



Field Guides Tour Report

Costa Rica: Birding the Edges Part II, the Far North 2015

Jan 13, 2015 to Jan 22, 2015
Jay VanderGaast & Tom Johnson

For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).



One of the amazing encounters of our tour was this spectacular one with Wrenthrush...we could not have seen what is normally a real "skulker" any better! Photo by guide Tom Johnson.

One of the interesting things about doing tours like this year after year is noting the differences from one year to the next. This season, unusually high rainfall on the Caribbean slope had left the lowlands extraordinarily wet, and this had a profound effect on bird activity and distribution. This was most noticeable in the Cano Negro region where the vast quantity of water meant that there were no big concentrations of water birds gathered in any one location, but it also meant that we were able to access a lot more of the region by boat than we had on previous visits. The high waters left some species much more difficult to track down, while giving us greater access to habitats for others. And while the differences were much less pronounced in the other areas we visited, there were some nonetheless.

All in all, though the rain did cost us a few species (and nearly a full day of birding at Arenal), it also added a few we might have otherwise struggled for, and overall it was a great ride! We kicked things off in a big way, nailing the ultimate bird of the trip, the incomparable Resplendent Quetzal, as one of the very first birds of the tour! Our views were simply outstanding: between avocado-catching sallies, an immaculately plumaged male sat out in full view below eye level, bringing a whole load of sunshine to a drizzly morning on the slopes of Poas Volcano. And things didn't go downhill as we climbed higher. A Large-footed Finch soaking up some sun when it finally broke through the morning mist, a plethora of feisty Fiery-throated Hummingbirds buzzing around us as we incited an avian mob scene with a pygmy-owl imitation, and a pair of uncharacteristically bold Wrenthrushes, those weird, aberrant warblers, all played their part in making for a memorable start to the tour. Later that morning a visit to the always exciting hummingbird feeders at La Paz got our hummingbird tally into the double digits quickly with gems like Green Thorntail, Magenta-throated Woodstar, and Black-bellied Hummingbird.

Next day we wended our way to the delightful Bosque de Paz Lodge adding a roadside Pearl Kite along the way. We also encountered our first good mixed feeding flock along the road before we even got to the lodge, a flock that netted us our one and only Flame-throated Warbler, a brilliant adult male, the lovely Spangle-cheeked Tanager, and the scarce and local Black-banded Woodcreeper. Though we didn't have a lot of time at the lodge, we made the most of it, enjoying the likes of elegant Long-tailed Silky-flycatchers perched up in the canopy, Zeledon's Antbirds and Slaty-backed Nightingale-Thrushes attending an army-ant swarm in the forest, skulking Azure-hooded Jays and Streak-breasted Treehunters along the roadside, and plenty of Black Guans, Yellow-thighed Finches, and Chestnut-capped Brush-Finches at the feeders (not to mention a quartet of shy Pacas!)

All too quickly we said goodbye to the wonderful highland forests and hello to the flooded wetlands of the Cano Negro region, and a whole suite of new
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species. The drive in was memorable for a very green three-toed sloth sunbathing in a roadside Cecropia tree, and a visit to the excellent Medio Queso wetlands, where we found our biggest concentration of waterbirds and scored big with such rarities as a massive Jabiru, a very cryptic Pinnated Bittern, and one of the few records (if not the only one) of White-tailed Hawk for the country's Caribbean slope!

Most of our next day was spent on the water, exploring the various lagoons and channels that were available to us due to the extremely high water. And though some expected birds were notably absent (Limpkins, where were you?), other difficult ones performed beautifully. Foremost among these was Yellow-breasted Crane; a pair of these skulkers strolled about in the open for several minutes with us gawking from a few meters away! Easily the best view I've ever had of this normally retiring species! Other highlights in the area included a couple of gorgeous Black-collared Hawks, a trio of Snail Kites coursing over one particular lagoon, a beautifully camouflaged Common Potoo, an excited male Bare-crowned Antbird, and the extremely local Nicaraguan Grackle, an area specialty. Night birding was also incredibly productive here, and we tallied a total of 4 Striped Owls, 4 Pacific Screech-Owls, and single Barn and Black-and-white owls, plus an incredible close encounter with an amazing Great Potoo on a hunting perch on our two night drives.

We finished up in the beautiful Arenal Volcano region, where the lush Caribbean slope forest is home to a great variety of birds. Despite the rain washing out most of one of our days here, we still did quite well and found a great number of the most hoped-for species of the region. Among the many highlights here: a lovely Semiplumbeous Hawk tailing a troop of monkeys along with a pair of Double-toothed kites; the fantastic sight of an Ornate Hawk-Eagle displaying directly overhead; an imposing looking Spectacled Owl giving a threat display after dark; the highly local Keel-billed Motmot, perched on a roadside power line no less; the amusing sight of a Pale-billed Woodpecker getting its bill stuck in the trunk of a tree; a wonderfully cooperative Thicket Antpitta that everyone got a look at; fruiting fig trees swarming with a variety of species, from Crested Guans and Keel-billed Toucans to White-collared Manakins and Bay-headed and Emerald tanagers.

This really was a fun trip to Costa Rica's far north (to complement the south section we covered with some of you on [Part I](#)), and it was great to be able to share it with all of you. Thanks so much for joining Tom and me on this journey. I hope this report and Tom's pictures help bring back some nice warm memories to help tide you over until the spring thaw. And I hope to see all of you on another trip sometime soon. Oh, and before I forget, special thanks to Vernon, our awesome driver, who safely got us everywhere we needed to go and back again. Couldn't have done it without him.

--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

BIRDS

Tinamidae (Tinamous)

LITTLE TINAMOU (*Crypturellus soui*) – Heard along the road between Cano Negro and Arenal. [*****]

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) – There were loads of these at Medio Queso marsh but we only saw 4 during the Cano Negro boat trips, certainly due in part to the extremely high water there.

MUSCOVY DUCK (*Cairina moschata*) – A few far off birds among the whistling-ducks at Medio Queso.

AMERICAN WIGEON (*Anas americana*) – At least 7 birds, including a couple of breeding plumaged drakes, on a lagoon at Cano Negro during our afternoon boat trip. [**b**]

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Anas discors*) – Generally the most common migrant duck in the country; we saw god numbers at Cano Negro. [**b**]

LESSER SCAUP (*Aythya affinis*) – With all the water around at Cano Negro, this diving duck was pretty common in some of the deeper lagoons there. [**b**]

Cracidae (Guans, Chachalacas, and Curassows)

GRAY-HEADED CHACHALACA (*Ortalis cinereiceps*) – Three birds seen along the river at Cano Negro were the only ones of the trip.

CRESTED GUAN (*Penelope purpurascens*) – Seen daily at Arenal, where the fruiting fig trees kept them hanging around.

BLACK GUAN (*Chamaepetes unicolor*) – Bosque de Paz has to be the easiest place to see this highland guan; one evening there were at least a dozen of them hanging around the feeders there.

GREAT CURASSOW (*Crax rubra*) – A pair of these turkey-sized birds were regular visitors below the feeders at Arenal.

Ciconiidae (Storks)

JABIRU (*Jabiru mycteria*) – A rarity on this trip, but for the second consecutive year we saw a single bird, this one scoped and seen beautifully at Medio Queso.

WOOD STORK (*Mycteria americana*) – Fairly common in the Cano Negro region.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – Many at Cano Negro, including a noisy, smelly colony of them on our afternoon boat trip. [**N**]

Anhingidae (Anhingas)

ANHINGA (*Anhinga anhinga*) – Incredibly numerous at Cano Negro, where we saw loads during the boat trips.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

PINNATED BITTERN (*Botaurus pinnatus*) – Generally a pretty tough bird to find in CR, but Medio Queso is one of the best places to look, and once again we found a single bird here, showing wonderfully not far from the road.

BARE-THROATED TIGER-HERON (*Tigrisoma mexicanum*) – Nice looks at both adults and tiger-striped juveniles at Cano Negro.

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – A few birds at Cano Negro. [**b**]

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – Pretty numerous in the Cano Negro wetlands.

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*) – Seen daily in small numbers around Cano Negro.

LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*) – Daily at Cano negro, with a few other scattered individuals.

TRICOLORED HERON (*Egretta tricolor*) – Just three birds on our morning boat tour at Cano Negro.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Numerous throughout.

GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens*) – A handful at Cano Negro, but sadly we never connected with a recently reported Striated Heron here.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – Three dapper adults were roosting below the big cormorant colony during our afternoon boat trip.

BOAT-BILLED HERON (*Cochlearius cochlearius*) – We only managed to spot three of these strange, nocturnal herons, on our morning boat trip at Cano Negro.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

WHITE IBIS (*Eudocimus albus*) – Small numbers at Cano Negro.

GLOSSY IBIS (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – A pair of these were seen at the Nicaraguan Grackle site at Cano Negro. With the extreme water levels, and little exposed mud, numbers of all the ibis species were lower than usual.

GREEN IBIS (*Mesembrinibis cayennensis*) – Superb views of a trio of these shaggy, stocky ibises at Cano Negro.

ROSEATE SPOONBILL (*Platalea ajaja*) – A couple of brilliant ones at Medio Queso, as well as several at Cano Negro.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*) – Abundant daily.

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*) – Also abundant daily.

LESSER YELLOW-HEADED VULTURE (*Cathartes burrovianus*) – Pretty local and scarce in the country. We had a couple of wonderfully close birds fly past at Medio Queso.

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*) – A couple of birds at Cano Negro, and a couple more around Lake Arenal. [b]

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

PEARL KITE (*Gampsonyx swainsonii*) – As we slowed down due to congestion as we approached a toll booth west of San Jose, we spotted one of these tiny, dapper raptors perched on a utility pole next to the highway. It's not often that heavy traffic has a positive side.

WHITE-TAILED KITE (*Elanus leucurus*) – Singles on three days in open country during the drives.

BLACK HAWK-EAGLE (*Spizaetus tyrannus*) – A rather slow morning at the casona viewpoint at Arenal took a turn for the better when Dan spotted one of these magnificent large raptors heading our way. The bird passed by quite close, and at eye level, giving us all a great look at before it soared off into the distance.

ORNATE HAWK-EAGLE (*Spizaetus ornatus*) – This impressive bird ended up in a three-way tie for third place in bird of the trip voting, but probably would have placed higher if more people had seen it. Only those few who continued on up to the viewpoint at the Arenal Sky Trek were treated to distant views of a bird, both perched and flying, followed by the same bird, a few minutes later, performing an impressive aerial display directly overhead, screaming loudly all the while! What an amazing show!

BLACK-COLLARED HAWK (*Busarellus nigricollis*) – This gorgeous hawk is a fish specialist, and thus is pretty much always found near water. We had awesome looks at a couple of them during our morning boat trip at Cano Negro.

SNAIL KITE (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*) – Three different adults were seen at Cano Negro, all three of which were in the same lagoon during our afternoon boat trip.

DOUBLE-TOOTHED KITE (*Harpagus bidentatus*) – This species has an interesting habit of following along with troops of capuchin monkeys, feeding on any small prey items (insects, lizards, etc) the monkeys flush up as they disturb the foliage. We were fortunate enough to witness this twice in the Arenal region, with one troop of capuchins at the Sky Trek being accompanied by two pairs of kites, and another troop near our lodge with attendant kites and a Semiplumbeous Hawk.

NORTHERN HARRIER (*Circus cyaneus*) – A fairly scarce migrant in the country; the lovely male we watched hunting over the marshland at Medio Queso was the first I've seen in CR in years. [b]

COMMON BLACK HAWK (*Buteogallus anthracinus*) – A soaring bird we spotted from the bus as we drove from Cano Negro towards Arenal was a nice surprise, as I rarely see this species on the Caribbean slope. It's a much more common bird in the Pacific coast mangroves.

BARRED HAWK (*Morphnarchus princeps*) – A brief and rather poor view of one that whizzed by overhead at the viewing platform at the Arenal Sky Trek.

ROADSIDE HAWK (*Rupornis magnirostris*) – Quite common in the Cano negro region, where we saw them daily.

HARRIS'S HAWK (*Parabuteo unicinctus*) – We saw single birds on two days: one near dusk as we drove through open country en route to Rio Frio, the other along the highway just outside of La Fortuna.

WHITE-TAILED HAWK (*Geranoaetus albicaudatus*) – In Costa Rica this is a Pacific slope bird, so the bird we saw so well (both perched and in flight) at Medio Queso was a real surprise, and may be one of the few, if not the first, record of this species for the site and the Caribbean slope!

WHITE HAWK (*Pseudastur albicollis*) – A rather soggy bird perched near the roadside close to Lake Arenal was a highlight of a particularly damp morning of birding.

SEMIPLUMBEOUS HAWK (*Leucopternis semiplumbeus*) – That first one Vernon spotted from the viewing deck at our Arenal lodge was pretty distant and unsatisfying, but luckily we got better views of this handsome hawk on our final day when we found one hanging out with a troop of capuchin monkeys.

BROAD-WINGED HAWK (*Buteo platypterus*) – A common wintering migrant, with sightings on several days. [b]

GRAY HAWK (*Buteo plagiatus*) – Reasonably common in the region. We saw them daily around Cano Negro, and also had a couple of sightings around Arenal.

SHORT-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo brachyurus*) – Several sightings in the Arenal region. I forgot to make note, but I believe we saw both light and dark morph individuals.

RED-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo jamaicensis*) – We saw a couple of these in the highlands on our first day out, and though the views weren't the greatest,

both birds appeared to me to be migrants, rather than the distinctive resident race, costaricensis. [b]

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

WHITE-THROATED CRAKE (*Laterallus albigularis*) – As common as these things are, they can be incredibly tough to see, and though we were close a couple of times, we never found one that would play nice. [*]

GRAY-NECKED WOOD-RAIL (*Aramides cajaneus*) – With less exposed shoreline at Cano Negro due to the high water, these rails were a little less visible than usual. Even so, we still managed to see 5 of them, so we can't really complain!

YELLOW-BREASTED CRAKE (*Porzana flaviventer*) – After the first one we flushed gave us the slip, we lucked across an incredibly cooperative pair that strolled around in the open as we oohed and aahed from just a few yards away! Incredibly we also spotted another pair, also feeding in the open, in an adjacent mat of floating vegetation. Just totally unexpected behavior from this usually skulking species! This was my favorite bird of the trip, and it also came in second place in the bird of the trip voting (not even counting my vote!).

PURPLE GALLINULE (*Porphyrio martinicus*) – A few birds at the Medio Queso wetland.

COMMON GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*) – A single bird on one of the lagoons at Cano Negro.

AMERICAN COOT (*Fulica americana*) – Also just a single bird on the margins of one of the Cano Negro lagoons. [b]

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-NECKED STILT (*Himantopus mexicanus*) – A handful of these elegant waders were seen at Cano Negro.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

SOUTHERN LAPWING (*Vanellus chilensis*) – A quartet of these birds, which have exploded across the country after first appearing in Costa Rica in 1997, were seen in a marshy area en route to Cano Negro.

KILLDEER (*Charadrius vociferus*) – A couple of birds in a wet meadow en route to Cano Negro. [b]

Jacaniidae (Jacanas)

NORTHERN JACANA (*Jacana spinosa*) – Quite numerous in the wetlands in and around Cano Negro.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*) – A widespread wintering species, seen most regularly at the stream crossing below the lodge at Arenal. [b]

SOLITARY SANDPIPER (*Tringa solitaria*) – A single bird in a roadside marsh as we were leaving Cano Negro. [b]

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – There wasn't much shorebird habitat available at Cano Negro this year, and consequently not many shorebirds. We did hear both this species and the next during our morning boat ride. [b*]

LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*) – How often do you get Least Sandpiper as a heard only bird on a trip? [b*]

WILSON'S SNIPE (*Gallinago delicata*) – A lone bird in a damp meadow along the roadside as we drove from Los Chiles to Rio Frio. [b]

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – No comment. [I]

PALE-VENTED PIGEON (*Patagioenas cayennensis*) – Pretty common in riverside vegetation in the Cano Negro region, where it is the default large pigeon.

RED-BILLED PIGEON (*Patagioenas flavirostris*) – A common montane species, with regular sightings around the San Jose region.

BAND-TAILED PIGEON (*Patagioenas fasciata*) – A few large, though distant flocks were seen in the Arenal region.

INCA DOVE (*Columbina inca*) – A pair near the Hotel Bougainvillea were the only ones for the trip.

RUDDY GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina talpacoti*) – Seen daily in good numbers around Cano Negro.

WHITE-TIPPED DOVE (*Leptotila verreauxi*) – A few sightings around Rio Frio, where this species is generally more numerous than the very local Gray-headed Dove.

GRAY-CHESTED DOVE (*Leptotila cassinii*) – A couple of these dark, chunky doves were regular, though shy visitors below the feeders at Arenal.

GRAY-HEADED DOVE (*Leptotila plumbeiceps*) – Cano Negro is one of the best places to see this local species in CR, but even there it is outnumbered by the much more common White-tipped Dove. Tom and Vernon managed to find us our only one, right at the boat dock after our morning cruise.

WHITE-WINGED DOVE (*Zenaida asiatica*) – Seen mainly in the San Jose region, but with a few birds around La Fortuna and a single at Cano Negro.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

SQUIRREL CUCKOO (*Piaya cayana*) – Relatively few this trip, though we had a couple of sightings in the Cano Negro area.

GROOVE-BILLED ANI (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*) – Pretty common in scrubby areas in the Cano Negro lowlands.

Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)

BARN OWL (*Tyto alba*) – Some great work with the spotlight by Tom picked out one of these on our second night of owling at Cano Negro. And I'd just been wondering why we never saw this species there!

Strigidae (Owls)

PACIFIC SCREECH-OWL (*Megascops cooperi*) – A very friendly pair showed wonderfully at a regular spot on our first night at Cano Negro. On the second night we almost got hit by one of a pair that were attracted to the bus headlights. The bird actually flew towards the bus and landed on the road just a few feet in front of us.

TROPICAL SCREECH-OWL (*Megascops choliba*) – Good response and views of one on our first night near the Bougainvillea.

SPECTACLED OWL (*Pulsatrix perspicillata*) – I hadn't expected to get this one so quickly and easily, but a territorial bird at Arenal flew in immediately and sat out on an open perch, later also giving an impressive threat display before flying off.

FERRUGINOUS PYGMY-OWL (*Glaucidium brasilianum*) – One on the grounds of the Bougainvillea cooperated nicely for those that went looking for it.

BLACK-AND-WHITE OWL (*Ciccaba nigrolineata*) – We were about to give up on this bird on our second attempt for it at Cano Negro when it suddenly called from nearby, and we tracked it down for fabulous views. We needn't have gone through so much effort, as another of these gorgeous creatures was hanging out nightly near the guides' room at Arenal.

STRIPED OWL (*Pseudoscops clamator*) – Cano Negro has got to be one of the best night birding sites in the country, and it's a great spot for this striking species, too. We found two birds on each of the two nights we went out, in completely different areas, so no overlap either. A much-wanted bird for Tom, who chose it as his favorite overall.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

LESSER NIGHTHAWK (*Chordeiles acutipennis*) – About 20 of these birds appeared over the riverside trees at dusk as we finished up our afternoon boat trip on the Rio Frio.

COMMON PAURAUQUE (*Nyctidromus albicollis*) – A few were seen along the roads as we searched for owls at Cano Negro.

Nyctibiidae (Potoos)

GREAT POTOO (*Nyctibius grandis*) – It was a long, bumpy drive to this bird's favorite hunting perch, but the few that came along were rewarded with outstanding close views of one of these huge potoos, easily the best and closest view I've ever had of this species at night! Had more folks come out, I think this would have been voted into the top 3; it did make it to number one on Richard's list of favorites.

COMMON POTOO (*Nyctibius griseus*) – Our boatman Antonio had a day roosting bird staked out along the Rio Frio, and we got a first-hand look at how their cryptic coloration and posture makes them incredibly hard to spot!

Apodidae (Swifts)

WHITE-COLLARED SWIFT (*Streptoprocne zonaris*) – The only swift of the tour, with scattered flocks of these large birds at several locations.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

GREEN HERMIT (*Phaethornis guy*) – A regular feeder visitor at La Paz and Bosque de Paz, with a single bird also seen near Arenal.

LONG-BILLED HERMIT (*Phaethornis longirostris*) – One paid a visit to a flowering tree along the Peninsula Road at Arenal.

STRIPE-THROATED HERMIT (*Phaethornis striigularis*) – One of these tiny hermits was seen somewhere between Cano Negro and Arenal, but I can't recall exactly where we saw it.

PURPLE-CROWNED FAIRY (*Heliothryx barroti*) – Wonderful views of this dainty hummingbird a couple of times around the Arenal region.

GREEN-BREASTED MANGO (*Anthracothorax prevostii*) – A male at a flowering tree near the Hotel Bougainvillea was the only one we saw.

GREEN THORNTAIL (*Discosura conversii*) – We also saw just a single male of this species, this one visiting the upper feeders at La Paz.

GREEN-CROWNED BRILLIANT (*Heliodoxa jacula*) – Quite numerous at the feeders at La Paz and Bosque.

MAGNIFICENT HUMMINGBIRD (*Eugenes fulgens*) – A large hummer of high elevations. First seen up on Poas Volcano, and then regularly at Bosque's feeders.

FIERY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Panterpe insignis*) – A handful of these colorful highland hummers buzzed around chattering noisily in response to my pygmy-owl imitation.

WHITE-BELLIED MOUNTAIN-GEM (*Lampornis hemileucus*) – An irregular visitor to the feeders at La Paz, so I was pleased to see a couple of these local hummers there.

PURPLE-THROATED MOUNTAIN-GEM (*Lampornis calolaemus*) – Seen commonly at the feeders at both La Paz and Bosque.

MAGENTA-THROATED WOODSTAR (*Calliphlox bryantae*) – A single male paid a few visits to the feeders at La Paz, and another showed up daily at the Bosque feeders.

VOLCANO HUMMINGBIRD (*Selasphorus flammula*) – The poor weather up on Poas wasn't really favorable for hummingbirds, and consequently we saw only a single female of this usually common species there.

SCINTILLANT HUMMINGBIRD (*Selasphorus scintilla*) – A few birds around the flowers at Bosque including a couple of snazzy males, whose wing buzz often gives away their presence.

VIOLET-HEADED HUMMINGBIRD (*Klais guimeti*) – One or two were regular visitors to the flowering verbena hedges below the viewing deck at Arenal.

SCALY-BREASTED HUMMINGBIRD (*Phaeochroa cuvierii*) – One of these large, dull hummers showed up a few times at the heliconias below the Arenal viewing deck.

VIOLET SABREWING (*Campylopterus hemileucurus*) – This big guy was pretty common at the La Paz and Bosque feeders.

STRIPE-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD (*Eupherusa eximia*) – A lone female paid a few visits to the feeders at Bosque. She looked very similar to the female Black-bellied Hummingbirds that were also there, but was a bit larger and showed a much more prominent rufous wing patch.

BLACK-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD (*Eupherusa nigriventris*) – Fair numbers at the feeders at La Paz, with a few at Bosque as well, though they seemed to feed more on the flowering verbena there than at the feeders.

COPPERY-HEADED EMERALD (*Elvira cupreiceps*) – This Costa Rican endemic was seen only at La Paz, where there were plenty of them at the feeders, mostly males. Our first was a male that flew straight into the windshield of the van we parked next to just after I got off the bus. Thankfully he seemed to recover after a couple of minutes in my hand. [E]

RUFIOUS-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia tzacatl*) – The most widespread and common hummer on the tour, see every day.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

RESPLENDENT QUETZAL (*Pharomachrus mocinno*) – An easy winner of the bird of the trip voting, and understandably so. We pretty much kicked off the tour with this species as we headed up towards Poas Volcano. A couple of roadside wild avocado trees were in perfect fruiting mode, and a couple of these brilliant birds, a female and an exquisitely plumaged male, showed up immediately, feeding on the fruits, then sitting right out in the open at eye level to digest. It couldn't have been a better quetzal experience, and the folks that chose this as their favorite bird overall- Ann, Carole, Diane, Wanda, and Dottie- undoubtedly agreed!

SLATY-TAILED TROGON (*Trogon massena*) – A lone male at a fruiting fig tree at Arenal was the only one we saw.

BLACK-HEADED TROGON (*Trogon melanocephalus*) – David B. spotted our only ones, a pair along the Rio Frio during our morning boat trip. This is one of a handful of Pacific slope species that just spill over the mountains onto the Caribbean slope at Cano Negro.

GARTERED TROGON (*Trogon caligatus*) – The former Violaceous Trogon. We saw single males on two consecutive days perched on roadside power lines at Arenal.

ORANGE-BELLIED TROGON (*Trogon aurantiiventris*) – Great looks at two separate males in the Arenal region, one along the roadside below the lodge, the other as we crossed the suspension bridge along the Waterfall Trail. In my view, this is a rather dubious species, as it really just looks, sounds, and acts like a Collared Trogon. With an orange belly, that is.

COLLARED TROGON (*Trogon collaris*) – Our first was a female at the same site as our quetzals on our way up to Poas. We also had some nice views of a lone male on both days at Bosque.

Momotidae (Motmots)

RUFOUS MOTMOT (*Baryphthengus martii*) – Vernon and Dave F. saw one at the Arenal Sky Trek when they returned early from our hike. The rest of us only heard this species near our lodge, though they refused to show themselves.

KEEL-BILLED MOTMOT (*Electron carinatum*) – A very local and poorly known species in the country, and an Arenal specialty. We dipped on our first attempt to find one, but then got lucky when we spotted one sitting on a power line next to the road when the rain finally cleared and the sun came out.

BROAD-BILLED MOTMOT (*Electron platyrhynchum*) – Regularly seen perched on roadside wires below our lodge at Arenal.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

RINGED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle torquata*) – Only about three of these monster kingfishers were seen during our Cano Negro boat trips. That's far fewer than usual, but all that water meant the birds just weren't concentrated as they'd be when water levels are down.

BELTED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle alcyon*) – Generally an uncommon migrant, and we saw just one, a female, during our morning boat tour. [b]

AMAZON KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle amazona*) – As usual the most numerous kingfisher at Cano Negro, with fairly good numbers seen, though they were also down from somewhat from previous visits.

GREEN KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle americana*) – It always surprises me how uncommon this species seems to be at Cano Negro, as it seems like there should be more of them. Still, we did manage to see a few.

Bucconidae (Puffbirds)

PIED PUFFBIRD (*Notharchus tectus*) – Despite it being the heat of the day when we tried for these, they responded quickly and showed very well on our drive to Arenal. Instead of the usual pair, there were 4 birds this time: 3 were seen at one time, with a 4th calling a short ways away.

Galbulidae (Jacamars)

RUFOUS-TAILED JACAMAR (*Galbula ruficauda*) – It took some work but we finally managed to get good views of a male just below the lodge at Arenal.

Sternornithidae (Toucan-Barbets)

PRONG-BILLED BARBET (*Sternornis frantzii*) – They may be kind of dumpy looking birds, but there's something endearing about these barbets, especially when they're duetting, or whatever you call it when three birds sing together, as they did for us at La Paz.

Ramphastidae (Toucans)

EMERALD TOUCANET (BLUE-THROATED) (*Aulacorhynchus prasinus caeruleogularis*) – A quartet of these beautiful small toucans were present at the fruiting avocado trees our first morning, though they were perhaps just a bit overshadowed by those other birds there, the um..., oh yeah, the quetzals.

COLLARED ARACARI (*Pteroglossus torquatus*) – A single bird near Los Chiles as we headed to Rio Frio, then regular sightings at Arenal.

BLACK-MANDIBLED TOUCAN (CHESTNUT-MANDIBLED) (*Ramphastos ambiguus swainsonii*) – We saw them daily in the Arenal region, including some excellent looks around the fruiting fig trees near the green gate.

KEEL-BILLED TOUCAN (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*) – As above, we had them daily around Arenal, including the fig trees, where we got side by side looks at the two big toucans a few times. This was Dan's pick for top bird of the trip, and it also was in a three-way tie for third overall in voting.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

BLACK-CHEEKED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes pucherani*) – A fairly common and conspicuous woodpecker at lower elevations on the Caribbean slope, and we had them daily at Cano Negro and Arenal.

HOFFMANN'S WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes hoffmannii*) – Pretty common around the Meseta Central, where we first saw them at the Bougainvillea. We also had a couple of sightings in the Cano Negro region.

SMOKY-BROWN WOODPECKER (*Picoides fumigatus*) – A male of this small and generally inconspicuous woodpecker showed nicely as we walked the trail at La Paz after the hummingbird show.

HAIRY WOODPECKER (*Picoides villosus*) – The race found here is much smaller than our northern Hairy WP, and is very brown below, and I like to call the "Dirty Hairys";-) We saw one in a big roadside flock as we headed down to Bosque.

RUFOUS-WINGED WOODPECKER (*Piculus simplex*) – A very responsive male along the Peninsula Road at Arenal flew in quickly and perched in the open, then promptly fell asleep. or, at least it looked that way, as it didn't so much as twitch for the next 20 minutes or so. Ann finally managed to get it to fly by pulling out her camera!

GOLDEN-OLIVE WOODPECKER (*Colaptes rubiginosus*) – Some good sightings up near the green gate fig trees at Arenal.

LINEATED WOODPECKER (*Dryocopus lineatus*) – These large woodpeckers, close relatives of our Pileated, were seen well a couple of times in the Cano Negro region, including a pair on our morning boat trip.

PALE-BILLED WOODPECKER (*Campephilus guatemalensis*) – This species provided one of the most interesting tour moments: the male of a pair we were watching at Arenal was hammering hard on a tree trunk when it managed to get its bill stuck! It struggled to pull free for about 15 or 20 seconds before it finally managed to get his bill unstuck. Now that's not something you see every day!

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

CRESTED CARACARA (*Caracara cheriway*) – Not uncommon in the Cano Negro region. We also saw a single bird near La Fortuna.

LAUGHING FALCON (*Herpetotheres cachinnans*) – A couple of close calling birds around Rio Frio just before we left the area just could not be tracked down. But later that morning we had excellent views of one perched along the roadside en route to La Fortuna.

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*) – A lone bird was seen on a roadside power line on our way in to Rio Frio. [b]

BAT FALCON (*Falco ruficularis*) – We had one bird during our morning boat ride at Cano Negro, another perched on a tower the next morning. Can't recall which one, but one of the two had just had a successful hunt and was consuming some unfortunate bird.

Psittacidae (New World and African Parrots)

ORANGE-CHINNED PARAKEET (*Brotogeris jugularis*) – These small parakeets were seen daily at Cano Negro.

BROWN-HOODED PARROT (*Pytilia haematotis*) – A group of 5 zoomed past overhead at Arenal on our final morning.

WHITE-CROWNED PARROT (*Pionus senilis*) – The common small parrot around Cano Negro. We saw them daily there, including one that popped out of a nest hole (which was occupied by a Pacific Screech-owl last year) and sat on the adjacent power line during our morning boat ride.

RED-LORED PARROT (*Amazona autumnalis*) – The common large parrot at Cano Negro, where we also saw them daily.

WHITE-FRONTED PARROT (*Amazona albifrons*) – Another of the Pacific slope species that just sneaks across to the Caribbean slope in the Arenal region. We saw a small flock fly in as we were watching the magpie-jays on our way in to Arenal, then had excellent views of a pair at the casona viewpoint.

OLIVE-THROATED PARAKEET (*Eupsittula nana*) – Quite a few of these were seen around the Cano Negro region.

CRIMSON-FRONTED PARAKEET (*Psittacara finschi*) – The common large parakeet through most of the country, though the previous species mainly replaced these at Cano Negro. These parakeets were first seen around the Bougainvillea, where there are often large, noisy flocks winging past.

Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds)

FASCIATED ANTSHRIKE (*Cymbilaimus lineatus*) – A fairly uncooperative male along the Peninsula Road at Arenal on our final morning was only seen by a few.

BARRED ANTSHRIKE (*Thamnophilus doliatus*) – Excellent views of a pair of these great birds near the old biological station at Rio Frio.

RUSSET ANTSHRIKE (*Thamnistes anabatins*) – This unique antshrike was present in several canopy flocks in the Arenal region, where we had some super looks along the road below the lodge.

SLATY ANTWREN (*Myrmotherula schisticolor*) – The group that did the longer hike with me at Bosque de Paz had pretty decent views of a male with a mixed understory flock.

DUSKY ANTIBIRD (*Cercomacra tyrannina*) – Heard regularly at Arenal, and some folks also saw one gleaning insects below the streetlight the first morning.

BARE-CROWNED ANTIBIRD (*Gymnocichla nudiceps*) – Not usually a bird you'd expect to see during a boat trip, but we had fantastic looks at an excited male on our morning boat ride at Cano Negro. The bird's behavior and the presence of Gray-headed Tanagers at the same spot makes me think there were probably army ants on the move there.

DULL-MANTLED ANTIBIRD (*Myrmeciza laemosticta*) – Our final species of the trip; this one came in close and showed beautifully during our drive out from Arenal.

ZELEDON'S ANTIBIRD (*Myrmeciza zeledoni*) – A small army ant swarm at Bosque de Paz had a few birds present, including a pair of these tail-pumping, dark antbirds. The group that did the longer hike also saw another male with another ant swarm. Until recently this species was called Immaculate Antbird.

SPOTTED ANTIBIRD (*Hylophylax naevioides*) – A female feeding around the street light near the casona at Arenal was our only one.

Grallariidae (Antpittas)

THICKET ANTPITTA (*Hylopezus dives*) – The first one we tried for lured us right to a small fer-de-lance, causing a bit of excitement! A couple of days later we finally connected with superb views of one below our Arenal lodge. Always nice to see this super skulker well!

Rhinocryptidae (Tapaculos)

SILVERY-FRONTED TAPACULO (*Scytalopus argentifrons*) – Always a tricky bird to see well, but we had quite good looks at one along the road above Bosque de Paz.

Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)

WEDGE-BILLED WOODCREEPER (*Glyphorhynchus spirurus*) – Woodcreepers were overall quite scarce this trip, and we only had a single one of this usually common species, on our way out from Arenal the final day.

BLACK-BANDED WOODCREEPER (*Dendrocolaptes picumnus*) – Quite a rare woodcreeper in the country, but Bosque de Paz is one of the best places I know for it. We had awesome close views of one that was moving with a mixed flock along the road above the lodge.

SPOTTED WOODCREEPER (*Xiphorhynchus erythropygius*) – Normally quite common in montane forest, though we saw only one at Arenal this trip.

STREAK-HEADED WOODCREEPER (*Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*) – Widespread at lower elevations, including in disturbed habitats. We saw a couple of birds on our final morning around Rio Frio.

SPOT-CROWNED WOODCREEPER (*Lepidocolaptes affinis*) – Replaces the preceding species above about 5000' in elevation. We had a few of these up at Bosque de Paz.

PLAIN XENOPS (*Xenops minutus*) – Some decent looks at this small Furnariid with a mixed flock at Arenal.

LINEATED FOLIAGE-GLEANER (*Syndactyla subalaris*) – Pretty skulky and unresponsive, but at least a few people got looks at a pair along the road above Bosque de Paz.

STREAK-BREADED TREEHUNTER (*Thripadectes rufobrunneus*) – One was seen by the folks that did the longer hike the first afternoon at La Paz, but the low light levels made it difficult to get much detail. We had another along the road above the lodge the next morning, but it was also pretty sneaky and not seen well by all.

BUFF-THROATED FOLIAGE-GLEANER (HYPOPHAEUS) (*Automolus ochrolaemus hypophaeus*) – Heard at Arenal. [*]

RED-FACED SPINETAIL (*Cranioleuca erythrops*) – A few encounters with these arboreal spinetails in the highlands. First seen at the quetzal site, then again a few times as Bosque.

SLATY SPINETAIL (*Synallaxis brachyura*) – Wonderful close views of this spinetail along the road from Rio Frio to Arenal, then a couple of moe sightings around the Arenal region.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

NORTHERN BEARDLESS-TYRANULET (*Camptostoma imberbe*) – One of these drab flycatchers was seen during the morning boat ride at Cano Negro.

YELLOW TYRANULET (*Capsiempis flaveola*) – We had a couple of encounters with excited pairs of these tyrannulets around Rio Frio.

YELLOW-BELLIED ELAENIA (*Elaenia flavogaster*) – A widespread species, and we had a few sightings, best being the pair feeding in the tall grassy margins of the air strip at Los Chiles.

MOUNTAIN ELAENIA (*Elaenia frantzii*) – One seen briefly in a fruiting tree on our way up to Poas, another seen much better during a morning walk at Bosque.

OLIVE-STRIPED FLYCATCHER (*Mionectes olivaceus*) – A couple of these fruit-eating flycatchers were seen as we walked down to the hummingbird feeders at La Paz.

PALTRY TYRANNULET (*Zimmerius vilissimus*) – A pretty widespread and common species, though we had only a couple of sightings of these mistletoe specialists around Arenal.

SCALE-CRESTED PYGMY-TYRANT (*Lophotriccus pileatus*) – A feisty, tiny bird, with a big voice and lots of attitude! We had great looks at a noisy one along the Peninsula Road as we left Arenal the final day.

SLATE-HEADED TODY-FLYCATCHER (*Poecilatriccus sylvia*) – Heard only at Rio Frio. [*]

COMMON TODY-FLYCATCHER (*Todirostrum cinereum*) – A common species, which we recorded on all but one day, though some folks didn't get a good view until that final morning at Arenal.

BLACK-HEADED TODY-FLYCATCHER (*Todirostrum nigriceps*) – An easily overlooked species, as it is small, stays up high, and sounds kind of like an insect. We saw a couple at Arenal, the best one being the one we could look down on from the viewing platform at the Sky Trek.

SULPHUR-RUMPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiobius sulphureipygius aureatus*) – One put in a brief appearance at the streetlight below the lodge on our first morning at Arenal.

TUFTED FLYCATCHER (*Mitrephanes phaeocercus*) – A few of these perky little guys were seen well at Bosque.

TROPICAL PEWEE (*Contopus cinereus*) – We had a few sightings of this resident species at Cano Negro. Generally perches lower than the two migrant pewees (which are quite similar), and has shorter primary projection and a very different voice. Also, at this time of year, this species is generally in much fresher plumage than the migrants.

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax flaviventris*) – Generally the most common migrant Empid in most of the country. That said, we saw only one at Arenal. [b]

YELLOWISH FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax flavescens*) – An odd name for a bird that is the yellowest of the Empids. We saw these birds regularly in the highland forests.

BLACK PHOEBE (*Sayornis nigricans*) – Not uncommon near water in the highlands.

LONG-TAILED TYRANT (*Colonia colonus*) – Our first ones were a pair in a dead tree (which had plenty of available nest cavities) along the road from Rio Frio to Arenal. We later saw others at Arenal, including an odd-looking tailless one found by my sister!

BRIGHT-RUMPED ATTLA (*Attila spadiceus*) – We called in a noisy bird at the old biological station at Rio Frio, and managed to scope it, though its half-hidden perch high in the canopy kept us from getting those soul-satisfying looks we all crave.

DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) – The common Myiarchus on the Caribbean slope. We saw them daily at Arenal.

GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus crinitus*) – Heard only at Cano Negro. [b*]

GREAT KISKADEE (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) – Very common and widespread, and we had them in numbers daily.

BOAT-BILLED FLYCATCHER (*Megarynchus pitangua*) – Also widespread, but never as numerous as the kiskadee. We had this large-billed species at several sites.

SOCIAL FLYCATCHER (*Myiozetetes similis*) – Also numerous and widespread, though somehow we missed this species on one day.

GRAY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiozetetes granadensis*) – Never as common as its congener, the Social Flycatcher, but still reasonably common, and we saw them well several times.

GOLDEN-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Myiodynastes hemichrysus*) – Excellent looks at a single bird we found along the river on the entrance road to Bosque de Paz.

TROPICAL KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – Ubiquitous and abundant; we saw many TKs every day.

Cotingidae (Cotingas)

SNOWY COTINGA (*Carpodectes nitidus*) – A female flew in and landed high in a riverside tree during our afternoon boat ride at Cano Negro while our boatman was buying dinner from a local fisherman. Sadly this meant he wasn't able to move the boat into a better position for viewing, so I don't think everyone got a view.

Pipridae (Manakins)

WHITE-RUFFED MANAKIN (*Corapipo altera*) – A couple of sightings in the fruiting fig trees at Arenal, including one striking male.

WHITE-COLLARED MANAKIN (*Manacus candei*) – Seen and heard a few times at Cano Negro and Arenal, though males proved a bit elusive. We did manage good views of one at the fruiting fig tree by the green gate on our final morning.

Tityridae (Tityras and Allies)

BLACK-CROWNED TITYRA (*Tityra inquisitor*) – Our only tityra was a male of this species with a large green katydid in its beak, as we watched the feeders near Los Chiles.

CINNAMON BECARD (*Pachyrhamphus cinnamomeus*) – Daily at Arenal, where they were regulars in the early morning around the lights.

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

YELLOW-WINGED VIREO (*Vireo carmioli*) – A highland specialty restricted to the mountains of Panama and Costa Rica. We had a couple of sightings at Poas and Bosque.

BROWN-CAPPED VIREO (*Vireo leucophrys*) – A lone bird in a nice mixed flock along the roadside as we birded our way down to Bosque de Paz.

TAWNY-CROWNED GREENLET (*Hylophilus ochraceiceps*) – Heard only at Arenal. [*]

LESSER GREENLET (*Hylophilus decurtatus*) – Oddly scarce this trip, and we met up with them only once at Arenal.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

AZURE-HOODED JAY (*Cyanolyca cucullata*) – An elusive pair above Bosque de Paz lodge did not manage to elude everyone, though some of us didn't get much by way of views.

WHITE-THROATED MAGPIE-JAY (*Calocitta formosa*) – A spillover from the Pacific slope, a small population of these flashy jays are seen regularly in the Arenal region, and we had some wonderful views of them.

BROWN JAY (*Psilorhynchus morio*) – A common visitor to the feeders at Arenal.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

BLUE-AND-WHITE SWALLOW (*Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*) – The common highland swallow. Seen most days, including some 47 birds roosting in the rafters just outside our rooms at Bosque.

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) – Both rough-winged swallows were seen daily at Arenal, giving us a good chance to compare these similar species. The ones here are probably resident, though migrants also show up in CR.

SOUTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) – Differs from the preceding species in having a whitish rump and a peachy orange throat.

GRAY-BREASTED MARTIN (*Progne chalybea*) – Small numbers at Cano Negro and on our drive back to San Jose.

MANGROVE SWALLOW (*Tachycineta albilinea*) – Not exclusively around mangroves, but generally found near water. We saw quite a few during our boat trips.

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*) – Fair numbers of these wintering migrants at Cano Negro. [b]

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

NIGHTINGALE WREN (*Microcerculus philomela*) – Heard numerous times at Arenal, but we never found a cooperative one. [*]

HOUSE WREN (*Troglodytes aedon*) – Very common, and seen daily.

OCHRACEOUS WREN (*Troglodytes ochraceus*) – Heard up at Bosque. [*]

BAND-BACKED WREN (*Campylorhynchus zonatus*) – We had a pair of these large arboreal wrens a couple of times up near the pool at Arenal.

RUFIOUS-NAPED WREN (*Campylorhynchus rufinucha*) – These Pacific slope birds turned up on the grounds of the Bougainvillea a few years ago, and have now established themselves locally. We saw them there our first day.

SPOT-BREASTED WREN (*Pheugopedius maculipectus*) – In Costa Rica, this lovely wren is only found in the Cano Negro region. We had good views of a singing pair just on our final morning in Rio Frio.

BLACK-THROATED WREN (*Pheugopedius atrogularis*) – Heard at both Cano Negro and Arenal, and we finally managed to see one of these skulkers at the Arenal Sky Trek.

STRIPE-BREASTED WREN (*Cantorchilus thoracicus*) – An incredibly aggressive pair at Arenal nearly hit Tom in the head in response to playback. That's one of the dangers of being so tall, I guess.

PLAIN WREN (*Cantorchilus modestus*) – Heard regularly at Cano Negro, and we finally saw at the big marshy area en route from Rio Frio to Arenal.

BAY WREN (*Cantorchilus nigricapillus*) – Very vocal, but also very elusive, and we never managed to lay eyes on this one. [*]

WHITE-BREASTED WOOD-WREN (*Henicorhina leucosticta*) – Heard a few times inside forest at Arenal. [*]

GRAY-BREASTED WOOD-WREN (*Henicorhina leucophrys*) – Numerous in highland forests. Our best views were of a pair on the ground and out in the open near the La Paz hummingbird feeders.

SONG WREN (*Cyphorhinus phaeocephalus*) – Maybe the rain had something to do with it, but this species was much less in evidence than usual at Arenal, and the ones we did find were pretty quiet and uncooperative. Still, some of us managed pretty decent views at the Sky Trek.

Poliophtilidae (Gnatcatchers)

TAWNY-FACED GNATWREN (*Microbates cinereiventris*) – Elusive, But some folks did get looks at a pair of these that were moving with some Song Wrens at the Sky Trek.

LONG-BILLED GNATWREN (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*) – Heard only at Arenal. [*]

TROPICAL GNATCATCHER (*Poliophtila plumbea*) – The default gnatcatcher in most parts of the country. We had a few sightings at Cano Negro.

Cinclididae (Dippers)

AMERICAN DIPPER (*Cinclus mexicanus*) – Nice studies of a pair along the river near Bosque. The birds found here in CR are significantly paler than the ones found in the Rockies.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

BLACK-FACED SOLITAIRE (*Myadestes melanops*) – Nice views of a couple of these lovely birds inside the forest at Bosque, though sadly they weren't really vocal so we didn't get to hear their beautiful song.

BLACK-BILLED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH (*Catharus gracilirostris*) – A single bird played nice along the walk to the crater at Poas.

SLATY-BACKED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH (*Catharus fuscater*) – Several good sightings at Bosque, particularly of the ones with the army ant swarm.

RUDDY-CAPPED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH (*Catharus frantzii*) – We had trouble getting looks at the ones inside the forest at Bosque, but later got lucky with one Ann spotted along the road. That one showed wonderfully for everyone.

BLACK-HEADED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH (*Catharus mexicanus*) – Trickier than normal, but in the end we had some good views of these attractive birds along the Waterfall Trail at Arenal.

WOOD THRUSH (*Hylocichla mustelina*) – Quite a common migrant in the country. We saw a couple feeding below the lights at Arenal. [b]

SOOTY THRUSH (*Turdus nigrescens*) – A couple of birds in a fruiting tree high up on the slopes of Poas Volcano.

MOUNTAIN THRUSH (*Turdus plebejus*) – Also in the same fruiting tree with the Sooty Thrushes, though there were far more of these. Also seen with the quetzals, and regularly at Bosque.

PALE-VENTED THRUSH (*Turdus obsoletus*) – A couple of birds were picked out among the numerous Clay-colored Thrushes in the fruiting fig trees at Arenal.

CLAY-COLORED THRUSH (*Turdus grayi*) – Abundant and seen daily in good numbers.

WHITE-THROATED THRUSH (*Turdus assimilis*) – A couple of these were also feeding in the fruiting fig trees at Arenal, and a single bird was an early morning visitor below the street light at the casona.

Ptiliognatidae (Silky-flycatchers)

LONG-TAILED SILKY-FLYCATCHER (*Ptiliognys caudatus*) – Vernon found a gorgeous pair of these birds near the lodge, shortly after our arrival at Bosque, and we saw several more during our time there.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia motacilla*) – This species prefers clear mountain rivers on their wintering grounds. We saw one at Bosque, Field Guides Birding Tours • www.fieldguides.com • 800-728-4953

and another that was feeding on the insects by the casona streetlight at Arenal. [b]

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – The more likely waterthrush in the lowlands, around slower moving and/or brackish water. We had a few at Cano Negro. [b]

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER (*Vermivora chrysotera*) – A reasonably common wintering species, and we had a few, particularly at Bosque. We also had a good view of a female Brewster's warbler (a hybrid between this and Blue-winged Warbler) at the quetzal stop. [b]

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER (*Mniotilta varia*) – Seen in small numbers at Bosque and Arenal. [b]

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER (*Protonotaria citrea*) – Some nice views of 3 or 4 of these beauties along the river during our boat trips. [b]

FLAME-THROATED WARBLER (*Oreothlypis gutturalis*) – We had only one of these stunning little warblers, but with the views we had, it'll d. Our lone bird was with a mixed flock along the roadside as we birded our way down to Bosque.

TENNESSEE WARBLER (*Oreothlypis peregrina*) – One of the more numerous of the migrant warblers. To see them, all you need to do is put out some bananas. [b]

GRAY-CROWNED YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis poliocephala*) – Great scope looks at one at Medio Queso marsh, and then another that tried to pass itself off as an Olive-crowned Yellowthroat along the drive from Cano Negro to Arenal.

KENTUCKY WARBLER (*Geothlypis formosa*) – We only got a glimpse of this one along the Waterfall Trail at Arenal. [b]

OLIVE-CROWNED YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis semiflava*) – A pair in a marshy area near our Cano Negro lodge were much less confiding than usual, and only a few of us got great views.

TROPICAL PARULA (*Setophaga pitiayumi*) – Not uncommon at Arenal, where we had a few nice views of these.

YELLOW WARBLER (*Setophaga petechia*) – Numerous along the waterways at Cano Negro. [b]

CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER (*Setophaga pensylvanica*) – One of the most numerous wintering warblers in the country, though, unlike the Tennessee Warblers, they don't seem to be attracted by bananas. [b]

HERMIT WARBLER (*Setophaga occidentalis*) – My flight cancellation cost me the opportunity to go look for this species (among some other scarce migrants) before the tour, so I was pretty pleased to find at least one, perhaps two, of these birds in the pines around the parking area at Arenal. It's not often now that I get a new bird on my CR list on a tour! [b]

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER (*Setophaga virens*) – Occurs quite commonly in montane forest, and we saw a few in the highlands over the first three days. [b]

RUFIOUS-CAPPED WARBLER (*Basileuterus rufifrons*) – A couple of birds on a morning walk near the Bougainvillea were the only ones we saw this tour.

BLACK-CHEEKED WARBLER (*Basileuterus melanogenys*) – We had a couple of decent encounters with this high elevation specialty at both Poas and Bosque de Paz, though they were a little more furtive than usual.

GOLDEN-CROWNED WARBLER (*Basileuterus culicivorus*) – A hyper little group of these darted all around us at the Sky Trek, but finally settled down enough for us to get good views.

THREE-STRIPED WARBLER (*Basileuterus tristriatus*) – Nearly every understory flock at Bosque de Paz has a few of these warblers in it, and we had several sightings there.

BUFF-RUMPED WARBLER (*Myiothlypis fulvicauda*) – Daily sightings at Arenal, where they were best seen at the creek crossing below our lodge.

WILSON'S WARBLER (*Cardellina pusilla*) – Probably the most numerous migrant warbler in highland areas. We had them regularly over the first three days of the tour, then also had a sighting at Arenal, where they are considerably less common. [b]

SLATE-THROATED REDSTART (*Myioborus miniatus*) – A common species of highland forests, seen regularly at Bosque in particular.

COLLARED REDSTART (*Myioborus torquatus*) – This cute Chiriqui endemic generally occurs at higher elevations than the preceding species, as on Poas, where we first encountered them. There is some overlap, however, and we had both species (though only a single of these) in a flock at Bosque.

WRENTHRUSH (*Zeledonia coronata*) – Whether this odd bird really belongs in the warbler family may be a subject of debate, but what isn't up for debate is that we all had jaw-dropping views of a pair of them in a bamboo-choked tree fall clearing on the slopes of Poas Volcano! They are not always this cooperative, trust me! Sue chose this as her favorite species of the trip, and it tied Ornate Hawk-Eagle and Keel-billed Toucan for third place in the voting.

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

GRAY-HEADED TANAGER (*Eucometis penicillata*) – A single one of these birds with the Bare-crowned Antbird during our Cano Negro boat trip was a bit unexpected, and the first I'd seen here. This is another predominately Pacific slope birds that just reaches the Caribbean slope in the Cano Negro region.

WHITE-THROATED SHRIKE-TANAGER (*Lanio leucothorax*) – Dave F. and Vernon were lucky enough to find a male of this species near the restaurant when they returned early from our Sky Trek hike.

PASSERINI'S TANAGER (*Ramphocelus passerinii*) – Isn't it wonderful that such a stunning bird is incredibly common? We saw this species on all but one day, usually in good numbers, and Doug chose it as his favorite of the tour.

BLUE-GRAY TANAGER (*Thraupis episcopus*) – This one we did see every day; it's easily the most widespread and most often seen of the tanagers.

PALM TANAGER (*Thraupis palmarum*) – Generally less numerous than the Blue-gray, though equally widespread and we saw them on every day but one.

GOLDEN-HOODED TANAGER (*Tangara larvata*) – In general, this is an abundant bird, usually the most numerous of its genus in most locations. They are also quite spectacular, and certainly caught the eye of Martha, who picked it as her favorite of all.

SPANGLE-CHEEKED TANAGER (*Tangara dowii*) – A fine bird, and a Chiriqui endemic to boot. We had multiple good views of this bird in various highland locales.

BAY-HEADED TANAGER (*Tangara gyrola*) – Another fancy tanager, and there were loads of these in the fruiting fig trees at Arenal.

EMERALD TANAGER (*Tangara florida*) – Usually far outnumbered by other Tangaras, as was the case on this trip, where we had just a couple of these mixed in among the many Bay-headed Tanagers at the fruiting fig trees.

SILVER-THROATED TANAGER (*Tangara icterocephala*) – The common Tangara of highland forests, with plenty seen at La Paz and Bosque, and a few also at Arenal.

SHINING HONEYCREEPER (*Cyanerpes lucidus*) – The last couple of folks to cross one of the hanging bridges at the Sky Trek got to see a male of this species in the same tree as our male Black-and-yellow Tanager.

RED-LEGGED HONEYCREEPER (*Cyanerpes cyaneus*) – A few birds daily at Cano Negro, including at the feeders.

GREEN HONEYCREEPER (*Chlorophanes spiza*) – Surprisingly few, with just a couple of sightings at Arenal.

BLACK-AND-YELLOW TANAGER (*Chrysothlypis chrysomelas*) – Just one male, perched obligingly below the hanging bridge at the Sky Trek and staying put long enough for everyone to get on him, which is a bit of a surprise as this species is usually pretty restless and active.

SLATY FLOWERPIERCER (*Diglossa plumbea*) – Quite numerous on the upper slopes of Poas Volcano.

BLUE-BLACK GRASSQUIT (*Volatinia jacarina*) – A few "Johnny Jump-ups" were noted in grassy fields during the drive from Cano Negro to Arenal.

THICK-BILLED SEED-FINCH (*Sporophila funerea*) – A handful were seen in seeding grass near Medio Queso marsh, and again on the drive to Arenal.

NICARAGUAN SEED-FINCH (*Sporophila nuttingi*) – Our stakeout en route to Cano Negro came good again, first with a quite distant, but acceptable male, then with a much closer bird. Man that bill is huge!

VARIABLE SEEDEATER (*Sporophila corvina*) – The default seedeater in most areas. The males here on the Caribbean slope are all black, and look like miniature Thick-billed Seed-Finches.

WHITE-COLLARED SEEDEATER (*Sporophila torqueola*) – A few of these in the Cano Negro region, with a particularly nice singing male on an antenna above the restaurant where we stopped to watch the feeders near Los Chiles.

BANANAQUIT (*Coereba flaveola*) – Pretty numerous throughout.

YELLOW-FACED GRASSQUIT (*Tiaris olivaceus*) – A couple near the Bougainvillea, then a few others in appropriate grassy habitat around Arenal.

BUFF-THROATED SALTATOR (*Saltator maximus*) – Usually the most numerous of the saltators at most locations, and that was certainly true on this trip, though they were probably outnumbered by Grayish Saltators along the river at Cano Negro.

BLACK-HEADED SALTATOR (*Saltator atriceps*) – Just a couple of these large raucous saltators were seen along the road below the lodge at Arenal.

GRAYISH SALTATOR (*Saltator coerulescens*) – Quite common along the river at Cano Negro. Also seen in the vicinity of the Bougainvillea.

Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

YELLOW-THIGHED FINCH (*Pselliophorus tibialis*) – This bird wouldn't be that much to look at if it wasn't for those incredible yellow thighs. Funny how a little tuft of feathers can increase a bird's appeal so greatly! We had awesome views at Poas and Bosque.

LARGE-FOOTED FINCH (*Pezopetes capitalis*) – A couple at Poas, one of which hopped out into a patch of sunlight at the edge of the parking lot and sat there taking in the rays for quite some time.

CHESTNUT-CAPPED BRUSH-FINCH (*Arremon brunneinucha*) – I can think of no place better to see this skulking species than Bosque, where they are incredibly common and easy to see at the feeders.

ORANGE-BILLED SPARROW (*Arremon aurantiostris*) – These little beauties were among the many species gathered around the light in the early morning for an insect feast at Arenal.

BLACK-STRIPED SPARROW (*Arremonops conirostris*) – Seen daily after we left the highlands, with especially good views of the ones below the feeders at Arenal.

WHITE-EARED GROUND-SPARROW (*Melospiza leucotis*) – Heard only near the Bougainvillea. [✱]

PREVOST'S GROUND-SPARROW (CABANIS'S) (*Melospiza biarcuata cabanisi*) – This local species had been tough lately, so I was happy when Tom spotted one near the Bougainvillea on our morning walk, confirming that they are still there despite the extensive construction going on.

RUFous-COLLARED SPARROW (*Zonotrichia capensis*) – A common highland species, with lots the first few days, then none until we returned to San Jose.

COMMON CHLOROSPINGUS (*Chlorospingus flavopectus*) – Numerous in highland forests, with loads of them especially at Bosque. Generally at lower elevations than the next species, though there is some overlap.

SOOTY-CAPPED CHLOROSPINGUS (*Chlorospingus pileatus*) – One of the most numerous Passerines at real high elevations, and we saw plenty at Poas.

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

HEPATIC TANAGER (*Piranga flava*) – A pair were daily visitors to the feeders at Arenal.

SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*) – A common winter migrant, recorded every day of the trip. [b]

RED-THROATED ANT-TANAGER (*Habia fuscicauda*) – A pair showed reasonably well along the peninsula road on our way out from Arenal.

CARMIOLO'S TANAGER (*Chlorothraupis carmioli*) – A flock of these noisy tanagers were regulars in the early morning at the light near the casona.

BLUE-BLACK GROSBEAK (*Cyanocopsa cyanoides*) – Pretty good looks at a female on our way out of Arenal on the final day.

PAINTED BUNTING (*Passerina ciris*) – A gorgeous male perched on a roadside fence as we headed in to Medio Queso marsh. [b]

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) – Fairly common around the Cano Negro wetlands, with our first being an all-male flock at Medio Queso.

RED-BREASTED BLACKBIRD (*Sturnella militaris*) – Wow, just a single one of these birds, fortunately a male, was seen perched on a power line along the road as we headed up to Cano Negro.

MELODIOUS BLACKBIRD (*Dives dives*) – A few birds around the Bougainvillea, and several also at Arenal. Quite widespread now after it first appeared in Costa Rica in 1989.

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) – Abundant and widespread.

NICARAGUAN GRACKLE (*Quiscalus nicaraguensis*) – Very local in the country, occurring only in the Cano Negro region. We had excellent looks at two pairs near one farm during our morning boat trip, though it took some time to find the right angle from which to see the singing male.

BLACK-COWLED ORIOLE (*Icterus prosthemelas*) – A couple around the hummingbird feeders at La Paz would have been a surprise at this high elevation if I hadn't seen them there on my last visit. much more regular at lower elevations, and we saw them daily at Arenal.

ORCHARD ORIOLE (*Icterus spurius*) – Seen in small numbers daily at Cano Negro. [b]

BALTIMORE ORIOLE (*Icterus galbula*) – An abundant winter migrant, with plenty at any decent flowering tree. [b]

YELLOW-BILLED CACIQUE (*Amblycercus holosericeus*) – Shy and skulking, though most folks got a look at a pair as we started down the hill below the Arenal lodge on our final morning.

MONTEZUMA OROPENDOLA (*Psarocolius montezuma*) – Seen every day in good numbers, with lots especially at the Arenal feeders.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

YELLOW-CROWNED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia luteicapilla*) – Euphonias were pretty scarce on this trip, and we saw just a single male of this one at Arenal.

YELLOW-THROATED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia hirundinacea*) – A few sightings at Cano negro, including some nice views at the hotel feeders there.

TAWNY-CAPPED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia anneae*) – Can be quite common in middle elevation forests, and we saw them a couple of times around Arenal.

GOLDEN-BROWED CHLOROPHONIA (*Chlorophonia callophrys*) – Unfortunately heard only at Bosque. [*]

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) – Generally only around towns and villages, with several right inside the restaurant at La Fortuna. [I]

MAMMALS

COMMON OPOSSUM (*Didelphis marsupialis*) – A single one was seen on each of the night drives at Cano Negro.

MANTLED HOWLER MONKEY (*Alouatta palliata*) – Heard more often than seen, though we did have sightings during the Rio Frio boat trips and saw a mother and baby along the Waterfall Trail at Arenal.

WHITE-THROATED CAPUCHIN (*Cebus capucinus*) – A couple were seen along the river during our boat trips, and we found a couple of troops around Arenal, both times with accompanying Double-toothed Kites.

BROWN-THROATED THREE-TOED SLOTH (*Bradypus variegatus*) – A male sunning himself in a Cecropia tree along the road to Los Chiles was probably the greenest one I've ever seen! In fact, this one may have been more algae than sloth!

VARIEGATED SQUIRREL (*Sciurus variegatoides*) – The common large squirrel seen.

RED-TAILED SQUIRREL (*Sciurus granatensis*) – The smaller squirrel (think Red Squirrel size) seen at Cano Negro.

CENTRAL AMERICAN AGOUTI (*Dasyprocta punctata*) – One paid a couple of visits to the corn meal feeders at Bosque, and we had a couple of sightings at Arenal, too.

PACA (*Cuniculus paca*) – Normally this is a shy, rarely seen nocturnal animal, but the feeders at Bosque have emboldened these animals so that they are practically a sure thing there. We had 4 at the feeders, the most I've seen there yet.

WHITE-NOSED COATI (*Nasua narica*) – Numerous at the feeders at Bosque and Arenal.

WHITE-TAILED DEER (*Odocoileus virginianus*) – A couple were spotlighted during our second night drive at Cano Negro.

Herps

GREEN IGUANA (*Iguana iguana*) – Man there were some huge ones at our lunch stop in Muelle (the appropriately named Restaurante Las Iguanas).

TROPICAL HOUSE GECKO (*Hemidactylus mabouia*) – Heard often (and seen by some) in the restaurant at Cano Negro.

FER-DE-LANCE (*Bothrops asper*) – I think Dottie disturbed that juvenile along the road at Arenal; it certainly seemed a little peeved off with us traipsing around. You don't think that antpitta lured us towards it intentionally, do you?

SPECTACLED CAIMAN (*Caiman crocodilus*) – Pretty common along the Rio Frio, though much less noticeable than usual due to the high water levels.

VAILLANT'S FROG (*Lithobates vaillanti*) – This was the large leopard frog that was hanging out by the frog pond at our Cano Negro hotel.

FORRER'S LEOPARD FROG (*Lithobates forreri*) – And this is the leopard frog we found in the pond at the Bougainvillea. Up until recently, I thought it was the Vaillant's Frog that was found here.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 326 bird taxa and 10 mammal taxa