also around La Ensenada and Hacienda Solimar.
Variable Seedeater  
*Sporophila corvina*
Both the black-bellied corvina Caribbean race; and the white-bellied hoffmani race of the Pacific slope were seen.

White-collared Seedeater  
*Sporophila torqueola*
Seen on four different days; near La Selva, El Tigre, and Arenal.

* Nicaraguan Seed-Finch  
*Oryzoborus nuttingi*  
In two trips to the fields at El Tigre, the best we could manage were some distant snatches of song heard by Cameron.

Bananquit  
*Coereba flaveola*
One was seen by some at Braulio, then others were seen at La Selva and at Arenal.

Yellow-faced Grassquit  
*Tiaris olivaceus*
We had some great views of a singing male at Arenal, and then a large flock was seen foraging in Lankester Gardens.

Dusky-faced Tanager  
*Mitrospingus cassini*
Two birds were seen well at La Selva.

Grayish Saltator  
*Saltator coerulescens*
Two seen in the grounds of the Hotel Bougainvillea, near San Jose, were the only ones of the entire trip.

Buff-throated Saltator  
*Saltator maximus*
Seven sightings; at La Selva, Arenal, in the Monteverde area, Carara, and in Lankester Gardens.

**BUNTINGS and NEW WORLD SPARROWS: EMBERIZIDAE**

* Yellow-thighed Finch  
*Pselliophorus tibialis*  
This popular highland endemic (by virtue of its out-of-place looking pair of yellow "trousers"), was seen a number of times in Savegre and Paraiso Quetzal areas. A single bird came in to the feeder at Savegre Lodge too.

* Large-footed Finch  
*Pezopetes capitalis*  
A pair were seen stopming around the flowers in the garden of Trogon Lodge; others were seen at La Georgina and Paraiso Quetzal.

* Sooty-faced Finch  
*Arremon crassirostris*  
A short diversion to the wonderful feeders at Catarata del Toro was undertaken in the hope of this species, and after two hours the bird decided to come in just as we decided to leave; luckily it stayed there long enough for all to see it.

Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch  
*Arremon brunneinucha*
One came in to feed on the rice at Catarata del Toro.

Orange-billed Sparrow  
*Arremon aurantiirostris*
One was seen well at La Selva, and others were seen at Arenal and Carara.

Black-striped Sparrow  
*Arremonops conirostris*
Some excellent views were had at Arenal, where there were several sightings right around the lodge.

White-naped Brush-Finch  
*Atlapetes albinucha*
Two or three birds were seen in Lankester Gardens in the Central Valley.

White-eared Ground-Sparrow  
*Melozone leucotis*
A pair was seen at the Hotel Bougainvillea, and then another pair were seen at Cala Lodge (Monteverde).

Stripe-headed Sparrow  
*Peucaea ruficauda*
Ten or so birds were seen on the journey into La Ensenada, with another couple seen in the refuge there too.

Rufous-collared Sparrow  
*Zonotrichia capensis*
This handsome sparrow was seen daily in the high mountains, and also in the garden of the Hotel Bougainvillea.
* Volcano Junco  
* Junco vulcani

A journey up into the paramo at Cerro de la Muerte (3,000m/9845ft+) was necessary to pick up this high elevation species, where a pair were typically confiding.

Common Chlorospingus  
* Chlorospingus flavopectus

Just recorded around Monteverde. This was formerly known as Common Bush-Tanager.

* Sooty-capped Chlorospingus  
* Chlorospingus pileatus

A very common bird in the high mountains, seen regularly around Savegre and Paraiso Quetzal. This was formerly known as Sooty-capped Bush-Tanager.

CARDINALS and ALLIES: CARDINALIDAE

Hepatic Tanager  
* Piranga flava

A few were seen around Arenal and in the Monteverde area.

Summer Tanager  
* Piranga rubra

Seen in the Hotel Bougainvillea, La Selva, Arenal, at Cala Lodge (Monteverde), Carara, and in Lankester Gardens.

Flame-colored Tanager  
* Piranga bidentata

About a dozen birds were seen during our two days in Savegre, including a pair at the Savegre Lodge feeders.

Red-crowned Ant-Tanager  
* Habia rubica

Heard only, in Carara National Park.

Red-throated Ant-Tanager  
* Habia fuscicauda

A pair were seen well in La Selva.

Carmol's Tanager  
* Chlorothraupis carmioli

Two were seen at Braulio Carrillo, but greater numbers were seen at Arenal. Also known as Olive Tanager.

Black-faced Grosbeak  
* Caryothraustes poliogaster

One was seen well by the hummingbird garden at El Tapir, and then another was seen well by the clearing at La Selva.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak  
* Pheucticus ludovicianus

A single female was seen en-route to La Ensenada.

Blue-black Grosbeak  
* Cyanocompsa cyanoides

Heard, once, in La Selva.

Indigo Bunting  
* Passerina cynea

Several males were seen in El Tigre fields, near La Selva. Another handful were seen on the journey into La Ensenada.

Painted Bunting  
* Passerina ciris

A super male was found by Ed J. in the garden of the Hotel Villa Lapas (Carara), which posed for a while in the open.

TROUPIALS and ALLIES: Icteridae

Red-winged Blackbird  
* Agelaius phoeniceus

Recorded on all of our three days in the La Selva area.

Red-breasted Blackbird  
* Sturnella militaris

Peggy found a male on the outskirts of San Isidro, which unfortunately disappeared before we could all get on it.

Eastern Meadowlark  
* Sturnella magna

Three birds were seen between La Selva and Arenal; another six birds were seen around Hacienda Solimar.

Melodious Blackbird  
* Dives dives

Seen on five different days of the tour, including around San Jose.
Great-tailed Grackle  
*Quiscalus mexicanus*

A common species, encountered regularly, (on at least 11 days).

Shiny Cowbird  
*Molothrus bronariensis*

Two different birds were seen in La Selva. The species was first discovered in Costa Rica in 2004, and is now spreading.

Bronze Cowbird  
*Molothrus aeneus*

Seen three times on the tour; twice at Arenal, and others were seen at El Tigre fields near La Selva.

Giant Cowbird  
*Molothrus oryzivorus*

Just a few flyovers were seen at La Selva.

Black-cowled Oriole  
*Icterus prosthemelas*

Several were seen on two of our days in La Selva, and further birds were seen around Arenal Observatory Lodge.

Streak-backed Oriole  
*Icterus pustulatus*

Four birds were seen on the journey to La Ensenada, which showed beside two **Spot-breasted Orioles** too.

Spot-breasted Oriole  
*Icterus pectoralis*

Seen three times around La Ensenada.

**Baltimore Oriole**  
*Icterus galbula*

Recorded on nine days of the tour; at La Selva, Arenal, La Ensenada, and around Carara.

Chestnut-headed Oropendola  
*Psarocolius wagleri*

A number of birds were seen on two of our days around La Selva, the only site where they were seen.

Montezuma Oropendola  
*Psarocolius Montezuma*

Recorded on eight days of the tour, with great sightings at La Selva, and also Arenal in particular.

**SISKINS, CROSSBILLS and ALLIES: FRINGILLIDAE**

**Scrub Euphonia**  
*Euphonia affinis*

Just a single male was seen close to Monteverde, which hosted roosting Northern Potoo and Pacific Screech-Owl.

Yellow-crowned Euphonia  
*Euphonia luteicapilla*

We had at least three sightings at La Selva, and another at Carara.

Yellow-throated Euphonia  
*Euphonia hirundinacea*

Seen three times on the tour; a pair between La Selva and Arenal, and further sightings at Arenal and Carara.

Olive-backed Euphonia  
*Euphonia gouldi*

As usual, we had some excellent views of birds visiting fruiting trees around the restaurant at La Selva.

* Tawny-capped Euphonia  
*Euphonia anneae*  
END

Two males were seen well at Braulio on our first morning, and then another pair was seen at Arenal.

* Golden-browed Chlorophonia  
*Chlorophonia callophrys*  
END

Half a dozen birds were seen at Monteverde, which included at least two dazzling males in the group; another group of four birds (with a male among them), were seen in Curi Cancha.

Yellow-bellied Siskin  
*Spinus xanthogastrus*

A single bird was seen briefly in the gardens of Trogon Lodge (Savegre), and another was seen in Cuero del la Muerte.

**OLD WORLD SPARROWS: PASSERIDAE**

**House Sparrow**  
*Passer domesticus*

Seen four or five times on the tour, mostly around urban gas stations.
Mammals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Observations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brown Three-toed Sloth</strong></td>
<td><em>Bradypus variegatus</em></td>
<td>One a good tour for sloth encounters, we saw one of these sloths in La Selva, and another in the parking lot at Carara.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hoffman’s Two-toed Sloth</strong></td>
<td><em>Choloepus hoffmanni</em></td>
<td>Two were seen on one day at La Selva, and another individual was seen on another day there too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>White-headed Capuchin</strong></td>
<td><em>Cebus capucinus</em></td>
<td>Seen at two sites; at Bajo del Tigre (near Monteverde), and again at Carara National Park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mantled Howler</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Seen on at least five days of the tour, with the most regular sightings being around La Ensenada.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central America Agouti</strong></td>
<td><em>Dasyprocta punctate</em></td>
<td>Recorded on five days of the tour; at Cala Lodge, Bajo del Tigre, Curi Cancha, and in Carara.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central American Dwarf Squirrel</strong></td>
<td><em>Microsciurus alfar</em></td>
<td>One was seen at Arenal, and another was seen at Bajo del Tigre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Red-tailed Squirrel</strong></td>
<td><em>Sciurus granatensis</em></td>
<td>Seen at Catarata del Toro, Arenal, and around Savegre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Variegated Squirrel</strong></td>
<td><em>Sciurus variegatoides</em></td>
<td>Seen on at least eight days of the tour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northern Ghost Bat</strong></td>
<td><em>Diclidurus albus</em></td>
<td>Two of these superb bats were seen at the start if the River Trail in Carara National Park.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Northern Ghost Bat Carara

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Proboscis Bat \textit{Rhynchonycteris naso} 
Four of these distinctive bats were seen hanging from an eave of the Hotel Villa Lapas.

Tent-making Bat \textit{Uroderma bilobatum} 
A mass of these attractive bats were huddled up in a “camp” under leaves in the garden of the Hotel Villa Lapas.

Common Raccoon \textit{Procyon lotor} 
Three were seen at night at La Ensenada.

White-nosed Coati \textit{Nasua narica} 
Seen on six different days of the tour (at Arenal, Monteverde, Curi Cancha and Hacienda Solimar). Our best views came at both Arenal, and Monteverde, where at least ten animals were raiding a large fruiting tree in the parking lot.

Collared Peccary \textit{Pecari tajacu} 
Up to half a dozen animals were seen at La Selva, where they were seen on each of three days on site.

Gray Four-eyed Oppossum \textit{Philander opossum} 
One of these odd-looking oppossums was seen at Hotel Sueno Azul, after it was captured by staff on the grounds.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|l|}
\hline
\textbf{OTHER WILDLIFE} & \\
\hline
\textbf{Marine Toad} & \textit{Rhinella (Bufo) marina} \\
Also known as \textit{Cane Toad}. Seen around the grounds of the Hotel Villa Lapas. & \\
\textbf{Green-and-black Poison Frog} & \textit{Dendrobates auratus} \\
Dede saw one of these handsome frogs while walking a trail on her own, in Carara National Park. & \\
\textbf{Strawberry Poison Frog} & \textit{Oophaga (Dendrobates) Pumilio} \\
Two of these striking animals were seen in La Selva. & \\
\textbf{Black River Turtle} & \textit{Rhinoclemmys funereal} \\
One was swimming under the main bridge at La Selva. & \\
\textbf{Common Basilisk} & \textit{Basiliscus basiliscus} \\
Several were seen along the river that runs through the grounds of the Hotel Villa Lapas (Carara). & \\
\textbf{Emerald (Green) Basilisk} & \textit{Basiliscus plumifrons} \\
This striking lizard was seen at La Selva. & \\
\textbf{Brown (Striped) Basilisk} & \textit{Basiliscus vittatus} \\
One was seen beside the restaurant at La Selva. & \\
\textbf{Spinytail Iguana (Ctenosaur)} & \textit{Ctenosaura similis} \\
A number of these large iguanas were seen at Hacienda Solimar and at Carara. & \\
\textbf{Green Iguana} & \textit{Iguana iguana} \\
Some huge examples of this lizard were seen lounging around by the river at La Selva. & \\
\textbf{Green Spiny Lizard} & \textit{Sceloporus malachiticus} \\
One was seen clinging to a wall in Lankester Gardens. & \\
\textbf{Common House Gecko} & \textit{Hemidactylus frenatus} \\
This introduced species was commonly encountered around our lodgings throughout the tour. & \\
\textbf{Boa Constrictor} & \textit{Boa constrictor} \\
A young boa was seen circled up under a leaf in one of the trees close to restaurant at La Selva. It’s presence was highlighted by a mobbing Green Honeycreeper and Passerini’s Tanager. & \\
\textbf{Northern Cat-eyed Snake} & \textit{Leptodeira septentrionalis} \\
One was seen in the grounds of the Hotel Villa Lapas (by Carara). & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}
Green Parrot Snake  
*Leptophis ahaetulla*
One was wrapped around the hand rail over the bridge within the grounds of the Hotel Villa Lapas (Carara).

Eyelash Pitviper  
*Bothriechis schlegelii*
A beautiful yellow individual was seen sleeping in the buttress of a tree at La Selva.

Spectacled Caiman  
*Caiman crocodilus*
One was seen on the journey into La Selva, near El Tigre.

American Crocodile  
*Crocodylus acutus*
A handful of animals were seen during our Tarcoles River cruise, near Carara.

Common Blue Morpho  
*Morpho peleides*
Several of these dramatic butterflies were seen on this tour, at Carara among other places.

Malachite  
*Siproeta stelenes*
One of these was seen in the lowlands.