Field Guides Tour Report

Costa Rica: Birding the Edges Part I, the Deep South 2016

Jan 9, 2016 to Jan 18, 2016
Jay VanderGaast & Tom Johnson

For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE.

Finding a glowing adult Turquoise Cotinga in the same tree as a subadult male at Talari was a real treat. Photo by participant Bill Byers.

This year marked the third run of this tour, and I gotta say, it just keeps getting better and better! And that's as it should be, as we learn from past tours, find new sites to visit, generally learn what works and what doesn't, and tweak the itinerary accordingly. One tweak we made this year was to stop at the wonderful Bosque del Tolomuco on our first day, a stop that helped us nail down a couple of target hummingbirds, and added a few other goodies to boot. It is definitely a change we will incorporate into future runs of this trip.

Things started out well on our first couple of short outings from the Bougainvillea. On the first afternoon stroll, we picked up a pair of the very local Prevost's Ground-Sparrows, while a trio of Ferruginous Pygmy-Owls were the highlight of another foray early the next morning. After a delicious breakfast, we were off for the south, on what was mainly a travel day. But what a travel day! After a quick stop near Cartago for Sedge Wrens, which performed amazingly well, we spent the rest of the morning in the highlands, birding the entrance road to Paraiso Quetzal. We tallied about 15 species of Chiriqui endemics on this morning, with highlights including feisty Fiery-throated Hummingbirds, elegant Long-tailed Silky-Flycatchers, a glowing Flame-throated Warbler, and a couple of curious Large-footed Finches. In the afternoon, our all too brief stop at Bosque del Tolomuco netted us White-tailed Emerald, Snowy-bellied Hummingbird, and a gorgeous male Elegant Euphonia.

We spent the next couple of days in the San Isidro area, with most of our birding taking place at Talari Lodge and Los Cusingos, the former home of Alexander Skutch. Birding was great at both sites, but the cooperative Turquoise Cotingas at Talari were arguably the star performers for the area. Not that the superb little Pearl Kite along the road, the Long-billed Starthroat nesting on a power line, the beautiful Baird's Trogons and Fiery-billed Aracaris, or that tiny Olivaceous Piculet in its nest hole, weren't all great, but man, those cotingas!

Next stop was the lovely accommodations at Wilson Botanical Gardens, right down near the frontier with Panama. The gardens right around the lodging were full of birds, thanks in part to a large fruiting fig tree that attracted a great number of toucans, aracaris, and guans. A nearby flowering tree behind the cabins was frequented by a spectacular male White-crested Coquette, a species we've struggled with on previous trips. A Short-tailed Nighthawk dive-bombed us early one morning on the viewing deck, Brown-billed Scythebills and Rufous-tailed Jacamars were admired along the Rio Java trail, and nearby sites offered up goodies such as Bat Falcon, Garden Emerald, and Costa Rican Brush-Finch.

Finally, we dropped down into the coastal lowlands for a 3-night stay at the wonderful Esquinas Lodge. Again, some of the best birding was right

outside our doors, with Great Curassows strolling through the gardens, Long-billed and Stripe-throated hermits feeding on flowers next to the dining area, and a young Spectacled Owl glowering at us from above the reception area. A stunning Agami Heron was a nice find here as well. The nearby La Gamba-Golfito road was superb too; standouts here included a close soaring King Vulture, an active Band-tailed Barbthroat nest sewn on the underside of a broad leaf, and a great mixed flock that held a striking Black-striped Woodcreeper, White-throated Shrike-Tanager, and the endemic and beautiful Black-cheeked Ant-Tanager. A pair of Royal Flycatchers were a nice final pick up on our way out the last morning.

Further afield, a visit to the Coto 47 area gave us great encounters with some of the country's most recent arrivals, including a shining male Veraguan Mango, a pair of Savanna Hawks (a country tick for me!), and Brown-throated Parakeet. And an early morning outing to the Rio Rincon rewarded our efforts with a great showing from some immaculate Yellow-billed Cotingas, (plus more Turquoise!), both large woodpecker species, plus the local Red-rumped Woodpecker, a surprise pair of Green Sea Turtles in the river below the bridge, and a big army ant swarm with several attendant toucans and woodcreepers.

Tom and I had a great time leading this trip, and really enjoyed sharing all those wonderful birds with all of you. This was such a fun, compatible group of birders, and we were really pleased that so many of you continued on with us for the second half of the trip. Thanks to all of you for joining us on this adventure; we both look forward to meeting up again on another tour someday. Oh, and finally, many thanks, too, to Vernon, our exceptional driver, for getting us around safely and for finding some great birds for us on the way.

-- Jay

KEYS FOR THIS LIST
One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

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BIRDS

Tinamidae (Tinamous)

GREAT TINAMOU (Tinamus major) – Heard a few times at Los Cusingos and Esquinas. **[*]**

LITTLE TINAMOU (Crypturellus soui) – Quite vocal at Esquinas. **[*]**

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK (Dendrocygna autumnalis) – We estimated about 300 of these ducks in the remnant wet area at the Coto 47 marsh.

MUSCOVY DUCK (Cairina moschata) – A lone bird flew across the back end of the wet fields along the entrance road to Esquinas.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (Anas discors) – The most common migrant duck in the country, though we saw only about a dozen of them among the whistling-ducks at Coto 47. **[b]**

Cracidae (Guans, Chachalacas, and Curassows)

GRAY-HEADED CHACHALACA (Ortalis cinereiceps) – We didn't miss these birds on many days, and recorded them at pretty much all the sites we visited.

CRESTED GUAN (Penelope purpurascens) – Quite a few were hanging around the fruiting palms and fig tree by the cabins at Wilson BG.

GREAT CURASSOW (Crax rubra) – A trio (two females and a male) impatiently waited for the workers to abandon the composting area at Esquinas so they could move in and start feeding.

Odontophoridae (New World Quail)

MARBLED WOOD-QUAIL (Odontophorus gujanensis) – Tom spotted a covey of these sneaky birds trying to slip away along the Rio Java Trail at Wilson BG. Fortunately they were curious enough to investigate some playback, and we all ended up with amazing views! Though I've seen this bird often in Ecuador and Venezuela, this was my first sighting of them in Costa Rica!

Ciconiidae (Storks)

WOOD STORK (Mycteria americana) – A couple flew over at Coto 47, and a single was seen along the coast on our drive back to San Jose.

Fregatidae (Frigatebirds)

MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD (Fregata magnificens) – Pretty numerous at Golfito and along the coast northward.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (Phalacrocorax brasilianus) – Small numbers at Coto 47 and along the Rio Rincon.

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

BROWN PELICAN (Pelecanus occidentalis) – A few birds roosting with vultures at Golfito, with substantial numbers soaring among vultures during the drive back to the north.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

BARE-THROATED TIGER-HERON (Tigrisoma mexicanum) – A fine adult showed well at Coto 47, with a couple more seen from the Rincon bridge.

GREAT BLUE HERON (Ardea herodias) – A single at Coto 47 and one or two at the Rincon bridge. **[b]**

GREAT EGRET (Ardea alba) – Fairly numerous throughout.

SNOWY EGRET (Egretta thula) – Just a couple were at the marsh at Coto 47, with a few more at Rincon.

LITTLE BLUE HERON (Egretta caerulea) – Seen in small numbers at most wetland sites we visited.

CATTLE EGRET (Bubulcus ibis) – Numerous throughout.

GREEN HERON (Butorides virescens) – A few birds daily in the Golfito/Esquinas region.

AGAMI HERON (Agamia agami) – As soon as Tom exclaimed "Oh my god!" I knew it was one of these elegant herons he had spotted. What I didn't

know was how close it was to us, crouched in the shadows only a dozen or so feet away at the Esquinas caiman pond. We all enjoyed incredible looks at this beauty, which we rarely see on these tours. Sal had this bird as her trip favorite.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

WHITE IBIS (Eudocimus albus) – A few of these were on the Golfito mudflats and in the wet fields by Esquinas.

ROSEATE SPOONBILL (Platalea ajaja) – A nice rosy adult flew past at Coto 47, while a couple more perched in a dead tree along the Rincon River.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (Coragyps atratus) – Abundant daily.

TURKEY VULTURE (Cathartes aura) – Ditto.

KING VULTURE (Sarcoramphus papa) – This was a good trip for this species, which is never common and entirely missable. We saw about 6 overall, with a couple of low flying birds in good light along the La Gamba-Golfito road being especially nice. We could even make out the various colors on their heads as they flew past!

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (Pandion haliaetus) – Singles on two days along the Rio General in the Talari Lodge area, and a couple more at the Rincon bridge. **[b]**

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

PEARL KITE (Gampsonyx swainsonii) – A wonderfully cooperative bird was perched up along the roadside as we returned to Talari from Los Cusingos, and we all enjoyed excellent scope studies of this relative newcomer to Costa Rica. This was Ruth's choice for bird of the trip.

WHITE-TAILED KITE (Elanus leucurus) – Nice views of a couple of these elegant fliers on the first day as we left San Jose behind. A few others were seen around San Vito and the Coto 47 marsh. Bill picked this bird as his favorite of the trip.

HOOK-BILLED KITE (Chondrohierax uncinatus) – Good views of a female as it soared up over the Rincon river just as we were preparing to call it a morning.

SWALLOW-TAILED KITE (Elanoides forficatus) – Quite a few in the San Vito/Wilson BG area gave multiple great looks. At this time of year, this species seems restricted to the far south of CR, though in a few week's time, others will begin arriving from further south and they will be pretty common throughout the country.

DOUBLE-TOOTHED KITE (Harpagus bidentatus) – A pair turned up riding the thermals along the Rincon river, but they were soon nearly invisible as they climbed incredibly high in a very short time. Still their pushed forward wings and fluffy white undertail coverts were clearly visible before they ascended.

SAVANNA HAWK (Buteogallus meridionalis) – Though this species has been known from the Coto 47 region for a few years, having moved in from Panama recently, it is still not common and I had not seen them in CR before this trip. So I was pleased to spot a pair of them sitting atop a distant tree near a newly ploughed field, where they gave us good scope views.

GREAT BLACK HAWK (Buteogallus urubitinga) – An adult flew up out of the marshy fields along the Esquinas entrance road, surprising me, as I rarely encounter this species in the country. It perched up in a nearby treetop where it was joined by a second bird that was not quite in adult plumage.

ROADSIDE HAWK (Rupornis magnirostris) – The most commonly seen raptor on the tour. We had them most days, including a copulating pair along the Esquinas entrance road.

WHITE HAWK (Pseudastur albicollis) – Our only one was a distant bird soaring well below us as we ate lunch at the Mirador del Torre restaurant above Ciudad Neily.

GRAY HAWK (Buteo plagiatus) – The northern counterpart of the next species. We saw three of them along the coastal road on our drive back to San Jose.

GRAY-LINED HAWK (Buteo nitidus) – In Costa Rica, this species only occurs in the extreme southwest, replacing Gray Hawk south of the Dominical region. We had excellent looks at a perched bird near La Gamba.

BROAD-WINGED HAWK (Buteo platypterus) – A fairly common wintering migrant. We saw singles a number of times. **[b]**

SHORT-TAILED HAWK (Buteo brachyurus) – A quite common small Buteo. We saw singles on several days, with 4 on the day we traveled from San Vito to Esquinas, and with both light and dark morphs being encountered. Best was a fairly low-flying bird at Coto 47.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

WHITE-THROATED CRAKE (Laterallus albigularis) – Devilishly tough, as always, and we never found one that wanted to show off. **[*]**

GRAY-NECKED WOOD-RAIL (Aramides cajaneus) – Ruth and Phil spotted one sitting in a tree at Los Cusingos, but it got away before the rest of us could see it. We did manage to call it back, however, and got some decent views, though other sightings around Esquinas were somewhat more satisfying.

PURPLE GALLINULE (Porphyrio martinicus) – A few scattered singles in marshy areas of the lowlands around Golfito and at San Vito.

COMMON GALLINULE (Gallinula galeata) – Three birds in the airport marsh at San Vito.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-NECKED STILT (Himantopus mexicanus) – A half a dozen of these were among the many ducks at Coto 47.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

SOUTHERN LAPWING (Vanellus chilensis) – Another relative newcomer to Costa Rica, but now quite widespread. Our only ones were a pair at the Coto 47 marsh.

WILSON'S PLOVER (Charadrius wilsonia) – About 5 of these thick-billed plovers were on the mudflats at Golfito.

SEMIPALMATED PLOVER (Charadrius semipalmatus) – A couple on the Golfito mudflats. **[b]**

Jacanidae (Jacanas)

NORTHERN JACANA (Jacana spinosa) – Quite common in marshy areas around Golfito, including a number of white-bellied young birds.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (Actitis macularius) – A couple along the Rio General at Talari, and a few on the Golfito mudflats. **[b]**

SOLITARY SANDPIPER (Tringa solitaria) – Generally found only around freshwater areas as opposed to coastal mudflats. We saw a couple at Coto

47, and another along the Esquinas entrance road. **[b]**

WILLET (Tringa semipalmata) – A couple on the Golfito mudflats were of the western race inornatus. **[b]**

WHIMBREL (Numenius phaeopus) – Just a single bird on the Golfito mudflats. **[b]**

RUDDY TURNSTONE (Arenaria interpres) – A couple of these were also on the mudflats at Golfito. **[b]**

WESTERN SANDPIPER (Calidris mauri) – The only peep we noted at Golfito, with about half a dozen of them present. **[b]**

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

LAUGHING GULL (Leucophaeus atricilla) – The default gull in Costa Rica. Quite a few of these were along the coast. **[b]**

ROYAL TERN (Thalasseus maximus) – Generally the most common tern along the CR coast. We had a small number roosting on the Golfito mudflats.

SANDWICH TERN (Thalasseus sandvicensis) – A pair of these dark-billed terns were with the Royals at Golfito.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (Columba livia) – Common in towns and cities. **[I]**

PALE-VENTED PIGEON (Patagioenas cayennensis) – The common large pigeon in the coastal lowlands.

SCALED PIGEON (Patagioenas speciosa) – We had just one of these beautiful, well-marked pigeons, perched atop a tall tree near the San Vito airport marsh.

RED-BILLED PIGEON (Patagioenas flavirostris) – Quite common around San Jose but not seen again after we left the Meseta Central.

RUDDY PIGEON (Patagioenas subvinacea) – Very similar to the next species, and best separated by voice. We saw and heard one bird at Bosque del Tolomuco lodge, then had a trio hanging around the gardens at Wilson BG, where we also heard Short-billed Pigeon calling from the forest below the lodge.

SHORT-BILLED PIGEON (Patagioenas nigrirostris) – As they overlap with Ruddy Pigeon at some locales, such as at Wilson, voice is critical to identify them, as they are next to impossible to separate out on plumage alone. In the lowlands around Esquinas, only this species occurs, and they were seen and heard often there.

INCA DOVE (Columbina inca) – A bird of the dry northwest which has recently spread across the central valley. We saw them only around the Bougainvillea.

RUDDY GROUND-DOVE (Columbina talpacoti) – A very common bird in open country throughout.

BLUE GROUND-DOVE (Claravis pretiosa) – Scarce this year, and our only one was a male we scoped from the Rio Rincon bridge.

WHITE-TIPPED DOVE (Leptotila verreauxi) – Most of the doves in this genus are forest birds, but this species is much more tolerant of disturbed habitats, and we saw them regularly in gardens and along roadsides.

GRAY-CHESTED DOVE (Leptotila cassinii) – Heard at Wilson BG, but we couldn't track one down. **[*]**

WHITE-WINGED DOVE (Zenaida asiatica) – Another northwest dove that has spread across the central valley and is now numerous around the Bougainvillea and elsewhere around San Jose.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

SQUIRREL CUCKOO (Piaya cayana) – Heard almost daily, but we had only a couple of sightings this trip.

SMOOTH-BILLED ANI (Crotophaga ani) – Not uncommon in open country and disturbed areas in the far south.

GROOVE-BILLED ANI (Crotophaga sulcirostris) – Replaces the preceding species in the north, with the contact zone somewhere around Dominical. We saw these birds near the Bougainvillea and on our drive back to San Jose.

Strigidae (Owls)

TROPICAL SCREECH-OWL (Megascops choliba) – Great response and views of a cooperative bird at Talari Lodge just after dark.

SPECTACLED OWL (Pulsatrix perspicillata) – A young bird still showing a lot of white was very vocal at Esquinas, calling throughout the night on a couple of our nights there. We also had a super view of it just above the lodge one night. Karen, who claimed it was one of her target birds for the trip, subsequently named it her favorite bird of the trip, too.

FERRUGINOUS PYGMY-OWL (Glaucidium brasilianum) – A trio of birds, almost certainly a pair with a full grown youngster, were seen beautifully in the early morning near the Bougainvillea.

MOTTLED OWL (Ciccaba virgata) – Heard early one morning at Wilson, but when we tried to find it that night, it remained quiet. Sally did see what was probably this species fly past the deck in the predawn gloom. **[*]**

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

SHORT-TAILED NIGHTHAWK (Lurocalis semitorquatus) – After missing this one our first morning at Wilson, we more than made up for it the next, when we had a bird flying close around our heads at first light.

COMMON PAURAQUE (Nyctidromus albicollis) – Heard often, with quite a few seen on the roadsides during nocturnal outings.

Apodidae (Swifts)

CHESTNUT-COLLARED SWIFT (Streptoprocne rutila) – A flock over Talari as we watched from the poolside viewpoint were the only ones for the tour.

WHITE-COLLARED SWIFT (Streptoprocne zonaris) – We had just one encounter with this large swift when a flock flew over Wilson BG on our final morning there.

VAUX'S SWIFT (Chaetura vauxi) – The most commonly seen swift, and the only regular Chaetura in the mountains.

COSTA RICAN SWIFT (Chaetura fumosa) – Quite a few in the lowlands near Esquinas, where they sometimes flew low enough that the narrow white rump band was quite conspicuous.

LESSER SWALLOW-TAILED SWIFT (Panyptila cayennensis) – A pair of these sleek and elegant swifts circled over the riverside vantage point at Talari.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

WHITE-NECKED JACOBIN (Florisuga mellivora) – A male was seen briefly at Wilson BG, and a female was seen hawking insects a couple of times at the Esquinas parking lot.

BAND-TAILED BARBTHROAT (Threnetes ruckeri) – An active nest sewn on to the underside of a heliconia leaf along the La Gamba-Golfito road

was a nice find, and allowed us all some nice views of this species. Interestingly, though the prevailing thought is that female hummingbirds do all of the nesting duties on their own, on both of our visits to the nest, two birds were present, suggesting the male may have a more active role in these duties than is currently known. **[N]**

GREEN HERMIT (Phaethornis guy) – Heard on their lek along the Rio Java trail at Wilson, but they were too far off the trail for us to spot. **[*]**

LONG-BILLED HERMIT (Phaethornis longirostris) – Seen well daily as they fed at flowers around the gardens at Esquinas.

STRIPE-THROATED HERMIT (Phaethornis striigularis) – First seen at breakfast one morning at Talari, as it fed on passion flowers growing along the railing around the dining area. Seen pretty regularly afterward, including more mealtime sightings of birds feeding next to the restaurant at Esquinas.

GREEN VIOLETEAR (Colibri thalassinus) – Quite a few of these frequented the feeders at Paraiso Quetzal.

PURPLE-CROWNED FAIRY (Heliothryx barroti) – Seen first at Bosque del Tolomuco, then subsequently several times around Wilson and Esquinas. For some reason, this species never seems to visit feeders.

VERAGUAN MANGO (Anthracothorax veraguensis) – Great scope studies of a shining male perched in some bare branches atop a tall tree at the Coto 47 marsh, the same perch on which we saw one last year! This species is a fairly new arrival in Costa Rica, and is still limited to a small area of the southwest.

WHITE-CRESTED COQUETTE (Lophornis adorabilis) – Some researchers had told us of an often used perch behind the rooms that was frequented by a male coquette, and checking after lunch one day, I found him sitting, as promised. We hurriedly got most everyone out for a great view of him though he soon moved on to feed in a nearby flowering tree. Those that missed seeing him (Tom included) staked out the tree the next day and again were rewarded with great looks at this little stunner. This is a favorite of mine on this tour, and honestly, I'm amazed no one picked it as their trip favorite (though given the many other great birds we saw, perhaps I shouldn't be too surprised!)

GREEN-CROWNED BRILLIANT (Heliodoxa jacula) – A common highland species. There were a bunch of these at the feeders at Bosque del Tolomuco.

MAGNIFICENT HUMMINGBIRD (Eugenes fulgens) – Pretty numerous at the Paraiso Quetzal feeders.

LONG-BILLED STARTHROAT (Heliomaster longirostris) – Three excellent sightings of this species, highlighted by the one nesting on a power line that we spotted from the bus on our way to Los Cusingos. **[N]**

FIERY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (Panterpe insignis) – An awesome little bird; that fiery gorget is hot, hot, hot! We had incredible views of this highland specialty at the Paraiso Quetzal feeders.

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (Archilochus colubris) – A lone female at a flowering tree at Talari was the only one we saw. **[b]**

VOLCANO HUMMINGBIRD (Selasphorus flammula) – A few birds along the road into Paraiso Quetzal.

SCINTILLANT HUMMINGBIRD (Selasphorus scintilla) – A couple of female-plumaged birds were feeding in the verbena hedges along the driveway at Bosque del Tolomuco.

GARDEN EMERALD (Chlorostilbon assimilis) – Alan spotted a glittering male in a scrubby roadside spot near La Union. It was later joined by a second male, both of which gave us some wonderful views, both perched and feeding.

SCALY-BREASTED HUMMINGBIRD (Phaeochroa cuvierii) – Pretty common and vocal at pretty much all the sites visited.

VIOLET SABREWING (Campylopterus hemileucurus) – Seen only at Bosque del Tolomuco, where a couple of huge purple males frequently visited the feeders.

CROWNED WOODNYMPH (Thalurania colombica) – A female along the La Gamba-Golfito road was the only one of the trip.

STRIPE-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD (Eupherusa eximia) – A ratty-plumaged male at a flowering tree at Bosque del Tolomuco was a surprise, and the first one I've ever seen there. Those rusty secondary coverts are a great field mark.

WHITE-TAILED EMERALD (Elvira chionura) – Excellent looks at one feeding in the same flowering tree as the Stripe-tailed Hummer at Bosque del Tolomuco, and a couple of others at the coquette tree at Wilson. I'd never noticed before how the males show a narrow wedge of white in the lower belly, a feature that isn't shown in the field guides, but that seems to set it apart from any other similar hummingbirds in the country.

CHARMING HUMMINGBIRD (Amazilia decora) – A lone bird at Tolomuco, with a couple of others seen well at flowering verbena at Esquinas. Formerly called Beryl-crowned Hummingbird, also an apt name as we saw so well.

SNOWY-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD (Amazilia edward) – Bosque del Tolomuco is one of the best places I know for this species in Costa Rica, and it came through again, with at least 4 birds seen during our brief visit there. Another was seen briefly at Talari, but without the stop at Tolomuco, we probably wouldn't have had real satisfying views of this one.

RUFOUS-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD (Amazilia tzacatl) – The most numerous hummingbird in most lower elevation areas, and the only one we saw every day of the tour.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

SLATY-TAILED TROGON (Trogon massena) – Trogons were kind of scarce this trip, and the only one of these we saw was a fine male perched next to a Yellow-billed Cotinga at the Rio Rincon bridge.

BAIRD'S TROGON (Trogon bairdii) – It took a bit of searching, but Vernon finally managed to pick out a calling male (one of two) sitting high in the canopy along the trail at Los Cusingos.

GARTERED TROGON (Trogon caligatus) – A solo male showed up in the garden at Los Cusingos just as we arrived, though unfortunately a couple of folks were already in the rest rooms and missed it.

ORANGE-BELLIED TROGON (Trogon aurantiiventris) – Roslyn and Karen saw one with Vernon at Los Cusingos when they turned back early from one of our walks. I have some doubts as to the validity of this bird as a species, and suspect it is just a color morph of the widespread Collared Trogon, but for now it is a countable species.

Momotidae (Motmots)

BLUE-CROWNED MOTMOT (LESSON'S) (Momotus coeruliceps lessonii) – Once we got down to Wilson BG we started seeing this gorgeous bird daily, including one at the fruit feeder at Wilson. Tom P. picked this as his fave of the tour.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

RINGED KINGFISHER (Megaceryle torquata) – A couple flew by along the Rio General at Talari Lodge, and another were seen at the Rincon bridge.

AMAZON KINGFISHER (Chloroceryle amazona) – A couple each day in the coastal lowlands, with some nice views at the Rincon bridge.

GREEN KINGFISHER (Chloroceryle americana) – Scope looks at one perched on a boulder along the Rio General, with a couple of others at the

Rincon bridge allowing nice comparisons with the larger Amazon.

AMERICAN PYGMY KINGFISHER (Chloroceryle aenea) – Vernon alerted us to this bird's presence at the Turtle pond at Esquinas, and we all had fine views of a smashing male perched quietly above the water.

Bucconidae (Puffbirds)

WHITE-NECKED PUFFBIRD (Notharchus hyperrhynchus) – A dedicated stop for this species came good when Tom spotted a bird sitting up in a distant tree along the La Gamba-Golfito Road. It may have been far, but that's what those scopes we carry around are for!

Galbulidae (Jacamars)

RUFOUS-TAILED JACAMAR (Galbula ruficauda) – A pair along the Rio Java trail at Wilson gave us nice views, and Tom and Merbie were treated to an especially nice show as they hung back to watch-- the male had caught a large cicada and presented it to the female, who accepted it and gobbled it down. No word if his offering led anywhere though...

Ramphastidae (Toucans)

EMERALD TOUCANET (BLUE-THROATED) (Aulacorhynchus prasinus caeruleogularis) – Our only one was a bird that hit a window at Wilson and was picked up, stunned. That is hardly countable, but the bird did resume natural behavior after a long time recuperating in a nearby tree, so it was certainly countable in the end.

FIERY-BILLED ARACARI (Pteroglossus frantzii) – The namesake bird of Alexander Skutch's homestead (Los Cusingos), though we failed to see them there this trip. No worries though, as we had several superb encounters at a fruiting tree at Talari, as well as the fruiting fig at Wilson, and also at Esquinas. This handsome bird won Alan over, and he chose it as his bird of the trip.

YELLOW-THROATED TOUCAN (CHESTNUT-MANDIBLED) (Ramphastos ambiguus swainsonii) – Common throughout, with lots of great encounters, including about a dozen hanging around the big fruiting fig tree at Wilson, and several birds feeding at a big army ant swarm near the Rincon bridge! Phil chose this bird as his tour favorite.

KEEL-BILLED TOUCAN (Ramphastos sulfuratus) – Not a bird we usually expect on this trip, but a few of us saw a couple in a dead tree along the toll road between the coast and San Jose on our final day's drive.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

OLIVACEOUS PICULET (Picumnus olivaceus) – This tiny woodpecker is always good fun to see, and we had a couple of nice sightings, with our first being a bird poking its head out of a nest hole at Los Cusingos. **[N]**

GOLDEN-NAPED WOODPECKER (Melanerpes chrysauchen) – One of several species restricted to the Pacific lowlands of southern CR and western Panama. We had some great views of these lovely woodpeckers around Esquinas and at the Rincon bridge, where a trio of them sat together in a bare tree top.

RED-CROWNED WOODPECKER (Melanerpes rubricapillus) – The most commonly encountered woodpecker on this tour, with sightings pretty much daily.

HOFFMANN'S WOODPECKER (Melanerpes hoffmannii) – Replaces the Red-crowned Woodpecker in the northern half of the country, with some overlap and hybridization about halfway along the Pacific coast. We saw this species only around the Bougainvillea.

SMOKY-BROWN WOODPECKER (Picoides fumigatus) – Some nice views of this small, dingy woodpecker, first at Copabuena, then a few times elsewhere around the Wilson BG region.

HAIRY WOODPECKER (Picoides villosus) – A smallish, brownish version of our familiar northern bird. Here in CR this species is restricted to the mountains, which is where we saw our only one along the Paraiso Quetzal entrance road.

RED-RUMPED WOODPECKER (Veniliornis kirkii) – A fairly local species which in CR is restricted to the southwest. We spotted one in a bare tree near the Rincon bridge and got good scope views of it before it flew off for good. This was only my second ever in the country.

RUFOUS-WINGED WOODPECKER (Piculus simplex) – Excellent looks at one (or possibly two different birds) hammering at a dead branch in the subcanopy as it tagged along with a wonderful mixed feeding flock along the La Gamba-Golfito Road.

GOLDEN-OLIVE WOODPECKER (Colaptes rubiginosus) – Super looks at a handsome male from the viewing deck at Wilson early on our first morning there.

LINEATED WOODPECKER (Dryocopus lineatus) – Several were seen, but the best were the ones at the Rincon bridge that showed up at almost the same time as the Pale-billed Woodpeckers. Good to be able to compare these two large woodpeckers side by side.

PALE-BILLED WOODPECKER (Campephilus guatemalensis) – Great views of a pair from the Rincon bridge, and it was fun to hear the double knock drumming sound they make, similar to the drum of the closely related Ivory-billed Woodpecker.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

BARRED FOREST-FALCON (Micrastur ruficollis) – A couple were heard in the predawn gloom at Wilson BG. **[*]**

CRESTED CARACARA (Caracara cheriway) – Pretty common throughout southern CR, and we saw a few most days.

YELLOW-HEADED CARACARA (Milvago chimachima) – Even more common than the preceding species, with several seen daily from San Isidro onwards.

LAUGHING FALCON (Herpetotheres cachinnans) – This was a good tour for this gorgeous falcon, with birds seen well on three days, at Los Cusingos once (appropriate, as it was the only raptor Skutch tolerated and liked due to it's snake-eating habits) and twice in the coastal lowlands.

MERLIN (Falco columbarius) – Our only one flew past on our first afternoon's walk around the Bougainvillea. **[b]**

BAT FALCON (Falco rufigularis) – Pam spotted our only one, a distant bird teed up on a tall pine tree at La Union. Despite the distance, the lighting was fantastic, and the scope views of this bird were awesome.

Psittacidae (New World and African Parrots)

ORANGE-CHINNED PARAKEET (Brotogeris jugularis) – These small parakeets were seen flying around a bunch of times, but I don't recall getting a good view of perched birds until we got to the Rincon bridge, where we had a few sitting in some dead branches.

BROWN-HOODED PARROT (Pyrilia haematotis) – Our first sightings were of several birds in the canopy over the trail at Los Cusingos, then we went on to see them daily at Wilson BG, where they regularly sat up in a bare treetop just off the viewing deck.

BLUE-HEADED PARROT (Pionus menstruus) – Daily sightings in the coastal lowlands, though our best views were at Wilson, where we had 3 or 4 feeding in a nice flowering Erythrina tree. These birds were Sally's choice as trip favorite.

WHITE-CROWNED PARROT (Pionus senilis) – Usually the most common small parrot around, but, though we saw them regularly, it doesn't seem

that they were more numerous than the preceding two species this year.

RED-LORED PARROT (Amazona autumnalis) – Quite a few in the coastal lowlands, with daily sightings and some nice scope views at times.

WHITE-FRONTED PARROT (Amazona albifrons) – This small Amazona has recently spread across the Central Valley and is now regularly seen around the Bougainvillea. We had quick flybys of 3 birds our first afternoon, and a single the next morning.

MEALY PARROT (Amazona farinosa) – At least 8 of these large parrots flew over at the Rincon bridge, though the backlighting was pretty bad and made it tough to make out the salient features.

SULPHUR-WINGED PARAKEET (Pyrrhura hoffmanni) – Adding a stop at Bosque del Tolomuco not only gave us a good shot at some local hummingbirds, but also gave us some great flyover views of these attractive parakeets, which we weren't really expecting on this tour.

BROWN-THROATED PARAKEET (Eupsittula pertinax) – Another one of a number of species to have recently invaded southwestern Costa Rica from adjacent Panama. We had good scope views of our first, sharing a treetop with our first Fork-tailed Flycatcher, then had a group of 4 fly past a couple days later near La Gamba.

SCARLET MACAW (Ara macao) – At least a dozen birds (i.e. 6 pairs) flew by at different times through the morning as we made our cotinga vigil at the Rincon bridge.

CRIMSON-FRONTED PARAKEET (Psittacara finschi) – Easily the most numerous Psittacid on this tour, with good numbers daily, including over 100 birds in a couple of large flocks in the Esquinas area one afternoon.

Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds)

BLACK-HOODED ANTSHRIKE (Thamnophilus bridgesi) – Another of the Pacific lowland endemics shared with neighboring Panama. We had a fairly responsive male show well at Los Cusingos, then a pair along the Rio Java trail at Wilson BG.

RUSSET ANTSHRIKE (Thamnistes anabatinus) – A couple of these arboreal antshrikes were in a mixed flock along the Rio Java trail, though they were not particularly cooperative. We had better luck with a lone bird with that wonderful mixed flock we encountered along the La Gamba-Golfito road.

SLATY ANTWREN (Myrmotherula schisticolor) – A fairly elusive pair were with the same flock as the preceding two species along the Rio Java trail.

DUSKY ANTBIRD (Cercomacroides tyrannina) – Nice views of a pair of these in dense secondary scrub along the entrance road at Esquinas.

CHESTNUT-BACKED ANTBIRD (Myrmeciza exsul) – We whistled a pair in close along the La Gamba-Golfito road and eventually got one into an opening along the roadside where everyone got a great look at it.

Formicariidae (Antthrushes)

BLACK-FACED ANTTHRUSH (Formicarius analis) – A calling bird along the drive at Esquinas on our final morning eventually strolled into view on the hillside above us, though it didn't stay long and not all of us managed to see it.

Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)

OLIVACEOUS WOODCREEPER (Sittasomus griseicapillus) – The group that staked out the coquette tree on our last morning at Wilson saw one of these small woodcreepers too.

TAWNY-WINGED WOODCREEPER (Dendrocincla anabatina) – Fantastic looks at one along the driveway near the tennis court at Talari Lodge. There was also one at the Rio Rincon army ant swarm (this species is an avid army ant follower) though it wasn't quite as friendly as the first one.

WEDGE-BILLED WOODCREEPER (Glyphorynchus spirurus) – The smallest of the woodcreepers, this species is widespread and generally pretty common, though we saw just a single bird along the Rio Java trail at Wilson BG.

NORTHERN BARRED-WOODCREEPER (Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae) – Another avid follower of army ants, this large woodcreeper showed very well at the Rio Rincon ant swarm.

COCOA WOODCREEPER (Xiphorhynchus susurrans) – Woodcreepers in general seemed scarcer than usual, and this normally common species only showed up a couple of times. We had reasonable views of a couple at Los Cusingos, and a single bird was seen at the army ant swarm, where it was probably taking advantage of the easy insect pickings, though it isn't as fanatic a follower as the other two species present.

BLACK-STRIPED WOODCREEPER (Xiphorhynchus lachrymosus) – Easily one of the most strikingly patterned and best-looking woodcreepers. We saw this beauty very well with the big mixed flock along the La Gamba-Golfito road.

SPOTTED WOODCREEPER (Xiphorhynchus erythropygius) – Common in mid-elevation forests, but we only heard this species once along the Rio Java trail. **[*]**

BROWN-BILLED SCYTHEBILL (Campylorhamphus pusillus) – Without the spectacularly long, decurved bill, this would be just another woodcreeper, but it's not just another woodcreeper! We had awesome views of a pair of these great birds along the Rio Java trail.

STREAK-HEADED WOODCREEPER (Lepidocolaptes souleyetii) – A widespread and familiar species, as it is much more tolerant of disturbed areas than most of the other woodcreepers. We had regular sightings at Wilson and Esquinas.

PLAIN XENOPS (Xenops minutus) – One was with the mixed flock along the La Gamba-Golfito road, though it wasn't as cooperative or easy to see as we would have liked, and I think only a few people got a look at it.

RUDDY FOLIAGE-GLEANER (Clibanornis rubiginosus) – Very local in Costa Rica, and where it does occur, it is an inveterate skulker! Tom got a recording of a vocal bird along the Rio Java trail, and though it responded well and flew past pretty close to us, it never sat out where we could see it, so we had to be content with the flybys.

BUFF-THROATED FOLIAGE-GLEANER (EXSERTUS) (Automolus ochrolaemus exsertus) – A couple of sightings, with the best being a scope view of one just as we entered the forest at Los Cusingos. Note that this subspecies sounds radically different that the Caribbean slope subspecies, and it would seem that there is some good evidence that they may need to be split one day.

STRIPED WOODHAUNTER (Automolus subulatus) – The name of this species makes an otherwise rather generic brown bird all the more interesting and fun to see. And we had fun with one that was moving along with the big mixed flock along the La Gamba-Golfito road, giving us all some excellent views.

RUDDY TREERUNNER (Margarornis rubiginosus) – A pair of these highland birds showed beautifully in some tall roadside trees along the entrance road to Paraiso Quetzal.

RED-FACED SPINETAIL (Cranioleuca erythrops) – A lone bird rummaged around in the dense, moss-laden branches of a tree next to the viewing deck at Wilson BG, where it was tough to see, though everyone who stuck with it eventually got a nice look.

PALE-BREASTED SPINETAIL (Synallaxis albescens) – Amazing scope views of a stationary bird perched on the edge of a tall stand of caña brava (wild sugar cane) at Copabuena, at the time when the young girls who recognized me from 2 years back came over to say hello.

SLATY SPINETAIL (Synallaxis brachyura) – An unresponsive pair called from some dense scrub along the road near La Gamba. **[*]**

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

YELLOW-BELLIED TYRANNULET (Ornithion semiflavum) – After hearing these birds regularly (and far more often than usual), Tom spotted one just overhead along the La Gamba-Golfito road, where it gave great looks, and held us in place long enough for the rest of that awesome flock to come our way! Thanks tyrannulet!

SOUTHERN BEARDLESS-TYRANNULET (Camptostoma obsoletum) – Good scope views of a calling bird at the Rio General vantage point at Talari.

YELLOW TYRANNULET (Capsiempis flaveola) – I've always had a great fondness for these delightful little tyrannulets, and they reinforced that again by performing so nicely for us a couple of times, at La Union and again at La Gamba.

YELLOW-BELLIED ELAENIA (Elaenia flavogaster) – Common and widespread, and we had sightings of this species nearly every day of the trip, though we were unable to definitively turn any of them into the very similar Lesser Elaenia (though one along the Esquinas entrance road sure seemed to be that species).

MOUNTAIN ELAENIA (Elaenia frantzii) – Quite a few in the highland forests around Paraiso Quetzal, though we heard far more than we saw.

OCHRE-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (Mionectes oleagineus) – Singles were seen at Los Cusingos, Wilson, and Esquinas, though I don't recall any one that performed well for the entire group.

PALTRY TYRANNULET (Zimmerius vilissimus) – This tiny mistletoe-loving flycatcher can be found pretty much everywhere in the country, and we saw some most days of this trip.

SCALE-CRESTED PYGMY-TYRANT (Lophotriccus pileatus) – This little guy has a feisty nature and calls that I've always loved. We had superb close views of one along the Rio Java trail.

COMMON TODY-FLYCATCHER (Todirostrum cinereum) – Another feisty and charming little tyrant, and this one is common and widespread, too. We saw some of these wonderful little birds virtually every day of the tour, and Pam liked them well enough to choose them as her favorite bird overall.

EYE-RINGED FLATBILL (Rhynchocyclus brevirostris) – One of these rather lethargic birds was with a mixed flock along the Rio Java trail, another with the big flock along the La Gamba-Golfito road.

YELLOW-OLIVE FLYCATCHER (Tolmomyias sulphurescens) – Though it's a pretty common and widespread species, we didn't meet up with any until our final morning when Karen spotted one in the riparian forest at the crooked bridge along the Esquinas entrance road, just before she spotted the birds we were specifically looking for there (two species below).

GOLDEN-CROWNED SPADEBILL (Platyrinchus coronatus) – A vocal bird proved pretty elusive at Los Cusingos, but most folks got a pretty good look when it paused for a moment before vanishing for good.

ROYAL FLYCATCHER (NORTHERN) (Onychorhynchus coronatus mexicanus) – The bird we were actually looking for (and saw, thanks to Karen!) at the crooked bridge on our way out from Esquinas. Though we never saw one with its crest extended (not surprising as they rarely do extend open them up; I've seen ti exactly once), we could see the bright blue and red in the closed crests of these birds.

SULPHUR-RUMPED FLYCATCHER (Myiobius sulphureipygius aureatus) – A single along the Rio Java trail, another with the mixed flock along the La Gamba-Golfito road, neither of which was especially friendly.

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (Empidonax flaviventris) – The most common wintering Empid in the country. We saw one or two most days. **[b]**

BLACK-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (Empidonax atriceps) – An abnormally easy Empid to identify. This highland specialty showed well along the road to Paraiso Quetzal.

BLACK PHOEBE (Sayornis nigricans) – A couple of birds regularly frequented the rocky Rio General shoreline at Talari.

BRIGHT-RUMPED ATTILA (Attila spadiceus) – Heard more often than seen, but we had nice studies of a pair building a nest on on the side of a large tree trunk along the La Gamba-Golfito road. **[N]**

RUFOUS MOURNER (Rhytipterna holerythra) – Not too vocal this trip, and we only heard one call one morning near the Rio Rincon bridge. **[*]**

DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (Myiarchus tuberculifer) – Heard quite often, and we had decent views of one at Talari, and others at Wilson BG.

GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER (Myiarchus crinitus) – One flew over the road after calling from a concealed perch several times along the Esquinas entrance road on our final morning. **[b]**

GREAT KISKADEE (Pitangus sulphuratus) – An abundant, widespread species that we saw daily in good numbers.

BOAT-BILLED FLYCATCHER (Megarynchus pitangua) – Greatly outnumbered by the similar kiskadee, but we still saw a fair few around Talari and Esquinas.

SOCIAL FLYCATCHER (Myiozetetes similis) – Almost as numerous as the kiskadee, with many seen daily.

GRAY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (Myiozetetes granadensis) – Not uncommon, but numbers are never anywhere near those of Social Flycatcher. We had them regularly at most sites.

STREAKED FLYCATCHER (Myiodynastes maculatus) – A single one was seen at Los Cusingos, and another at Wilson. The similar Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher is generally absent from the country at this time of year, not returning from their South American wintering grounds until late February to early March.

PIRATIC FLYCATCHER (Legatus leucophaius) – Heard fairly regularly, and we scoped one calling bird as it perched on a treetop across the Rio General from Talari Lodge.

TROPICAL KINGBIRD (Tyrannus melancholicus) – Seen daily in good numbers; a common roadside bird.

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER (Tyrannus forficatus) – The usual field we find these in during our drive up the coast had none, but Vernon spotted one sitting on the fence a short while later and found a place to pull off so we could all get a look. **[b]**

FORK-TAILED FLYCATCHER (Tyrannus savana) – A couple of sightings of this beauty in the coastal lowlands, with nice scope views of the first between Coto 47 and Golfito, perched in a tall, bare tree alongside a Brown-throated Parakeet. Merbie picked this as her favorite bird, though she hinted that she would have preferred a Spoon-tailed Flycatcher.

Cotingidae (Cotingas)

TURQUOISE COTINGA (Cotinga ridgwayi) – I'd often heard Talari was a good place to find this species, but I'd never actually had it there, so it was a great moment when we spotted first a subadult male, then a glowing adult male, in the same tree at the river vantage point! Not only that, both birds gave us incredible long views, and several folks got some great photos. This sighting made the views of at least 3 other birds at the Rincon bridge

rather anticlimactic.

RUFOUS PIHA (Lipaugus unirufus) – We heard these birds calling loudly at Los Cusingos, then had a couple fly into view just as the Brown-hooded Parrots we were watching had moved off.

YELLOW-BILLED COTINGA (Carpodectes antoniae) – With a bridge out between Esquinas and the main road, our drive to the Rincon bridge was much longer than usual, and necessitated a very early start, but when those immaculate white birds (about 15 of them!) started putting in an appearance almost as soon as we arrived, I think we all agreed that it was more than worth it. I'm sure Roslyn did at the very least-- she chose these as her favorite trip birds.

Pipridae (Manakins)

WHITE-RUFFED MANAKIN (Corapipo altera) – A few sightings were had along the Rio Java trail, though there wasn't any one individual bird that showed well for all of us.

BLUE-CROWNED MANAKIN (Lepidothrix coronata) – After several sightings of females at Talari and Los Cusingos, we finally connected with a lovely male not far from the army ant swarm in the Rio Rincon area.

ORANGE-COLLARED MANAKIN (Manacus aurantiacus) – A bit elusive, but we managed to scope a male near the tennis courts at Talari, and had another male in a fruiting tree at Esquinas one morning.

RED-CAPPED MANAKIN (Ceratopipra mentalis) – After missing this one at Los Cusingos (other than hearing them vocalize), I thought we were done with it, but Sally spotted a couple of males in the garden at Esquinas and all that were there had a good look at them before they took off into the forest.

Tityridae (Tityras and Allies)

BLACK-CROWNED TITYRA (Tityra inquisitor) – Generally less common that the Masked Tityra, and our only ones this trip were a pair one morning in the Esquinas area.

MASKED TITYRA (Tityra semifasciata) – There weren't a lot of these but we did have several sightings both at Talari and Esquinas.

WHITE-WINGED BECARD (Pachyramphus polychopterus) – Super looks at a male that came right in near the Rio Rincon army ant swarm.

ROSE-THROATED BECARD (Pachyramphus aglaiae) – A few sightings at Wilson and Esquinas, with an especially nice look at a female above the entry gate at the former. Note that the race found here lacks the rose in the throat.

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO (Vireo flavifrons) – A pretty common northern migrant that we saw regularly, until we hit the coastal lowlands. **[b]**

PHILADELPHIA VIREO (Vireo philadelphicus) – An uncommon migrant. We had a couple at Talari, and singles a couple of times at Wilson and Esquinas. **[b]**

SCRUB GREENLET (Hylophilus flavipes) – Great looks at a pair along the stream on our way out from Esquinas, after Tom managed to tape them in with a recording of their own calls.

LESSER GREENLET (Pachysylvia decurtata) – A commonly heard voice in just about every mixed flock we encountered, and eventually we did see these little vireos a few times, too.

GREEN SHRIKE-VIREO (Vireolanius pulchellus) – As often is the case, we only heard this canopy bird a couple of times, both at Los Cusingos and in the lowlands, but never managed to see one. **[*]**

RUFOUS-BROWED PEPPERSHRIKE (Cyclarhis gujanensis) – Heard only at Los Cusingos. **[*]**

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

BROWN JAY (Psilorhinus morio) – Quite common and noisy both around San Jose and at Talari.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

BLUE-AND-WHITE SWALLOW (Pygochelidon cyanoleuca) – The default swallow through most of the highlands.

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (Stelgidopteryx serripennis) – Just a couple of birds were seen along the Rio General. Note that this species is resident here, not a northern migrant.

SOUTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (Stelgidopteryx ruficollis) – Seen well first at the San Vito airport marsh, then a few times in the lowlands. It isn't unusual to have both species of rough-wings occur together, and they're fairly easily separable by the color of their rumps-- pale in southern, brown in northern, and less easily separable by their vocalizations.

GRAY-BREASTED MARTIN (Progne chalybea) – Quite numerous in many areas.

MANGROVE SWALLOW (Tachycineta albilinea) – A few birds at the Rio Rincon bridge showed nicely, especially when they flew below us, showing off their white rumps.

BARN SWALLOW (Hirundo rustica) – Numerous at the Coto 47 marsh. **[b]**

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

SCALY-BREASTED WREN (WHISTLING) (Microcerculus marginatus luscinia) – We lured in a singing bird near the Rio Rincon, but only Ruth and Merbie managed to see it before it slipped away.

HOUSE WREN (Troglodytes aedon) – Widespread and common, and recorded every day of the trip.

OCHRACEOUS WREN (Troglodytes ochraceus) – Heard only in the highland forest at Paraiso Quetzal. **[*]**

TIMBERLINE WREN (Thryorchilus browni) – A high-elevation Chiriqui endemic. We had nice response from a trio of these in scrubby paramo habitat at about 10,000 feet in elevation.

SEDGE WREN (Cistothorus platensis) – A very local and poorly known species in the country (so much so that the Neotropical Birds website doesn't even show the population on their distribution map!). We had excellent calm weather as we passed by the Cartago region, and managed to get superb views of at least three of these in some of the remaining habitat. Sedge Wrens are due for some taxonomic revision, and it'll be interesting to see what they do with this population.

RUFOUS-NAPED WREN (Campylorhynchus rufinucha) – Some folks saw these at the Bougainvillea before the tour officially began, but we did manage to get some official ones on the list, too, with a great sighting of half a dozen hopping around on the ground during a rest stop near the Rio Tarcoles on our way back to San Jose.

BLACK-BELLIED WREN (Pheugopedius fasciatoventris) – Great looks at a pair of these skulking wrens in a vine tangle above the trail on our final morning at Esquinas.

RUFOUS-BREASTED WREN (Pheugopedius rutilus) – A commonly heard voice at Talari, Los Cusingos, and Wilson, but I think we only managed to lay eyes on a single bird, though it did show very well next to the Talari tennis court.

PLAIN WREN (Cantorchilus modestus) – Excellent views of one our first morning before we left the Bougainvillea. It was calling from inside a dense hedge, but we were able to lure it to one end, where it popped up on a fence post and sang out in the open before retiring back into the hedge. Also heard regularly elsewhere. There is a proposal to split this into three species, and it is possible that the ones we heard in the Esquinas area may soon be regarded as a separate species- Panama Wren (C. elutus).

RIVERSIDE WREN (Cantorchilus semibadius) – This strikingly marked wren was seen well a couple of times at both Los Cusingos and Wilson, then heard regularly around the lodge at Esquinas.

WHITE-BREASTED WOOD-WREN (Henicorhina leucosticta) – Heard only at Wilson BG. **[*]**

GRAY-BREASTED WOOD-WREN (Henicorhina leucophrys) – Heard only in the highlands. **[*]**

Polioptilidae (Gnatcatchers)

LONG-BILLED GNATWREN (Ramphocaenus melanurus) – The one we had at Los Cusingos showed well for a few folks, but was a bit too elusive for the rest of us.

TROPICAL GNATCATCHER (Polioptila plumbea) – We had a few sightings of these common birds, beginning with a nice pair over our heads in the gardens at Los Cusingos.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

BLACK-BILLED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH (Catharus gracilirostris) – One hopped out onto a roadside wall and showed nicely for all on the way in to Paraiso Quetzal.

ORANGE-BILLED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH (Catharus aurantiirostris) – I find this the toughest of the 5 nightingale-thrushes to show to a group, though they aren;t uncommon. I think most people saw one somewhere along the way. Best one I recall was a cooperative bird from the folks that joined me for a walk when the majority of the group did a coquette watch at Wilson.

SOOTY THRUSH (Turdus nigrescens) – A few of the montane birds were seen well along the road to the antennas on Cerro de la Muerte.

MOUNTAIN THRUSH (Turdus plebejus) – Pretty common up around Paraiso Quetzal.

CLAY-COLORED THRUSH (Turdus grayi) – Abundant pretty much everywhere.

WHITE-THROATED THRUSH (Turdus assimilis) – One was seen briefly at Bosque del Tolomuco, but we had better looks at Wilson where there a few about.

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

TROPICAL MOCKINGBIRD (Mimus gilvus) – We used to have to search for this bird, but it has become pretty common in some areas, and we saw plenty especially around San Isidro, where we had as many as 5 along a short stretch of roadway between Talari Lodge and Los Cusingos.

Ptiliogonatidae (Silky-flycatchers)

LONG-TAILED SILKY-FLYCATCHER (Ptiliogonys caudatus) – A few of these elegant birds showed well along the entrance road to Paraiso Quetzal.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH (Parkesia noveboracensis) – A common migrant. It was interesting to see a couple visiting feeders at the little restaurant by the Rincon bridge. **[b]**

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER (Vermivora chrysoptera) – A lone male was seen at Wilson BG. **[b]**

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER (Mniotilta varia) – A few birds around Wilson BG. **[b]**

FLAME-THROATED WARBLER (Oreothlypis gutturalis) – This stunning Chiriqui endemic gave great close views along the entrance road to Paraiso Quetzal.

TENNESSEE WARBLER (Oreothlypis peregrina) – One of the most numerous of the migrant warblers, with many seen most days. **[b]**

MOURNING WARBLER (Geothlypis philadelphia) – A couple of slippery birds in a weedy field near San Vito did their best to remain out of sight. **[*]**

AMERICAN REDSTART (Setophaga ruticilla) – A female plumaged bird near the Talari tennis court was the only one for the trip. **[b]**

TROPICAL PARULA (Setophaga pitiayumi) – The folks that joined me for the non-coquette walk at Wilson enjoyed close looks at one of these birds.

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER (Setophaga fusca) – A dull female-plumaged bird at Wilson BG one morning was it for the trip. **[b]**

YELLOW WARBLER (Setophaga petechia) – Quite a common migrant, especially in the coastal areas. **[b]**

CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER (Setophaga pensylvanica) – Another very common migrant warbler that was seen in numbers most days. **[b]**

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER (Setophaga virens) – A couple of birds in the highlands on our first day eluded many of us. **[b]**

RUFOUS-CAPPED WARBLER (Basileuterus rufifrons) – Great views of this little gem on our first morning near the Bougainvillea, with a couple of others at Copabuena that tried their best to distract us from the brush-finches we were trying to see!

BLACK-CHEEKED WARBLER (Basileuterus melanogenys) – We finally managed to find a pair of these highland endemics along the Paraiso Quetzal entrance road.

GOLDEN-CROWNED WARBLER (Basileuterus culicivorus) – A couple of excited parties of these warblers showed well along the Rio Java trail at Wilson.

BUFF-RUMPED WARBLER (Myiothlypis fulvicauda) – A confiding pair put on a nice show just outside of the restaurant at Esquinas.

WILSON'S WARBLER (Cardellina pusilla) – In highland areas, this is one of the most numerous migrant warblers, and we saw a fair number on our transit day to Talari. **[b]**

SLATE-THROATED REDSTART (Myioborus miniatus) – These active little birds were pretty common and easy to see at Wilson.

COLLARED REDSTART (Myioborus torquatus) – A Chiriqui highland specialty that replaces the preceding species at higher elevations. We had a nice look at a couple of these cuties around Paraiso Quetzal.

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

GRAY-HEADED TANAGER (Eucometis penicillata) – A pair paid a few visits to the bunches of bananas hanging just outside of the dining area at Talari, and were easily seen as they perched on the oxcart nearby. At least one bird was also present at the army ant swarm at Rincon.

WHITE-SHOULDERED TANAGER (Tachyphonus luctuosus) – We only saw one, a male, in the gardens at Los Cusingos, but we did get a good look at him.

WHITE-THROATED SHRIKE-TANAGER (Lanio leucothorax) – A pair of these great birds were part of the fantastic mixed flock along the La Gamba-Golfito road, and they showed really well, especially the striking male.

CHERRIE'S TANAGER (Ramphocelus costaricensis) – Numerous throughout the tour.

BLUE-GRAY TANAGER (Thraupis episcopus) – Another very common bird throughout the trip.

PALM TANAGER (Thraupis palmarum) – Less common than its congener, above, but not by that much, and we saw these birds most days.

GOLDEN-HOODED TANAGER (Tangara larvata) – This spectacular little tanager is usually one of the most numerous of the birds in this genus, and we saw them often, including at feeders.

SPECKLED TANAGER (Tangara guttata) – One of these stunning tanagers delighted everyone when it visited the fruit feeder at Bosque del Tolomuco. Later we also saw a couple at the feeders at Wilson BG. This was Charlotte's choice for favorite bird of the trip.

SPANGLE-CHEEKED TANAGER (Tangara dowii) – A bird of highland forests. We saw a couple with a mixed flock on the road in to Paraiso Quetzal.

BAY-HEADED TANAGER (Tangara gyrola) – Quite a few of these beauties were seen both at Los Cusingos and Wilson.

SILVER-THROATED TANAGER (Tangara icterocephala) – Very common in upper middle elevation forests. A number of these were at the feeders at Bosque del Tolomuco and Wilson.

BLUE DACNIS (Dacnis cayana) – Nice scope views of several pairs in trees along the rio General at Talari, with a couple also along the Rio Rincon.

SHINING HONEYCREEPER (Cyanerpes lucidus) – A subadult male with the mixed flock along the La Gamba-Golfito road was our only one.

RED-LEGGED HONEYCREEPER (Cyanerpes cyaneus) – A couple of birds were well seen in the Los Cusingos gardens, then we ran into these brilliant birds regularly in the coastal lowlands.

GREEN HONEYCREEPER (Chlorophanes spiza) – Fairly common, and especially well seen at the feeders at Wilson.

SLATY FLOWERPIERCER (Diglossa plumbea) – We saw a bunch of these in the highland forests during our initial travel day across Cerro de la Muerte.

BLUE-BLACK GRASSQUIT (Volatinia jacarina) – Numerous in open areas with tall grasses.

THICK-BILLED SEED-FINCH (Sporophila funerea) – Nice looks at a singing male along the road as we made our way from San Vito to Esquinas.

VARIABLE SEEDEATER (Sporophila corvina) – The most numerous seedeater throughout the trip.

WHITE-COLLARED SEEDEATER (Sporophila torqueola) – I think we only managed to find a lone male at the same site as our singing Thick-billed Seed-Finch near San Vito.

YELLOW-BELLIED SEEDEATER (Sporophila nigricollis) – Always outnumbered by Variable Seedeaters, but there were a few of these present at several sites including along the runway at the San Vito airport.

BANANAQUIT (Coereba flaveola) – Commonly seen feeding in flowering trees and shrubs. One pair was gathering nesting material and building a nest right next to the tower at Wilson. **[N]**

YELLOW-FACED GRASSQUIT (Tiaris olivaceus) – A singing male was well-seen from the viewing deck at Wilson.

BUFF-THROATED SALTATOR (Saltator maximus) – The most numerous and easily seen saltator; we recorded these birds daily.

GRAYISH SALTATOR (Saltator coerulescens) – Seen only around the Bougainvillea on our pre-breakfast walk the first morning.

STREAKED SALTATOR (Saltator striatipectus) – First seen along the roadside at Copabuena, but we had much better looks at a pair that dropped by the feeders at Wilson one morning.

Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

SOOTY-CAPPED CHLOROSPINGUS (Chlorospingus pileatus) – Loads of these were seen on our day in the highlands.

COMMON CHLOROSPINGUS (Chlorospingus flavopectus) – Not really that common on this tour, but there were a few at Wilson, with a couple visiting the feeders there.

BLACK-STRIPED SPARROW (Arremonops conirostris) – Seen regularly at Wilson and Esquinas.

COSTA RICAN BRUSHFINCH (Arremon costaricensis) – A southern specialty, restricted to the far south of Costa Rica and adjacent western Panama. We had good response from, and views of, an excited pair at Copabuena, then ran into another pair along the Rio Java trail the next morning.

ORANGE-BILLED SPARROW (Arremon aurantiirostris) – Heard pretty regularly at several sites, and finally seen a few times at Wilson and Esquinas. Folks that didn't do the coquette stake out had great views of one that turned up immediately after the Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush put in an appearance.

VOLCANO JUNCO (Junco vulcani) – We only saw one this trip, in our brief time in the cold heights of Cerro de la Muerte, but it was all we needed.

RUFOUS-COLLARED SPARROW (Zonotrichia capensis) – Numerous in San Jose but after we left the city, we only saw a few on our way from Talari to San Vito.

LARGE-FOOTED FINCH (Pezopetes capitalis) – Great looks at a couple of these, including one lacking its tail, near Paraiso Quetzal.

PREVOST'S GROUND-SPARROW (CABANIS'S) (Melozone biarcuata cabanisi) – Our first afternoon's walk near the Bougainvillea netted us decent looks at a pair of these sparrows, which have a very restricted range in the country. In fact, this subspecies occupies a highly disjunct range from the main population in northern Central America, and may be better treated as a separate species, endemic to Costa Rica. The fact that it also looks quite different, with a large black chest patch and less white on the face and more rufous on the crown, also suggests that this is probably a good species.

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

SUMMER TANAGER (Piranga rubra) – Not a day went by that we didn't see or hear at least one of these common wintering migrants. **[b]**

FLAME-COLORED TANAGER (Piranga bidentata) – A male and a female paid a visit to the fruit feeders at Bosque del Tolomuco, showing wonderfully. The race here, citrea, is restricted to the mountains of CR and Panama.

BLACK-CHEEKED ANT-TANAGER (Habia atrimaxillaris) – A very localized endemic of SW Costa Rica. Tom heard a couple of these calling as we enjoyed the great feeding flock along the La Gamba-Golfito road, and when the flock passed, he lured them into view with some playback. We also heard the wonderful dawn song of this species each morning at Esquinas. **[E]**

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK (Pheucticus ludovicianus) – A pretty common winter resident, in the hills at least. We saw quite a few at Talari and

Wilson, but none after we went down into the coastal lowlands. **[b]**

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

EASTERN MEADOWLARK (Sturnella magna) – A pair were heard and seen flying around at the Sedge Wren site near Cartago, and a single bird in the wet fields near Esquinas.

RED-BREASTED MEADOWLARK (Sturnella militaris) – Quite a few in the coastal lowlands at Coto 47 and the wet fields near Esquinas. Until recently called Red-breasted Blackbird, but the name was changed to meadowlark (rightly so) in the most recent round of taxonomic revisions.

MELODIOUS BLACKBIRD (Dives dives) – A flock of 50+ birds near the Bougainvillea was the biggest group I'd yet seen in the country.

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE (Quiscalus mexicanus) – A very common and familiar bird throughout the country, and we saw them daily.

BRONZED COWBIRD (Molothrus aeneus) – A few birds along the road en route to Los Cusingos, then seen daily in the coastal lowlands.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE (Icterus galbula) – A very common wintering birds that we saw daily, usually in good numbers. **[b]**

SCARLET-RUMPED CACIQUE (SCARLET-RUMPED) (Cacicus uropygialis microrhynchus) – A vocal trio of these birds moved through the gardens at Esquinas during our first pre-breakfast walk there.

CRESTED OROPENDOLA (Psarocolius decumanus) – A recent invader from Panama, now not uncommon in the San Vito region, where we saw a few birds, including one or two feeding in flowering Erythrina trees at Wilson. There was also a small active nesting colony seen near the San Vito airport. **[N]**

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

YELLOW-CROWNED EUPHONIA (Euphonia luteicapilla) – The most regularly seen euphonia, with a few each day beginning at Talari.

THICK-BILLED EUPHONIA (Euphonia laniirostris) – Recorded daily around Wilson, with a couple of birds showing up at the feeders there.

ELEGANT EUPHONIA (Euphonia elegantissima) – It took some searching but we finally managed to track down a singing male for some great scope views at Bosque del Tolomuco.

SPOT-CROWNED EUPHONIA (Euphonia imitans) – Males are very similar to Yellow-crowned Euphonia males, though the back edge of the yellow crown patch is quite ragged compared to the clean edge of the more extensive yellow on the Yellow-crowned. The calls are quite different between the two, and females look nothing alike, so identifying them isn't quite as hard as the book makes it look. We had these regularly at Wilson, where both sexes showed well on the feeders.

LESSER GOLDFINCH (Spinus psaltria) – A lovely male turned up at the roadside birding stop near La Union, sitting up for some good scope views.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (Passer domesticus) – Seen in a few select towns and cities. **[I]**

MAMMALS

LONG-NOSED BAT (Rhynchonycteris naso) – A bunch of these were roosting under the porch overhang on some of the lower cabins at Esquinas.

GREATER WHITE-LINED BAT (Saccopteryx bilineata) – The usual crowd of these on their regular roost behind the bar at Esquinas.

MANTLED HOWLER MONKEY (Alouatta palliata) – Nice views of a half a dozen feeding in a flowering tree at Coto 47.

WHITE-THROATED CAPUCHIN (Cebus capucinus) – The raucous troop at Los Cusingos obviously didn't realize those were bird feeders we'd stocked with bananas. As it was, the birds didn't have a lot of time to feed before the bananas disappeared.

VARIEGATED SQUIRREL (Sciurus variegatoides) – The larger, more variably colored squirrel that we saw at Talari and Esquinas.

RED-TAILED SQUIRREL (Sciurus granatensis) – We saw this common smaller squirrel daily.

CENTRAL AMERICAN AGOUTI (Dasyprocta punctata) – A couple at Los Cusingos, that seen well each day at Wilson and Esquinas.

NORTHERN RACCOON (Procyon lotor) – A couple of animals loafing in a tree during one of our night drives near Esquinas.

WHITE-NOSED COATI (Nasua narica) – Just one lone male was seen on a couple of days at Esquinas.

Herps

GREEN IGUANA (Iguana iguana) – Quite a few in the coastal lowlands.

COMMON BASILISK (Basiliscus basiliscus) – Always near water. Common at Esquinas, where one large one was a regular feature in the dining area.

TROPICAL HOUSE GECKO (Hemidactylus mabouia) – Heard and seen in the cabins at Talari.

AMERICAN CROCODILE (Crocodylus acutus) – Some biggies along the Rio Tarcoles on our drive back to the north.

SPECTACLED CAIMAN (Caiman crocodilus) – A few in the Caiman Pond at Esquinas.

CANE TOAD (Bufo marinus) – Far more common then our few records would suggest.

HOURGLASS TREE FROG (Dendropsophus ebraccatus) – This is the small noisy frog we saw just outside of the dining area at Esquinas.

MESO-AMERICAN SLIDER (Trachemys venusta) – A couple of these turtles were basking on a log along the Rio Rincon.

GREEN SEA TURTLE (Chelonia mydas) – When Phil said he was seeing a couple of large turtles in the Rincon River, this was not what we were expecting! I never would have expected to see sea turtles so far up river, but there was no mistaking these creatures. Tom even managed to get photos in which he could read the number on the flipper tag. We're still waiting for info about them from whoever tagged them.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 323 bird taxa and 9 mammal taxa