



Field Guides Tour Report

Costa Rica: Birding the Edges Part II, the Far North 2018

Jan 14, 2018 to Jan 23, 2018

Tom Johnson & Cory Gregory, with Vernon Campos

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



Sunbittern was voted the bird of the trip on the merits of our wonderful sighting of this singing and wing-displaying bird near Arenal. What an extraordinary bird! Photo by guide Tom Johnson.

This tour is a fun and concise exploration of the northern portion of Costa Rica, focusing on the wet lowlands south of Lake Nicaragua and middle elevation forests between Arenal Volcano and Bosque de Paz. Along the way, we also fit in a bit of montane birding on the Poas Volcano, though our visit to the volcano was abbreviated this year due to rain and recent volcanic activity (!).

Did I mention rain? We experienced heavy rain on 5 of 8 tour days this year, and had to get creative at times to continue to find birds. Fortunately, we had good weather during our boat trips (only occasional rain, and we had a canopy that helped with that!) in the north.

Though the weather could have been better at times, the birding was fabulous throughout. We ended up finding a long list of wonderful birds, including Sunbittern and Sungrebe, Jabiru, Yellow-breasted Crane, Barred Hawk, Resplendent Quetzal, Black-crested Coquette, Chiriqui Quail-Dove, Ocellated Antbird, Brown-billed Scythebill, and many more.

Some of the great mammals we encountered included the rarely seen Tayra, the spotted, nocturnal Paca, and the fabulous and weird Northern Tamandua.

Cory and I had a fun time with everyone on this tried and true route through Costa Rica's very birdy north. Significant thanks go to Vernon Campos from Costa Rica Gateway for his excellent driving, bird guiding skills, and wonderful companionship. Thanks to all of you for coming along with us, and we'll see you on another adventure soon.

-Tom

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

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) – Scattered around the lagoon at Caño Negro.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Spatula discors*) – A few flocks at Caño Negro.

LESSER SCAUP (*Aythya affinis*) – A very scruffy individual was in the lagoon at Caño Negro.

Cracidae (Guans, Chachalacas, and Curassows)

GRAY-HEADED CHACHALACA (*Oreortyx cinereiceps*) – Our best views came from the boat trips at Caño Negro.

CRESTED GUAN (*Penelope purpurascens*) – Frequent sightings at Arenal.

BLACK GUAN (*Chamaepetes unicolor*) – These handsome cracids came in to feed in the yard at Bosque de Paz.

GREAT CURASSOW (*Crax rubra*) – A stunning attraction at Arenal Observatory Lodge.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

PIED-BILLED GREBE (*Podilymbus podiceps*) – One was along the road through Medio Queso marsh.

Ciconiidae (Storks)

JABIRU (*Jabiru mycteria*) – The first bird we saw was at point-blank range in a roadside ditch - WOW! Later, also in the Caño Negro area, we saw an adult standing next to a nest in a huge tree. [N]

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

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

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

Anhingidae (Anhingas)

ANHINGA (*Anhinga anhinga*) – Plenty along waterways in the north; we saw them especially well during the boat trips at Caño Negro.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

BARE-THROATED TIGER-HERON (*Tigrisoma mexicanum*) – These lovely herons were common between Los Chiles and Caño Negro.

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – A few were scattered around wetlands in the north.

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – Common.

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*) – Plenty around Caño Negro.

LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*) – Common in the northern lowlands.

TRICOLORED HERON (*Egretta tricolor*) – Just a few between Los Chiles and Caño Negro.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Very common and widespread.

GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens*) – Plenty at Medio Queso marsh and Caño Negro. A pale, gray-necked *Butorides* heron that we saw briefly at Medio Queso marsh was likely a Green x Striated Heron hybrid (or perhaps even a dark Striated Heron).

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – Several were along the edges of the water at Caño Negro.

BOAT-BILLED HERON (*Cochlearius cochlearius*) – Boatman Antonio did well to spot this amazing heron on its well-hidden day roost at Caño Negro.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

WHITE IBIS (*Eudocimus albus*) – Scattered sightings in the wetlands of the north.

GLOSSY IBIS (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – Two were at Caño Negro.

GREEN IBIS (*Mesembrinibis cayennensis*) – Two sightings of these strange ibis at Caño Negro.

ROSEATE SPOONBILL (*Platalea ajaja*) – These astounding pink waders were scattered throughout northern wetlands.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*) – Abundant.

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*) – Common.

LESSER YELLOW-HEADED VULTURE (*Cathartes burrovianus*) – Excellent views of multiple individuals at Medio Queso.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

WHITE-TAILED KITE (*Elanus leucurus*) – We found these striking raptors hovering over the roadsides at several places along our route.

BLACK-COLLARED HAWK (*Busarellus nigricollis*) – Our first was the close bird perched along the canal edge at Medio Queso; later, we saw more at Caño Negro.

SNAIL KITE (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*) – Good, close views of hunting birds at Medio Queso and again at Caño Negro.

DOUBLE-TOOTHED KITE (*Harpagus bidentatus*) – One perched along the side of the Peninsula Road at Arenal, and allowed us to get close enough to see both "teeth."

GREAT BLACK HAWK (*Buteogallus urubitinga*) – The one that flew past us on the Peninsula Road at Arenal was an impressive sight.

BARRED HAWK (*Morphnarchus princeps*) – The one near Cinchona after the rain stopped gave us some marvelous views as it rose up next to us and then above us on a column of warm air.

ROADSIDE HAWK (*Rupornis magnirostris*) – This common raptor was seen on most days of the tour.

WHITE HAWK (*Pseudastur albicollis*) – Cory spotted one as we were driving up the winding road below Cinchona. The bird waited for us to enjoy good scope views before taking off and soaring.

GRAY HAWK (*Buteo plagiatus*) – Quite a few sightings of this widespread hawk.

BROAD-WINGED HAWK (*Buteo platypterus*) – Plenty of sightings around Arenal and Bosque de Paz.

SHORT-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo brachyurus*) – Only one sighting this time - the weather surely kept us from seeing more of these common raptors.

RED-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo jamaicensis*) – A few brief sightings in the highlands on our final day.

Eurypygidae (Sunbittern)

SUNBITTERN (*Eurypyga helias*) – This stunner was singing and spreading its fabulous wings at a river crossing near the entrance to the Arenal Observatory Lodge. After such a remarkable show, this was voted "Bird of the Trip" on our final evening.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

YELLOW-BREASTED CRAKE (*Hapalocrex flaviventer*) – A few individuals walked around out in the open atop floating vegetation during our afternoon Caño Negro boat trip. This secretive species is rarely seen!

WHITE-THROATED CRAKE (*Laterallus albigularis*) – We had some surprisingly good views of these reclusive crakes during the Medio Queso boat trip.

RUSSET-NAPED WOOD-RAIL (*Aramides albiventris*) – Stellar views of this recent split in the Caño Negro area.

SORA (*Porzana carolina*) – At least two birds showed fairly well along the edge of the marsh at Medio Queso during our boat trip.
PURPLE GALLINULE (*Porphyrio martinica*) – Common at Medio Queso this year - we even saw some young chicks being attended by adults.
COMMON GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*) – A few sightings of these familiar marsh birds during our boat trips.

Heliornithidae (Finfoots)

SUNGREBE (*Heliornis fulica*) – Three individuals scooted along the river at Caño Negro as we watched from our boat. Good, close views.

Aramidae (Limpkin)

LIMPKIN (*Aramus guarauna*) – A few sightings of these lanky waders in the Caño Negro area.

Burhinidae (Thick-knees)

DOUBLE-STRIPED THICK-KNEE (*Burhinus bistriatus*) – We found one of these odd shorebirds with the spotlight beam during a night drive out of Caño Negro.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-NECKED STILT (*Himantopus mexicanus*) – Fairly common in wetlands.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

SOUTHERN LAPWING (*Vanellus chilensis*) – Scattered sightings around Caño Negro

SEMPALMATED PLOVER (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) – A flock of wintering birds rose up from the edge of the lagoon at Caño Negro.

KILLDEER (*Charadrius vociferus*) – Only at Caño Negro.

Jacanidae (Jacanas)

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

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*) – These peeps were mixed in with Semipalmated Plovers at Caño Negro.

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*) – A frequent sight from our boat trips at Caño Negro.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – Common in towns. [H]

PALE-VENTED PIGEON (*Patagioenas cayennensis*) – Scattered sightings in the lowlands.

RED-BILLED PIGEON (*Patagioenas flavirostris*) – Plenty, especially around middle elevations including the Central Valley.

BAND-TAILED PIGEON (*Patagioenas fasciata*) – A few large flocks zoomed over when we were at Arenal.

INCA DOVE (*Columbina inca*) – A few on our final evening in the Central Valley.

RUDDY GROUND-DOVE (*Columbina talpacoti*) – Common in lowlands.

BLUE GROUND-DOVE (*Claravis pretiosa*) – Brief sighting in the Caño Negro area.

WHITE-TIPPED DOVE (*Leptotila verreauxi*) – Fairly common, especially in edge habitat.

GRAY-CHESTED DOVE (*Leptotila cassinii*) – A few in forest at Arenal.

GRAY-HEADED DOVE (*Leptotila plumbeiceps*) – One was walking around on the ground in the town of Caño Negro.

BUFF-FRONTED QUAIL-DOVE (*Zentrygon costaricensis*) – At least two birds walked out below us at the Cinchona feeders during the heavy rain.

Later, we saw one walk across the driveway at Bosque de Paz.

CHIRIQUI QUAIL-DOVE (*Zentrygon chiriquensis*) – Yowza! This stunner came out to feed on cracked corn in the yard at Bosque de Paz on both of our mornings there. Fantastic views of this secretive, range-restricted dove.

WHITE-WINGED DOVE (*Zenaida asiatica*) – Common in the Central Valley.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

GROOVE-BILLED ANI (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*) – Widespread in scrubby open country.

SQUIRREL CUCKOO (*Piaya cayana*) – This large, russet cuckoo was seen a few times along forest edges.

MANGROVE CUCKOO (*Coccyzus minor*) – A few showed fairly well overhead at the edge of the water in Medio Queso.

Strigidae (Owls)

PACIFIC SCREECH-OWL (*Megascops cooperi*) – The day-rooster sighting at Caño Negro was great, and then we saw another fly across the road and land on a fencepost during our night drive. Awesome!

BLACK-AND-WHITE OWL (*Ciccaba nigrolineata*) – Excellent sighting at night during our spotlighting drive at Caño Negro.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

LESSER NIGHTHAWK (*Chordeiles acutipennis*) – Over a dozen bounded around overhead as we returned from our evening boat trip at Caño Negro.

COMMON PAURAQUE (*Nyctidromus albicollis*) – Common at night in the north.

Nyctibiidae (Potoos)

GREAT POTOO (*Nyctibius grandis*) – We spotlighted one at night and then saw another on a tricky day roost.

Apodidae (Swifts)

WHITE-COLLARED SWIFT (*Streptoprocne zonaris*) – Several large flocks at middle elevations.

VAUX'S SWIFT (*Chaetura vauxi*) – One sighting on our final evening at the Hotel Bougainvillea.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

WHITE-NECKED JACOBIN (*Florisuga mellivora*) – A few sightings of this treetop-sitting insect gleaner.

GREEN HERMIT (*Phaethornis guy*) – A regular feature at the Bosque de Paz feeders.

LONG-BILLED HERMIT (*Phaethornis longirostris*) – A few sightings along the Peninsula Road at Arenal.

STRIPE-THROATED HERMIT (*Phaethornis striigularis*) – Scattered sightings of this small hummer in the Arenal area.

PURPLE-CROWNED FAIRY (*Heliothryx barroti*) – Vernon spotted one perched along the Peninsula Road at Arenal.

GREEN-BREASTED MANGO (*Anthracothorax prevostii*) – A few quick sightings during the Medio Queso boat trip.

GREEN THORNTAIL (*Discosura conversii*) – Close views at La Paz Waterfall Gardens.

BLACK-CRESTED COQUETTE (*Lophornis helenae*) – A few of these excellent little sprites patrolled the verbena hedges at Arenal.

GREEN-CROWNED BRILLIANT (*Heliodoxa jacula*) – Common at Bosque de Paz.

TALAMANCA HUMMINGBIRD (*Eugenes spectabilis*) – Regular at the Bosque de Paz feeders.

FIERY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Panterpe insignis*) – We made it into this montane hummer's range on our final afternoon and saw a few at Volcan Poas.

PURPLE-THROATED MOUNTAIN-GEM (*Lampornis calolaemus*) – Building a nest above the feeders at Bosque de Paz.

MAGENTA-THROATED WOODSTAR (*Calliphlox bryantae*) – A pair was seen frequently in the garden at Bosque de Paz.

VOLCANO HUMMINGBIRD (*Selasphorus flammula*) – A male displayed overhead on our final afternoon on Volcan Poas.

VIOLET-HEADED HUMMINGBIRD (*Klais guimeti*) – A few sightings in the gardens at Arenal.

SCALY-BREASTED HUMMINGBIRD (*Phaeochroa cuvierii*) – Seen defending verbena hedges at Arenal.

VIOLET SABREWING (*Campylopterus hemileucurus*) – Common at Bosque de Paz.

BLACK-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD (*Eupherusa nigriventris*) – These square-headed hummers were at Bosque de Paz and La Paz Waterfall Gardens.

COPPERY-HEADED EMERALD (*Elvira cupreiceps*) – This CR endemic was a centerpiece of our visit to La Paz Waterfall Gardens on our final day.

[E]

RUFOUS-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD (*Amazilia tzacatl*) – Common and widespread.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

RESPLENDENT QUETZAL (*Pharomachrus mocinno*) – A female sat calmly next to a large avocado tree on the slopes of Volcan Poas on the last day of the trip.

SLATY-TAILED TROGON (*Trogon massena*) – Good views at Caño Negro, along the roadside.

BLACK-HEADED TROGON (*Trogon melanocephalus*) – One perched along the road with a Slaty-tailed Trogon.

GARTERED TROGON (*Trogon caligatus*) – This small trogon was seen frequently.

ORANGE-BELLIED TROGON (*Trogon aurantiiventris*) – One made a few appearances at Bosque de Paz.

Momotidae (Motmots)

LESSON'S MOTMOT (*Momotus lessonii lessonii*) – A few sightings at the Hotel Bougainvillea.

KEEL-BILLED MOTMOT (*Electron carinatum*) – One was perched with a Broad-billed Motmot near Lake Arenal - close, extended views!

BROAD-BILLED MOTMOT (*Electron platyrhynchum*) – Fairly common in the Arenal area.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

RINGED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle torquata*) – This large kingfisher usually announced its presence with loud calls.

BELTED KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle alcyon*) – A few were seen at Medio Queso and Caño Negro.

AMAZON KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle amazona*) – The most common kingfisher of our boat trips in the north.

GREEN KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle americana*) – A handful perched inconspicuously at the sides of the rivers.

AMERICAN PYGMY KINGFISHER (*Chloroceryle aenea*) – At least 3 good sightings of this beautiful little kingfisher, the smallest kingfisher in the New World.

Galbulidae (Jacamars)

RUFOUS-TAILED JACAMAR (*Galbula ruficauda*) – Great views along the Peninsula Road near Arenal.

Capitonidae (New World Barbets)

RED-HEADED BARBET (*Eubucco bourcierii*) – Up close and personal at the Cinchona feeders.

Semnornithidae (Toucan-Barbets)

PRONG-BILLED BARBET (*Semnornis frantzii*) – These strange beasts were attending the Cinchona feeders, too. Close views of the prongs!

Ramphastidae (Toucans)

NORTHERN EMERALD-TOUCANET (BLUE-THROATED) (*Aulacorhynchus prasinus caeruleogularis*) – During the rainstorm on our first day, we saw these lovely toucans at close range at Cinchona.

COLLARED ARACARI (*Pteroglossus torquatus*) – Fairly common in the northern lowlands.

YELLOW-THROATED TOUCAN (CHESTNUT-MANDIBLED) (*Ramphastos ambiguus swainsonii*) – Amazing views at the Bogarin feeders in La Fortuna.

KEEL-BILLED TOUCAN (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*) – A handful were perched up in large fruiting trees, including in the Arenal gardens.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

ACORN WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes formicivorus*) – One flew over on our montane blitz during the final afternoon.

BLACK-CHEEKED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes pucherani*) – Common in the northern lowlands.

HOFFMANN'S WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes hoffmannii*) – Common, with especially great views at the Hotel Bougainvillea.

SMOKY-BROWN WOODPECKER (*Picoides fumigatus*) – This small woodpecker showed fairly well in the forest canopy above us.

GOLDEN-OLIVE WOODPECKER (*Colaptes rubiginosus*) – A few sightings around Caño Negro.

LINEATED WOODPECKER (*Dryocopus lineatus*) – Fairly common in woodlands.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

CRESTED CARACARA (*Caracara cheriway*) – Several sightings in open country.

YELLOW-HEADED CARACARA (*Milvago chimachima*) – This was the small caracara that we found frequently.

LAUGHING FALCON (*Herpetotheres cachinnans*) – Several perched up for us in the Caño Negro area.

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*) – Just one seen in fields downhill from Bosque de Paz. Uncommon.

MERLIN (*Falco columbarius*) – Two on our final day on the slopes of Volcan Poas.

BAT FALCON (*Falco ruficularis*) – A few birds circled overhead at Medio Queso. We also saw a few others perched up during rainstorms.

Psittacidae (New World and African Parrots).

ORANGE-CHINNED PARAKEET (*Brotogeris jugularis*) – Close views at the Bogarin feeders.

WHITE-CROWNED PARROT (*Pionus senilis*) – A few were in the lowlands during the first few days of the trip.

RED-LORED PARROT (*Amazona autumnalis*) – Fairly common in the northern lowlands.

OLIVE-THROATED PARAKEET (*Eupsittula nana*) – Frequently seen during the first three days of the tour.

CRIMSON-FRONTED PARAKEET (*Psittacara finschi*) – Only a few sightings, but we had plenty flying around Hotel Bougainvillea on our final evening there.

Thamnophilidae (Typical Antbirds).

BARRED ANTSHRIKE (*Thamnophilus doliatus*) – A lovely pair showed for us along the water's edge at Medio Queso.

STREAK-CROWNED ANTVIREO (*Dysithamnus striaticeps*) – A great experience with one inquisitive bird within the fast-and-furious mixed flocks at Arenal Sky Trek.

SLATY ANTWREN (*Myrmotherula schisticolor*) – Seen briefly in a flock at Arenal Sky Trek.

DUSKY ANTBIRD (*Cercomacroides tyrannina*) – One was in the vicinity of an antswarm at Arenal and was so kind to give us some good looks.

BARE-CROWNED ANTBIRD (*Gymnocichla nudiceps*) – We heard this antbird singing along the edges of the water at Caño Negro, but it failed to show for us. [*]

DULL-MANTLED ANTBIRD (*Sipia laemosticta*) – Wow - a fantastic, close view in a ravine near Arenal.

BICOLORED ANTBIRD (*Gymnopathys bicolor bicolor*) – Along with the next two species, this one was found a few times around army ant swarms at Arenal. When they were preoccupied with the insects fleeing the ants, we were able to enjoy them from just a few feet away!

SPOTTED ANTBIRD (*Hylophylax naevioides*) – Awesome, close views of both males and females at army ant swarms at Arenal.

OCELLATED ANTBIRD (*Phaenostictus mcleannani*) – This stunner was fairly reclusive, but put in a few appearances around the fringes of an army ant swarm at Arenal Observatory Lodge. Another pair paused briefly to look at us at Arenal Sky Trek, but then continued rapidly on their way through the understory.

Grallariidae (Antpittas).

THICKET ANTPITTA (*Hylopezus dives*) – "Maria" responded nicely to whistling and approached us closely for scope views at Arenal.

Rhinocryptidae (Tapaculos).

SILVERY-FRONTED TAPACULO (*Scytalopus argentifrons*) – We heard one along the road above Bosque de Paz, but it did not approach closely. [*]

Furnariidae (Ovenbirds and Woodcreepers).

WEDGE-BILLED WOODCREEPER (*Glyphorhynchus spirurus*) – Two were in a flock at Arenal Observatory Lodge.

COCOA WOODCREEPER (*Xiphorhynchus susurrans*) – One sighting at Caño Negro.

SPOTTED WOODCREEPER (*Xiphorhynchus erythropygius*) – This lovely, medium-sized woodcreeper showed well on the trails at Bosque de Paz.

BROWN-BILLED SCYTHEBILL (*Campylorhamphus pusillus*) – This beautiful and strange woodcreeper made a quick appearance in a flock at Bosque de Paz - just enough time for us to see that loooooong sickle of a bill.

STREAK-HEADED WOODCREEPER (*Lepidocolaptes souleyetii*) – Common around Caño Negro.

SPOT-CROWNED WOODCREEPER (*Lepidocolaptes affinis*) – A nice view right along the driveway to Bosque de Paz.

PLAIN XENOPS (*Xenops minutus*) – When we left Caño Negro, we stopped for a roadside flock that included a scope view of this fine little Furnariid.

STREAK-BREASTED TREEHUNTER (*Thripadectes rufobrunneus*) – One was in roadside vegetation along the roadside above Bosque de Paz.

BUFF-THROATED FOLIAGE-GLEANER (HYPOPHAEUS) (*Automolus ochrolaemus hypophaeus*) – A couple of appearances by this Caribbean slope form. The voice is highly distinctive from the Pacific race of Buff-throated Foliage-gleaner.

SPOTTED BARBTAIL (*Premnoplex brunescens*) – One foraged in mossy vines above us on a wet afternoon walk at Bosque de Paz.

RUDDY TREERUNNER (*Margarornis rubiginosus*) – This excellent Furnariid climbed around, nuthatch-like, in the subcanopy at Bosque de Paz.

RED-FACED SPINETAIL (*Cranioleuca erythroptus*) – Good views in flocks at Bosque de Paz.

SLATY SPINETAIL (*Synallaxis brachyura*) – One approached closely at the end of the driveway to the lodge at Caño Negro.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers).

NORTHERN BEARDLESS-TYRANULET (*Camptostoma imberbe*) – A fairly common voice in the northern lowlands, but we only ended up seeing a couple.

YELLOW TYRANULET (*Capsiempis flaveola*) – Boisterous and striking, these small flycatchers were on display along the streets of the town of Caño Negro.

YELLOW-BELLIED ELAENIA (*Elaenia flavogaster*) – Common and widespread in the lowland wetlands.

MOUNTAIN ELAENIA (*Elaenia frantzii*) – Nice views on the slopes of Volcan Poas.

OLIVE-STRIPED FLYCATCHER (*Mionectes olivaceus*) – A few of these wing-flippers at Arenal and La Paz Waterfall Gardens.

OCHRE-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Mionectes oleagineus*) – One was feeding on fruit along the Peninsula Road below Arenal.

SLATY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Leptopogon superciliaris*) – We found one of these small, helmeted flycatchers in the canopy high above us on the Peninsula Road at Arenal.

PALTRY TYRANULET (*Zimmerius vilissimus*) – Common and widespread. We found one building a lovely enclosed nest (with a side entrance) at Caño Negro. [N]

SCALE-CRESTED PYGMY-TYRANT (*Lophotriccus pileatus*) – A few good opportunities to see this tiny flycatcher - once at Arenal Observatory Lodge, and again at Sky Trek.

COMMON TODY-FLYCATCHER (*Todirostrum cinereum*) – Seen commonly along the edge of water on our boat trips.

WHITE-THROATED SPADEBILL (*Platyrinchus mystaceus*) – One of these cute little flycatchers showed poorly along the trails at Bosque de Paz.

SULPHUR-RUMPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiobius sulphureipygius aureatus*) – In the mixed flocks at Arenal Sky Trek.

TUFTED FLYCATCHER (*Mitrephanes phaeocercus*) – Several seen well at middle elevations including Bosque de Paz.

DARK PEWEE (*Contopus lugubris*) – The one at La Paz Waterfall Gardens posed at eye level along the river for some excellent views.

TROPICAL PEWEE (*Contopus cinereus*) – Common in the northern lowlands, often sitting on fences.

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax flaviventris*) – A few of these wintering Empidonax from the north showed for us in the Arenal area.

WILLOW FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax traillii*) – One posed in the open at the edge of the marsh at Medio Queso and gave us a nice listen to its "whit" call.

YELLOWISH FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax flavescens*) – These lovely, approachable flycatchers were common at Bosque de Paz.

BLACK PHOEBE (*Sayornis nigricans*) – A few were along the edges of rivers at Arenal and Bosque de Paz.

BRIGHT-RUMPED ATTLA (*Attila spadiceus*) – Two along the Peninsula Road near Arenal.

DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) – This mournful-sounding Myiarchus was at Caño Negro and Arenal.

GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus crinitus*) – One "wheep"-ed for us at Caño Negro.

GREAT KISKADEE (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) – Common and widespread, especially in the lower elevations.

BOAT-BILLED FLYCATCHER (*Megarynchus pitangua*) – A few of these kiskadee look-alikes were in the Arenal vicinity.

SOCIAL FLYCATCHER (*Myiozetetes similis*) – Common and widespread.

GRAY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER (*Myiozetetes granadensis*) – Some good, close views during our rain vigils at Arenal Observatory Lodge.

TROPICAL KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – Everywhere!

FORK-TAILED FLYCATCHER (*Tyrannus savana*) – Seven were at Medio Queso Marsh.

Pipridae (Manakins)

WHITE-COLLARED MANAKIN (*Manacus candei*) – Several good sightings in the Arenal area.

Tityridae (Tityras and Allies)

BLACK-CROWNED TITYRA (*Tityra inquisitor*) – Caño Negro and Arenal.

MASKED TITYRA (*Tityra semifasciata*) – The more common tityra that we saw - at both Caño Negro and Arenal.

BARRED BECARD (*Pachyrhamphus versicolor*) – Wow - the female that was at eye-level along the road at Bosque de Paz was one of the tour highlights for several of us. Such an intricate pattern, and a rare opportunity to see this lovely bird down low.

CINNAMON BECARD (*Pachyrhamphus cinnamomeus*) – A good sighting of one bird at the same spot where we saw the Plain Xenops near Upala.

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

RUFOUS-BROWED PEPPERSHRIKE (*Cyclarhis gujanensis*) – One came in reasonably well for views above us at Bosque de Paz.

TAWNY-CROWNED GREENLET (*Tunchiornis ochraceiceps*) – One was in the mixed flock at Arenal Sky Trek.

LESSER GREENLET (*Pachysylvia decurtata*) – Fairly common and widespread.

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO (*Vireo flavifrons*) – Particularly good views of one at Caño Negro.

YELLOW-WINGED VIREO (*Vireo carmioli*) – Our first two were a bit suboptimal in the rain at Bosque de Paz, but we found two more at high elevation on the road to Volcan Poas.

PHILADELPHIA VIREO (*Vireo philadelphicus*) – One along the Peninsula Road at Arenal stood out as a nice view.

BROWN-CAPPED VIREO (*Vireo leucophrys*) – One at Bosque de Paz and another on Volcan Poas.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

WHITE-THROATED MAGPIE-JAY (*Calocitta formosa*) – These big, inquisitive jays checked us out frequently along the edges of the Arenal National Park.

BROWN JAY (*Psilorhinus morio*) – Common and widespread.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

BLUE-AND-WHITE SWALLOW (*Pygochelidon cyanoleuca*) – Common only at the higher elevations at Bosque de Paz and Volcan Poas on this tour.

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) – A few were below the Lake Arenal dam with other swallows.

SOUTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) – The creamy rumps and butterscotch throats of these swallows helped us to distinguish them from their Northern cousins. These were widespread, often seen in forest gaps and along roads.

GRAY-BREASTED MARTIN (*Progne chalybea*) – Common in northern lowlands.

MANGROVE SWALLOW (*Tachycineta albilinea*) – Plenty in the Caño Negro area, nesting along the edge of the water.

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*) – About 6 were at Caño Negro during a boat trip there.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

NIGHTINGALE WREN (*Microcerculus philomela*) – We came very close to seeing this fine little songster, but he stayed hidden. Heard at a few different sites at Arenal. [*]

HOUSE WREN (*Troglodytes aedon*) – Common.

OCHRACEOUS WREN (*Troglodytes ochraceus*) – A few sightings of this buffy vine-lover at higher elevations at Bosque de Paz and Volcan Poas.

BAND-BACKED WREN (*Campylorhynchus zonatus*) – These big wrens were zooming around the Arenal gardens and went to roost together in a palm tree as we watched.

SPOT-BREASTED WREN (*Pheugopedius maculipectus*) – It took a little while, but we finally had a great look at this northern specialty on our final morning in the town of Caño Negro.

BLACK-THROATED WREN (*Pheugopedius atrogularis*) – One skulked through vines and eventually presented itself for a nice look on the Peninsula Road at Arenal.

STRIPE-BREASTED WREN (*Cantorchilus thoracicus*) – A frequent sound and sight on trails around Arenal.

CABANIS'S WREN (*Cantorchilus modestus*) – These members of the Plain Wren complex were singing at the Hotel Bougainvillea on our final evening together. [*]

CANEBRAKE WREN (*Cantorchilus zeledoni*) – Great, close views in the Caño Negro area.

BAY WREN (*Cantorchilus nigricapillus*) – Repeated nice views in the Caño Negro lowlands, typically together in duetting pairs.

WHITE-BREASTED WOOD-WREN (*Henicorhina leucosticta*) – Heard frequently around Arenal - we eventually squeaked out some quick views on the Waterfall Trail.

GRAY-BREASTED WOOD-WREN (*Henicorhina leucophrys*) – Quite common around Bosque de Paz.

SONG WREN (*Cyphorhinus phaeocephalus*) – One bird was particularly cooperative along the trail at Arenal Sky Trek.

Poliptilidae (Gnatcatchers).

LONG-BILLED GNATWREN (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*) – A pair was responsive along the Arenal Peninsula Road.

Cinclidae (Dippers).

AMERICAN DIPPER (*Cinclus mexicanus*) – Three members of the group saw one in the river adjacent to Bosque de Paz.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies).

BLACK-FACED SOLITAIRE (*Myadestes melanops*) – Wow - the fruit-hungry birds in the garden at Arenal were so close and beautiful!

BLACK-BILLED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH (*Catharus gracilirostris*) – Good looks of singing birds along the road on Volcan Poas.

SLATY-BACKED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH (*Catharus fuscater*) – One of these handsome thrushes hopped around in the lunch pavilion at La Paz Waterfall Gardens.

RUDDY-CAPPED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH (*Catharus frantzii*) – Confiding at Bosque de Paz.

BLACK-HEADED NIGHTINGALE-THRUSH (*Catharus mexicanus*) – Our only one was a skulker along the Waterfall Trail at Arenal.

WOOD THRUSH (*Hylocichla mustelina*) – Several sightings in the forest around Arenal.

SOOTY THRUSH (*Turdus nigrescens*) – One of these big, dark thrushes was along the road at Volcan Poas.

MOUNTAIN THRUSH (*Turdus plebejus*) – Fairly common around Bosque de Paz and Volcan Poas.

CLAY-COLORED THRUSH (*Turdus grayi*) – Widespread and common (and the national bird of CR). Seen every day.

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers).

TROPICAL MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus gilvus*) – A few of this expanding species were found in the northern lowlands.

Ptilionotidae (Silky-flycatchers).

BLACK-AND-YELLOW SILKY-FLYCATCHER (*Phainoptila melanoxantha*) – On our final afternoon on Volcan Poas, we found a fruiting tree with a couple of these stocky silky-flycatchers at close range.

LONG-TAILED SILKY-FLYCATCHER (*Ptiliononys caudatus*) – Some great views of this stunner at Bosque de Paz.

Parulidae (New World Warblers).

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia motacilla*) – Seen frequently around Arenal and Bosque de Paz. Winters along flowing streams and rivers.

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – Common around Caño Negro and the Arenal area.

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) – Scattered sightings of this beautiful wintering species from the US and Canada.

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER (*Mniotilta varia*) – Several quality sightings in middle elevations.

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER (*Protonotaria citrea*) – Quite common (happily) in root tangles along the edge of water at Caño Negro.

FLAME-THROATED WARBLER (*Oreothlypis gutturalis*) – One of these regional specialties was tough to pick out of a mixed flock at Bosque de Paz.

TENNESSEE WARBLER (*Oreothlypis peregrina*) – Common - seen most days at low and middle elevations.

GRAY-CROWNED YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis poliocephala*) – Great views from the boat trip at Medio Queso Marsh.

KENTUCKY WARBLER (*Geothlypis formosa*) – One was along the trail at Bosque de Paz.

OLIVE-CROWNED YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis semiflava*) – We fished a pair out of a thickly vegetated channel at Caño Negro during our morning boat trip.

TROPICAL PARULA (*Setophaga pitiayumi*) – Only a few sightings of this small, lovely warbler - at Arenal Waterfall Trail and Bosque de Paz.

MAGNOLIA WARBLER (*Setophaga magnolia*) – One was a surprise in a mixed flock in an orchard in the town of Caño Negro.

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER (*Setophaga fusca*) – One of the first birds we saw at Bosque de Paz was this dazzling orange-throated canopy jewel.

YELLOW WARBLER (*Setophaga petechia*) – Fairly common, especially in northern lowlands.

CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER (*Setophaga pensylvanica*) – This widespread wintering species was a frequent sight at low and middle elevations.

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (MYRTLE) (*Setophaga coronata coronata*) – One was a surprising sight in the edge of marshland at Medio Queso during our afternoon boat ride there.

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER (*Setophaga virens*) – We found this wintering species a few times around Bosque de Paz.

RUFUS-CAPPED WARBLER (*Basileuterus rufifrons*) – One popped up for us across the street from the Hotel Bougainvillea on our last evening.

BLACK-CHEEKED WARBLER (*Basileuterus melanogenys*) – A few sightings of this montane species between Bosque de Paz and Volcan Poas.

GOLDEN-CROWNED WARBLER (*Basileuterus culicivorus*) – This active little warbler anchored a few of our mixed flocks in the Arenal and Bosque de Paz areas.

COSTA RICAN WARBLER (*Basileuterus melanotis*) – Great views of this regional specialty on our final day at La Paz Waterfall Gardens.

BUFF-RUMPED WARBLER (*Myiothlypis fulvicauda*) – A frequent trailside "bobber" during our explorations of the Arenal area.

WILSON'S WARBLER (*Cardellina pusilla*) – Common in middle and upper elevations.

SLATE-THROATED REDSTART (*Myioborus miniatus*) – Great views at Bosque de Paz, sometimes in company of the next species.

COLLARED REDSTART (*Myioborus torquatus*) – While watching a Slate-throated Redstart at Bosque de Paz, this outrageous yellow-faced warbler popped up and put on a nice show for us.

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

CRIMSON-COLLARED TANAGER (*Ramphocelus sanguinolentus*) – Wow - stunning red and black birds attended the Bogarin feeders.

PASSERINI'S TANAGER (*Ramphocelus passerinii*) – This is the Caribbean slope member of the Scarlet-rumped Tanager group (opposite Cherrie's Tanager on the Pacific slope), and we saw it quite frequently in many habitats.

BLUE-GRAY TANAGER (*Thraupis episcopus*) – Abundant.

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

GOLDEN-HOODED TANAGER (*Tangara larvata*) – A frequent sight at fruit feeders and in flocks.

RUFOUS-WINGED TANAGER (*Tangara lavinia*) – A side trip to the Arenal Hanging Bridges netted us this lovely species feeding on a fig tree. It looks rather like the Bay-headed Tanager, but we had the close views needed to separate the two.

BAY-HEADED TANAGER (*Tangara gyrola*) – This attractive tanager was a common visitor to fruiting trees around Arenal.

EMERALD TANAGER (*Tangara florida*) – Never common, but we had some excellent views at fruit feeders and fig trees at Arenal.

SILVER-THROATED TANAGER (*Tangara icterocephala*) – Fairly common throughout the tour.

RED-LEGGED HONEYCREEPER (*Cyanerpes cyaneus*) – A few good sightings around Caño Negro, and then lots attending the feeders at Bogarin.

GREEN HONEYCREEPER (*Chlorophanes spiza*) – Two came in to the well-stocked Bogarin feeders.

SLATY FLOWERPIERCER (*Diglossa plumbea*) – Only a couple were at higher elevations near the end of our tour. Great views on Volcan Poas.

BLUE-BLACK GRASSQUIT (*Volatinia jacarina*) – A few were in grassy roadside areas in the northern lowlands.

THICK-BILLED SEED-FINCH (*Sporophila funerea*) – A few sightings in grassy margins between Caño Negro and Upala.

NICARAGUAN SEED-FINCH (*Sporophila nuttingi*) – This remarkably large-billed finch was a great sighting on our Medio Queso boat trip.

VARIABLE SEEDEATER (*Sporophila corvina*) – Common and seen almost every day.

WHITE-COLLARED SEEDEATER (*Sporophila torqueola*) – Frequent sightings in the northern lowlands between Medio Queso and Caño Negro.

BANANAQUIT (*Coereba flaveola*) – Common and widespread.

YELLOW-FACED GRASSQUIT (*Tiaris olivaceus*) – Scattered sightings of this tiny seed hunter throughout the tour.

BUFF-THROATED SALTATOR (*Saltator maximus*) – This was the most common saltator that we found.

BLACK-HEADED SALTATOR (*Saltator atriceps*) – We had nice comparisons of these huge saltators with the smaller, finer-billed Buff-throated Saltator at the Cinchona and Bogarin feeders.

GRAYISH SALTATOR (*Saltator coerulescens*) – Repeated sightings in the northern lowlands.

Passerellidae (New World Buntings and Sparrows)

SOOTY-CAPPED CHLOROSPINGUS (*Chlorospingus pileatus*) – Only at high elevations on Volcan Poas on our final day.

COMMON CHLOROSPINGUS (*Chlorospingus flavopectus*) – Most of ours were in the vicinity of Bosque de Paz in middle elevations.

BLACK-STRIPED SPARROW (*Arremonops conirostris*) – Plenty between Caño Negro and Arenal.

ORANGE-BILLED SPARROW (*Arremon aurantirostris*) – Two skulked in the undergrowth at Arenal Sky Trek, where they were tough to spot in the shadows.

CHESTNUT-CAPPED BRUSHFINCH (*Arremon brunneinucha*) – These lovely brushfinches hopped around on the lawn at Bosque de Paz in search of cracked corn.

SOOTY-FACED FINCH (*Arremon crassirostris*) – One of these striking finches posed for us at La Paz Waterfall Gardens.

RUFOUS-COLLARED SPARROW (*Zonotrichia capensis*) – A few sightings at middle elevations late in the tour.

CABANIS'S GROUND-SPARROW (*Melospiza cabanisi*) – A pair popped up at the edge of a coffee plantation near Hotel Bougainvillea on our final afternoon, and most of us got to see them fairly well. This is a split from Prevost's Ground-Sparrow.

YELLOW-THIGGED FINCH (*Pseliophorus tibialis*) – Common at the feeders and river edge at Bosque de Paz.

WHITE-NAPED BRUSHFINCH (YELLOW-THROATED) (*Atlapetes albinucha gutturalis*) – One twittered and approached us briefly across the road from Bosque de Paz.

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*) – Seen commonly at low and middle elevations.

FLAME-COLORED TANAGER (*Piranga bidentata*) – A pair showed off with the silky-flycatchers at a fruiting tree on Volcan Poas.

CARMOL'S TANAGER (*Chlorothraupis carmioli*) – A few of these olive-colored tanagers zapped across our path and posed briefly on the trails at Arenal, though we had a tough time getting nice views this time.

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

EASTERN MEADOWLARK (*Sturnella magna*) – A few were perched up on roadsides on our first day's drive to Los Chiles.

RED-BREASTED MEADOWLARK (*Sturnella militaris*) – Several were perched up in pastures during our drive north on the first day.

CHESTNUT-HEADED OROPENDOLA (*Psarocolius wagleri*) – One came in to the Arenal feeders with the larger Montezuma Oropendolas.

MONTEZUMA OROPENDOLA (*Psarocolius montezuma*) – A common and bizarre fixture at the fruit feeders at Arenal Observatory Lodge.

BLACK-COWLED ORIOLE (*Icterus prosthemelas*) – Repeated sightings between Caño Negro and the Arenal gardens.

ORCHARD ORIOLE (*Icterus spurius*) – Good sightings of this small, slim oriole at the edge of Medio Queso Marsh.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE (*Icterus galbula*) – A common wintering bird in Costa Rica - we saw plenty.

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) – Hundreds in the Caño Negro area.

MELODIOUS BLACKBIRD (*Dives dives*) – These loud blackbirds were found occasionally throughout the tour, though never in large numbers.

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) – Common in open country.

NICARAGUAN GRACKLE (*Quiscalus nicaraguensis*) – We heard one singing, and then a small group flew past us while we were on the evening boat trip at Caño Negro.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

YELLOW-THROATED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia hirundinacea*) – A regular feeder visitor between Caño Negro and Arenal.
OLIVE-BACKED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia gouldi*) – A few sightings - one at Bogarin and another at the Arenal Hanging Bridges.
TAWNY-CAPPED EUPHONIA (*Euphonia anaeae*) – One was in the gardens at Arenal Observatory Lodge.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) – Only found in towns/ cities, so we found few on this tour. [I]

MAMMALS

MANTLED HOWLER MONKEY (*Alouatta palliata*) – Common and seen frequently in the Caño Negro area. We also heard their roars at Bosque de Paz.

WHITE-THROATED CAPUCHIN (*Cebus capucinus*) – A few showed for us in the canopy at Arenal.

CENTRAL AMERICAN SPIDER MONKEY (*Ateles geoffroyi*) – We had repeat sightings of this slender, handsome monkey around Arenal. Most impressive was the cooperate bridge-building behavior we witnessed in which two monkeys collected branches from adjacent trees and then one held the two trees together in an "iron cross" as the rest of the troop crossed between the two treetops. It was very exciting to watch this obvious display of altruism!

HOFFMANN'S TWO-TOED SLOTH (*Choloepus hoffmanni*) – Ours was camouflaged in the epiphyte-laden branches on the way down from the Poas Volcano.

NORTHERN TAMANDUA (*Tamandua mexicana*) – One of these striking creatures put on a show for part of our group at Arenal Observatory Lodge.

VARIEGATED SQUIRREL (*Sciurus variegatoides*) – Common.

BANG'S MOUNTAIN SQUIRREL (*Syntheosciurus brochus*) – This rare and highly localized squirrel was attending the cracked corn spread on the ground at Bosque de Paz. This species is restricted to a few highland localities in Costa Rica and western Panama.

CENTRAL AMERICAN AGOUTI (*Dasyprocta punctata*) – This large rodent was a regular sight in the yard at Bosque de Paz.

PACA (*Cuniculus paca*) – These spotted mammals came in to feed on cracked corn at Bosque de Paz.

WHITE-NOSED COATI (*Nasua narica*) – Common and fairly tame at the Arenal Observatory Lodge.

TAYRA (*Eira barbara*) – One of these long mustelids bounded across the road in front of us as we drove up the hill toward Arenal Sky Trek.

Herps

GREEN IGUANA (*Iguana iguana*) – Very common along the edge of waterways, especially at Caño Negro and Medio Queso.

GREEN BASILISK (*Basiliscus plumifrons*) – Good views along the edge of the water at Caño Negro.

EYELASH VIPER (*Bothriechis schlegelii*) – A small yellow one was curled up in the crotch of a tree on the Waterfall Trail at Arenal Observatory Lodge.

SPECTACLED CAIMAN (*Caiman crocodilus*) – We found plenty during the boat rides at Caño Negro.

RED-EYED LEAF FROG (*Agalychnis callidryas*) – Good looks at the one under a leaf at the small pond at Arenal Observatory Lodge.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 312 bird taxa and 11 mammal taxa