

Costa Rica

22 March – 6 April, 2008

Trip Report

Leaders: Tim Earl and Willy Alfaro

Driver: William Alfaro-Cortes

Highlights

These are the highlight list as nominated by individual group members:

- Seeing our first Ironwood tree in flower, teeming with hummingbirds and tanagers.
- Roseate Spoonbills in flight from horseback at La Ensenada. The ride was an extra booked by part of the group and turned out to be a highlight in its own right (though a little painful for some the next day).
- Great company on the trip. This Travelling Naturalist group got on well, as is usually the case on our holidays.
- The wonderful time at Rancho Solimar where we Jabiru on the nest and close to the bus, spectacular Spectacled Owls roosting and two male Long-tailed Manakins sitting side by side on a branch singing in duet. These two birds were voted top birds on the whole trip. It was quite simply a magical and moving sight.
- Watching a party of Golden-browed Chlorophonias at the end of a wonderful walk at Savegre Lodge. This species is so brilliantly colourful as to be almost unbelievable.
- Sitting on the observation deck at the Arenal Lodge watching the beautiful sunset on one side and red-hot lava rocks rolling down the mountain like spinning Catherine wheels on the other.
- Watching a ballet performed by White-necked Jacobins from a bedroom balcony at Arenal Observatory Lodge. The discovery of a Black-crested Coquette the following day was also a highlight.
- A pair of Scarlet Macaws which sat preening each other outside their nest hole.
- The mangrove boat trip at La Ensenada... indeed, all the boat trips we did were wonderful chances to visit pristine habitats quietly.
- Seeing our first lek of manakins – Orange Collared – and hearing them make their electric wing-snapping sounds. We were to see White-collared and Long-tailed Manakins also.
- The swimming pools around the country were a fabulous way to cool down and much appreciated.
- The brilliant sight of hundreds of White-collared Swifts descending down the San Fernando waterfall to nest behind it.
- Watching a small Brown Basilisk literally walk across the surface of a stream. One of its Emerald cousins did the same on one of the Tortuguero boat trips.

Habitats

Five different major habitats, plus many micro-habitats, in a country with such a vast biodiversity as Costa Rica were guaranteed to produce a long list of birds and mammals.

We began at high altitude in the thin air of **montane oak forests** where nights were cold and days cool as we started the great adventure based in the Savegre Lodge. Magnificent oaks dominated the views as they grew to great heights while clinging to steep valley sides. Moss and bromeliads festooned the trees. Here we found Collared Whitestart, Flame-throated Warbler, Red-faced Spinetail, Mountain Robin and Band-tailed Pigeon, as expected.

The Tárcoles River marks a divide between the dry northern Guanacaste region and the wetter southern regions. In the Carara National Park's **wetter rain forest** of the Pacific coast we found massive trees with their tall clean boles and impressive buttresses, home of the Neotropical speciality families of antbirds, manakins (including Orange-collared Manakin) and an adult and baby Kinkajou.

Crossing to the dry northern Pacific coast at La Ensenada a mixture of habitats was explored. Trees in the basic **tropical dry forest** of Guanacaste were leafless making the birding easier as were found Banded Wren, Black-headed Trogon and Scrub Euphonia. Forest was interspersed with burnt **savannah-pastureland** where Crested Caracara, Rufous-naped Wren, White-throated Magpie-jays and Howler Monkeys entertained us. **Mangrove swamps** were explored by boat at high tide to find Boat-billed heron, Mangrove Warbler, Mangrove Vireo and Mangrove Swallow, while the low tide **mud flats** of the Tempisque Basin produced Brown Pelicans, waders, gulls and terns. The **seasonal marshes** were wet attracting waders, Roseate Spoonbills, White Ibis, Jabiru and Wood Stork.

Close to Volcán Arenal we entered lower-middle elevation **moist-wet forest** with its understory of woody shrubs where White-necked Jacobin and Bay-headed Tanager were seen. The great prize was a Black-collared Coquette.

At La Selva Biological Station we entered true **lowland rain forest** and experienced the micro-habitats of **understory** (with its large-leaved palms and herbs where Great Tinamou, Antbirds and Jacobins dwell) sunlight-dappled **forest streams** (with their large leaved Heliconias and vine tangles) in which trogons sit quietly, and an **open cacao plantation** trail on which we saw Pale-billed Woodpeckers and Anole Lizards.

Finally, we visited the **riparian rainforest** of the Caribbean coast with its spectacularly high trees, White-faced, Howler and Spider Monkeys, Sungebes, Black River Turtles and Spectacled Caymans.

This is the Costa Rica 2008 story:

Daily Diary

Saturday 22 March: to Costa Rica

We met at Heathrow and caught the Continental Airways flight to New York where some of us has good views of the Empire State Building and Statue of Liberty as we landed. The long wait for Immigration was frustrating but we were in plenty of time for our flight to San José where we were met and transferred to the Doubletree Hotel by Hilton efficiently, enjoying a complimentary drink and canapés before turning in.

Sunday 23 March: San Jose, Tapanti area and Cerro de la Muerte

Sunny with a few clouds, 22°C

Our first day was near perfect, we decided at the evening meal as the group toasted Costa Rica which had provided us with a wonderful start to the tour. A 6am pre-breakfast walk attracted a full house and we enjoyed sorting out some of the more common birds. Bucket-loads of Clay-coloured Thrushes, Costa Rica's national bird, were seen along with Masked Tityra, Rufous-naped Wren, Melodious Blackbird, Greyish Saltator, Rufous-tailed Hummingbird and Hoffmann's Woodpecker among others. We walked beside a pretty golf course and watched a Variegated Squirrel dash nervously onto a fairway, possibly in search of balls.

Willy and William were waiting for us at breakfast and were on the road by 8am, driving through San José with ease as it was Easter Sunday and traffic was light. During a comfort-stop coffee at the Kiri Restaurant we had great views of a stunning Violet Sabrewing which came in to feed from a hummingbird feeder, and a Passerini's Tanager posing in a nearby bush. The latter we nicknamed 'liar, liar, pants on fire' because of the male's brilliant red rump. Several were seen in the area. A feeding station loaded with fruit was attracting a pair of Palm Tanagers and several Montezuma Oropendolas and it was to search for the latter's colony that we set off back down the road, also to sample birds of the Tapanti area.

Masked Tityras and Piratic Flycatcher were first to fall on our gaze, followed swiftly by Grey-capped and Great Crested Flycatchers. An Osprey which flew past may well have been the same bird seen 10 minutes later. The first of several miniscule Mistletoe (Paltry) Tyrannulets was studied carefully as was a Brown Violetear.

A pair of Tropical Gnatcatchers was feeding with a female Chestnut-sided Warbler while views of a perched Northern Roughwing Swallow were flowed some time later by two of its Southern cousins.

The Montezuma Oropendolas were from a colony in an isolated eucalyptus and delighted us by the males' noisy – 'gold swinging' – displays. A colony of Chestnut-headed Oropendolas was found nearby soon afterwards. Willy pointed out a female Giant Cowbird which, in an exciting development, started investigating nests for a suitable host to raise her offspring... any nest with just one oropendola egg would have received a second from her. Three Swallow-tailed Kites were seen quite high up and Charles found a Black-and-white Warbler close to the oropendola colony.

As it was Easter Sunday there were many local people out picnicking or driving their families into the countryside. This made life busy but extremely jovial and we were all impressed by the warmth and friendliness shown to us.

Lunch was eaten back at the Kiri Restaurant and we settled down for the two-hour drive up into the Cerro de la Meurte highlands. Here, in cooler but pleasant air, we walked a section of the gravel road down to the Savegre Lodge watching Sooty and Mountain Thrushes, Common and Sooty-capped Brush Tanagers, Summer and Flame-coloured Tanagers and a stunning White-throated Mountain-gem. A Long-tailed Silky-flycatcher was a great delight posing for pictures to be taken.

We arrived at the lodge at 6pm in time for a shower before dinner at 7pm and the call-over.

March 24: Savegre Lodge short forest and river trails

Sunny, some cloud, cool early on, heavy rain from 2.15pm to 3.30pm, 20°C

The excitement of yesterday continued with a succession of exciting birds of which at least 12 are endemic to Costa Rica. We started the day with a walk around the lodge cabins seeing nothing new until a Central American Dwarf Squirrel (Alfaro's Squirrel) popped up on a tree close to us. Things picked up as the sun rose above the steep valley sides and things began to move around. A Hairy Woodpecker started the ball rolling quickly followed by both Volcano and Scintillant Hummingbirds chasing each other around. These are tiny species and we wondered how big their eggs must be. Making our way to the restaurant we saw several Slaty Flowerpiercers in the colourful borders. A Green Violetear was admired briefly until our attention was drawn to the first of many 'clown-faced peckers' – Acorn Woodpeckers which have distinctive facial markings. It was surprising to see parties of up to five of these charismatic birds at a time. Our last new bird before breakfast was a cracker – a Magnificent Hummingbird zipping in to the feeders outside the restaurant. It was the first of several we saw during the day.

The main morning walk was around several open areas until we entered a forest area to walk a track up the gentle slope of a volcano. In the open areas we heard and then found a Black-thighed Grosbeak and several Rufous-capped Nightingale-thrushes, a delightful if somewhat drab species. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak failed to oblige many but the first of several Mountain Elandias was studied carefully (the tyrant flycatchers are a great challenge) before we switched attention to a pair of colourful Collared Redstarts. These birds go around in pairs, Willy told us and so it proved... we saw three pairs during the day.

The forest trail was quiet until we paused at a spot overlooking the stream as Common Brush Tanagers could be heard. Suddenly eight gasps were issued simultaneously as a female Resplendent Quetzal dropped into the stream and started to bathe no more than five metres away from us. She then hopped up onto a low branch and continued her toilet, straightening feathers (exquisite plumage she had) and ruffling them occasionally. Several perches were used before she finally slipped away into the forest. Whoopee! A female Collared Trogon joined us watching the quetzal for a while and we wondered at just how lucky we had been.

Another group came down the path and told us they had seen a male nearer the lodge but we were sure that the 'Attenborough moment' shared with the female was a better highlight.

Continuing up the trail we were suddenly surrounded by a feeding flock of birds which gradually rose higher into the trees. Golden-winged and Flame-throated Warblers, Ruddy Treerunners and Red-faced Spinetails, Yellow-winged Vireo and Yellow-thighed Finches were teased out of the scene. Suddenly a large long-tailed bird flew past us as we gazed into the canopy. It was a male Resplendent Quetzal and it had perched just 30 metres away. We walked a little closer and enjoyed brilliant views over the next five minutes. Wow! This was brilliant.

Eventually he too disappeared and we continued along the trail watching Sulphur-winged Parakeets and a pair of Tufted Flycatchers. Breaking out of the forest at the end of the path we enjoyed a few blackberries picked by William who had accompanied us for the morning. Willy said that we should look for raptors as the open area we were in was good for sightings. Had he already seen the three Swallow-tailed Kites which came past seconds later? No, but it was uncanny. He pointed out the squeaky-gate call of Black-faced Solitaire before we retraced our steps down the trail. Luckily we were to see several of these striking thrushes during the course of the day. The walk ended with sightings of Silver-throated Tanager and about 50 White-collared Swifts.

Arranging to meet at 2.30 after an early lunch we retired for solo walks, rest or note-making. It started to rain at 2.15 and by 2.30 was throwing it down. There was a lull allowing us to gather at the restaurant where we enjoyed an hour's hummingbird watching as they zoomed into feeders. A few large flocks of hirundines came over and we found a couple of Rufous-collared Swifts.

Our delayed walk was down the river watching a Boat-billed Flycatcher, Torrent Tyrannulets, and Louisiana Waterthrush but failing to find American Dipper. A male Resplendent Quetzal had been found by another group but it had just started growing its tail and was not a patch on our earlier bird. Two Emerald Toucanets were keeping it company, however, and we enjoyed great views of these.

The walk ended on a high when Jill found four Golden-browed Chlorophonias which were in stunning immature plumage. Two Silver-throated Tanagers were with them and as we enjoyed this wonderful sight an adult chlorophonia was discovered. What a fabulous bird. The combination of green, yellow and blue plumage was just stunning.

March 25: Cerro de la Muerte highlands, Domincal beach and estuary, road to Quepos

Mist and clag at 11,300ft, sunny with cloud, increasingly warm and humid, 6°C to 32°C

After a rather bad start, this travelling day turned into a brilliant session of armchair wildlife watching. Low cloud and clag took the edge of a walk at 11,300ft. The plants were terrific, if wet, but birds were few and far between. A Volcano Hummingbird put on a super display and a Mountain Elaenia was seen briefly but little else. We retired to La Georgina café for hot chocolate and hummingbirds.

Star of the hummers' show at the café's feeders was Fiery-throated Hummingbird although the many Magnificent Hummingbirds and one or two Green Violetears made up a super supporting cast. Large-footed and Yellow-thighed Finches were watched feeding the garden compost heap and a Black-capped Flycatcher, endemic to the highlands, was seen well before we left.

A Swallow-tailed Kite swooped down and passed us just 30 metres away at the Vista del Villa café causing gasps of admiration. The place was loaded with birds which included Buff-throated and Black-

headed Saltators, Cherrie's, Silver-throated and Summer Tanagers, Chestnut-capped Brush Finch and a brilliant Green-crowned Brilliant.

Scores of Magnificent Frigatebirds were in the air above the Pacific Ocean when we arrived at Domincal beach. Most were too far away for close examination, however, and we switched our attention to the flooded estuary of a small river where Willets were roosting while a Tricoloured Heron fished close by. Mangrove Swallows were feeding over the water and a Little Blue Heron was found on the other side.

A line of Brown Pelicans flew past each demonstrating how they get uplift: as wind hits the waves and from the bird in front (the rear pelican was much higher than the leading bird) while utilising the 'ground effect' for optimum flying. A couple of Ospreys were seen and a flock of Laughing Gulls flew past chuckling to themselves and us. I found a Zone-tailed Hawk soaring above the nearby hill-line and a flock of four Orange-chinned Parakeets shot past us.

We started a memorable afternoon of armchair birding after a sandwich, driving from the beach to Quepos on an unmetalled road. William stopped many times for us to enjoy special moments such as Red-crowned Woodpeckers setting up home in a dead palm, a Yellow-headed Caracara perched, one Common Black-hawk which seemed to be searching a ploughed field for something as it walked to and fro. 'Where did I leave my spectacles?'

A Laughing Falcon must have had a joke at our expense as we examined it atop an electricity pole although nobody understood the punch-line. It was easy to identify a Roadside Hawk which was perched, er, next to the road and a passing Northern Crested Caracara was highly distinctive too.

Some of the highlights came from seeing several species at the same time. A small stream which had a Green Heron perched on a pipe was also home to a pair of 1.5metre Spectacled Caymans. And while we watched them a Bare-throated Tiger-heron gave us stunning views as it hunted along the bank only a few metres away. A larger river had Barn and Cliff Swallows hawking over Black-bellied Whistling Ducks, a Great Blue Heron, Snowy and Great Egrets. We stopped to sort out three Groove-billed Ani and noticed a Solitary Sandpiper in a stream beneath them. Seconds later a White Ibis trotted into view accompanied by a white-phased Little Blue Heron. Basilisk Lizards and a Spiny-tailed Iguana, a Roseate Spoonbill and no less than four Bare-throated Tiger Herons were seen. We all agreed that if the road is ever metalled (increasing vehicle speeds and banning stopping) it will be a sad day.

March 26: Villa Lapas and Carara national park, the Tárcoles estuary and bridge

Sunny, warm and humid, 32°C

After a day of travelling it was great to slow down and enjoy the birds at Hotel Villa Lapas and Carara national park. Howler Monkeys were singing when we met at 6am for a productive session (it could hardly be called a walk) during which we found Buff-rumped Warblers, Little Greenbuls, Philadelphia and Red-eyed Vireos. Nine White-ibis were feeding happily in the river which also attracted a pair of Green Kingfishers and a Basilisk Lizard.

The main stage was held by just a few of the many trees in which hosts of birds were performing. Stars of the show were a pair of Chestnut-mandibled Toucans which were nesting in an abandoned woodpecker hole... just. The fit was so tight that one of the birds could barely get in and we wondered if it could turn around and exit the hole. It did, phew!

There were masses of small birds too and we added Common Tody-flycatcher, Blue Dacnis, Green and Blue Honeycreepers to our list. Mike and I saw Western Wood Pewee and Cinnamon Becard before we retired to the restaurant for breakfast, watching Yellow-throated Euphonia, Long-tailed Hermit, Scaly-breasted and Steely-vented Hummingbirds on the way. What a start to the day.

A walk through the open woodland trail in Carara national park was our main morning activity, finding a super pair of Royal Crested Flycatchers early on. Two birds with similar calls had us struggling for a while before we finally identified Northern Bentbill and Slate-headed Tody-flycatcher, the latter looking similar to Black-headed Pygmy-tyrant which does not occur in the area – hence confusion.

Dusky Antbird, Black-hooded Antshrike and Dot-winged Antwren were seen well, good representatives of dark overgrown rainforest while Ochre-bellied Flycatcher eating fruit caused more debate.

Eventually we reached a lagoon where a flock of Boat-billed Herons were nesting – one of the chicks had fallen from a nest and was crocodile-bait on a stick in the water beneath. Northern Jacanas were feeding on the banks where we also found Roseate Spoonbill, Anhinga, Ringed and Belted Kingfishers. A beautiful Yellow Warbler was our last bird of the morning.

Three Crested Guans were pointed out to us high in a tree as we left for the afternoon after a long and welcome siesta during which some had been swimming while Gill visited the local village craft centre. We went to the Tárcoles estuary where the birds were well out to sea – hopes of tern and wader roosts were washed away by a very high spring tide. We did get good views of Magnificent Frigatebirds, fishing Brown Pelicans and at least one Royal Tern.

our last stop was the (in)famous Tárcoles bridge. Scarlet Macaws fly past on dusk to roost in nearby mangroves and the bridge is famous as the best viewpoint. It is infamous for the heavy traffic which thunders past with little regard for people – it is a popular vantage point for locals and tourists. Nevertheless, we enjoyed 30 minutes watching the macaws – about 25 went past during our visit – and lots of other birds besides. Being on a river the expected herons and egrets were numerous and included a magnificent Bare-throated Tiger Heron, a Wood Stork flew past giving great views as did a superb Roseate Spoonbill. An Amazon Kingfisher perched on a fallen log while a Black-crowned Night Heron fished nearby. Three Southern Lapwings called noisily as they flew under the bridge and a Red-winged Blackbird, possibly on its way to the USA, posed beautifully. It was a great end to the day.

March 27: Carara national park and onwards to La Ensenada Lodge

Hot and sunny, less humid but temperatures rising further north, 34°C

A Kinkajou with its baby was the day's greatest surprise at Carara national park as we started a pre-breakfast walk. It was shaking branches about 30metres above our heads, a little like angry monkeys do.

We were able to see the adult and youngster for a few minutes before they slunk into a huge hole in the tree. Kinkajous are nocturnal members of the Raccoon family so we were fortunate to see these individuals up so late (it was about 6.30am, an hour after sunrise).

We were led to them by a pair of Scarlet Macaws which were nesting some way below in the same tree. They came in a few minutes later and sat on a branch in front of the nest hole preening each other... such an endearing sight (it's a pity they let themselves down with their raucous voices, Ed).

Deeper into the forest we saw Chestnut-backed Antbird, Barred Antshrike, Cocoa, Streak-throated and Northern Barred Woodcreepers. Six White-crowned Parrots were seen rather badly high in the canopy before we turned back. A beautiful pair of Black-throated Trogons and a Northern Waterthrush, which allowed comparison with the Louisiana Waterthrush of yesterday, were our last birds of Carara National park.

We looked for Long-tailed Manakins back at the hotel after breakfast without success but our walk took us over a rickety suspension bridge into some forest where the birds' lek site was found. Yellow-crowned and Yellow-throated Euphonias were seen at the hotel before we left for La Ensenada.

Our journey took us through the town of Orotino where a walk around a busy park resulted in the discovery of a pair of Black-and-white Owls which were roosting in one of the trees. A Turquoise-crowned Motmot put on a show for us before I managed to locate a pair of Two-toed Sloths an ice-cream seller had told me about. Amazingly for sloths, one moved showing that it was not a stuffed specimen, although I was sure the leaf on its belly had been there five years ago.

The Mata Lemon Estuary was loaded with birds but the vast majority were Laughing Gulls and we had to search for a few Whimbrels and Spotted Sandpipers.

Our last birds of the day were two Pacific Screech Owls roosting at the entrance to the restaurant at La Ensenada when we arrived rather earlier than expected. The rest of the day was spent in a go-as-you-please session with people either swimming or doing their own birding with satisfying success.

A Howler Monkey was found eating mangoes above the restaurant roof and to William's disgust was left to take a couple of bites out of each one rather than be shooed away. We thought this was a fine idea but the following morning a pile of nibbled fruit rotting on the ground was all that was left of what had been a fine crop. Perhaps William had been right after all.

March 28: La Ensenada mangrove boat trip, horse riding and the toast rack

Sunny, hot and quite humid, 34°C

La Ensenada lived up to its reputation for super wildlife and a relaxing atmosphere as we all enjoyed a leisurely but wonderfully productive day. It started with a boat trip around and through the local mangroves at 6am, watching Streak-backed oriole and a pair of Lineated Woodpeckers on the walk down to the jetty. Our first small birds responded to boatman Fidel's imitation of an owl – Panamanian Flycatcher, Mangrove Vireo and loads of Yellow Warblers (some of the red-headed race, Mangrove Warbler).

Waders were roosting on Mangrove stems as the tide was extremely high. We saw Short and Long-billed Dowitcher, Turnstones, and Grey Plovers. Later, when the tide had dropped, we added Semipalmated Plover, several stunning Marbled Godwits and Western Sandpipers. (The wader list was added to again later in the day when we visited some salt-pans which were teeming with birds including Least, Baird's, Solitary and Semipalmated Sandpipers, Lesser Yellowlegs and many species we had seen earlier.)

We were taken up a mangrove-lined creek and enjoyed the peach while watching warblers and flycatchers almost everywhere we looked. Kingfishers, egrets and waders, mostly Whimbrel and Spotted Sandpipers, were our constant companions. By the time we returned the tide had dropped and the mud-banks revealed were massed with waders, gulls and terns. We searched for Black Skimmers without success but heard a Long-billed Curlew, a rare bird for Costa Rica.

Time was short, however, and it was with reluctance that we returned to the lodge for a late breakfast followed by a walk for some and horse-riding for the majority. This proved a great success with the riders seeing Roseate Spoonbills in flight, roosting Lesser Nighthawk and Lesser Ground Cuckoo from their elevated vantage points. Those of us on foot searched more flocks of Yellow Warblers and roosting terns.

A roost of Lesser White-lined Bats was found and noted for the others to see. A troop of Howler Monkeys was asleep in trees near the lodge.

Temperatures are high at La Ensenada and we retired to hammocks for a read before lunch (and after) leaving on the 'toast-rack' trailer ride at 3.30pm. Birds were found immediately with the morning's nighthawk relocated and a glimpse of the Lesser Ground Cuckoo in flight. An Eastern Meadowlark was found but gave poor views. Stopping next to a pond covered in water hyacinth, we watched hummers in a flowering aaa tree, adding Cinnamon and Mangrove Hummingbirds and Canivet's emerald. Steely-vented and Scaly-breasted Hummingbirds were also zipping around. A pair of White-lored Gnatcatchers were most cooperative.

We could have spent a day at the salt pans, so many were the waders, but light and time were against us and we moved on towards the climax of the trailer ride, stopping first to admire two Ferruginous Pygmy Owls and then a beautiful pond which should have been a full afternoon visit. Purple Gallinule was a new bird for most of us but it was teeming with ducks, herons and storks.

The tractor finally arrived at the top of a hill a delightful surprise (not to be told here for the sake of those who follow on future tours) awaited us. A Common Pauraque was seen on the way back to the lodge.

March 29: Rancho Solimar and on to Lake Arenal and the volcano

Sunny, warm, some cloud, 29°C

We left La Ensenada with some sadness but picked up a little when a flock of Orange-fronted Parakeets settled in trees long enough for a great view. We arrived at the impressive Rancho Solimar an hour later and were soon taken out onto the vast stock-rearing farm stopping for birds frequently. Our first stream, for example, held Anhinga, several Bare-throated Tiger-herons, three Limpkins – and that had followed a pair of Harris's Hawks seconds earlier.

We were taken through a beautiful wood to see a pair of roosting Spectacled Owls which were sock-rockingly amazing. Sadly (hardly the correct word) our concentration was broken by two male Long-tailed Manakins which landed near us and started singing in duet, once again giving wonderful views. What does one watch?

Our next stop was to admire a nest containing three huge Jabiru chicks, an amazing sight as these birds are in serious decline. Good scope views were had before we moved on to a lagoon where to our amazement an adult and juvenile Jabiru from another nest on the ranch gave us great views and opportunities for pictures. A pair of White-tailed Kites and five Double-striped Thick-knees ended our visit to this wonderful place.

Toad Hall is an unlikely name for a good birding stop but the café we visited (complete with Toad himself in the form of a bewigged, well-paunched gentleman bearing the mark of his tribe, a wolf's head tattooed on his torso) was excellent. A Grey-headed Chachalaca skipped past briefly before reappearing to gorge upon the fruit-feeder offerings, Brook found firstly a Crimson-collared Tanager and then a Tayra which ran up the trunk of a cecropia tree and disappeared into a tangle of vines. A member of the weasel family, it looked a lot like a small black cat.

We stopped at a well known site for Great Potoo but it could not be found. Gill was on form and spotted a Long-tailed Tyrant and Keel-billed Toucan which were compensation. A Black-cheeked Woodpecker was also seen.

Mt Arenal was almost clear of cloud on our arrival at the Observatory Lodge and we gathered on its observation deck to watch the sunset and subsequent volcanic activity. Great boulders tumbled out of the cloud and down the mountainside, each bounce marked by a great cloud of dust, sometimes sparking off avalanches which rumbled and roared. The boulders started to glow red as light levels fell and we realised that these had just been thrown out of the volcano's mouth. It was an amazing sight as many split into several red-hot pieces each spinning wildly as they sped down the mountainside. Gradually smaller pieces became visible as darkness fell and the scene turned into an upside-down firework show of awesome power. This was nature in the raw, a primeval and irresistible force at work.

The show continued after dinner and through the night with the volcano's neck visible occasionally through the night. Our rooms had superb views up the slopes and we all suffered from lack of sleep the following morning after watching the red-hot boulder field close to the summit and seen massive spark-shows as the mountain roared and rumbled.

March 30: Arenal Observatory Lodge, and Mirador Catarata

Sunny, warm, humid some drizzle at mid-altitude, 29°C

All that activity made our planned 5.30am start to look for a rare hummingbird all the more painful. But Black-crested Coquettes show in the hotel grounds only up to 6pm when they depart to feed in distant canopies unseen by human eye, Willy said. Nobody had told the birds this, however, and they did not turn up at all. We wandered bleary-eyed around all the likely flower beds to no avail. Not a sniff. Nothing. There were other things to compensate, as ever in Costa Rica. Brown Jays, a lovely White-necked Jacobin and Bay-headed Tanager were seen, each for the first time, among others. An early breakfast was followed by a spell on the observation deck after the fruit-feeders had been stocked. This resulted in views of a White-nosed Coati family, Black-striped Sparrows and a bunch of Montezuma Oropendolas.

During further exploration of the grounds we found Stripe-breasted Wren, several White-collared Thrushes, Golden-bellied Flycatcher, Long-billed Gnatwren, Alder Flycatcher, Band-backed Wren and our first Bananaquits. The time came for us to leave and as we were loading the bus Mike called that he

had found a Black-crested Coquette. Sure enough, one was sitting in clear view on a dead twig and most of us managed good views, It was 10.30am – the bird was five hours late.

A little retail therapy and a good lunch (Northern Waterthrush and a female American Redstart were seen afterwards) were followed by a visit to the Mirador Catarata Café, famous for its hummingbird and fruit-feeders. It also has wonderful pristine views down to the San Fernando waterfall where White Collared Swifts were gathering in their hundreds to nest. They shoot behind, or even through, sheets of water to incubate eggs on inaccessible ledges. Six species of hummingbird were visiting the feeders, Violet Sabrewings even zooming through the front door of the café to reach favoured feeding spots on the back balcony. Green Hermit, Coppery-headed Emerald and Green Thorntail were all new to us. We left the café after about an hour arriving at La Selva Lodge on dusk.

Monday 31 March: The lodge and La Selva biological station

Sunny, hot and humid, 33°C

Yesterday's early start was balanced by a lie-in and 7am breakfast (although some thought my idea of a lie-in was a joke). We spent the morning at La Selva biological station in the company of local guide Yahaira Rojas who had a super ear for birds.

Double-toothed Kite, Short-tailed Hawk and Grey-rumped Swift were almost immediate additions to our lists with Black-throated Wren and Red-throated Ant Tanager following just before a couple of feral dogs raced in and started hunting the local Collared Peccaries to their and our consternation. Willy volunteered to return to the centre and report the dogs.

Given our heads, the Brits found a Plumbeous Kite for Yahaira who had never seen one in the three years she has been at La Selva. Two Great Antshrikes started singing at each other and while trying to see them we found a female which seemed torn between the singers. Willy returned and immediately found a Broad-billed Motmot which was admired enthusiastically.

Walking deeper into the forest we spotted a Blue Ground Dove and a stunning Rufous-tailed Jacamar, the first of three. (Our last was watched as it ripped the wings off an Owl Moth, one by one, before eating the unfortunate creature.) A Slaty-tailed Trogon was next to fall to our combined spotting skills with Rufous-winged Woodpecker soon after, a good bird but rather poor views. A bunch of Tityras turned out to be a pair each of Masked and Black-crowned.

As we came out of the forest Charles looked up and called out in surprise: there were hundreds of Turkey Vultures wheeling overhead.

"No," I assured everyone, "they are not waiting for one of us to die but are migrating north to breed in the USA and Canada,"

In fact the birds were gaining height rapidly in a thermal and pouring out of the top of it in a long glide down to the base of the next, there to repeat the process. It has been estimated that a TV can fly the length of Costa Rica in a day without once beating its wings. We estimated that more than 1,000 vultures passed over our heads in 30 minutes accompanied by a few Ospreys, Swainson's and Red-tailed Hawks.

Elated by this fantastic sight we turned around to retrace our steps finding Plain Xenops (a great character bird) almost immediately. White-collared Manakins were wing-cracking on their lek site but we could not locate them (eventually succeeding behind our rooms the following morning). Wedge-billed Woodcreeper, Yellow-billed and Scarlet-rumped Caciques were found and a Scarlet Tanager and Violaceous Trogon completed the morning's tally.

We returned to the lodge for a siesta after lunch and got back to the reserve by 3.30pm. A pair of Olive-backed Euphonies were seen well with a Violet-crowned Woodnymph for company. Yahaira pointed out a Red Poison-dart Frog (known as a Blue Jeans Frog due to its blue hips and legs) which was much smaller than any of us expected. It was amazing to think that the animal contained enough poison to bring down a Howler Monkey (or even a man) yet when eaten its deadly chemical is digested and rendered harmless.

A search for Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer was only partly successful as a bird was seen briefly. A pair of White-ringed Flycatchers was found under a huge tree bearing many Montezuma Oropendola nests but the shock of the afternoon came when a fruiting fig tree turned out to have a pair of Crested Curassow feeding in it. A few Crested Guans were in attendance but nowhere near the 10 we were to see the following day. A large group of Collared Peccaries was under the tree eating fallen and dropped fruit. Our walk through the jungle ended with the haunting calls, but no sightings, of Great Tinamou.

1 April: The lodge and La Selva biological station revisited

Sunny, hot and humid, 33°C

Mike found a stunning Semiplumbeous Hawk perched in a tree quite unconcerned by us when we finished our pre-breakfast walk. The quarry had been a Sunbittern but we walked the Rio Sarapiquí's banks in vain although finding several Green Poison-dart Frogs and a Red-eyed Leaf Frog was excellent.

We returned to the biological station's jungles after breakfast where Christian Gamboa was our guide. He took us through a collection of forest trees beneath which the understory had been removed. His thumb-nail sketches of several, including a wild cocoa tree, were fascinating and made up for the comparative lack of birds. Willy pointed out the largest damselfly in the world – A Giant Helicopter Damselfly (who knows what they were called before the invention of helicopters?) – and also a Giant Pug-nosed Anole. As we were returning a Great Tinamou walked onto the path in front of us and kept us company for a while. We were able to watch the blue jungle chicken picking around in the detritus and drinking from a tiny pool of water remaining in an upturned dead leaf.

Several of us were feeling the effects of heat and high humidity so we dropped plans for the afternoon and returned to the lodge for a siesta, rehydration tablets and a swim in many cases. Willy woke several of us at 2.30 as he had found a Rufous Motmot, a species I had heard but not seen on previous visits, which was admired with enthusiasm. I led another walk to search for Sunbittern at 4pm with total success as one was found on the bank opposite our cabins. Those who were still sleeping were roused and we all enjoyed the bird greatly.

2 April: To Tortuguero via La Selva biological station

Hot, sunny and humid, some cloud, 33°C

Breakdowns in our transport are rare occurrences but we had one today when a fan-belt broke. Poor William tried running repairs (in terrible heat) but to no avail. We were not far from La Selva biological station and limped back there, getting good views of Nicaraguan (Pink-billed) Seed Finch at one of the stops and seeing a dead Tamandua at another, to wait for a replacement bus.

The day had started well with a pre-breakfast walk to see lekking White-collared Manakins, Orange-billed Sparrow and Rufous Motmot.

As we were back at the biological station we got permission to enter the reserve without a guide (Willy has led many student groups there) and enjoyed another two hours there. Top birds seen were Slaty-tailed Trogon, a Pale-billed Woodpecker, Shining Honeycreeper and a magnificent King Vulture.

The replacement bus arrived and we said farewell to William who left in the broken one with an engineer for company, had an early lunch and set off for ??? where a boat was waiting to take us to Pachira Lodge on the edge of Tortuguero national park.

Freddy, our captain, slowed for birds and we added 30 minutes to the transfer which is normally just over an hour. As a result, we had great views of Anhingas, an immature Common Black Hawk, a Peregrine and another Great Curassow which flew across the river in front of us.

Quickly dumping cases (we were travelling light having left most of our stuff in the bus with William) in our rooms we assembled to explore the grounds. Great views of Purple-throated Fruitcrow were enjoyed before three large woodpeckers were found together on a single trunk – a pair of Pale-billed with a female Lineated, an extraordinary sight.

3 April: Two boat trips and a visit to the village

Hot, sunny and humid, cooling sea breezes, 33°C

Coffee preceded our first boat trip at 5.45am which stopped soon after it started – Willy had to queue to buy permits for Tortuguero park, a terrible waste of time and human effort. We sat in the boat waiting and watching a stunning male Bare-throated Tiger Heron sky-pointing and calling a doleful love-song to an unseen mate. Five more were seen during the trip.

‘Semiplumbeous Mike’ found his second hawk of that name high in a riverside tree, a terrific bit of spotting. We watched the sleek bird as it called and was answered by another close by. It eventually flew off giving us our first glimpse of the species in flight.

A Moorhen spotted crossing the river soon afterwards looked a bit odd – further investigation showed it to be a Sungrebe. We drifted close to where it had started feeding and enjoyed brilliant views of this highly sought after species. It was beautifully marked, its head pattern showing up particularly well.

A Grey-necked Wood Rail was the next bird to gain our attention (we were trying to overtake other boats, go to the far end of the water-trail and work our way back without other folk around but this proved difficult as things kept on popping into sight). It was building a nest on a raft of floating grasses (I hoped it would not fall foul of a grazing Manatee) and allowed us close enough for everyone to get good pictures.

Two Green Ibis high in a tree were admired and soon after we had stopped to look at a Spectacled Cayman we found a couple of Spider Monkeys which performed acrobatics for us as Howlers roared close by. There really were so many magic moments on this tour.

Squirrel Cuckoo, Blue Dacnis and a Green-and-white Kingfisher were seen before our next mega-bird, a Rufescent Tiger-heron on a nest. We decided it was a well-grown chick as a rather uncharacteristic crest was visible. This was probably part of a threat display prompted by our presence.

A flock of smaller birds passing over turned out to be Eastern Kingbirds migrating north to the USA. About 50 were seen in all. We were not sure if these were the same birds (they probably were not) found behaving oddly in the afternoon. They were plunging into the water apparently bathing, before flying high into a tree to preen. Sighting like this of birds on passage are always fascinating and exciting.

Our wonderful boat trip had been tranquil, relaxed and full of wildlife moments so it was with sadness that we landed back at the lodge for a late breakfast. We decided to visit Tortuguero village in the late morning, stopping at a turtle research station before walking a little way down the Caribbean coast on a black volcanic-sand beach. The village was a school and one shop with huge models of a macaw and toucan in front of it (the setting for a group photo, of course). While idling a little time away outside the shop (a wooden turtle would have been a wonderful souvenir but at £100 and weighing half my luggage allowance I gave it a miss) I noticed a cuckoo fly past. It was a very well behaved and Mangrove Cuckoo, stunning to look at and which allowed close views. It posed for Willy to get pictures which will be used in a short paper in the Costa Rica ornithological journal as the bird was well out of its normal range.

Lunch and a siesta were followed by our second boat trip of the day with Freddy at the helm once more. This was slower than the morning cruise but still held much of interest from an Anhinga nest with three well grown chicks to a Chestnut-coloured Woodpecker found deep in jungle as we went along a narrow channel. Our first White-faced Capuchins were seen close to a troop of Howler Monkeys and a brilliant Two-toed Sloth was found sleeping in an uncomfortable-looking position. To our amazement it moved. It actually raised its head and then scratched a flank with some vigour. Exertion over its head slumped forward (a little like our Great and Glorious Leader a few times in the bus) and the sloth returned to Slumberland. A pair of Great Curassows were last but not least on the big-moment itinerary, a fabulous sight in the pristine rain forest.

We returned to the lodge for a difficult call-over. Other residents decided to watch a loud video about Tortuguero national park – they might as well have bought a copy and stayed at home – we discovered later that they were members of a skiing club and were suffering from the heat. A spot of Greater Fishing

Bat watching from the dock was enjoyed after dinner... a lovely end to our visit, except for tomorrow's planned pre-breakfast walk.

4 April: Return to San Jose

Hot, sunny and humid,

Heavy rain in the night washed out the planned walk and we enjoyed a leisurely breakfast instead. Returning to the dock we again had a boat to ourselves, a great luxury. We suspected that Willy was releasing birds: seconds after telling us to look out for Red-breasted Blackbird two were spotted on the bank.

The drive up to Squirres was uneventful and as the group had a coffee I went into an Internet café to reserve decent seats for our flight home. This proved a good move as we were able to change our transfer from the hotel to San Jose Airport the following morning from 4.30am to 6.15am.

Lunch was in an excellent restaurant about 50km from the city. Some of us saw a couple of Pale-vented Pigeons on our exit and a few minutes after setting off Willy pointed out a Bat Falcon sitting in a dead tree- a terrible twitch at 80km/hour.

We had better time with hummingbirds, stopping at a site close to the Braulio Carillo national park. Using the bus as a hide we watched a patch of flowering plants and saw an amazing six species of hummer in 20 minutes. New to us were Violet-headed Hummingbird and Snowcap, one of the smallest yet most beautiful of all this group.

It was with some elation that we returned to our first hotel where our local agents, represented by Willy and Rodolfo Alvarez, hosted a super farewell dinner.

5 April: Returning home

William and Willy accompanied us to the airport to catch the uneventful flights home.

ANNOTATED LIST OF SPECIES

Figures in brackets eg: (2/6) = (number of days a species was recorded / maximum number seen).

With each species the number seen on the first occasion and where is annotated followed by the other sites it was seen (if any).

Birds

	TINAMOUS		Family Tinamidae
1	Great Tinamou (3/1)	<i>Tinamus major</i>	At least two heard at La Selva, one seen the following day; one heard several times on the second Rio Tortuguero boat trip.
	CHACHALACAS, CURASSOWS, GUANS		Family Cracidae
2	Grey-headed Chachalaca (2/3)	<i>Ortalis cinereiceps</i>	Three at Toad Hall café; Arenal Observatory Lodge.
3	Crested Guan (5/10)	<i>Penelope purpurascens</i>	Three Villa Lapas; one Arenal Observatory Lodge; 10 at La Selva.
4	Great Curassow (4/3)	<i>Crax rubra</i>	A pair in a fig tree, a female nesting at La Selva; one Tortuguero N.P. two on the second Rio Tortuguero boat trip.
	WILDFOWL		Family Anatidae
5	Black-bellied Whistling Duck (4/200)	<i>Dendrocygna autumnalis</i>	About 30 in a stream between Domicinal and Quepos; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar.
6	Muscovy Duck (3/7)	<i>Cairina moschata</i>	One in a river near Quepos; Carara national park; La Ensenada Lodge.

7	Blue-winged Teal (2/30)	<i>Anas discors</i>	Thirty at La Ensenada salt ponds; Rancho Solimar.
	STORKS		Family Ciconiidae
8	Wood Stork (3/50)	<i>Mycteria americana</i>	One at the Tárcoles bridge; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar.
9	Jabiru (1/5)	<i>Jabiru mycteria</i>	One adult, one immature, three juveniles in the nest at Rancho Solimar.
	IBISES, SPOONBILLS		Family Threskiornithidae
10	Green Ibis (1/2)	<i>Mesembrinibis cayennensis</i>	Two seen Rio Tortuguero first boat trip.
11	American White Ibis (5/30)	<i>Eudocimus albus</i>	One in a stream between Domincal and Quepos; nine in the river at Villa Lapas; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar.
12	Roseate Spoonbill (5/7)	<i>Platalea ajaja</i>	One in flight between Domincal and Quepos; Carara national park; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar; La Selva.
	HERONS, BITTERNES		Family Ardeidae
13	Rufescent Tiger Heron (1/2)	<i>Tigrisoma lineatum</i>	Two on nests Rio Tortuguero boat trips.
14	Fasciated Tiger Heron (3/1)	<i>Tigrisoma fasciatum</i>	One at La Selva.
15	Bare-throated Tiger Heron (6/10)	<i>Tigrisoma mexicanum</i>	Four in streams between Domincal and Quepos; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar; La Selva.
16	Boat-billed Heron (2/10)	<i>Cochlearius cochlearius</i>	A colony of at least 10 in Carara national park.
17	Black-crowned Night Heron (2/2)	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	One at the Tárcoles bridge; Rancho Solimar.
18	Yellow-crowned Night Heron (1/2)	<i>Nyctanassa violacea</i>	Two at La Ensenada salt ponds.
19	Green Heron (6/20)	<i>Butorides virescens</i>	One in a stream between Domincal and Quepos; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar; Tortuguero N.P.
20	Cattle Egret (10/100)	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	Common.
21	Great Blue Heron (8/20)	<i>Ardea herodias</i>	One in a stream between Domincal and Quepos; Carara national park; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar; Tortuguero N.P.
22	Great Egret (10/30)	<i>Ardea alba</i>	Common.
23	Tricolored Heron (7/10)	<i>Egretta tricolor</i>	One at Domincal beach / estuary; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar; Tortuguero N.P.
24	Little Blue Heron (7/100)	<i>Egretta caerulea</i>	One at Domincal beach / estuary; one white phased bird in a stream between Domincal and Quepos; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar; Tortuguero N.P.
25	Snowy Egret (7/6)	<i>Egretta thula</i>	Six in a river between Domincal and Quepos; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar; Tortuguero N.P.
	FRIGATEBIRDS		Family Fregatidae
26	Magnificent Frigatebird (6/300)	<i>Fregata magnificens</i>	Scores at Domincal beach / estuary; La Ensenada Lodge.
	PELICANS		Family Pelecanidae
27	Brown Pelican (6/20)	<i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>	Twelve at Domincal beach / estuary; La Ensenada Lodge.
	CORMORANTS		Family Phalacrocoracidae
28	Neotropic Cormorant (2/30)	<i>Phalacrocorax brasilianus</i>	One La Ensenada; 30+ in Tortuguero N.P.
	ANHINGAS		Family Anhingidae
29	Anhinga (5/30)	<i>Anhinga anhinga</i>	One in Carara national park; Rancho Solimar; many in Tortuguero N.P. three well grown chicks in a nest on the second Rio Tortuguero boat trip.

NEW WORLD VULTURES

30	Turkey Vulture (13/1,000)	<i>Cathartes aura</i>
31	American Black Vulture (13/100)	<i>Coragyps atratus</i>
32	King Vulture (1/1)	<i>Sarcoramphus papa</i>
FALCONS, CARACARAS		
33	Northern Crested Caracara (5/9)	<i>Caracara cheriway</i>
34	Yellow-headed Caracara (3/6)	<i>Milvago chimachima</i>
35	Laughing Falcon (1/1)	<i>Herpetheres cachinnans</i>
36	Bat Falcon (1/1)	<i>Falco rufigularis</i>
37	Peregrine Falcon (1/1)	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>

KITES, HAWKS, EAGLES

38	Osprey (10/6)	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>
Family Accipitridae		
39	Grey-headed Kite (1/2)	<i>Leptodon cayanensis</i>
40	Swallow-tailed Kite (4/20)	<i>Elanoides forficatus</i>
41	White-tailed Kite (1/2)	<i>Elanus leucurus</i>
42	Double-toothed Kite (1/2)	<i>Harpagus bidentatus</i>
43	Plumbeous Kite (2/1)	<i>Ictinia plumbea</i>
44	Sharp-shinned Hawk (1/1)	<i>Accipiter striatus</i>
45	Semiplumbeous Hawk (2/1)	<i>Leucopternis semiplumbeus</i>
46	Common Black Hawk (7/8)	<i>Buteogallus anthracinus</i>
47	Harris' Hawk (1/3)	<i>Parabuteo unicinctus</i>
48	Grey-lined Hawk (2/2)	<i>Buteo nitida</i>
49	Roadside Hawk (1/2)	<i>Buteo magnirostris</i>
50	Broad-winged Hawk (3/2)	<i>Buteo platypterus</i>
51	Short-tailed Hawk (1/1)	<i>Buteo brachyurus</i>
52	Swainson's Hawk (1/3)	<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>
53	White-tailed Hawk (1/1)	<i>Buteo albicaudatus</i>
54	Zone-tailed Hawk (1/1)	<i>Buteo albonotatus</i>
55	Red-tailed Hawk (3/2)	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>

SUNBITTERN

56	Sunbittern (1/1)	<i>Eurypyga helias</i>
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FLUFFTAILS, RAILS, CRAKES, COOTS

57	Grey-necked Wood Rail (1/1)	<i>Aramides cajanea</i>
58	Purple Gallinule (2/1)	<i>Porphyrio martinicus</i>
FINFOOTS		
59	Sungrebe (1/1)	<i>Heliornis fulica</i>
LIMPKIN		
60	Limpkin (1/5)	<i>Aramus guarauna</i>

STONE-CURLEWS, THICK-KNEES

61	Double-striped Thick-knee (1/5)	<i>Burhinus bistriatus</i>
STILTS, AVOCETS		
62	Black-necked Stilt (5/20)	<i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>

PLOVERS

Family Charadriidae

Family Cathartidae

Common. About one thousand migrating north at La Selva.

Common.

One at La Selva.

Family Falconidae

One between Dominical and Quepos; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar.

One between Dominical and Quepos; La Ensenada Lodge.

One between Dominical and Quepos.

One near Braulio Carillo N.P.

One on the way to Pachira Lodge, Tortuguero N.P.

Two in the Tapanti area; five at Savegre Lodge; between Dominical and Quepos; La Ensenada Lodge; La Selva; Tortuguero N.P.

One La Ensenada.

Three in the Tapanti area; at least five at Savegre Lodge; 20 on 25 March.

A pair at Rancho Solimar.

Two at La Selva.

One between Dominical and Quepos; La Selva.

One in the Tapanti area.

One at La Selva; one on the Tortuguero first boat trip.

One between Dominical and Quepos; La Ensenada Lodge; Tortuguero N.P.

A pair plus one on a nest at Rancho Solimar; La Selva.

A pair displaying near Mt Arenal.

Two between Dominical and Quepos.

One at Vista del Valle, one between Dominical and Quepos; Carara national park; La Selva.

One at La Selva.

One at La Selva.

One over La Selva.

Two between Dominical and Quepos.

One at Savegre Lodge; between Dominical and Quepos; La Selva.

Family Eurypygidae

One Rio Sarapiquí, La Selva Lodge.

Family Rallidae

One building a nest Rio Tortuguero first boat trip.

One near Sao Jose; La Ensenada Lodge.

Family Heliornithidae

One seen Rio Tortuguero first boat trip.

Family Aramidae

Five at Rancho Solimar.

Family Burhinidae

Four at Rancho Solimar.

One in Carara national park; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar; Tortuguero N.P.

63	Southern Lapwing (1/3)	<i>Vanellus chilensis</i>	Three at the Tárcoles bridge.
64	Grey Plover (2/100)	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	About 20 La Ensenada boat trip; one on Tortuguero beach.
65	Semipalmated Plover (3/200)	<i>Charadrius semipalmatus</i>	Ten La Ensenada boat trip; four on Tortuguero beach.
	JACANAS		Family Jacanidae
66	Northern Jacana (7/10)	<i>Jacana spinosa</i>	A few in Carara national park; La Ensenada Lodge.
	SANDPIPERS, SNIPES		Family Scolopacidae
67	Short-billed Dowitcher (1/50)	<i>Limnodromus griseus</i>	About 50 La Ensenada boat trip.
68	Long-billed Dowitcher (1/6)	<i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i>	About 10 La Ensenada boat trip.
69	Marbled Godwit (1/15)	<i>Limosa fedoa</i>	Five La Ensenada boat trip.
70	Whimbrel (2/200)	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	Four Mata Lemon estuary; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar.
71	Long-billed Curlew (2/6)	<i>Numenius americanus</i>	One heard on mud-flats at La Ensenada.
72	Lesser Yellowlegs (2/6)	<i>Tringa flavipes</i>	Several at La Ensenada salt ponds.
73	Solitary Sandpiper (3/2)	<i>Tringa solitaria</i>	One in a stream between Dominical and Quepos; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar.
74	Spotted Sandpiper (9/15)	<i>Actitis macularius</i>	Common.
75	Willet (2/100)	<i>Catoptrophorus semipalmatus</i>	Three at Dominical beach / estuary; La Ensenada Lodge.
76	Ruddy Turnstone (1/100)	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	About 50 La Ensenada boat trip.
77	Semipalmated Sandpiper (1/30)	<i>Calidris pusilla</i>	Lots at La Ensenada salt pans.
78	Western Sandpiper (3/100)	<i>Calidris mauri</i>	About 50 La Ensenada boat trip; Rancho Solimar.
79	Least Sandpiper (1/10)	<i>Calidris minutilla</i>	Lots at La Ensenada salt pans.
80	Baird's Sandpiper (1/1)	<i>Calidris bairdii</i>	One at La Ensenada salt pans.
	GULLS, TERNS, SKIMMERS		Family Laridae
81	Ring-billed Gull (1/2)	<i>Larus delawarensis</i>	Newark Airport, USA.
82	Laughing Gull (3/300)	<i>Larus atricilla</i>	About 20 at Dominical beach / estuary; 200 Mata Lemon estuary; La Ensenada Lodge.
83	Caspian Tern (1/1)	<i>Sterna caspia</i>	One in Tortuguero N.P.
84	Sandwich Tern (2/15)	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	About 20 La Ensenada boat trip; one on the second Rio Tortuguero boat trip.
85	Royal Tern (5/100)	<i>Sterna maxima</i>	At least one at the Tárcoles estuary; 30 Mata Lemon estuary; La Ensenada Lodge; Tortuguero N.P.
	PIGEONS, DOVES		Family Columbidae
86	Common Pigeon (8/20)	<i>Columba livia</i>	Common.
87	Band-tailed Pigeon (4/10)	<i>Patagioenas fasciata</i>	A small flock in the Tapanti area; Savegre Lodge; Arenal Observatory Lodge; La Selva.
88	Pale-vented Pigeon (1/2)	<i>Patagioenas cayennensis</i>	Two near Braulio Carillo N.P.
89	Red-billed Pigeon (3/2)	<i>Patagioenas flavirostris</i>	One at the Tárcoles bridge; La Ensenada Lodge.
90	Ruddy Pigeon (3/6)	<i>Patagioenas subvinacea</i>	Three San José; Savegre Lodge; Arenal Observatory Lodge; Tortuguero N.P.
91	Short-billed Pigeon (1/1)	<i>Patagioenas nigrirostris</i>	One seen Rio Tortuguero first boat trip.
92	Mourning Dove (1/1)	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>	One in the Tapanti area.
93	White-winged Dove (4/20)	<i>Zenaida asiatica</i>	One in the Tapanti area; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar.
94	Inca Dove (3/15)	<i>Scardafella inca</i>	One at Villa Lapas; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar; Arenal Observatory Lodge.
95	Common Ground Dove (5/10)	<i>Columbina passerina</i>	A few between Dominical and Quepos; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar.
96	Ruddy Ground Dove (6/10)	<i>Columbina talpacoti</i>	Common.
97	Blue Ground Dove (1/1)	<i>Claravis pretiosa</i>	One at La Selva.

98	White-tipped Dove (6/2)	<i>Leptotila verreauxi</i>	One between Domincal and Quepos; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar.
	COCKATOOS, PARROTS		Family Psittacidae
99	Scarlet Macaw (2/30)	<i>Ara macao</i>	Six Villa Lapas; Carara national park.
100	Olive-throated Parakeet (2/4)	<i>Aratinga nana</i>	Four at La Selva.
101	Orange-fronted Parakeet (1/15)	<i>Aratinga canicularis</i>	A few at La Ensenada.
102	Sulphur-winged Parakeet (1/4)	<i>Pyrrhura hoffmanni</i>	Five at Savegre Lodge.
103	Orange-chinned Parakeet (4/15)	<i>Brotogeris jugularis</i>	Four at Domincal beach / estuary; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar; La Selva.
104	White-crowned Parrot (3/6)	<i>Pionus senilis</i>	Two La Ensenada boat trip.
105	White-fronted Amazon (4/15)	<i>Amazona albifrons</i>	Six in Carara national park; La Ensenada Lodge; Arenal Observatory Lodge; La Selva.
106	Red-lored Amazon (2/2)	<i>Amazona autumnalis</i>	Two at La Selva; Rio Tortuguero.
107	Mealy Amazon (24/6)	<i>Amazona farinosa</i>	A pair at La Selva; Tortuguero N.P.
	CUCKOOS		Family Cuculidae
108	Groove-billed Ani (7/20)	<i>Crotophaga sulcirostris</i>	Common.
109	Lesser Ground Cuckoo (1/1)	<i>Morococcyx erythropygus</i>	One at La Ensenada Lodge.
110	Squirrel Cuckoo (4/2)	<i>Piaya cayana</i>	One in Carara national park; La Ensenada Lodge; La Selva.
111	Mangrove Cuckoo (1/1)	<i>Coccyzus minor</i>	One at Tortuguero village: this sighting will be reported in Costa Rica's birding journal as it is out of the bird's normal range.
	OWLS		Family Strigidae
112	Pacific Screech Owl (2/2)	<i>Megascops cooperi</i>	Two on arrival at La Ensenada Lodge.
113	Black-and-white Owl (1/2)	<i>Strix nigrolineata</i>	A pair in Orotino town park.
114	Spectacled Owl (1/2)	<i>Pulsatrix perspicillata</i>	A pair at Rancho Solimar.
115	Ferruginous Pygmy Owl (2/2)	<i>Glaucidium brasilianum</i>	Heard La Ensenada boat trip.
	NIGHTJARS		Family Caprimulgidae
116	Lesser Nighthawk (1/2)	<i>Chordeiles acutipennis</i>	Two at La Ensenada Lodge.
117	Pauraque (1/1)	<i>Nyctidromus albicollis</i>	One at La Ensenada Lodge.
	SWIFTS		Family Apodidae
118	American Black Swift (2/20)	<i>Cypseloides niger</i>	Lots in the rain at Savegre Lodge; between Domincal and Quepos.
119	Chestnut-collared Swift (1/2)	<i>Cypseloides rutilus</i>	Two at Savegre Lodge.
120	White-collared Swift (4/200)	<i>Streptoprocne zonaris</i>	A few in the Tapanti area; between Domincal and Quepos; Mirador Catarata.
121	Grey-rumped Swift (2/20)	<i>Chaetura cinereiventris</i>	Lots at La Selva.
122	Vaux's Swift (2/8)	<i>Chaetura vauxi</i>	Several in the Tapanti area; Savegre Lodge.
123	Chimney Swift (1/6)	<i>Chaetura pelagica</i>	Six Tortuguero N.P.
	HUMMINGBIRDS		Family Trochilidae
124	Green Hermit (2/4)	<i>Phaethornis guy</i>	Visiting feeders at the Mirador Catarata cafe.
125	Western Long-tailed Hermit (3/4)	<i>Phaethornis superciliosus</i>	One Villa Lapas; several heard and glimpsed at a lek in La Selva biological reserve.
126	Little Hermit (1/1)	<i>Phaethornis longuemareus</i>	One at Rancho Solimar.
127	Scaly-breasted Hummingbird (1/4)	<i>Campylopterus curvierii</i>	One Villa Lapas; La Ensenada Lodge.
128	Violet Sabrewing (3/4)	<i>Campylopterus hemileucurus</i>	One in the Tapanti area; Mirador Catarata; La Selva.
129	White-necked Jacobin (3/3)	<i>Florisuga mellivora</i>	One at Arenal Observatory Lodge.
130	Brown Violetear (1/4)	<i>Colibri delphinae</i>	One in the Tapanti area; Mirador Catarata.
131	Green Violetear (4/4)	<i>Colibri thalassinus</i>	A few at Savegre Lodge; Mirador Catarata.
132	Green-breasted Mango (2/4)	<i>Anthracothorax prevostii</i>	One in the Carara national park;
133	Violet-headed Hummingbird (1/2)	<i>Klais guimeti</i>	Two near Braulio Carillo N.P.

134	Black-crested Coquette (1/1)	<i>Lophornis helenae</i>	One at Arenal Observatory Lodge.
135	Green Thorntail (1/2)	<i>Popelairia conversii</i>	Visiting feeders at the Mirador Catarata cafe.
136	Canivet's Emerald (2/2)	<i>Chlorostilbon canivetii</i>	One in the Tapanti area; La Ensenada Lodge.
137	Fiery-throated Hummingbird (1/4)	<i>Panterpe insignis</i>	Several at La Georgina Café.
138	Coppery-headed Emerald (1/4)	<i>Elvira cupreiceps</i>	Visiting feeders at the Mirador Catarata cafe.
139	Violet-crowned Woodnymph (2/2)	<i>Thalurania colombica</i>	One at La Selva.
140	Cinnamon Hummingbird (1/4)	<i>Amazilia rutila</i>	Several at La Ensenada Lodge.
141	Rufous-tailed Hummingbird (8/10)	<i>Amazilia tzacatl</i>	One San José; Mirador Catarata; La Selva.
142	Mangrove Hummingbird (1/5)	<i>Amazilia boucardi</i>	Several at La Ensenada Lodge.
143	Steely-vented Hummingbird (2/4)	<i>Amazilia saucerrottei</i>	One Villa Lapas; La Ensenada Lodge.
144	Snowcap (1/3)	<i>Microchera albocoronata</i>	Two near Braulio Carillo N.P.
145	Bronze-tailed Plumeleeter (2/2)	<i>Chalybura urochrysis</i>	Two at La Selva.
146	White-throated Mountaingem (2/4)	<i>Lampornis castaneiventris</i>	One in the Cerro de la Muerte; Savegre Lodge.
147	Green-crowned Brilliant (2/4)	<i>Heliodoxa jacula</i>	One at La Georgina Café; Mirador Catarata.
148	Magnificent Hummingbird (2/4)	<i>Eugenes fulgens</i>	Common at Savegre Lodge.
149	Volcano Hummingbird (2/6)	<i>Selasphorus flammula</i>	Common at Savegre Lodge; one at 11,300ft.
150	Scintillant Hummingbird (1/4)	<i>Selasphorus scintilla</i>	Common at Savegre Lodge.
TROGONS			Family Trogonidae
151	Black-headed Trogon (2/1)	<i>Trogon melanocephalus</i>	One at La Ensenada Lodge.
152	Violaceous Trogon (2/1)	<i>Trogon violaceus</i>	One at La Selva.
153	Collared Trogon (1/1)	<i>Trogon collaris</i>	A female at Savegre Lodge.
154	Black-throated Trogon (3/2)	<i>Trogon rufus</i>	A pair La Carara national park; La Selva.
155	Slaty-tailed Trogon (4/2)	<i>Trogon massena</i>	One at La Selva biological station; a pair at La Selva Lodge; male at Pachira Lodge, Tortuguero N.P.
156	Resplendent Quetzal (1/3)	<i>Pharomachrus mocinno</i>	Two males and a female in brilliant circumstances (see 24 March above) at Savegre Lodge.
KINGFISHERS			Family Alcedinidae
157	Green-and-rufous Kingfisher (1/2)	<i>Chloroceryle inda</i>	One seen on each of the Rio Tortuguero boat trips.
158	Green Kingfisher (8/3)	<i>Chloroceryle americana</i>	One at Domicinal beach / estuary; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar; La Selva; Tortuguero N.P.
159	Amazon Kingfisher (5/4)	<i>Chloroceryle amazona</i>	One at the Tárcoles bridge; Rancho Solimar; La Selva; Tortuguero N.P.
160	Ringed Kingfisher (5/1)	<i>Megaceryle torquata</i>	One in Carara national park; Rancho Solimar; La Selva; Tortuguero N.P.
MOTMOTS			Family Momotidae
161	Rufous Motmot (3/1)	<i>Baryphthengus martii</i>	One at La Selva Lodge.
162	Broad-billed Motmot (2/3)	<i>Electron platyrhynchum</i>	A pair at La Selva.
163	Turquoise-browed Motmot (3/6)	<i>Eumomota superciliosa</i>	One in Orotino town park; near La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar; La Selva.
TOUCANS, BARBETS			Family Ramphastidae
164	Emerald Toucanet (2/2)	<i>Aulacorhynchus prasinus</i>	Two at Savegre Lodge; Arenal Observatory Lodge; La Selva.
165	Collared Aracari (2/5)	<i>Pteroglossus torquatus</i>	Five at Arenal Observatory Lodge; La Selva.
166	Keel-billed Toucan (6/2)	<i>Ramphastos sulfuratus</i>	One in the Lake Arenal area; at Arenal Observatory Lodge; La Selva.

167	Chestnut-mandibled Toucan (7/3)	<i>Ramphastos swainsonii</i>	A pair nesting at Villa Lapas; Carara national park; La Selva.
	WOODPECKERS		Family Picidae
168	Acorn Woodpecker (2/10)	<i>Melanerpes formicivorus</i>	Small flocks at Savegre Lodge.
169	Black-checked Woodpecker (6/6)	<i>Melanerpes pucherani</i>	A pair in th Lake Arenal area; Arenal Observatory Lodge; La Selva.
170	Red-crowned Woodpecker (1/6)	<i>Melanerpes rubricapillus</i>	Several between Domincal and Quepos.
171	Hoffmann's Woodpecker (5/25)	<i>Melanerpes hoffmannii</i>	One San José; Villa Lapas; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar.
172	Hairy Woodpecker (1/2)	<i>Picoides villosus</i>	Two at Savegre Lodge.
173	Rufous-winged Woodpecker (1/2)	<i>Piculus simplex</i>	One at La Selva.
174	Golden-olive Woodpecker (1/1)	<i>Piculus rubiginosus</i>	One in the Tapanti area.
175	Chestnut-coloured Woodpecker (1/1)	<i>Celeus castaneus</i>	One seen on the second Rio Tortuguero boat trip.
176	Lineated Woodpecker (3/2)	<i>Dryocopus lineatus</i>	A pair La Ensenada Lodge; female with a pair of Pale-billed at Pachira Lodge, Tortuguero N.P.
177	Pale-billed Woodpecker (3/2)	<i>Campephilus guatemalensis</i>	At least two pairs at La Selva biological station; a pair with a female Lineated at Pachira Lodge, Tortuguero N.P.
	JACAMARS		Family Galbulidae
178	Rufous-tailed Jacamar (1/3)	<i>Galbula ruficauda</i>	One at La Selva.
	PUFFBIRDS		Family Bucconidae
179	White-whiskered Puffbird (1/1)	<i>Malacoptila panamensis</i>	One at La Selva.
	MANAKINS		Family Pipridae
180	White-collared Manakin (5/3)	<i>Manacus candei</i>	A female at La Selva; male and female on a lek at La Selva Lodge; one at Pachira Lodge, Tortuguero N.P.
181	Orange-collared Manakin (2/4)	<i>Manacus aurantiacus</i>	At least two active leks of displaying males in Carara national park.
182	Long-tailed Manakin (1/2)	<i>Chiroxiphia linearis</i>	Two males singing in duet at Rancho Solimar. Voted bird of the trip.
	COTINGAS		Family Cotingidae
183	Black-crowned Tityra (1/2)	<i>Tityra inquisitor</i>	A pair at La Selva.
184	Masked Tityra (4/2)	<i>Tityra semifasciata</i>	One San José; in the Tapanti area; Villa Lapas; La Ensenada Lodge; Arenal Observatory Lodge; La Selva.
185	Cinnamon Becard (5/3)	<i>Pachyramphus cinnamomeus</i>	Two La Ensenada Lodge; Arenal Observatory Lodge.
186	White-winged Becard (1/2)	<i>Pachyramphus polychopterus</i>	A pair in Carara national park.
187	Rose-throated Becard (4/8)	<i>Platypsaris aglaiae</i>	A pair at Villa Lapas; Carara national park; La Ensenada Lodge.
188	Purple-throated Fruitcrow (3/4)	<i>Querula purpurata</i>	Three at Pachira Lodge, Tortuguero N.P.
	TYRANT FLYCATCHERS		Family Tyrannidae
189	Greenish Elaenia (2/1)	<i>Myiopagis viridicata</i>	One at Villa Lapas.
190	Yellow-bellied Elaenia (1/3)	<i>Elaenia flavogaster</i>	One San José; Villa Lapas.
191	Mountain Elaenia (2/6)	<i>Elaenia frantzii</i>	Six at Savegre Lodge.
192	Southern Beardless Tyrannulet (2/1)	<i>Camptostoma obsoletum</i>	One Villa Lapas.
193	Torrent Tyrannulet (1/3)	<i>Serpophaga cinerea</i>	Three at Savegre Lodge.
194	Paltry Tyrannulet (5/3)	<i>Zimmerius vilissimus</i>	Three in the Tapanti area; Savegre Lodge; La Selva.
195	Ochre-bellied Flycatcher (2/4)	<i>Mionectes oleagineus</i>	One in Carara national park; La Selva.
196	Black-capped Pygmy Tyrant (1/1)	<i>Myiornis atricapillus</i>	One at La Selva.
197	Northern Bentbill (1/1)	<i>Oncostoma cinereigulare</i>	One in Carara national park.
198	Slaty-headed Tody-flycatcher (1/1)	<i>Poecilatriccus sylvia</i>	One in Carara national park.
199	Common Tody-Flycatcher (6/3)	<i>Todirostrum cinereum</i>	Two Villa Lapas; Arenal Observatory Lodge; La Selva.
200	Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher (1/1)	<i>Todirostrum nigriceps</i>	A male at La Ensenada.
201	Yellow-olive Flatbill (2/2)	<i>Tolmomyias sulphurescens</i>	One Villa Lapas; Carara national park.
202	Northern Royal Flycatcher (2/2)	<i>Onychorhynchus mexicanus</i>	A pair in Carara national park.

203	Black Phoebe (2/5)	<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>	Several in the Tapanti area; Savegre Lodge.
204	Northern Tufted Flycatcher (1/4)	<i>Mitrephanes phaeocercus</i>	Four at Savegre Lodge.
205	Olive-sided Flycatcher (1/1)	<i>Contopus cooperi</i>	One in Carara national park.
206	Dark Pewee (1/1)	<i>Contopus lugubris</i>	One at Savegre Lodge.
207	Western Wood Pewee (1/1)	<i>Contopus sordidulus</i>	One at La Ensenada Lodge.
208	Tropical Pewee (2/1)	<i>Contopus cinereus</i>	One in the Tapanti area; Vista del Valle.
209	Alder Flycatcher (1/1)	<i>Empidonax alnorum</i>	One at Arenal Observatory Lodge.
210	Yellowish Flycatcher (1/1)	<i>Empidonax flavescens</i>	One at Savegre Lodge.
211	Black-capped Flycatcher (1/1)	<i>Empidonax atriceps</i>	One at La Georgina Café.
212	Long-tailed Tyrant (4/2)	<i>Colonia colonus</i>	A male in th Lake Arenal area; La Selva.
213	Piratic Flycatcher (6/2)	<i>Legatus leucophaeus</i>	One in the Tapanti area; Villa Lapas; La Ensenada Lodge.
214	Social Flycatcher (12/6)	<i>Myiozetetes similis</i>	Common.
215	Grey-capped Flycatcher (8/4)	<i>Myiozetetes granadensis</i>	Several in the Tapanti area; Villa Lapas; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar; La Selva.
216	Great Kiskadee (13/8)	<i>Pitangus sulphuratus</i>	Common.
217	White-ringed Flycatcher (1/2)	<i>Conopias albovittatus</i>	A pair at La Selva.
218	Golden-bellied Flycatcher (1/1)	<i>Myiodynastes hemichrysus</i>	One at Arenal Observatory Lodge.
219	Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher (4/2)	<i>Myiodynastes luteiventris</i>	One Villa Lapas; La Ensenada Lodge; La Selva.
220	Streaked Flycatcher (1/1)	<i>Myiodynastes maculatus</i>	One at Rancho Solimar.
221	Boat-billed Flycatcher (5/2)	<i>Megarynchus pitangua</i>	One at Savegre Lodge; La Ensenada Lodge; La Selva.
222	Tropical Kingbird (12/12)	<i>Tyrannus melancholicus</i>	Abundant on wires.
223	Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (1/1)	<i>Tyrannus forficatus</i>	One on the way to La Ensenada.
224	Eastern Kingbird (1/75)	<i>Tyrannus tyrannus</i>	About 50 seen Rio Tortuguero first boat trip, 25 on the second.
225	Dusky-capped Flycatcher (1/1)	<i>Myiarchus tuberculifer</i>	One at Arenal Observatory Lodge.
226	Panamanian Flycatcher (1/1)	<i>Myiarchus panamensis</i>	Two La Ensenada boat trip.
227	Great Crested Flycatcher (3/1)	<i>Myiarchus crinitus</i>	One in the Tapanti area.
228	Brown-crested Flycatcher (2/2)	<i>Myiarchus tyrannulus</i>	One La Ensenada.
	ANTBIRDS		Family Thamnophilidae
229	Fasciated Antshrike (2/6)	<i>Cymbilaimus lineatus</i>	Two pairs at La Selva.
230	Great Antshrike (1/3)	<i>Taraba major</i>	Female seen, two males heard att La Selva.
231	Barred Antshrike (1/1)	<i>Thamnophilus doliatus</i>	One in Carara national park.
232	Black-hooded Antshrike (2/2)	<i>Thamnophilus bridgesi</i>	Three in Carara national park.
233	Dot-winged Antwren (1/2)	<i>Microrhopias quixensis</i>	A pair in Carara national park.
234	Dusky Anthbird (1/1)	<i>Cercomacra tyrannina</i>	One in Carara national park.
235	Chestnut-backed Antbird (2/1)	<i>Myrmeciza exsul</i>	One in Carara national park; La Selva.
	TAPACULOS		Family Rhinocryptidae
236	Silvery-fronted Tapaculo (1/1)	<i>Scytalopus argentifrons</i>	One heard at Savegre Lodge.
	OVENBIRDS		Family Furnariidae
237	Red-faced Spinetail (1/2)	<i>Cranioleuca erythroptis</i>	Two at Savegre Lodge.
238	Ruddy Treerunner (1/2)	<i>Margarornis rubiginosus</i>	Two at Savegre Lodge.
239	Plain Xenops (1/3)	<i>Xenops minutus</i>	Three at La Selva.
	WOODCREEPERS		Family Dendrocolaptidae
240	Wedge-billed Woodcreeper (2/2)	<i>Glyphorhynchus spirurus</i>	Two at La Selva.
241	Northern Barred Woodcreeper (4/2)	<i>Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae</i>	One in Carara national park; Rancho Solimar.
242	Cocoa Woodcreeper (2/2)	<i>Xiphorhynchus susurrans</i>	One in Carara national park.
243	Streak-headed Woodcreeper (4/1)	<i>Lepidocolaptes souleyetii</i>	One in Carara national park; La Ensenada Lodge; Arenal Observatory Lodge; La Selva.
244	Spot-crowned Woodcreeper (1/3)	<i>Lepidocolaptes affinis</i>	Four at Savegre Lodge.
	VIREOS, GREENLETS		Family Vireonidae
245	Mangrove Vireo (1/4)	<i>Vireo pallens</i>	Two La Ensenada boat trip.
246	Yellow-throated Vireo (1/1)	<i>Vireo flavifrons</i>	One in Carara national park.

247	Yellow-winged Vireo (1/3)	<i>Vireo carmioli</i>	Four at Savegre Lodge.
248	Philadelphia Vireo (1/2)	<i>Vireo philadelphicus</i>	A few at Villa Lapas.
249	Red-eyed Vireo (1/1)	<i>Vireo olivaceus</i>	One Villa Lapas.
250	Lesser Greenlet (2/4)	<i>Hylophilus decurtatus</i>	Two at Villa Lapas; Carara national park; La Selva.
	CROWS, JAYS		Family Corvidae
251	Brown Jay (1/5)	<i>Cyanocorax morio</i>	Several at Arenal Observatory Lodge.
252	White-throated Magpie-Jay (3/6)	<i>Calocitta formosa</i>	Several La Ensenada Lodge.
	WAXWINGS & ALLIES		Family Bombycillidae
253	Long-tailed Silky-flycatcher (2/10)	<i>Ptilogonys caudatus</i>	Three in the Cerro de la Muerte; Savegre Lodge.
	SWALLOWS, MARTINS		Family Hirundinidae
254	Sand Martin (1/6)	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	At least one at the Tárcoles bridge.
255	Mangrove Swallow (7/20)	<i>Tachycineta albilinea</i>	Several at Domincal beach / estuary; La Ensenada Lodge; Tortuguero N.P.
256	Purple Martin (1/1)	<i>Progne subis</i>	One early in the trip.
257	Grey-breasted Martin (9/20)	<i>Progne chalybea</i>	Common.
258	Blue-and-white Swallow (6/10)	<i>Notiochelidon cyanoleuca</i>	Several San José; Tapanti area; Cerro de la Muerte; Savegre Lodge; Mt Arenal area.
259	Northern Rough-winged Swallow (3/4)	<i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i>	One in the Tapanti area; between Domincal and Quepos.
260	Southern Rough-winged Swallow (3/6)	<i>Stelgidopteryx ruficollis</i>	Two in the Tapanti area.
261	Barn Swallow (7/100)	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Many between Domincal and Quepos; Carara national park; La Ensenada Lodge.
262	American Cliff Swallow (3/10)	<i>Petrochelidon pyrrhonota</i>	About 10 between Domincal and Quepos.
	WRENS		Family Troglodytidae
263	Band-backed Wren (1/1)	<i>Campylorhynchus zonatus</i>	One at Arenal Observatory Lodge.
264	Rufous-naped Wren (5/6)	<i>Campylorhynchus rufinucha</i>	One San José; La Ensenada Lodge.
265	Black-throated Wren (1/1)	<i>Thryothorus atrogularis</i>	One at La Selva.
266	Black-bellied Wren (1/1)	<i>Thryothorus fasciatoventris</i>	One in Carara national park.
267	Riverside Wren (2/2)	<i>Thryothorus semibadius</i>	Heard at Villa Lapas; seen Carara national park.
268	Bay Wren (3/4)	<i>Thryothorus nigricapillus</i>	One at La Selva.
269	Stripe-breasted Wren (3/2)	<i>Thryothorus thoracicus</i>	One at Arenal Observatory Lodge; La Selva.
270	House Wren (6/4)	<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>	Common.
271	Ochraceous Wren (2/2)	<i>Troglodytes ochraceus</i>	Two at Savegre Lodge.
272	Grey-breasted Wood Wren (1/1)	<i>Henicorhina leucophrys</i>	Several heard at Savegre Lodge.
	GNATCATCHERS		Family Polioptilidae
273	Long-billed Gnatwren (2/1)	<i>Ramphocaenus melanurus</i>	One at Arenal Observatory Lodge; La Selva.
274	White-lored Gnatcatcher (1/2)	<i>Polioptila albiloris</i>	A pair at La Ensenada Lodge.
275	Tropical Gnatcatcher (1/2)	<i>Polioptila plumbea</i>	A pair in the Tapanti area.
276	Tropical Mockingbird (2/1)	<i>Mimus gilvus</i>	One at the Doubletree Hotel.
	STARLINGS		Family Sturnidae
277	Common Starling (1/3)	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Newark Airport, USA.
	THRUSHES		Family Turdidae
278	Black-faced Solitaire (2/6)	<i>Myadestes melanops</i>	Many singing and seen at Savegre Lodge.
279	Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush (1/2)	<i>Catharus gracilirostris</i>	One in the Cerro de la Muerte.
280	Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush (1/10)	<i>Catharus frantzii</i>	Common at Savegre Lodge.
281	Swainson's Thrush (1/1)	<i>Catharus ustulatus</i>	One at Vista del Valle.
282	Wood Thrush (6/2)	<i>Hylocichla mustelina</i>	Two at Mt Arenal; La Selva; Pachira Lodge, Tortuguero N.P.
283	Sooty Thrush (2/10)	<i>Turdus nigrescens</i>	Several in the Cerro de la Muerte.
284	Mountain Thrush (2/2)	<i>Turdus plebejus</i>	A few in the Cerro de la Muerte; Savegre Lodge.
285	Clay-coloured Thrush (11/20)	<i>Turdus grayi</i>	Abundant.
286	White-throated Thrush (1/3)	<i>Turdus assimilis</i>	Three at Arenal Observatory Lodge.

	OLD WORLD SPARROWS, SNOWFINCHES		
287	House Sparrow (6/5)	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Family Passeridae Newark Airport, USA.
	FINCHES		Family Fringillidae
288	Scrub Euphonia (1/1)	<i>Euphonia affinis</i>	One on the La Ensenada boat trip.
289	Yellow-crowned Euphonia (1/1)	<i>Euphonia luteicapilla</i>	A male at Villa Lapas.
290	Yellow-throated Euphonia (3/1)	<i>Euphonia hirundinacea</i>	One Villa Lapas; Arenal Observatory Lodge.
291	Olive-backed Euphonia (4/4)	<i>Euphonia gouldi</i>	Two males at La Selva.
292	Golden-browed Chlorophonia (1/5)	<i>Chlorophonia callophrys</i>	A party of five at Savegre Lodge.
293	Yellow-bellied Siskin (1/1)	<i>Carduelis xanthogastra</i>	One at Savegre Lodge.
	NEW WORLD WARBLERS		Family Parulidae
294	Golden-winged Warbler (1/1)	<i>Vermivora chrysoptera</i>	One at Savegre Lodge.
295	Tennessee Warbler (5/3)	<i>Vermivora peregrina</i>	Common.
296	Flame-throated Warbler (1/5)	<i>Parula gutturalis</i>	About five at Savegre Lodge.
297	Tropical Parula (1/1)	<i>Parula pitiayumi</i>	One in the Tapanti area.
298	Chestnut-sided Warbler (7/8)	<i>Dendroica pensylvanica</i>	One in the Tapanti area; Villa Lapas; Carara national park; Arenal Observatory Lodge; La Selva.
299	American Yellow Warbler (5/50)	<i>Dendroica petechia</i>	One in Carara national park; La Ensenada Lodge; Rancho Solimar; Arenal Observatory Lodge.
300	Mangrove Warbler (1/100)	<i>Dendroica erithachorides</i>	Large numbers in the mangroves at La Ensenada.
301	Black-throated Green Warbler (1/1)	<i>Dendroica virens</i>	One at Savegre Lodge.
302	Black-and-white Warbler (1/1)	<i>Mniotilta varia</i>	One in the Tapanti area.
303	American Redstart (3/1)	<i>Setophaga ruticilla</i>	A female on the way to La Selva; La Selva.
304	Northern Waterthrush (2/1)	<i>Seiurus noveboracensis</i>	One in Carara national park; near Arenal Observatory Lodge; La Selva.
305	Louisiana Waterthrush (1/1)	<i>Seiurus motacilla</i>	One at Savegre Lodge.
306	Wilson's Warbler (3/6)	<i>Wilsonia pusilla</i>	One in the Cerro de la Muerte; Savegre Lodge.
307	Canada Warbler (1/2)	<i>Wilsonia canadensis</i>	Two La Ensenada.
308	Collared Whitestart (1/6)	<i>Myioborus torquatus</i>	Three pairs at Savegre Lodge.
309	Black-checked Warbler (1/1)	<i>Basileuterus melanogenys</i>	One at Savegre Lodge.
310	Three-striped Warbler (1/1)	<i>Basileuterus tristriatus</i>	One at Savegre.
311	Buff-rumped Warbler (3/2)	<i>Phaeothlypis fulvicauda</i>	Two at Villa Lapas; La Selva.
	NEW WORLD BLACKBIRDS		Family Icteridae
312	Chestnut-headed Oropendola (3/20)	<i>Zarhynchus wagleri</i>	A colony in the Tapanti area; Lake Arenal area; La Selva.
313	Montezuma Oropendola (8/50)	<i>Psarocolius montezuma</i>	A colony in the Tapanti area; Lake Arenal area; Arenal Observatory Lodge; La Selva; Tortuguero N.P.
314	Scarlet-rumped Cacique (1/2)	<i>Cacicus microrhynchus</i>	One at La Selva.
315	Yellow-billed Cacique (1/2)	<i>Amblycercus holosericeus</i>	One at La Selva.
316	Spot-breasted Oriole (2/5)	<i>Icterus pectoralis</i>	One La Ensenada.
317	Black-cowled Oriole (2/3)	<i>Icterus prothemelas</i>	One at La Selva.
318	Baltimore Oriole (7/3)	<i>Icterus galbula</i>	One San José; Savegre Lodge; La Ensenada Lodge; Lake Arenal area; Arenal Observatory Lodge; La Selva.
319	Streak-backed Oriole (2/3)	<i>Icterus pustulatus</i>	A few La Ensenada Lodge.
320	Giant Cowbird (1/1)	<i>Molothrus oryzivorus</i>	A female prospecting a Chestnut-headed Oropendola colony in the Tapanti area.
321	Bronzed Cowbird (3/6)	<i>Molothrus aeneus</i>	A few in the Tapanti area; near Mt Arenal Lodge; Tortuguero N.P.
322	Melodious Blackbird (4/8)	<i>Dives dives</i>	Several San José; Tapanti area; La Ensenada Lodge; La Selva.
323	Red-winged Blackbird (4/10)	<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>	One at the Tárcoles bridge; La Ensenada Lodge; Arenal Observatory Lodge; La Selva; Tortuguero N.P.

324	Great-tailed Grackle (9/50)	<i>Quiscalus mexicanus</i>	Common.
325	Red-breasted Blackbird (1/2)	<i>Sturnella militaris</i>	Two on the Rio Tortuguero.
326	Eastern Meadowlark (1/1)	<i>Sturnella magna</i>	One at La Ensenada Lodge.
	BANANAQUIT fam		Family Coerebidae
327	Bananaquit (4/6)	<i>Coereba flaveola</i>	Several at Arenal Observatory Lodge; La Selva.
	BUNTINGS, NEW WORLD SPARROWS & ALLIES		Family Emberizidae
328	Rufous-collared Sparrow (7/10)	<i>Zonotrichia capensis</i>	Common.
329	Black-striped Sparrow (1/5)	<i>Arremonops conirostris</i>	Two pairs at Arenal Observatory Lodge.
330	Orange-billed Sparrow (4/5)	<i>Arremon aurantirostris</i>	Heard in Carara national park; several seen La Selva.
331	Chestnut-capped Brush Finch (1/1)	<i>Buarremon brunneinucha</i>	One at Vista del Valle.
332	Large-footed Finch (3/4)	<i>Pezopetes capitalis</i>	One in the Cerro de la Muerte; Savegre Lodge.
333	Yellow-thighed Finch (2/10)	<i>Pseliophorus tibialis</i>	About 10 at Savegre Lodge.
	TANAGERS & ALLIES		Family Thraupidae
334	White-lined Tanager (1/1)	<i>Tachyphonus rufus</i>	One at Arenal Observatory Lodge.
335	Crimson-collared Tanager (1/1)	<i>Phlogothraupis sanguinolenta</i>	A male at Toad Hall cafe.
336	Passerini's Tanager (8/10)	<i>Ramphocelus passerinii</i>	Several in the Tapanti area; Arenal Observatory Lodge; La Selva.
337	Cherrie's Tanager (2/10)	<i>Ramphocelus costaricensis</i>	Ten at Vista del Valle; Villa Lapas.
338	Blue-grey Tanager (11/18)	<i>Thraupis episcopus</i>	Common.
339	Palm Tanager (7/6)	<i>Thraupis palmarum</i>	A pair on a feeder in the Tapanti area; Villa Lapas; Lake Arenal area; La Selva.
340	Silver-throated Tanager (3/4)	<i>Tangara icterocephala</i>	Two at Savegre Lodge; Mirador Cararata cafe; La Selva.
341	Bay-headed Tanager (1/1)	<i>Tangara gyrola</i>	One at Arenal Observatory Lodge.
342	Golden-hooded Tanager (6/5)	<i>Tangara larvata</i>	One female in the Tapanti area; La Selva.
343	Spangle-cheeked Tanager (1/2)	<i>Tangara dowii</i>	One at Savegre Lodge.
344	Blue Dacnis (3/1)	<i>Dacnis cayana</i>	One Villa Lapas.
345	Shining Honeycreeper (1/1)	<i>Cyanerpes lucidus</i>	One at La Selva.
346	Red-legged Honeycreeper (4/6)	<i>Cyanerpes cyaneus</i>	One Villa Lapas; Carara national park; Lake Arenal area; La Selva.
347	Green Honeycreeper (3/4)	<i>Chlorophanes spiza</i>	One Villa Lapas.
348	Slaty Flowerpiercer (2/10)	<i>Diglossa plumbea</i>	Common.
349	Blue-black Grassquit (7/10)	<i>Volatinia jacarina</i>	Several in the Tapanti area; Savegre Lodge; La Ensenada Lodge; La Selva.
350	Variable Seedeater (6/6)	<i>Sporophila corvina</i>	One between Dominical and Quepos; Lake Arenal area; La Selva.
351	White-collared Seedeater (1/4)	<i>Sporophila morelleti</i>	Four at La Ensenada.
352	Nicaraguan Seed Finch (1/1)	<i>Oryzoborus nuttingi</i>	One near La Selva.
353	Yellow-faced Grassquit (3/6)	<i>Tiaris olivaceus</i>	Eight in the Tapanti area; Savegre Lodge.
354	Common Bush Tanager (2/4)	<i>Chlorospingus ophthalmicus</i>	One in the Cerro de la Muerte; Savegre Lodge.
355	Sooty-capped Bush Tanager (1/6)	<i>Chlorospingus pileatus</i>	One in the Cerro de la Muerte; Savegre Lodge.
356	Flame-coloured Tanager (2/8)	<i>Piranga bidentata</i>	One in the Cerro de la Muerte; Savegre Lodge.
357	Summer Tanager (6/3)	<i>Piranga rubra</i>	One at La Selva.
358	Scarlet Tanager (1/1)	<i>Piranga olivacea</i>	One at La Selva.
359	Red-throated Ant Tanager (2/1)	<i>Habia fuscicauda</i>	One at La Selva.
360	Black-thighed Grosbeak (1/1)	<i>Pheucticus tibialis</i>	Three at Savegre Lodge.
361	Rose-breasted Grosbeak (1/2)	<i>Pheucticus ludovicianus</i>	Two males at Savegre Lodge.
362	Black-headed Saltator (2/1)	<i>Saltator atriceps</i>	One at Vista del Valle; Lake Arenal area; La Selva.
363	Buff-throated Saltator (2/1)	<i>Saltator maximus</i>	One at Vista del Valle; La Selva.
364	Greyish Saltator (3/1)	<i>Saltator coerulescens</i>	One San José; Tapanti area; La Selva.

Mammals

	AMERICAN ANTEATERS	
1	Northern Tamandua (1/1)	<i>Tamandua mexicana</i>
	TWO-TOED SLOTHS	
2	Hoffmann's Two-toed Sloth (2/2)	<i>Choloepus hoffmanni</i>
	SQUIRRELS	
3	Red-tailed Squirrel (3/3)	<i>Sciurus granatensis</i>
4	Deppe's Squirrel (1/2)	<i>Sciurus deppei</i>
5	Variiegated Squirrel (6/4)	<i>Sciurus variegatoides</i>
6	Central American Dwarf Squirrel (1/3)	<i>Microsciurus alfari</i>
	AGOUTIS & PACAS	
7	Central American Agouti (2/1)	<i>Dasyprocta punctata</i>
	OTTERS, WEASELS & BADGERS	
8	Tayra (3/1)	<i>Eira barbara</i>
	RACCOONS	
9	Kinkajou (1/2)	<i>Potos flavus</i>
10	White-nosed Coati (4/7)	<i>Nasua narica</i>
	SHEATH-TAILED BATS	
11	Lesser White-lined Bat (4/9)	<i>Saccopteryx leptura</i>
	BULLDOG BATS	
12	Greater Fishing Bat (1/5)	<i>Noctilio leporinus</i>
	APES	
13	Human (Naked Ape) (1/1)	<i>Homo sapiens</i>
	NEW WORLD MONKEYS	
14	White-faced Capuchin (2/2)	<i>Cebus capucinus</i>
15	Central American Spider Monkey (1/2)	<i>Ateles geoffroyi</i>
16	Mantled Howler Monkey (9/30)	<i>Alouatta palliata</i>
	PECCARIES	
17	Collared Peccary (Javelina) (3/20)	<i>Dicotyles tajacu</i>
	DEER	
18	White-tailed Deer (2/1)	<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>

Reptiles & Amphibians

	TOADS		Family Bufonidae
1	Marine (Cane) Toad (4/3)	<i>Bufo marinus</i>	One at Villa Lapas; La Ensenada Lodge; La Selva.
	TREE FROGS		Family Hylidae
2	Red-eyed Leaf Frog (1/1)	<i>Agalichnis chalidnus</i>	One at La Selva Lodge.
3	Tink (Philosopher) Frog (1/3)	<i>Eleutherodactylus diastema</i>	Several heard on the second Tortuguero boat trip (I tink therefore I am).
	POISON-DART FROGS		Family Dendrobatiidae
4	Strawberry 'Blue-jeans' Poison-dart Frog (1/1)	<i>Dendrobates pumilo</i>	One at La Selva.
5	Black-and-green Poison-dart Frog (2/8)	<i>Dendrobates auratus</i>	Eight at La Selva Lodge.
	CROCODILES		Family Crocodylidae
6	American Crocodile (4/20)	<i>Crocodylus niloticus</i>	Three Carara national park; 15 at the Tárcoles bridge.

7	Spectacled Cayman (2/4) GECKOES	<i>Crocodylus niloticus</i>	Two between Domincal and Quepos. Family Gekkonidae
8	Yellow-belly Gecko (5/10)	<i>Phyllodactylus tuberculatus</i>	Common.
9	Yellow-headed Gecko (5/1) TYPICAL LIZARDS	<i>Gonatodes albogularis</i>	Several at Villa Lapas; Tortuguero N.P. Family Lacertidae
10	Giant Pug-nosed Anole (1/2)	<i>Anole (Norops) capito</i>	One at La Selva.
11	Brown Basilisk (10/3)	<i>Basiliscus basiliscus</i>	Several at Villa Lapas; Carara national park; La Selva; Tortuguero N.P.
12	Emerald Basilisk (3/2)	<i>Basiliscus plumifrons</i>	Three at La Selva Lodge; Tortuguero N.P.
	IGUANAS		Family Iguanidae
13	Land (Green) Iguana (8/20)	<i>Iguana iguana</i>	One at Villa Lapas; La Ensenada Lodge; huge animals in the Arenal and La Selva areas; Tortuguero N.P.
14	Spiny-tailed Iguana (7/10)	<i>Ctenosaurus similis</i>	One between Domincal and Quepos.

Other Taxa

1	Urania Moth	<i>Urania fulgens</i>	Several in the cloud forest at Savegre Lodge.
2	Giant Helicopter Damselfly	<i>Megaloprepus cerrulatus</i>	The largest damselfly in the world, we saw several at La Selva biological reserve.
3	Firefly		Some at Villa Lapas; La Selva Lodge.
4	Golden-orb Spider		Quite common.
5	Wolf Spider		La Selva.
6	Fiddler Crab		Mata Lemon estuary.
7	Ghost Crab		Holes in the sand at Domincal beach; several in the gardens at Pachira Lodge, Tortuguero.

Heavenly Bodies

1	Orion: Rigel, Betelguise, the Orion Nebula		Several times.
2	Gemini with Pollux and Castor		From La Ensenada.
3	Mars		From La Ensenada.
4	Saturn		From La Ensenada.
5	The Plough		Several times.
6	Polaris, the Pole Star		From La Ensenada and with the Southern Cross visible at the same time.
7	Crux, the Southern Cross		From La Ensenada.
8	Sirius, the brightest star in the sky, in Canui Major		Several times.
9	Arcturus		From La Ensenada. Arcturus is a giant or super-

giant star. It is possible that this star is an 'eclipsing variable' - members of a double star system which pass directly in front of their companion stars during their orbit. When this happens, light from the companion star is blocked, and the binary star appears fainter to observers on Earth. The most famous eclipsing binary is Algol, nicknamed 'the Demon Star' for its spooky changes in brightness.

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