



*Field Guides Tour Report*

**Costa Rica: Birding the Edges Part II, the Far North 2016**

Jan 17, 2016 to Jan 26, 2016  
Jay VanderGaast & Tom Johnson

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



*Black-crested Coquette at Arenal was one of the group's favorite sightings of the tour -- understandably so! Photo by guide Tom Johnson.*

This tour's birding far outperformed its accompanying short-term weather forecast -- I love it when that happens! When we started out in San Jose, it looked like we'd be dodging wind and rain all week. However, we fared better than expected, with only a few short rainstorms to hamper the birding (until we got to Arenal, but more on that in a bit). Highlights included great experiences with cooperative Sungrebes at close range, a fishing Fasciated Tiger-Heron, a mystical Great Potoo, a Black-crested Coquette flexing his whiskers, an amazing army ant swarm at Arenal (apologies for the annoying, added alliteration), and loads of colorful tanagers mixing with familiar wintering migrants from North America.

We started with a day trip to the Poás Volcano, where we were met with mist, rain, and some great views of a Zeledonia (Wrenthrush), Black-and-yellow Silky-Flycatchers, and a two-toed sloth on a utility wire. La Paz Waterfall Gardens provided us with some mixed flocks by the river (Spotted Barbtail included), a plethora of hummingbirds, and a soaring Ornate Hawk-Eagle. We then continued on to Bosque de Paz, our home for two nights. Temperatures were cool and enjoyable, and we enjoyed ogling the Violet Sabrewings and Black Guans at the feeders just outside the restaurant. Prong-billed Barbets, Scintillant Hummingbirds, and a Golden-bellied Flycatcher entertained us along the forest edge, and we relaxed in the plush accommodations at this comfortable lodge nestled in the mountain forest.

Next up were the steamy northern wetlands of Medio Queso marsh and the stunning Caño Negro. Morning and afternoon boat trips here got us right in the thick of the action, helping us to see an Agami Heron, Sungrebes, Boat-billed Herons, 5 species of kingfishers, and even two Jabiru feeding with a huge assortment of wading birds in a shallow lagoon. Our land explorations around the town of Caño Negro met with Cinnamon Woodpeckers, Black-headed Trogons, and Pied Puffbirds. Night birding here can be legendary, and the Pacific Screech-Owls, Black-and-white Owls, and especially the close, watchful Great Potoo helped underscore this for us.

Our final three nights were at Arenal Observatory Lodge at the foot of the iconic Arenal Volcano. We spent most of our time plying the forests and gardens around Arenal for landbirds, finding diminutive jewels like Black-crested Coquette, robust gems like Keel-billed Toucans, and even the mother lode of an active army ant swarm with attendant Spotted, Bicolored, and Zeledon's Antbirds. (We'll have to return to Arenal to get views of the sneaky Ocellated Antbird that was skulking around at the back of the swarm!) However, heavy rainstorms here occasionally forced breaks in the birding, and on our final morning, we decided to re-route and made a break for drier climes on the west coast of Costa Rica.

This additional stop in the southern reaches of Costa Rica's Guanacaste region was a bit of a risk, timing-wise, but we made a few targeted stops in the Punta Caldera area and along the Guacimo Road, and in fairly short order added some 21 write-in species to our checklist! These included seabirds like Magnificent Frigatebird and Sandwich Tern, as well as such scrub forest birds as Turquoise-browed Motmot, Cinnamon Hummingbird, Mangrove Vireo, Banded Wren, Long-tailed Manakin, Stripe-headed Sparrow, and Streak-backed Oriole. Wow -- what a bonanza, especially for the heat of the day! With all of these new birds to consider, it was an easy ride back in to the lovely Hotel Bougainvillea in the San Jose area, where we shared a final meal and memories of a fine week spent exploring some of the best birding Costa Rica has to offer.

Jay and I would like to thank everyone for their flexibility, bird-spotting abilities, and contributions to an enjoyable group dynamic during the tour. We'd also like to thank the wonderful Vernon Campos for driving us safely around Costa Rica, for his generosity and companionship, and for serving as an excellent third guide, finding choice birds for the group on numerous occasions.

Until next time,

-- Tom

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## 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

### Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

**BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK** (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) – Seven were at Medio Queso marsh.

**BLUE-WINGED TEAL** (*Anas discors*) – Large flocks (est. 250) were in the lagoon at Caño Negro during our boat trips there.

**LESSER SCAUP** (*Aythya affinis*) – Eight were on the lagoon with the Blue-winged Teal during our boat trip at Caño Negro.

### Cracidae (Guans, Chachalacas, and Curassows)

**GRAY-HEADED CHACHALACA** (*Ortalis cinereiceps*) – Common around Arenal Observatory Lodge.

**CRESTED GUAN** (*Penelope purpurascens*) – Common and conspicuous around Arenal Observatory Lodge.

**BLACK GUAN** (*Chamaepetes unicolor*) – At least 16 of these striking cracids were attending the feeders at Bosque de Paz during our stay there.

**GREAT CURASSOW** (*Crax rubra*) – These huge, impressive birds regularly stalked around the grounds at Arenal (and regularly dominated the action at the feeding station).

### Ciconiidae (Storks)

**JABIRU** (*Jabiru mycteria*) – After Tom tried his hardest (and failed!) to turn two distant fishermen into Jabirus at Medio Queso, we were pleased to see 2 at the huge wading bird feeding frenzy at Caño Negro.

**WOOD STORK** (*Mycteria americana*) – We had oodles of storks on this trip on several days, with about 200 crowding in during the feeding frenzy at Caño Negro.

### Fregatidae (Frigatebirds)

**MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD** (*Fregata magnificens*) – Our excursion to the west coast led us to see several of these huge pirates overhead.

### Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

**NEOTROPIC CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – Common at Caño Negro.

### Anhingidae (Anhingas)

**ANHINGA** (*Anhinga anhinga*) – Quite common at Caño Negro.

### Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

**BROWN PELICAN** (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) – 25 were at the Estero Mata de Limón on our final day.

### Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

**FASCIATED TIGER-HERON** (*Tigrisoma fasciatum*) – One hunting in the stream at the base of the driveway at Arenal was a big highlight for many members of the group. Such close views!

**BARE-THROATED TIGER-HERON** (*Tigrisoma mexicanum*) – Good views between Medio Queso and Caño Negro.

**GREAT BLUE HERON** (*Ardea herodias*) – Over 30 were seen on our Caño Negro boat trips.

**GREAT EGRET** (*Ardea alba*) – Very common.

**SNOWY EGRET** (*Egretta thula*) – Common at Caño Negro.

**LITTLE BLUE HERON** (*Egretta caerulea*) – Fairly common, especially at Caño Negro.

**TRICOLORED HERON** (*Egretta tricolor*) – Just a few were found at Caño Negro and along the west coast.

**CATTLE EGRET** (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Abundant and widespread.

**GREEN HERON** (*Butorides virescens*) – Very common on waterways in the far north.

**AGAMI HERON** (*Agamia agami*) – One showed briefly during one of our Caño Negro boat trips, but it strode off down a shadowy ditch before we could all admire its gorgeous colors to our full satisfaction.

**BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – We found fewer than 10 on each of our boat trips at Caño Negro.

**BOAT-BILLED HERON** (*Cochlearius cochlearius*) – These nocturnal herons are typically difficult to see during daylight hours. We found 2-3 roosting in thick cover during each of our Caño Negro boat trips, in different spots each time. Fantastic.

### Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

**WHITE IBIS** (*Eudocimus albus*) – Uncommon but seen on several days in the north, especially at Caño Negro.

**GLOSSY IBIS** (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – We saw one at Caño Negro during a boat trip.

**GREEN IBIS** (*Mesembrinibis cayennensis*) – One was near the biological station at the edge of Caño Negro while we were searching for songbirds in the tangles.

**ROSEATE SPOONBILL** (*Platalea ajaja*) – Over 100 were mixed in with the huge feeding flock of waders at Caño Negro.

### Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

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

**TURKEY VULTURE** (*Cathartes aura*) – Abundant.

**LESSER YELLOW-HEADED VULTURE** (*Cathartes burrovianus*) – About 6 swept past flying low at Medio Queso marsh. This species is scarce in Costa Rica, but this is one of the best sites. We even saw some cryptic, dull-headed juveniles (they look even more like Turkey Vultures than the

adults!).

Pandionidae (Osprey)

**OSPREY** (*Pandion haliaetus*) – One was at Caño Negro.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

**WHITE-TAILED KITE** (*Elanus leucurus*) – A few of these elegant raptors were perched or hovering along the roadsides between Medio Queso and Caño Negro.

**ORNATE HAWK-EAGLE** (*Spizaetus ornatus*) – We had flight views of two of these magnificent raptors. The first was circling around above the La Paz Waterfall Gardens, and the second cruised in overhead while we watched the skies at Bosque de Paz.

**SNAIL KITE** (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*) – Two of these snail specialists were loping over the lagoons at Caño Negro.

**ROADSIDE HAWK** (*Rupornis magnirostris*) – Fairly common and vocal around Caño Negro.

**HARRIS'S HAWK** (*Parabuteo unicinctus*) – One was perched along the road near La Fortuna.

**WHITE-TAILED HAWK** (*Geranoaetus albicaudatus*) – This species is quite rare on the Caribbean slope. This was our second year in a row seeing an adult at Medio Queso marsh.

**WHITE HAWK** (*Pseudastur albicollis*) – Two were soaring below the veranda at Arenal Observatory Lodge.

**GRAY HAWK** (*Buteo plagiatus*) – Several of these slim, small Buteos were in the Arenal area and also along the Guacimo Road on the west coast.

**BROAD-WINGED HAWK** (*Buteo platypterus*) – These long-distance migrants were at Arenal and Bosque de Paz.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

**WHITE-THROATED CRAKE** (*Laterallus albigularis*) – We heard their churring calls widely, but never did see one this time. [\*]

**GRAY-BREASTED CRAKE** (*Laterallus exilis*) – Heard calling at Medio Queso marsh and along the entrance road to Caño Negro. [\*]

**GRAY-NECKED WOOD-RAIL** (*Aramides cajaneus*) – Fairly common along the river edge at Caño Negro; we also heard one in the west along the Guacimo Rd.

**PURPLE GALLINULE** (*Porphyrio martinicus*) – Two were along the road at Medio Queso marsh.

Heliornithidae (Finfoots)

**SUNGREBE** (*Heliornis fulica*) – Spectacular! We scored with tremendous views of at least 5 individuals during our boat trips at Caño Negro. A few even sat up on branches above the water and showed off their incredible lobed feet.

Aramidae (Limpkin)

**LIMPKIN** (*Aramus guarauna*) – We found these strange birds on just a couple of occasions at Caño Negro.

Burhinidae (Thick-knees)

**DOUBLE-STRIPED THICK-KNEE** (*Burhinus bistriatus*) – A pair of these huge, goggle-eyed shorebirds were in fields along the entrance road to Caño Negro. We weren't really expecting to find these birds - quite a treat!

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

**BLACK-NECKED STILT** (*Himantopus mexicanus*) – Common at Caño Negro.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

**SOUTHERN LAPWING** (*Vanellus chilensis*) – Eight were at Medio Queso marsh.

**SEMPALMATED PLOVER** (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) – An impressive flock of ~120 of these Arctic migrants wheeled past us during one of the Caño Negro boat trips.

**KILLDEER** (*Charadrius vociferus*) – About 5 were along the exposed mud at the edge of one of the lagoons at Caño Negro.

Jacanidae (Jacanas)

**NORTHERN JACANA** (*Jacana spinosa*) – Common at Medio Queso and Caño Negro.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

**SPOTTED SANDPIPER** (*Actitis macularius*) – We found small numbers each day between Medio Queso and Caño Negro.

**SOLITARY SANDPIPER** (*Tringa solitaria*) – One was along the Caño Negro entrance road.

**GREATER YELLOWLEGS** (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – Just a few were at Caño Negro.

**WILLET** (*Tringa semipalmata*) – About 7 were on the flats at Estero Mata de Limón.

**WHIMBREL** (*Numenius phaeopus*) – Two were on the flats at Estero Mata de Limón.

**LEAST SANDPIPER** (*Calidris minutilla*) – Five of these tiny peeps were with the Semipalmated Plover flock at Caño Negro.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

**LAUGHING GULL** (*Leucophaeus atricilla*) – Very common on the west coast - about 350 were along the beach at Estero Mata de Limón.

**ROYAL TERN** (*Thalasseus maximus*) – Roughly 40 were with Laughing Gulls at Estero Mata de Limón.

**SANDWICH TERN** (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*) – One was with the Royal Terns on the west coast.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

**ROCK PIGEON** (*Columba livia*) – Only around the few towns and cities we passed through. [I]

**PALE-VENTED PIGEON** (*Patagioenas cayennensis*) – Common, especially around Caño Negro and Arenal.

**RED-BILLED PIGEON** (*Patagioenas flavirostris*) – Seen occasionally, including at the beginning and end of the tour at Hotel Bougainvillea.

**RUDDY PIGEON** (*Patagioenas subvinacea*) – We heard one at Bosque de Paz. [\*]

**SHORT-BILLED PIGEON** (*Patagioenas nigrirostris*) – Two were on the Peninsula Road at Arenal.

**INCA DOVE** (*Columbina inca*) – Fairly common on the dry west coast on our final day.

**COMMON GROUND-DOVE** (*Columbina passerina*) – We saw about 10 on our final day on the Guacimo Rd. in the west.

**RUDDY GROUND-DOVE** (*Columbina talpacoti*) – Common, especially around Caño Negro.

**WHITE-TIPPED DOVE** (*Leptotila verreauxi*) – Common, especially around Caño Negro.  
**GRAY-CHESTED DOVE** (*Leptotila cassinii*) – One was seen in the gardens at Arenal Observatory Lodge on several occasions.  
**GRAY-HEADED DOVE** (*Leptotila plumbeiceps*) – After some searching we finally tracked down this scarce dove on the edge of town at Caño Negro.  
**WHITE-WINGED DOVE** (*Zenaida asiatica*) – Seen just a few times around Medio Queso, Caño Negro, and the Guacimo Road.

#### Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

**SQUIRREL CUCKOO** (*Piaya cayana*) – We heard this huge cuckoo's wolf whistles more often than we saw the bird; however, one that climbed up above us at Sky Trek near Arenal was particularly memorable.  
**MANGROVE CUCKOO** (*Coccyzus minor*) – One showed briefly in the dry forest of the Guacimo Road.  
**GROOVE-BILLED ANI** (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*) – Fairly common in open areas and wetland edges, including Medio Queso marsh and Caño Negro.

#### Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)

**BARN OWL** (*Tyto alba*) – One flew across the road during our night expedition at Caño Negro, and we got to watch it coursing around over a field, illuminated in the spotlight beam.

#### Strigidae (Owls)

**PACIFIC SCREECH-OWL** (*Megascops cooperi*) – Fantastic views of a pair at night on the outskirts of Caño Negro.  
**TROPICAL SCREECH-OWL** (*Megascops choliba*) – We heard one from the gardens of Hotel Bougainvillea, but couldn't convince it to come over the wall. [E]  
**FERRUGINOUS PYGMY-OWL** (*Glaucidium brasilianum*) – One showed nicely on the Guacimo Road.  
**BLACK-AND-WHITE OWL** (*Ciccaba nigrolineata*) – Wow - a pair was incredibly accommodating on the edge of Caño Negro. On one evening, one was perched on a utility line during our night drive. On another trip through the same area, we got to see and hear the pair duetting.

#### Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

**LESSER NIGHTHAWK** (*Chordeiles acutipennis*) – One appeared overhead at Caño Negro at dusk.  
**COMMON PAURAUQUE** (*Nyctidromus albicollis*) – Very common at Caño Negro - we heard and saw 14 on one night drive.

#### Nyctibiidae (Potoos)

**GREAT POTOO** (*Nyctibius grandis*) – Great views of multiple birds around Caño Negro at night. One was hawking insects, while the other was perched at close range like a feathered gargoyle atop a roadside pole.

#### Apodidae (Swifts)

**WHITE-COLLARED SWIFT** (*Streptoprocne zonaris*) – Most impressive was a flock of 15 White-collared Swifts that passed by close on their way downvalley at Bosque de Paz. We saw more at Arenal, too.

#### Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

**GREEN HERMIT** (*Phaethornis guy*) – These slim, long-tailed hummers were attending feeders at La Paz Waterfall Gardens and Bosque de Paz.  
**LONG-BILLED HERMIT** (*Phaethornis longirostris*) – We saw these forest hermits trap-lining flowers at several places around Arenal.  
**STRIPE-THROATED HERMIT** (*Phaethornis striigularis*) – This small, frenetic hummingbird was at Sky Trek and the Observatory Lodge at Arenal.  
**PURPLE-CROWNED FAIRY** (*Heliophryx barroti*) – These short-billed, elegant hummingbirds put in appearances a few times at Arenal.  
**GREEN-BREASTED MANGO** (*Anthracothorax prevostii*) – One perched up along the Caño Negro entrance road.  
**GREEN THORNTAIL** (*Discosura conversii*) – Males and females were attending the feeders at La Paz Waterfall Gardens. Fantastic, close views!  
**BLACK-CRESTED COQUETTE** (*Lophornis helenae*) – A male-female pair were regulars in the verbena flowers in the gardens at Arenal Observatory Lodge. They buzzed around like bumble bees, and mostly were able to avoid the wrath of the territorial Rufous-tailed Hummingbird that "owned" the hedge.  
**GREEN-CROWNED BRILLIANT** (*Heliodoxa jacula*) – Very common at La Paz Waterfall Gardens and Bosque de Paz. These long-bodied, short-billed hummers often land on feeder supports and crane their necks around to access nectar.  
**MAGNIFICENT HUMMINGBIRD** (*Eugenes fulgens*) – A few of these sporty hummingbirds were dominating the feeders at Bosque de Paz.  
**FIERY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Panterpe insignis*) – Common on the first day of the tour at Volcán Poás.  
**WHITE-BELLIED MOUNTAIN-GEM** (*Lampornis hemileucus*) – These striking hummingbirds were outnumbered by Purple-throated Mountain-gems at the feeders at La Paz Waterfall Gardens.  
**PURPLE-THROATED MOUNTAIN-GEM** (*Lampornis calolaemus*) – Common at Bosque de Paz and the La Paz Waterfall Gardens.  
**SCINTILLANT HUMMINGBIRD** (*Selasphorus scintilla*) – We saw these tiny hummers on Volcán Poás and in the verbena at Bosque de Paz.  
**VIOLET-HEADED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Klais guimeti*) – Seen sporadically in the flowers at Arenal Observatory Lodge.  
**SCALY-BREASTED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Phaechroa cuvierii*) – One was frequently seen and heard singing just below the veranda railing at Arenal Observatory Lodge.  
**VIOLET SABREWING** (*Campylopterus hemileucurus*) – This massive hummingbird was a common visitor to the feeders at La Paz Waterfall Garden and Bosque de Paz. At the latter site, the birds were often perched close enough to us that we could see their unusually thick primary shafts (the source of the "sabrewing" name).  
**BRONZE-TAILED PLUMELETEER** (*Chalybura urochrysis*) – Two of these red-legged hummingbirds posed for us in and above the verbena hedges at Arenal.  
**BLACK-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Eupherusa nigriventris*) – Common at La Paz; one was at Bosque de Paz too.  
**COPPERY-HEADED EMERALD** (*Elvira cupreiceps*) – This Costa Rican endemic was quite common and easy to see at the feeders at La Paz Waterfall Gardens. [E]  
**STEELY-VENTED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Amazilia saucerotiei*) – Good views of 2 in the dry forest along Guacimo Road on our final day.  
**RUFIOUS-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Amazilia tzacatl*) – Common and widespread.  
**CINNAMON HUMMINGBIRD** (*Amazilia rutila*) – One showed briefly in the dry forest along Guacimo Road.

#### Trogonidae (Trogons)

**BLACK-HEADED TROGON** (*Trogon melanocephalus*) – Our only encounters with this trogon were in the forest margins around Caño Negro.

**GARTERED TROGON** (*Trogon caligatus*) – One showed off its yellow eye ring as it perched high and sallied a few times near the creek on the Guacimo Road on our final day.

**ORANGE-BELLIED TROGON** (*Trogon aurantiiventris*) – Two of these Collared Trogon look-alikes were at Sky Trek near Arenal.

**COLLARED TROGON** (*Trogon collaris*) – This red-bellied trogon was in the forest at Bosque de Paz.

#### Momotidae (Motmots)

**KEEL-BILLED MOTMOT** (*Electron carinatum*) – One accompanied a Broad-billed Motmot near Lake Arenal. The Arenal area is known for mixed pairings of these two taxa, and it certainly appeared that the Keel-billed was fairly chummy with the Broad-billed, sitting peacefully on the same branch, just a foot or so apart. Very strange!

**BROAD-BILLED MOTMOT** (*Electron platyrhynchum*) – Two were near the Keel-billed Motmot above Lake Arenal.

**TURQUOISE-BROWED MOTMOT** (*Eumomota superciliosa*) – Our dry forest excursion to the west coast on our final day allowed us the chance to see this spectacular motmot. Great views!

#### Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

**RINGED KINGFISHER** (*Megaceryle torquata*) – Common in the wetlands of the north. We counted a max. of 15 on one of our boat trips.

**BELTED KINGFISHER** (*Megaceryle alcyon*) – We saw 2 on each of the Caño Negro boat trips.

**AMAZON KINGFISHER** (*Chloroceryle amazona*) – This was the most common kingfisher on our Caño Negro boat trips. Our counts from the two boat trips were 50 (morning) and 20 (afternoon).

**GREEN KINGFISHER** (*Chloroceryle americana*) – Fairly common around Caño Negro, but far outnumbered by Amazons. Max. count on one boat trip = 6.

**AMERICAN PYGMY KINGFISHER** (*Chloroceryle aenea*) – Two of these diminutive kingfishers showed nicely on each of our Caño Negro boat trips.

#### Bucconidae (Puffbirds)

**PIED PUFFBIRD** (*Notharchus tectus*) – Great views of a pair of calling birds on the outskirts of Caño Negro as we were leaving town.

#### Galbulidae (Jacamars)

**RUFOUS-TAILED JACAMAR** (*Galbula ruficauda*) – Great views on the Peninsula Road at Arenal and also nearby at Sky Trek.

#### Capitonidae (New World Barbets)

**RED-HEADED BARBET** (*Eubucco bourcierii*) – Brief views of one in the canopy of a fruiting fig tree at Bosque de Paz.

#### Semnornithidae (Toucan-Barbets)

**PRONG-BILLED BARBET** (*Semnornis frantzii*) – Several of these unique barbets showed nicely at La Paz Waterfall Gardens and along the road near the "kitten spot" above Bosque de Paz.

#### Ramphastidae (Toucans)

**EMERALD TOUCANET (BLUE-THROATED)** (*Aulacorhynchus prasinus caeruleogularis*) – Two of these small, green toucans were feeding in the avocado tree where we searched for quetzals on the way up Volcán Poás.

**COLLARED ARACARI** (*Pteroglossus torquatus*) – A small group frequented the fruiting trees in the gardens at Arenal Observatory Lodge.

**YELLOW-THROATED TOUCAN (CHESTNUT-MANDIBLED)** (*Ramphastos ambiguus swainsonii*) – Common and widespread.

**KEEL-BILLED TOUCAN** (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*) – Good views, including in direct comparison with Yellow-throated Toucan at Arenal.

#### Picidae (Woodpeckers)

**OLIVACEOUS PICULET** (*Picumnus olivaceus*) – We caught up with one of these tiny woodpeckers in the edge of the forest in Caño Negro.

**BLACK-CHEEKED WOODPECKER** (*Melanerpes pucherani*) – Fairly common in the north. Our first ones were near the open-air restaurant where we had lunch on the way to Medio Queso marsh.

**HOFFMANN'S WOODPECKER** (*Melanerpes hoffmannii*) – Common, especially in savanna-type woodlands.

**SMOKY-BROWN WOODPECKER** (*Picoides fumigatus*) – Between Sky Trek and the Peninsula Road at Arenal, we found 3 of these small woodpeckers.

**HAIRY WOODPECKER** (*Picoides villosus*) – "Dirty Hairy" (the sooty form of Hairy Woodpecker found here) showed nicely in the woods along the road above Bosque de Paz.

**GOLDEN-OLIVE WOODPECKER** (*Colaptes rubiginosus*) – Seen well near the feeders at the lodge at Caño Negro and also at Arenal.

**CINNAMON WOODPECKER** (*Ceelus loricatus*) – Wow! Two of these gorgeous woodpeckers appeared just outside the entrance to the lodge at Caño Negro, posing nicely at the edge of the forest.

**LINEATED WOODPECKER** (*Dryocopus lineatus*) – Common around Caño Negro. We also had a great flyby when we were standing on the veranda at Arenal Observatory Lodge.

#### Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

**CRESTED CARACARA** (*Caracara cheriway*) – Common around Caño Negro.

**YELLOW-HEADED CARACARA** (*Milvago chimachima*) – Two were along the entrance road to Caño Negro.

**LAUGHING FALCON** (*Herpetotheres cachinnans*) – We saw these stocky falcons on several occasions while driving. The first was eating a Coral Snake (!) in a tree on the side of the road, and woofed down the tail just after we got it in the scopes.

**BAT FALCON** (*Falco ruficularis*) – Just a few of these small falcons perched up for us near Caño Negro.

#### Psittacidae (New World and African Parrots)

**ORANGE-CHINNED PARAKEET** (*Brotogeris jugularis*) – Fairly common and widespread. Their short-tailed look and bounding flight pattern is fairly distinctive.

**BROWN-HOODED PARROT** (*Pyrilia haematotis*) – These small-medium sized, squeaky-voiced parrots were routine guests of the gardens at Arenal Observatory Lodge.

**WHITE-CROWNED PARROT** (*Pionus senilis*) – Pairs flew over us a few times at Bosque de Paz and Arenal.

**RED-LORED PARROT** (*Amazona autumnalis*) – This is the common Amazona (large parrot) at Caño Negro and Arenal Observatory Lodge.

**OLIVE-THROATED PARAKEET** (*Eupsittula nana*) – These drab but talkative parakeets flew over and perched above us along the Caño Negro entrance road.

**ORANGE-FRONTED PARAKEET** (*Eupsittula canicularis*) – Our dry forest excursion on the final day allowed us some close scope views of these fine parakeets along the Guacimo Road.

**CRIMSON-FRONTED PARAKEET** (*Psittacara finschi*) – Much less common than in the south, we saw just two flocks pass overhead (near Caño Negro).

#### Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds)

**FASCIATED ANTSHRIKE** (*Cymbilaimus lineatus*) – One male teased us along the Peninsula Road at Arenal, but we never had good views.

**GREAT ANTSHRIKE** (*Taraba major*) – One of these bruisers showed nicely on the Peninsula Road at the same place where the Fasciated Antshrike played hard to get.

**BARRED ANTSHRIKE** (*Thamnophilus doliatus*) – These charismatic antshrikes are reasonably common and generally easy, with good views along the forest edge at Caño Negro.

**RUSSET ANTSHRIKE** (*Thamnistes anabatinus*) – We found just a couple with mixed flocks in the forests around Arenal.

**SLATY ANTWREN** (*Myrmotherula schisticolor*) – One was at Bosque de Paz, and a pair showed poorly for us in a mixed flock at the Arenal Sky Trek.

**DUSKY ANTBIRD** (*Cercomacroides tyrannina*) – These drab antbirds called on several occasions near Arenal, but we only had brief views.

**DULL-MANTLED ANTBIRD** (*Myrmeciza laemosticta*) – A stunner with a bad name! This handsome antbird posed nicely along the edge of a road cut at Arenal.

**ZELEDON'S ANTBIRD** (*Myrmeciza zeledoni*) – At least 3 of these attractive antbirds fed at an army ant swarm on the waterfall trail at Arenal.

**BICOLORED ANTBIRD** (*Gymnophrys bicolor bicolor*) – When we stood quietly at the edge of the antswarm at Arenal, a few of these beauties foraged on ant-scared insects within an arm's length.

**SPOTTED ANTBIRD** (*Hylophylax naevioides*) – Though this species is fairly common, it was a real privilege to see Spotted Antbirds as well as we did at the army ant swarm at Arenal. They were "naked eye birds", showing well down to 3-4 feet away!

#### Rhinocryptidae (Tapaculos)

**SILVERY-FRONTED TAPACULO** (*Scytalopus argentifrons*) – Though we heard a few, we couldn't quite convince one of these feathered mice to come out into the open.

#### Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers)

**TAWNY-THROATED LEAFTOSSER** (*Sclerurus mexicanus*) – The show that the vocal bird put on for us at the Arenal Sky Trek was really memorable. We saw this skulky understory bird really well as it perched and called from a downed log.

**WEDGE-BILLED WOODCREEPER** (*Glyphorhynchus spirurus*) – These small woodcreepers were seemingly everywhere along the trails at the Arenal Sky Trek.

**NORTHERN BARRED-WOODCREEPER** (*Dendrocolaptes sanctithomae*) – One showed fairly well along the trail at Sky Trek near Arenal.

**SPOTTED WOODCREEPER** (*Xiphorhynchus erythropygius*) – Heard and seen several times around Arenal.

**STREAK-HEADED WOODCREEPER** (*Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*) – We found these slim woodcreepers a few times in the area around Caño Negro.

**SPOT-CROWNED WOODCREEPER** (*Lepidocolaptes affinis*) – At least 3 were in the mountain forest near Bosque de Paz.

**LINEATED FOLIAGE-GLEANER** (*Syndactyla subalaris*) – After some coaxing, one showed at the forest edge along the road above Bosque de Paz.

**BUFF-THROATED FOLIAGE-GLEANER (HYPOPHAEUS)** (*Automolus ochrolaemus hypophaeus*) – We heard this forest bird a few times around Arenal; the trilling calls of the birds here sound different than those in the south of Costa Rica. [\*]

**SPOTTED BARBTAIL** (*Premnoplex brunescens*) – One showed very well in a mixed flock near the hummingbird feeders at La Paz Waterfall Gardens.

**RED-FACED SPINETAIL** (*Cranioleuca erythroptus*) – About 4 danced around in the forest at Bosque de Paz.

**SLATY SPINETAIL** (*Synallaxis brachyura*) – Small (family?) groups teased us but finally obliged with good views at Caño Negro and especially near the casitas at Arenal Observatory Lodge.

#### Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

**ORNITHION TYRANULET SP.** (*Ornithion* sp.) – A vocal but unresponsive bird at the Snowy Cotinga site near Caño Negro was either a Brown-capped or a Yellow-bellied Tyrannulet.

**NORTHERN BEARDLESS-TYRANULET** (*Camptostoma imberbe*) – This drab flycatcher, named for what it doesn't have, was fairly common in the northern lowlands from Medio Queso to Caño Negro.

**YELLOW TYRANULET** (*Capsiempis flaveola*) – We found active pairs of this lovely small flycatcher twice at Caño Negro.

**YELLOW-BELLIED ELAENIA** (*Elaenia flavogaster*) – "FREEEEEEer!" These elaenias were a common part of the soundscape of the tour, and we saw them several times too.

**MOUNTAIN ELAENIA** (*Elaenia frantzii*) – Good looks at these nicely proportioned flycatchers at Volcán Poás and Bosque de Paz.

**OLIVE-STRIPED FLYCATCHER** (*Mionectes olivaceus*) – We encountered this little wing-flipper at least three times - at La Paz Waterfall Gardens, Bosque de Paz, and Arenal.

**SLATY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER** (*Leptopogon superciliaris*) – One of these gray-helmeted tyrants showed nicely in a mixed flock at Arenal's Sky Trek.

**SCALE-CRESTED PYGMY-TYRANT** (*Lophotriccus pileatus*) – We had good luck with this tiny hammerhead of a bird, finding it near Arenal Observatory Lodge and also at Sky Trek.

**SLATE-HEADED TODY-FLYCATCHER** (*Poecilatriccus sylvia*) – Two were around town at Caño Negro.

**COMMON TODY-FLYCATCHER** (*Todirostrum cinereum*) – Common, especially near water.

**YELLOW-OLIVE FLYCATCHER** (*Tolmomyias sulphurescens*) – Ours were at Caño Negro and also on the west coast near Punta Caldera.

**SULPHUR-RUMPED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiobius sulphureipygius aureatus*) – Two were on the trails at Sky Trek near Arenal.

**TUFTED FLYCATCHER** (*Mitrephanes phaeocercus*) – During a rainstorm at La Paz Waterfall Gardens, one of these beautifully crested flycatchers perched and sallied out for insects about 10 feet below us as we watched from the dry overhang of a veranda.

**DARK PEWEE** (*Contopus lugubris*) – One was flycatching from the top of a bare snag during our first morning at Bosque de Paz.

**TROPICAL PEWEE** (*Contopus cinereus*) – Common, especially near Medio Queso and Caño Negro.

**YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax flaviventris*) – These surprised-looking migrants from the boreal forests of North America were on the Peninsula Road and Sky Trek trails at Arenal.

**YELLOWISH FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax flavescens*) – These colorful *Empidonax* (an oxymoron? Not in this case!) flycatchers were at La Paz and Bosque de Paz.

**BLACK PHOEBE** (*Sayornis nigricans*) – Two were near the river at Bosque de Paz.

**LONG-TAILED TYRANT** (*Colonia colonus*) – This nicely ornamented flycatcher was fairly common along the edges of forested habitats at Arenal - good looks were had at the casitas.

**DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) – We saw this slim *Myiarchus* and heard its mournful calls on just a few occasions near Arenal.

**PANAMA FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus panamensis*) – The final day's expedition into the mangroves near Punta Caldera led us to this wildly excited *Myiarchus*.

**NUTTING'S FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus nuttingi*) – At least three showed for us along the Guacimo Rd. on our final day.

**GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus crinitus*) – This familiar *Myiarchus* let out "REEEEAAP!" calls on a few occasions around Caño Negro.

**GREAT KISKADEE** (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) – Common and widespread.

**BOAT-BILLED FLYCATCHER** (*Megarynchus pitangua*) – These kiskadee look-alikes put in appearances a few times at Caño Negro and near Arenal, too.

**SOCIAL FLYCATCHER** (*Myiozetetes similis*) – Quite common.

**GRAY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiozetetes granadensis*) – Less common than Social Flycatcher. We saw several along the water's edge during our boat trips at Caño Negro (and even got to compare them directly with Social Flycatchers).

**GOLDEN-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiodynastes hemichrysus*) – This stocky flycatcher seems like a combination of a kiskadee and a Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher. They don't occur at very high density along our route, but we were pleased to see a pair nicely at Bosque de Paz.

**TROPICAL KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – Abundant.

**SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER** (*Tyrannus forficatus*) – Though we saw a few while driving between Caño Negro and Arenal, the best views of these streamer-tailed wonders came on our final day on the Guacimo Road.

#### Cotingidae (Cotingas)

**SNOWY COTINGA** (*Carpodectes nitidus*) – Our stakeout fruiting trees near Caño Negro produced good scope views of 3 of these handsome canopy birds. They are fairly scarce and spend a lot of their time just sitting around in the canopy, so we were very pleased to see these stunners.

#### Pipridae (Manakins)

**LONG-TAILED MANAKIN** (*Chiroxiphia linearis*) – Though we heard one taunting us, we couldn't find it along the stream crossing the Guacimo Road. [\*]

**WHITE-RUFFED MANAKIN** (*Corapipo altera*) – Fairly common in the Arenal area.

**WHITE-COLLARED MANAKIN** (*Manacus candei*) – These striking manakins performed admirably at Caño Negro, and we saw a few more around Arenal.

#### Tityridae (Tityras and Allies)

**BLACK-CROWNED TITYRA** (*Tityra inquisitor*) – One of these strikingly plumaged birds perched atop a fruiting tree at Arenal Observatory Lodge.

**MASKED TITYRA** (*Tityra semifasciata*) – One of these pale, stocky tityras flew in while we were on cotinga patrol on one of the Caño Negro boat trips, setting off alarm bells. We ended up having great views!

**CINNAMON BECARD** (*Pachyrhamphus cinnamomeus*) – Fairly common at Caño Negro and in the gardens at Arenal.

#### Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

**MANGROVE VIREO** (*Vireo pallens*) – One of these coastal forest specialists showed remarkably well in the mangroves at Estero Mata de Limón.

**YELLOW-THROATED VIREO** (*Vireo flavifrons*) – We saw these northern migrants just a few times - at Bosque de Paz, Sky Trek, and at Estero Mata de Limón.

**YELLOW-WINGED VIREO** (*Vireo carmioli*) – These delightful Chiriqui endemics were along the road above Bosque de Paz. They ended up coming quite close to us after some pygmy-owl whistling!

**BROWN-CAPPED VIREO** (*Vireo leucophrys*) – We saw these vireos near running water both at La Paz Waterfall Gardens and at Bosque de Paz.

**LESSER GREENLET** (*Pachysylvia decurtata*) – Looking somewhat like a drab Nashville Warbler, these songbirds are common and widespread.

#### Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

**WHITE-THROATED MAGPIE-JAY** (*Calocitta formosa*) – Three of these magnificent, long-tailed jays were hanging around a trailhead in Arenal National Park, much to the delight of many onlookers.

**BROWN JAY** (*Psilorhinus morio*) – Seen on several occasions while we were driving. Additionally, a group (family?) of six came in to the feeding station at Arenal.

#### Hirundinidae (Swallows)

**BLUE-AND-WHITE SWALLOW** (*Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*) – This is a common swallow in the mountains. On both nights we stayed at Bosque de Paz, a group of about 20 individuals came in to roost in the rafters outside our rooms.

**NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW** (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) – Fairly common and widespread. Drabber and less contrasting than the following species.

**SOUTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW** (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) – These swallows frequent forest gaps, and we saw them commonly along road cuts at Arenal.

**GRAY-BREASTED MARTIN** (*Progne chalybea*) – Common between Medio Queso and Caño Negro, where they were seldom out of sight in the sky above us during daylight hours.

**MANGROVE SWALLOW** (*Tachycineta albilinea*) – Common in the wetlands of the northern border. Some of these small swallows nest in the tour boats used at Caño Negro, and we had up close and personal views of them as they circled and eventually landed on moving boats.

**BARN SWALLOW** (*Hirundo rustica*) – Quite common on the west coast near Punta Caldera on our final day.

#### Troglodytidae (Wrens)

**NIGHTINGALE WREN** (*Microcerculus philomela*) – We heard the phenomenal song of this secretive bird very nicely, but unfortunately were not able to get a view. [\*]

**HOUSE WREN** (*Troglodytes aedon*) – Common - a near-constant vocal presence at many locations.

**OCHRACEOUS WREN** (*Troglodytes ochraceus*) – Toward the beginning of the tour, we enjoyed good views of these small climbers in mixed flocks at La Paz Waterfall Gardens and Bosque de Paz.

**RUFIOUS-NAPED WREN** (*Campylorhynchus rufinucha*) – Four of these huge wrens visited us noisily on the Guacimo Road.

**SPOT-BREASTED WREN** (*Pheugopedius maculipectus*) – It took considerable effort to see our first one well near Caño Negro, and then it seemed that they popped out of the woodwork there.

**BLACK-THROATED WREN** (*Pheugopedius atrogularis*) – Heard regularly around Arenal, with good views at the casitas and Sky Trek.

**BANDED WREN** (*Thryophilus pleurostictus*) – The mixed flocks along the Guacimo Road included one of these striking wrens - an unexpected treat on this tour.

**STRIPE-BREASTED WREN** (*Cantorchilus thoracicus*) – Fairly common around Arenal.

**PLAIN WREN** (*Cantorchilus modestus*) – A stop at a marshy area southwest of Caño Negro enabled us to see a pair of "Canebrake" Plain Wrens. This population is a candidate for a split from other Plain Wrens.

**BAY WREN** (*Cantorchilus nigricapillus*) – Loud, but quite shy! We eventually coaxed one out to the edge of the forest where it showed nicely at Caño Negro.

**WHITE-BREASTED WOOD-WREN** (*Henicorhina leucosticta*) – Heard at Arenal. [\*]

**GRAY-BREASTED WOOD-WREN** (*Henicorhina leucophrys*) – This montane forest gnome was seen nicely along a road cut at Bosque de Paz.

**SONG WREN** (*Cyphorhinus phaeocephalus*) – This beauty was a highlight of our walk on the trails at Sky Trek near Arenal.

#### Poliophtilidae (Gnatcatchers)

**TAWNY-FACED GNATWREN** (*Microbates cinereiventris*) – Despite our best efforts, we only heard these tiny forest birds at the Arenal Sky Trek. [\*]

**WHITE-LORED GNATCATCHER** (*Poliophtila alboris*) – The addition of time on the Guacimo Road allowed us to see this dry forest species.

**TROPICAL GNATCATCHER** (*Poliophtila plumbea*) – We had a couple of sightings of singles at Caño Negro and Guacimo Road.

#### Cinclididae (Dippers)

**AMERICAN DIPPER** (*Cinclus mexicanus*) – This pale, southern form of American Dipper put in a great show in the river at Bosque de Paz.

#### Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

**BLACK-FACED SOLITAIRE** (*Myadestes melanops*) – How about that solitaire above the roof at Bosque de Paz? This classy bird put in a few appearances to eat fruit with other songbirds along the driveway.

**BLACK-BILLED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH** (*Catharus gracilirostris*) – We heard one of these small, montane thrushes singing at Volcán Poás. [\*]

**SLATY-BACKED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH** (*Catharus fuscater*) – While we ate lunch at La Paz Waterfall Gardens, a dark flash revealed one of these beautiful thrushes that had flown in to the restaurant to pilfer our leftovers. Amazing! We later saw a few more "in the wild" out on the trails.

**RUDDY-CAPPED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH** (*Catharus frantzii*) – Our time at Bosque de Paz allowed us to hear and see this dense forest skulker a few times.

**BLACK-HEADED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH** (*Catharus mexicanus*) – One attended the army ant swarm at Arenal.

**WOOD THRUSH** (*Hylocichla mustelina*) – Fairly common around Arenal, but we only heard this northern migrant. [\*]

**MOUNTAIN THRUSH** (*Turdus plebejus*) – Readily seen on Volcán Poás.

**CLAY-COLORED THRUSH** (*Turdus grayi*) – The national bird is common and widespread. Seen every single day.

#### Ptilionotidae (Silky-flycatchers)

**BLACK-AND-YELLOW SILKY-FLYCATCHER** (*Phainoptila melanoxantha*) – This is the real oddball in the silky-flycatcher family, and we had some great views in the mists of Volcán Poás. Compared to *Phainopepla* and the other silkies, this species is quite chunky and compact.

**LONG-TAILED SILKY-FLYCATCHER** (*Ptilionotus caudatus*) – Delightfully common around Bosque de Paz, with a chattering flock of ~10 birds in a bare tree above the lodge at one point.

#### Parulidae (New World Warblers)

**LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH** (*Parkesia motacilla*) – At least two patrolled the stream that runs through Bosque de Paz. These northern migrants prefer to use high quality, clean, insect-rich waterways during breeding and on the wintering grounds.

**NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH** (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – Widespread, though most common at Caño Negro on this tour.

**GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER** (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) – We saw these fine, declining warblers early in the tour when we were at higher elevation around Bosque de Paz and the La Paz Waterfall Gardens.

**BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER** (*Mniotilta varia*) – Just a few - we saw them at Arenal and Bosque de Paz, always with mixed flocks.

**PROTHONOTARY WARBLER** (*Protonotaria citrea*) – It was great to see some of our iconic US breeders on their wintering grounds, and this was no exception. The morning boat trip at Caño Negro took us past at least 6 of these golden swamp-warblers.

**FLAME-THROATED WARBLER** (*Oreothlypis gutturalis*) – Noise from a mixed flock along the road above Bosque de Paz led us to this Chiriqui endemic stunner.

**TENNESSEE WARBLER** (*Oreothlypis peregrina*) – Quite common, especially in the gardens and forest edge around Arenal.

**GRAY-CROWNED YELLOWTHROAT** (*Geothlypis poliocephala*) – If you're accustomed to seeing Common Yellowthroats up north, this species really jumps out at you because of its thick, curved bill. We saw this neat warbler at Medio Queso and in shrubby areas around Caño Negro.



**MOURNING WARBLER** (*Geothlypis philadelphia*) – One popped up, calling, on our afternoon boat trip at Caño Negro. Another was heard only at Arenal later in the tour.

**KENTUCKY WARBLER** (*Geothlypis formosa*) – We just heard this northern migrant giving its rich "chup" call from the ground at Sky Trek. [\*]

**OLIVE-CROWNED YELLOWTHROAT** (*Geothlypis semiflava*) – We tried, but couldn't get the singing male to show itself at the edge of a brushy lagoon on Caño Negro during the morning boat trip. [\*]

**AMERICAN REDSTART** (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – Our only one was on the day we traveled from Caño Negro to Arenal.

**TROPICAL PARULA** (*Setophaga pitiayumi*) – Common in forest habitats, especially around Arenal.

**BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER** (*Setophaga fusca*) – This real gem put on a show in the avocado tree with the Emerald Toucanets on the way up Volcán Poás.

**YELLOW WARBLER** (*Setophaga petechia*) – Common around Caño Negro and especially on the Guacimo Road, where we found about 15 individuals.

**CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER** (*Setophaga pensylvanica*) – Common - one of the most widely seen wintering songbirds from the US.

**BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER** (*Setophaga virens*) – Singles put in appearances at Bosque de Paz and Arenal.

**GOLDEN-CROWNED WARBLER** (*Basileuterus culicivorus*) – Noisy groups of these understory warblers chattered past us around Arenal's waterfall trail and at Sky Trek.

**THREE-STRIPED WARBLER** (*Basileuterus tristriatus*) – We intersected a group of these social understory warblers above Bosque de Paz.

**BUFF-RUMPED WARBLER** (*Myiothlypis fulvicauda*) – A regular sight along road cuts and trail edges around Arenal.

**WILSON'S WARBLER** (*Cardellina pusilla*) – We saw these in ones or twos at most sites except for Caño Negro.

**SLATE-THROATED REDSTART** (*Myioborus miniatus*) – Common in the mountains - we saw ours at Bosque de Paz and the La Paz Waterfall Gardens.

**WRENTHRUSH** (*Zeledonia coronata*) – Ooooo La La! The delightful Wrenthrush or Zeledonia is a magical little bird that is typically rather difficult to see. We were lucky to have tremendous views, nearly at our feet, of a vocal bird on the flanks of Volcán Poás. While Clements currently groups this bird with the wood-warblers, a recent treatment ("Bird Families of the World" by Winkler, Billerman, and Lovette) takes recent genetic studies into consideration and places the Wrenthrush in its own distinct family, Zeledoniidae.

*Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)*

**WHITE-THROATED SHRIKE-TANAGER** (*Lanio leucothorax*) – This flock leader kept an eye on a mixed foraging flock along the trail system at Sky Trek near Arenal.

**CRIMSON-COLLARED TANAGER** (*Ramphocelus sanguinolentus*) – Getting good looks at this remarkable tanager was a nice highlight of our fruit-watching outings around Arenal.

**PASSERINI'S TANAGER** (*Ramphocelus passerinii*) – Abundant in the Caño Negro and Arenal areas.

**BLUE-GRAY TANAGER** (*Thraupis episcopus*) – Common and widespread.

**PALM TANAGER** (*Thraupis palmarum*) – Common and widespread.

**GOLDEN-HOODED TANAGER** (*Tangara larvata*) – Not quite as common as Blue-gray and Palm Tanagers, but these beauties were all over the place around Arenal.

**BAY-HEADED TANAGER** (*Tangara gyrola*) – Very common at Arenal. While we scanned flocks of Bay-headed Tanagers carefully for Rufous-winged Tanager, the group never caught up with one during our time there.

**EMERALD TANAGER** (*Tangara florida*) – Colorful flocks would jet quickly through the gardens at Arenal, often joining the Bay-headed Tanagers and Golden-hooded Tanagers.

**SILVER-THROATED TANAGER** (*Tangara icterocephala*) – Readily seen at Bosque de Paz and Arenal.

**RED-LEGGED HONEYCREEPER** (*Cyanerpes cyaneus*) – Small groups appeared magically in front of us in the canopy at Caño Negro and Arenal.

**BLACK-AND-YELLOW TANAGER** (*Chrysothlypis chrysomelas*) – After we climbed to the top of the trails at Sky Trek, we were lucky to look down from above on a small flock of these shockingly bright, contrasty tanagers.

**SLATY FLOWERPIERCER** (*Diglossa plumbea*) – Fairly common in mixed flocks at Volcán Poás and Bosque de Paz.

**BLUE-BLACK GRASSQUIT** (*Volatinia jacarina*) – Common in grassy margins, especially near Caño Negro.

**RUDDY-BREASTED SEEDEATER** (*Sporophila minuta*) – At least 3 dull-plumaged birds with tiny flecks of ruddy color were along the edge of the road and marsh at Medio Queso. They would have been easy to pass over at a distance!

**THICK-BILLED SEED-FINCH** (*Sporophila funerea*) – Three were in the town of Caño Negro. Their bills are thick, but not as impressive as the next species.

**NICARAGUAN SEED-FINCH** (*Sporophila nuttingi*) – The long, bumpy drive in to Caño Negro was marked by at least 3 good sightings of this amusing songster which has a fairly restricted range in Costa Rica. Their gigantic pink-horn bills are something to see!

**VARIABLE SEEDEATER** (*Sporophila corvina*) – Common and widespread.

**WHITE-COLLARED SEEDEATER** (*Sporophila torqueola*) – Good views around Caño Negro, including a singing bird in town.

**BANANAQUIT** (*Coereba flaveola*) – Very common.

**YELLOW-FACED GRASSQUIT** (*Tiaris olivaceus*) – Just a few - we had some along the side of the road near Lake Arenal and more along the Arenal Observatory Lodge driveway.

**BUFF-THROATED SALTATOR** (*Saltator maximus*) – Scattered sightings, including at Medio Queso, Caño Negro, and Arenal.

**BLACK-HEADED SALTATOR** (*Saltator atriceps*) – Two were on the Peninsula Road at Arenal.

**GRAYISH SALTATOR** (*Saltator coerulescens*) – Nice views of these handsome saltators around Caño Negro.

*Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)*

**SOOTY-CAPPED CHLOROSPINGUS** (*Chlorospingus pileatus*) – In the higher elevations, these were generally outnumbered by Common Chlorospingus, but on Volcán Poás, we were overrun by this species.

**COMMON CHLOROSPINGUS** (*Chlorospingus flavopectus*) – We saw a few more of these than Sooty-capped, but both were common in high elevation forest.

**STRIPE-HEADED SPARROW** (*Peucaea ruficauda*) – Roughly 7 of these marvelous sparrows were in the dry scrub forest of the Guacimo Road.

- OLIVE SPARROW** (*Arremonops rufivirgatus*) – Another Guacimo Road - only bird. We wouldn't expect to encounter this or Stripe-headed Sparrow on the normal itinerary.
- BLACK-STRIPED SPARROW** (*Arremonops conirostris*) – Common at both Caño Negro and Arenal, often visiting feeders on or near the ground.
- ORANGE-BILLED SPARROW** (*Arremon aurantiirostris*) – With some effort, we had a nice experience with these secretive forest sparrows at Arenal and Sky Trek.
- CHESTNUT-CAPPED BRUSHFINCH** (*Arremon brunneinucha*) – Remarkably, these are fairly common feeder birds at Bosque de Paz. Away from feeders, they can be quite tough to see well, so we were spoiled with the lovely views we had.
- SOOTY-FACED FINCH** (*Arremon crassirostris*) – One was hiding in the ornamental rock wall near the monkeys at La Paz Waterfall Gardens, and most of us saw it pretty well as it skulked around.
- RUFIOUS-COLLARED SPARROW** (*Zonotrichia capensis*) – Common in mid-elevations. Quite a few were around the La Paz Waterfall Gardens.
- YELLOW-THIGHED FINCH** (*Pselliophorus tibialis*) – This attractive ground-feeder was a frequent sight at the bird tables at Bosque de Paz.

#### Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

- HEPATIC TANAGER** (*Piranga flava*) – A few of these ashy-faced tanagers appeared at Arenal and Sky Trek, offering a nice ID comparison (with females, anyway) with Carmiol's Tanager.
- SUMMER TANAGER** (*Piranga rubra*) – Common and widespread.
- FLAME-COLORED TANAGER** (*Piranga bidentata*) – Two were on Volcán Poás, including at the toucanet avocado tree.
- WHITE-WINGED TANAGER** (*Piranga leucoptera*) – Two of these well-marked fruit eaters appeared near the buildings at Bosque de Paz early one morning.
- RED-THROATED ANT-TANAGER** (*Habia fuscicauda*) – A noisy group "chack"ed along the edge of the Peninsula Road at Arenal, and we eventually saw them well.
- CARMIOL'S TANAGER** (*Chlorothraupis carmioli*) – These strange tanagers showed up at the streetlights at Arenal to catch insects in the early morning hours.
- ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK** (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) – One was calling at the site where we saw the Snowy Cotingas. [\*]
- BLUE-BLACK GROSBEAK** (*Cyanocompsa cyanoides*) – Nice views of a singing male along the driveway at Arenal.
- INDIGO BUNTING** (*Passerina cyanea*) – Two were on the Guacimo Road.

#### Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

- RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD** (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) – Common in some of the wetlands between Medio Queso and Caño Negro.
- EASTERN MEADOWLARK** (*Sturnella magna*) – Two were walking on the ground along the road in to Caño Negro from Medio Queso.
- RED-BREASTED MEADOWLARK** (*Sturnella militaris*) – One perched up nicely along the Caño Negro entrance road.
- MELODIOUS BLACKBIRD** (*Dives dives*) – Widely scattered - away from the Hotel Bougainvillea, these were at La Paz Waterfall Gardens, Caño Negro, and Sky Trek.
- GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE** (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) – Common in human-disturbed areas like farm fields and town edges.
- NICARAGUAN GRACKLE** (*Quiscalus nicaraguensis*) – When we arrived, we heard that this range-restricted target species wasn't around at Caño Negro this year, but we found some anyway. They were walking around with horses on the edge of the big lagoon with the Jabiru and the large feeding flock at Caño Negro.
- GIANT COWBIRD** (*Molothrus oryzivorus*) – One flew over us and landed in town at Caño Negro.
- BLACK-COWLED ORIOLE** (*Icterus prothemelas*) – This slim, black-and-yellow oriole popped up just a few times, showing especially nicely at Caño Negro and Arenal. [\*]
- ORCHARD ORIOLE** (*Icterus spurius*) – Two were along the entrance road to Caño Negro.
- STREAK-BACKED ORIOLE** (*Icterus pustulatus*) – These large, colorful orioles were some of the last additions to the bounty we found in the dry forest of Guacimo Road on the tour's final day.
- BALTIMORE ORIOLE** (*Icterus galbula*) – Common and widespread as a wintering migrant from the north.
- SCARLET-RUMPED CACIQUE (SCARLET-RUMPED)** (*Cacicus uropygialis microrhynchus*) – Three flew in and showed briefly during one of our Caño Negro boat trips.
- MONTEZUMA OROPENDOLA** (*Psarocolius montezuma*) – The experience of enjoying a breakfast cup of coffee at Arenal Observatory lodge while a flock of Montezuma Oropendolas devours watermelon with the Arenal Volcano in the background ranks as a distinctly wonderful tropical feeling!

#### Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

- SCRUB EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia affinis*) – We added these dry forest birds on the final day between Punta Caldera and Guacimo Road.
- YELLOW-THROATED EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia hirundinacea*) – Just a few were at Medio Queso and Caño Negro.
- TAWNY-CAPPED EUPHONIA** (*Euphonia annae*) – While watching for tanagers in the gardens at Arenal, a nice male showed well at fairly close range.
- YELLOW-BELLIED SISKIN** (*Spinus xanthogastrus*) – At least ten were calling and eating seeds high above the driveway at Bosque de Paz. With some patience, we had good views in the scope.

#### Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

- HOUSE SPARROW** (*Passer domesticus*) – Common in larger towns. [I]

## MAMMALS

- COMMON OPOSSUM** (*Didelphis marsupialis*) – Spotlighted at Caño Negro.
- CENTRAL AMERICAN WOOLY OPOSSUM** (*Caluromys derbianus*) – Spotlighted at Caño Negro.
- MANTLED HOWLER MONKEY** (*Alouatta palliata*) – These were a regular feature on this tour, including some great views above us at Caño Negro.
- WHITE-THROATED CAPUCHIN** (*Cebus capucinus*) – These small monkeys showed nicely during our monkey hat-trick at Caño Negro on the afternoon boat trip.
- CENTRAL AMERICAN SPIDER MONKEY** (*Ateles geoffroyi*) – Gangly and beautiful, we were fortunate to see Spider Monkeys at Caño Negro

and also in the pines at Arenal, where a female was leading a tiny baby around through the trees.

**HOFFMANN'S TWO-TOED SLOTH** (*Choloepus hoffmanni*) – Vernon brought the bus to a stop alongside one of these iconic animals as it hung from a utility wire alongside the road down from Volcán Poás. Within minutes, a dozen other cars had stopped to get a better look, too!

**BROWN-THROATED THREE-TOED SLOTH** (*Bradypus variegatus*) – How about a tour with two species of sloth? Check! On the boat trip at Caño Negro, we saw 3 climbing around rather actively in some tall cecropias. "Rather actively" in reference to sloths means that they moved about ten feet in the half hour that we spent with them.

**VARIEGATED SQUIRREL** (*Sciurus variegatoides*) – Fairly common at lower and mid elevations.

**RED-TAILED SQUIRREL** (*Sciurus granatensis*) – One of these small squirrels was at La Paz Waterfall Gardens.

**CENTRAL AMERICAN AGOUTI** (*Dasyprocta punctata*) – Fairly common around Bosque de Paz.

**PACA** (*Cuniculus paca*) – At night, these reclusive, spotted, agouti-esque creatures came in to feed near the dining room at Bosque de Paz, offering us some rare opportunities to view them.

**NORTHERN RACCOON** (*Procyon lotor*) – Spotlighted during the night drive at Caño Negro.

**WHITE-NOSED COATI** (*Nasua narica*) – We saw a lot of coatis on this tour. Most memorable, perhaps, was the group with youngsters parading around the feeding area at Arenal Observatory Lodge.

**WHITE-TAILED DEER** (*Odocoileus virginianus*) – One at Caño Negro.

#### Herps

**GREEN IGUANA** (*Iguana iguana*) – Very common at Caño Negro.

**BLACK SPINY-TAILED IGUANA** (*Ctenosaura similis*) – Jay spotted one along a rocky edge at the coast near Estero Mata de Limón on our final day.

**GREEN BASILISK** (*Basiliscus plumifrons*) – A few were loafing along the water's edge during the Caño Negro boat trips.

**TROPICAL HOUSE GECKO** (*Hemidactylus mabouia*) – Chak-chak-chak-chak! We heard these at most of the lodges where we stayed.

**SPECTACLED CAIMAN** (*Caiman crocodilus*) – Common at Caño Negro.

**VAILLANT'S FROG** (*Lithobates vaillanti*) – Caño Negro.

**FORRER'S LEOPARD FROG** (*Lithobates forreri*) – Arenal.

**MESO-AMERICAN SLIDER** (*Trachemys venusta*) – These were the turtles we saw at Caño Negro.

**CANE TOAD** (*Rhinella marina*) – We saw these frequently around Caño Negro.

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## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

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**Totals for the tour: 330 bird taxa and 14 mammal taxa**