



**COSTA RICA, NEW YEAR CUSTOM TOUR
TRIP REPORT DECEMBER 2015/JANUARY 2016**

By Eduardo Ormaeche



Resplendent Quetzal (photo Kevin Easley), one of the main targets of this tour

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1, December 28

Birding the gardens of the Hotel Bougainvillea north of San José. Birding at different locations along Cerro de la Muerte. Birding around Savegre Mountain Lodge. Overnight Savegre Mountain Lodge

Day 2, December 29

Full day birding around Savegre Mountain Lodge. Overnight Savegre Mountain Lodge

Day 3, December 30

Birding Savegre Mountain Lodge and the páramo on Los Quetzales National Park. Transfer to Selva Verde Lodge near Puerto Viejo. Birding the hummingbird garden at Braulio Carrillo National Park and the Sarapiquí River. Overnight Selva Verde Lodge

Day 4, December 31

Birding at La Selva Biological Station. Visit Cinco Ceibas Rainforest Reserve. Overnight Selva Verde Lodge

Day 5, January 1

Birding the Virgen del Socorro road and the hummingbird garden at Braulio Carrillo National Park. Transfer to San José. Overnight Hotel Bougainvillea

Day 6, January 2

Farewell and departure

Our last custom tour of 2015 was a short 6-days tour in Costa Rica, which included two of the main natural habitats: The Caribbean lowlands in the northern part of the country, including visits to the famous La Selva Biological Station, the Sarapiquí River and Selva Verde Lodge, and the cloudforest of the Cordillera de Talamanca, including Cerro de la Muerte and Savegre Mountain Lodge.

Costa Rica is possibly the most popular birding destinations in Central America. At the size of a few whales, Costa Rica holds 903 bird's species, an amazing number for such a small country. The topography is the key for such a privileged and rich avifauna. Costa Rica's most important natural zones are formed by Caribbean lowlands and foothills, humid mountain forest and páramo at middle and higher elevations, and the Northern and Southern Pacific lowlands, all well connected through a good net of roads, allowing visitors to travel safely while enjoying weeks of spectacular birding.

Costa Rica also possesses an excellent tourist infrastructure for birdwatchers, with nice and comfortable lodges all over the country, the strongest democracy in Latin America, and with the US currency locally accepted throughout, all of which makes travel very easy all over the country.

Day 1

We started our trip in the gardens of the Hotel Bougainvillea, located near San José's international airport. We met early in the morning, and the birds cooperated very well, including **Hoffmann's Woodpecker** and **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**, **Rufous-naped Wren**, the secretive **White-eared Ground Sparrow**, the territorial **Rufous-tailed Hummingbird**, flocks of **Finsch's Parakeets**, the recently split **Blue-diademed Motmot**, **Clay-colored Thrush**, **Greyish Saltator**, **Social Flycatcher**, **Great Kiskadee**, **Melodious Blackbird**, and **Baltimore Oriole**, all of them allowing good views before our tasty breakfast.

We continued the trip to the Cordillera de Talamanca, birding at mid-elevations in the infamous Cerro de la Muerte ("Mountain of Death"). On the way we had good views of **White-tailed Kite**, **Great-tailed Grackle**, and **Black Vulture**. Once in Cerro de la Muerte we spent almost an hour at a small restaurant, enjoying our first hummingbird feeders of the trip, with terrific views of **Fiery-throated Hummingbird** and **Rivoli's Hummingbird**.

Other good birds this morning included the first **Yellow-thighed Finch** and **Large-footed Finch**.

We arrived at Savegre Mountain Lodge at lunchtime, and before we had our meal we enjoyed views of **Flame-colored Tanager** and **Acorn Woodpecker** at the lodge feeders. The afternoon was highly rewarding with more species, such as **Green Violetear**, **White-throated Mountaingem**, **Scintillant Hummingbird**, **Slaty Flowerpiercer**, **Sulphur-winged Parakeet**, **Black-faced Solitaire**, and awesome views of **Long-tailed Silky-flycatcher**, the handsome **Spangle-cheeked Tanager**, and **Silver-throated Tanager**.

We went to sleep after a first productive day, with the promise of quetzal for the next morning.

Day 2

Traveling after Christmas one takes the risk of finding crowds everywhere, and this day was not an exception. Several guests from the lodge and even from other lodges met early in the morning for the quetzal vigil. According to the local guides there was a pair of the most-wanted Resplendent Quetzal coming to a fruiting tree by the main road to feed every morning during the first hour of light, and consequently we had at least 30 others in the same spot, including some who didn't have a clue about the guidelines to follow when watching birds and other wildlife. Fortunately after few minutes we got the high prize with close views of a male and female **Resplendent Quetzal**. Other birds this morning included several **Sooty-capped Bush Tanagers**, **Golden-browed Chlorophonia**, brief views of **Black-cheeked Warbler** and **Flame-throated Warbler**, as well as several North American migrants like **Wilson's** and **Townsend Warblers** and **Philadelphia Vireo**.

During the afternoon we explored the Savegre Mountain Lodge's surroundings looking for Spotted Wood Quail, but despite serious efforts we could not find it. However, other birds included **Black-billed** and **Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrushes**, **Sooty Thrush**, **Mountain Thrush**, **Collared Whitestart**, the endemic **Dark Pewee**, **Northern Tufted Flycatcher**, **Scaly-breasted Hummingbird**, **Louisiana Waterthrush**, **Blue-throated Toucanet**, and **Western Osprey**.

Day 3

Today we had time to explore the lodge gardens, only to be amazed by a group of eight **Spotted Wood Quails**, including a male displaying around a female at a short distance from us. We then drove to the páramo of Los Quetzales National Park, where the localized and near-endemic **Timberline Wren** was seen quickly, but **Volcano Junco** took a lot of time to find, but just before we had to leave we managed to have excellent views of one bird running in the grass. We also got good views of **Volcano Hummingbird**, **American Kestrel**, and **Red-tailed Hawk**.

Then we left Los Quetzales National Park on the way to the Caribbean lowlands. After crossing San José and driving on the main road to the other side of a mountain pass we reached Braulio Carrillo National Park, where we stopped at a small private property to enjoy a splendid hummingbird garden with species such as **Black-crested Coquette**, **Green Thorntail**, **Rufous-tailed Hummingbird**, **White-necked Jacobin**, **Long-billed Hermit**, and **Violet-headed Hummingbird**. However, the most-wanted Snowcap sadly was denied us.

We arrived at Selva Verde Lodge in time to check in and drop our luggage before getting on a boat to explore the Sarapiquí River, enjoying views of **Great Blue Heron**, **Green Heron**, **Bare-throated Tiger Heron**, **Mangrove Swallow**, **Snowy Egret**, and **Buff-rumped Warbler**. We also had good views of a number of reptiles, including spectacled caiman, black river turtle, green iguana, and green basilisk.

After the boat trip we enjoyed good views of **White-crowned Parrot**, **Pale-vented Pigeon**, **White-tipped Dove**, and **Montezuma Oropendola**.

Day 4

We had an early start to explore the famous La Selva Biological Station, one of the most important ecological research facilities since its creation in 1968. More than 3100 scientific papers have been published based on research conducted within the La Selva forest. The station is located on 1640 hectares of lowland rainforest bordering Braulio Carrillo National Park.

We were very lucky during our morning at La Selva. Great fly-by views of **Great Green Macaw** were had, and we found **White-ruffed** and **White-collared Manakins** around the lodge clearing, followed by **Red-throated Ant Tanager**, **Cinnamon Becard**, **Rufous-winged Woodpecker**, **Pale-billed Woodpecker**, **Ochre-bellied Flycatcher**, **Masked Tityra**, **Keel-billed Toucan**, **Collared Aracari**, and **Crested Guan**. But perhaps the highlight of the day was scope views of a male **Great Curassow** perched in a big fig tree, showing its head very nicely through the scope.

A non-birding highlight was a silky anteater, the smallest and rarest species of anteater in the Americas, a very seldom-seen nocturnal creature, which spends most of its time in the canopy and subcanopy. We were lucky finding an individual sleeping at daytime at one side of the trail.

In the afternoon we went to explore the Cinco Ceibas Rainforest Reserve, located about 1.5 hours from La Selva. Unfortunately the place was very quiet and hot after lunch, and besides a flock of **Tawny-crested Tanagers** we didn't see any other bird species.

We met for dinner in the dining room of our comfortable Selva Verde Lodge and had a great dinner and a couple of cold beers to say goodbye to an exciting year of 2015 and to celebrate the coming 2016.

Day 5

Today we left Selva Verde toward the Virgen del Socorro area. On the way to this site we saw a perched **Bat Falcon** and **Grey-breasted Martin**. We visited a small restaurant, where we had breakfast while enjoying its hummingbird and fruit feeders. We got excellent views of **Prong-billed Barbet** and **Silver-throated**, **Blue-grey**, **Palm**, **Crimson-collared**, and **Common Bush Tanagers**. The hummingbird feeders attracted **Violet Sabrewing**, **Green-crowned Brilliant**, and **Coppery-headed Emerald**, one of the two country-endemic hummingbirds. The forest below the restaurant showed some flocks with **Emerald Tanager**, **Golden-winged Warbler**, **Blackburnian Warbler**, **Black-thighed Grosbeak**, **Passerini's Tanager**, **Grey-headed Chachalaca**, **Orange-chinned Parakeet**, **Slate-colored Grosbeak**, and others.

After lunch we returned to the hummingbird garden near the Braulio Carrillo National Park, where we spent over three hours waiting for the Snowcap, which once again was totally absent. But we got great views of **Black-and-yellow Tanager** among many other species.

We came back to San José to the Hotel Bougainvillea and had our last dinner together before our return flights early the next morning.

COSTA RICA CUSTOM TOUR SYSTEMATIC LIST, DECEMBER 2015/JANUARY 2016

Taxonomy: IOC (International Ornithological Congress) 5.4

Abbreviations:

(H) Heard only

(E) Country endemic

TINAMIFORMES**Tinamidae**

Slaty-breasted Tinamou (H) *Crypturellus boucardi* Only heard along the Socorro Road during our last morning. Here the subspecies *costaricensis*

GALLIFORMES**Cracidae**

Grey-headed Chachalaca *Ortalis cinereiceps* Great views of at least six individuals along the Sarapiquí River after our boat ride

Crested Guan *Penelope purpurascens* Seen at La Selva Biological Station

Black Guan *Chamaepetes unicolor* Great views of at least six different individuals during our two days at Savegre. The species is classified as near-threatened.

Great Curassow *Crax rubra* A great start of the New Year with a male roosting in a tree. While the body kept being hidden behind bromeliads, the whole head and neck were visible through the scope. The species is classified as vulnerable.

Odontophoridae

Spotted Wood Quail *Odontophorus guttatus* Incredible views of a convoy of eight birds on our last morning in Savegre. We were able to watch the mating display as well.

PELECANIFORMES**Threskiornithidae**

Green Ibis *Mesembrinibis cayennensis* Seen along the Sarapiquí River

Ardeidae

Bare-throated Tiger Heron *Tigrisoma mexicanum* One seen along the Sarapiquí River

Green Heron *Butorides virescens* One seen in flight along the Sarapiquí River

Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* A few seen during the tour

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias* Seen along the Sarapiquí River

Great Egret *Ardea alba* A couple were noticed during the tour.

Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea* One juvenile was seen on the way to the Cinco Ceibas Rainforest Reserve.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula* Seen at the Sarapiquí River

ACCIPITRIFORMES**Cathartidae**

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus* Common throughout the tour

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura* Not as common as the previous species

King Vulture *Sarcoramphus papa* Two birds were seen soaring high above La Selva Biological Station.

Pandionidae

Western Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* Seen at Savegre near the trout fishing farms

Accipitridae

White-tailed Kite *Elanus leucurus* One seen in the Caribbean lowlands and another from the window of our hotel in San José

Grey Hawk *Buteo plagiatus* Seen in the Caribbean lowlands

Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus* One bird seen well along the Virgen del Socorro road

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis* Two sightings during the tour. Here the subspecies *costaricensis*

GRUIFORMES**Rallidae**

White-throated Crake (H) *Laterallus albigularis* Heard once near the Sarapiquí River

Grey-necked Wood Rail *Aramides cajaneus* Seen crossing the road on January 1st early in the morning when we left Selva Verde Lodge



Grey-necked Wood Rail

Purple Gallinule *Porphyrio martinicus* An adult and a juvenile were seen near the Sarapiquí River.

Jacanidae

Northern Jacana *Jacana spinosa* Seen in a wet field on the way back to Selva Verde Lodge

Scolopacidae

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius* At least seven individuals were seen along the Sarapiquí River.

COLUMBIFORMES

Columbidae

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia* Common

Band-tailed Pigeon *Patagioenas fasciata* Seen in the hotel grounds at Savegre

Pale-vented Pigeon *Patagioenas cayennensis* Seen at Selva Verde

Red-billed Pigeon *Patagioenas flavirostris* One of the most widespread pigeons in Costa Rica. We got good views in San José and the Caribbean lowlands. Here the nominate subspecies

Short-billed Pigeon *Patagioenas nigrirostris* Scope views of two individuals in the Braulio Carrillo NP

Ruddy Ground Dove *Columbina talpacoti* Seen in the Caribbean lowlands

White-tipped Dove *Leptotila verreauxi* A few in the Caribbean lowlands

White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica* Quite of few encounters throughout the trip. The first was seen at the Bougainvillea Hotel.

CUCULIFORMES

Cuculidae

Groove-billed Ani *Crotophaga sulcirostris* Seen in the Caribbean lowlands

Squirrel Cuckoo *Piaya cayana* Two encounters during the trip

STRIGIFORMES

Strigidae

Costa Rican Pygmy Owl (H) *Glaucidium costaricanum* Only one heard while waiting for the Resplendent Quetzal. A regional endemic, found only in Costa Rica and Panama

APODIFORMES

Apodidae

White-collared Swift *Streptoprocne zonaris* Seen on the way to Savegre and in the Caribbean lowlands

Vaux's Swift *Chaetura vauxi* Seen at the lower parts of Cerro de la Muerte on the way to Savegre

Grey-rumped Swift *Chaetura cinereiventris* Seen at La Selva Biological Station

Trochilidae

Green Hermit *Phaethornis guy* Seen at the waterfall garden feeders. Here the subspecies *coruscus*

Long-billed Hermit *Phaethornis longirostris* Seen in the Braulio Carrillo NP garden

Violet Sabrewing *Campylopterus hemileucurus* Great views at the waterfall garden feeders. Here the subspecies *mellitus*

Scaly-breasted Hummingbird *Phaeochroa cuvierii* Only one encounter in the Caribbean lowlands. Here the subspecies *roberti*

White-necked Jacobin *Florisuga mellivora* Only two sightings in the Braulio Carrillo NP garden

Green Violetear *Colibri thalassinus* Common at Savegre and in other areas. Here the subspecies *cabanidis*

Violet-headed Hummingbird *Klais guimeti* Seen in the Braulio Carrillo NP garden

Black-crested Coquette *Lophornis helenae* Great views in the Braulio Carrillo NP garden

Green Thorntail *Discosura conversii* Seen at the Braulio Carrillo NP garden

Fiery-throated Hummingbird *Panterpe insignis* Great views on the restaurant feeders at Cerro de la Muerte. A regional endemic, found only in Costa Rica and Panama. Here the subspecies *insignis*

Coppery-headed Emerald (E) *Elvira cupreiceps* Common at the waterfall garden feeders

Stripe-tailed Hummingbird *Eupherusa eximia* We saw quite a few individuals in Savegre. Here the subspecies *egregia*

Black-bellied Hummingbird *Eupherusa nigriventris* A female seen briefly and studied with a lot of care in Savegre. Sadly, we didn't encounter the male. A regional endemic, found only in Costa Rica and Panama

Crowned Woodnymph *Thalurania colombica* Only one encounter during the trip. Here the subspecies *venusta*

Rufous-tailed Hummingbird *Amazilia tzacatl* Widespread and territorial. We had several views throughout the trip. The first individual was seen at the Hotel Bougainvillea.

White-throated Mountaingem *Lampornis castaneiventris* Seen at Savegre. A regional endemic, found in Costa Rica and Panama

White-bellied Mountaingem *Lampornis hemileucus* A male was seen well at the waterfall garden feeders. A regional endemic, found in Costa Rica and Panama

Purple-throated Mountaingem *Lampornis calolaemus* A female was seen at Cerro de la Muerte. A regional endemic, found from Nicaragua to Panama

Rivoli's Hummingbird *Eugenes fulgens* Great views at Savegre and the Cerro de la Muerte feeders. Resurrect classic English name of Rivoli's Hummingbird for *Eugenes fulgens* with split of Admirable Hummingbird (*E. spectabilis*). Genetic studies support this split (Zamudio-Beltrán & Hernández-Baños 2015).

Green-crowned Brilliant *Heliodoxa jacula* Only one seen at the waterfall garden feeders. Here the subspecies *henryi*

Purple-crowned Fairy *Heliothryx barroti* Seen in the Braulio Carrillo NP garden

Volcano Hummingbird *Selasphorus flammula* Seen at Cerro de la Muerte and Savegre. A regional endemic, found in Costa Rica and Panama



Volcano Hummingbird

Scintillant Hummingbird *Selasphorus scintilla* Another regional endemic found in Costa Rica and Panama. This species was seen in Savegre.

TROGONIFORMES

Trogonidae

Resplendent Quetzal *Pharomachrus mocinno* Great views of a pair near Savegre. Here the subspecies *costaricensis*. This is the national bird of Guatemala, and Quetzal is the name of that country's currency. The species is classified as near-threatened.

Slaty-tailed Trogon *Trogon massena* Seen at La Selva Biological Station

Gartered Trogon *Trogon caligatus* Seen near the entrance of La Selva Biological Station

Black-throated Trogon *Trogon rufus* Seen at La Selva Biological Station

CORACIIFORMES

Alcedinidae

Amazon Kingfisher *Chloroceryle amazona* Seen along the Sarapiquí River

Green Kingfisher *Chloroceryle americana* Seen along the Sarapiquí River

Ringed Kingfisher *Megaceryle torquata* Only one seen flying by along the Sarapiquí River

Momotidae

Blue-diademed Motmot *Momotus lessonii* Great views of one individual at the Hotel Bougainvillea. There are six new species as the result of the Blue-crowned Motmot split:

***Momotus coeruliceps* Blue-crowned Motmot** – NE and Central Mexico

***Momotus lessoni* Blue-diademed Motmot** – South Mexico to Central Panama

***Momotus subrufescens* Whooping Motmot** – E Panama to NC Venezuela and the Magdalena Valley of Colombia, SE Ecuador and extreme NW Peru

***Momotus bahamensis* Trinidad Motmot** – Trinidad and Tobago

***Momotus momota* Amazonian Motmot** – Venezuela (S of the Orinoco) and the Guianas S through the entire Amazon basin to extreme N Argentina and Paraguay

***Momotus aequatorialis* Andean Motmot** – The Andes from NC Colombia to NE Bolivia

Rufous Motmot *Baryphthengus martii* Seen at Selva Verde Lodge

Broad-billed Motmot *Electron platyrhynchum* Seen at La Selva Biological Station. Here the subspecies *minus*

PICIFORMES

Galbulidae

Rufous-tailed Jacamar *Galbula ruficauda* Seen at La Selva Biological Station. Here the subspecies *melanogenia*

Semnornithidae

Prong-billed Barbet *Semnornis frantzii* Fantastic views of this regional endemic at the feeders of the waterfall garden. This species and the Toucan Barbet, *Semnornis ramphastinus*, are the only two members of the family Semnornithidae.

Ramphastidae

Collared Aracari *Pteroglossus torquatus* Seen at La Selva

Blue-throated Toucanet *Aulacorhynchus caeruleogularis* Great views at the feeders of the waterfall garden. A regional endemic, found in Costa Rica and Panama.

Yellow-throated Toucan *Ramphastos ambiguus* Great views at Selva Verde Lodge and along the Sarapiquí River. Here the subspecies *swainsonii*. Yellow-throated Toucan is the appropriate English names for this species (SACC 663). The species is classified as near-threatened.

Keel-billed Toucan *Ramphastos sulfuratus* Great views in the Caribbean lowlands. Here the subspecies *brevicarinatus*. This is the national bird of Belize.

Picidae

Black-cheeked Woodpecker *Melanerpes pucherani* Seen well at the fruit feeders of Selva Verde Lodge. I managed to have the first record of this species for NW Peru not far from the Ecuadorian border: **Two new species for Peru: Lemon-rumped Tanager *Ramphocelus icteronotus* and Black-cheeked Woodpecker *Melanerpes pucherani*** by Renzo P. Piana, Fernando Angulo, Eduardo Ormaeche and Carlos Mendoza. *Cotinga* 25 (2006): 78–79

Hoffmann's Woodpecker *Melanerpes hoffmannii* Great views in the garden of the Hotel Bougainvillea. Named after Carl Hoffmann, a 19th century Costa Rican biologist, who died at a young age fighting with the infamous army of William Walker in Nicaragua in 1856

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker *Sphyrapicus varius* Great views in the Hotel Bougainvillea garden

Hairy Woodpecker *Picoides villosus* Seen on the way to Savegre Lodge

Rufous-winged Woodpecker *Piculus simplex* One individual seen at La Selva Biological Station. This is a regional endemic, found from Honduras to Panama.

Chestnut-colored Woodpecker *Celeus castaneus* Seen at La Selva Biological Station

Pale-billed Woodpecker *Campephilus guatemalensis* One individual with an obvious eye disease was seen at eye-level at La Selva Biological Station.

Acorn Woodpecker *Melanerpes formicivorus* Seen at the fruit feeder of Savegre Lodge



Acorn Woodpecker

FALCONIFORMES

Falconidae

Northern Crested Caracara *Caracara cheriway* Seen in the Caribbean lowlands and around the Hotel Bougainvillea

Laughing Falcon *Herpetotheres cachinnans* Seen at La Selva Biological Station

Bat Falcon *Falco ruficularis* Seen along the Socorro road. Here the subspecies *petoensis*

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius* One seen in the páramo of Los Quetzales National Park

PSITTACIFORMES

Psittacidae

Orange-chinned Parakeet *Brotheria jugularis* Seen in the Caribbean lowlands and also noticed at Hotel Bougainvillea

White-crowned Parrot *Pionus senilis* Scope views of a single bird in the Caribbean lowlands. This bird occurs from Mexico to Panama.

Red-lored Amazon *Amazona autumnalis* Short but good-enough views in flight of one individual in the Caribbean lowlands

Northern Mealy Amazon *Amazona guatemalae* Seen in flight in the Caribbean lowlands. Northern Mealy Amazon is split from [Southern] Mealy Amazon (Wenner et al. 2012, HBW Alive). The species is classified as near-threatened.

Sulphur-winged Parakeet *Pyrrhura hoffmanni* Flocks were daily seen around Savegre Lodge. Great scope views. A regional endemic, found in Costa Rica and Panama

Olive-throated Parakeet *Eupsittula nana* Seen in the Caribbean lowlands. Here the subspecies *astec*

Great Green Macaw *Ara ambiguus* Three birds passed flying by near La Selva Biological Station, allowing good views of them. Here the nominate subspecies. The species is classified as endangered.

Scarlet Macaw (H) *Ara macao* We heard a pair near the Cinco Ceibas Rainforest Reserve, but they were not visible. Here the nominate subspecies

Finsch's Parakeet *Psittacara finschi* Great views in the Hotel Bougainvillea garden. This species ranges from Nicaragua to Panama. Named after Herman Otto Finsch, a German ornithologist, collector and author (1839-1917)

PASSERIFORMES

Furnariidae

Ruddy Treerunner *Margarornis rubiginosus* Great views near Savegre. Here the nominate subspecies

Olivaceous Woodcreeper *Sittasomus griseicapillus* Seen in the Caribbean lowlands. Here the subspecies *sylvioides* that ranges from Mexico to Costa Rica. Keep track of different subspecies, because it's going to be split at least into four different species.

Wedge-billed Woodcreeper *Glyphorhynchus spirurus* Seen at La Selva Biological Station. Here the subspecies *subestus*

Cocoa Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus susurrans* Seen in the Caribbean lowlands. Here the subspecies *costaricensis*

Streak-headed Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes souleyetii* Seen at La Selva Biological Station

Spot-crowned Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes affinis* Seen near Savegre Lodge

Thamnophilidae

Fasciated Antshrike *Cymbilaimus lineatus* One seen well at La Selva Biological Station

Black-crowned Antshrike *Thamnophilus atrinucha* Seen at La Selva Biological Station

Chestnut-backed Antbird (H) *Myrmeciza exsul* Heard distantly at Cinco Ceibas Rainforest Reserve

Tyrannidae

Mountain Elaenia *Elaenia frantzii* Several sightings in the Savegre Lodge grounds

Torrent Tyrannulet *Serpophaga cinerea* Seen along the river near Savegre Lodge

Mistletoe Tyrannulet *Zimmerius parvus* A few birds were seen in small mixed flocks. *Zimmerius parvus* is split from Paltry Tyrannulet (*Z. vilissimus*) (Rheindt et al. 2013).

Olive-striped Flycatcher *Mionectes olivaceus* Often seen in mixed flocks at mid-elevations

Ochre-bellied Flycatcher *Mionectes oleagineus* Seen in the Caribbean lowlands

Common Tody-Flycatcher *Todirostrum cinereum* Seen in the Braulio Carrillo NP garden

Long-tailed Tyrant *Colonia colonus* Seen in the Caribbean lowlands

Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans* Seen along the river from the Virgen del Socorro bridge

Northern Tufted Flycatcher *Mitrephanes phaeocercus* Seen near Savegre

Dark Pewee (E) *Contopus lugubris* Great views near Savegre

Eastern Wood Pewee *Contopus virens* A few sightings throughout the trip

Yellowish Flycatcher *Empidonax flavescens* Seen near Savegre

Social Flycatcher *Myiozetetes similis* A few were seen during the trip.

Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus* Common in the Caribbean lowlands

Grey-capped Flycatcher *Myiozetetes granadensis* One seen at La Selva Biological Station

White-ringed Flycatcher *Conopias albobittatus* One seen in the Caribbean lowlands

Boat-billed Flycatcher *Megarynchus pitangua* One seen in the Caribbean lowlands

Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus* Common throughout the trip

Rufous Mourner *Rhytipterna holerythra* Great views of one bird at La Selva Biological Station

Cotingidae

Snowy Cotinga *Carpodectes nitidus* A roosting bird was seen at night during our night walk at Selva Verde Lodge.

Pipridae

White-ruffed Manakin *Corapipo altera* Amazing views of a male at La Selva Biological Station

White-collared Manakin *Manacus candei* Great views of a male at La Selva Biological Station

Tityridae

Masked Tityra *Tityra semifasciata* Seen at La Selva Biological Station

Black-crowned Tityra *Tityra inquisitor* Seen at Selva Verde Lodge

Barred Becard *Pachyramphus versicolor* Good views of one male along Cerro de la Muerte

Cinnamon Becard *Pachyramphus cinnamomeus* Seen at Selva Verde Lodge

Vireonidae

Rufous-browed Peppershrike *Cyclarhis gujanensis* Seen at La Selva Biological Station

Yellow-winged Vireo *Vireo carmioli* Seen on the way to Savegre

Philadelphia Vireo *Vireo philadelphicus* Only one encounter during the trip

Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus* Seen at Selva Verde Lodge

Lesser Greenlet *Hylophilus decurtatus* Seen on the way to Savegre

Ptiliognatidae

Long-tailed Silky-flycatcher *Ptiliogonys caudatus* Great views of this spectacular bird at Savegre

Hirundinidae

Mangrove Swallow *Tachycineta bicolor* Close-up views of this species along the Sarapiquí River

Grey-breasted Martin *Progne chalybea* Seen near Selva Verde Lodge

Blue-and-white Swallow *Notiochelidon cyanoleuca* Seen from the Virgen del Socorro stakeout

Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis* Great views on the way to Selva Verde Lodge

Southern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis* Seen in the lowlands

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* Only one seen during the tour

Troglodytidae

Rufous-naped Wren *Campylorhynchus rufinucha* Great views at Hotel Bougainvillea

Stripe-breasted Wren *Cantorchilus thoracicus* Seen at La Selva Biological Station. A regional endemic, it ranges from Nicaragua to Panama.

House Wren *Troglodytes aedon* Seen on January 1st

Timberline Wren *Thryorchilus browni* Great views of one individual at Los Quetzales National Park. This is a near-endemic, found in Costa Rica and Panama.

Grey-breasted Wood Wren *Henicorhina leucophrys* Seen at Savegre

White-breasted Wood Wren (H) *Henicorhina leucosticta* Heard on a few occasions

Turdidae

Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus gracilirostris* Great views at Savegre

Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus frantzii* Seen twice at Savegre

Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus* Only one bird was seen at Selva Verde Lodge.

Sooty Thrush *Turdus nigrescens* Seen well at Savegre. A near-endemic, found in Costa Rica and Panama

Mountain Thrush *Turdus plebejus* This Central American thrush was seen well at Savegre.

Clay-colored Thrush *Turdus grayi* Common throughout the trip. This is the national bird of Costa Rica.

Black-faced Solitaire *Myadestes melanops* Great views at Savegre. A near-endemic, found in Costa Rica and Panama



Black-faced Solitaire

Fringillidae

Yellow-bellied Siskin *Spinus xanthogastrus* Seen well at Savegre

Olive-backed Euphonia *Euphonia gouldi* Seen at La Selva Biological Station

White-vented Euphonia *Euphonia minuta* Seen well at La Selva Biological Station

Tawny-capped Euphonia *Euphonia anneae* Seen well at Braulio Carrillo NP

Golden-browed Chlorophonia *Chlorophonia callophrys* Spectacular views of this species near Savegre. A near-endemic, found in Costa Rica and Panama

Parulidae

Louisiana Waterthrush *Parkesia motacilla* One bird was seen twice in the rapid-water river at Savegre.

Golden-winged Warbler *Vermivora chrysoptera* This handsome warbler was seen nicely along the Virgen del Socorro road. The species is classified as near-threatened.

Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia* Seen in the Caribbean lowlands

Flame-throated Warbler *Oreothlypis gutturalis* Splendid views of this near-endemic species in Savegre. Found in Costa Rica and Panama

Tennessee Warbler *Leiothlypis peregrina* A few individuals were seen throughout the trip.

Cerulean Warbler *Setophaga cerulea* One seen near the Virgen del Socorro road

Blackburnian Warbler *Setophaga fusca* Nice views along the Virgen del Socorro road

Chestnut-sided Warbler *Setophaga pensylvanica* One of the most common North American warblers in Costa Rica this time of the year

Townsend's Warbler *Setophaga townsendi* A few seen during the tour. Named after John Kirk Townsend, a 19th century US ornithologist, author and collector

Buff-rumped Warbler *Myiothlypis fulvicauda* Seen well at Selva Verde Lodge

Black-cheeked Warbler *Basileuterus melanogenys* Brief but good views of this near-endemic near Savegre. Found in Costa Rica and Panama

Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla* Several seen along Cerro de la Muerte on the way to Savegre. Named after Thomas B. Wilson, a 19th century US ornithologist

Slate-throated Whitestart *Myioborus miniatus* Great views along the Virgen del Socorro road

Collared Whitestart *Myioborus torquatus* Spectacular views of this near-endemic in the Savegre area. Found in Costa Rica and Panama

Icteridae

Eastern Meadowlark *Sturnella magna* Seen along the highway outside San José

Chestnut-headed Oropendola *Psarocolius wagleri* A few sightings only

Montezuma Oropendola *Psarocolius montezuma* Common in the Caribbean lowlands, especially at Selva Verde Lodge. Named after Montezuma Xocoyotzin, 1480-1520, emperor of the Aztecs during the pre-hispanic Mexican civilization that was conquered by the Spaniard Hernán Cortés

Scarlet-rumped Cacique *Cacicus microrhynchus* Seen at La Selva Biological Station

Baltimore Oriole *Icterus galbula* A few encounters throughout the trip. We saw the first bird at the Bougainvillea Hotel.

Melodious Blackbird *Dives dives* Several encounters with this Central American blackbird

Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus* One of the most common birds of open areas in Costa Rica

Coerebidae

Bananaquit *Coereba flaveola* Several in the Caribbean lowlands. Here the subspecies *colombiana*

Emberizidae

Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis* Seen at mid and high elevations

Volcano Junco *Junco vulcani* It took a while, but fortunately we had great views of this páramo species in Los Quetzales NP. This near-endemic is found in Costa Rica and Panama.

White-eared Ground Sparrow *Melospiza leucotis* Great views of this shy species in the garden of the Hotel Bougainvillea

Orange-billed Sparrow *Arremon aurantirostris* Seen in the lowlands

Chestnut-capped Brush Finch *Arremon brunneinucha* Seen at mid elevations near Savegre

Large-footed Finch *Pezopetes capitalis* Great views on the way to Savegre. This is a near-endemic, found in Costa Rica and Panama.

White-naped Brush Finch *Atlapetes albinucha* Seen around the cabins at Savegre Lodge

Yellow-thighed Finch *Pseliophorus tibialis* Great views at higher elevations on the way to Savegre

Common Bush Tanager *Chlorospingus flavopectus* Seen in the cloudforest of Savegre

Sooty-capped Bush Tanager *Chlorospingus pileatus* Great views on the way to Savegre. This is a near-endemic, found in Costa Rica and Panama.

Thraupidae

Dusky-faced Tanager *Mitrospingus cassinii* A few sightings of this species in the lowlands

Tawny-crested Tanager *Tachyphonus delatrii* A flock was seen crossing the road on the way to Cinco Ceibas Rainforest Reserve

Crimson-collared Tanager *Ramphocelus sanguinolentus* This Central America tanager was seen in the Virgen del Socorro area.

Passerini's Tanager *Ramphocelus passerinii* Several sightings of this Central American tanager. Named after Carlos Passerini, a 19th century Italian naturalist and collector

Blue-grey Tanager *Thraupis episcopus* Common in Costa Rica

Palm Tanager *Thraupis palmarum* Common in the lowlands

Plain-colored Tanager *Tangara inornata* Seen at La Selva

Emerald Tanager *Tangara florida* Great views of one individual in a mixed flock at Virgen del Socorro



Emerald Tanager

Silver-throated Tanager *Tangara icterocephala* Great views at several locations, including Braulio Carrillo NP

Golden-hooded Tanager *Tangara larvata* Great views at several locations, including the Virgen del Socorro area

Spangle-cheeked Tanager *Tangara dowii* Crippling views of this truly handsome bird at Savegre. A near-endemic, found in Costa Rica and Panama

Red-legged Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes cyaneus* Seen at Selva Verde Lodge

Green Honeycreeper *Chlorophanes spiza* Seen at Braulio Carrillo NP

Black-and-yellow Tanager *Chrysothlypis chrysomelas* Great views of this tanager at Braulio Carrillo NP. A near-endemic, found in Costa Rica and Panama

Slaty Flowerpiercer *Diglossa plumbea* Seen at Savegre Lodge feeders

Blue-black Grassquit *Volatinia jacarina* Seen in the lowlands

Variable Seedeater *Sporophila corvina* Common in the lowlands. Here the subspecies *hoffmani*

White-collared Seedeater *Sporophila torqueola* Two encounters with this species in the lowlands

Yellow-faced Grassquit *Tiaris olivaceus* Seen in the lowlands

Cardinalidae

Flame-colored Tanager *Piranga bidentata* Common in the feeders at Savegre Lodge

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra* A couple of sightings throughout the trip

Red-throated Ant Tanager *Habia fuscicauda* Seen at La Selva Biological Station

Black-faced Grosbeak *Caryothraustes poliogaster*

Black-thighed Grosbeak *Pheucticus tibialis* Great views along the Virgen del Socorro road. A near-endemic, found in Costa Rica and Panama

Slate-colored Grosbeak *Saltator grossus* Great views of this shy species near Virgen del Socorro

Black-headed Saltator *Saltator atriceps* Brief views of this species at the feeders in Virgen del Socorro

Buff-throated Saltator *Saltator maximus* Several sightings

Greyish Saltator *Saltator coerulescens* Seen in the garden of the Hotel Bougainvillea. Here the subspecies *brevicaudus*

Blue-black Grosbeak *Cyanocompsa cyanoides* Only one sighting

WILDLIFE

Variiegated squirrel *Sciurus variegatoides* Seen in the lowlands

Red-tailed squirrel *Sciurus granatensis* Common at higher elevations

Tent-making bat *Uroderma bilobatum* Its common name comes from its curious behavior of constructing tents out of large, fan-shaped leaves. These roosts provide excellent protection from the tropical rains, and a single tent roost may house several bats at once.

Black-eared opossum *Didelphis marsupialis* Only one seen in the garden of the Hotel Bougainvillea

Hoffmann's two-toed sloth *Choloepus hoffmanni* One seen during the trip

Brown-throated sloth *Bradypus variegatus* Nice views of two individuals in the Caribbean lowlands

Silky anteater *Cyclopes didactylus* An amazing encounter with this seldom-seen creature along the trails of La Selva Biological Station. This is the smallest of the anteaters. Some authors suggest that the silky anteater usually dwells in silk cotton trees (genus *Ceiba*). Because of its resemblance to the seed pod fibers of these trees, it can use the trees as camouflage and avoid attacks by predators such as hawks and especially harpy eagles. During the day they typically sleep curled up in a ball.

Mantled howler monkey *Alouatta palliata* A family was seen in the Caribbean lowlands.

Kinkajou *Potos flavus* Two seen during the nocturnal hike at Selva Verde Lodge

Collared peccary *Pecari tajacu* A group was seen at La Selva Biological Station

Common caiman *Caiman crocodilus* Seen along the Sarapiquí River

Black river turtle *Rhinoclemmys funerea* Seen along the Sarapiquí River

Green basilisk *Basiliscus plumifrons* Seen at Selva Verde Lodge and along the Sarapiquí River. This lizard is able to run short distances across water, using both its feet and tail for support, an ability shared with other basilisks and the Malaysian sail-finned lizard, *Hydrosaurus amboinensis*. In Costa Rica this has earned the plumed basilisk the nickname "Jesus Christ lizard". It is also an excellent swimmer and can stay under water for up to 30 minutes. The green basilisk's generic name *Basiliscus* is taken from the legendary reptilian creature of European mythology which could turn a man to stone by its gaze, the Basilisk.

Common green iguana *Iguana iguana* Several sightings in the lowlands

Four-lined ameiva *Ameiva quadrilineata* A common lizard in the lowlands

Green-and-black poison frog *Dendrobates auratus* One of the most striking-looking Neotropical poison frogs. Nice views at Selva Verde Lodge after the rain

Strawberry poison frog *Oophaga pumilio* A truly tiny beauty. This frog with red-and-blue legs was seen at Selva Verde Lodge after the rain. In Costa Rica it is also called the blue jeans frog. This frog is perhaps best known for its wide variation in color, including differently colored specimens for each island in the Bocas del Toro Archipelago in Panama.

Red-eyed treefrog *Agalychnis callidryas* Another beauty seen nicely at Selva Verde Lodge