

## Holiday Highlights

### Costa Rica

22 February – 9 March 2025

**Guides:** Roy Atkins and Paco Madrigal

**Guests:** Dawn and Peter Black, Kari Mayer Warren and Andy Warren, Ann Hendrickson and Bill Otto, Katherine Michaelian and Keith Jacobson, Nina Cheung and David Lai, Julie and Peter Royle

**Travel day:** This has been different for everyone with people travelling from America, Australia, Malaysia and the UK. We gather in the evening together for a chat about the coming trip and a look at the map showing where we will be going – then we head for a delicious evening meal together, before heading to bed.

**Day 1:** We start our day with a coffee, cake and bananas in reception at 5.45am before heading out into the garden to see our first birds. There are a few Red-billed Pigeons around and a few flycatchers, including two very tame Social Flycatchers, Kiskadee, a Boat-billed Flycatcher and Tropical Kingbirds. We find our first Clay-colored Thrushes - Costa Rica's national bird - as Crimson-fronted Parakeets are flying overhead and a few Great-tailed Grackles. We are especially pleased to find a Lineated Woodpecker in the biggest tree and then hear a singing Rufous-naped Wren which we locate nearby. It is a lovely bird and big for a wren. We find Rufous-tailed Hummingbird feeding on yellow flowers then walk round to the bamboos where Kathy tells us they saw an owl yesterday. We soon locate it and wow what a fabulous view, a Mottled Owl perched right out in the open and we enjoy frame filling views.

Walking on, we shortly find a very obliging Philadelphia Vireo and get brief views of a Lesson's Motmot. We enjoy nice scope views of Hoffmann's Woodpecker then a raptor flies through causing an outburst of noise from a small group of Brown Jays we had not spotted - they soon fly across, perching out in the open for us.

After an excellent breakfast we get on our way, as we have a drive this morning to a boat we have to catch. It is a beautiful day - perfect weather with sunshine and light breeze and even the Braulio Corillo National Park is not in cloud as it so often is. We pass through beautiful, lush habitat with tree ferns, Gunnera plants, palms and lush trees and other vegetation, as Paco tells us about the Park and how it links to other Reserves allowing altitudinal migration of all sorts of animals and birds.

We enjoy the views as we drive on down into the lowlands, passing through villages and then past a large banana plantation. There are vultures everywhere in the sky as we go and the occasional Tropical Kingbird or Kiskadee on the wires. We pause to pick up supplies but are thrilled when a little further on we find a small group of people looking into the trees - they have found a Three-toed Sloth! We get great views through the scope even if it is rather curled up in a ball, we can just make out

its face. We finally arrive at the port where House Sparrows and Grey-breasted Martins are on the roof tops.

We meet Minor, our boatman and board our boat for the journey to the lodge. The first part passes along a fairly narrow channel with occasional Snowy Egrets and Little Blue Herons and Southern Rough-winged Swallows skimming the water. We pass a few baby American Crocodiles, a few Spectacled Caiman, a much bigger Crocodile, some very large Green Iguanas and a Great Blue Heron. Eventually we come to the main channel where we are excited to find our first monkeys – the first being a Central American Spider Monkey high in the trees, at one point just hanging by its very long tail. This is great to see but as we are looking we realise there is also a troop of Mantled Howler Monkeys nearby. We enjoy superb views as they climb around feeding on the leaves before we head on again, finally arriving at our lodge. We receive a welcome fruit juice then head to our rooms to drop off our bags before lunch.

In the grounds on our way to lunch and after lunch, we add a few more birds between us. A small fruiting tree has Palm Tanager, Olive-backed Euphonia, both Social and Grey-capped Flycatcher and a lovely Common Tody Flycatcher. The Montezuma Oropendola colony proves entertaining and on the beach we find Black-bellied Plover, Spotted Sandpiper and Willet.

We gather at around 3pm for our afternoon boat ride and start with great views of a Keel-billed Toucan. Julie brilliantly spots a Three-toed Sloth up ahead. Like the first this one it also has a dark stripe down its back making it a male. We head down the main channel passing a superb adult male Magnificent Frigatebird on the way, then take one of the side channels sneaking into a narrow one off that. We are pleased to find a gorgeous Emerald Basilisk - a stunning looking creature with bright green colour, pale blue spots and a crest all down its head and body - wow! We get good views of a Green Kingfisher that poses well - a nice male and this is shortly followed by a female. We can hear Great Green Macaws calling in a large tree at the back, but they seem impossible to find, though a couple of people get a glimpse as they fly off. We'll have to find some better ones. We enjoy incredibly close views of a Bare-throated Tiger Heron and enjoy the gorgeous fine markings. As we come back out we spot a Land Crab in a hole – it is surprisingly big! Also in the roof of the building nearby is a line of Long-nosed Bats.

Back on the larger side channel we spot a Ringed Kingfisher flying by, then get very close views of Northern Jacanas and Green Heron. Roy hears a calling Purple-throated Fruitcrow and as we search for it we find a White-necked Puffbird, a very nice find! We find another Ringed Kingfisher and a nice flock of Grey-breasted Martins on the wires. Paco spots a raptor in the crook of a tree, which turns out to be an immature Gray Hawk tilting its head right over to one side - very strange.

The weather is perfect, though very warm, with blue skies and a light breeze and we are more than happy – some of us came from very cold weather at home and it feels like a real treat. The forest is beautiful with a wide variety of trees, including

Wild Almonds with beautiful pink flowers and some flowering creepers too including one with large white flowers like powder puffs.

Our next find is a Purple Gallinule that doesn't hang around - but we get another chance moments later when it flies across to another patch of vegetation and runs. We have seen occasional large parrots fly across the channel but at last we manage to identify a pair of Red-lored Parrots, with the sunshine helping us to pick out the red on the front of their heads.

We decide we should head round to where the sea enters the main channel, so a fast bit of whizzing along soon gets us there and here we find a lovely flock of Snowy Egrets feeding at the channel. A guy on the shore is photographing a Tricolored Heron and we add Spotted Sandpiper, a flock of Brown Pelican fly over and there is a small flock of Royal Terns on the island. Meanwhile overhead we are amazed to see so many vultures. They seem to be having a bit of a fly around before heading to roost and the large flock is mixed Black and Turkey Vultures making for a nice comparison.

As we head back to base we spot both Yellow-throated and Keel-billed Toucans and then an Osprey flies through the trees. To our delight a Peregrine appears above the trees and circles right over our heads - a great view. Next, Paco spots our third Three-toed Sloth of the day! This time a much better view as it is fairly active and hanging from the branches so we can see the shape so much better - a great finish to our day before we head back for an hour's break before we gather to run through the checklist and our evening meal.

**Day 2:** We gather for coffee at 5.30am as we want to be on our way by 5.45am to get the tickets for entry to the Park. We still can't resist stopping for a few birds along the way and spot an Osprey flying along the far side as we set off - then a pair of Green Ibis looking like vultures in the tree tops and a Lineated Woodpecker briefly. We get great views of Amazon Kingfisher, then as Paco gets the tickets we spot a pair of Red-lored Parrots.

Setting off into the Park we find another pair of Green Ibis and a Mealy Parrot perched in the tree tops and a flock of Chestnut-collared Swifts is flying through - a good sighting. A little further on we also spot a few Grey-rumped Swifts, so much smaller and with much faster wingbeats. We glimpse Lesser Greenlet and Chestnut-sided Warbler in the tree tops and pass a few Northern Jacanas along the way.

We spot a few of the same species we saw yesterday, glimpse a Broad-winged Hawk flying through and then we are astounded to see a flock of 52 Swallow-tailed Kites that are clearly migrating. They fly along the tree tops then circle up right above us, allowing us the most exceptional views – along with lots of wows from their audience! Simply superb.

We move on and Kari spots a pair of Scarlet-rumped Caciques, then White-collared Swifts start passing overhead. There seems to be a bit of a movement of them all flying the same way, allowing the chance to actually see their white collars as they fly overhead.

We decide we really should start heading back and get the briefest of glimpses of a Neotropic River Otter but superb sightings of Bottlenose Dolphins, two that we think are mothers with well grown young ones and right by the boat too!

We pass Barn Swallows and Mangrove Swallows on the way back and a Magnificent Frigatebird. We arrive back ready for breakfast after a great morning.

After an excellent breakfast we have a short break to put on suntan lotion etc and then it is straight back to the boats for our next outing. As we head down to get the permit we pass a nice group of Magnificent Frigatebirds, including at least one all black male. We spot a couple of Keel-billed Toucans, a Howler Monkey and Amazon Kingfisher.

It seems a lot quieter as the rain starts and we go for a while seeing the occasional Little Blue Heron, Anhinga and Jacanas but little new. A flock of White-collared Swifts flies over and a few Grey-rumped too. We try one or two of the narrower channels but with little of note, then we are delighted to find a Sungrebe! This is a target bird for here and we are pleased to not just get to see one but enjoy wonderful views as it searches the lower overhanging branches for insects.

We also get a couple of brief views of a Neotropic River Otter, but it is remarkably elusive. There are occasional Emerald Basilisks, mainly young ones, though over the morning we find at least two fabulous looking adult males. Up one narrow channel we find a Spectacled Caiman but there is a huge shock when we spot a Baird's Tapir swimming across the channel!!! Amazingly it swims back across a couple more times then comes out of the water and we enjoy some incredible close views before it climbs up the bank and away. We think that is it then suddenly there it is again swimming back across the channel before climbing the bank and dashing away into the vegetation – wow!! This is a first even for Roy!

We continue down the channel and the steady rain seems to put a dampener on things as it is very quiet – though we are still on a high after the tapir. What a beautiful place though, with trees overarchng the channel from both sides creating a peaceful atmosphere and we just enjoy being here - the trees, ferns, palms, bromeliads and trees with intricate buttress roots are all beautiful. We see a fly-by Green-and-rufous Kingfisher as we come back out, then we are pleased to find a couple of White-faced Capuchins high in the trees. It is incredible to watch as they perform spectacular leaps from the high branches dropping a long way as they leap and landing on some branches so much lower - they even get a round of applause!

As we exit the channel we pass another small boat of people looking at something - which turns out to be a Mexican Porcupine. It is all curled up in a ball and hard

to make much of out to be honest, but still a nice find. We see more Keel-billed Toucans, a Bare-throated Tiger Heron that has speared a fish and more Grey-rumped Swifts overhead. Time had run out and we head back for lunch and to change into dry clothes!

After lunch we have a bit of free time before meeting up again at 2.45pm for our next boat ride. The weather has improved now and the sky doesn't look the least threatening as we head across to the far side of the channel, where we soon find two rather smart Yellow-crowned Night Herons. Our next sighting is of two Spider Monkeys - brilliant views of them right out in the open and not too high either so we spend a while just watching them as they clamber around foraging for leaves, sometimes hanging just from their tails. Meanwhile there is a Bat Falcon perched in the tree top opposite.

We travel on down the channel and though we see a few species we have seen before we are thrilled when a Black-collared Hawk flies down the channel and perches at eye level not far away at all. This is a great find and the best views we have ever had of this species on a trip here. At one point it tries for a fish but with no luck. At the same time, as we come to rest in the tall grasses, a pair of Jacanas come to see if the boat has disturbed anything and you could literally lean out and pat them on the head if they would let you!

Our next find is a Russet-naped Wood Rail and what a bird, with bright pink legs and stout yellow bill. This species results from a split of Grey-necked Wood rail and we'll watch out for its other species later in the trip. Continuing on, we spot a couple of Squirrel Cuckoos along with a family party of Groove-billed Anis.

We head a long way down this channel spotting odd birds as we go, but nothing new. Toucans fly over as do a couple of large parrots and there are swifts overhead. We hear a Spectacled Owl calling but can't find it. We enjoy some lovely views of Amazon and Ringed Kingfishers, see lots of Jacanas and plenty of Little Blue and Green Herons, as well as a few leaf birds, twig birds and a nice stump bird!

Taking another channel we pause to look at an Anhinga and then Roy spots a second Sungrebe. We enjoy exceptional views as it happily picks insects from the overhanging leaves, then two Great Green Macaws fly right over our heads! We go a little further and a raptor flies off from the trees ahead but we soon relocate it - an adult Broad-winged Hawk. We find two female Great Curassows - great birds - and then a male higher in the trees.

Back at base we have a break before our evening meal and a run through the checklist, but while we are doing this a Crab-eating Raccoon is suddenly spotted climbing a tree right beside the dining room! What a day for mammals it has been.

**Day 3:** We gather for coffee, then at 6am head out round the garden, soon finding a few birds in the trees and on the wires. Boat-billed Flycatcher, Black-cheeked Woodpecker, Common Tody Flycatcher, Blue-grey and Palm Tanagers and

Pale-vented Pigeons are found in quick succession and a Collared Aracari flies in and poses beautifully if briefly for us - what a great bird! We spot a tiny Mistletoe Tyrannulet then a Streak-headed Woodcreeper pausing to preen on the side of a palm trunk.

Moving on, there is great excitement as we spot a Purple-throated Fruitcrow – a fabulous find and it is a male too!! This is our first cotinga species – a very special group of birds and one we usually see in the forest. We find Social Flycatcher and Kiskadee and a pair of Summer Tanagers, the male a gorgeous red colour. We enjoy good views of two or three Red-lored Parrots, find some perched Olive-throated Parakeets and take a little while to enjoy the amazing Montezuma Oropendola colony. Here we find at least three Giant Cowbirds looking for a chance to pop in and lay an egg in one of the nests! We see Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, Variable Seedeater, then at the far end a great view of a Common Black Hawk. A Black-cowled Oriole appears and we get brief views of a Squirrel Cuckoo.

There is a slight delay to leaving from the lodge, giving us a little more time in the grounds and some people head to see the beach, finding Whimbrel, Sanderling and Semipalmated Plover there - then we get on our way back towards the port. Enroute we spot plenty of herons and egrets, as well as a few Spotted Sandpipers. Nina notices a large dark bird flying overhead but before we can alert anyone else to its presence it is a gone - a juvenile King Vulture! The best sighting however is a trio of White Hawks that circle for ages, allowing everyone the chance to get onto them before we leave them behind. We also spot several of both Crocodiles and Caiman and a superb male Emerald Basilisk.

It does not take long to get loaded up onto the bus then we start on our way back along the road where we hope to find Red-breasted Blackbird. We pause to check out some of the fields, finding a few Variable Seedeaters, a couple of Ruddy Ground-Doves and Bill spots a Roadside Hawk we are all looking right past!

There are large numbers of vultures as we travel and we pass Cattle and Great Egrets and Bare-throated Tiger Heron. We pause to check out some of the corrals where there are sometimes cowbirds and at one of them we find a few Bronzed Cowbirds and a couple of Giant Cowbirds. There are a few Groove-billed Anis, then at last - in almost the very last possible field - there is the Red-breasted Blackbird! Hoorah!

There is little else as we travel towards our lunch spot, then after lunch we have a quick look at the grounds as there is a short trail down to the river. Here the carpark guard shows Paco a hummingbird nest - a lovely nest on top of a leaf with a female White-necked Jacobin on it. There are Chestnut-sided Warblers in the trees but little else – presumably due to the heat of the middle of the day. Before we leave there are two more hummingbirds around the small flowers in the car park - a Rufous-tailed and a female Blue-chested Hummingbird.

We travel onwards towards our next lodge, but before we arrive we decide to head to a spot that Paco and Roy christened 'Parrotland' many years ago as parrots and macaws come to roost there.

We start walking along the track and wow... it is just jumping with birds! There is a flock of Scarlet-rumped Tanagers, Red-legged Honeycreeper, Black-cowled Oriole, Andy finds a Yellow-crowned Euphonia, Bananaquit, Morelet's Seedeater, Piratic Flycatcher, Thick-billed Seedfinch, Golden-hooded Tanager, Barred Antshrike, Yellow-bellied Elaenia and a nice comparison of Gray-capped and Social Flycatcher together. Along the track we soon add more birds as a Smoky brown woodpecker flies in and two pairs of Scarlet Macaws fly by – a species that seems to now be colonising this side of the country. We get good views of Olive-backed Euphonia, White-lined Tanager, Black-striped Sparrow and noisy Red-lored Parrots start flying in to roost. A Yellow Tyrannulet shows well and we glimpse Slaty Spinetail, White-tipped Dove and Ruddy Ground-Doves.

The birds keep on coming and at the far end of the track where we are scanning the tall trees for parrots and macaws, we find Black-cheeked Woodpecker, Tropical Pewee, House Wren, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Common Tody Flycatcher, Crimson-fronted Parakeet and a Gray Hawk. At last a couple of Great Green Macaws fly in providing fabulous views, then a Bat Falcon shoots by! A Crested Caracara appears in the trees, but the light is fading fast so we decide to head to our lodge and get checked-in while there is still a little daylight.

After a very nice evening meal a few of us decide to check a small pond close by and find a great collection of creatures. The real target is Red-eyed Tree-frog and we are thrilled to find three of them relatively easily. One is in the perfect position for a photo. We also find a big old Martine Toad, the species also known as Cane Toad and a real nuisance in Australia but fine here. A Slender Anole seems to be fast asleep on a leaf and we spot a huge forest cockroach and a big plated millipede.

**Day 4:** We gather at the balcony to watch 'slow-motion man' putting out the bird food, carefully peeling the bananas and carefully arranging the fruit on the bird tables as the birds gather, waiting for him to leave - then in they come! There are lots of Clay-colored Thrushes, lots of Scarlet-rumped Tanagers and other species we are now familiar with, then some new birds, Red-throated Ant-tanager and Orange-billed Sparrow. Oh and rather bizarrely - a white Guineafowl! A couple of Olive-backed Euphonias arrive, then a Variegated Squirrel comes in looking very different to the variant we saw previously at Hotel Bougainvillea. We are astonished to see a White-tailed Deer walking through and even coming to the feeders to eat some banana! Not a common sight here. There is then great excitement when someone at the other end of the balcony announces that there is a Two-toed Sloth coming down the tree there. We all go to take a look as it very slowly moves then hangs there for a while. The face is really quite different to the Three-toed Sloth we have already seen with a longer pinkish snout.

Back at the birds we are just enjoying the show with so many colourful birds darting in and out when Kathy says a bird just dropped into the river and caught a fish! To our surprise it is an Osprey and we watch as it flies off out of sight.

We head down to the river side to see what is down here and find Spotted Sandpiper, Little Blue Heron, Black Phoebe and a juvenile Bare-throated Tiger Heron. We also see two look-alike Kingfishers, Amazon and Green Kingfisher - similar plumage but very different sizes. A small group of Mealy Parrots flies overhead and in the trees we find Yellow-throated Euphonia and Grey-capped Flycatcher, while those who stay back at the feeders add Crimson-collared Tanager and Shining Honeycreeper.

After breakfast we head out to La Selva making a stop just short of the entrance to do some birding as we go in. This is soon nicknamed woodpecker corner as we find Pale-billed Woodpecker, Rufous-winged Woodpecker and Chestnut coloured Woodpecker all in a matter of yards! We find a nice flock of Black-faced Grosbeaks, a Long-tailed Tyrant, Plain-colored Tanager and a Great Green Macaw flies over. A large flock of Gray-rumped Swifts is wheeling round over the trees and two Double-toothed Kites circle up amongst them. Then as we arrive in the carpark area we find Piratic Flycatcher and Yellow-throated Toucan.

We pause to sign some forms at the entrance and to have an ice cream and we find a couple of Orange-chinned Parakeets and a Black-cheeked Woodpecker – but way better, Paco spots a Black Hawk-Eagle - a magnificent bird!

We are joined by an old friend of Paco's who works here called Joel and he tells us he hopes to show us something nearby in the edge of the forest. Moments later we are looking through the scopes with frame filling views of Crested Owl - wow!!! Nearby we get brief views of Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher and glimpse a White-breasted Wood Wren.

We take a walk through the forest passing through what is old looking forest, but it is not untouched so is still considered secondary forest. We find a very obliging White-whiskered Puffbird, another Two-toed Sloth, Fasciated Antshrike, a brief White-ringed Flycatcher, Blue Dacnis and a Bay-breasted Warbler.

Continuing further we find a trogon calling and eventually Paco finds it – a very smart looking Gartered Trogon. We find another Chestnut-colored Woodpecker, a male this time and a Rufous Mourner. At the edge of the path a scuttling lizard pauses long enough for us to identify it as a Central American Whip-tailed Lizard. Before we turn back we spot Slaty-tailed Trogon and a handsome Broad-billed Motmot. On our way back we add a pair of Blue-black Grosbeaks.

We meet up again at 1.30pm as we have a bit of a drive to visit a friend of Paco's called Cope. Over many years he has gradually set up his garden to include bird feeders, a pool, hummingbird feeders and a seated area to watch it all – and we arrive to find an excellent little bird waiting for us... an American Pygmy Kingfisher!



This is a very nice bonus as we were not really expecting that and we enjoy some incredible scope views filling the frame - what a stunning little bird!

Now, having made sure we have all had good views of this special find, we start looking at what else is here and wow - it is jumping with birds! Many are species with which we are now familiar, but in many cases they are just way better views - so as well as Scarlet-rumped Tanagers we enjoy stunning close up views of Orange-chinned Parakeets, Collared Aracaris, both Yellow-throated and Keel-billed Toucans and lots of Montezuma Oropendolas. In with these are a few new birds too such as Chestnut headed Oropendola, Red-winged Blackbird and hummingbirds such as Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer, Scaly-breasted Hummingbird and Green-breasted Mango.

As we sit enjoying the birds coming and going and taking loads of photos, other species come and go. Pale-vented Pigeons, Russet-naped Wood Rail, Red-legged and Shining Honeycreepers, a very brief Long-billed Hermit and lots of White-necked Jacobins all come in to feed. There are plenty of Clay-colored Thrushes, Scarlet-rumped Caciques appear briefly, a Kiskadee appears. It is a constant riot of movement and colour but much of the time it is the various toucans that steal the show. The only non-bird wildlife is a strange looking turtle that we later identify as Black Wood Turtle.

It is very hard to pull ourselves away - but there is still one other bird that Cope can show us a short drive away... and as we leave, he shows us a rather nice little lizard - a Helmeted Iguana on the plants by his drive.

We take a short drive to a lovely bit of woodland and a short walk with just a brief stop to look at a large Black River Turtle. Then a little further on and suddenly we are watching two fabulous looking Spectacled Owls!! Wow they are great, large owls with such striking markings on their faces - a real treat.

We head back and drive Cope back home, thanking him profusely before heading back to the lodge for a break before our evening meal. Afterwards a few of us check out the Red-eyed Tree Frogs, finding three as well as the big fat toad and Slender Anoles.

**Day 5:** Back again on the veranda with coffee this morning, we watch the birds arriving at the feeders then decide to head out for a walk. The fog has lifted quite a lot already and we can easily see the far side of the river now.

Down at the river we spot a few Mangrove Swallows and Spotted Sandpipers, but the Sunbittern has been elusive in recent weeks according to Paco so perhaps it is no surprise we can't see any sign. We follow the river upstream and eventually locate a Fasciated Tiger Heron on the far side, smaller and darker than the Bare-throated we have seen so far. Heading away from the river we find an Eye-ringed Flatbill then enjoy good views of a Bright-rumped Atilla - a species that can be remarkably elusive. More exciting still is a small group of Rufous Motmots.

There are at least four and there seems to be a small altercation between them. Another fabulous bird! Another Eye-ringed Flatbill has caught a large katydid and is having trouble fighting it down but it gets there in the end and, as we watch, a pair of Green Ibis flies over.

After breakfast we head back to La Selva where we are greeted by our guide Joel again. With little going on around the reception area we head for the bridge and pause for a guy to show us a species of Birthwort with a most strange-shaped flower. He explains how it attracts insects inside by use of smell, backward pointing hairs and pretend windows - trapping them inside and releasing them later to go and pollinate another flower.

Crossing the bridge, we pause to look at a two-toed Sloth fast asleep in the crook of a tree and at the far end a troop of Mantled Howler Monkeys feeding above the water. At the far side we enjoy nice views of a Blue-chested Hummingbird.

There seems very little in the bushes in amongst the accommodation, so we start following a path into the forest. This is primary forest and beautiful with a huge variety of trees, palms, ferns, vines and it has a wonderful atmosphere. We spot a Plain Brown Woodcreeper as we enter the trees and then a little way further on find both species of large toucan. A Great Curassow is calling and we spot a female crossing the path up ahead.

Some of the trees have astonishing buttress roots and others are especially tall. We even find one or two of the famous Bullet Ants before there is great excitement when we find a Great Tinamou - a bird we were especially keen to see. It wanders along the forest floor walking slowly and allowing great views.

There are many birds in Costa Rica with 'Ant' in their name and this is because they follow large groups of Army Ants through the forest picking off the insects the ants disturb as they work their through the vegetation. They can be some of the more exciting species and we are thrilled to discover a huge column of Army Ants with a few birds in attendance - including both Bicolored Antbird and Spotted Antbird as well as another Plain Brown Woodcreeper.

As we walk on, we are a little taken aback when a Spider Monkey we pause to watch takes offense and actually throws a stick at us - and a large one at that! We arrive at an area known as the Arboretum where we find a large troop of Howler Monkeys looking very chilled out in the tree tops.

We spot a toucan but as we watch it we are surprised to realise there is a Snowy Cotinga. It flies off over our heads so at least everyone gets a flight view. Walking back we pause to watch a Helicopter Damselfly (also known as Spider-eating Damselfly) - a species that steals flies from spider's webs - and sometimes the spider too!

Back at the accommodation area the bushes are alive with Black-faced Grosbeaks, then as we walk the last bit to the car park Joel picks out three King Vultures overhead.

We take a break in the middle of the day as it is very hot today, then meet up again at 2.30pm to drive back to La Selva where we drive straight to the centre and almost immediately Paco spots a King Vulture cruising overhead. We go straight across the bridge pausing as we start as there are a few birds in the trees here, including Cocoa Woodcreeper, Cinnamon and White-winged Becards and more Black-faced Grosbeaks. The sloth is still here but is awake now and looks round at us as we take photos with the most peaceful looking face!

On the far side we see plenty of Scarlet-rumped Tanagers and two Great Green Macaws fly over. We have been told that at the forest edge there is a fruiting tree that has had visiting manakins, but we arrive and all seems quiet - then Andy walks over and shows us a photo on the back of his camera - wow it is a stunning male Red-capped Manakin!! Soon we are enjoying the most unbelievable views of this bird, surely the best views we have ever had on any holiday here. It stays in full view, and close by, for so long we even start looking round to see what else is around! The views through the scope are simply outrageous!!

It flies into the fruiting tree and Roy spots a much duller looking bird that also is a manakin and checking the details we work out this one is a female White-ruffed Manakin. Then 'Manakin Man' strikes again with a photo of a female White-collared Manakin! Well done Andy. Apart from Olive-backed Euphonias there seems to be little else here, so we walk into the forest a short way. It seems very quiet but after walking in a fairly short distance suddenly there are Collared Peccaries crossing the trail up ahead. One after another they pass across the trail vanishing into the trees. Paco tells us an alarming story of how he was bitten by one as a child and took a month to get over it!

We walk back towards the car park, pausing to enjoy the amazing sight of thousands of leaf-cutter ants carrying cut pieces of leaves way off across the lawn, quite an astonishing sight with the sun glinting off their leaves way off into the distance. Andy photographs a Baltimore Oriole in the tree-tops as we head back, then back at the car park there is the rather lovely scene of a dozen or so Chestnut-headed Oropendolas feeding in the top of an orange flowered Erythrina tree.

Time has flown by and the day is pretty much done so we head for home, but Paco has one more little treat for us. We pull off the side of the road on the way back and there – looking out of a large cavity in a tall tree - is a pair of Great Green Macaws!

**Day 6:** Today we are trying to squeeze in as much as we can as we travel to Arenal, so this morning we enjoy an earlier breakfast so we can get on our way. It is a cold breakfast at 5.30am with cereals, all kinds of fruit, yoghurt, toast, eggs and more, before we gather at 6.30am to get on our way.

It is about an hour's drive to our first destination - a beautiful valley with a dirt road that drops down to a river. We hop out of the bus and almost instantly we are finding new birds. Wilson's Warbler, Mistletoe Tyrannulet, Blackburnian Warbler, Tawny-capped Euphonia, Crimson-collared Tanager and Yellow-throated Vireo all come in quick succession and David and Nina finds a Slaty-throated Redstart. We get brief views of a Dusky-capped Flycatcher and a couple of Lesser Greenlets are flitting around above the road. Paco finds a Collared Trogon - a superb bird.

We have barely moved any distance yet and there are still birds everywhere with more in the next bushes – Bananaquit, Speckled Tanager, Scarlet-thighed Dacnis briefly and we get good views of Olivaceous Woodcreeper. We find a tree full of Bay-headed Tanagers and watch a lovely Black-and-white Warbler working the branches like a nuthatch. That mixed flock finally vanishes and we walk on down the road still picking out occasional different birds such as Tennessee Warbler, Bright-rumped Attila, White-tipped Dove, Silver-throated Tanager and Black-throated Green Warbler.

It is easy to forget to watch the skies, but it is worth keeping your eyes open as suddenly we find a White Hawk chasing a Short-tailed Hawk over the road. Roy is especially excited when a rather brown bird hops out with strange spectacle like markings round the eyes... a new bird for him, which doesn't happen often here these days. It is a Spectacled Foliage-Gleaner - an excellent find indeed.

We walk on down the road adding nothing new for a little while and finally arrive down by the bridge at the bottom. Here we check the rocks in the river and soon find an American Dipper. There are also both Black Phoebe and Tufted Flycatcher hawking from the overhanging trees. We find a Great Black Hawk circling high over the valley and in the tree tops around some blossoms we add Crowned Woodnymph.

Well pleased with our sightings we decide it is time to get on our way again as we also wish to visit another place before heading for lunch and we need a good hour there, so driving higher into the hills we arrive at a small café where they also have a platform where you can watch the birds at the feeders and bird table.

Birds come thick and fast... Silver-throated Tanagers in good numbers, at least three Emerald (Blue-throated) Toucanets, Baltimore Orioles, Prong-billed Barbet, Tennessee Warbler all come to the bird table while several Green-crowned Brilliants come to the hummingbird feeders. Usually there are a lot more hummingbirds here, but it is a while before we add Green Hermit which stays very briefly and also much later Violet Sabrewing. A couple of Prong-billed Barbets are feeding down on the ground before eventually appearing on the table itself and shortly a stunning pair of Red-headed Barbets come in to feed too. We see Red-legged Honeycreeper, Bananaquit and we enjoy all this while also being treated to coffee and empanadas! In the background is a beautiful waterfall.

We finally drag ourselves away and make a short stop at the roadside to scan for raptors above the valley. We see several rather distant Swallow-tailed Kites, a large flock of White-collared Swifts, a Short-tailed Hawk and a Crested Caracara. Time has flown by and we head back for lunch.

Once we have eaten, we get back on the road and head next to a Reserve not far from Arenal. Arriving in the car park we start by checking out some bushes nearby and soon find what we are looking for, a couple of Boat-billed Herons are roosting here, along with two or three Yellow-crowned Night Herons.

We walk round to the Reserve itself and soon we are watching lots of birds coming to feed on the bananas and other fruit put out for them. There are all three species of saltator, Black-headed, Buff-breasted and Greyish Saltator – now called Cinnamon-bellied. Another new bird here is Grey-headed Chachalaca along with several species we are now very familiar with.

We head for a walk around the Reserve and have not really gone very far when Paco spots a pair of Black-and-white Owls high in the trees. A short walk off the path and we are enjoying scope filling views of these very impressive and handsome birds.

Walking on we find Cocoa Woodcreeper, a female Emerald Basilisk, then a gorgeous Rufous-tailed Jacamar. As we are about to walk away from that bird a Central American Agouti appears walking across the woodland floor like a tiny Capybara. Ann mentions that we have still not seen one of the little red frogs we were hoping for, so we make a final effort to see if we can find one. It is Paco who finds it and we are amazed to see just how tiny it is - a lovely little thing - properly called a Strawberry Poison-dart Frog but also nicknamed Blue Jeans Frog as it is red with blue legs. Our final sighting before returning to the entrance is a lovely Three-toed Sloth that is being at least a little active. Back at the feeders and small pond Peter has had a brief view of a White-throated Crake and we also watch a very close Russet-naped Wood Rail walk by.

There is a little way still to go to get to the lodge and we get on our way, arriving with time for a rather short break before gathering for the checklist and our evening meal.

**Day 7:** We meet around 6am to check out the feeders from the balcony and they are already full of birds... many species we have seen before, but it is great to get such good views and a fabulous photo opportunity as Great Curassow, Montezuma Oropendolas, Collared Aracari, Silver-throated Tanager, Yellow-throated Euphonia, Green Honeycreeper, various other tanagers and lots of Clay-colored Thrushes vie for the food.

Then Paco suddenly says there is a Bare-throated Umbrellabird!!! This is startling - it is almost a mythical bird it is so rare and hard to see in Costa Rica, so we are very keen to make sure everyone sees it. Amazingly it hangs around and as people

arrive everyone gets a view - though it is hard to make out in the dull light under the canopy. Everyone is trying to stand in a small space to view the bird through a small window in the leaves and get photos - what a find! At one point a second bird appears but the young male is the best with a reasonable sized crest and a little red visible on his chest.

Further birds appear... we add Emerald Tanager - a gorgeous bright green little bird. Paco finds a White-throated Thrush briefly and there are Grey-headed Chachalacas, Crested Guans and Great Curassow now side by side. Yellow-throated Toucans come in and then suddenly it is time for breakfast!

After a very nice breakfast we gather in front of our rooms and head for a walk partly in the grounds and partly in the forest. A Black-crested Coquette has apparently got a regular perch nearby and before we have gone anywhere, we put a bit of time into seeing this gorgeous little bird. The views through the scope are fantastic with its punky crest! We also find a Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer with its little red feet, Violet-headed Hummingbird and White-necked Jacobin.

Further down the track we watch Crested Guans walking along the branches, then a Gray Hawk circles overhead while down in the bottom of one of the bushes we find a Black-striped Sparrow.

We take a path past a spot where White-collared Manakins have been lekking recently and after a short look we hear one making the characteristic little snaps and chirps and the astonishing buzzing they do with their wings. At first we struggle to get a good view, but eventually one perches in the perfect spot and enjoy wonderful views of this delightful little bird.

We enter the trees and soon arrive at the frog pond where there don't seem to be any frogs today, but we do find a lovely little Water Anole. Then we continue on our walk through beautiful forest with ferns and palms and bromeliads and, with the sun coming out now, the dappled shade and light is beautiful.

We have some way with no birds at all, then suddenly birds come flooding in as a mixed flock passes through! It is quick fire birding and I imagine no-one saw everything with so many birds so quickly, you have barely had time to check one out when the next is announced! In all, we find Russet Antshrike, Black-and-white Warbler, Golden-crowned Warbler, Spotted Woodcreeper, Carmiol's Tanager, Plain Xenops, White-throated Shrike Tanager (which is a great find), Black-throated Wren, Stripe-breasted Wren and Slaty-capped Flycatcher - and who knows what else was in amongst them!

Shortly we come out of the trees at the far end of the grounds, where we carefully check the hummingbird bushes - vervains with little purple flowers. A great find is Brown Violet-ear and we see two of them, also Slaty-breasted Hummingbird, a female Crowned Woodnymph and a nice male Violet-headed Hummingbird. A Crested Caracara flies in and vanishes into one of the trees.

What happens next seem impossible, as Paco somehow spots an incredibly well camouflaged Eyelash Viper! Even when you know where it is, and what it is, it seems impossible to spot it. Through the scope you can even make out the little pointed scales that make the 'eyelashes'.

We wander on a little further, but things seem to have gone very quiet so shortly we decide to take a break and have some downtime before lunch. We are delighted to see that the volcano top finally becomes completely visible! It is a spectacular sight - a volcano shaped like the classic child's drawing of one and even with a whisp of steam drifting from the top of it.

We meet up again at around 2.30pm and find a pair of Hepatic Tanagers flitting around the reception area, then while some choose to stay and enjoy the gardens and birds at the feeders, the rest of us head down the entrance road in the bus, pausing here and there for a short walk.

We have hardly gone anywhere when Paco says, 'I wonder if the snake is still there!' We stop and check and there it is - a rather small skinny snake with a beautiful pattern on it. Later research identifies it as a Lichen-colored Snail-eater - a great name for a snake.

We drive down to the gates and pause to check the stream but there is a guide Paco knows pointing out something, so we stop to see what he has first. It turns out to be a Black-crowned Tityra and he points out the female, then shortly we find the male as well. Also from this spot we find a Streaked Flycatcher and glimpse an Ochre-bellied Flycatcher.

Walking down to the stream we find a couple of Black Phoebe's but little else here, then we walk up the road spotting a few bits with White-throated Thrush being new for most people. A Dusky-capped Flycatcher appears and we find another Black-crested Coquette working its way round one of the trees. A flock of White-collared Swifts flies over then Roy spots a Golden-winged Warbler, but it is rather elusive with few people getting onto it, but as we try a Stripe-breasted Wren appears in the same area.

We go down to the end of the road adding little more - though we do find a few Chestnut-headed Oropendolas, Golden-hooded Tanager, Red-legged Honeycreeper, Green Honeycreeper and a variety of common flycatchers - indeed there is a nice comparison between Kiskadee and Social Flycatcher side by side on the wires and Keith identified them both without even raising his binoculars - impressive!

On the way back we pause again at the river and now there is a Louisiana Waterthrush there! We drive up to a very nice viewpoint looking down towards the lake and here find quite a few little birds in the bushes. Golden-hooded Tanager, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Yellow-throated Euphonia, Red-legged Honeycreeper,

Ochre-bellied Flycatcher, Mistletoe Tyrannulet, Yellow-throated Toucan and a smart Cinnamon Becard.

We enjoy the view and scan all the tree tops adding nothing new - but it is a lovely finish to the day.

**Day 8:** We gather outside the rooms at 6am and head out to the waterfall trail. It feels rather gloomy outside and has just been raining. As we start the trail we can hear various birds calling but none of them seem to want to be seen.

We have gone quite a long way before we hear a calling Dull-mantled Antbird close to the path. After a few moments two of them appear right in front of us and hop rapidly through the vegetation disappearing again into the foliage. It is a good if brief view and one has a particularly obvious white spot on its back.

We decide to head back and as we do so a hawk starts calling high in the trees. We catch a glimpse as it flies away then just as we decide to leave suddenly it flies back in – a superb Semiplumbeous Hawk.

We pass Red-lored Parrots in the grounds, Golden-hooded Tanagers, Pale-vented Pigeons, Scale-breasted Hummingbird and other bits and pieces, then head to breakfast. We gather again at 9am to get on our way.

We drive down the entrance road and well on the way down Paco spots a White Hawk perched above the road, so we carefully get out and enjoy fantastic full frame views of this gorgeous raptor - what a treat!

Next we make a stop down near the dam and walk up the track a little way. Here we get good views of variable and Morelet's Seedeaters. We can hear a Stripe-breasted Wren calling and eventually get a few glimpses of it. We find both Rufous-winged and Smokey Brown Woodpeckers very close together. Further up the track we find a beautiful Rufous Motmot in perfect light - another fabulous bird and the paparazzi are out in force for that one. Then we have barely walked on when we find Broad-billed Motmot too, followed by Cinnamon Becard as we head back.

We get on our way as we have a fair way to go today and we watch the scenery go by as we go round the lake for a long time before cutting up and over a ridge that signifies we have left the Caribbean side behind and we are now on the Pacific Slope, entering the Guanacaste region. It is a very different habitat being so much drier and less lush.

We make a very brief stop at a cattle pond, where we see Greater Yellowlegs and Solitary Sandpiper as well as a flock of Cattle Egrets and one Great Egret. The next little pond has another Greater Yellowlegs, a Spotted Sandpiper and astonishingly a Least Grebe!



Our next stop is along a road that passes by a fish farm. There are a small number of pools and we scan each in turn finding plenty of Lesser Scaup on the first pool then a variety of other birds including Blue-winged Teal, Neotropic Cormorant, at last three Snail Kites, three Ospreys and a very close Limpkin just the other side of the fence. There is a single Bare-throated Tiger Heron, a few other egrets, a fly by Black-necked Stilt and a Wood Stork flies over. A very nice collection of birds all picked up with ease before we move on.

We finally arrive at our lunch stop, where we enjoy a delicious meal with a view out over Lake Arenal. It is a busy place with a great atmosphere good food and the juice drinks even better!

We still have a way to go and the first part is on tarmac road but once we turn off onto the dirt tracks we can go a little slower and watch out for birds. This area has a bit of a list of special birds only found around here and, with those in mind, we stop when we spot anything. The first is Striped-headed Sparrow with a head like a badger! We spot Brown-crested Flycatcher, Inca and Ruddy Ground Doves and Blue-black Grassquit before arriving at the lodge. Here we check in and drop our bags.

We have a slight dilemma. People are quite tired but the tide is high right now, so it would be the ideal time to go and visit the salt pans as the waders get pushed off the mud at high tide and rest up there until it drops again - but we don't have much time, so we literally drop the bags in the rooms and come straight back out.

It is a short drive and we are there and wow - there look to be thousands of birds here! It is difficult to point out individual species at times as so many birds are packed so close together but with patience we work through the flocks, picking out lots of Western Sandpipers, with a scattering of Semipalmated Sandpipers amongst them, Semipalmated Plover, Ruddy Turnstone and lots of Hudsonian Whimbrel. A couple of Stilt Sandpipers are feeding busily and there are plenty of Black-bellied (Grey) Plovers. Right in front of us a Least Sandpiper wanders by and we spot several terns of two species, Royal Terns and Cabot's Tern (or Sandwich Tern depending on your taxonomy!) A Black Hawk flies over and also a Roseate Spoonbill and scattered amongst the other waders are plenty of Black-necked Stilts. There are a couple of distant White Ibis and one young bird closer by and Roy finds a couple of Short-billed Dowitchers.

We walk round to check the rest of the birds and get the sun behind us and we are pleased to find dozens of Short-billed Dowitchers here, a Lesser Yellowlegs, a single Marbled Godwit and lots of Wilson's Plovers. Flocks of Barn Swallows are passing through and a single Northern Rough-winged Swallow flies by and as the light starts to fade parrots are going to roost. We see a pair of Yellow-naped Parrots and masses of noisy White-fronted Parrots. The whole scene is simply wonderful with so many birds, but time is flying now and here the evening meal is ready at 7pm so if we are to get a decent length break we had better get moving.

**Day 9:** There is no need for an alarm clock this morning! Mantled Howler Monkeys live here in good numbers and they are in the trees right by our cabins and roaring as dawn approaches! So we stir from our beds and meet at the coffee urn.

The coffee having hit the spot we take a walk around the grounds, soon finding Rufous-naped Wrens in the car park as a couple of Yellow-naped Parrots fly in. We spot a beautiful Streak-backed Oriole here and then two male Black-headed Trogons in the trees, enjoying full frame scope views before Paco hears a Ferruginous Pygmy Owl calling and we set off in search. We pass an enormous Grasshopper on the way! It is as big as a house!

We can't find the owl but get fabulous views of the parrots and also some Orange-fronted Parakeets. Back on the main path we find more Streak-backed and also Baltimore Orioles and a bunch of White-fronted Parrots having a fight - then hear another Ferruginous Pygmy Owl. This time Paco finds it and the cameras are busy taking pics of this tiny owl next to the large white flowers of Pochote Tree – beautiful white flowers like shaving brushes! Kathy finds our first Turquoise-browed Motmot here too and there is a Cinnamon Hummingbird working the flowers. It is also hard to ignore all the Howler Monkeys here - they seem to be everywhere!

We walk on and soon we find more orioles, several Baltimore but with them, at least two gorgeous Spot-breasted Orioles - the other target oriole here. A pair of lovey-dovey Orange-fronted Parakeets are cuddled up in the tree tops. Walking towards the coast we spot Squirrel Cuckoo and then a pair of Masked Tityras and Kathy strikes again with a very rufous coloured Ferruginous Pygmy Owl.

Looking at the sea there are distant Brown Pelicans and Magnificent Frigatebirds and on the jetty lines of Royal Terns with a few Cabot's Terns and Laughing Gulls. An Osprey is perched in the tree here and we find a female Rose-throated Becard before we head back for breakfast.

After breakfast gather again and head to the car park where a couple of White-breasted Magpie-Jays are there ready to entertain us. Paco has been searching for another owl and we are about to give up when suddenly Paco says he has found it! Looking like a broken branch with its ears stiffly upright is a Pacific Screech Owl and close too. What a great photo opportunity.

We load up the bus and pay our bills and soon get on our way. We don't go far before we stop for a very short walk – and who'd have thought it – another Ferruginous Pygmy Owl!! This is worrying a pair of White-lored Gnatcatchers and a couple of Yellow Warblers and a Tennessee Warbler. A Brown-crested Flycatcher appears in the same tree and a pair of Yellow-olive Flycatcher right at the very top testing our id skills.

We move on and pause here and there as we spot more things. First a Common Ground Dove with a couple of Inca Doves, then a gorgeous pair of Turquoise-

browed Motmots. Then David spots a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher - what an absolutely stunning bird and apparently Nena had said she would like to see one. We find Scrub Euphonia nearby and then close to the road we enjoy a pair of Double-striped Thick-knees standing in the shade.

We have done remarkably well catching up with almost all of the birds we are hoping to find in this area but time has run out, so we now start driving proper to our next destination where we are having lunch.

Almost at our destination we take the chance to walk across the bridge over the Tarcoles river, where far down below us is a sand bank and about a dozen large Crocodiles! One is truly enormous but all of them are big. From directly above their noses look surprisingly narrow.

We are picked up at the far side and then soon we arrive at our lodge. Here the rooms are not yet ready, so we have lunch first then take a short wander in the grounds. We find a few birds including Summer Tanager, Streaked Flycatcher, Chestnut-sided and Tennessee Warblers, Squirrel Cuckoo and two beautiful Scarlet Macaws fly in and land in the trees at the top of the slope opposite. We enjoy fabulous scope views and, while we watch, a Zone-tailed Hawk appears over the skyline - a great sighting.

We are also impressed by some of the Black Spinetail Iguanas – fabulous looking beasts and we spot a male Common Basilisk with an impressive crest. The noise from the cicadas is astonishing. It is not long until we get our keys and can settle into our rooms, taking an hour or so break before going out again for another walk.

We walk out of the end of the grounds and in honesty it feels a little quiet. That is not to say we don't find anything and we start the walk with a huge flock of Magnificent Frigatebirds wheeling round high in the sky.

Walking slowly through the trees we find a Streak-headed Woodcreeper, then a Black Hawk flies through pausing for a short time before flying on. We can hear a Long-billed Hermit calling either side of the path and after a search Paco eventually finds one of them – a great bird with elongated white central tail feathers. We glimpse a Northern Barred Woodcreeper and get good views of a Lesson's Motmot. Roy finds a Buff-rumped Warbler in a rocky channel that refuses to show for more than a few seconds at a time.

We start back towards the lodge and pause to enjoy wonderfully close -up views of a Great Tinamou. We can hear displaying Long-tailed Manakins high up the slope but there is no way we are going to see them there. A Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher shows well but we add nothing else and take a nice break before meeting for the checklist and our evening meal.

A few of us decide to go frogging afterwards and have a great time spotting a lot of Yellow Tree Frogs calling with little puffed out throated. They are so small, they

are in huge contrast to an enormous Savage's Bullfrog also known as Central American Bullfrog or even Smoky Jungle Frog. We find one incredibly tiny greenish frog that might be Emerald Glass Frog, but Hourglass Frog remains elusive, so we decide to try the pond the other side of the bridge. Here we find many more Yellow Tree Frogs here, but we are thrilled to also find a couple of gorgeous Hourglass Frogs. There is a small lizard too – an anole of some kind and perhaps Slender Anole again.

Well pleased with our findings we finally head to bed - it is almost 9pm and past our bed time!

**Day 10:** As we sip coffee at 5.45am we are pleased to find both Buff-rumped Warbler and Northern Waterthrush beside the river. There is a Spotted Sandpiper too and macaws flying overhead.

We take a wander in the grounds, which starts off slightly frustratingly with lots of birds calling but nothing showing but finally we get a new bird... a Blue-throated Goldentail, a hummingbird we think should be called Red-billed Hummingbird! There is a flock of Orange-chinned Parakeets in the tree tops and a variety of birds we have seen before such as Common Tody Flycatcher, Yellow-throated Euphonia, Piratic Flycatcher and many more.

After breakfast we head for the Caracara National Park and a very nice trail that can be very good for birds. We start well with a pair of Black-throated Trogons, the female showing very well then find a White-whiskered Puffbird. We walk quite some way adding nothing new, then hear a Baird's Trogon calling up ahead. It is a very smart looking trogon with red belly and white undertail and we are right on the edge of its range here.

We continue down the trail, pausing to enjoy a great view of Long-billed Hermit and a couple of pairs of White-shouldered Tanagers. The birds are proving rather elusive, but we do get glimpses of a Rufous-and-white Wren and a smart male Barred Antshrike, then Keith spots a Gray-headed Tanager sat on a nest - a great find.

We find a small group of White-faced Capuchin Monkeys and enjoy lovely viewing as they wander through the branches searching for food. There are at least three very young ones amongst them and they seem almost as inquisitive about us as we are of them.

Our next new bird is Dusky Antbird, soon followed by Black-hooded Antshrike. A Gray Hawk flies over and we find a tiny flycatcher in a cecropia tree called a Southern Beardless Tyrannulet. Another guide tells us there is a large Army Ant swarm further down the trail and we dash to get there before it disappears into the forest. It is a truly enormous swarm of ants - they are crawling all over everything and in attendance are quite a few birds. There must be at least half a dozen Grey-headed Tanagers, at least four Bicolored Antbirds, a couple of Chestnut-backed

Antbirds, a Tawny-winged Woodcreeper and a brief Northern Barred Woodcreeper. Roy finds a Rufous-and-white Wren hidden amongst the tree roots. Before we leave a massive Blue Morpho flies down the path landing here and there, even right by our feet - what an exceptional insect it is! Walking on, we pause to look at another small group of birds, this time including Long-billed Gnatwren and a male Dot-winged Antwren.

We walk around the trail to a spot where Orange-collared Manakins lek and we are delighted to find at least four beautiful males here. We watch them for a while and to our delight there is a little bit of 'dancing' as a couple of birds flit back and forth between thin twigs and the ground with explosive clicks of the wings each time they jump. We spend a little time just enjoying the show, but time is racing and we get on our way again.

At the bus Johny has some truly delicious cold fruit - slices of pineapple, sweet melon and water melon that is all the tastier after having been on our feet in the heat for a while - it is wonderful! As we get back on the bus a Zone-tailed Hawk cruises over the road.

We have a nice long break for lunch then meet up again at 2.30pm to head for our boat ride. As we drive down towards our boat, we see a flock of around 20 Scarlet Macaws fly across the road - the biggest flock we've ever seen on a Speyside Wildlife trip. It is therefore an astonishing sight as we get closer to some tall trees to find they are full of Scarlet Macaws - perhaps as many as 50! What a noise!! They are climbing around the branches and flying in and out and one or two are really mucking about - even just hanging from their bills or off each other.

We arrive at the jetty and meet our boat man, then we are soon on our way initially heading upstream. We are followed by Mangrove Swallows and Paco explains that there is in fact a nesting box on top of the boat, so they follow their nest up and down the river!

We are soon spotting plenty of birds - Great and Snowy Egrets, Little Blue and Great Blue Heron, White Ibis, Wood Stork, Tricolored Heron and Spotted Sandpipers, including one that has a few spots. There are quite a few Black-necked Stilts and then on the mud we find a lovely Collared Plover. A Yellow-headed Caracara flies though and there are birds everywhere.

We turn the boat and head back downstream, pausing to enjoy a smart Yellow-crowned Night Heron and in the distance a group of Wood Storks and a Roseate Spoonbill. Further downstream we enjoy wonderful close-up views of an Osprey with a fish and moments later a Common Black Hawk flies in and we are not sure whether it steals the fish or not! The Osprey is not happy either way and the two have quite a tussle!! We see a Black-bellied Whistling Duck and a few Red-winged Blackbird.

As we get closer to the river mouth there are birds everywhere!! In the sky above us are dozens of Magnificent Frigatebirds and the tree tops are full of Brown Pelicans and Neotropic Cormorants. We spot at least another three or even four Ospreys and two more Black Hawks, there are a couple of Anhingas and a large flock of Royal Terns. On the mud there are plenty of shorebirds with Least Sandpiper, Semipalmated Plover, Black-bellied Plover, plenty of Hudsonian Whimbrel, a small number of Willet and a single Marbled Godwit. Two Muscovy Duck fly over and then we find another on the mud. There are plenty more Wood Storks and a flock of White Ibis... what a show!

We head into the mangroves and potter slowly along, searching for a few special birds only found here – and soon enough we find out first in the form of Mangrove Warbler - a female then a male moulting into adult plumage with plenty of chestnut on its face. We spot Prothonotary Warbler, Tropical Pewee and then a stunning male American Redstart. There are several Roseate Spoonbills in the trees going to roost already. We see occasional Black Hawks then find a Panama Flycatcher. We add Black-and-white Warbler then get brief views of a Rufous-browed Peppershrike.

On our way back out Paco brilliantly spots a Crab-eating Raccoon asleep in the crook of a tree. Back at the river mouth the sun is setting and the scene is stunningly beautiful with pelicans in the tree tops, egrets flying to roost in the mangroves, a flock of Yellow-naped Parrots and frigatebirds overhead.

Well on our way back we find a number of Yellow-naped Parrots in some leafless tree tops and as the first Lesser Nighthawks take to the wing a Plumbeous Kite flies across – dropping fast to join a second in the tree tops. Loads of macaws are also going to roost and White fronted Parrots too.

**Day 11:** A small group of us meet for breakfast and a walk along the trail out the end of the hotel grounds. Our first sighting is not a bird but a frog, the lovely Green-and-black Poison-dart Frog looking like a child's plastic toy. Apart from a small number of familiar birds we enjoy excellent views of a tiny little flycatcher with virtually no tail and a very wide bill – Golden-crowned Spadebill. Further on find Slaty Antwren and on the way back Keith finds a Northern Waterthrush.

After breakfast we get on our way as we have a long drive today having decided to head south and then up into the hills with a few stops along the way. We pass a Gray Hawk on the wires as we pass through mile after mile of Palm Oil plantation, then we turn inland and head up towards San Isidro. As we head up the winding road we pass a couple of Swallow-tailed Kites.

We enjoy a fabulous lunch in the town then, stuffed to the gunnels, we head to the edge of town where we check the tree tops for cotingas - but no luck. Time is flying by, so we get on our way again making our next stop at a nice little café where they have a bird table and several hummingbird feeders. We enjoy an excellent selection of birds including some beautiful hummingbird such as Violet Sabrewing,

Green-crowned Brilliant, Brown Violetear, White-tailed Emerald, Snowy-bellied Emerald and a brief Green Hermit. A stunning male Bay-headed Tanager appears and we see plenty of Scarlet-rumped Tanagers – the females looking quite different as we are now on the Pacific side of the country. We find Blackburnian Warbler, get brief views of Orange-billed Nightingale Thrush. Baltimore Orioles come to the fruit as does a smart male Red-crowned Woodpecker. We get superb views of a gorgeous Tropical Parula and see Tennessee Warbler, Grey-headed Chachalacas, Buff-throated Saltator, Silver-throated Tanager, Bananaquit, Rufous-collared Sparrow, Blue-and-white Swallow and close views of more Swallow-tailed Kites.

We still have quite a drive to go and we get back on the road, which is the Pan-American Highway following the ridge to the highest point where we pause to have a quick look for Volcano Junco. It is a spot Paco saw one many years ago, but we don't have time to check out the best place higher up. There seems to be no sign and we are even driving away when suddenly Johnny stops the bus and points - and there in one of the bushes is a Volcano Junco! Well done Johnny!

We continue on our way and take the road that winds down and down and down to our lodge – and stop briefly when we see a couple of birds, Sooty Thrush and Large-footed Finch. Then decide to ignore anything else as we really don't want to drive this road in the dark! It doesn't take long to check in and settle into our lovely rooms before another run through the checklist and a delicious meal.

**Day 12:** After a quick coffee near reception, we head up the road keen to try and see what must be the biggest target bird in Costa Rica - Resplendent Quetzal. A pair is said to be nesting near the road, so we stop where a group of people are clearly watching through their binoculars and cameras. Excited we jump out to find they have a female in view and the tail of the male poking out of the nest hole!

We wait - but really not for long at all and suddenly the male emerges and flies a little towards us then perches out in full view, facing us with the bright red belly and long tail and everything - wow!!! It has almost been too easy and what a truly stunning bird this is - so beautiful and as it flies the tail seems to float up and down behind it.

Thrilled with our success we still want more and we wait around a little while before the male flies back in. It is initially hidden amongst the leaves, but it moves to a more open position but with its back to us. Still the tail is remarkable with those elongated upper tail coverts blowing in the breeze. What a bird!

Before we head back we enjoy our first Acorn Woodpecker and a couple of Sooty-capped Chlorospingus, but we think let's head for breakfast then we will be out again all the earlier.

Once back out after breakfast we start finding so many new birds in quick succession. Three hummingbirds for starters... Scintillant is a tiny one, Talamanca is a big one and Lesser Violet-ear is in between - all are gorgeous of course!

We see plenty of Rufous-collared Sparrows, Flame-colored Tanager, Blue-and-white Swallows overhead, Tropical Mockingbird and a couple of Baltimore Orioles. We enjoy watching a Slaty Flowerpiercer working the flowers here – both fuchsias and cannas. There is a Mountain Elaenia, a Hairy Woodpecker flies past and a Band-tailed Pigeon pokes its head out of the tree tops. High on the slopes we spot a Red-tailed Hawk and we're thrilled when Kari spots a Long-tailed Silky Flycatcher that comes into a bush right in front of us - what a stunning bird with that lovely crest. More fly over and perch in the trees and a Rose-breasted Grosbeak flies in and shows briefly.

Walking down to the river we add White-throated Mountain-Gem, then as we walk down the track we find a delightful little Torrent Tyrannulet and find our first Yellowish Flycatcher.

In the forest we can hear a Black-faced Solitaire calling and David gets onto it, but as he starts giving directions it flies. Bill picks up a Spot-crowned Woodcreeper. We get lovely views of Collared Redstart and find Golden-winged and Black-throated Green Warblers. We find a female Rose-breasted Grosbeak and then a Tufted Flycatcher alongside it. As we are about to head back a pair of Spangle-cheeked Tanagers appears. As we walk back, we enjoy fabulous views of American Dipper in the river doing what dippers do.

After a leisurely lunch we take a short break then meet up again at 2.30pm with the intention of heading up the road and seeing what we can find. We pause to check the quetzal spot but there appears to be nothing there, then we continue to a spot where we get out of the bus and walk along the road. It is very quiet indeed with no birds at all and eventually we decide to take a different tack - so we head to a cafe where there are hummingbird feeders and a bird table.

Here we enjoy coffee and cake as we watch the show - and it is a great show with two new hummingbirds... Fiery-throated Hummingbird and the tiny Volcano Hummingbird. There are also Lesser Violetears, Talamanca Hummingbird and a rather lovely female White-throated Mountain Gem. The most startling find is a pair of Buff-fronted Quail-Doves! A beautiful bird and only the second time Roy has ever seen one. We enjoy watching the Large-footed Finches scratching for food and some beautiful Flame-colored Tanagers, but quite astonishing in their appearance are the Acorn Woodpeckers - crazy looking birds with a staring white eye and so close and so many! We see a couple of Silver-throated Tanagers, a few Sooty Thrushes and lots of Rufous-collared Sparrows before calling it a day and heading for home.

**Day 13:** Before an early breakfast we take a short wander around the area finding many of the same birds as yesterday morning. Roy spots a Stripe-tailed Hummingbird though very few people get onto it, then Nina spots a small flock of Sulphur-winged Parakeets flying by. Baltimore Orioles and Tennessee Warblers are in one of the bushes and a Slaty Flowerpiercer is working the Canna flowers. We walk up the



track a short way and a Mountain Thrush flies in landing briefly, then we get great views of Yellow-thighed Finch.

After breakfast we gather at 7.30am to take the 4-wheel drive vehicles up the hill. It is a steep track and at the top we get out and start looking for birds. It is rather quiet and we are a bit disappointed that the Costa Rican Pygmy Owl doesn't come to its nest hole.

We find a small group of Sooty-capped Chlorospingus, then an Ochraceous Wren appears nearby. A Collared Trogon shows very well – a beautiful male. Peter finds a chunky Green Spiny Lizard on one of the tree trunks. We gradually add a few more birds such as Black-throated Green Warbler, Ruddy-capped Nightingale Thrush and Wilson's Warbler, but we have gone a long way down the track before at last we bump into a mixed flock which is what we have been hoping for. Ruddy Treerunner is creeping through the vegetation, there are both Flame-throated and Black-cheeked Warbler, another Ochraceous Wren, Spangle-cheeked Tanager, Brown-capped Vireo, Black-and-white Warbler, Golden-winged Warbler and we get better views of Ruddy-capped Nightingale Thrush and absolutely fabulous views of Collared Redstart - it is so tame! We also photograph a small anole on plants near the ground but it doesn't seem to match anything in the book. With research later it turns out to be a very variable species known as Cloud-forest Anole or Swift Anole.

We find another mixed flock of mainly the same species but also Yellow-winged Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo and Hairy Woodpecker, then as we walk on at least a couple of people glimpse a Black-capped Flycatcher before it flies. Our final bird before we arrive back is a Black-faced Solitaire.

We pack and get on our way driving back up the steep road with no time really to stop. After driving a short distance along the main road, we stop at our lunch spot and after making our order we head out to enjoy the hummingbirds. There are lots of Fiery-throated and Volcano Hummingbirds here, as well as Talamanca and a female White-throated Mountain Gem. We see occasional Acorn Woodpeckers as we scan the trees and a few Long-tailed Silky Flycatchers and the odd Mountain Thrush before we are finally called in to have lunch. There is a beautiful view out over the mountains.

It is now a drive down the mountain and one towards San Jose. We are stuck in traffic for roadworks when suddenly Paco is on fire finding more new birds one after another! First a beautiful White-tailed Kite, then two Eastern Meadowlarks on the fence posts, then on the wires two Mourning Doves - a new Costa Rica bird even for Roy! What a surprise!

We pop into a supermarket just before arriving at the hotel to buy coffee then soon we are at the hotel and checking in, before meeting an hour and a half later for our final run through the checklist and our traditional round up which involves

choosing a favourite species, a favourite place and a 'magic moment'. With so many species seen on this trip we decide to make it five species!

It is testament to how many amazing species we have seen that by the time we have gone round everyone we have listed almost 40 species! And given that some of those are 'owls' or 'hummingbirds' plus one person seriously cheating and saying, 'all the colourful birds!'

There are too many to mention all here but species from the tiny hummingbirds and tanagers, through motmots, owls, manakins, honeycreepers, flycatchers, frogs, lizards, sloths, toucans and macaws and more all get a mention. A few get more than one mention, including the delightful little Collared Redstart and the very rare Bare-necked Umbrellabird. Sloths obviously get a few mentions and both Crested and Spectacled Owl but the bird with the highest number of votes is not surprisingly the Resplendent Quetzal. It is not a bird however that gets the highest votes of all - that is also perhaps no surprise as it is the Baird's Tapir with the wonderful views we got of it - the first ever seen by any Speyside Wildlife group.

Favourite places were surprisingly varied with many places getting a mention. Laguna Lodge getting three votes and both Ensenada and Savegre both getting four! Magic Moment is harder to predict but again it is the tapir that scores highest, but with the same score is the amazing sight of those Army Ant swarms with attending birds – an exceptional sighting and ecology in action! Others include the beautiful Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, the sighting of 52 Swallow-tailed Kites, the dolphins, finding his own snake and the manakins dancing, as well as sunset at the river mouth and the general beauty of the country.

One thing we all agree on is what a wonderful job Paco did leading this fabulous trip. Thank you to Nina for her lovely comments about Roy's leading too and thanks to everyone for the laughs and fun and their enthusiasm! It has been lovely hearing what everyone had to say, but now it is time to say farewell to Paco as he gets a few days at home before he starts all over again with a new group – we all just want to join him and do it all again!

**Day 14:** Well, it is the last morning so we decide to keep with the routine and meet for some pre-breakfast birding. The grounds are full of birds but unlike last time many of them are now much more familiar, such as the Kiskadees, tropical Kingbirds and Clay-colored Thrushes. There is a sense of déjà vu when the Red-billed Pigeons are on the same branches as last time.

We find Hoffmann's Woodpecker, Rufous-naped Wren, Kiskadee, Baltimore Oriole and plenty of Tennessee Warbler. The Mottle Owl is still tucked into the bamboo and we enjoy some excellent views of Lessons Motmots. Blue-and-white Swallows are flitting overhead, Crimson-fronted Parakeets fly over and we find a couple of Yellow Warblers.

After breakfast we add Melodious Blackbird, more motmots a brief Lineated Woodpecker, Philadelphia Vireo. Cinnamon-bellied Saltator and more then as the morning starts to warm up things go a bit quieter and we head to our rooms to finish packing, before our final goodbyes as people depart at various times for the airport and our flights home.

## BIRDS

Great Tinamou	<i>Tinamus major</i>	Black-collared Hawk	<i>Busarellus nigricollis</i>
Great Curassow	<i>Crax rubra</i>	Snail Kite	<i>Rostrhamus sociabilis</i>
Grey-headed Chachalaca	<i>Ortalis cinerieiceps</i>	Swallow-tailed Kite	<i>Elanoides forficatus</i>
Black Guan	<i>Chamaepetes unicolor</i>	White-tailed Kite	<i>Elanus leucurus</i>
Crested Guan	<i>Penelope purpurascens</i>	Plumbeous Hawk	<i>Ictinia plumea</i>
Sungrebe	<i>Heliornis fulica</i>	Tiny Hawk	<i>Accipiter superciliosus</i>
Least Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus dominicus</i>	White Hawk	<i>Leucopternis albigollis</i>
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck	<i>Dendrocygna autumnalis</i>	Semiplumbeous Hawk	<i>Leucopternis semiplumbea</i>
Muscovy Duck	<i>Cairina mochata</i>	Short-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo brachyurus</i>
Blue-winged Teal	<i>Anas discors</i>	Double-toothed Kite	<i>Harpagus bidentatus</i>
Lesser Scaup	<i>Aythya affinis</i>	Roadside Hawk	<i>Buteo magnirostris</i>
Neotropic Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax brasilianus</i>	Broad-winged Hawk	<i>Buteo platypterus</i>
Anhinga	<i>Anhinga anhinga</i>	Gray Hawk	<i>Asturina nitidus</i>
Brown Pelican	<i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>	Common Black Hawk	<i>Buteogallus anthracinus</i>
Magnificent Frigatebird	<i>Fregata magnificens</i>	Great Black Hawk	<i>Buteogallus urubitinga</i>
Laughing Gull	<i>Larus atricilla</i>	Zone-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo albonotatus</i>
Royal Tern	<i>Thalasseus maxima</i>	Red-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>
Cabot's Tern	<i>Thalasseus acutiflavus</i>	Black Hawk-Eagle	<i>Spizaetus tyrannus</i>
Bare-throated Tiger-Heron	<i>Tigrisoma mexicanum</i>	Bat Falcon	<i>Falco rufigularis</i>
Fasciated Tiger-Heron	<i>Tigrisoma fasciatum</i>	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
Green Heron	<i>Butorides virescens</i>	Crested Caracara	<i>Polyborus plancus</i>
Tricolored Heron	<i>Egretta tricolor</i>	Yellow-headed Caracara	<i>Milvago chimachima</i>
Little Blue Heron	<i>Egretta caerulea</i>	Crested Owl	<i>Lophotrix cristata</i>
Great Egret	<i>Ardea albus</i>	Spectacled Owl	<i>Pulsatrix perspicillata</i>
Great Blue Heron	<i>Ardea herodias</i>	Mottled Owl	<i>Ciccaba virgata</i>
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	Black-and-white Owl	<i>Ciccaba nigrolineata</i>
Snowy Egret	<i>Egretta thula</i>	Pacific Screech-Owl	<i>Otus cooperi</i>
Black-crowned Nigh-Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	Ferruginous Pygmy Owl	<i>Glaucidium brasilianum</i>
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	<i>Nyctanassa violacea</i>	Pauraque	<i>Nyctidromus albigollis</i>
Boat-billed Heron	<i>Cochlearius cochlearius</i>	Lesser Nighthawk	<i>Chordeiles acutipennis</i>
White Ibis	<i>Eudocimus albus</i>	Chestnut-collared Swift	<i>Cypseloides rutilus</i>
Green Ibis	<i>Mesembrinibis cayennensis</i>	White-collared Swift	<i>Streptoprocne zonaris</i>
Roseate Spoonbill	<i>Ajaia ajaja</i>	Gray-rumped Swift	<i>Chaetura cinereiventris</i>
Limpkin	<i>Aramus guarauna</i>	Mangrove Swallow	<i>Tachycineta albilinea</i>
Double-striped Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus bistriatus</i>	Blue-and-white Swallow	<i>Notiochelidon cyanoleuca</i>
Wood Stork	<i>Mycteria americana</i>	Gray-breasted Martin	<i>Progne chalybea</i>
Southern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus chilensis</i>	Southern Rough-winged Swallow	<i>Stelgidopteryx ruficollis</i>
Black-bellied Plover (Grey Plover)	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Collared Plover	<i>Charadrius collaris</i>	Violet Sabrewing	<i>Campylopterus hemileucurus</i>
Wilson's Plover	<i>Charadrius wilsonia</i>	Green Hermit	<i>Phaethornis guy</i>
Semipalmated Plover	<i>Charadrius semipalmatus</i>	Long-billed Hermit	<i>Phaethornis superciliosus</i>
Black-necked Stilt	<i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>	Green-crowned Brilliant	<i>Heliodoxa jacula</i>
Marbled Godwit	<i>Limosa fedoa</i>	Talamanca Hummingbird	<i>Eugenes spectabilis</i>
Hudsonian Whimbrel	<i>Numenius hudsonicus</i>	Fiery-throated Hummingbird	<i>Panterpe insignis</i>
Willet	<i>Catoptrophorus semipalmatus</i>	Scaly-breasted Hummingbird	<i>Phaeochroa cuvierii</i>
Solitary Sandpiper	<i>Tringa solitaria</i>	Blue-chested Hummingbird	<i>Amazilia amabilis</i>
Greater Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa melanoleuca</i>	White-necked Jacobin	<i>Florisuga mellivora</i>
Lesser Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa flavipes</i>	Crowned Woodnymph	<i>Thalurania colombica</i>
Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularia</i>	Snowy-bellied Hummingbird	<i>Amazilia edward</i>
Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	Striped-tailed Hummingbird	<i>Eupherusa eximia</i>
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	White-tailed Emerald	<i>Elvina chionura</i>
Semipalmated Sandpiper	<i>Calidris pusilla</i>	Blue-throated Goldentail	<i>Hylocharis eliciae</i>
Western Sandpiper	<i>Calidris mauri</i>	Rufous-tailed Hummingbird	<i>Amazilia tzacatl</i>
Least Sandpiper	<i>Calidris minutilla</i>	Cinnamon Hummingbird	<i>Amazilia rutila</i>
Stilt Sandpiper	<i>Calidris himantopus</i>	Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer	<i>Chalybura urochrysis</i>
Short-billed Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus griseus</i>	Green-breasted Mango	<i>Anthracothorax prevostii</i>
Northern Jacana	<i>Jacana spinosa</i>	Brown Violetear	<i>Colibri delphinae</i>
American Purple Gallinule	<i>Porphyryla martinica</i>	Lesser Violetear	<i>Colibri cyanotus</i>
Russet-naped Wood-Rail	<i>Aramides albiventris</i>	White-throated Mountain-Gem	<i>Lampornis castaneoventris</i>
White-throated Crane	<i>Laterallus albigularis</i>	Black-crested Coquette	<i>Lophornis helenae</i>
Black Vulture	<i>Coragyps atratus</i>	Violet-headed Hummingbird	<i>Klais guimeti</i>
Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>	Scintillant Hummingbird	<i>Selasphorus scintilla</i>
King Vulture	<i>Sarcorampus papa</i>	Volcano Hummingbird	<i>Selasphorus flammula</i>
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>

Pale-vented Pigeon	<i>Columba cayennensis</i>	Plain-brown Woodcreeper	<i>Dendrocincla fuliginosa</i>
Red-billed Pigeon	<i>Columba flavirostris</i>	Tawny-winged Woodcreeper	<i>Dendrocincla anabatina</i>
Band-tailed Pigeon	<i>Columba fasciata</i>	Cocoa Woodcreeper	<i>Xiphorhynchus sussurans</i>
White-winged Dove	<i>Zenaida asiatica</i>	Spotted Woodcreeper	<i>Chloroceryle erythropygius</i>
Mourning Dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>	Streak-headed Woodcreeper	<i>Lepidocolaptes souleyetii</i>
Inca Dove	<i>Columbina inca</i>	Spot-crowned Woodcreeper	<i>Lepidocolaptes affinis</i>
Common Ground-Dove	<i>Columbina passerina</i>	Spectacled Foliage-gleaner	<i>Anabacerthia variegaticeps</i>
Ruddy Ground-Dove	<i>Columbina talpacoti</i>	Ruddy Treerunner	<i>Margaromis rubiginosus</i>
Gray-chested Dove	<i>Leptotila cassinii</i>	Slaty Spinetail	<i>Synallaxis brachyura</i>
White-tipped Dove	<i>Leptotila verreauxi</i>	Fasciated Antshrike	<i>Cymbilaimus lineatus</i>
Buff-fronted Quail-Dove	<i>Geotrygon costaricensis</i>	Barred Antshrike	<i>Thamnophilus doliatus</i>
Ruddy Quail-Dove	<i>Geotrygon montana</i>	Black-hooded Antshrike	<i>Thamnophilus bridgesi</i>
Sulphur-winged Parakeet	<i>Pyrrhura hoffmanni</i>	Russet Antshrike	<i>Thamnophilus anabatinus</i>
Crimson-fronted Parakeet	<i>Aratinga finschi</i>	Dusky Antbird	<i>Cercomacra tyrannina</i>
Olive-throated Parakeet	<i>Aratinga nana</i>	Chestnut-backed Antbird	<i>Myrmeciza exsul</i>
Orange-fronted Parakeet	<i>Aratinga canicularis</i>	Bicolored Antbird	<i>Gymnopothis leucaspis</i>
Orange-chinned Parakeet	<i>Brotogeris jugularis</i>	Dull-mantled Antbird	<i>Myrmeciza exsul</i>
Brown-hooded Parrot	<i>Pionopsitta haemototis</i>	Spotted Antbird	<i>Hylophylax naevioides</i>
White-crowned Parrot	<i>Pionus senilis</i>	Streak-crowned Antwren	<i>Dysithamnus striaticeps</i>
Great Green Macaw	<i>Ara ambigu</i>	Slaty Antwren	<i>Myrmotherula schisticolor</i>
Scarlet Macaw	<i>Ara macao</i>	Dot-winged Antwren	<i>Microhoppas quixensis</i>
White-fronted Parrot	<i>Amazona albifrons</i>	Golden-crowned Spadebill	<i>Pterylinchus coronatus</i>
Red-lored Parrot	<i>Amazona autumnalis</i>	Mistletoe Tyrannulet	<i>Zimmerius parvus</i>
Mealy Parrot	<i>Amazonia farinosa</i>	Yellow Tyrannulet	<i>Capsiempis flaveola</i>
Yellow-naped Parrot	<i>Amazona auropalliata</i>	Southern Beardless Tyrannulet	<i>Camptostoma obsoletum</i>
Groove-billed Ani	<i>Crotophaga sulcirostris</i>	Yellow-bellied Elaenia	<i>Elaenia flavogaster</i>
Squirrel Cuckoo	<i>Piaya cayana</i>	Mountain Elaenia	<i>Elaenia frantzii</i>
Black-headed Trogon	<i>Trogon melanocephalus</i>	Piratic Flycatcher	<i>Legatus leucophaeus</i>
Gartered Trogon	<i>Trogon caligatus</i>	Yellow-olive Flycatcher	<i>Tolmomyias sulphurescens</i>
Black-throated Trogon	<i>Trogon rufus</i>	Slaty-capped Flycatcher	<i>Leptopogon supercilialis</i>
Baird's Trogon	<i>Trogon bairdii</i>	Common Tody-Flycatcher	<i>Todirostrum cinereum</i>
Collared Trogon	<i>Trogon collaris</i>	Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher	<i>Todirostrum nigriceps</i>
Resplendent Quetzal	<i>Pharomachrus mocinno</i>	Sulphur-rumped Flycatcher	<i>Myiobius sulphureipygius</i>
Slaty-tailed Trogon	<i>Trogon massena</i>	Bight-rumped Attila	<i>Attila spadiceus</i>
Lesson's Motmot	<i>Momotus lessonii</i>	Rufous Mourner	<i>Rhytipterna holerythra</i>
Rufous Motmot	<i>Baryphthengus martii</i>	Torrent Tyrannulet	<i>Serpophaga cinerea</i>
Broad-billed Motmot	<i>Electron platyrhynchum</i>	Long-tailed Tyrant	<i>Colonia colonus</i>
Turquoise-browed Motmot	<i>Eumomota superciliosa</i>	Eye-ringed Flatbill	<i>Rhynchocyclus brevirostris</i>
Ringed Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle torquata</i>	Eastern Wood Pewee	<i>Contopus sordidulus</i>
Green Kingfisher	<i>Chloroceryle americana</i>	Tropical Pewee	<i>Contopus cinereus</i>
American Pygmy Kingfisher	<i>Chloroceryle aenea</i>	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax flaviventris</i>
Green-and-rufous Kingfisher	<i>Chloroceryle inda</i>	Yellowish Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax flavescens</i>
Amazon Kingfisher	<i>Chloroceryle amazona</i>	Black-capped Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax atriceps</i>
White-necked Puffbird	<i>Bucco macrorhynchus</i>	Tufted Flycatcher	<i>Mitrephanes phaeocercus</i>
White-whiskered Puffbird	<i>Malacoptila panamensis</i>	Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	<i>Tyrannus forficatus</i>
Rufous-tailed Jacamar	<i>Galbula ruficauda</i>	Black Phoebe	<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>
Red-headed Barbet	<i>Eubucco bourcierii</i>	Brown-crested Flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus tyrannulus</i>
Prong-billed Barbet	<i>Semnomis frantzii</i>	Dusky-capped Flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus tuberculifer</i>
Blue-throated (Emerald) Toucanet	<i>Aulacorhynchus aeruleogularis</i>	Panama Flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus panamensis</i>
Collared Araçari	<i>Pteroglossus torquatus</i>	Great Kiskadee	<i>Pitangus sulphuratus</i>
Keel-billed Toucan	<i>Ramphastos sulfuratus</i>	Boat-billed Flycatcher	<i>Megarhynchus pitangua</i>
Yellow-throated Toucan	<i>Ramphastos ambiguus</i>	Social Flycatcher	<i>Myiozetetes similis</i>
Acorn Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes formicivorus</i>	Gray-capped Flycatcher	<i>Myiozetetes granadensis</i>
Black-cheeked Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes pucherani</i>	White-ringed Flycatcher	<i>Coryphotriccus albobittatus</i>
Hoffmann's Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes hoffmanni</i>	Streaked Flycatcher	<i>Myiodynastes maculatus</i>
Red-crowned Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes rubicapillus</i>	Tropical Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus melancholicus</i>
Hairy Woodpecker	<i>Picoides villosus</i>	Black-crowned Tityra	<i>Tityra inquisitor</i>
Smoky-brown Woodpecker	<i>Picoides fumigatus</i>	Masked Tityra	<i>Tityra semifasciata</i>
Rufous-winged Woodpecker	<i>Piculus simplex</i>	Rose-throated Becard	<i>Pachyramphus aglaiae</i>
Lineated Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus lineatus</i>	White-winged Becard	<i>Pachyramphus polychopterus</i>
Pale-billed Woodpecker	<i>Campephilus guatemalensis</i>	Cinnamon Becard	<i>Pachyramphus cinnamomeus</i>
Chestnut-colored Woodpecker	<i>Celeus castaneus</i>	White-collared Manakin	<i>Manacus candei</i>
Plain Xenops	<i>Xenops minutus</i>	Orange-collared Manakin	<i>Manacus aurantiaricus</i>
Northern Barred Woodcreeper	<i>Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae</i>	White-ruffed Manakin	<i>Corapipo leucorrhoa</i>
Olivaceous Woodcreeper	<i>Sittasomus griseicapillus</i>	Red-capped manakin	<i>Pipra mentalis</i>

Snowy Cotinga	<i>Carpodectes nitidus</i>	Emerald Tanager	<i>Tangara florida</i>
Purple-throated Fruitcrow	<i>Querula purpurata</i>	Speckled Tanager	<i>Tangara guttata</i>
Bare-necked Umbrellabird	<i>Cephalopterus glabricollis</i>	Golden-hooded Tanager	<i>Tangara larvata</i>
White-throated Magpie-Jay	<i>Calocitta formosa</i>	Spangle-cheeked Tanager	<i>Tangara dowii</i>
Brown Jay	<i>Cyanocorax morio</i>	Green Honeycreeper	<i>Chlorophanes spiza</i>
Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush	<i>Catharus frantzii</i>	Bay-headed Tanager	<i>Tangara gyrola</i>
Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush	<i>Catharus aurantiirostris</i>	Blue Dacnis	<i>Dacnis cayana</i>
Black-faced Solitaire	<i>Myadestes melanops</i>	Scarlet-thighed Dacnis	<i>Dacnis venusta</i>
Sooty Thrush	<i>Turdus nigrescens</i>	Shining Honeycreeper	<i>Cyanerpes lucidus</i>
Mountain Thrush	<i>Turdus plebejus</i>	Red-legged Honeycreeper	<i>Cyanerpes cyaneus</i>
Clay-colored Thrush	<i>Turdus grayi</i>	Bananaquit	<i>Coereba flaveola</i>
White-throated Thrush	<i>Turdus assimilis</i>	Slaty Flowerpiercer	<i>Diglossa plumbea</i>
American Dipper	<i>Cinclus mexicanus</i>	Blue-black Grassquit	<i>Volatinia jacarina</i>
Tropical Mockingbird	<i>Mimus gilvus</i>	Thick-billed Seed-Finch	<i>Oryzoborus funereus</i>
Long-tailed Silky-Flycatcher	<i>Ptilogonys caudatus</i>	Morelet's Seedeater	<i>Sporophila moreletii</i>
Long-billed Gnatwren	<i>Ramphocaenus melanurus</i>	Variable Seedeater	<i>Sporophila aurita</i>
White-lored Gnatcatcher	<i>Poliophtila albiloris</i>	Yellow-faced Grassquit	<i>Tiaris olivacea</i>
Rufous-naped Wren	<i>Campylorhynchus rufinucha</i>	Grayish Saltator	<i>Saltator coerulescens</i>
Stripe-breasted Wren	<i>Thryothorus thoracicus</i>	Buff-throated Saltator	<i>Saltator maximus</i>
Rufous-and-white Wren	<i>Thryothorus rufalbus</i>	Black-headed Saltator	<i>Saltator atriceps</i>
Black-throated Wren	<i>Thryothorus altrogularis</i>	Yellow-thighed Finch	<i>Pselliophorus tibialis</i>
Ochraceous Wren	<i>Troglodites ochracea</i>	Large-footed Finch	<i>Pezopetes capitalis</i>
House Wren	<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>	Orange-billed Sparrow	<i>Arremon aurantirostris</i>
Gray-breasted Wood-Wren	<i>Henicorhina leucophrys</i>	Black-striped Sparrow	<i>Arremonops conirostris</i>
Yellow-throated Vireo	<i>Vireo flavifrons</i>	Stripe-headed Sparrow	<i>Peucaea ruficauda</i>
Yellow-winged Vireo	<i>Vireo carmioli</i>	Common Chlorospingus	<i>Chlorospingus ophthalmicus</i>
Brown-capped Vireo	<i>Vireo leucophrys</i>	Sooty-capped Chlorospingus	<i>Chlorospingus pileatus</i>
Philadelphia Vireo	<i>Vireo philadelphicus</i>	Rufous-collared Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia capensis</i>
Lesser Greenlet	<i>Hylophilus decurtatus</i>	Volcano Junco	<i>Junco volceni</i>
Rufous-browed Peppershrike	<i>Cyclarhis gujanensis</i>	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Louisiana Waterthrush	<i>Seiurus motacilla</i>	Blue Grosbeak	<i>Passerina caerulea</i>
Northern Waterthrush	<i>Seiurus noveboracensis</i>	Black-faced Grosbeak	<i>Caryothraustes poliogaster</i>
Buff-rumped Warbler	<i>Phaeothlypis fulvicauda</i>	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	<i>Pheucticus ludovicianus</i>
Golden-winged Warbler	<i>Vermivora chrysoptera</i>	Red-throated Ant-Tanager	<i>Habia fuscicauda</i>
Prothonotary Warbler	<i>Protonotaria citrea</i>	Red-crowned Ant-Tanager	<i>Habia rubica</i>
Black-and-white Warbler	<i>Mniotilta varia</i>	Carmioli's Tanager	<i>Chlorothraupis carmioli</i>
Tennessee Warbler	<i>Vermivora peregrina</i>	Hepatic Tanager	<i>Piranga flava</i>
Yellow Warbler	<i>Setophaga aestiva</i>	Summer Tanager	<i>Piranga rubra</i>
Mangrove Warbler	<i>Setophaga petechia</i>	Flame-colored Tanager	<i>Piranga bidentata</i>
American Redstart	<i>Setophaga ruticilla</i>	Red-winged Blackbird	<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>
Flame-throated Warbler	<i>Parula gutturalis</i>	Red-breasted Blackbird	<i>Sturnella militaris</i>
Tropical Parula	<i>Parula pitayumi</i>	Eastern Meadowlark	<i>Sturnella magna</i>
Chestnut-sided Warbler	<i>Setophaga pensylvanica</i>	Melodious Blackbird	<i>Dives dives</i>
Bay-breasted Warbler	<i>Setophaga castanea</i>	Shiny Cowbird	<i>Molothrus bonariensis</i>
Blackburnian Warbler	<i>Setophaga fusca</i>	Bronzed Cowbird	<i>Molothrus aeneus</i>
Black-throated Green Warbler	<i>Setophaga virens</i>	Giant Cowbird	<i>Scaphidura oryzivora</i>
Wilson's Warbler	<i>Wilsonia pusilla</i>	Great-tailed Grackle	<i>Quiscalus mexicanus</i>
Slate-throated Redstart	<i>Myioborus miniatus</i>	Streak-backed Oriole	<i>Icterus pustulatus</i>
Collared Redstart	<i>Myioborus torquatus</i>	Spot-breasted Oriole	<i>Icterus pectoralis</i>
Black-cheeked Warbler	<i>Basileuterus melanogenis</i>	Black-cowled Oriole	<i>Icterus dominicensis</i>
Golden-crowned Warbler	<i>Basileuterus cuculivorus</i>	Baltimore Oriole	<i>Icterus galbula</i>
Gray-headed Tanager	<i>Eucomelis penicillata</i>	Scarlet-rumped Cacique	<i>Cacicus uropygialis</i>
White-shouldered Tanager	<i>Tachyphonus luctuosus</i>	Chestnut-headed Oropendola	<i>Psarocolius wagleri</i>
White-lined Tanager	<i>Tachyphonus rufus</i>	Montezuma Oropendola	<i>Psarocolius montezuma</i>
White-throated Shrike-Tanager	<i>Lanio leucothorax</i>	Olive-backed Euphonia	<i>Euphonia gouldi</i>
Scarlet-rumped Tanager	<i>Ramphocelus passerinii</i>	Tawny-capped Euphonia	<i>Euphonia anae</i>
Crimson-collared Tanager	<i>Phlogothraupis sanguinolenta</i>	Yellow-throated Euphonia	<i>Euphonia hirundinacea</i>
Blue-gray Tanager	<i>Thraupis episcopus</i>	Scrub Euphonia	<i>Euphonia affinis</i>
Palm Tanager	<i>Thraupis palmarum</i>	Yellow-crowned Euphonia	<i>Euphonia luteicapilla</i>
Plain-colored Tanager	<i>Tangara inornata</i>		
Silver-throated Tanager	<i>Tangara icterocephala</i>		

379 species!

## MAMMALS

Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth	<i>Bradypus variegatus</i>
Hoffman's Two-toed Sloth	<i>Choloepus hoffmanni</i>
White-faced Capuchin	<i>Cebus capucinus</i>
Mantled Howler Monkey	<i>Alouatta palliate</i>
Central American Spider Monkey	<i>Ateles geoffroyi</i>
Gray Fox	<i>Urocyon cinereoargenteus</i>
White-nosed Coati	<i>Nasua narica</i>
Kinkajou	<i>Potos flavus</i>
Crab-eating Raccoon	<i>Procyon cancrivorous</i>
Neotropic Otter	<i>Lontra longicaudis</i>
Collared Peccary	<i>Tayassu tajacu</i>
Baird's Tapir	<i>Tapirus bairdii</i>
White-tailed Deer	<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>
Red-tailed Squirrel	<i>Sciurus granatensis</i>
Variegated Squirrel	<i>Sciurus variegatoides</i>
Mexican Porcupine	<i>Sphiggurus mexicanus</i>
Central American Agouti	<i>Dasyprocta punctata</i>
Central American Tapeti	<i>Sylvilagus gabbi</i>
Long-nosed Sac-winged Bat	<i>Saccopteryx bilineata</i>
Bottlenose Dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>

## REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

Green-and-black Poison-Dart Frog	<i>Dendrobates auratus</i>
Strawberry Poison-Dart Frog	<i>Dendrobates pumilio</i>
Yellow Tree Frog	<i>Dendrophophus mrocephalus</i>
Hourglass Frog	<i>Dendrophophus ebraccatus</i>
Glass Frog sp (Emerald?)	<i>Hyalinobatrachium</i> sp.
Red-eyed Tree Frog	<i>Agelychnis callidryas</i>
Rain Frog	<i>Vraugaster</i> sp.
Savegre's Bullfrog	<i>Leptodactylus savegei</i>
Cane Toad	<i>Bufo marinus</i>
Black River (Wood) Turtle	<i>Rhinoclemmys funerea</i>
Nicaraguan Slider	<i>Trachemys scripta</i>
Common Basilisk	<i>Basiliscus basiliscus</i>
Brown Basilisk	<i>Basiliscus vittatus</i>
Emerald Basilisk	<i>Basiliscus plumifrons</i>
Green Iguana	<i>Iguana iguana</i>
Black Spiny-tailed Iguana	<i>Ctenosaura similis</i>
Helmeted Iguana	<i>Corytophanes cristatus</i>
Central American Whip-tailed Lizard	<i>Amieva festiva</i>
Ground Anole	<i>Anolis humilis</i>
Water Anole	<i>Anolis aquaticus</i>
Swift (Cloud forest) Anole	<i>Anolis tropidolepis</i>
Slender Anole	<i>Anolis limifrons</i>
House Gecko	<i>Hemidactylus frenatus</i>
Yellow-headed Gecko	<i>Gonatodes albogularis</i>
American Crocodile	<i>Crocodylus acutus</i>
Spectacled Caiman	<i>Caiman crocodilus</i>
Eyelash Viper	<i>Bothriechis schlegelii</i>
Fer de Lance	<i>Bothrops asper</i>
Lichen-coloured Snail-eater	<i>Sibon longifrenis</i>
Litter Snake sp	<i>Rhadinaea</i> sp

## BUTTERFLIES

Sulphur sp	<i>Phoebis</i> sp
Banded Peacock	<i>Anartia fatima</i>
Blue Morpho sp	<i>Morpho</i> sp
Monarch	<i>Danaus plexippus</i>
Crimson Patch	<i>Chlosyne janais</i>
And many, many more we never identified	

## ALSO

Cicadas  
Leaf-cutter Ants  
Army Ants  
Helicopter Damselfly  
Plated Millipede  
Orb Spider (Nephila)  
Three-banded Scorpion (in Ann's bathroom!)  
Giant Red-winged Grasshopper  
And lots more!